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CSK EYE STABILITY AGAINST PBKS 12 SPORTS

Covishield cure comes with serious side effects

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Sparking criticism and raising concerns, British-Swedish multinational pharmaceutical firm AstraZeneca has for the first time acknowledged in court documents in the UK that its Covid-19 vaccine, which is known as Covishield in India, has the potential to cause Thrombocytopenia Syndrome (TTS), a rare side effect associated with blood clotting.

This condition involves the formation of blood clots accompanied by a low platelet count, which is critical for blood clotting.

As per media reports in the UK, the pharma giant is facing up to 51 litigations, being sued in class action over claims its vaccine caused death and serious injury in dozens of cases. In India, it was one of the widely administered Covid vaccines to reduce severe Covid-19 complications.

Developed in collaboration with University of Oxford, AstraZeneca's vaccine was manufactured in India by Pune-based Serum Institute of India (SII). As many as 1,749,417,978 doses of Covishield vaccine have been administered in India, in what was the world's largest vaccination programme from January 2021, according to the vaccine dashboard of the

government's web portal CoWIN as on April 29, 2024. Taking cognizance of the development, Delhi Health Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj said the Indian Government should work to urgently address the alleged side-effects of the Covishield vaccine as millions of people in India were administered the shot during the Covid pandemic.

Bharadwaj expressed concern over the alleged link between the vaccine's side-effects and a series of sudden deaths in India, claiming that Covishield was banned in several European countries, including Germany, France, Spain, Finland, Norway and Denmark, at the beginning of



2021 due to apprehensions about its safety. Speaking about complications related to the Covishield vaccine, Bharadwaj told a news agency,

"We have seen numerous videos on social media recently showing people collapsing and dying immediately after performing activities, which was not observed before the pandemic. Many people speculate a connection to the coronavirus vaccine and such reports are a matter of concern as they escalate tension."

However, in India, the doctors said there was no need to worry. They said that if a person has received the AstraZeneca vaccine, known as Covishield in India, two years ago, the likelihood of experiencing any adverse effects now is extremely low. "Adverse effects, if they occur, typically manifest within a few weeks of vaccination," said Dr Sudhir

Kumar, Neurologist, Apollo Hospital, Hyderabad. Dr Rajeev Jayadevan, Co-Chairman of the National Indian Medical Association, added that this particular outcome is reported only in the first month following the first dose, not afterwards. In India, Dr Kumar added that the incidence of TTS after the vaccine is not known. "Only isolated case reports have been reported. So, TTP is extremely rare after Covid vaccination, considering millions of vaccine doses have been administered," the expert said. "TTS is thrombocytopenia with thrombocytopenia syndrome, which is basically clot in blood vessels of the brain or elsewhere,

along with a low platelet count. It is known to occur in very rare instances following certain types of vaccines and also from other causes. According to the WHO, adenovirus vector vaccines in particular have been rarely associated with this condition," Dr Jayadevan asserted. Dr MV Padma Srivastava, Chairperson - Neurology, Paras Hospitals, Gurugram, however, told a news agency, "I have read the recent report which states that TTS (Thrombocytopenia Syndrome (TTS)) is happening. In rare events, I can say that the vaccine has caused certain consequences and TTS."

Amit Shah deepfake video sings the Congress Sex scandal plot thickens

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ AHMEDABAD/NEW DELHI

The Gujarat police on Tuesday said they have arrested a Congress leader and an Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) functionary for allegedly sharing Union Home Minister Amit Shah's deep fake video, in which he is purportedly seen announcing the curtailment of reservation rights of the SCs, STs and OBCs.

The arrest comes a day after Delhi Police initiated a probe and summoned several persons including Telangana chief minister Revanth Reddy for questioning in the case. A few arrests have already been made in this case as Mumbai police too registered FIRs against the Maharashtra Youth Congress social media platform and 16 others. Police in other BJP-ruled States also swung into action making the first arrest in Assam in connection with the case on Sunday.

In his first reactions pertaining to the matter, Home Minister Amit Shah said the Congress' frustration and disappointment have reached such a level that it made and circulated it on social media and even chief ministers and state unit chiefs also forwarded



Union Home Minister Amit Shah addresses a Press conference at Vajpayee Bhawan, in Guwahati, on Tuesday. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and State BJP president Bhabesh Kalita are also seen

it. Shah alleged that since leader Rahul Gandhi assumed leadership of the Congress, its level of politics is sinking and the attempt to create confusion and mislead people is condemnable. "They should contest elections on the basis of their principles, programmes and manifesto and not by circulating a fake video," he said at a Press conference in

Guwahati when asked on the arrest of a Congress functionary of Assam for allegedly circulating a fake video of the BJP leader. The Ahmedabad Cyber Crime Cell arrested the two persons, including one who was working as a Personal Assistant (PA) of Congress MLA Jignesh Mevani since the last six years. Another has been serving as the AAP's

Dahod district president since the last four years and third belongs to the Dalit community, also serves as the general secretary of Banaskantha district Congress. The duo was booked under section 153A (promoting enmity between different groups) and 505(2) (statements creating or promoting enmity, hatred or ill-will between classes) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). The police release said the duo had uploaded the

edited video of Amit Shah's speech with an intention to create enmity between reserved castes and unreserved castes in view of the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. "Both of them had shared this edited video of Amit Shah on their Facebook pages. They received this video on their WhatsApp and investigations are still on to nab the person who had edited this video," said a Gujarat police official.

BJP on Monday lodged a complaint with the Election Commission against the Congress, alleging that it circulated a "deep fake and morphed" video of Amit Shah to derail the poll process, and demanded strict action against the party. The Special Cell of the Delhi Police had on Sunday registered an FIR after the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C), which is under the Ministry of Home Affairs, filed a complaint about the doctored video of Shah where his statements indicating a commitment to abolish quota for Muslims on religious ground in Telangana were changed to make it seem that he was advocating scrapping of all reservations.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI/BENGALURU

JD(S) on Tuesday suspended its Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna from the party with immediate effect over an alleged sex scandal involving him. Prajwal is the BJP-JD(S) alliance's candidate from Hassan, which went to the polls in the second phase on Friday.

While Home Minister Amit Shah sought to know why the Congress Government in the State did not take any action against Prajwal for alleged sexual abuse of women, the National Commission for Women sought a report within three days from the Karnataka police over allegations of sexual abuse involving Prajwal. The 33-year-old is the son of HD Deve Gowda's elder son HD Revanna, who is an MLA and a former Minister. Prajwal's uncle H D Kumaraswamy is State president of JD(S). The suspension came minutes after the party core committee that met in Hubballi recommended his suspension to its national president and former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda, who is also Prajwal's grandfather. "Videos of Hassan MP Prajwal



NSUI members hold a poster of JD(S) MP Prajwal Revanna during a protest against his involvement in the alleged sexual abuse case in Bengaluru on Tuesday

Revanna allegedly harassing women are widely in circulation on social media and this has caused huge embarrassment to the party and its leadership," the suspension order said. Stating that the Congress government in Karnataka has constituted a Special Investigation Team to investigate this, it said, "In this backdrop, as per JD(S) party constitution and rules regarding breach of discipline and punishment, Prajwal Revanna has been suspended with immediate effect." Some explicit video clips allegedly involving Prajwal

Revanna were circulated in Hassan over the last few days. Police on Sunday booked Prajwal Revanna and his father H D Revanna on charges of sexual harassment and criminal intimidation based on a complaint from a woman, who worked in their household. BJP welcomed the JD(S) decision to suspend MP Prajwal Revanna over allegations of sexual abuse, asserting that it will push for the full might of law against him, and launched a fierce counter-attack on Congress for "delayed"action by Karnataka Government.

MEA debunks WaPo report claiming RAW hand in murder plan

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A day after *The Washington Post* named an Indian official for allegedly plotting to eliminate Sikh extremist Gurbat Singh Pannun, India on Tuesday said the report made "unwarranted and unsubstantiated" imputations on a serious matter.

The newspaper, citing unnamed sources, named a Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) officer in connection with the alleged plot to assassinate Pannun. "The report in question makes unwarranted and unsubstantiated imputations on a serious matter," External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said. "There is an ongoing investigation of the high level committee set up by the Government of India to look into the security concerns shared by the US government on networks of organised criminals, terrorists and others," he said. Jaiswal was responding to media queries on the report.

"Speculative and irresponsible comments on it are not helpful," Jaiswal said. The report in *The Washington Post* claimed that a man referred to as 'CC-1' in the indictment filed on the alleged murder plot to kill Khalistani terrorist Gurbat Singh Pannun was a RAW officer, Vikram Yadav. Yadav forwarded details about Pannun to the hired hit team, the report said. Vikram Yadav, an officer who allegedly worked with the Research and Analysis Wing, had hired a hit team and plotted an attack on Pannun on American soil, the report said. According to the report, Vikram Yadav, who is allegedly working with a different government organisation now, forwarded details about Pannun, including his New York address, to the hit team. The *Washington Post* claimed that the Ministry of External Affairs declined to respond to its article. In November last year, US federal prosecutors charged Indian national Nikhil Gupta with working with an Indian government employee in the foiled plot to kill Pannun. He is wanted in India on terror charges.

EC confirms voter fatigue in first two rounds

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Days after suspense over the low voter turnout, the Election Commission (EC) on Tuesday came out with official data showing low voting percentage in the first two phases that concluded recently. A voter turnout of 66.14 per cent was recorded in the first phase and 66.71 per cent was recorded in the second phase of Lok Sabha elections.

In 2019, the voter turnout was recorded at 69.43 per cent and 69.17 per cent in the first and second phases, respectively. The voter turnout in the two phases of the recent Lok Sabha elections experienced a decline compared to the 2019 polls.

The first phase of polling was held on April 19 across 102 constituencies and the second phase was held on April 26

for 88 constituencies. "In the ongoing general elections, voter turnout of 66.14 per cent has been recorded in phase 1 for 102 PCs (Parliamentary Constituencies) and 66.71 per cent in phase 2 for 88 PCs that went for polls in the two phases," the EC said in a statement. Generally, a higher voter turnout is considered an indication of change, while a low turnout suggests continuity. However, there is no clear correlation or trend evident in the data. Analysts say the lower turnout marked a clear lack of enthusiasm among people. Officially sharing the turnout figure, the EC said in phase one of the elections, 66.22 per cent of male and 66.07 female electors turned up to vote. The turnout for registered third-gender voters stood at 31.32 per cent. In the



2019 polls, the turnout in the first phase stood at 69.43 per cent. In the second phase of elections held on April 26, the male voter turnout was recorded at 66.99 per cent, while the female turnout stood at 66.42 per cent. As many as 23.86 per cent of the

registered third-gender voters came out to vote. The data showed that Bihar recorded 49.26 per cent voter turnout, less than 50 per cent while Meghalaya and Uttar Pradesh recorded 56.87 per cent and 57.22 per cent respectively. Three parliamentary constituencies recorded less than 50 per cent voting percentage, which include Nawada in Bihar 43.17 per cent; Karauli-Dholpur in Rajasthan 49.59 per cent, a decline from 55.18 per cent in 2019 and Almora in Uttarakhand 48.74 per cent, a decline from 52.31 per cent in 2019. In the first phase of polling, Lakshadweep (84.1 per cent) recorded the highest voter percentage while Bihar (49.26 per cent) recorded the lowest voter turnout of the twenty-21 States and Union Territories that voted on April 19.

Kolkata experiences 43°C burns for first time ever

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KOLKATA

Even as parts of south-western Bengal simmered in the vicinity of 45-46 degrees centigrade, Kolkata on Tuesday recorded its all-time highest temperature at 43 degrees which is six degrees above normal, said the weather office, adding the temperature is to go up in the coming 3-4 days. Kolkata had recorded highest temperature of 41.7 degrees 44 years ago in 1980, said sources at Alipore weather office, adding Orange alert had been issued for the City of Joy which had presently turned into a 'city on the boil'. Red alert has been sounded in the Gangetic West Bengal including the areas adjacent to Chotanagpur plateau like Purulia, Bankura, West Midnapore and Birbhum, sources said advising caution for the election campaigners and asking them to abstain from campaigning between 12 and 3 pm. "While heat wave like conditions will prevail in Kolkata, severe heat wave like conditions will prevail in western districts of the Gangetic Bengal," weather office sources said predicting heat-wave like condition in districts of North Bengal too save Darjeeling. The Bengal Government had preponed the summer vacations in Government and Government aided schools from April considering rising heat. "Considering the prevailing heat wave situation, the competent authority has decided to prepone the summer vacation in the schools under your administrative jurisdiction with effect from April 22 except for schools in hill areas of Darjeeling and Kalimpong districts, wherein the existing academic schedule may continue until further order," the notice issued by School Education earlier said.

India squad for T20 World Cup

RISHABH MALIK ■ NEW DELHI

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) announced the Indian squad for the upcoming T20 World Cup which will be hosted in the West Indies and the USA from June 2. The Senior Selection Committee chairman Ajit Agarkar and Captain Rohit Sharma picked India's 15-member squad on Tuesday. However there are many surprising inclusions in the team and shocking omissions which created buzz among the cricket fans. In a 15-member squad opener Yashasvi Jaiswal found a place with opening partner Rohit (captain) followed by Hardik Pandya who is newly appointed vice captain for the upcoming World Cup which raises eyebrows about his poor

form. In the much awaited race of wicketkeepers who are named in the squad are Rishabh Pant and Sanju Samson. KL Rahul was ignored in the selection with many questions arising despite his seniority and experience in the game and Ishan Kishan due to his form and inconsistency. Virat Kohli and Suryakumar Yadav will be seen batting at number three and four positions. The new all-rounder Shivam Dube, who is getting praises for his swashbuckling batting in the IPL for the CSK, will further strengthen India's bowling attack with Ravindra Jadeja. Yuzvendra Chahal is making a comeback in this year's World Cup. The four spinners in the team are Kuldeep Yadav, Yuzvendra Chahal, Ravindra



Jadeja and Axar Patel. Right-arm leg break spinner Ravi Bishnoi has been axed in this year's World Cup. The pace attack will be headed by Jasprit Bumrah, Arshdeep Singh, and Mohammed Siraj. India will begin their World Cup campaign against Ireland in Group A on June 5 in New York. SQUAD: Rohit Sharma (Captain), Hardik Pandya (Vice Captain), Virat Kohli, Rishabh Pant (WK), Sanju Samson (WK), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Shivam Dube, Ravindra Jadeja, Suryakumar Yadav, Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav, Arshdeep Singh, Mohd Siraj, Jasprit Bumrah, Yuzvendra Chahal. Reserves: Shubman Gill, Khaleel Ahmed, Avesh Khan and Rinku Singh.

Jamshedpur swelters as temperatures soar to record 45.5 degrees

PNS : JAMSHEDPUR

Jamshedpur experienced its hottest day of the season on Tuesday as the mercury soared to a scorching 45.5 degrees Celsius. Meanwhile, Baharagora sweated it out at a staggering 47.1 degrees Celsius, marking one of the highest temperatures in the region.

According to reports, the Chotanagpur plateau region is currently gripped by severe heat wave conditions, with nearby suburbs also experiencing sweltering temperatures. The heat wave alert, initially issued on Monday, has been extended across the state for another 48 hours, underscoring the severity of the situation.

Officials attribute the blistering conditions to prevailing westerly to northwesterly winds at lower levels over the region. They warn that heat wave conditions are expected to persist in parts of the



Chotanagpur region over the next two days. April has proven to be exceptionally hot in Jamshedpur this season, with forecasts indicating clear skies and temperatures exceeding 43 degrees Celsius for the next two days. An official from the Meteorological



Office in Sonari remarked on the unbearable heat, predicting even hotter temperatures for May. The scorching summer has not only made daily life difficult but has also led to a rise in health issues among residents. Hospitals and nursing homes are witnessing a surge in admissions due to ailments such as dehydration, gastroenteritis, jaundice, and viral fever.

Interestingly, historical data reveals that Jamshedpur holds records for extreme temperatures. On June 11, 1942, the city recorded its highest maximum temperature of 47.2 degrees Celsius. Additionally, in May 2013, temperatures soared to 45 degrees Celsius, marking one of the hottest days in Jamshedpur's history.

with Sarthak Sustainable Development Foundation, aim to provide quality education to socio-economically disadvantaged students, thereby fostering their overall development. The various winners amongst the categories in which the children were competing In Group A (Prerna Tutorials (5 teams): 1st position was secured by Prerna Tutorials, Modidih; 2nd position was won by Prerna Drawing Centre, Chandaha; and 3rd position by Prerna Tutorials, Kumatan. In Group B (Prerna centre (5 teams): 1st was by Prerna Centre, Chandaha; 2nd position was secured by Prerna Centre, Sijalori; Prerna Centre, Yodidh stood 3rd. While in Group C (Vedanta ESL Excel 30 centre (5 teams) - Team 1 won.

Chas municipal corporation organises voter awareness program

PNS : BOKARO

In a bid to enhance voter awareness ahead of the upcoming elections, the Chas Municipal Corporation organized a voter awareness program in the Chas Municipal area. Laborers enthusiastically participated in the Voter Awareness Morning Rally and Quiz Competition, highlighting the importance of active citizenship.

Led by Chas AMC Sourav Kumar Bhuvaniya, along with Subdivisional Officer, Om Prakash Gupta, and Sveep Nodal Officer, Prabhash Datta, the Voter Awareness Morning Rally commenced at the Chas Municipal Office premises on the eve of International Labor Day 2024. Hundreds of laborers actively engaged in the event.

Addressing the gathering, AMC Bhuvaniya emphasized the significance of democracy, especially with the upcoming polling day on May 25, 2024, in Bokaro district. Expressing concerns over the relatively low voter turnout in urban areas, he highlighted the continuous efforts of the district administration, through the Sveep campaign, to increase voter awareness. The event aimed to inspire both self-voting and encouraging others to participate in the democratic process. Various speakers urged everyone to participate fearlessly in the festival of democracy and pledged their commitment to vote. Moreover, additional activities like quiz competitions, musical chairs, and rangoli were organized among school children to educate them about the importance of voting. Citizens also took selfies at the designated selfie point to commemorate the event.



DC held review meeting

Garhwa admn review meet on poll preparations

PNS : LOHARDAGA

For voter awareness under Lok Sabha General Election, 2024, a football match was organized between the District Administration and Talent Center Lohardaga at Nadia



Hindu High School, Lohardaga on Tuesday. The match was

started by kicking the football by District Election Officer-cum-Deputy Commissioner Dr. Waghmare Prasad Krishna. In this, the Deputy Commissioner got introduced to all the participants and appealed to all the eligible voters to exercise

their suffrage in the upcoming elections to be held in Lohardaga district on 13 May 2024. The Deputy Commissioner said that you should motivate yourself and all the eligible voters in your family to vote. Voting is to be

held in Lohardaga district on 13 May. All of you should participate enthusiastically in this great festival of democracy. The Deputy Commissioner administered the voter oath to all the present participants, officials and personnel.

