

rallies to beat American Tommy Paul 1-6, 7-6 (7/3), 6-2 to book a championship rematch with Carlos Alcaraz at the ATP-WTA Indian Wells Masters, P 16

Asian Games bronze medallist athlete Gulveer Singh shatters a 16-yr-old national record in men's 10000m to finish 2nd in his heat at The Ten in San Juan Capistrano in California. The 25-yr-old clocks 27.41.81 to better the earlier nat'l mark of 28:02.89, P 15

While discussing economy & auto industry, **Trump** promises to place tariffs on cars made abroad if he wins in Nov. He says, 'Now if I don't get elected, it's going to be a bloodbath for the whole - that's going to be the least of it', P 14

Parents

shocked!

Leverage Edu

finds ₹2 crore

courses under

Thinking studying in

USA requires a mountain

of money? Think again!

Leverage Edu, founded

by Akshay Chaturvedi is

able study options under

wal-

Job Assistance

Programs

counselling

services, exclusive

partnerships, and a

unreachable ₹2 crore

USA gets slashed to

Students make

seagulls dance

at their ultimate

Studying abroad is not

an adventure with

boat parties

and cultural

It's not just

about classes;

it's entering a

life, blending

vibrant student

rigorous academ-

ics with unforgetta-

ble social experiences.

Prepare for a journey

where every day is a

celebration of global

friendships and life

lessons beyond the

classroom. Welcome to

your ultimate adventure!

festivals that

dazzle the night.

where seagulls

join the dance,

just about education; it's

under ₹20 lakhs!

boat party

abroad

ly that seemingly

touch of magic, sudden-

price tag for studying in

₹20 lakhs, so you won't

end up broke.

Indian

beam-

ing with

because

sending

the idea of

their kids to

par-

ents

are

joy

your powerful partner,

guiding you to afford-

₹20 lakhs for

students!

Russian President Vladimir Putin has won Russia's presidential election with 87.97% of the vote, according to the first official results, P 14



ADVERTORIAL

Donors for 94% electoral bond funding not disclosed so far

Top 5 Parties Got 87%, None Has **Revealed Details**

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

The Election Commission on Sunday released data on electoral bonds that had been given to the Supreme Court in a sealed cover, but the new data showed that no donors' details were revealed by the five biggest recipients — BJP, Congress, Trinamool, BRS and BJD, which together account for 87% of EB funds.

All told, parties that gave no details account for over 94% of the total raised through EBs, while the two that fully revealed their donors — DMK and Goa Forward Party — account for barely 4%.

The SC has asked SBI why it did not provide details of the unique number of each bond,

▶ Related reports on electoral bonds on P 10

which would help match donor and recipient, but exactly when that data will be put out remains unclear, with the apex court to hear what SBI has to say on the issue on Monday.

With Sunday's data, it is now possible to get a full picture of how much each party received through EBs since their inception till the SC shut down the scheme. BJP, with Rs 8,251 crore, got just a bit more than all other parties put together.

Congress with Rs 1,952 crore and Trinamool with Rs 1,717 crore were a distant second and third.

Somewhere between the parties that draped themselves completely in a veil and those that opened the kimono were those that did a halfmonty — including JD(S), RJD, AAP, NCP, JD(U) and SP - with details only for the period from Jan to May 2019.

▶ 'Won't reveal donors', P 10 Cong 2nd-largest gainer

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

electoral bonds last week, one

of the more surprising reve

lations was that Trinamool

Congress, a regional party

restricted largely to one state,

had received more than Cong-

ress, a national party. Sunda-

y's fresh data dump from the

EC shows that Congress has

actually received more thro-

ugh EBs than Trinamool, tho-

the period from April 12, 2019

onwards. What was also avai-

lable in the public domain

earlier was the collation of

EB data for 2017-18 and 2018-19

by the Association for Demo-

cratic Reforms. Those two fi-

gures combined put the Tri-

Sunday's release has provided

is the data for the first 11 days

The fresh information that

namool ahead of Congress.

The earlier data was for

ugh not by much.

hen the Election Co-

mmission released

the first set of data on

from EBs, slightly ahead

of TMC, shows fresh data

BJP GOT MORE THAN Full Disclosure ALL OTHERS COMBINED Account for about 4% of total) **Partial Disclosure** No Donors Disclosed Only till May 2019, account for less than 1% of total Account for over 94% of total donations through EBs **Total Received Prominent Donors** (₹ cr) Total Received (₹ cr) 8,251 JD(S) 89.8 | JSW Steel, Megha BJP Construction, Aditya 1,952 Cong Birla Group 1,708 Trinamool 73.5 | Prudent Electoral Trust RJD 1,408 BRS 69.0 Bajaj Group, Torrent Pharma, AAP **Shirke Construction** 1,020 NCP 65.3 | Bajaj Finserv, C Poonawalla, YSRCP 500 Bharti Airtel, Avinash Bhosle TDP 321 14.1 | No big names Shiv Sena 227 Chennai Super Kings AIADMK SDF* SAD 7 6.0 | Alembic Pharma *Sikkim Democratic Front **Prominent Donors Full Disclosure** Donation | Prominent Donors Donation Account for over 4% ₹656.5cr Prudent Future Gaming, Mega ₹ 0.5cr of total donations Electoral Infrastructure, India Goa Forward Party Trust through EBs

At ₹509cr, 'Lottery King' contributed 77% of DMK's income from electoral bonds

Bharti.Jain@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Future Gaming and Hotel Services, owned by 'lottery king' Santiago Martin, who has been under probe by the Enforcement Directorate and Central Bureau of Investigation since 2019, contributed Rs 509 crore to DMK between 2019-20 and 2023-24. This accounts for 77% of the Rs 656.5 crore received by Tamil Nadu's ruling party in electoral bonds.

As per fresh details of the bonds released by Election Commission on Sunday, Future Gaming, the biggest overall political donor through the EB route across the country, deposited contributions

11-DAY PERIOD KEY

> Fresh info that Sunday's

from April 1, 2019 to April 11,

ECI release provided is

2019, a crucial period

for electoral funding

2019 Lok Sabha polls

as it was on the eve of

> While Cong encashed

EBS worth nearly ₹142cr

just ₹10cr. As a result,

to ₹1,717cr

over those 11 days, TMC got

TMC with ₹1,952cr compared

of 2019-20, that is the period

from April 1, 2019 to April 11,

2019, a crucial period for electo-

ral funding as it was on the eve

of the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

That shows that while Cong-

ressencashed EBS worth near-

ly Rs 142 crore over those 11 da-

ys, Trinamool got just Rs 10

crore. As a result, in the total

till date, Congress pips Trina-

mool with Rs 1,952 cr compa-

red to Rs 1,717 cr.

in total till date, Cong pips

for DMK in four tranches purchasing bonds worth Rs 60 crore between Oct 23, 2020 and Oct 29, 2020, Rs 249 crore between April 5, 2021 and Jan 11, 2022, Rs 160 crore between April 11, 2022 and Oct 12, 2022 and, finally, Rs 40 crore on April 20, 2023.

Cements, Sun Network

DMK's other major donors through bond during this period (2019-20 and 2023-24) included Mega Infrastructure (Rs 105 crore) which figures among the top donors and has also faced probes, India Cements (Rs14crore), Sun TV Network (Rs 10 crore), Triveni (Rs 8 crore) and Ramco Cements (Rs 5 crore).

▶ Collected details, P 10

Guj firm, Bajaj gave AAP most

based Torrent Pharmaceuticals were among the major contributors to AAP war chest for the 2019 LS polls. AAP was among the parties that revealed details of its donors for the period from Jan to May 2019.

It received Rs 5.75 crore through electoral bonds. Of this, Rs 3 crore came from Bajaj Group. Another crore came from Torrent Pharma and a crore from Pune-based B G Shirke Construction Technology Pvt Ltd. Bangalore-based KMZ Investments contributed Rs 50 lakh. Delhi-based firms or individuals accounted for only Rs 5,01,000 and Punjab-based companies or persons did not figure in the list at all. TNN

Poll bonds were just left at our offices, don't know by whom, say TMC & JD(U)

Vishwa Mohan & Dipak Dash

New Delhi: In a bizarre explanation to mask their donors. Trinamool Congress and JD (U), in their electoral bond disclosures for 2018-19, said some anonymous persons dropped/ handed over sealed envelopes in their respective offices in Kolkata and Patna and, therefore, they were unaware of

who made the donations. Though JD(U) disclosed the identities of donors of Rs3 crore out of Rs 13 crore it received in April 2019, TMC did not disclose identities of donors who collectively donated nearly Rs 75 crore through electoral bonds to the party between

July 16, 2018, and May 22, 2019. "Most of these bonds were sent to our office and dropped in the drop box or sent through messengers from various persons who wished to support our party, many of whom prefer to remain anonymous Thus, we are not in the posses-

JD(U) REVEALS

WHO DONATED ₹3CR > TMC did not disclose identities of the donors who gave ₹75 crore through electoral bonds between July 16, 2018, and May 22, 2019

> Party said most bonds were sent to its office, put in drop box or sent through messengers, so it didn't know names/details of buyers

> JD(U) disclosed identities of 2 donors who gave ₹3 crore out of ₹13 crore in April 2019

sion of names and other details of the buyers," TMC said in its submission to EC on May 27, 2019. JD(U), in its submission on May 30, 2019, said, "Somebody came to our office on April 3, 2019, in Patna and handed over a sealed envelope and when it was opened, we found a bunch containing 10 electoral bonds of Rs1crore each."