'Cyber Cowboy' Major Vineet Kumar leads netizens to Cyberpeace across the Globe

DIVYA MODI : RANCHI

In the ever-evolving landscape of cyber warfare, a name that stands as a stalwart defender of peace in cyberspace is Major Vineet Kumar whose story began in Ranchi, Jharkhand where he displayed a powerful aptitude for technology as a child prodigy.

A TEDx speaker and guest instructor at esteemed institutions like the National Police Academy, Railway Staff College and Indian Institute of Management, Ranchi, Kumar's influence in cybersecurity education and training is profound.

At the young age of 16, Kumar floated the pioneering initiative National Anti-Hacking Group (NAG) followed by the Global Association of Ethical Hackers (GEHA). He further

went on to be recognised as the youngest Microsoft-certified systems engineer in 2008 and later also received the UN Youth Achievement Award.

Kumar further went on to act as an Advisor to the Jharkhand

Government. While at 22, he served as the Chief Technology Officer and Head of State Government Agency, Cyber Defense Research Centre at the Jharkhand Government. He is also a commissioned officer of the Territorial Army. His academic pursuits led

him to Cyber Defence and Information Assurance at Cranfield University and the Joint Services and Staff College in the United Kingdom followed by leadership studies at Cambridge University.

Additionally, he expanded his expertise in Cyber Defence through studies at Geneva Center for Security Policies in Switzerland. Further, driven by an unwavering commitment to creating a safe cyberspace for netizens, the social entrepreneur founded CyberPeace, presently recognised as the



world's first non-profit organisation dedicated to cybersecurity and think-tank with offices in three countries, impacting over 200 million netizens and stakeholders across 112 nations. Under his leadership, CyberPeace has launched several groundbreaking initiatives aimed at promoting cybersecurity, fostering digital hygiene and combating cyber threats. Among these

initiatives, the CyberPeace Corps stands out as a global community of cybersecurity experts and enthusiasts united in their mission to collaborate and share knowledge to combat cyber threats.

Kumar's leadership has also led to the inception of several impactful programmes and initiatives on the national level like The CyberPeace Initiative, which in collaboration with

Google.org aims to tackle misinformation and other cyber security challenges through innovative solutions and partnerships and also create cyber warriors and master trainers.

Global CyberPeace Challenge or GCC happens to be the world's largest cybersecurity competition with participants from over 120 countries, aims to recognise and award talent that can build solutions to some of the most pressing cybersecurity problems faced by society. The objective of the challenge is to tap into the innovative approaches adopted by participants to solve critical real-world problems in the technical and policy challenges.

Through these initiatives, CyberPeace and Kumar continue to make

significant strides in fostering a safer digital world for all.

Dr TMA Pai Hall inaugurated at Manipal Tata Medical College

PNS : JAMSHEDPUR

Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE) witnessed a momentous occasion today as it commemorated the 126th Birth Anniversary of its visionary founder, Dr. Tonse Madhava Anantha Pai. The grand celebration, held at the Manipal Tata Medical College, Jamshedpur, was marked by the inauguration of the "Dr TMA Pai Hall," a tribute to the enduring legacy of Dr. Pai.

The ceremony, held in the Lecture Hall and Auditorium of the Academic Block, brought together faculty, students, and esteemed guests in a spirit of reverence and gratitude. Dr. TMA Pai's visionary leadership continues to shape the ethos of MAHE, and the inauguration of the hall serves as a fitting tribute to his remarkable contributions to education and healthcare.

Dr. TMA Pai's enduring legacy serves as a beacon of inspiration for generations of students and educators at



MAHE community and beyond. His legacy continues to resonate through the halls of the institution, inspiring excellence and innovation in education and healthcare. As MAHE commemorates Founders Day and inaugurates the "Dr TMA Pai Hall," it reaffirms its dedication to honoring the visionary ideals of its founder and perpetuating his legacy for generations to come.

The event concluded with heartfelt reflections from faculty, students, and staff, highlighting the profound impact of Dr. TMA Pai's visionary leadership on the

Brahmananda Narayana Hospital receives award for excellence in patient safety

PNS : JAMSHEDPUR

Brahmananda Narayana Hospital, a distinguished healthcare institution under the banner of Narayana Health, has been recognized with a prestigious accolade at the 9th IHW Summit Awards 2024 in Mumbai. The hospital's unwavering commitment to patient safety and centrality has earned it the esteemed title of "Best Hospital in Patient Safety & Centrality Category" in Jharkhand.

Brahmananda Narayana Hospital, accredited by NABH and renowned for its tertiary care services, stands as a beacon of excellence in the healthcare landscape. The recent recognition in the Patient Safety category at the IHW Summit Awards underscores the institution's dedication to maintaining the highest standards of patient safety. In an era where patient safety is paramount, Brahmananda Narayana Hospital has distinguished itself through its implementation of stringent protocols, innovative technologies, and comprehensive training programs. This multidisciplinary approach, coupled with a culture of continuous improve-

ment, has propelled the hospital to the forefront of patient safety practices in the region. Expressing gratitude for the honor, Vinit Raj, Facility Director of Brahmananda Narayana Hospital, emphasized the institution's unwavering commitment to prioritizing patient safety. He reiterated the hospital's belief that every patient deserves the highest level of care and reaffirmed their dedication to upholding the highest standards of safety, quality, and excellence.

As Brahmananda Narayana Hospital celebrates this remarkable achievement, it remains steadfast in its mission to provide compassionate, comprehensive, and safe healthcare services to the residents of Jamshedpur and beyond. The recognition serves as a testament to the hospital's enduring commitment to excellence and its tireless efforts to ensure the safety and well-being of every patient entrusted to its care.

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DIC Encourages Lady Executives to Compete with Themselves for Professional Growth

PNS : BOKARO

In the closing session of the Leadership and Management Productivity (LAMP) Workshop for Women Executives, Atanu Bhowmick, Director In-Charge at RSP, urged 25 lady executives to prioritize self-improvement for their career advancement. Held at the HRD Centre on April 27, 2024, the workshop saw the presence of esteemed guests including Mr. S R Suryawanshi, ED (Works), Dr. B K Hota, ED (M&S), and Tarun Misra, ED (P&A) with Additional Charge of ED (Projects). Organized by B-More Consulting, the workshop featured industry veterans like Dr. Shoeb Ahmed, Former Director (SAIL), and Roshan Joseph and Ajoy Joseph as faculty members.

Mr. Bhowmick emphasized the essential pillars of leadership, stressing the importance of team happiness, engagement, information, and pro-



ductivity. Mr. Suryawanshi urged the lady executives to assume leadership roles in their respective domains, regardless of their current positions. Echoing this sentiment, Mr. Misra expressed optimism about seeing more women in higher positions and leadership roles within RSP.

Certificates were awarded to the participants by DIC Bhowmick, Mr. Suryawanshi, and Mr. Misra, with special recognition given to team 'Sharks' for their outstanding performance during the three-day workshop. Dr. Shoeb Ahmed commended

the workshop's objective and lauded the management for grooming future leaders. Roshan Joseph praised the participants for their enthusiasm and eagerness to learn and perform.

Rajashree Banerjee, CGM (HRD), extended a warm welcome to the attendees. Each participant shared their learning experiences and takeaways from the program, highlighting how the workshop enriched and motivated them to become better leaders. K K Jaiswal, AGM (HRD), efficiently coordinated the program, ensuring its success.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CENTRAL INSTITUTE OF PSYCHIATRY
 KANKE, RANCHI-834006, JHARKHAND

Notice

Director, Central Institute of Psychiatry, Ranchi invites applications for the following posts for a period of 10 months **01.05.2024 to 31.03.2025** on contract basis. Details of vacant posts are as under:

Sl. No.	Name of the post	No. of Posts	Salary per month (INR)
I.	Drug Treatment Centre (DTC) Coordinator	02 (UR)	57,652.00
II.	Training and Field Coordinator	05 (04-UR, 01-OBC)	47,000.00
III.	Accounts-cum-Administrative Assistant	01 (UR)	30,000.00

Desirous candidates possessing the eligibility criteria and who are within the prescribed age limit should send their duly filled applications upto 13.05.2024 for walk-in-interview till 5:00 pm in the prescribed format giving full details of academic records and experience along with original and attested photocopy of the relevant documents with recent photograph at this Institute by registered post or by hand. The walk-in-interview for the following posts shall be held on **15.05.2024** at 9.30 A.M. onwards.

Details can be seen on the Institute website www.cipranchi.nic.in.

Sd/-Director

Rajasthan CM, Marandi, Bauri participates in Dhullu's nomination

Bhajanlal Sharma highlights achievements of Narendra Modi govt

PNS : RANCHI

Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma on Tuesday participated in the nomination of Dhanbad's NDA candidate Dhullu Mahato at Dhanbad collectorate. Later he addressed a huge public meeting, where he highlighted the achievements of Prime Minister Narendra Modi government.

Sharma said that after 2014, a huge change has taken place within the country. Everyone must have seen the situation in the country before 2014. Corruption was at its peak. Before 2014, terrorists used to explode bombs in crowded areas of the country. They used to take away the heads of soldiers from the border. After the year 2014 the situation has completely changed.

He said that earlier the poor did not have any bank



Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma and State BJP President Babul Marandi being garlanded by party workers during a public meeting after filling of nomination papers by Dhanbad BJP candidate Dhullu Mahato in Dhanbad on Tuesday. Pix by Vinay Murmu

account. The poor could not even step on the threshold of the bank. Prime Minister Narendra Modi curbed cut money by making everyone open bank accounts. Cut

money was prevalent in Jharkhand. Former Prime Minister of Congress used to say that we send ? 1, by the time we reached the village 15 paise used to reach. Today

if the Prime Minister puts ?100, the entire money comes into the beneficiary's account. Farmers get Kisan Samman Nidhi. There is no cut money anywhere. This is a change after 2014.

Prime Minister Modi did the work of honoring mothers and sisters by giving them toilets. Mother and sisters were troubled in cooking. It used to increase during rains. Smoke entered the eyes and lungs. Prime Minister Modi worked to honor mothers and sisters by giving them the connection of Ujjwala.

The Chief Minister of Rajasthan said that the pace of development increased after 2014. Constructing 6 lane roads. There has also been historical development in railways. There has been development in every field. The number of hospitals has increased five times. India's respect has increased within the world. Earlier the face of

backward, dayless India was visible to the world. Today the whole world looks at India with longing eyes. Prime Minister Modi did the work of safely evacuating the youth of India trapped between the war between Russia and Ukraine. He said that this time 25 out of 25 seats are coming to the Lok Sabha in Rajasthan. This time in Jharkhand also, 14 out of 14 seats are going to be held by Bharatiya Janata Party and NDA. Bharatiya Janata Party is going to form the government in the upcoming assembly elections also. BJP always follows the culture and ideas of the country.

Sharma said that the opposition used to say that Article 370 will not be removed from Jammu and Kashmir. Rivers of blood will flow. Those who said so got the answer. After the removal of Article 370, not even a single pebble was thrown there.

When we used to say that Ramlala will come, the temple will be built there. The opposition said that they will not tell the date. Now a grand temple of Lord Ram has also been built. The opposition tried to portray Lord Ram as imaginary. The invitation for the consecration of Lord Ram was also not accepted. If Lord Ram does not belong to him, then how will Ram be his? BJP government will be formed in Jharkhand by registering a historic victory in the upcoming assembly elections.

BJP State President and former Chief Minister Babul Marandi said that in this election, Dhullu Mahato has to be made victorious with more votes than last time. This heat and the challenge of the opposition also have to be accepted. The security of the borders became stronger during the tenure of the country's Prime Minister Narendra

Modi. Common people are living their lives free from fear. Ignoring every problem and using 100% voting, NDA candidate Dhullu Mahato has to be made victorious from Dhanbad by a record number of votes. The teeth of the opponents were already sour. The public has further soured his teeth. It has worked to break his morale.

AJSU Party chief Sudesh Mahato said that no challenge from the opposition is visible here. This election is the election of the leader of entire India. To fulfill NDA's target of crossing 400, Dhullu Mahato has to be made victorious from Dhanbad. The opposition has no face of a leader. There is no alternative to Prime Minister Modi. The alliance which has no face has no votes. People have to vote assuming this. The country has come out to elect a Prime Minister and it needs a Prime Minister who has been serving for 10 years.

CEO took stock of poll preparations in Khunti LS seat

PNS : RANCHI

Chief Electoral Officer, Jharkhand, Ravi Kumar on Tuesday took stock of the progress of election preparations in Khunti Lok Sabha constituency including various polling stations and door-to-door distribution of voter information slips. He took information about the work done so far and being done by the BLO regarding the Lok Sabha elections. Instructions were given to bring progress in the work. He said that this time there is a provision of incentive for BLOs working in the Lok Sabha elections. But, BLOs with poor performance or negligence in work will be deprived of incentives. He encouraged all the BLOs to do good work and asked them to complete the election work on time.

The Chief Electoral Officer went to Pipra Toli Belahathi Road, Khunti and took information about the distribution of Voter Information Slips by BLOs among the voters. Also inspected the forms filled by them. He met the BLOs at the

polling stations located at Karra Road, Urban Primary Health Center of Khunti district and got information about the updated status of the works related to Lok Sabha elections. Apart from this, he inspected the polling stations located at CM School of Excellence (Girls), Khunti and Community Hall, Namkom. The Chief Electoral Officer took updated information about absent/shifted/death list, voter information slip, polling station awareness group and directed to bring progress in the work. He directed to complete the distribution of voter information slips among all voters by May 3. Besides, BLOs, supervisors and senior officials were asked to speed up the preparations for the election work.

Before this, the Chief Electoral Officer conducted a surprise inspection of Kalamati check post in Khunti district. Expressing displeasure over the laxity of the soldiers and magistrates deployed at the check post, he directed to keep a close watch



on the movement of vehicles and conduct thorough checking of the vehicles. He said that any kind of negligence in vehicle checking work will not be tolerated.

During the inspection of the Chief Electoral Officer, Khunti District Election Officer-cum-Deputy Commissioner Lokesh Mishra, Sub-Divisional Officer Aniket, Block Development Officer Jyoti Kumari etc. were present.

Later in the day, Chief Electoral Officer K Ravi Kumar also inspected various polling stations which had low voting percentage during the last elections in Simdega and observed the preparations for

voting. He directed the Deputy Commissioner, Simdega to take action against the BLO and Supervisor of Polling Station No. 162 of Chief Minister Girls Excellent School, Simdega for negligence in their work. The voting percentage at these booths was low in the last elections. In the voter list of this polling station, names of many voters were found who no longer live here. There were names of many government employees who had been transferred earlier. The names of such voters have neither been removed from the voter list nor have they been included in the Absent, Shifted or Death i.e. ASD list.

Girls shine in JAC 12th Board results



PNS : RANCHI

Jharkhand Academic Council (JAC) has released the result of Inter Board Examination for standard 12th Board. Girls shined in all three streams Arts, Science and Commerce.

Topper in Arts is Zeenat Praveen from Government High School, Kanke with 94 per cent, topper in Science is Sneha from Ursuline Inter College, Ranchi with 98.2 per cent and topper in Commerce is Pratibha Saha from Ursuline Inter College, Ranchi with 94.8 per cent.

Secretary In-Charge of Education Department, Uma Shankar Singh, present as the chief guest in the program, special guest and Director of Secondary Education Utkarsh Gupta and JAC President Anil Mahato jointly released the Inter Board result. This year 3, 44, 000 candidates appeared in the examination. Of these, 94,433 candidates appeared for Science, 25,907 for Commerce and 2,24,502 for Arts. Students can check their results on the official websites of JAC, jacresults.com, jac.jharkhand.gov.in and lagatar.in. Total 94433 students had registered in Science. Out of these, 93805 students appeared in the examination. But only 68203 students have passed the examination. This includes 72.2 percent boys and 72.67 percent girls. 72.70 percent students have passed in first division. Talking about vocational, 508 candidates had registered. Of these, only

493 students appeared in the examination. Out of 493, 439 students that is 89.22 percent students have passed.

In Commerce stream, 23235 which was 90.06 percent of students have passed. 93 per cent of these are girls. 61 per cent candidates have passed in first division. A total of 25907 students had registered in Commerce. Out of these, only 25644 candidates appeared in the examination. 93.7 per cent students have passed in Arts. In this, 83404 students have got first division. A total of 2, 24, 502 students had registered in Arts. Out of these, only 2, 06, 685 students passed the examination. Girls have also won in arts. Singh said that the result has declined due to change in the examination pattern. He said that the results in Physics and Chemistry were not satisfactory. Five districts were top in Commerce are Latehar, Koderma, Simdega, Pakud and Godda. These districts in the top five in Science are Koderma, Latehar, Chatra, Jamtara and Hazaribagh and five districts top in Arts are Simdega, Godda, Koderma, Gumla and Hazaribagh.

JAC had earlier released the result of Secondary Board Examination (10th Board) on April 19. 90.39 percent children had achieved success in the matriculation examination. In the year 2024, 4,21,687 (1,91,262 boys and 2,00,549 girls) students had registered. But only 418623 candidates appeared in the examination. Of these, 3,38,398 (90.39 percent) students passed the examination. In this, 2,05,110 candidates (54.20 percent) passed in first division, 1,53,733 (40.65 percent) passed in second division and 19,555 (5.17 percent) passed in third division.

Bidyut files nomination for third term as Jamshedpur Lok Sabha candidate



PNS : JAMSHEDPUR

With a hope to register a hat-trick on the Jamshedpur seat in this Lok Sabha election, Bidyut Baran Mahto of BJP officially submitted his nomination papers. He expressed his confidence to win the Jamshedpur Lok Sabha seat for the third consecutive term. The nomination ceremony, held on Tuesday, garnered significant attention, with notable figures from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in attendance.

Mahto reminisced about the overwhelming trust bestowed upon him by the electorate in the previous election, which resulted in a resounding victory margin of over 3 lakh votes. Building upon this foundation of public trust, Mahto boldly proclaimed that this year, he anticipates an even greater show of support from the people, aiming to secure victory by a margin exceeding five lakh votes.

With his sights set on clinching the Jamshedpur Lok Sabha seat for the third consecutive term, Mahto envisions not only securing victory but also establishing a record in the electoral history of the region. By achieving a victory margin of such magnitude, Mahto aims to etch his name

in the annals of Jamshedpur's political landscape, cementing his legacy as a formidable leader and a true representative of the people.

Mahto's ambitious vision is underpinned by his unwavering commitment to serving the constituents of Jamshedpur. Throughout his tenure, Mahto has remained dedicated to addressing the needs and concerns of the community, advocating for their interests at the national level. His pledge to secure an unprecedented victory margin reflects his deep-seated belief in the power of democracy and the enduring bond between elected representatives and the electorate.

The ceremony, held at a well-attended gathering, underscored Mahto's enduring appeal and the solid support he enjoys within the local community. Notable BJP figures, including Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and Union Minister Arjun Munda, graced the occasion, reaffirming their backing for Mahto's candidacy. The presence of leaders from the NDA further solidified the coalition's support for Mahto's re-election bid. Prior to the nomination submission, the BJP organized a large-scale public meeting at the Bodhi Temple ground in Sakhi.

Nilendu Singh is new CMD, CCL

PNS : RANCHI

Nilendu Kumar Singh took charge as Chairman-cum-Managing Director of Central Coalfields Limited (CCL) a Coal India subsidiary.

In the light of the orders of the Ministry of Coal, Government of India and Coal India Limited (CIL), after selection from the Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB), Singh assumed the charge of Chairman-cum-Managing Director of Central Coalfields Limited on Tuesday.

Before this assignment, Singh was working as Director Technical (Projects and Planning) of Eastern Coalfields Limited (ECL). He graduated in Mining Engineering (B.Tech.) from IIT-ISM, Dhanbad in the year 1989 and obtained First Class Mine Manager Certification in the year 1994.

After his education, he started his career in 1989 from Central Coalfields Limited, a subsidiary of Coal India Limited. Shri Singh served in various capacities in CCL till 2011. During this period, he served as Mine Manager at projects like Piparwar, Ashoka, Urimari and Kalyani and others. Subsequently, he was posted in SECL in January, 2012 where he worked as Mine Manager at Gevra; Contributed as Deputy Area Manager (Agent) in Deepka and Chhal Project and General Manager in Deepka area, Korba area and Raigarh area of SECL.

Singh has extensive experience in working in mega open cast mines, operating FMC projects, commissioning sidings, adopting new mining technologies and working with the highest capacity HEMMs.

Nilendu Kumar Singh has also visited Australia in 1997 to gain experience in mining techniques. He has keen interest in sports and painting. She has represented volleyball at the All India University level.

Having vast experience of over three decades in the coal industry, Singh has contributed significantly in introducing various new mining methods and improving the functioning of the company. Along with this, he has diverse and long-term experience in the coal industry in working with various labor organizations and company stakeholders.

Team CCL will benefit from Singh's experience of over three decades in the coal industry. Under his able leadership the company will definitely achieve the set target. Notably, CCL has created new records in performance by achieving highest ever generation and dispatch in FY 23-24.



Nilendu Kumar Singh

BJP alleges JMM, govt 'connivance' in grabbing land illegally

PNS : RANCHI

BJP state spokesperson Pratul Shahdeo today attacked the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha and state government alleging that ruling party and state government are working hand and hand in grabbing land illegally in State. Shahdeo addressing a press conference at BJP media centre at alleged that the documents filed in the PMLA court have made it clear that several people including JMM leader Antu Tirkey, Saddam Hussain, Afsar Ali have accepted that the fake documents of 8.86 acres of land of Hemant Soren were prepared by them. Pratul said that these accused have also admitted that they run a huge racket of transfer posting and land fraud. Pratul said that the land loot scam can be worth billions of rupees. The situation in Jharkhand has become such that it seems there is corruption on every branch, what will happen to Jharkhand as a result?

Pratul said that the WhatsApp chat between Jharkhand Mukti Morcha General Secretary Supriya Bhattacharya and Antu Tirkey has revealed shocking facts. It is clear from this chat



BJP spokesperson Pratul Shahdeo at the press conference.

that Antu Tirkey, who was involved in land racketeering, was lobbying Supriya Bhattacharya to post Jitendra Munda, working as DCLR, Khunti, as District Land Acquisition Officer in Ranchi. It was also known that the file reached the CM House. Pratul said that now Supriya Bhattacharya should leave his misrepresentations and tell the truth. Pratul wanted to know from Chief Minister Champai Soren through the press conference, what is the relationship between his government, party and the people engaged in the racket of land brokers and transfer posting?



Jharkhand Ratna Award : The Jharkhand Ratna Award was conferred to Ashok Bhagat an eminent social worker and founder secretary of Vikas Bharti Bishunpur, a voluntary social organization of National repute. The award was presented by Kanya Punjabi TV Actress and Saurabh Tiwary Former Indian Cricketer. The aim for Jharkhand Ratna is to Honour people of Jharkhand who have made an impact and are continuing to do the same. The Award had two titles Jharkhand Ratna Award :Honorary Award and People's Choice : Jharkhand Ratna Awards. The event was attended by more than 200+ people from Jharkhand. The aim of the event is to continue and make it a signature event and try to make sure that the awards are not bought but given in honour of

Cong candidate KN Tripathi files nomination from Chatra



PNS : RANCHI

Congress candidate, KN Tripathi has filed nomination from Chatra Lok Sabha seat on Tuesday.

After the nomination, Tripathi said that this is a fight to save the Constitution. "BJP is raising the slogan of crossing 400, but will they cross 400 without public votes? This time the public

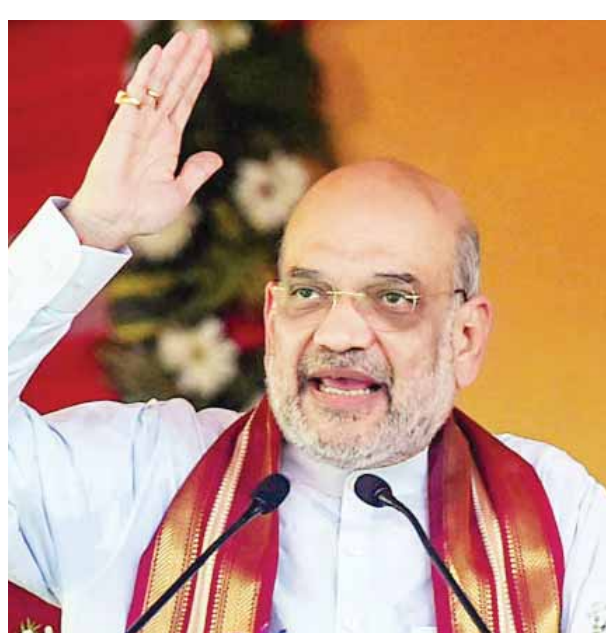
has taken everything for granted. BJP alleges outsiders and insiders, but let me tell you that I have a lineage of 500 years, if they want, I will show it. Can Kalicharan show his lineage? They are outsiders from Buxar, they are not me. BJP is promoting me by calling me an outsider and insider," he added. The elections are to be held in Chatra on May 20. BJP candidate Kalicharan Singh will face KN Tripathi. Let us tell you that at the time of nomination, Minister Satyanand Bhokta was also with KN Tripathi. Meanwhile, President of Ranchi Metropolitan Congress Committee, Kumar Raja said in the meeting held in Ranchi that the manifesto of Congress has to be taken to

every last person of the society. A meeting of Morabadi Block Booth Committee was called by Congress. In this, talks were held with the chairpersons of all the wards coming to the block to prepare for the public relations campaign. A review was conducted regarding preparations. Kumar Raja said that instructions have been given to all the block and ward level officials of all the cells of the Congress Party, Metropolitan Congress, Mahila Congress and Youth Congress. It has been said that everyone should form a group and work to deliver the manifesto to every last person of the society. Work to expose the anti-national ideologies of BJP and oust it from power.



Congress spreading lies about BJP changing Constitution: Shah

PTI ■ GUWAHATI
 Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday alleged the Congress was spreading lies that the BJP intends to change the constitution and end reservations if it returns to power for a third term. Shah also said the BJP is heading towards its goal of 400-plus Lok Sabha seats with the blessings and support of people.
 "The Congress is spreading lies about the saffron party changing the constitution and ending reservations... We do not see voters as minority or majority; the BJP will win 12 of the 14 Lok Sabha seats in Assam," he told a press conference here.
 The senior BJP leader slammed the Congress for practising the "politics of appeasement since the very beginning", and said it wants to save "the little of what is remaining of their support base".



"The BJP does not believe in reservations on the basis of religion... We are also in favour of implementing the Uniform Civil Code across the country and ensure that there is one law for people of all religions," the home minister said. In a secular country, it is not

right to have laws based on religion, and this is against the spirit of the constitution, Shah said.
 The BJP condemns the Congress' promise to bring back the Muslim Personal Law as mentioned in its manifesto, he said.
 Commenting on the "fake video" of Shah on reservations that was circulated on social media platforms, he said all kinds of methods were being employed by the opposition to misguide people.
 A Congress functionary of Assam was arrested on Monday for allegedly circulating the video, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma had said.
 To a question, the home minister asserted that the BJP was getting a "very good response" from voters in the southern states.
 Shah had arrived here on Monday evening and held a roadshow for the party's Guwahati candidate Bijuli Kalita Medhi.

81.16 per cent voter turnout recorded in repolling in Outer Manipur LS seat



PTI ■ IMPHAL
 A voter turnout of 81.16 per cent was recorded at six polling stations in Outer Manipur Lok Sabha seat, where repolling was held on Tuesday, election officials said.
 No untoward incident was reported and voting, which commenced at 7 am, was held peacefully under tight security arrangements, they said.
 A voter turnout of 81.16 per cent was recorded till the end of polling at 4 pm, the officials

declared null and void, a notification issued by the office of Manipur's chief electoral officer had earlier said.
 Five of the polling stations are in Ukhrul district and have a total of 4,156 voters.
 Around 76.06 per cent of 4.84 lakh voters exercised their franchise during polling in 13 of 28 assembly segments of Outer Manipur Lok Sabha constituency on April 26. Voting was held in the remaining 15 segments, along with the entire Inner Manipur Lok Sabha seat, in the first phase on April 19.

Haryana to rope in musical bands to encourage young voters

PTI ■ CHANDIGARH
 Haryana will rope in musical bands to play election-theme songs for encouraging young voters to exercise their franchise, Chief Electoral Officer Anurag Agarwal said.
 These bands will encourage people to cast their vote on the day of polling and also promote awareness and education regarding the election, Agarwal told PTI.
 "Soon we will be doing the first band play, hopefully in Panchkula. The band will perform and election-theme music will be played," he said.
 Later, these bands will be engaged districts having a higher percentage of young voters, he said.
 Notably, 1,99,81,982 voters across the state are eligible to cast their votes when polling will be held on May 25 in 10 Lok Sabha constituencies of the state in the sixth phase of general elections.

Developments in Surat, Indore show people affection for BJP: Rajnath

PTI ■ INDORE
 Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday termed the Congress a "sinking ship" and said the developments in Surat and Indore showed the people's affection for the ruling BJP.
 Several Congress candidates had been elected unopposed in the past, he said at a rally at Mandhata in Madhya Pradesh in support of BJP candidate from Khandwa and sitting MP Dnyaneshwar Patil.
 "This time there was a miracle in Lok Sabha elections. The BJP candidate from Surat won unopposed, and the Congress



candidate in Indore withdrew his nomination and extended support to the BJP. This shows people's deep affection towards the BJP which is increasing all the time," Singh said. Countering Congress' claim

that such developments were a threat to democracy, the Union minister said its candidates had been elected unopposed on 20 occasions. "I want to ask the Congress, was there no threat to democracy then?" he said. The Opposition party was a "sinking ship with a hole," and no power in the world can save it, the BJP leader further said. On Monday, Congress candidate from Indore, Akshay Kanti Bam, withdrew his nomination and joined the BJP. Earlier, the BJP scored its first victory in the ongoing Lok Sabha elections on April 22 after the nomination of

Congress' Surat candidate Nilesh Kumbhani was rejected for technical reasons and the other candidates dropped out of the race, leading to the BJP's Mukesh Dalal being elected unopposed.
 "Mahatma Gandhi had said the Congress should be dissolved after independence. But Congress leaders did not listen to him. Now the people of India are bent on finishing Congress as per Gandhi's wishes," Singh further said.
 "If you were to ask a child ten years down the line if he knows Congress, he would say, 'what Congress'. This is the condition of the

party," he added. Singh also attacked Rahul Gandhi's statement about conducting a "wealth survey" and Indian Overseas Congress chief Sam Pitroda's remarks about inheritance tax.
 Such proposals were not acceptable to the people of the country and global economists too have termed them a "very dangerous game," the BJP leader said. The BJP's was determined to hold simultaneous Lok Sabha and Assembly elections in future and necessary amendments would be made to existing laws and rules, Singh said.

Congress having vicious, divisive design: BJP president Nadda

PTI ■ SHIVAMOGGA (KARNATAKA)
 Accusing the Congress of supporting the idea of religion-based reservation, despite the fact that it cannot be done as per the Constitution, BJP President J P Nadda on Tuesday charged the grand old party with having "vicious and divisive designs".
 He said this while speaking at "professionals meet" organised here as part of the BJP's campaign for Shimoga Lok Sabha candidate B Y Raghavendra. "In the Constitution, it is very clearly written that there is no place for religious reservation, but what they (Congress) did -- 4 per cent reservation to Muslims, from OBC quota (in Karnataka). Who is against the OBC? They are neither friends of Muslim brethren nor sympathisers of OBC," Nadda said.
 Addressing the gathering, he noted that in undivided Andhra Pradesh, Congress came out with a law four times, where they tried to take reservation of SC/ST and OBCs, to give it to the Muslim community.
 "We are not against the Muslim community, but we have to understand that the Constitution clearly says that there will be no reservation based on religion, and it is a very deep thought... But these people (Congress) the kind of vicious and divisive designs they have. Are we going to support them?" he asked. Veteran BJP leader B S Yediyurappa, Raghavendra and other party leaders were present.
 Accusing opposition parties of indulging in 'divisive politics', Nadda said, "a few days ago there was a video and they were trying to create an impression and environment that BJP is



against SC/ST and OBC, and if we (BJP) come to power the reservations for these communities will go."
 "They came out with a fabricated video... People and media exposed the INDI Alliance's deep fake video. The sad part of it is that the fake video was uploaded on social media from Telangana CM Revanth Reddy's phone, and all partners of the INDI Alliance tried to make it viral... They are in deep depression about BJP and NDA crossing 400 seats under PM's leadership. This shows their mentality," he added.
 Noting that on one hand there is BJP, which is being led by PM Modi, under whom India is becoming stronger day-by-day and things have changed, the BJP chief said, but it is very sad to note that on the other hand the INDI Alliance, which has got "no perspective, no objective and no direction."
 "They (INDIA bloc) are so frustrated that they are trying to build divisive forces and encourage divisive forces, they want to create a north and south divide. When PM speaks about 'Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas Sabka Vishwas Sabka Prayaas', they talk about division of north and south," he added.

Chandrababu Naidu confident of regaining Andhra Pradesh

PTI ■ KURNOOL
 TDP supremo N Chandrababu Naidu has said the anti-incumbency wave coupled with failure of all institutional frameworks will ensure his party sweeps both assembly and Lok Sabha elections in Andhra Pradesh as people have 'realised' the ruling YSR Congress has failed to live up to all its promises.
 The former Chief Minister who is fighting to regain power in the state, expressed confidence that the TDP-BJP-Jana Sena Party (JSP) combine will win 24 out of 25 Lok Sabha seats and 160 of the 175 assembly seats comfortably in the simultaneous elections to be held on May 13.
 Naidu (74) said the YSRCP came to power on the promise of getting a special status to AP but the issue has been relegated to the background as people are struggling to deal with alleged mismanagement of every government department. The state has gone into huge financial debt to an extent that



people have not received salaries and pensions, he added.
 "There is a tremendous anti-incumbency. YSR Congress has destroyed the ecosystem of development in Andhra Pradesh," Naidu told PTI in an interview.
 The YSR Congress has not only failed to get a special status for the state but also not been able to build a proper capital even after 10 years of the state bifurcation, he said. He alleged that the current government has 'destroyed' all government institutions. There

is total "chaos" in the state as every sector is in "doldrums".
 "Morale of all officers is very low. Nobody is willing to work. This is the scenario today in the state," he said.
 People were suffering due to lack of development.
 "There is no water in the villages. There is no power in the villages, no proper roads. In fact, the income of an ordinary man is far less compared to his expenditure. This is very bad. Total living standards for everybody has gone down," he said.
 Naidu further claimed the people have seen the false promises made by the YSR Congress without doing any iota of work on the ground. This has boosted the anti-incumbency wave and people have made up their mind to vote for TDP.
 On tying up with BJP despite the saffron party not having enough presence in AP, he said it was done to end the sufferings of the people under the "misrule" of Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan

Reddy and bring normalcy in the state.
 "At that time, we were very keen on the special status issue. Now, the YSR Congress Party has made the special status a non-issue. Now, if I fight also, nothing will happen," he said.
 Due to bifurcation in 2014, Andhra people had to suffer. But they suffered more under the YSR Congress rule.
 "We don't want people to suffer any more. And we have to revive, rebuild Andhra Pradesh. That's why we joined together — BJP, TDP and Jana Sena under the NDA umbrella," he said.
 "We will fight, we will restore total normalcy, and also we will create a better future for the people of Andhra." Asked if alliance with actorn-turned politician Pawan Kalyan's Jana Sena Party will benefit TDP, since film actors are generally good crowd pullers but do not turn fans into voters, Naidu said, "Pawan Kalyan is different as he is a party head. He has a vote bank. That's why we joined him."

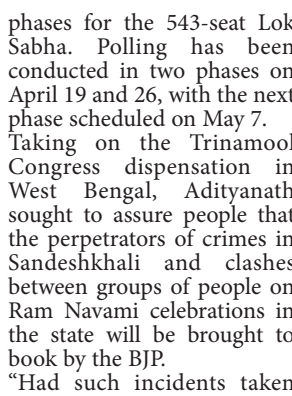
Modi targets Sharad Pawar

PTI ■ MALSHIRAS (MAHARASHTRA)
 A day after terming Sharad Pawar as a wandering soul, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday continued his attack on the NCP leader, saying he did not do much for farmers while being the Union agriculture minister.
 "When a big Maharashtra leader was Union agriculture minister, farmers used to make rounds of sugarcane commission for their arrears," Modi said at a rally in Malshiras of Solapur district in Maharashtra.
 "There is a 'bhakti atma' (wandering soul) in Maharashtra. If it does not manage success it spoils others' good work. Maharashtra has been a victim of it," Modi had said at a rally on Monday, hitting out at Sharad Pawar without taking his name.
 "This game was started by the same leader 45 years ago. It was just for his own ambition

that Maharashtra has always been an unstable State. As a result, several chief ministers could not complete their full term," Modi had said.
 At the Malshiras rally Tuesday, Modi asked voters not to waste their vote by giving it to Congress and other Opposition parties.
 "Why waste your vote by giving it to those who are not contesting even the minimum number of seats needed for a simple majority in Lok Sabha," he said.
 He asserted that when there is a strong government in the country, its focus is on the present as well as the future. Modi said people are seeing the difference between his government's 10 years and Congress rule of 60 years. Congress leaders kept talking about eradicating poverty in every poll but would not do anything after that, he said. Modi said that in the last 10 years, his Government was able to bring 25 crore people out of poverty and 80 crore are getting free ration.