►Unique numbers, P 10

ahead of '19 poll

ata put out by EC show that Bajaj Group and Gujarat-

study in USA doesn't seem like a let-draining mission anymore, all thanks to Leverage Edu. How you ask? With their top-notch

Students enjoy **Chole Bhature in** their accommodations abroad

Study in USA with Leverage Edu

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TOEFL Exam Worth ₹16,900/-

making you feel at home away from home. Along with that, they can avail many important facilities like gas, electricity, water, WiFi, international sim cards, free airport pick-up and much more.

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Snatchers pick wrong guy: An encounter cop

wo snatchers who targeted a jogger at Nehru Park in Chanakyapuri Saturday were in for a shock when he turned out to be encounter specialist Vinod Badola from



Delhi Police's special cell. The men walked off with his chain after holding him at

gunpoint. But the unarmed cop chased them on foot and engaged in a fierce fistfight, pinning down one. When the other man fled, Badola informed PCR and started hunting for him with cops. The snatcher tried mingling with walkers and sat near a fountain but was nabbed, reports Rajshekhar Jha. P4 : manded a ransom of Rs 3 lakh. line. An hour later, the father ▶3 secs of audio, P 10

Fooled by your own kid? Chilling rise of AI voice cloning scams

Himanshi Dhawan & Sneha Bhura

magine your child crying on the phone and asking ↓ for help? Sarita Khanna*, the middle-aged wife of a businessman from MP's Khargone, did what any mother would do when she got a call from an unknown number that her 19-year-old daughter Surbhi studying in an Indore college had been kidnapped.

The caller said in a stern voice, "Your daughter is with us. Do as you are told, otherwise you won't see her again." She could hear a girl sobbing in the background. As soon as he finished speaking, Surbhi's cries of 'mumma' became clear and the phone seemed to be pulled away from her. The man de-

HOW TO STAY SAFE

> Set a verbal 'codeword' with family or trusted friends. Ask for it if they call, text or email for help, particularly if they're older or more vulnerable

Always question the source. If it's a call. text or email from an unknown sender, or even if it's from a number you recognise, stop, pause and think. Does that really sound like them? Hang up and call the person directly or try to

verify info before responding or sending money > Be thoughtful about friends and connections you have online. The wider your

connections and the more you share, the more you may open yourself up to having your identity cloned for malicious purposes Use identity monitoring and theft services that can catch suspicious activity and

A distraught Sarita tried calling her daughter's number but it was switched off. She called her husband but before he could rush back home, she had already transferred Rs 50,000 on-

notify you Source: McAfee Security got a call from Surbhi who said she was in the hostel sleeping & had switched off her phone. It's a new scam that uses AI-powered voice cloning software.



MOONRISE 12.19PM (MON)

MOONSET 3.03AM (TUE)



Parcel at IGI leads to gang sending SIMs abroad | 4

DPCC study to determine **ON SUNDAY** sources of (MODERATE CATEGORY) Yamuna pollution | 6



No WD likely,

mercury may

33°C in 2 days

shoot up to

BJP Wants To Arrest CM Before Polls: AAP

Says Agencies Helping Modi, BJP Rubbishes It

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: AAP senior leader Atishi on Sunday called Enforcement Directorate (ED) and Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) PM Narendra Modi's "gunde" and said BJP wanted to arrest the party's national convener, Arvind Kejriwal, before the Lok Sabha elections.

Addressing a press conference, Atishi said ED had now served summonses to the chief minister in two different cases related to the liquor excise policy and Delhi Jal Board (DJB). Calling the DJB case "fabricated", Delhi finance minister pointed out that legal validity of previous summonses in the excise policy case had already been challenged by Kejriwal and there would be arguments over its legitimacy soon.

"Instead of awaiting the court's decision, ED has sent another summons in the excise policy case," Atishi said. The probe agency has asked Kejriwal to appear before it on March 21.

Referring to the DJB case, Atishi claimed it was 100% fabricated and no investigation had been going on in it. "BJP's aim to arrest Kejriwal in the 'fake' excise policy case has not been fulfilled, so a new fabricated case has been created and the CM has been summoned. Their sole aim is to prevent CM Arvind Kejriwal from campaigning in the elections by arresting him," Atishi said.

"ED and CBI act as Modi's henchmen, targeting his opponents. Modi govt uses ED, CBI and income-tax department only to eliminate Modi's opponents," she alleged.



Atishi addresses a press conference on Sunday

Atishi said Kejriwal had personally appeared in the Rouse Avenue Court on Saturday where he was granted bail. She added that whether Kejriwal would have to appear before ED on the basis of those summonses would be decided in the court. CM was granted bail in relation to an ED complaint over skipping its summonses in the excise policy case.

Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva, however, claimed ED was working independently, but Kejriwal was repeatedly flouting the law. "Kejriwal's bail vesterday has nothing to do with the liquor policy case. After disrespecting the summonses, which he earlier claimed were illegal, he has now taken bail, confirming their validity," Sachdeva said.

Unhappy with the words used by Atishi in her press conference, Sachdeva said the conduct and language of the AAP leaders was a "testament to their character". "Former deputy CM and an AAP MP have been in jail for a long time, but their repeated assertion that there was no scam in liquor policy is

Summonses for **AAP** convener

FORECAST Mainly clear sky. Maximum and minimum

SUNRISE 6.26AM (TUE)

SUNSET 6.31PM (MON)

▶ Continued from P1

Investigations and digital evidence show that Jagdish Kumar Arora (exchief engineer of DJB who was arrested) passed on bribes (received from contractors) to various persons, including persons connected with AAP. Bribe amounts were also passed on as election funds to AAP." ED had to nearly three lakhs. said in a statement.

AAP minister Atishi Marlena has called the DJB case "fake" and accused the agency of trying to frame the CM to arrest him and prevent him ded the Conduct of Election from campaigning in the Lok Rules, 1961, on the recommen-Sabha polls.

CM's questioning in both cases is with regard to his role as the national convener of AAP.

Last week, Supreme Court had turned down the curative petition filed by former deputy CM Manish Sisodia against apex court's earlier order denying him bail in the alleged liquor scam.

ludicrous," Sachdeva said.

On the summons to Kejriwal in the DJB case, he claimed, "The jal board scam was bigger than the liquor case." Sachdeva alleged, "Four or five officials have already been arrested because fake documents were made and money was looted. Work was shown on paper, but the ground reality is completely different. Contractors were paid and they (AAP leaders) took their commission in that payment."

61-yr-old dies after speeding biker hits him near Gole Mkt, takes him to hosp and was injured. Vijay who lives with his parents

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: A 61-year-old man was mowed down by a speeding motorcycle in New Delhi area when he was walking from Kali Bari Lane towards Gole Market on Saturday. Victim Ram Naresh Mahto was on his way around 8.20am when the motorcycle rammed into him, police said.

Complainant Rajesh Kumar, who works as an ambulance driver at Ram Manohar Lohia hospi-

tal, witnessed the accident and informed police. The motorcycle driver Vijay (25), who works

as a waiter at a hotel in Connaught Place, also fell,

and brother in Nangloi, was on the way to work when the accident occurred, police said.

Vijay took injured Mahto to RML hospital, police said, adding the victim could not give his statement due to the nature of his injuries, and later died.

Mahto, who retired after his service at Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited, is survi-

ved by his wife and two sons. An FIR has been registered for rash driving, endangering human life, and causing death by negligence under sections 279, 337 and 304A of the IPC.



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EC move to help 3L people in city to cast their votes from homes

Atul.Mathur@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Over three lakh people, including those above 85 years and persons with disabilities (PwDs), will be eligible to vote through postal ballots in the capital in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

As per the final electoral roll published in Jan this year after the summary revision exercise, Delhi has 2,63,771 voters aged above 80 years and 71,794 PwDs spread across seven Lok Sabha constituencies. Since the Election Commission has decided to allow those above 85 years to cast their votes from the comforts of their homes, officials said the number would come down

This is the first time that the facility will be available to the eligible voters in Lok Sabha elections. After the ministry of law and justice amendation of the Election Commission, in Oct 2019, those over 80 years and PwDs were

Atul.Mathur@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: With more women

participating in voting than

ever before and even domina-

ting political discourse within

their households, they now

find themselves at the fore-

front of various schemes and

policies announced by politi-

cal parties ahead of elections.

nounced Mahila Samman Yo-

jana in the budget, promising a

monthly stipend of Rs 1,000 to

women above 18 years of age,

and proudly promotes their

launched the 'Lakhpati Didi'

programme, aiming to make

women financially self-reli-

ant while promoting various

other women-centric sche-

mes implemented in recent

years. This is perhaps the

first time that BJP has fiel-

ded two women candidates

that with a higher voter tur-

nout in parliamentary as

well as assembly polls in re-

cent elections, women will

now drive the narrative ahe-

Though women constitute

Similarly, the difference in

Political analysts agree

in the capital.

Similarly, BJP recently

free travel in public buses.

Aam Aadmi Party govt an-



Every vote counts: How women are

79,86,572

67,30,371

able to cast votes through postal ballots in the 2020 Delhi assembly polls. Nearly 3,000 people had opted for it.

The rules were amended again in June 2020, during the Covid-19 pandemic, to extend the facility to those infected with the coronavirus. On the EC's recommendation, the postal ballot facility was extended to those above

GENDER POWER

Voter turnout (%) in 2019 Lok

1,47,18,119

Voters in Delhi

Sabha elections

Chandni Chowk Men

North-East

East Delhi

New Delhi

West

South

Total

turnout was even smaller in

the 2020 assembly elections.

While 62.6% of male voters

cast their votes, 62.5% of wo-

men exercised their franchise.