Polling held in 191 LS seats so far indicate third term for Modi Government: Yogi

PTI ■ BAHARAMPUR/SURI/ASANSOL (WB)
 Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday asserted that polling held in the 191 Lok Sabha seats so far indicate another term for the Narendra Modi government, with 400 seats for the BJP-led NDA. He claimed that Uttar Pradesh would "gift" all 80 constituencies in the northern state to Modi.
 "Polling held in 191 Lok Sabha seats so far indicate another term for the Modi government, with 400 seats for NDA," Adityanath said, while addressing an election rally in Baharampur Lok Sabha seat in West Bengal in support of BJP candidate Nirmal Kumar Saha. Elections are being held across the country in seven



phases for the 543-seat Lok Sabha. Polling has been conducted in two phases on April 19 and 26, with the next phase scheduled on May 7. Taking on the Trinamool Congress dispensation in West Bengal, Adityanath sought to assure people that the perpetrators of crimes in Sandeshkhali and clashes between groups of people on Ram Navami celebrations in the state will be brought to book by the BJP.
 "Had such incidents taken place in Uttar Pradesh, I would have taught the perpetrators such a lesson that their next seven generations would not have dared to even think of doing any such thing," he asserted. He said that hundreds of rallies were held in Ayodhya on the occasion of Ram Navami sans any incident. "West Bengal also needs a model like UP," he said.



great personalities, "has been destroyed by Congress, communists and Trinamool Congress".
 Claiming that neither Rahul Gandhi nor any other leader of the Congress or TMC "would come to the aid" of people of the state if they are in a crisis, he alleged, "Didi's affection is for the mafias that

are looting Bengal and putting to crisis the state's identity."
 He asserted that only the BJP and Narendra Modi stand by the people in all situations. Stating that there has not been any communal tension or curfew in Uttar Pradesh in the last seven years during his tenure as the chief minister, he said that everyone, irrespective of caste or creed, gets the benefits of welfare projects in the northern state.
 "In Uttar Pradesh, both daughters and businessmen are safe," he said, asserting that no one can browbeat any other person in his state. Speaking at another election rally in Birbhum seat in support of BJP candidate Debatanu Bhattacharya, he asserted that since he took over as the chief minister seven years ago, all gangsters in Uttar Pradesh have "either left the state or the world".

"We have not only constructed Ram temple in Ayodhya, we have also arranged for 'Ram Naam Satya Hai' (funeral) of many big gangsters," he said. He claimed that the large-scale influx of illegal immigrants into West Bengal, which shares a long border with Bangladesh, is changing the demography of the state. Adityanath alleged that the perpetrators of crimes in Sandeshkhali and during Ramnavami celebrations were being "protected" by the ruling party in West Bengal. Adityanath accused the Congress and other members of the opposition INDIA alliance of "trying to divide" the country and resorting to "religious appeasement" in a bid to win the elections.
 "I have come to give the guarantee of development without any discrimination," he added.

He claimed that terrorism and Naxalism have been contained under the Modi government.
 "Now if even a cracker is burst, Pakistan comes forward to clarify that it does not have any hand in it, because our neighbouring country knows that even if something happens by mistake, it will have to pay a heavy price," he said.
 "This is the new India under Modi ji. We do not tinker with anyone, but if anyone dares to do so with us, we do not leave them unscathed," Adityanath asserted.
 He said that infrastructural projects such as highways, railways and educational institutions are flourishing under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi but the TMC government is preventing the implementation of such initiatives in West Bengal. He said that along with an

'Atmanirbhar Bharat', West Bengal will also become self-reliant if the BJP comes to power.
 Speaking at another election rally in Asansol Lok Sabha seat, where the BJP has fielded S S Ahluwalia, Adityanath alleged that West Bengal has come under the grip of violence, lawlessness and corruption.
 Stating that this election is for creating a new India, he said that good and efficient people should be elected to the Lok Sabha. He claimed that what the Modi government has achieved for the development of the country in the last 10 years could not be done in 65 years by the Congress.
 Stating that 50,000 Durga Pujas are held in Uttar Pradesh, he said there has not been a single incident of violence during the festivities in his State.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Repeat offenders

Pro-Khalistan slogans raised again at Toronto event in front of Trudeau; India hits back

Yet another event which saw pro-Khalistan slogans being raised, this time in Toronto, has triggered diplomatic tensions between India and Canada. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau was also present in the programme, which made it look like the Canadian Government was condoning the act. It prompted India to summon in New Delhi a Canadian diplomat and express strong disapproval. The event, celebrating cultural diversity and inclusivity, took an unexpected turn when a group of individuals began chanting slogans in support of Khalistan, a separatist movement. The unfortunate incident is indeed a setback to ongoing discussions between the countries on various issues. For India, the incident struck a sensitive chord as it perceives the Khalistan movement a threat to its sovereignty and territorial integrity. Indian authorities view any display of support for Khalistan, especially in the presence of heads of State, with utmost seriousness. The Indian Government, therefore, wasted no time in conveying its concerns to Canadian authorities. The summoning of their diplomat serves as a clear signal of India's displeasure and underscores the gravity with which it views the matter. Meanwhile, in Canada, the incident has sparked discussions about the limits of freedom of expression and the implication of such incidents on diplomatic relations.



While Canada may uphold the principles of free speech and assembly, the chanting of pro-Khalistan slogans on its soil in the presence of its Prime Minister raises questions about the appropriateness of such actions, particularly in a diplomatic context. Trudeau, who has been an advocate for multiculturalism and

diversity, has yet to publicly comment on the incident. However, it is expected that he will address the matter in due course, considering the diplomatic ramifications and the need to maintain constructive relations with India. Given the history of the roots of Khalistanis in Canada, it was a foregone conclusion that something of this sort might come up. The Canadian Prime Minister should have ensured in advance such a thing would not happen as it reflects badly on his Government and strains relations with India. Indeed, pampering Khalistanis on its soil is going to be a problem for Canada as history repeats itself and all those regimes that once harboured such elements have paid a heavy price for it. The incident also underscores the complexities of managing diaspora politics, particularly when it intersects with sensitive geopolitical issues. Canada is home to a significant Sikh population, many of whom have strong ties with India and hold varying views on the Khalistan movement. Ultimately, the Toronto incident highlights the interconnectedness of global politics and the need for vigilance in safeguarding the principles of sovereignty, unity and respect for diverse perspectives. It is a stark reminder that actions and words uttered in one corner of the world can have far-reaching implications, shaping the course of international relations for years.

PICTALK



Fireworks light up the sky at the Golden Temple on the birth anniversary of Sikh Guru Teg Bahadur, in Amritsar

Why is the BJP avoiding China in campaigning?



ASHOK K MEHTA

The BJP's election focus has shifted away from recent China tensions, opting instead to highlight Nehru's actions during the 1962 conflict

China has been generally missing from election manifestos and campaigning so far. Former Army Chief Gen Naravane at a literary festival in Ajmer recently called China India's primary threat adding confrontation along LAC was a good thing as it exposed this ground reality that Delhi was shy to admit. EAM S Jaishankar and especially Defence Secretary Giridhar Armane have made unkind references to Beijing. In his book Four Stars of Destiny Naravane has written extensively about the India-China confrontation which started under his watch. It was a serious failure of intelligence which allowed the Chinese PLA to occupy nearly 2000 square km of territory on the Indian side of LAC corresponding to their 1956 claim line. The avoidable tragedy at Galwan and the refusal of the Chinese to restore the status quo ante April 2020 even after 21 rounds of military dialogue (the last round on 21 February) place India at a serious disadvantage. In 1998 India gave China as the reason for conducting nuclear tests which incensed the Chinese, requiring then foreign minister Jaswant Singh to travel to Beijing to "untie the knot". I was witness to the repair exercise in Beijing even as then our Army was retaking Tololing Heights, Kargil. Singh had to say that China was not a threat. Later then defence minister George Fernandes called China the number one threat though it was misreported as "No 1 enemy". This caused a diplomatic furore as China is acutely sensitive to being seen as or worse a threat by any country. The Government is careful in its articulations on China as it hopes to secure full disengagement diplomatically. But the gloves came off Feb /Mar. Jaishankar speaking at the Raisina dialogue said that China should not be allowed to play mind -games to counter which India must use other means (implying US help) to seek better equilibrium. His comments came a day after Armane at the INDUS-X FORUM in Delhi unprecedentedly called Beijing a bully adding "we expect our friend US will be



there in case we need their support". Not since 1962 have we sought unequivocally US military support. This is bound to have upset China. Worse, no Indian official had ever called China a bully. Surprisingly China has not reacted. Naravane's book and excerpts have been withheld by the Government in damage control after publishers circulated excerpts of Operation Snow Leopard Night 29/30 August 2020 which belittle the Government's political control in war and explosive comments on Agniveer. Armed with material from the horse's mouth, the opposition is targeting the Government in China and Agniveer — during election rallies where foreign policy is an issue. How Army intelligence cleared the book for publication is a mystery. In parliament on 10 Feb 2021, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh had informed Parliament about withdrawals in the North Pangong Tso Lake Fingers area. But he made no mention of vacation from Kailash Heights, which presumably was implied in 'mutual withdrawal'. But Singh added: "Chinese side is aware of our resolve not to allow an inch of territory to be taken". Former NSA, Shiv Shankar Menon in his writings has observed: "we don't know what happened in South Bank (Kailash heights) as we know

FORMER ARMY CHIEF GEN NARAVANE RECENTLY HIGHLIGHTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S CAUTIOUS ARTICULATIONS ON CHINA AIM TO SECURE FULL DISENGAGEMENT DIPLOMATICALLY, DESPITE THE SERIOUS INTELLIGENCE FAILURE ALLOWING CHINESE OCCUPATION OF INDIAN TERRITORY ALONG THE LAC

about North Bank (Pangongtso Lake)". Recently Congress leader Jairam Ramesh cited an X post by Chushul Councillor Konchok Stanzin of autonomous Ladakh Hill Development Council that the Rezangla battle 1962 memorial was dismantled as it fell in the 'buffer zone' negotiated with China during the vacation of Kailash Heights. That undisputed Kailash Heights in Indian territory had been made a buffer zone is a revelation that the Government never even informed parliament. In the critical operational situation replete with vertical and horizontal escalation that developed at Kailash Heights that critical night, no political guidance had been provided by CCS/RM/PM to Naravane which became clear from his conversation with Singh urgently seeking orders. With Naravane's book and excerpts embargoed for release, the book may never materialise as it showed the political direction of a war-like situation in poor light. But Naravane will know why he didn't become CDS even as critical Kailash heights are lost for perpetuity. In the election campaign, no BJP leader has so far mentioned Galwan or Kailash heights which were examples of valorous use of force against China as it could open a can of worms. Keeping Naravane out of the fray, the opposition is attacking the Government for losing 2000 sq km of land as well as 26 of 65 patrolling points. Campaigning in Pune and speaking to the media on 12 April, Jaishankar emphasized "there was no encroachment by China; it has not occupied any of our land; but the situation is sensitive, competitive and challenging." The PM, HM and RM have all also denied loss of territory. In his interview with *Newsweek* in response to a question on China, PM Modi's terse reply was: "New Delhi ties with Beijing are important and the prolonged situation at the border should be addressed urgently, for peace and tranquillity to be restored and sustained at the borders". The Chinese welcomed the statement adding sound and stable ties were in common interest. Restoring the LAC to April 2020 as sought by India, the Chinese will never do. It's tough to conceive of a compromise formula. Consequently, the C word is almost missing from the BJP election discourse, cleverly diverted to Nehru's follies in 1962. But Naravane deserves praise. (The writer, a retired Major General, was Commander, IPKF South, Sri Lanka and a founder member of the Defence Planning Staff, currently the Integrated Defence Staff. Views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CHALLENGES FOR NEW GOVERNMENT

Madam — Apropos the news article, "Challenges loom ahead of the July Union Budget," published on April 30, this is my response. The forthcoming union budget already stirs anticipation, underscoring the critical juncture India faces. Economic discourse dominates electoral debates, eclipsing divisive issues. However, the electorate's focus on core economic woes signals a paradigm shift. Spiralling inflation, mounting household debts and sluggish job creation demand urgent attention. Yet, electoral promises veer towards populism rather than pragmatic solutions. The fiscal landscape is daunting, with staggering debt repayments curtailing budgetary flexibility. Amid global economic headwinds, India's export slump exacerbates trade deficits. Addressing structural issues like low productivity and high taxation is imperative for sustained growth. Furthermore, infrastructural development must align with socio-economic welfare, assuage rural discontent and foster inclusive growth. A judicious blend of public and private sector involvement and prudent fiscal policies can steer India towards its lofty economic aspirations. Ultimately, the onus lies on the new Government to navigate these challenges deftly, prioritising the populace's wellbeing over partisan agendas. Neha Iyer | Pune

ENGAGING YOUTH IN POLITICS

Madam — Apropos the news article, "Why are the young not joining politics?" published on April 30, this is my response. Witnessing the apathy of young voters towards participating in the political process is disheartening. While some may feel disillusioned with the quality of politicians, others might believe their voices won't make a difference. However, by abstaining from voting, they relinquish their right to shape the nation's future. On the other end of the spectrum, the

State Assembly sessions



Apropos the news article, "Delhi, other state legislative meetings dwindle," published on April 29, this is my response. As someone who follows daily news, the pattern of state assembly sessions raises concerns. The data compiled by PRS Legislative Research reveals a significant disparity in the number of days assemblies convene. While some states meet

the constitutional mandate of at least one session every six months, others fall drastically short. The emphasis on budget sessions, evident from the majority of sittings concentrated within these periods, indicates a rushed legislative process. Such haste might compromise the quality of debate and scrutiny essential for robust policymaking. Moreover, the prolonged sessions in some states, stretching beyond a year in extreme cases, question the efficiency and accountability of legislative bodies. The instances of bills being passed swiftly after introduction raise doubts about thorough deliberation and stakeholder consultation. Efforts to streamline legislative processes and ensure meaningful engagement during sessions are imperative to uphold democratic principles and deliver effective governance. Nisha Menon | Bhopal

lack of interest among older individuals in entering politics is concerning. The decline in ethical and social values, coupled with the high cost of electioneering, deters many from pursuing political careers. Addressing these issues requires systemic changes, such as the delimitation of electoral constituencies and measures to reduce election expenses. Compulsory voting could also enhance participation and diminish the influence of vote-bank politics. Moreover, curbing the distribution of freebies is crucial to prevent elections from devolving into mere transactions. True democracy demands active engagement from all citizens, irrespective of age or background. Meera Patel | Ahmedabad

NUTRITION FOR ORAL HEALTH

Madam — Apropos the news article, "Diet, Mint, Ginger Impact," published on April 29, this is my response. Maintaining oral health extends beyond brushing and flossing; it's about what we eat too. Sugary and starchy foods can

feed harmful mouth bacteria, leading to gum disease. A balanced diet of fruits, vegetables, protein, calcium-rich foods and whole grains not only supports a healthy body but also promotes a bright smile. Opting for natural foods over processed ones is key to oral and overall wellbeing. Remember, oral health impacts your entire body; bacteria from the mouth can spread, increasing the risk of various diseases. Mint and ginger offer natural remedies for oral care. Mint's antiseptic properties combat bacteria, freshen breath and prevent cavities. Meanwhile, ginger, with its gingerol compound, fights infections and inflammation, strengthening teeth. Incorporating these ingredients into a refreshing drink like Mint & Ginger Healthy Drink adds flavour and health benefits to your routine, promoting a radiant smile and robust health. Arjun Reddy | Hyderabad

Recognising workers' resilience and struggle

On International Labour Day, let us reaffirm our commitment to worker welfare and advocate for fair, empowering policies



SANTOSH MATHEW

On May 1st, as we celebrate International Labour Day, these words of Karl Marx resonate with renewed significance. May Day is not merely a day of rest; it is a powerful reminder of the resilience and collective strength of workers worldwide. It is a day to honour the countless individuals who have fought for the rights and dignity of labourers and to recognise the ongoing struggle for justice in the workplace.



Chicago staged a massive protest demanding an eight-hour workday. This pivotal event led to the establishment of International Workers' Day, symbolising the collective struggle for fair labour practices. Since then, May Day has evolved into a global movement, with workers from all walks of life coming together to advocate for their rights. May Day holds immense significance in highlighting the importance of workers' rights. It serves as a platform to address issues such as fair wages, equal opportunities, maternity benefits, healthcare and safe working conditions. By amplifying the voices of workers, May Day fosters solidarity and empowers individuals to strive for better living standards and dignity in labour.

In India, May Day was first celebrated in 1923 by the Labour Kisan Party of Hindustan in Madras (now Chennai). Led by visionary leaders like Singaravelu Chettiar, this event marked the beginning of a movement to champion the rights of workers. Since then, May Day has been observed with fervour across the country, with various labour organisations leading rallies and campaigns to advocate for workers' welfare. Dr BR Ambedkar, a towering figure in India's labour movement, played a pivotal role in advocating for the rights of marginalised labourers. He emphasised the principles of equal pay for equal work, maternity benefits, eradication of discrimination and fair treatment of workers.

Through his leadership and advocacy, Dr Ambedkar laid the groundwork for a more inclusive and equitable society.

While we have made significant strides in advancing labour rights, challenges persist. Many workers, especially those in the informal sector, continue to face exploitation and lack of protection. We must address these issues and work towards creating a more just and equitable working environment for all. As we celebrate International Labour Day, let us reaffirm our commitment to the welfare of workers. We must advocate for policies that promote fair labour practices, empower workers and ensure their wellbeing. As International Labour Day dawns upon us once again on May 1st, 2024, let it serve not just as a commemoration of past struggles, but as a beacon lighting our path towards a future where every worker's dignity is honoured, every voice is heard and every dream finds its fulfilment in a world of equality and justice. (The writer is an associate professor, views are personal)

The roots of International Labour Day trace back to May 1, 1886, when workers in

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FIRST COLUMN

A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

Visual storytelling can promote sensitivity and empathy



SWAPNA MAJUMDAR

A scared figure crouching in a corner, a large hand covering a mouth trying to muffle a scream, outstretched arms pleading for help, tattered clothes. More often than not, images like these accompany media reports of sexual violence against women. As a survivor of sexual harassment, Ankita Anand felt insulted looking at these images. She didn't want to be depicted this way.

What upset her most were drawings meant to represent the survivors and create awareness that served to titillate. She decided to take matters into her own hands. The activist-turned-journalist started a campaign with a Change Org petition and directed her attention to one of the major news channels to set an example by not using disrespectful images of women in sexual violence reporting. What was needed to transform the way society perceived women was images that were not about helplessness but about the rage that challenged the oppression. Pictures that showed that women are "doers," not always the "done upon-s." were shared by Anand in her piece about her innovative campaign for the Network of Women in Media, India.

While her 2018 petition garnered over 47,000 signatories and also helped to spotlight an earlier Redraw Misogyny campaign by Breakthrough, an organisation working to end violence against women, many media platforms continue to churn out images that strip the victim of agency and perpetuate shame and stigma attached with rape and sexual harassment, creating a biased perception of women who have experienced sexual violence.

But now Anand and the many survivors in India and the region, no longer have to be depicted in this disempowering way thanks to the just-launched free-to-use image bank reframing visual narratives around women and sexual violence in South Asian media.



Conceptualised by the Hri Institute for Southasian Research and Exchange, Kathmandu and developed with the help of a team of artists and photographers from India and Nepal, the image bank re-imagines visual depiction of women and sexual violence to address the wide spectrum of women's experiences. It is an outcome of a unique collaborative effort to explore the role images play in forming perceptions around sexual assault, women and gender equality. The project 'Challenging Visual Depiction of Women and Sexual Violence in Southeast Asia' led by Laxmi Murthy and Pawas Manandhar united researchers, activists, filmmakers, and artists to redefine visual portrayals of gender-based violence in cinema, media, and popular culture across Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.

The one-year project focused on challenging problematic imagery and promoting more meaningful depictions of violence and trauma. South Asian artists utilised textiles alongside illustrations and photos to narrate stories of injustices against women. It is an important artistic medium of expression, especially for those who have suffered violence, repression and discrimination as textiles are inextricably linked to the lives of people, particularly women. "I Never Ask For It," a campaign by Blank Noise, a Bengaluru-based volunteer-led project, has been working to generate awareness of gender-based violence and end victim shaming/blaming by building testimonies of clothing. Images from this campaign can also support survivors of violence to feel heard and believed.

A picture is worth a thousand words. It can transform the way sexual violence against women is framed in the media when used sensitively and appropriately. It just needs the will to do it.

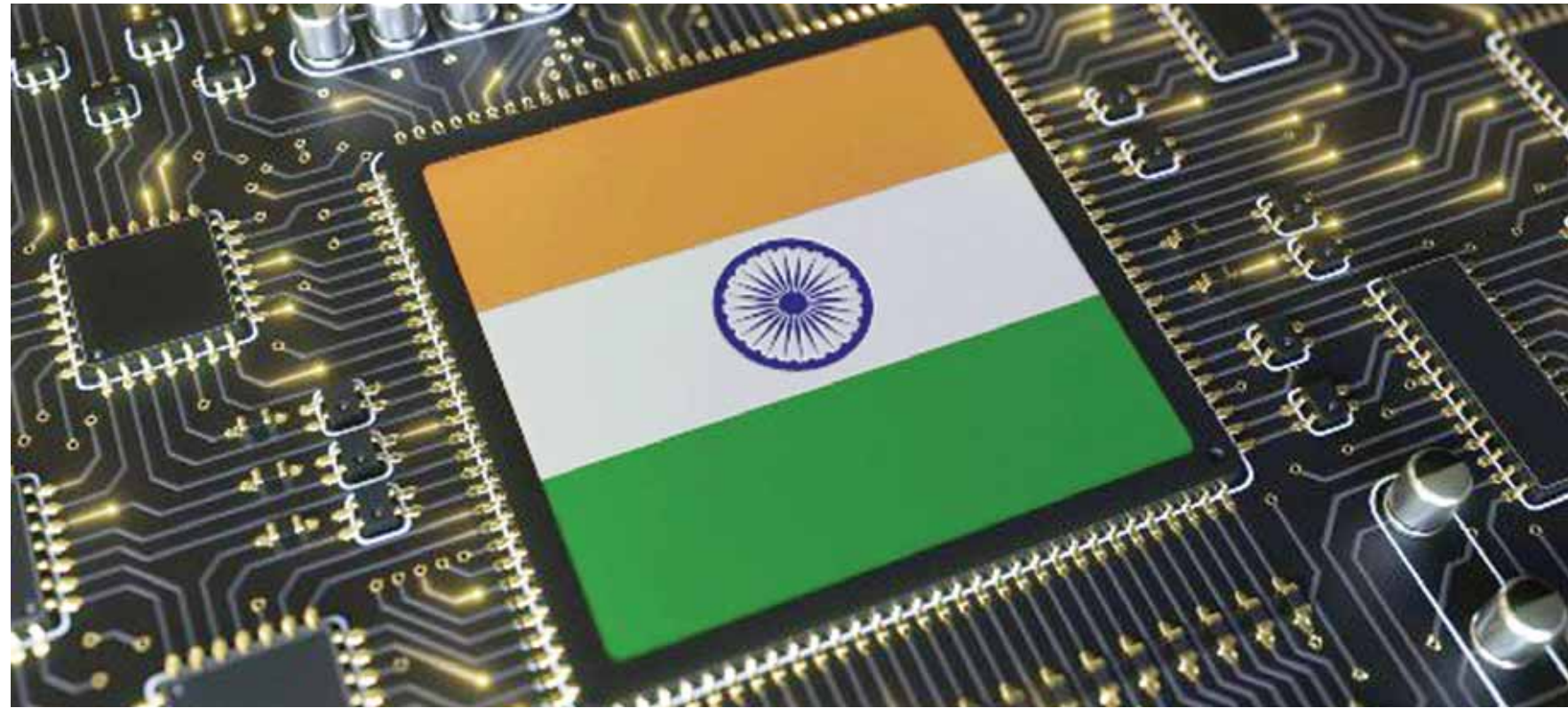
(The author is a journalist writing on development and gender. The views expressed are personal)

Semicon ecosystem: A revolution in India



A S MITTAL

India's talent, resources and infrastructure position it to excel in the semiconductor sector and becoming a global leader



As our lives become increasingly reliant on technology, semiconductors have become the essential foundation of society. These tiny chips are the powerhouses behind our electronic devices, communication systems and even the functioning of our agricultural implements medical equipment and vehicles. India has recognised the enormous socio-economic potential and strategic importance of this silent revolution of technology and is taking the lead in building a robust semiconductor ecosystem and developing a talented workforce.

India's goal of becoming self-sufficient and a global leader in semiconductors is supported by the fact that the semiconductor industry is expected to generate over one million job opportunities for semiconductor design engineers, manufacturing engineers, R&D scientists, operators, technicians and skilled workers in chip design and semiconductor fabrication, packaging and sales facilities over the next five years. "Around 30 per cent of the new global capability centres established in India during the December quarter of last year were in the semiconductor space, indicating a growing interest in leveraging the local talent pool in areas such as front-end design, performance testing and post-silicon validation", according to the National Association of Software and Service Companies (Nasscom) and Zinnov latest report. The world's leading chip design companies, including Intel, Texas Instruments, AMD, Nvidia and Qualcomm, have design and R&D centres in India. AMD recently inaugurated its largest global design centre in Bengaluru. In March, an event - 'India's Techade: Chips for Viksit Bharat', witnessed the foundation stone of three semiconductor projects worth Rs 1.25 lakh crore.

Tata Electronics in partnership with Taiwan's Power Chip Semiconductor Manufacturing Corporation (PSMC), set up the country's first semiconductor fab plant in Dholera (Gujrat) with an investment of Rs 91,000 crore and another plant in Morigaon (Assam) with investment of Rs 27,000 crore, with the first chips to



INDIA'S SEMICONDUCTOR MARKET IS VALUED AT AN ESTIMATED \$15 BILLION AND IS EXPECTED TO REACH \$55 BILLION BY 2026. SMARTPHONES AND WEARABLES, AUTOMOBILE COMPONENTS, COMPUTERS AND DATA STORAGE ACCOUNT FOR MORE THAN 60 PER CENT OF THE MARKET

begin coming off the production line in 2026. US-based semiconductor manufacturer Micron India plant with an investment of Rs 22,500 crore in Sanand (Gujarat), is expected to roll out the first "Made in India" memory chips by December. It is contributing its bit to the Chandrayaan-3 mission Semiconductor Corporation of India (SCL) proposed to update and expand its chip facility in the Mohali plant with an investment of Rs 20,000 crore, to enhance its contribution to ISRO and other space research organisations globally.

95 Percent Import Dependency: Despite the upward trajectory of India's current semiconductor chip ecosystem, the country remains dependent on the US, Taiwan, China, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore and South Korea, with over 95 per cent of semiconductors imported from these countries.

To reduce this dependency on imports, India recognised the strategic importance of a robust domestic semiconductor industry. It unveiled the India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) offering 50 per cent capital expenditure support to new entrants, production-linked incentive (PLI) and design-linked incentive (DLI) schemes with an outlay of Rs 76,000 crore, as well as state Government incentive support, international partnerships and a focus on talent development. The Electronic and IT Ministry plans to train over 85,000 engineers in chip design over the next five years to address the skill gap. Such focused efforts aim to steer the ecosystem through nurturing policymaking to develop a self-sufficient ecosystem.

Moreover, the geopolitical uncertainties involving the China-US trade war have compelled companies to seek alternative production bases or sourcing locations outside

China. Amid this relocation in the industry, India and Southeast Asian nations like Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and Indonesia have been preferred for front-end manufacturing in the future. India's entry into this ecosystem is timely and strategically important for diversifying the global supply chain and positioning India as a global hub for semiconductor design, manufacturing and technology development, fostering the creation of employment opportunities for the nation's youth.

Present Landscape and Scope of Growth: Bengaluru and Hyderabad together host about two-thirds of India's semiconductor global capability centres (GCCs), which is over two-thirds of the total 55 semiconductor GCCs in the country. With more than 95 GCC units and a specialised workforce of 50,000, this demonstrates India's strong commitment to the semiconductor industry. Presently, India's semiconductor market is valued at an estimated \$15 billion and is expected to reach \$55 billion by 2026. Smartphones and wearables, automobile components, computers and data storage account for more than 60 per cent of the market.

Challenges: Semiconductor manufacturing is an extremely complex process that requires precision at the smallest level. Since the global chip world is closely connected, Indian companies need to collaborate with countries like Taiwan and South Korea to gain access to advanced technology that will enable them to support emerging applications with more chip content, such as autonomous machines, smart medical devices, futuristic communications at 6G onward and AI across electronics. Bridge the skill gap: India needs to bridge the skill gap, especially for advanced chip design and fabrication. The global semiconductor

manufacturing industry has a talent pool of 2.3 million, with nearly 25 per cent of senior talent being Indian.

To attract and retain this talent, Indian companies are holding roadshows in Taiwan's chip manufacturing centre of Hsinchu. Communications and IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw says, "The engineers who have decided to return to India from the US are younger, while those from Taiwan, Singapore and Malaysia are generally over 45 years and with more experience. We expect many of them to come back to participate in India's high-tech manufacturing revolution."

Road Ahead: The future of the semiconductor industry in India holds immense promise. It will play a crucial role in shaping the country's advanced technological landscape, driving economic growth and positioning India as a global leader in innovation. The semiconductor industry will also generate opportunities for an entrant and Indian talent working in this sector globally, many of whom wish to return to their roots.

India's ambition to become a self-reliant and dominant player in the semiconductor industry is clear. With the talent, resources and infrastructure in place, India is poised to make significant strides in the semiconductor sector and establish itself as a global leader in the years to come.

-The Author is Vice-Chairman of Sonalika IITL Group, Vice-Chairman (Cabinet Minister rank) of the Punjab Economic Policy and Planning Board, Chairman of ASSOCHAM Northern Region Development Council and President, of Tractor and Mechanisation Association (TMA). Views expressed are personal

Driving innovation: Role of intellectual property in India

India can emulate Japan's post-Meiji transformation by harnessing innovation, embracing change and cultivating a risk-taking culture

In the 76th Independence Day speech on August 15, 2022, the Prime Minister called for innovation with a focus on indigenous innovations highlighting "Jai Anusandhan".

Innovation is the key to India realising a self-reliant, competitive and USD 30 trillion economy by 2047. Innovation has the potential to unlock major productivity gains and will allow the nation to leapfrog towards higher value-added products and services across sectors.

In the last few years, globally we have witnessed a fundamental and rapid shift from a knowledge economy to an era of artificial intelligence (AI) and virtuality. During the same time, the unprecedented nature and



KRISHNA SARMA

scale of the pandemic affirmed the importance of having an innovation ecosystem for finding new cures — vaccines, medicines and diagnostics.

For a country with a legacy of scientific and technical knowledge base, the private sector in India has previously made modest investments in research and development (R&D). India has taken a different approach to innovation

to meet its unique challenges. The transformational digital public infrastructure, starting with the Aadhar platform, is a case in point.

Similarly, against the backdrop of concerns regarding public health, access and affordability of medicines and protecting the domestic industry, India's approach to innovation in the biopharmaceutical sector is primarily based on public-sector-led collaborative innovation, where the private sector has merely been 'encouraged' to invest in R&D in priority areas.

While in many cases, publicly supported research provides a wellspring of initial discovery, it is the private sector that must develop new technologies and bring them to the

market. To be a leader in a rapidly changing marketplace across sectors, private sector innovation is critical. How does one measure innovation? One way could be to determine how much a company spends on R&D as a percentage of its revenue annually. As patents secure exclusive rights to an invention, the innovative index of a company can be additionally judged by the number of granted patents, patent applications filed, whether the filings are in multiple countries, the quality of the patents and so forth. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Commerce's 161st Report on IPR Regime in India (July 2021) expresses concern that the rate of increase in the number of

patents in India in the last four years has been very low compared to the US and China. It goes on to say that this is co-related to the microscopic spending on R&D which is a meagre 0.7 per cent of India's GDP. Globally, companies with the highest R&D spend are big tech US companies like Amazon, Meta, Alphabet, Microsoft, Intel Corp. and bio-pharmaceutical companies like Roche, J&J, Pfizer, Bristol-Myers Squibb and Merck & Co. This list also includes three companies from China — Huawei, Tencent Holdings and Alibaba; Samsung from S. Korea; and European automobile manufacturers like Volkswagen and Mercedes-Benz.

Regarding the biopharmaceutical sector, the removal of product patent protection for drugs in 1970 allowed reverse engineering, which led to the exponential growth of the domestic generic industry and helped India be 'the pharmacy of the world'. At the same time, however, the lack of effective patent protection profoundly impacted corporate investment in R&D and the discovery of new molecules. Zydus Cadila's Saroglitazar, launched in 2013, remains so far, the only compound that was entirely indigenously discovered.

India has the potential to spur its innovative spirit by leveraging its strengths, embracing change and fostering a risk-taking culture.

Japan's transformation after the Meiji Restoration from being an importer and imitator of foreign technologies, to a global powerhouse in innovation that has defined the world's technological landscape exemplifies that necessity is the mother of invention.

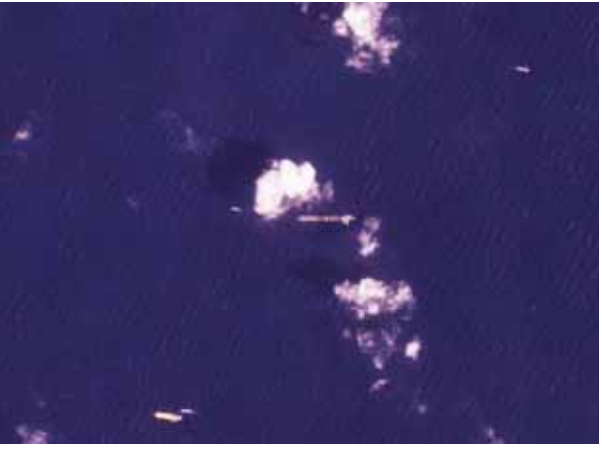
There is no silver bullet for creating an enabling environment for innovation. Bryce Hoffman in his book Red Teaming shows how disruptive innovation requires critical and contrarian thinking. So, to inculcate the scientific temper and risk-taking and entrepreneurship spirit, there is a dire need to shift the emphasis of our education system from rote memorisation and conformity. Second, we must vigorously

pursue closer collaboration between academia and industry to commercialise innovation. It is a matter of great pride that Prof. Rahul Purwar, IIT Mumbai obtained marketing approval for the first indigenously developed cell and gene therapy for the treatment of cancer.

Last but not least, a robust, meaningful and predictable intellectual property rights system can most optimally provide economic incentives to inventors and investors to invest risk capital in inventive activity — a very high-risk undertaking.

(The author is Managing Partner, Corporate Law Group, a New Delhi-based law firm; views are personal)

US military ships working to build pier for Gaza aid



This satellite photo from Planet Labs PBC shows the USNS Roy P. Benavidez, center, in the Mediterranean Sea off shore from the Gaza Strip on Monday. AP/PTI

AP ■ JERUSALEM

US Navy ship and several Army vessels involved in an American-led effort to bring more aid into the besieged Gaza Strip are offshore of the enclave and building out a floating platform for the operation that the Pentagon has said will cost at least USD 320 million. Sabrina Singh, Pentagon spokeswoman, told reporters the cost is a rough estimate for the project and includes the transportation of the equipment and pier sections from the United States to the coast of Gaza, as well as the construction and aid delivery operations.

Satellite photos analyzed by The Associated Press on Tuesday show the USNS Roy P Benavidez about 11 kilometers (6.8 miles) from the port on shore, where the base of operations for the project is being built by the Israeli military. The USAV General Frank S Besson Jr, an Army logistics vessel, and several other Army boats are with the Benavidez and working on the construction of what the military calls the Joint Logistics Over-the-Shore, or JLOTS, system.

Satellite images from Sunday and Monday by Planet Labs PBC showed pieces of the floating pier in the Mediterranean Sea, alongside the Benavidez. Measurements of the vessel match known features of the Benavidez, a Bob Hope-class vehicle cargo ship operated by the Military Sealift Command. A US military official confirmed late last week that the Benavidez had begun

construction and that it was far enough off shore to ensure that the troops building the platform would be safe. Singh said on Monday that next will come the construction of the causeway, which will then be anchored to the beach.

The US military's Central Command early Tuesday published images of the floating pier's construction online, after the AP's publication of the satellite photos.

"The pier will support USAID and humanitarian partners to receive and deliver humanitarian aid to the people of Gaza," the statement on the social platform X said.

US and Israeli officials have said they hope to have the floating pier in place, the causeway attached to the shore and operations underway by early May. The Pentagon said on Monday the operation will cost at least USD 320 million. The cost was first reported by Reuters. Under the plan by the US military, aid will be loaded onto commercial ships in Cyprus to sail to the floating platform now under construction off Gaza. The pallets will be loaded onto trucks, which will be loaded onto smaller ships that will travel to a metal, floating two-lane causeway. The 550-meter (1,800-foot) causeway will be attached to the shore by the Israeli Defense Forces.

The US military official said an American Army engineering unit has teamed with an Israeli military engineering unit in recent weeks to practice the installation of the causeway, training on an Israeli beach just up the coast.