Notably, there were 25 assem-

bly segments, out of 70, where

women voters outnumbered

varied from clusters of unaut-

horised colonies such as Bu-

rari, Sangam Vihar, Badar-

pur and Tughlaqabad to posh

urban pockets like Greater

Kailash and a mix of slums,

lower-middle and middle ur-

female voter turnout in the

2014 Lok Sabha polls was re-

The difference in male and

ban areas like Wazirpur.

These assembly segments

their male counterparts.

Voters' turnout (%) in previous elections

North-West

Women

Women

65 years. However, after the EC realised that providing the postal ballots facility to such a large number of people would not be practical, the rules were changed yet again in Aug 2020.

Changing the definition fected or suspected to be in- of senior citizens who are eligible to choose the postal ballot facility from "above 80 years" to "above 85 years", the law ministry issued a ga-

Gender Ratio | 843 women

TOTAL

62.7

56.9

59.0

58.7

62.5

62.6

61.4

58.4

58.9

2019

60.1

corded at 1.5 percentage po-

ints, which decreased to 1.1

percentage points in the 2015

Delhi assembly elections,

further reduced to 0.7 in the

2019 Lok Sabha elections, and

just 0.1 percentage points in

associate professor of politi-

cal science at Delhi Universi

ty's Hindu College, highligh-

ted that state-led economic

reforms in the 21st century

followed by women-centric

schemes launched by govts

have given bargaining power

cond decade of the 21st centu-

ry saw the launch of more

Singh observed, "The se-

to women in politics.

Chandrachur Singh, an

the 2020 assembly polls.

60.2

60.1

2020

62.7 63.7

voters per 1,000 men

63.8 Women

64.5

58.5

2015

zette notification recently. With the age bracket now changed, officials said they

tual number of people who would be eligible for this facility in Delhi. With 50,208 persons aged above 80 years, West Delhi

New Delhi. South Delhi has the least number of 29,349 voters aged 80 years and above. North East Delhi has the highest number of 13,320 PwDs (with 40% benchmark disability) registered as voters, followed by 12,901 in West Delhi and 12,758 in North West Delhi. New Delhi

has just 5,519 PwDs registered as voters. As per the rules, people willing to avail the facility will have to fill up a form during the dates announced by EC. A team of poll officials will visit their house to facilitate postal ballots' use befo-

re the actual date of polling.

This made women more as-

significantly better, and they

sed that they might gain mo-

"In the current political regi-

me, governance is more gen-

der-sensitive. Women are the

target group, as they trans-

son Priyanka Kakkar emp-

AAP's chief spokesper-

cend caste identities.'

trend for democracy.

women-centric

TIMES NEWS NETWORK will soon make public the ac-

New Delhi: Daytime is going to get hot and dry in the capital as the maximum temperature is likely to reach 33 degrees Celsius over the next two days. Met officials said no may have the highest number of people who may be eli-

western disturbances were gible for postal ballots, folloexpected this week and the wed by Chandni Chowk and skies too will remain clear, leading to an increase in daytime temperatures. The minimum temperatu-

re on Sunday was 11.9 degrees Celsius, a notch below normal, against 10.1 degrees Celsius a day earlier. The maximum temperature was 30.8 degrees Celsius, a notch below normal, against 30.3 degrees Celsius a day earlier.

At 31.6 degrees Celsius, the Sports Complex near Akshardham temple was the warmest area in the city.



ENJOYING THE WEATHER: Two white tigers play inside their enclosure at Delhi zoo on Sunday

An official at the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said the temperature is likely to rise.

hasised that growing partici-"The city will see clear skipation and interest of woes from Monday onwards. men in politics is a positive This will lead to a rise in the daytime temperature, and the "Initiatives like Mahila minimum temperature might Samman Yojana have been fall. The winds will be northintroduced not just as a rewesterly, which are dry, so the sponse to elections but also humidity may drop. Due to the as part of our ongoing comlow speeds, it would not immitment to empower and repact the temperature much," cognise the contributions of said the official.

women in all spheres of soci-According to the weather ety. The provision of free tradepartment, the maximum vel for women in public buand minimum temperatures ses has facilitated safe travel on Monday are likely to hover for women, incentivising inaround 31 and 13 degrees Celsicreased participation in the us respectively. By Wednesday, the maximum temperatu-Delhi BJP secretary Hare is likely to hover around 33 degrees Celsius.

rish Khurana also appreciated the increased participation of women in electoral politics, considering it a healthy trend for Indian democracy. a day earlier.

"The credit goes to PM Narendra Modi. Schemes such every house, and Jan Dhan Yojana have been designed to benefit women, empower them, and encourage active participation in governance. The women reservation bill, which was passed by Parliament, is icing on the cake," he said.

workforce," Kakkar said.

Meanwhile, the air quality remained 'moderate'. The air quality index (AQI), on a scale of 0 to 500, was 193, against 167

Pollution monitoring as Ujwala Yojana, toilets in agencies expect the AQI to remain moderate from Monday to Wednesday. "The air quality is likely to be in the poor to moderate category in the subsequent six days," said the decision support system at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM).

School Buzz



The sports arena came alive with a vibrant display of sportsmanship as several prestigious schools from the NCR gathered at Raghubir Singh Junior Modern School, Humayun Road for the highly anticipated in-

ter-school athletic meet 2024. The event began with a march past by the participating teams. The spirited competition brought together young athletes who demonstrated exceptional skill and sportsmanship in various track and field events, including exhilarating races and displays of strength in the shot put, high jump,



and long jump. The host school emerged as the overall winner, claiming 'Best Athletic Team Trophy.' The winner athletes exhibited outstanding performances, reflecting the commitment to nurturing sporting talent. Air Force Bal Bharti School secured the position of the first runner-up while Greenfields School clinched the title of the second runner-up, adding to the excitement of the event.

The annual function - 'Resplendence' at Bhatnagar International Foundation School, Vasant Kunj was a spectacular display of talent and dedication. Students poured their hearts into a variety of colourful dances, meticulously choreographed and adorned with vibrant props, creating a visual feast for the



audience. A captivating skit on the royal circus of virtues portrayed how virtues triumph over fleeting materialistic desires. Their commitment to portraying these values through artistry and skill was evident, making the show a resounding success that left a lasting impact on everyone present.

Shanti Gyan Vidyapeeth School, Dwarka celebrated its annual sports day and prize distribution ceremony in the school sports ground. The chief guest of the event Dr Kiran Bedi was welcomed by Ashwini Khurana. The guest of honour Ms Pinki (Arjuna awardee lawn-bowls) was welcomed by Raj Kumar Khurana. The school report was given by MD Rohit Santosh Khurana. Students performed beautiful drills, aerobics, and power dance. The pole drill was an eye-catching performance. Students took part in various races like umbrella race,

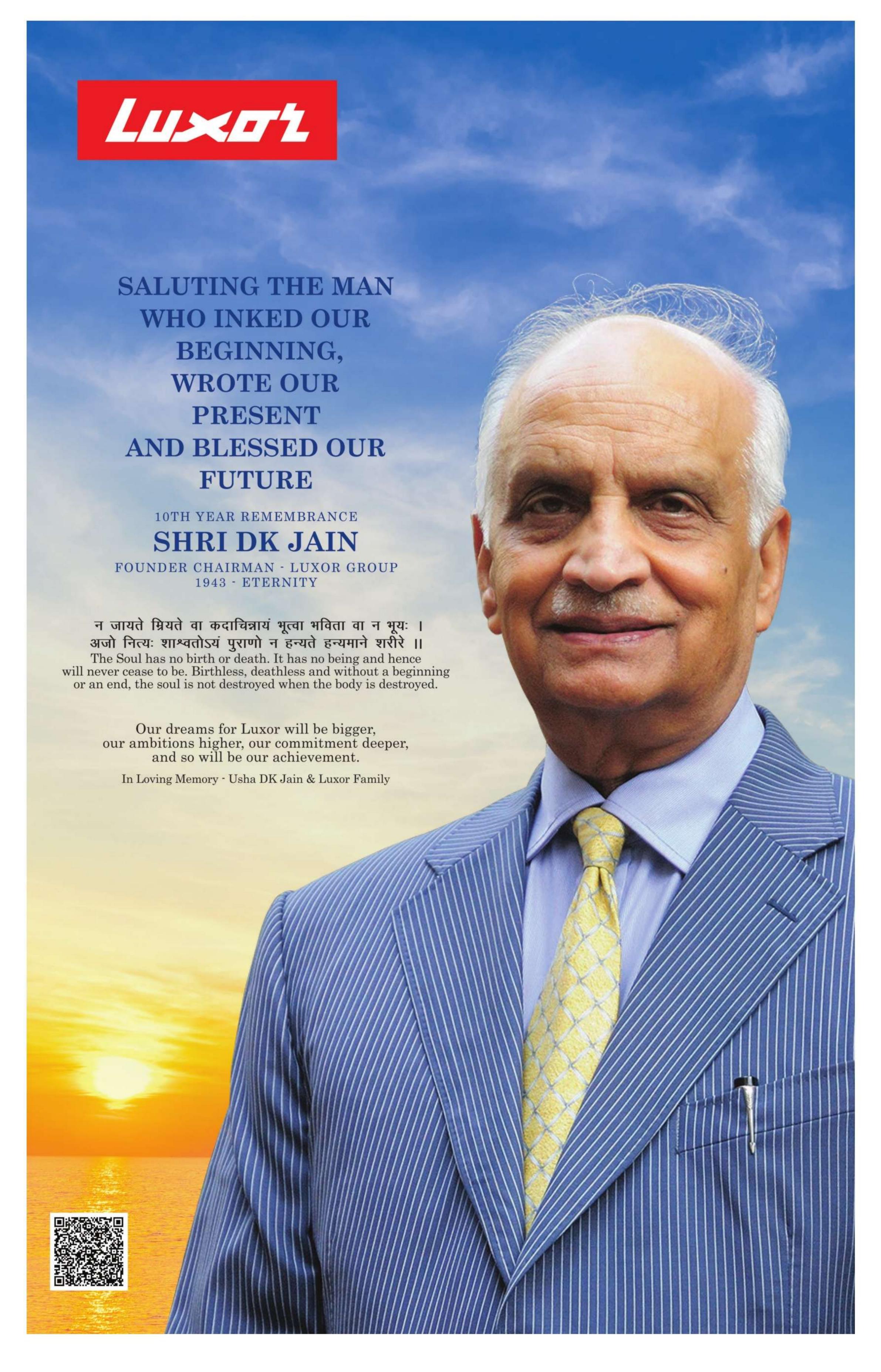


sack race, wheel barrow race, hurdle race etc. Students were glad to see their Parents also taking part in various races. Students and parents were delighted to receive the medals. The students were awarded trophies in various categories for the current session. Dr Kiran Bedi Mam and Ms Pinky laid emphasis on the need of participation in sports.