Antony Blinken presses Hamas to accept new proposal for Gaza ceasefire

Cairo (AP): The United States stepped up pressure Monday for a cease-fire deal in Gaza as the secretary of state said a new proposal had been put to Hamas, whose officials were in Cairo talking to Egyptian mediators. Israeli airstrikes killed 26 people in Gaza's southernmost town of Rafah, according to hospital records.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, ahead of a visit to Israel this week, urged Hamas to accept the latest proposal, calling it "extraordinarily generous" on Israel's part.

The terms were not made public. But according to an Egyptian official and Israeli media, Israel has softened its position, lowering the number of hostages it demands that Hamas free during the initial six-week phase of the cease-fire in return for the release of hundreds of Palestinians from Israeli prisons.

One question is whether that will be enough to overcome Hamas concerns over the cease-fire's second phase.

Hamas has demanded assurances that an eventual release of all hostages will bring a complete end to Israel's nearly seven-month assault in Gaza and a withdrawal of its troops from the devastated territory. Israel has offered only an extended pause, vowing to resume its offensive once it is over. The issue has repeatedly obstructed efforts by US, Egyptian and Qatari mediators during months of talks.

Some Israeli commentators depicted Israel as at a crossroads: Go for a deal with a potential end to the war, bringing benefits that could include normalisation of ties with Saudi Arabia, or push ahead with plans including an attack on Rafah in the hope of crushing Hamas and risk international isolation.

Protesters take over Columbia University

AP ■ NEW YORK

Dozens of protesters took over a building at Columbia University in New York early Tuesday, barricading the entrances and unfurling a Palestinian flag out of a window in the latest escalation of demonstrations against the Israel-Hamas war that have spread to college campuses nationwide.

Video footage showed protesters on Columbia's Manhattan campus locking arms in front of Hamilton Hall early Tuesday and carrying furniture and metal barricades to the building, one of several that was occupied during a 1968 civil rights and anti-Vietnam War protest on the campus. Posts on an Instagram page for protest organizers shortly after midnight urged people to protect the encampment and join them at Hamilton Hall. A "Free Palestine" banner hung from a window. "An autonomous group reclaimed Hind's Hall, previously known as 'Hamilton Hall,' in honor of

Hind Rajab, a martyr murdered at the hands of the genocidal Israeli state at the age of six years old," CU Apartheid Divest posted on X, formerly known as Twitter, early Tuesday.

The student radio station, WKCR-FM, broadcast a play-by-play of the hall's takeover — which occurred nearly 12 hours after Monday's 2 pm deadline for the protesters to leave an encampment of around 120 tents or face suspension.

Representatives for the university did not immediately respond to emails requesting comment early Tuesday but the Public Safety department said in a statement that access to the Morningside campus has been limited to students living in the residential buildings and employees who provide essential services, such as dining, public safety and maintenance staff. There was just one access point into and out of campus.

"The safety of every single member of this community is paramount," the advisory said.

In the X post, protesters said they planned to remain at the hall until the university conceded to the CUAD's three demands: divestment, financial transparency and amnesty. Universities across the US are grappling with how to clear out encampments as commencement ceremonies approach, with some continuing negotiations and others turning to force and ultimatums that have resulted in clashes with police. Dozens of people were arrested Monday during protests at universities in Texas, Utah, Virginia and New Jersey, while Columbia said hours before the takeover of Hamilton Hall that it had started suspending students.

The nationwide campus protests began as a response by some students to Israel's offensive in Gaza after Hamas launched a deadly attack on southern Israel on October 7.

Militants killed about 1,200 people, most of them civilians, and took roughly 250 hostages. Vowing to stamp out Hamas,

Israel has killed more than 34,000 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, according to the local health ministry.

Israel and its supporters have branded the university protests as antisemitic, while critics of Israel say it uses such allegations to silence opponents. Although some protesters have been caught on camera making antisemitic remarks or violent threats, organizers of the protests, some of whom are Jewish, say it is a peaceful movement aimed at defending Palestinian rights and protesting the war.

At the University of Texas at Austin, an attorney said at least 40 demonstrators were arrested Monday. The confrontation was an escalation on the 53,000-student campus in the state's capital, where more than 50 protesters were arrested last week. Later Monday, dozens of officers in riot gear at the University of Utah sought to break up an encampment outside the university president's office that went

up in the afternoon. Police dragged students off by their hands and feet, snapping the poles holding up tents and zipping those who refused to disperse. Seventeen people were arrested. The university says it's against code to camp overnight on school property and that the students were given several warnings to disperse before police were called in.

At Princeton University, 13 people were arrested Monday night including 11 students, after briefly occupying a building that houses its graduate school. They received summons for trespassing and have been barred from campus, President Christopher Eisgruber said in a statement.

"The plight of students who have been arrested has become a central part of protests, with the students and a growing number of faculty demanding amnesty for protesters. At issue is whether the suspensions and legal records will follow students through their adult lives.

Netanyahu vows to invade Rafah with or without deal

AP ■ TEL AVIV

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu pledged Tuesday to launch an incursion into the southern Gaza city of Rafah, where hundreds of thousands of Palestinians are sheltering from the 7-month-long war.

Netanyahu said Israel would enter Rafah to destroy Hamas' battalions there "with or without a deal." Israel and Hamas are negotiating a cease-fire agreement meant to free hostages and bring some relief to the Palestinians in the besieged enclave.

"The idea that we will stop the war before achieving all of its goals is out of the questions. We will enter Rafah and we will eliminate Hamas' battalions there — with a deal or without a deal, to achieve the total victory," Netanyahu said in a meeting with families of hostages held by militants in Gaza, according to a statement from his office.

Netanyahu has vowed to achieve "total victory" in the war and has faced pressure from his nationalist governing partners to launch an offensive in Rafah, which Israel says is Hamas' last major stronghold.

Hopes have risen in recent days that the sides could move toward a deal that would avert an Israeli incursion into Rafah, where more than half of Gaza's 2.3 million population are sheltering. The international community, including Israel's top ally, the US, have raised an alarm over the fate of civilians in Rafah if Israel invades. Netanyahu has repeatedly rejected stopping the war in return for hostage releases, and says an offensive on Rafah is crucial to destroying the militants after their Oct. 7 attacks on Israel triggered the conflict. His government could be threatened if he agrees to a deal because hard-line Cabinet members have demanded an attack on Rafah.



Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani, left, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, right, and other officials attend a Joint Ministerial Meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council and US to discuss the humanitarian crises faced in Gaza, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia Monday. AP/PTI

King Charles III returns to public duties with cancer centre visit

London (PTI): Britain's King Charles III, who was diagnosed with cancer earlier this year, on Tuesday resumed his public-facing duties with a planned visit to a cancer centre in London where he held hands with a number of patients. The 75-year-old monarch, still undergoing treatment which Buckingham Palace earlier said has been rated as "very encouraging" by his medical team, was also named Cancer Research UK's new patron as he joined wife Queen Camilla at the Macmillan Cancer Centre at University College Hospital.

Smiling and cheerful Charles and Camilla spoke to staff and patients at the centre where the King was overheard saying it was important to get enough people diagnosed early. "This visit will be the first in a number of external engagements His Majesty will undertake in the weeks ahead," Buckingham Palace has said. "His Majesty's treatment programme will continue, but doctors are sufficiently pleased with

the progress made so far that the King is now able to resume a number of public-facing duties. Forthcoming engagements will be adapted where necessary to minimise any risks to His Majesty's continued recovery," the palace said.

The royals also handed out presents to children and received some flowers in return. The King, who is also patron of Macmillan Cancer Support, said he was "much better" when people shouted out to ask how he was feeling. The royal couple were introduced to clinicians to hear more about all the new technology at the hospital, including CT scanners which are being used to help with the early detection of cancer. The King met Cancer Research UK's chief clinician, Professor Charlie Swanton, who has led a project called TRACERx — a collaboration with 250 researchers and clinicians based at 19 centres across the UK, to investigate how lung cancer evolves.

Man arrested after stabbing spree in London, teen dies

PTI ■ LONDON

A sword-wielding man on Tuesday smashed a vehicle into a home and then went on a stabbing spree in a "serious incident" near an east London Tube station, killing a 13-year-old boy and wounding four people, before being arrested, the Metropolitan Police said. The police said the incident did not appear to be linked with "any act of terrorism" and that of the five people injured, a boy has died from his injuries and the others, including two police officers, remain in hospital after the attack in Hainault area of the city.

"A 13-year-old boy was taken to hospital after being stabbed and sadly died a short while after. The child's family are being supported by local officers and are now with some specialist officers," said Met Police Chief Superintendent Stuart Bell in a statement. He confirmed the 36-year-old suspect was tasered within 22



Police talking to members of the public at the scene in Hainault, north east London, Tuesday after reports of several people being stabbed at a Tube station. AP/PTI

minutes of the first call and remains in custody.

"I cannot even begin to imagine how those affected must be feeling. My thoughts are with the injured, their families and the wider community as we all begin to come to terms with what has happened and try to understand what has happened here.

"I know that there will be clearly and understandably a desire for answers and an explanation to what happened. Our investigation is in its very early stages and my officers are working right now to establish the full facts as a priority," he added.

Judge holds Trump in contempt, fines him \$9k in hush money trial

AP ■ NEW YORK

Donald Trump was held in contempt of court Tuesday and fined \$9,000 for repeatedly violating a gag order that barred him from making public statements about witnesses, jurors and some others connected to his New York hush money case. If he does it again, the judge warned, he could be jailed. Prosecutors had alleged 10 violations, but New York Judge Juan M Merchan found there were nine. The ruling was a stinging rebuke for the Republican former president, who had insisted he was exercising his free speech rights.

Merchan wrote that Trump "is hereby warned that the Court will not tolerate continued willful violations of its lawful orders and that if necessary and appropriate under the circumstances, it will impose an incarceration punishment."

Trump stared down at the table in front of him as the judge read the ruling, frowning slightly. The ruling came at the start of the second week of testimony in the historic case. Manhattan prosecutors say Trump and his associates took part in an illegal scheme to influence the 2016 presidential campaign by burying negative stories. He has pleaded not guilty. Trump must pay the fine by the close of business on Friday, Merchan said in a written ruling. He must remove seven offending posts from his Truth Social account and two from his campaign website by 2:15 pm EDT, Tuesday, Merchan said. Merchan is also weighing other alleged gag order violations by Trump and will hear arguments Thursday. Court was resuming Tuesday with Gary Farro, a banker who helped Trump's former attorney Michael Cohen open accounts, including one that Cohen used to buy the silence of porn performer Stormy Daniels. She alleged a 2006 sexual encounter with Trump, which he denies. For his part, the former presi-

dent and presumptive Republican nominee has been campaigning in his off-hours, but is required to be in court when it is in session, four days a week. Outside the courtroom, Trump criticized prosecutors again. "This is a case that should have never been brought," he said.

Jurors so far have heard from two other witnesses. Trump's former longtime executive assistant, Rhona Graff, recounted that she recalled once seeing Daniels at Trump's office suite in Trump Tower and figured the performer was a potential contestant for one of Trump's "Apprentice"-brand shows. Former National Enquirer publisher David Pecker laid out how he agreed to serve as the Trump campaign's "eyes and ears" by helping to squelch unflattering rumors and claims about Trump and women.

Through detailed testimony on email exchanges, business transactions and bank accounts, prosecutors are forming the foundation of their argument that Trump is guilty of 34 felony counts of falsifying business records in connection with the hush money payments. The prosecution is leading up to crucial testimony from Cohen himself, who went to federal prison after pleading guilty to campaign finance violations and other crimes. Trump has denied any wrongdoing and pleaded not guilty. It's unclear when Cohen will take the stand; the trial is expected to go on another month or more. And with every moment Trump is in court as the first of his four criminal trials plays out, he's growing increasingly frustrated while the November election moves ever closer.

"Our country's going to hell and we sit here day after day after day, which is their plan, because they think they might be able to eke out an election," Trump declared last week in the courthouse hallway.

Missile attack by Houthi rebels damages ship in Red Sea

Jerusalem (AP): A missile attack by Yemen's Houthi rebels damaged a ship in the Red Sea on Monday, authorities said, the latest assault in their campaign against shipping in the crucial maritime route. The attack happened off the coast of Mokha, Yemen, the British military's United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations centre said. The ship was damaged in the attack, the UKMTO said, though its crew was safe and heading to its next port of call. The agency urged vessels to exercise caution in the area.

There was "an explosion in close proximity to a merchant vessel," the UKMTO said. "Vessel and crew are reported safe."

The US military's Central Command identified the ship damaged as the Cyclades, a Malta-flagged, Greece-owned bulk carrier. The military separately shot down a drone on a flight path toward the USS Philippine Sea and USS Laboon, the military said Tuesday.

Houthi military spokesman Brig. Gen. Yahya Saree claimed the attack on the Cyclades and targeting the US warships in a statement early Tuesday.

Meanwhile Monday, the Italian Defence Ministry said its frigate Virgino Fasan shot down a Houthi drone that morning near the Bab el-Mandeb Strait between the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden.

"A missile exploded in the water in the vicinity of the escorted vessel, causing only minor superficial damage," the Italian Defence Ministry said, not identifying the commercial vessel being escorted. "The frigate Fasan and the protected merchant vessel are continuing their southward route as planned to exit the Red Sea."

Saree did not acknowledge that attack, though he claimed the Houthis also targeted a ship in the Indian Ocean.

There was no immediate report or evidence to support that claim.

COVID sequencing scientist protests eviction from lab

Shanghai (AP): The first scientist to publish a sequence of the COVID-19 virus in China staged a sit-in protest outside his lab after authorities locked him out of the facility — a sign of the Beijing's continuing pressure on scientists conducting research on the coronavirus. Zhang Yongzhen wrote in an online post Monday that he and his team had been suddenly notified they were being evicted from their lab, the latest in a series of setbacks, demotions and ousters since the virologist published the sequence in January 2020 without state approval.

When Zhang tried to go to the lab over the weekend, guards barred him from entering. In protest, he sat outside on flattened cardboard in drizzling rain, pictures from the scene posted online show. News of the protest spread



widely on Chinese social media and Zhang told a colleague he slept outside the lab — but it was not clear Tuesday if he remained there.

"I won't leave, I won't quit, I am pursuing science and the truth!" he wrote in a post on Chinese social media platform Weibo that was later deleted.

In an online statement, the Shanghai Public Health Clinical Center said that Zhang's lab was being renovated and was closed for "safety reasons." It added that it had provided Zhang's team an alternative laboratory space.

But Zhang wrote online that his team wasn't offered an alternative until after they were notified of their eviction, and that the lab offered didn't meet safety standards for conducting their research, leaving his team in limbo.

Zhang's latest difficulty reflects how China has sought to control information related to the virus: An Associated Press investigation found that the government froze meaningful domestic and international efforts to trace it from the first weeks of the outbreak. That pattern continues to this day, with labs closed, collaborations shattered, foreign sci-

entists forced out and Chinese researchers barred from leaving the country.

When reached by phone on Tuesday, Zhang said it was "inconvenient" for him to speak, saying there were other people listening. In an email Monday to collaborator Edward Holmes seen by AP, Zhang confirmed he was sleeping outside his lab after guards barred him from entering.

An AP reporter was blocked by a guard at an entrance to the compound housing Zhang's lab. A staff member at the National Health Commission, China's top health authority, said by phone that it was not the main department in charge and referred questions to the Shanghai government. The Shanghai government did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Zhang's ordeal started when he and his team decod-

ed the virus on Jan. 5, 2020, and wrote an internal notice warning Chinese authorities of its potential to spread — but did not make the sequence public. The next day, Zhang's lab was ordered temporarily shut by China's top health official, and Zhang came under pressure by Chinese authorities.

Around the time, China had reported several dozen people were being treated for a respiratory illness in the central city of Wuhan. Possible cases of the same illness had been reported in Hong Kong, South Korea and Taiwan involving recent travelers to the city. Foreign scientists soon learned that Zhang and other Chinese scientists had deciphered the virus and called on China to release the sequence. Zhang published it on Jan. 11, 2020, despite a lack of government permission.

'4 law officers killed, 4 hurt in North Carolina home shootout'

AP ■ CHARLOTTE

Four police officers serving a warrant for a felon wanted for possessing a firearm were killed and four other officers were wounded in a shootout Monday at a North Carolina home, police said.

that were left broken. Several armoured vehicles were parked across yards, some with tree branches dangling off them. The US Marshals Task Force was fired on by the wanted suspect as they approached the house and the man was killed in the front yard, Jennings said. His name was not released, but the chief said he was wanted as a felon illegally possessing a weapon.

Charlotte and was speaking to the families of the officers killed and hurt. Their names have not been released. Charlotte-Mecklenburg police officer Joshua Eyer died a few hours later at the hospital, Jennings said. Eyer was named the officer of the month for the force for April a few weeks ago, the chief said.

knocking over recycling bins before officers removed a person with blood on their shirt who was then loaded into an ambulance. After the home was cleared, the helicopter pilot said he couldn't show the front lawn of the home because the scene was too graphic and disturbing.

IMF approves immediate disbursement of \$1.1 bn loan tranche to Pakistan

AP ■ WASHINGTON/ ISLAMABAD

The IMF has approved an immediate disbursement of the final tranche of USD 1.1 billion to Pakistan as part of a bailout package, emphasising that the cash-strapped country needs to take tough measures to bring its economy back on track.

capitalise on this hard-won stability, persevering — beyond the current arrangement — with sound macroeconomic policies and structural reforms to create stronger, inclusive, and sustainable growth," said IMF's Deputy Managing Director Antoinette Sayeh.

this week. Sayeh emphasised Pakistan needed to adhere to "a market-determined exchange rate to absorb external shocks and broadening of structural reforms to support stronger and more inclusive growth".

for a new long-term Extended Fund Facility (EFF) ranging between USD 6 to USD 8 billion with the possibility of augmentation through climate financing.

Japan's PM denies he will step down over his party's loss in special polls

AP ■ TOKYO

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said Tuesday his governing party's major defeat in last weekend's by-elections was largely due to a political fundraising scandal and that he would not step down or replace party executives to take responsibility.



Asked if he would take responsibility for the election loss, Kishida denied he would step down or replace top LDP posts, and pledged to pursue party and political reforms, including a revision to the political funds laws. He also vowed to tackle economic issues.

Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan clinched all three seats previously held by LDP. The loss is seen as a punishment by voters for the governing party's scandal, which erupted last year and has undermined Kishida's leadership.

Mexico taking Ecuador to top UN court

AP ■ THE HAGUE

Mexico is taking Ecuador to the top UN court on Tuesday, accusing the nation of violating international law by storming the Mexican Embassy in Quito to arrest a former vice president who had just been granted asylum by Mexico.

are focused on Mexico's request for interim orders known as provisional measures to be put in force while the case progresses through the court — a process likely to take many months.

Chinese coast guard fires water cannons at Philippine vessels

AP ■ MANILA

Chinese coast guard ships fired water cannons at two Philippine patrol vessels Tuesday near a disputed shoal in the South China Sea, damaging both in the latest flare-up in an increasingly tense territorial conflict.

the fisheries vessel, the BRP Bankaw, and two other Chinese coast guard ships hit the Philippine coast guard ship, the BRP Bagacay, simultaneously from both sides, damaging part of its deck railing and a canopy, Tarriela added.

Exclusive Economic Zone,' the task force said. The Philippine vessels pressed on with their patrol despite the Chinese coast guard's actions, according to the Philippine coast guard.

Microsoft will invest \$1.7 bn in AI, cloud infrastructure in Indonesia

AP ■ JAKARTA

Microsoft will invest USD 1.7 billion over the next four years in new cloud and artificial intelligence infrastructure in Indonesia — the single largest investment in Microsoft's 29-year history in the country — Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella said Tuesday.



Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella speaks as the logo of GitHub, a subsidiary of Microsoft Corp, is displayed on the screen during an event titled "Microsoft Build: AI Day" in Jakarta, Indonesia, Tuesday. AP/PPTI

announcing today — spanning digital infrastructure, skilling, and support for developers — will help Indonesia thrive in this new era," he said.

as a growing market and potential location for more AI product development. The rise of AI in the region is expected to significantly impact its economic landscape.

at" manufacturing in Indonesia. Indonesia, under President Joko Widodo's administration, has emphasised development of digital technology and information sectors, aiming to achieve the government's Golden Indonesia 2045 Vision, which projects Indonesia becoming one of the world's top five economies with GDP of up to USD 9 trillion, exactly a century after it won independence from Dutch colonisers.

Facebook, Instagram face EU scrutiny

AP ■ LONDON

The European Union said Tuesday that it's investigating Facebook and Instagram over a range of suspected violations of the bloc's digital rulebook, including not doing enough to protect users from foreign disinformation ahead of EU-wide elections.



could be used to disrupt the many votes around the world this year. The Commission said it's looking into whether Meta is doing enough to curb the spread of "deceptive advertisements, disinformation campaigns and coordinated inauthentic behaviour" that could pose a risk to "electoral processes" and consumer protection.

Taliban working to woo tourists to Afghanistan

AP ■ KABUL

Around 30 men are crammed into a Kabul classroom, part of the debut student cohort at a Taliban-run institute training tourism and hospitality professionals.

increased flight connections with hubs like Dubai, and the bragging rights that come with vacationing in an unusual destination. The numbers aren't huge — they never were — but there's a buzz around Afghan tourism.

expensive to access. Many countries severed ties with Afghanistan after the Taliban returned to power, and no country recognizes them as the legitimate rulers of the country.

ly avoid Afghan airspace. The capital Kabul has the most international flights, but no Afghan airport has direct routes with major tourist markets like China, Europe, or India.

know more about tourism and hospitality first. "They hear that Afghanistan is backwards, poverty and all about war," said Ahmadzai. "We have 5,000 years of history. There should be a new page of Afghanistan."

beauty salons banned, there are fewer places where they can meet outside the home. In a sign that the country is preparing for more overseas visitors, the country's only five-star hotel, the Serena, has reopened its women's spa and salon for foreign females after a month-long closure.

Indian economy likely to grow over 7 per cent in 2024-25: NCAER

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
The Indian economy could grow more than 7 per cent during the current fiscal amid a benign global outlook and expected above-normal monsoon, economic think tank NCAER said.
In its April 2024 issue of Monthly Economic Review (MER), NCAER said a range of high-frequency indicators reflect the resilience of the domestic economy with the Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) for manufacturing at a 16-year high and UPI, the leading digital payments system, touching the highest volume since its inception in 2016.
"Projected acceleration in both global growth and trade volumes, as well as a forecast of an above-normal monsoon, indicate that the Indian economy can again attain growth rates higher than 7 per



cent during the current fiscal year," said NCAER Director General Poonam Gupta. According to NCAER, Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections reached Rs 1.8 lakh crore in March, the second best since its rollout in 2017, while UPI recorded 13.4 billion transactions (in volume) in March 2024, the highest since its inception, registering a growth of 55.3 per cent on a year-on-year basis.
"These high-frequency indicators, coupled with a more benign global outlook

projected by the IMF and WTO bode well for the Indian economy during the current year," Gupta added. According to the report, Consumer Price Index (CPI) headline inflation was down to 4.9 per cent in March from 5.1 per cent in February, while core inflation came down to 3.2 per cent during the same period. The report said employment indicators again showed mixed trends, with an increase in the number of net new subscribers under the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) on a year-on-year basis. However, the overall online hiring activities, as per the Naukri JobSpeak Index, moderated year-on-year, it added.
While the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Fitch Ratings have estimated India's growth at 7 per cent, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), S&P Global Ratings and Morgan Stanley projected a 6.8 per cent growth rate for FY25. The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) decided to keep the policy rate unchanged at 6.5 per cent. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) kept projections for India's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth for FY2024-25 at 7 per cent and Consumer Price Index (CPI) headline inflation at 4.5 per cent, in line with their previous projections.

Central Bank of India Q4 profit jumps 41 per cent

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
State-owned Central Bank of India on Tuesday reported a 41 per cent jump in its net profit to Rs 807 crore for the March quarter, helped by a decline in bad loans and a rise in interest income. The Mumbai-based lender had earned a net profit of Rs 571 crore in the year-ago period. During the quarter, the bank's total income increased to Rs 9,699 crore as against Rs 8,567 crore a year ago, Central Bank of India said in a regulatory filing.
Interest income grew to Rs 8,337 crore during the period under review from Rs 7,144 crore in the corresponding quarter a year ago. On the asset quality side, the bank's gross Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) were reduced to 4.5 per cent of gross advances as of March 31, 2024, compared to 8.44 per



cent by the end of March 2023. Net NPAs also came down to 1.23 per cent of the advances over 1.77 per cent at the end of 2024. The fall in bad loans ratio helped cut the provisions towards NPAs for Q4FY24 to Rs 509 crore compared to Rs 789 crore a year ago. The board also approved raising of capital up to Rs 5,000 crore through a Follow-on Public Offer (FPO) or

Sterlite Power bags projects worth ₹2,500 crore in Q4

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Sterlite Power on Tuesday announced securing new orders worth Rs 2,500 crore during the quarter ended March 31. This takes the company's cumulative order wins in FY24 to Rs 7,000 crore, up 35 per cent year-on-year (YoY) over FY23, Sterlite Power said in a statement.
"Sterlite Power has capped off a successful fiscal year FY24 with new orders worth Rs 2,500 crore for its Global Products and Services (GPS) business unit in Q4. This growth underscores the growing global and domestic demand for robust power transmission infrastructure, particularly to support the integration of renewable energy sources critical for a net-zero future," the company said.
Pratik Agarwal, Managing Director, Sterlite Power, said, the company's GPS business is experiencing significant growth. These products are essential in driving the sector's expansion over multiple decades, spurred by the global shift towards energy transition and decarbonization. In Q4, some of the projects secured by the company are for conductor supply to green energy power transmission projects in Rajasthan including the Farhad Transmission line project. The company also bagged export orders for OPGW (Optical Ground Wire) in Africa and CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) markets. Besides, Sterlite Power has secured multiple orders to supply Extra High Voltage (EHV) & High Voltage (HV) cables for large-scale infrastructure projects that are underway in Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Karnataka, Odisha, and Gujarat. The company's specialized EPC services unit signed a turnkey project contract with Odisha state transmission utility to upgrade its existing 132 kV Pratapsasan-Kesura-Ransinghpur transmission line using high performance conductors (HPC). Sterlite Power is a leading private sector power transmission infrastructure developer and Global Products and Services provider.

Markets wipe out early gains on fag end sell off Nifty slips from record

PTI ■ MUMBAI
Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty ended lower on Tuesday as a fag-end sell-off wiped out early gains, with IT and power stocks playing spoilsport amid a mixed trend in global markets. Snapping its two-day winning run, the 30-share BSE Sensex declined 188.50 points or 0.25 per cent to settle at 74,482.78. During the day, it had jumped 404.11 points or 0.58 per cent to 75,111.39. The NSE Nifty dipped 38.55 points or 0.17 per cent to finish at 22,604.85. In the late afternoon trade, the benchmark hit its all-time peak of 22,783.35, up 139.95 points or 0.61 per cent. From the Sensex basket, Tech Mahindra, Tata Steel, JSW Steel, HCL Technologies, Tata Consultancy Services, Larsen & Toubro and Kotak Mahindra Bank were the biggest laggards. Mahindra & Mahindra, Power Grid, Bajaj Finance, IndusInd Bank and Maruti were the major gainers. In Asian markets, Seoul,



Tokyo and Hong Kong settled in the positive territory while Shanghai ended lower. European markets were mostly trading lower. Wall Street ended with gains on Monday. Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.21 per cent to USD 88.59 a barrel. "Global markets remained mixed ahead of the US FED policy meeting, as markets appear to have already factored in the slim chance of a near-term rate cut. Profit booking ensued towards a close given the sharp rally in the last couple of days and a holiday-led truncated week," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) turned buyers on Monday after continuous offloading. They bought equities worth Rs 169.09 crore, according to exchange data. In the previous session, the BSE benchmark jumped 941.12 points or 1.28 per cent to settle at 74,671.28 on Monday. The NSE Nifty went up by 223.45 points or 1 per cent to 22,643.40. Domestic equity markets will remain closed on Wednesday on account of Maharashtra Day.

India's oil import bill could swell in FY25: ICRA

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
India's net oil import bill could widen to USD 101-104 billion in current fiscal from USD 96.1 billion in 2023-24 and any escalation in the Iran-Israel conflict could impart an upward pressure on the value of imports, ICRA said on Tuesday. The domestic rating agency said based on its analysis, lower value of Russian oil imports is estimated to have led to savings of USD 7.9 billion in 11 months (April-February) of 2023-24, up from USD 5.1 billion in 2022-23. "With India's oil import dependency expected to remain high, if the discounts on purchases of Russian crude persist at the prevailing low levels, ICRA expects India's net oil import bill to widen to USD 101-104 billion in FY2025 from USD 96.1 billion in FY2024, assuming an average crude oil price of USD 85/bbl in the fiscal," ICRA said. Additionally, any escalation in the Iran-Israel conflict and an associated rise in crude oil prices could impart an upward pressure on the value of net oil imports in the current fiscal year, it added. As per ICRA's calculations, a USD 10/barrel uptick in the average crude oil price for this fiscal pushes up the net oil



imports by USD 12-13 billion during the year, thereby enlarging the current account deficit (CAD) by 0.3 per cent of GDP. Accordingly, if the average crude oil price rises to USD 95/barrel in FY2025, then the CAD is likely to widen to 1.5 per cent of GDP from ICRA's current estimate of 1.2 per cent of GDP for 2024-25. CAD, which is the difference between value of India's imports and exports, is estimated at 0.8 per cent in 2023-24. India is more than 85 per cent dependent on imports for its needs of crude oil, which is converted into fuels such as petrol and diesel at refineries. ICRA said the value of India's imports of petroleum crude and products declined by 15.2 per cent YoY during April-February of last fiscal, even as volumes rose slightly in this period. This was supported by the fall in average global crude oil prices as well as savings from stepped up purchases of discounted Russian crude. In volume terms, the share of crude petroleum imported from Russia jumped to 36 per cent in April-February FY2024 from 2 per cent in FY2022, while that from West Asian countries (Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Kuwait) fell to 23 per cent from 34 per cent, respectively. ICRA estimates that the lower imputed unit value of imports

of Russian oil, compared to imports from West Asia, has led to savings in India's oil import bill amounting to USD 5.1 billion in 2022-23 and USD 7.9 billion in 11 months of 2023-24, thereby compressing India's CAD/GDP ratio by 15-22 basis points in FY2023-24. However, the extent of monthly discounts relative to price narrowed sharply over the fiscal, to 8 per cent on an average in September-February FY2024 from 23 per cent in April-August FY2024. Consequently, the savings related to purchase of Russian crude are likely to have dipped to USD 2 billion in September-February FY2024 from USD 5.8 billion in April-August FY2024, ICRA said. Post the Ukraine war, some Western nations shunned Russian oil, leading to Moscow offering discounts. This led to Indian refiners lapping up the discounted oil. The recent conflict in the Middle East also poses threat to crude oil import route. Earlier this month, Iran first launched drone and rocket attacks on Israel, which retaliated by firing a missile. India imports oil from Saudi Arabia, Iraq and the UAE as well as liquefied natural gas (LNG) from Qatar through the Strait of Hormuz, which is a narrow sea passage between Oman and Iran.

Gold slumps ₹150; silver plunges ₹750

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Extending the losses for the second straight session, gold prices on Tuesday slumped Rs 150 to Rs 72,600 per 10 grams in the national capital amid fall in precious metal rates in the global markets, according to HDFC Securities. The yellow metal had closed at Rs 72,750 per 10 grams in the previous session. Silver prices also plunged Rs 750 to Rs 83,750 per kg. In the previous close, it had ended at Rs 84,500 per kg. "Spot gold prices (24 carats) in the Delhi markets are trading at Rs 72,600 per 10 grams,

down Rs 150 taking bearish cues from overseas markets," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst of Commodities at HDFC Securities, said. In the international markets, spot gold at Comex was trading at USD 2,320 per ounce, down USD 13 from the previous close. "Gold prices continued to weaken... As this sell-off was attributed to the anticipation of a hawkish stance from the US Federal Reserve in the upcoming interest rate policy announcement scheduled for May 1. "Additionally, the week ahead is expected to see continued

RITES completes 50 years

PNS ■ GURUGRAM
RITES Limited, a leading engineering consultancy firm in India, celebrated its milestone 50th anniversary on Friday. The month-long Foundation Day celebrations, 'Marking The Gold', that were carried across work sites culminated with a cultural evening at Shikhar, RITES' Corporate Office, Gurugram. Members of RITES' cultural team 'Sankalp' presented RITES Anthem at the 50th anniversary celebrations. On the occasion, Chairman & Management Director Rahul Mittal launched RITES' coffee

table book — Atulya, a compilation tracing the organisation's illustrious journey of becoming 'The Infrastructure People'. Also, it marked the unveiling of 'RITES Dhara', a novel initiative to treasure the organisation's legacy and encapsulate the essence of its core values — Integrity, Professionalism and Excellence. Addressing the gathering and paying gratitude to the founding fathers, Mithal said, "From pioneering projects to fostering sustainable practices, RITES' five-decade journey has been glorious.

Rupee recovers 4 paise to 83.41 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI
The rupee recovered 4 paise to 83.41 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, tracking foreign capital inflows and a strengthening greenback against major crosses overseas. According to forex analysts, the domestic currency initially faced resistance from a strong greenback and upward momentum in the crude oil prices but recovered the lost ground

during the session on the back of a sharp rally in equities in the late afternoon trade. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.46 and traded between 83.41 and 83.52 against the greenback during the session. The domestic currency finally settled at 83.41 (provisional) against the dollar, registering a gain of 4 paise from its previous closing level. The rupee had settled 7 paise lower at 83.45 against the US dollar on Monday after losing 10 paise in the preceding session on Friday. Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst — Commodity and Currency, LKP Securities, said: "Volatility in the capital market kept the rupee range-bound. Participants are closely monitoring the upcoming interest rate decision in the US for potential price action in the rupee. Weakness persists in the rupee, albeit in a stable manner."

US tile industry seeks import tariff on India

PTI ■ WASHINGTON
A coalition of US ceramic tile suppliers has urged the federal government to impose tariffs on ceramic tile imports from India as it is impacting domestic industry due to subsidised imports by the Indian government. The Department of Commerce has instituted an investigation into this matter. Import of ceramics and tiles from India has increased significantly over the past few years, an association of the US ceramic and tiles industry has claimed alleging that these are impacting their domestic industry as the imports are subsidised by the Indian government. In a petition filed before the US International Trade Commission of the

Department of Commerce, the Coalition for Fair Trade in Ceramic Tile (TCNA), which claims to represent more than 90 per cent of US tile production, seeks the imposition of tariffs estimated between 408 per cent to 828 per cent, alleging that there is ongoing massive and widespread dumping from India. "American tile manufacturers have always welcomed fair competition from imports. In fact, US manufacturers have plentiful deposits of clay and feldspar, an efficient and well-respected labour force, local community support, state-of-the-art equipment, and affordable energy - so much so that major exporters from Italy, Spain, Brazil, Mexico, and China have built facilities in the US from



which to compete on a global scale," stated Tile Council of North America executive director, Eric Astrachan. "However, Indian tile producers enjoy substantial government subsidies, which in conjunction with selling excess capacity at dumped prices, has allowed them to flood the US market. Over the last 10 years, sales of tile from India have increased from a mere 344,000 square feet in 2013 to nearly 405 million square feet by the end of 2023," he alleged. "Our domestic manufacturers had no alternative but to petition the federal government for relief from these unjust trading practices. The vitality of the US industry and the livelihoods of thousands of employees and their families within our member

companies depend on it," Astrachan said. US International Trade Commission last week issued a federal notification giving notice of the institution of investigations and commencement of preliminary phase antidumping and countervailing duty investigation to determine whether there is a reasonable indication that the imports of ceramic tile from India impact US industry. June 10 is the last date for responses. According to Barnes & Thornburg, trade counsel for the Coalition for Fair Trade in Ceramic Tile, if the US finds that Indian imports are unfairly traded and have injured or threatened to injure US tile manufacturers, the Government will impose tariffs on Indian tile imports.

The Government would first impose preliminary tariffs in a few months and would impose final tariffs at the conclusion of its investigation in approximately 16 months, with the calculation of such final tariffs applied retroactively to the date of initiation, he said. In its filing, the Coalition for Fair Trade in Ceramic Tile (FTCT) claimed that India is engaged in unjust trading practices by allowing low-priced ceramic tile imports into the United States, which undercut domestic manufacturers. The scope of the investigation includes various types of ceramic tile, such as flooring tile, wall tile, paving tile, hearth tile, porcelain tile, mosaic tile, and more. These ceramic tiles are articles containing a mixture of minerals, including clay, that are fired to produce a finished product less than 3.2 cm in actual thickness. The investigation covers both glazed and unglazed tiles, regardless of end use, surface area, weight, or other factors. The members of the Coalition for Fair Trade in Ceramic Tile include American Wonder Porcelain, Crossville, Inc., Dal-Tile Corporation, Del Conca USA, Inc., Florida Tile, Inc., Florim USA, Landmark Ceramics, and StonePeak Ceramics. The US Department of Commerce has initiated investigations in response to the petition filed by the Coalition for Fair Trade in Ceramic Tile.