Ramakrishna Sr Sec School, Vikaspuri celebrated its 34th annual prize distribution ceremony. The lighting of the lamp done by the chief guest IP Aggarwal, chairman, Triveni Educational and Social Welfare Society, along with the dignitaries, added a touch of spirituality, enlightenment and positivity. Presided over by school chairman Dr S K Bhatia, the ceremony had a notable presence of other distinguished guests as well. School principal Dr Mamta Aggarwal highlighted school's achievements and milestones, in the annual report. The chief guest, bestowed



certificates upon the deserving students and shared his insightful words of wisdom, imparting valuable guidance and blessings to the studentss. The students were presented certificates for achievements in academics, sports, zonal competitions, and maintaining 100% attendance. The meritorious students of classes X and XII were also given cash prizes based on their exemplary performance in CBSE Board examinations. A remarkable instrumental tribute to 110 years of Indian Cinema was presented by the school Rock Band, "Beyond the Barriers". This was followed by a ballet, 'Silver Screen Saga- A Tribute to Indian Cinema's Remarkable Journey of 110 Years, paying homage to its rich history.



Parcel at IGI leads to gang sending SIM cards abroad

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The airport police has busted a major scam involving the smuggling of "pre-activated Indian SIM cards" to foreign countries by intercepting a suspicious FedEx package.

The SIM cards were allegedly issued in the names of labourers in Agra for a commission and were on their way to Vietnam after being wrapped in carbon paper and hidden in cavities inside diaries.

Sources said the mastermind behind the racket was a Chinese national, who the police are trying to locate. The transactions related to it were done on the cryptocurrency exchange Binance, which the govt banned in Jan this year.

DCP (airport) Usha Rangnani said their probe revealed that these SIMs were meant to be used by gaming apps and by crooks running work from home and social media scams.

Intelligence sources said that such preactivated SIM cards were used in espionage operations by sleuths working for the Ministry of State Security (MSS), the Chinese secret service. Those linked to this busted module are being probed.

DCP Rangnani said four people had been arrested so far and 700 SIMs recovered.

"The arrested men have been identified as Mukul Kumar (22), Hemant (26), Kanhaiya Gupta (29) and Anil Kumar (20)," she added.

The courier firm filed a complaint after detecting the package at the airport. Police randomly selected 60 SIM cards from the package and traced their origins to Agra using technical analysis tools.

found that a man named Mukul Kumar had approached daily wage labourers who worked in factories that made shoes. Kumar had given Rs 200 to each person to apply for a SIM card and claimed that it would help his friends meet SIM sale targets," the DCP further said.

The cards further exchanged hands and reached Anil Kumar in Delhi, who paid Rs 500 per SIM and sent them to an address in Vietnam. Anil got Rs 1,300 for each smuggled SIM into his bank account through Binance.

During interrogation, Anil claimed that he was approached online by someone from Vietnam to supply them with activated SIM cards for gaming apps, etc. Police have recovered 200 more SIM cards from him.

Anil had also put up an ad online loo- targeted by the snatchers was king for people who could supply activated SIM cards, in response to which Kanhaiya, Hemant and others contacted him. Police found that Anil's bank account had figured in 19 other cyber complaints.

Man steals gold from CBI staffer's house

New Delhi: Delhi police is on the look out for a man who allegedly stole over 65 grams of gold from the house of a person working in Central Bureau of Investigation on Thursday.

Dwarka Mor for work, after which his wife heard a voice on the street of a man offering lock fixing service. She called the repairman into her house to fix their cupboard around 4pm. The man tried to fix the lock but claimed he could not do it alone and would need assistance of his brother

and left the premises. However, the accused never returned.

When Kumar arrived at his residence and was informed about the incident, he Rajendra Kumar left his residence in checked the cupboard and found several pinned him down and disarvaluables missing from it. Gold bangles med him. The other, however, weighing 4 tolas, gold earrings weighing 1 tola, a gold pendant set weighing 1.5 tolas and four other pairs of gold earrings were found missing.

A case has been registered at Mohan and started hunting for the se-Garden police station. TNN

Snatchers Get Target Wrong, Jogger Turns Out To Be Encounter Cop; Held

They Try To Snatch Officer's Chain, He Resists & Disarms One Of Them, Calls PCR

Rajshekhar.Jha@timesgroup.com

"Raids were conducted in the area. It was New Delhi: When two snatchers targeted a jogger at the entrance of Nehru Park in Chanakyapuri on Saturday evening, they had no idea what they had walked into. They tried to take away the man's chain but failed. So, they whipped out a pistol, assaulted the man and threatened to shoot him.

Holding him at gunpoint, they broke the chain dangling from his neck and walked away.

On any other day, it would have been recorded as another snatching attempt. However, this rolled differently. The man decorated encounter specialist Vinod Badola of Delhi Police's special cell. He was also trained in Krav Maga.

The tables turned within seconds as the unarmed officer, in his tracksuit, decided to take on the armed snatchers by himself.

A high-voltage drama ensued as Badola chased the snatchers on foot and got into a fierce fist fight with them. The officer grappled with one of them, managed to flee as the officer held on to his associate.

Badola dialled 112 and informed the PCR but didn't give up cond snatcher with local police. The other criminal tried to escape by mingling among walkers and sat near a fountain.

He too was located and caught. DCP (New Delhi) Devesh Mahla said the two snatchers

were identified as Gaurav

HOW THE TABLES TURNED



WHAT HAPPENED

- > Two snatchers waylay a mar out for a walk, try to flee with his chain
- > Fail as the man resists; a snatcher pulls out a pistol, threatens to shoot
- > The snatcher punches the man in the face, snatches the chain and flees
- > Victim, a decorated cop, fights back and chases the men

wan Dev from a slum cluster

on Tughlaq Road. Both have

been booked under stringent

sections of robbery with at-

helm of several high-profile

team tracked down gangster Ni-

tu Dabodia, who had become a

terror for the city's business-

men, and gunned him down in a

operations and encounters.

Badola, 48, has been at the

In Oct 2013, Badola and his

tempt to cause death.

Near Nehru park entry gate, Chanakyapuri > Pins down

- the armed man, disarms him: calls PCR on 112
- The other snatcher tries to flee by mingling with walkers > Cop tracks him down among
- walkers near the fountain, hands him over to local police

hotel south Delhi's Vasant Kunj.

multiple anti-terror operations,

one of which earned him the co-

veted Union Home Minister's

covered a hitherto unknown

modus operandi of a Taliban-

backed cartel using the land ro-

ute from Afghanistan through

Iran and then via sea to the

ports of western India for nar-

Badola and his team also un-

Special Operations Medal.

Thereafter, Badola was in

THE TARGET Vinod Badola (48) of Special

> Has been at the helm of several high-profile anti-terror operations and encounters of feared gangsters

> Claim to fame is the encounter of gangster Neetu Dabodia in Vasant

kg of heroin worth Rs 1,320 cro-

re was seized. It turned out to be

the biggest recovery in Delhi

cluding five Afghan nationals

from Delhi and Harvana, were

arrested. A heroin processing

factory was busted in southe-

of robbery was reported in the

jurisdiction of Chankyapuri

"On March 16, an incident

ast Delhi's Jamia Nagar.

Nine cartel members, in-

Police's history at the time.

from Sarojini Nagar and Pa- fierce encounter near a five-star cotics smuggling. Around 330 police station. During the inci-

Kunj in 2013

Busted a Talibancontrolled heroin cartel Tracked down terrorists

sent by Canada-based KTF chief Arsh Dalla, who beheaded a man in Delhi and filmed it

Was recently awarded the coveted Union Home Minister's Special Operations Medal

dent, two robbers tried to

snatch a complainant's chain.

One of them punched the

complainant's face and poin-

ted a pistol at him and took away the chain. After that,

both started running away," a

senior officer said, adding that

both were caught and arrested.

CCTV footage from near the

area and stepped up patrolling

around the spot.

The police have obtained

NE riots: 2

men freed

on benefit

New Delhi: A Delhi

court acquitted two

men of the charges

for offences of rio-

hurt to two police of-

ficers and other

charges in a case re-

lated to Delhi riots

2020 stating that "both the accused

persons entitled for

ditional Sessions

Judge Pulastya Pra-

machala acquitted

both the men noting

that evidence related

to identification of

both these accused

persons is not full

proof, and it shall not

be safe to rely upon

the testimony of two

key public witnesses

to presume that both

the accused persons

were actually part of

of the accused persons by these two vic-

tims or injured (poli-

ce) officers is shadowed with clouds of doubt," the court said.

The court was hearing a case against Abid Ali and Sheru

alias Raja, who were

accused of being

part of a riotous mob

that vandalised pro-

perties and pelted

stones on the main

Vijay Park Road during the communal

riots on Feb 23, 2020.

police station had re-

The Bhajanpura

"The whole process of identification

aforesaid mob.

The court of Ad-

benefit of doubt".

voluntarily

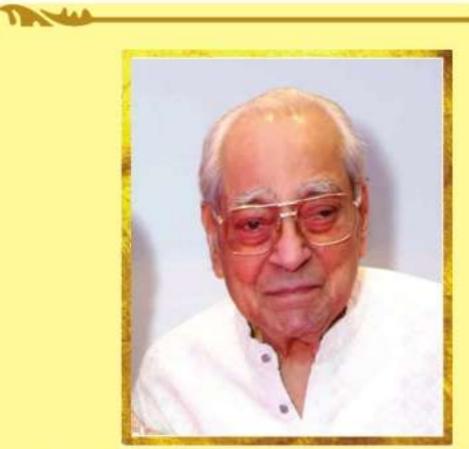
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25-12-1935 - 15-03-2024

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will be held on Monday, 18th March 2024 at Chinmaya Mission, 89, Lodhi Road, New Delhi from 12.00 noon to 1.00 pm

> Fondly remembered by: Smt. Mohini Malhotra

Sudha & Rajeev Malhotra Anita & Tarun Kapoor Sanskriti & Jai Kapoor

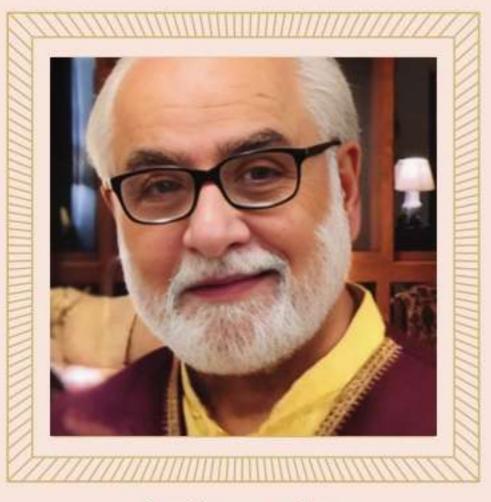
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Rewari blast: Haryana CM orders SDM probe

Ankita.Anand@timesgroup.com

Rewari: Chief minister Nayab Singh Saini has ordered a magisterial probe into the blast at an auto parts factory in Rewari that left 38 workers injured on Saturday evening.

Officials said 19 of the 38 injured workers had suffered more than 50% burns. Two of the workers with more than 90% burns were shifted to Delhi's Safdarjung hospital on Sunday.

Around 70 workers were on evening shift when an explosion occurred in the dust collector of Lifelong Pvt Ltd's factory in Dharuhera, Rewari, around 5.45pm, leading to a blaze. Videos circulated on social media showed people running out of the factory amid plumes of smoke.

An FIR was registered against Shivam, a contractor, and others following a complaint by one of the in-

jured workers. The FIR was registered under sections 287 (act rashly or negligently with any machinery as to endanger human life, knowingly or negligently omits to take such order with any machinery in his possession or under his care as is sufficient to guard against any probable danger), 337 (causing hurt by acting rashly or negligently, endangering human life) and 34 (act done by several persons with common intention) of the IPC.

The probe ordered by CM Saini will be carried out by sub-divisional magistrate Ravinder Singh. "He has instructed the Rewari deputy commissioner to ensure all the injured workers get proper treatment," an official said.

While 10 workers are undergoing treatment at Civil Hospital in Rewari, those with serious burns have been admitted to Rohtak medical college. Two critically injured workers are at Safdarjung.

"There are 19 patients at the Rohtak hospital. Two of them had to be shifted to Delhi for better treatment. Five workers are undergoing treatment at a private clinic in Dharuhera. Those with minor injuries have been discharged," said Rahul Hooda, the deputy commissioner.

The investigation team headed by the SDM has been asked to submit a report in two days. "We are, however, willing to give them more time if there is a need. Prima facie, it appears the fire spread from the dust collector. The team will find out the exact cause of the blaze," Hooda added. Senior medical officer Suresh Kataria said the

workers had suffered between 30% and 100% burns. "Some patients had their clothes stuck to their skin, which means they were not clad in safety gear. A few of them suffered 100% burns and some 90%. The Civil Hospital has patients suffering 30-50% burns."

ਕਬੀਰ ਸੇਵਾ ਕਉ ਦੂਇ ਭਲੇ ਏਕੁ ਸੰਤੂ ਇਕੁ ਰਾਮੂ ॥ ਰਾਮ ਜ ਦਾਤਾ ਮਕਤਿ ਕੋ ਸੰਤ ਜਪਾਵੈ ਨਾਮ ॥ Apostle of Service to Humanity

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A Kirtan Samagam is being held at Gurudwara Rakabganj Sahib, Main Hall, Parliament Street, New Delhi on Tuesday, 19th March 2024 between 3:00 to 5.00 pm

to mark the I4th Anniversary of completion of his worldly journey. All who have loved & joined in his cause for service to humanity are humbly requested to participate in this Samagam.

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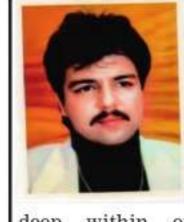
Forever in our thoughts and prayers, Col A. S. Kohli and family

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& your voice always imprinted in our minds. So Loved and So Missed. - Family and Friends.



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treasured part of the story of our lives. The sweet melody of your laughter still resonates within our souls. You'll always

Your chapter remains a

In Loving Memory of

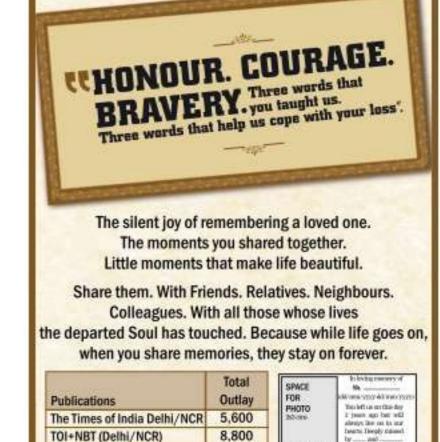
remain a part of our lives, even though you're not physically here with us. We dearly miss you ... Sabharwal Family



In the Loving Memory of DR. SHARDA AGARWAL (09-07-1930 - 18-03-2008)

Everyday that passes, in everything we do, we feel your absence, We Miss You.

Dr. Kavita A. Sharma (Niece), Parijat & Archana (Nephew & Niece- in- law), Molshree & James Hegberg (Niece & Nephew- in- law) Maya, Travi & Viraat (Grand children).



TOI+ET (Delhi/NCR) REMEMBRANCE SHARING MEMORIES For any information call Vinod: 9958992088 Pankaj: 8130604727

gistered an FIR against the duo under various penal provisions, including for unlawful assembly, voluntarily causing grievous hurt to deter a public servant from his duty and assault or criminal force on a public servant. TNN

Air Charge: Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Chennai, Nagpur & via Rs. 5.00. Leh. Srinagar and via Rs. 2.00. Price in Nepal: NEP Rs.15.00 Made in New Dehi

Cancer takes her, but Tanisa lives on through awareness work Ingesta plant

Ridhima.Gupta @timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Meenakshi Dhingra's daughter, Tanisa, was just 23 years old and had a dream job at Google India. But the family was devastated when the young woman was diagnosed with cancer. "My first reaction was that the reports were wrong. How can someone who is a fitness freak and has a healthy lifestyle get cancer?" asked the mother.

This was in 2016. Tanisa complained about continued stomach pain. Her mother said that in a family for whom health was a priority, they did not think of cancer being a possibility. "For several weeks, we tried general medication without success. We then went for an ultrasound which

eventually raised the alarm, said Meenakshi. Soon after. Tanisa was diagnosed with ovarian cancer and her family got her treatment started in the United States.

It was during treatment

that Tanisa felt she had to work for those who didn't have the privilege of available the best cancer treatment. "One day, Tanisa told me that she wanted the same kind of treatment she was getting with counselling and with extracurricular and entertainment activities — for patients in India, especially those from the underprivileged section," recalled Meenakshi

After her recovery, Tanisa came back to India and joined NGOs working with cancer patients. She also resumed her job and in time she took



up cancer activism. "She went for talks at cancer sup-

port groups, helped raise awareness about the disease and took personal counselling sessions. To support her, I also joined her work and that is when we both discovered the TANISA'S MOTHER SAYS

One day, Tanisa told me that she wanted the same kind of treatment she was getting for patients in India, especially those from the underprivileged section

challenges people face battling cancer," said Meenakshi.

In 2021, Tanisa, then 28, was told by doctors that the cancer had resurfaced. In the following months she succumbed to the disease. "Her passing shattered the family but we did not want to put the brakes on her dream to start an NGO for underprivileged cancer patients. Three

months after she left us, we got the Tanisa Foundation registered," said Meenakshi, overcome with emotions.

The Tanisa Foundation. with its tagline of 'It's okay to not be okay', screens people for cancer in city slums and helps them avail treatment. Till now, it has organised more than 50 camps to create awareness about early detection of cancer.