Vishvanath, Akash, Preet storm into semis at ASBC Asian U-22 & Youth Boxing Championships

PTI ■ ASTANA (KAZAKHSTAN)
Vishvanath Suresh, Akash Gorkha and Preet Malik advanced to the men's U-22 semi-finals after convincing wins in their respective bouts at the ASBC Asian U-22 and Youth Boxing Championships here on Tuesday.

Reigning youth world champion Vishvanath (48kg) led the charge for India as he beat Iran's Hassani Seyedarsham 5-0 in a one-sided quarterfinal bout.

Senior national champion Akash (60kg) outclassed Ebad Arman of Iran with an identical 5-0 scoreline. Preet (67kg) also didn't take much time before finishing the bout with a Referee Stopping the Contest (RSC) decision in the first round itself against Vietnam's Nguyen Duc Ngoc.

Kunal (75kg), however, bowed out after losing 0-5 against Iran's Mahshari Mohammad in the quarter-finals. Jugnoo (86kg), Rhythm (+92kg), Tammana (50kg), Preeti (54kg) and Priyanka (60kg) will have their U-22 quarter-final bouts later on Tuesday.

US and Mexico drop bid to host 2027 World Cup

AP ■ NEW YORK
The U.S. Soccer Federation and its Mexican counterpart dropped their joint bid to host the 2027 Women's World Cup and said they instead will focus on trying to host the 2031 tournament.



Brazil and joint German-Dutch-Belgian bids remain
The decision left a proposal from Brazil and a joint Germany-Netherlands-Belgium plan competing to be picked for 2027 by the FIFA Congress that meets May 17 in Bangkok.

same 11 to be used in the 2026 men's World Cup. Mexico listed Guadalajara, Mexico City and Monterrey - its three sites for the men's World Cup - and in addition for 2027 listed as possibilities Leon and Querétaro.

AP ■ BARCELONA

Lewandowski hat trick gives Barcelona comeback victory over Valencia

Barcelona survived a tricky first half to beat Valencia 4-2 with the help of a second half hat trick from Robert Lewandowski and a red card to Valencia goalkeeper Giorgi Mamardashvili.



The balance of the match changed moments before the break when

Mamardashvili used a hand outside the box to thwart a scoring chance by Lamine Yamal and was red-carded. Lewandowski headed an equalizer from a corner kick after 50 minutes. However, it took Barcelona until the 82nd to regain the lead from another Lewandowski header after Valencia failed to clear another corner.

Nadal tested in 3 hours win over Cachin at Madrid

AP ■ MADRID
After spending more than three hours on the court and earning a hard-fought victory, Rafael Nadal was feeling optimistic again.

Nadal's body withstood its toughest test yet at this Madrid Open in a 6-1, 6-7 (5), 6-3 win over 91st-ranked Pedro Cachin on Monday.

Nadal didn't look as loose in the final set, but did look tired. He wasn't as consistent with his shots but picked up three breaks to seal the victory to the delight of the local crowd in the Caja Magica.



said. "We're trying to find a solution and I don't think it's anything serious. Sometimes I feel it more like today and some days are a little bit better."

sets to beat Coco Gauff 7-6 (4), 4-6, 6-4 in an all-American fourth-round meeting. It will be the 20th-ranked Keys' first quarterfinal appearance in Madrid. She lost in the first round in seven of her nine previous trips to the Spanish capital.

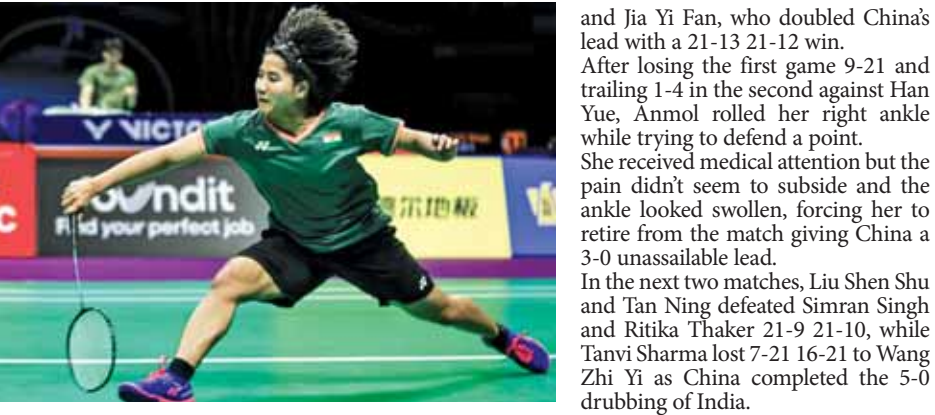
Tormo was the last Spanish woman in the draw. Swiatek, who lost last year's Madrid final to Aryna Sabalenka, will next face 11th-seeded Beatriz Haddad Maia, who defeated fifth-seeded Maria Sakkari 6-4, 6-4.

Indian women blanked 0-5 by China in Uber Cup

PTI ■ CHENGDU (CHINA)
Teenage sensation Anmol Kharb left the badminton court in tears owing to an ankle injury as an under-strength Indian women's team suffered a 0-5 defeat to the mighty China in its final group A fixture of the Uber Cup here on Tuesday.

To add to India's woes, 17-year-old Anmol was forced to retire after twisting her ankle during the second singles contest.

Olympic champion and world no.2 Chen Yu Fei started off the proceedings for China with an easy 21-12 21-10 win over 83rd ranked Isharani Baruah.



was a tough game but it was a good experience," she added. National champions Priya Konjengbam and Shruti Mishra, ranked 67, were no match for reigning world champions Chen Qing Chen



Soccer star, and a few teammates, show up for Heat Celtics game

AP ■ MIAMI
Lionel Messi took a night off to watch the Miami Heat. The Inter Miami star and eight-time Ballon d'Or winner as the world's best player - along with teammates Jordi Alba, Sergio Busquets and Luis Suarez - arrived just before tip-off of the Heat playoff game with the Boston Celtics on Monday night.

Inter Miami is 6-2-3 so far this season in Major League Soccer play, sitting in first place in the Eastern Conference and with the most points of any team in the league.

Real Madrid coach Carlo apologises for forgetting German on his Bayern Munich return

AP ■ MUNICH
Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti has apologized upon his return to Bayern Munich for not remembering his German.

Ancelotti was forced out after a shaky start to the 2017-18 season. Losing to Paris Saint-Germain 3-0 was the final straw for club chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge.



times before. But Ancelotti said on Monday he had only fond memories of his time in Munich. "I was fortunate to be coach of this club. It could have been for longer, yes, but otherwise it was a nice time," he said. "I have fantastic memories and

remember it with a lot of affection." The Italian, who led Madrid to the 2014 Champions League title, returned to the Spanish giant in 2021 after stints in charge of Napoli and Everton.

Messi's group - some clad in Heat attire and Busquets wearing a Heat hoodie - arrived in the players' parking garage, then were brought in through a VIP entrance before making their way to their seats in a suite atop the lower level.



CSK EYE ALL ROUND STABILITY AGAINST UNPREDICTABLE PBKS

PTI ■ CHENNAI

An inconsistent Chennai Super Kings will have to display all-round solidity when they face an unpredictable Punjab Kings in their Indian Premier League match here on Wednesday. The Super Kings have 10 points from nine matches, similar figures as that of Lucknow Super Giants, Sunrisers Hyderabad and Delhi Capitals, and the defending champions would certainly like to breakaway from that mid-table gridlock with a win. However, the defending champions will be a worried lot as Punjab Kings, who have six points from nine games, are coming to this match after scaling down 262 against Kolkata Knight Riders, the highest chase in the history of T20 cricket. But the Chepauk deck is a different beast, offering a semblance of assistance to the bowlers and it was evident in CSK's impressive 78-run win over SRH in their previous match. There was no dew in Chennai on that night, and the CSK bowlers defanged SRH's potent batting unit with their

accuracy and variations after their batters put on board a 200-plus total. They need an encore against Punjab, and all eyes will be on skipper Rituraj Gaikwad, who is on a hot streak. Gaikwad has registered scores of 108 and 98 in his last two innings and New Zealand man Daryl Mitchell too seemed to have regained his touch at just the right time with a 32-ball 52 against Hyderabad. However, the real storm-force in the CSK line-up is Shivam Dube, who has pulverised the opposition bowlers while coming as an Impact Sub. While Dube has always been a spin-basher, the left-hander has now added another angle to his batting with his effective tackling of pacers. Dube so far has made 350 runs, second highest for CSK behind Gaikwad's 447, and those runs came at a strike-rate of 172.41, second only to MS Dhoni's 259.45. However, the CSK opening combination continues to be a bit iffy. Gaikwad has been a solid presence but both now-dropped Rachin Ravindra and Ajinkya Rahane have not been able to play the support role to



their skipper. Rahane's last four outings as opener produced scores of 5, 36, 1, 9, and those numbers don't reflect his experience or skill-level. However, CSK in all likelihood will continue to back him. Batting coach Michael Hussey had remarked that the 35-year-old was close to getting a big knock under his belt. On the other hand, PBKS will be desperate to carry the momentum after that record chase and climb up the ladder from the current eighth place. For that, their batters need to fire in unison once again and the onus is on Jonny Bairstow, who made a hundred against KKR, Shashank Singh and Prabhsimran Singh. But they will eye a more impact outting from wicketkeeper batter Jitesh Sharma. However, PBKS' bowling department looks a bit shaky despite having experienced campaigners such as Kagiso Rabada, Harshal Patel, Arshdeep Singh and Sam Curran in their ranks. The visitors will also require a much-improved effort from their spinners — Harpreet Brar and Rahul Chahar - as they

have scalped just seven wickets among them this season. **TEAMS (FROM):** CSK: Rituraj Gaikwad (c), MS Dhoni (wk), Aravelly Avانش, Ajinkya Rahane, Shaik Rasheed, Moeen Ali, Shivam Dube, RS Hangargekar, Ravindra Jadeja, Ajay Yadav Mandal, Daryl Mitchell, Rachin Ravindra, Mitchell Santner, Nishant Sindhu, Deepak Chahar, Tushar Deshpande, Mukesh Choudhary, Mustafizur Rahman, Matheesha Pathirana, Simarjeet Singh, Prashant Solanki, Shardul Thakur, Maheesh Theekshana and Sameer Rizvi. **PBKS:** Shikhar Dhawan (c), Matthew Short, Jonny Bairstow (wk), Prabhsimran Singh (wk), Jitesh Sharma (wk), Sikandar Raza, Rishi Dhawan, Liam Livingstone, Atharva Taide, Arshdeep Singh, Nathan Ellis, Sam Curran, Kagiso Rabada, Harpreet Brar, Rahul Chahar, Harpreet Bhatia, Vidwath Kaverappa, Shivam Singh, Harshal Patel, Chris Woakes, Ashutosh Sharma, Vishwanath Pratap Singh, Shashank Singh, Tanay Thyagarajan, Prince Choudhary, Rilee Rossouw.



This IPL is different, need to mentally accept challenge, says Varun Chakravarthy

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Kolkata Knight Riders spinner Varun Chakravarthy said the teams have understood the concept of Impact Player better in this iteration of IPL and now bowlers will have to find ways to counter the ultra-aggressive approach of batsmen to make an impact on the game. Chakravarthy's spell of three for 16 played a vital role in KKR's thumping seven-wicket win over Delhi Capitals on Monday. "The Impact Player rule was there last year also. The teams have now understood how to use the impact player rule better. So, they know that there is extra batting and they want to charge from the first ball. That's how it's going," Chakravarthy said in the post-match press meet. "However much the bowlers cry, that's how it is. We've accepted that this IPL is different and mentally accept that challenge. You can't change the side of the ground or you can't change anything," Chakravarthy also said the Eden Gardens pitch offered a good amount of help to the bowlers against Delhi. "The last two matches before this, we didn't defend that well because the wickets have become very placid in the second innings. But this pitch was a little bit more turning. That was the difference. The length is basically the same for all the matches. It's just how the wicket behaves." Chakravarthy said the KKR players and management went into a huddle to find solutions after Punjab Kings managed to chase a record 262 in their previous match. "Definitely, the last match (vs PBKS) was a very hard pill to swallow. We had many conversations with the management, everyone chipped in. We spoke with the coaches Carl Crowe, Bharat Arun sir, (Gautam) Gambhir, Chandrakant (Pandit) sir, Abhishek Nair." The 32-year-old said even the KKR owner Shah Rukh Khan

pepped them up with a quick motivational talk. "Even Shah Rukh bhai, he came up to us yesterday and spoke to me a lot he said 'don't take it personally, whatever is happening this IPL is just going at a crazy rate, just don't self-doubt yourself'". **DC OPTIMISTIC TO MAKE PLAYOFFS:** After their defeat against KKR, Delhi have slipped to sixth with three matches left for them, and bowling coach James Hopes said they are optimistic of making the playoffs. Delhi next face Rajasthan Royals at home on May 7, before travelling to Bengaluru (May 12). Their last fixture in the league is against Lucknow Super Giants at home on May 14. "We have a week off now. Our destiny is still in our own hands, you might say," Hopes said. "If we can win three games and get to 16 points, that should be good enough. But we do have a week off now where we can readjust and see if we need to think a little different about anything." "Yeah, tonight was a missed opportunity, and we won't hide behind any excuses there," he said. Hopes said they could have recalibrated the target on a slow pitch. "This has been a high-scoring venue, and even though we'd lost three wickets in the power play, we had no reason to really think it wasn't going to be anything other than that." "We were still going 11 and half an over. So, we were still thinking 200-220. But I think once the spinners started to grip the ball, we saw it in Sunil (Narine) first over, it gripped a bit for him in the sixth over." "So our mistake probably lay in that we didn't recalibrate our sights on something slightly lower. I think everyone assumed that it was going to be a 240 game." "The trick is understanding that it's not that way sometimes, and you have to actually put a defensible score on the board and not go too hard."

MI camp divided, they are not performing as a team, says Clarke

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Winning major tournaments hinges on teamwork rather than individual brilliance, according to former Australia captain Michael Clarke, who reckons the Mumbai Indians camp is divided into groups, hindering players from functioning cohesively. After the sudden pre-season change in captaincy when Rohit Sharma was unceremoniously replaced by Hardik Pandya, the five-time champions are in descension. They need to win all their remaining five matches to even have a shot at qualifying for the playoffs.

"Yeah, I don't know (they will make it to the playoffs). I think it's wishful thinking for Mumbai this entire IPL." "I think there's a lot more going on than what we are seeing on the outside and you can't have that many good players and perform this inconsistently." "So, I think there are different groups inside that changing room and something is not working, they are not gelling together, they are not playing as a team," Clarke said on Star Sports Cricket Live. Despite having proven match winners like Rohit, Suryakumar Yadav, Pandya, Tim David and Jasprit Bumrah, MI have found it difficult to find victories this

season, slumping to six losses from nine outings. Their three wins can be attributed to the individual brilliance of pacer Bumrah and the big-hitting Romario Shepherd.

"Individual brilliance can get them over the line, if Rohit Sharma comes in and gets another hundred or Hardik does something with the bat or Bumrah bowls like a genius again, you never know," Clarke

said. "I think to win big tournaments you need to be a team and not just have individual performances and unfortunately they haven't played well as a team so I hope

they turn it around, but I can't see them winning this game," he added. MI, who occupy the penultimate spot on the points table, take on Lucknow Super Giants on Tuesday in Lucknow.



Rana suspended for one match, fined 100 per cent match fees

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Kolkata Knight Riders seamer Harshit Rana was on Tuesday fined 100 per cent of his match fees and suspended for one match for breaching IPL Code of Conduct during their seven-wicket win over Delhi Capitals here. Rana, who was fined 60 per cent of his match fees for giving a flying-kiss send off to Sunrisers Hyderabad batter Mayank Agarwal in an earlier match, almost repeated the same offence when he knocked over Abhishek Porel in their game against Delhi on Monday. Rana was seen pointing his hand towards Porel, indicating him to go back to pavilion and was about to give another flying kiss before he stopped short of doing that. He was also seen appealing excessively after hitting Rasikh Salam high on his pads. "Rana committed a Level 1 offence under Article 2.5 of the IPL's Code of Conduct. He admitted to the offence and

accepted the Match Referee's sanction. For Level 1 breaches of the Code of Conduct, the Match Referee's decision is final and binding," the IPL said in a statement. "The player was earlier penalised under the same level and article of the IPL Code of Conduct," it added. Rana will now miss KKR's next match against Mumbai Indians in an away game on Friday. Article 2.5 of the IPL Code of Conduct addresses offences related to "Using language, actions or gestures which disparage or which could provoke an aggressive reaction from another player in the match." In KKR's IPL opener against SRH on March 23, Rana committed two Level 1 offences under Article 2.5 of the IPL's Code of Conduct. He was fined 10 per cent and 50 per cent of his match fees for the two respective offences. Rana is KKR's joint leading wicket-taker with the spin duo of Sunil Narine and Varun Chakravarthy. The trio have 11 wickets each.

Format C-1
(for candidate to publish in Newspapers, TV)

Declaration about criminal cases
(As per the judgment dated 25' September, 2018, of Hon'ble Supreme Court in WP(Civil) No. 536 of 2011 (Public Interest Foundation & Ors. Vs. Union of India & Anr.)

Name and address of candidate: **ARJUN MUNDA**
64A, KHELARISAI, VILL.-KHELARISAI, PO-KHARSAWAN, PS-KHARSAWAN, DISTRICT-SERAIKELA KHARSAWAN, JHARKHAND — 833216

Name of political party : **BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY**
(Independent candidates should write "Independent" here)

Name of Election : **ELECTION TO THE HOUSE OF THE PEOPLE - 2024**

Name of Constituency : **11— KHUNTI (ST) PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY**

ARJUN MUNDA (name of candidate), a candidate for the above-mentioned election, declare for public information the following details about my criminal antecedents:

(A) Pending criminal cases

Sl. No.	Name of Court	Case No. and dated	Status of case(s)	Section(s) of Acts concerned and brief description of offence(s)
1	MS NUTAN EKKA, JUDICIAL MEGISTRATE 1, RANCHI	FIR NO. 107/23, DT. 11.04.2023.	APPEAL FOR REVISION FILED VIDE W.P. (Cr) NO. 270 OF 2024 at Jharkhand High Court for quashing of FIR No. 107/23 of Dhurwa PS	SECTION 147, 148, 188, 109, 353, 352, 427, 323 OF I.P.C. Protest against Jharkhand State Government Policy

(B) Details about cases of conviction for criminal offences

Sl. No.	Name of Court & date(s) of order(s)	Description of offence(s) & punishment imposed	Maximum Punishment Imposed
NA	NOT APPLICABLE	NOT APPLICABLE	NOT APPLICABLE

***In the case of election to Council of States or election to Legislative Council by MLAs, mention the election concerned in place of name of constituency.**