"There is a higher risk of cancer in the slums, especially because of consumption of tobacco and smoking. Even among women, there is almost no knowledge about cervical cancer, which eventually leads to late detection of the disease," said Meenakshi. "These camps, therefore, have proved very beneficial to the slum dwellers. We have

been able to help many get diagnosed with cancer and have followed up with their treatment also."

The foundation also takes up hair donation and nutrition camps for people in the slums. "Once the treatment starts, it is extremely vital that the patient gets a nutritional diet, which is why we conduct such camps," said

Meenakshi. open a home for scores of people who come to the capital to get cancer treatment but are forced to live on the footpaths outside govt hospitals. "Cancer is becoming more prevalent among people and it is important to raise awareness about and reach out to those who need help," said Tanisa's mother.

at abattoir in **Ghazipur to** take longer Vibha.Sharma @timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Implementation of a project for setting up an ingesta plant at Ghazipur slaughterhouse will take time The NGO now aims to as Municipal Corporation of Delhi is yet to finalise its tender. Based on its cost, the project will require further approval from the commissioner or the house if the cost goes above Rs 5 crore.

"The tender for setting up the plant has been opened and it is in the finalisation stage or can be floated. But even after that we will need a nod from the commissioner or the house, depending on the rates quoted by the agency, for going ahead with the project and issuing the work order. We are hopeful that the project will be implemented on time, this time," said the official.

However, as the model code of conduct can be implemented anytime, the implementation process will automatically get delayed as the house won't be able to give the nod for any such project related to rate and agency finalisation during this period. In the past, MCD has made multiple attempts to call tender but failed in finalising the process.

In May 2022, Ghazipur slaughterhouse was shut down after Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) withdrew consent for its operation while referring to an NGT order and violation of norms. On July 6, DPCC permitted the abattoir to reopen on the NGT's directive to fulfil norms in a time-bound manner, including installing the ingesta and RO plants.

Then in 2023, an NGT-appointed joint committee gave MCD four weeks to address violations at the slaughterhouse after finding that untreated effluents continued to be dumped in the Yamuna and a bio-methanation plant was yet to be installed.

While the RO plant has been installed by the concessionaire of the slaughterhouse on a public-private partnership (PPP) model, the project for installation of ingesta plant is still awaiting implementation.

HC Launches Probe Into Fabrication Of Bail Order

Lawyer Chosen To Help Undertrial Inmates Under Scanner

Abhinav.Garg @timesgroup.com

New Delhi: A query by a wor ried woman about the status of her jailed daughter's bail has triggered an investigation after Delhi High Court found no such matter pending before it.

HC recently initiated a suo motu probe after it came to know that a lawyer who was appointed to help undertrial prisoners had communicated an order that was never passed by it.

The lawyer allegedly created and circulated a fake order that claimed the accused's bail plea had been heard and reserved for orders.

"It is a very serious matter of prima facie forgery and fabrication of an order of Delhi High Court, which requires investigation, as it is not only about alleged forgery of a bail order, which itself is a serious offence and a matter of grave concern, but together with it is another crucial accompanying issue that the forged/fabricated order had been allegedly handed over to an undertrial prisoner by a jail visiting advocate, who has been appointed

Saira Bano, an inmate's mother, submitted before HC that her daughter was given a bail order by a lawyer and she asked her to find out its status. The court expressed shock and concern, stressing the gravity of forging a judicial document and the implications it could have on the integrity of the legal system

to assist and help the undertrials," Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma noted, directing the registrar general to lodge a police complaint so that the matter can be investigated.

The matter came to light when Saira Bano, the mother of the inmate, approached high court seeking clarity on the status of her daughter's bail application, only to reveal the existence of the forged document.

Bano submitted that her daughter was given the order by a lawyer. Bano received the document from her daughter during a jail visit to find out the status of the plea as it was

lying reserved as per the order. HC expressed shock and concern over the incident, stressing the gravity of forging a judicial document and the implications it could have on the integrity of the legal system.

The document in question falsely claimed that a bail application was reserved for order by high court on Nov 18, 2023, a Sunday, raising imme-

diate suspicion as the court

does not operate on weekends. Further scrutiny revealed no record of such a bail application ever being filed or reserved for order, confirming the document's fraudulent nature. HC said the incident demanded that the public and litigants remain aware of what to do to verify such bail orders.

To prevent such incidents from occurring again, HC highlighted safeguards in existence to verify the authenticity of its orders and judgments, stressing the use of QR codes, digital signatures and official emblems present on documents obtained from Delhi High Court's website.

HC pointed out that aut-

hentic documents can be accessed freely and without cost, often with the click of a button, providing a reliable ves, each dedicated to a sage means for individuals to veri- or a character from Indian fy the legitimacy of judicial

In addition to ordering a connection. police investigation, the court appointed advocate Harsh Prabhakar as amicus curiae to assist the inmate, ensuring that she receives proper legal representation from now.

It also asked the registrar to get the order translated into Hindi and disseminated to educate the public and inmates about verifying court documents.

be forwarded to jail superintendents of all Delhi Prisons, for bringing the same to the knowledge of prisoners, whether undertrials or convicts. A copy be also forwarded to member secretary, DSLSA, and secretary, DHCLSC, as well as to the principal district & sessions judge, headquarter, and all the principal & district judges of Delhi for information," HC further directed.

Now, a garden inspired by mythology at Asola

@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: The forest department is making a sacred grove, called Tapo Van, in Asola Wildlife Sanctuary with at least 50,000 trees.

The grove has 22 sub-gromythology that will have plants with an astrological

Officials said some species, however, could not survive the Aravali climate, so were replaced with similar plants of native species.

Officials said that they weredeveloping Tapo Van on the lines of already established Nakshatra Vatika, which has monoculture plantation dedicated to the constellations.

Tapo Van is being developed near the Dera Mandi area "Let a copy of this order of Asola over 48.2 hectares and has a perimeter of 4,821 metres, officials said.

> "In Tapo Van, the patch of 50,000 plants is divided into 22 smaller patches, with 22 different types of sapling plantations in each patch.... All the species planted are based on Vedic astrology belief. In the present era, such gardens made in parks, public places and schools help in association or mention in conserving plant species and mythology. Like Mahua is asstrengthening traditional sociated with the star Revati



knowledge about the importance of conserving biodiversity," a forest department presentation on Ta-

po Van said. The species being planted includes Mahua, Peepal, Bargad, Kadamb, **AREA IS BEING** Neem, Anvla, Bel **DEVELOPED AS** Patra, Jamun, **TAPO VAN NEAR** Amaltash, Shirish, **DERA MANDI** Shisham, Hingot

Ber, Desi Papri, Dhakor Palas, Gulmohar and on the theme of constella-Katha, among others. "Every species of plant chosen for Tapo Van has an

the almanac. Similarly, for Bargad or Banyan, the Hindu mythology that Brahma was

which is one of the stars in

says

transformed into this tree," a forest official said. In 2023, Delhi's forest department established another mini fo-

Wildlife Sanctuary tions. This was called Nakshatra Vatika.

It has 50 saplings each of 27 species in a circular garden with equal sections for each species.

rest at Asola Bhatti







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GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

Satyendra Nath Tagore Civil Services Study Centre announces Admission of aspirants to SNTCSSC Composite Course for

UPSC Civil Services Examination, 2025 for IAS / IPS and Allied Services

Aspiring candidates appearing for UPSC Civil Services Examination, 2025 can join Satyendra Nath Tagore Civil Services Study Centre (SNTCSSC) for a 10-month Composite Course (for Prelims and Mains Examinations including Mock Test Series and Mock Interviews) starting from June, 2024.

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Last date for submitting form is March 24, 2024, Sunday, 3.00 pm. Date of ADMISSION TEST is April 7, 2024, Sunday. Admission Test venue will be in Kolkata.

Details will be announced on website in due course of time. The decision of the SNTCSSC in the process of selection of candidates will be final.

FOR FURTHER DETAILS: visit www.csscwb.in ICA-N208(4)/2024

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Tender Notice No.: 15120232024/394-395 E-TENDER NOTICE

Dated: 11.03.2024

Approx Cost of work (Rs.): ₹ 90.37,402.45

Divisional Railway Manager (Engineering)/North Central Railway/Prayagraj, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites the following E-Tender on prescribed form for the following work up to 13.30 hrs. on 10.04.2024. The details of the Tenders are as under:

Approx Cost of work (Rs.): ₹ 66,44,133.35 Tender No.: 394 Name of Work: Improvement of Level crossing in Kanpur-Rura Section under ADEN/Line/CNB Earnest Money (Rs.): ₹ 1,32,900.00 Completion Period: 06 Months

Name of Work: Provision of New Parking at Kanpur Central Station under ADEN/HQ/II/CNB. Earnest Money (Rs.): ₹ 1,80,800.00 Completion Period: 06 Months

Date of Opening of Tender: For both Tender "10.04.2024"

Tender No.: 395

Similar work for Eligibility Criteria: For both Tender "Any Civil Engineering work" Note:- (1) Tender on line can be submitted up to 13:30 Hrs. on 10.04.2024. (2) The complete information along with tender document of above E-Tenders are available on Website www.ireps.gov.in. upto 13:30 hrs. on the due to date of tender opening .e., 10.04.2024. 461/24(A)

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No. A-12003/2/2022-Admn(NR) Government of India Staff Selection Commission (Northern Region)

Dated: 15/03/2024 This office is filling up 03 posts of consultants from retired Government servants on contract basis. The post will be located at New Delhi in SSC (NR). For detailed information, terms and conditions etc. please visit the SSC Website (www.sscnr.nic.in). The last date of receipt of application will be 01/04/2024.

> Sd/-(B K Gupta) Under Secretary

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

Tender Notice No.: AGC/Br/L/2023-24/08 Date: 11.03.2024 E-Tendering Tender Notice (Two Packet System) Dy. Chief Engineer/Bridge/Line, North Central Railway, Agra for and on behalf of

President of India invites open E-tenders on the prescribed forms for the under Approx Cost of work (Rs.): ₹ 361971813.50 Tender No.: Br-AGC-2023-09

Name of Work: Construction of 02-lane road over bridge in lieu of level crossing No. 540 at km. 1422/16-18 in Agra-Palwal section in Agra Division of North Central railway. Bid Security (Earnest Money): ₹ 1959900/-Completion Period: 18 Months

Tender No.: Br-AGC-2023-10 Approx Cost of work (Rs.): ₹ 35,88,78,035.67 Name of Work: Agra Division- Construction of 02 lane road over bridge in lieu of leve crossing no.551 at Km 1447/0-2 in Mathura-Palwal Section of Agra Division

Bid Security (Earnest Money): ₹ 1944400/- Completion Period: 18 Months

Date of Opening of Tender: For both Tender "04.04.2024"

Eligibility Criteria for Similar work: For both tender "Any Bridge work involving Erection/Launching or Re-girdering of Open Web Girder OR "Any Bridgework

involving Erection/Launching or Re-girdering of Bowstring Arch Bridge" Note:- (1) The complete information along with tender document of above E-Tenders are available on Website www.ireps.gov.in, up to 15:00 hrs. till the due date of tende opening i.e. 04.04.2024. (2) Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with Digital Signature Certificate issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. (3) Rates entered into Financial Rate page and duly signed digitally shall be considered. Rates and any other financial entity in any other form/letter head i attached by vendors shall be straightway ignored and shall not be considered. (4) Document being attached should be signed by the tenderer on its body. (5) Payment of Bid Security (Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)) in respect of e-tendering shall be accepted through net banking or payment gateway only. (6) In case of any difficulty

helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. (7) Tender on line

can be submitted up to 15.00 hrs. on dated 04.04.2024. North central railways | www.nor.indianrailways.gov.in | # @northcentrairailway | 🔀 @cFROKCE

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY 6200

E-Tender Notice

Tender Notice No.: CEN-2023-24-24 Dated: 14.03.2024 Dy. Chief Engineer/Const./North Central Railway/Prayagraj, for and on behalf of the President of India, invite the following E-Tenders on prescribed form for the following works up to 15.00 hrs. on 08.04.2024. The details of the tenders are as under: -

Name of Work: Supply and Stacking of track ballast as per IR specification, in between Atarra-Chitrakoot in connection with doubling project of KID-MKF section. Approx Cost of work: ₹ 183329300/-, Bid Security: ₹ 1066700/-Completion period: 09 Months. Tender Closing Date & Time: 08.04.2024 15.00 hrs. Date of opening of tender: 08.04.2024, 15.30 hrs. Type of tendering: Open Tender (Two Packet System). Note: 1. The completeinformation along with tender document of above E-Tenders are available on Website www.ireps.gov.in up to 15.00 on the due date of tender opening i.e. 08.04.2024. 2. Bids other than in the form of E-bids shall not be accepted against above Tenders. For this purpose, venders are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with Digital Signature Certificates issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. 3. The Bid Security shall be deposited either in cash through e-payment gateway or submitted as Bank Guarantee bond from a scheduled commercial bank of India or as mentioned in tender documents. The Bank Guarantee bond shall be as per Appendix-VI A of tender document in favour of FA & CAO/C/NCR/PRYJ as given in Tender Document and shall be valid for a period of 90 days beyond the bid validity period. 4. Rates entered into Financial Rate page and duly signed digitally shall be considered. Rates and any other financial entity in any other form/letter head if attached by vendor shall be straight way ignored and shall not be considered. Joint Venture (JV)/Consortiums/ MOUs shall be considered for the tender having cost more than 10 Cr. 6. Documents being attached should be signed by the tenderer on its body. 7. The tenderers shall submit a certificate as given in tender document in standard format for all items without which their tender may not be considered and shall be summarily rejected. 8. Each page of the copy of documents/certificates in support of credentials, submitted by the tenderer, shall be self attested/digitally signed by the tenderer or authorized representative of the tendering firm. Self-attestation shall include signature, stamp and date (on each page). Only those documents which are declared explicitly by the tenderer as "documents supporting the claim qualifying the laid down eligibility criteria". will be considered for evaluation his/their tender. In case of any wrong information submitted by the tenderer, the contract will be terminated, Bid Security (BS), Performance Guarantee (PG and Security Deposit (SD) of contract will be forfeited and agency will be banned for doing business on entire Indian Railways for five (5) years. 9. GST Act & rules issued from time to time by the Government authorities shall be applicable. 10. In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of 1REPS may be approached. 11. Tender online can be submitted up to 15.00 hrs. on 08.04.2024 and will be opened at 15.30 hrs. on same day.

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'Drunk' policeman rams car into several vehicles near Delhi Gate

New Delhi: A Delhi Police Saturday. The cop, Mohit, al- special cell. Additional CP

head constable allegedly drove leged to be drunk at the time of

his car into several vehicles on the incident, is posted in the belooking into the matter.

APPAREL EXPORT PROMOTION COUNCIL Gurugram, Haryana

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Apparel Export Promotion Council, Apparel House, Sector 44 Gurugram inviting bids from reputed & experienced restaurant chain & retail food outlets for leasing out the space of running of multicuisine restaurant. For more details & to download Tender

recorded the statement of one of the drivers who said the cop hit his vehicle from behind at high speed. TNN

Pramod Kushwaha is learnt to

driver was caught and handed

over to police, who said they

had initiated legal action

against him. Police have also

Date: 16/03/2024 General Election to Loksabha-2024 Appeal to the People

As per section 171 B of Indian Penal Code, any person giving or accepting any gratification in cash or kind during election process, with a view to inducing the person to exercise his electoral right is punishable with imprisonment up to one year or with fine or with both. Further, as per section 171 C of Indian Penal Code any person who threatens any candidate or elector, or any other person, with injury of any kind, is punishable with imprisonment up to one year or with fine or both. Flying Squads have been formed to register cases against both the giver and the taker of bribe and for taking action against those who are engaged in threat and intimidation of electors. All the Citizens are hereby requested to refrain from taking any bribe and in case, anybody offers any bribe or is having knowledge about the bribe or cases of threat/intimidation of electors then he should inform on the toll free number 1950, of the 24x7 Complaint Monitoring Cell of the district, set up for receiving the complaints. Published in Public Interest.

(ARVIND KUMAR MINA) District Election Officer Cooch Behar





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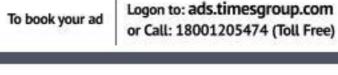
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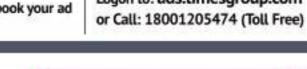
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TIMES inter









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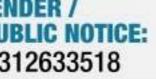
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DPCC To Find What's The incident took place near the Delhi Gate area in central Delhi. The errant Behind Yamuna Mess

Concerned As No Improvement Despite STPs

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Delhi Pollution Control Committee in its latest board meeting has said that a study will be conducted to determine the sources of pollution in Yamuna, apart from sewage. The board observed that despite STPs treating 70% of sewage, there hasn't been considerable improvement in the water quality of Yamuna.

"The board expressed concern about the sorry state of pollution in Yamuna. It questioned as to why purported treatment capacity and its utilization — 70% sewerage being purportedly treated — is not making a commensurate dent on the water quality of Yamuna. The board desired that a study may be assigned to a suitable institute to analyse the issues and reveal the truth. The board advised that protocol of testing samples needs to be revisited so that the correct position gets reflected," said the minutes of DPCC's 72nd board meeting. The meeting was held on Feb 20, but its minutes were shared recently.

To ensure proper functioning of Delhi Jal Board's sewage treatment plants (STPs), the board decided that the environmental compensation should be levied on the operator and the engineers in-charge in case of default in operating STPs up to the prescribed standard.

Currently, there is a gap of 222 MGD in sewage treatment and hence, untreated sewage



is discharged into Yamuna, according to the data shared with the high-level committee for rejuvenation of Yamuna.

In its last board meeting held on Dec 14, 2023, it was decided that DPCC will install 10 online continuous monitoring stations (OLMS) in Yamuna to collect real-time data on water quality. Currently, water samples are collected manually and analysed only once in a month. DPCC also planned to procure a mobile laboratory van to monitor water samples at various locations. However, the OLMS will help in determining the quality of water at a given time.

In the meeting held in Feb, it was informed that technical specification for OLMS and mobile van have been finalised and submitted for approval of competent authority and procurement will be done by March this year.

Experts to look into Pragati tunnel problems

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Public Works Department (PWD) has constituted an expert committee to fix the problems inside the Pragati Maidan tunnel, an official has said.

The committee will work with departments to find solutions to the drainage and design problems that were highlighted earlier. The tunnel is part of an underground

transit corridor inaugurated by the Prime Minister two years ago. It now has problems of water leakage from its walls, which has damaged the road and the roof making it risky for commuters to drive through it. According to sources in the expert com-

structural engineering and people from the company which executed the project. The main tunnel road which is the widest such path in the national capital provides a

direct link to the Pragati Maidan Convention

mittee, there will be experts from the field of

Centre through its underground parking.

Earlier, PWD officials said the problem of leakage was due to high groundwater in the area and damage to water lines. However, what is the exact problem and the solution will be found by the committee. The groundwater in the area where the road has been constructed is higher than the tunnel depth, which is causing water to leak through the expansion joints of the concrete structure of the tunnel.

Due to the constant leakage, potholes and cracks have appeared. This has been mentioned as a major problem by the PWD in its Rs 500-crore legal notice to the private firm responsible for the construction and maintenance of the corridor.

To prevent waterlogging inside the tunnel, officials had claimed during its construction that a roof on the ramps of the tunnel entrance, stormwater drains and an underground sump had been made. The claims fell flat last year when the tunnel was flooded for several days.

In a first, AIIMS transplants both kidneys of donor into one patient

Anuja.Jaiswal@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Two kidneys extracted from a 78-yearold brain dead donor were transplanted into one recipient for the first time at the All India Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS) in Delhi.

Both kidneys performed well following surgery. The 51-year-old woman recipient from Delhi, who had been on dialysis for almost five years, now carries four kidneys, including two of her own, in her body.

According to doctors, since the brain dead patient was older than 60 years, her single kidney would not have been sufficient for a patient on dialysis.

Dr Asuri Krishna, additional professor at AIIMS surgery unit, told TOI that a brain dead donor's kidneys are usually given to two patients. "However, in such elderly donors, kidney functions are already compromised. So, giving a single kidney to a patient who requires a kidney transplant may not serve The doctor said

the purpose," he said. Dr Krishna said the elderly donor would surgery was carried out on Dec 22 by the transplant team of the surgery This kind of surgery unit, including Dr Sus- is a great example hant Soren and Professor V Seenu. "Both kidneys were placed on the right resources to bridge side of the recipient, one the huge demand on top of the other. The transplantation took nearly three hours," he said. The doctor said or-

usually be rejected. of using limited and supply gap for organs in India

organs from such an

gans from such an elderly donor would usually be rejected. This kind of surgery is a great example of using limited resources to bridge the huge demand and supply gap for organs in India. According to published studies, survival rates

for dual kidney transplantation grafts were similar to those for single kidney transplantation grafts. "Dual kidney transplantation reduces the number of patients on waiting lists and also limits unnecessary discarding of viable organs," said doctors. This was a collaborative effort between the de-

partment of surgical disciplines and department of nephrology headed by Professor Dipankar Bhowmik and Dr Sandeep Mahajan, and Organ Retrieval Banking Organisation professor Arti Vij and transplant coordinator Balram.

Doctors said the 78-year-old woman was admitted to AIIMS Trauma Centre on Dec 19 with a severe head injury following a fall from stairs. She could not be revived and was declared brain dead. Her family consented to organ donation.

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY 620 Letter No. DRM/C/AGRA/NFR/E-AUCTION Dated: 14.03.2024

E-Auction Notice

On behalf of the President of India, The Sr. Divisional

Commercial Manager, North Central Railway, Agra invites E-Auction as per categories given as under:

Catalogue No.: ADVT-AGRA-23-40 Category: Publicity Asset Details: Commercial Publicity via LED at Agra Fort Railway station (platforms and concourse area) E-Auction Start Date and Time: Date: - 02.04.2024 Time: - 11.00

E-Auction End Date and Time: Date: - 02.04.2024 Time: - 11.30 Note:- Prospective bidders are requested to visit E-Auction Leasing Module on IREPS website (www.ireps.gov.in).

The Lot-wise details are available therein under the above

mentioned Catalogue Number. North central railways 🗵 @CPRONCR 🧱 @north central railway 🌉 www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

PWD to raze 70 flats built for judicial staff in Dwarka in 2016

Siddhanta.Mishra @timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Public Works Department will demolish 70 residential judicial flats built by it in 2016 in Dwarka in a clear case of utter negligence and disregard for public money.

The department has floated a tender to demolish the building, which has seven floors and a basement with type four and five quarters and stairs.

In Jan, PWD minister Atishi held a meeting with officials of PWD and law departments regarding the substandard construction in the judicial officials' residential complex.

The construction, which were meant to house judges and lawyers, was abandoned by PWD engineers, and despite spending around Rs 32 crore, the work has not been completed. This was found in an inquiry initiated by the PWD in Dec last year and the report was submitted to the department and the minister in Jan.

Construction of the 70 flats was awarded in 2014 and was to be over in 2016. As work could not be completed within the deadline, by 2018 the first contract was rescinded. An amount of Rs 30 crore against the total cost of Rs 48 crore had been spent. Subsequently, as the project

was still incomplete, the work left was restarted and an amount of Rs 2.5 crore was paid to the second contractor. But the building was again left incomplete as the second contractor submitted to the PWD that the building was seemingly unstable and there were cracks. "After that, the engineers responsible for the project abandoned work and left the site, seeking consultancy time from various institutions," a PWD official.

According to a PWD official, after considering reports from CPWD, CBRI and even IIT Delhi on the incomplete building, demolition of the existing structure was the only way forward.

The institutions in their individual reports highlighted that the condition of the building deteriorated due to lack of basic maintenance. Hence, at least four PWD engineers have been held responsible for substandard work and the private contractor has been blacklisted.

An inquiry report also suggests that an FIR be registered against the contractor.

A Fragmenting World?

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SANTOSH DESAI



The other day, when we ordered in for dinner, we ended up ordering dishes from different restaurants because each member of the family wanted something completely different. Not only were the dishes

different, each one ordered food from a different cuisine. Food delivery apps now allow us to search not only by location, cuisine, and restaurant, but also by individual dishes.

This is part of a much larger shift that is taking place as we unbundle things that earlier came in packages. The world is coming to us in increasingly atomised, piece-meal ways, multiplying choices. We don't' need to go to an aggregate structure called the shop to buy what we need; we can simply search for it and buy it directly from the manufacturer.

Earlier, we bought albums; today, we can stream individual songs. The album as an entity has become a rarity, enjoyed by purists. For the rest, individual songs are the default mode of accessing music. Similarly, all media are being disaggregated. We watch individual shows when we feel like it and access articles rather than read whole magazines.

Ownership has been rendered optional, as we can use ride-sharing options to call a car when and where we feel like. The need to have a cab stand, a central place where cabs are available, has been largely eliminated. We can go on holidays in someone else's home; the need for the aggregation called the hotel has reduced. We hoard individual photographs rather than necessarily bundle them into an album. We don't need to go to a library, that centralised repository of books and journals, to find the obscure reference we have been hunting for; we can directly access it from the comfort of our homes.

Notallacts of unbundling are welcome. Airlines have started unbundling their fares to the point where every little element of what was earlier a unified experience is now individually priced. We pay for luggage, seat choices, and food all separately. The other impact has to do

with the increased burden of decision-making. Planning an international vacation meant finding a good travel agent and then leaving everything in their hands. Today, it is possible for us to choose flight connections, hotels, tours, transportation, and entertainment separately. In each instance, there are a plethora of choices, large amounts of information on each kind of option, and ratings and reviews from other travellers to sift through. In essence, we have transferred the responsibility of a complex logistical operation to ourselves in the name of doing precisely what we want.

Technology is clearly the key driver of this shift. In a physical world, individual needs could only be met by aggregating them; it would be impossible to distribute each indivi-

In an unbundled world, we have much more control over what we want, but in turn, we become the centre of our universe. We load ourselves with greater information and responsibility and seek help from technology to narrow down the range of choices at our disposal. The paradox of choice is that we crave more but are desperate for less

dual element separately. There was no mechanism available to give people the option to watch an individual show without packaging it into a channel. Communication was oneway, and supply and demand were separated by time and space.

With the internet, it is like having all the physical places in the world—shopping malls, banks, theatres, and libraries—on our screens available to us all the time. Desire and its fulfilment converge. We can access something as soon as we hear about it. And the entire inventory of options is accessible; there is no additional cost to increasing our options.

What it has allowed us to do is not take the world as given but break it down into its constituent parts and choose precisely what we want. In an analogue world, the peripheral needed to be ignored. The mainstream was consi-

dered 'natural' and anything beyond it was deemed abnormal and worthy of shunning. The digital world accords the same significance to every individual pixel of existence. We can access the work of an obscure 17th-century Flemish painter with the same ease as we can the works of Picasso or buy a specialised piece of audio equipment as quickly as we can a table fan. The world is not organised around what is most popular or what is available, but around what we want. Search technology on the internet is the single biggest driver of this change.

But eventually, there is only so much by way of individual choice-making that the human brain can process. Fragmentation has led to a new kind of aggregation that is, in some ways, much more concentrated than in the past. Platforms of various kinds have sprung up, each giving us innumerable options within them but restricting our options when it comes to the platforms themselves. So, on Spotify, we can listen to millions of individual songs, but the number of such music streaming sites is quite low. Ditto for Amazon or YouTube.

Other mechanisms have evolved to handle this surplus of choice-making. Influencers today are the new mediators; unlike the past, they do not exist to ease the process of accessibility, unlike a shopkeeper; what they do is to help us choose. They are teaching us how to consume in this vastly changing landscape. Curation is one of the biggest needs of our time. Given the abundance of options at our disposal, we need help making the right choices. Technology is working at both ends-helping generate a nearly infinite number of choices and helping us narrow down those options by curating for us those options that we might like. Increasingly, we see algorithms that attempt to, using our behaviour on the net, decode the underlying pattern in our preferences and serve us with options that we are likely to be drawn towards.

In an unbundled world, we have much more control over what we want, but in turn, we become the centre of our universe. We load ourselves with greater information and responsibility and seek help from technology to narrow down the range of choices at our disposal. The paradox of choice is that we crave more but are desperate for less.

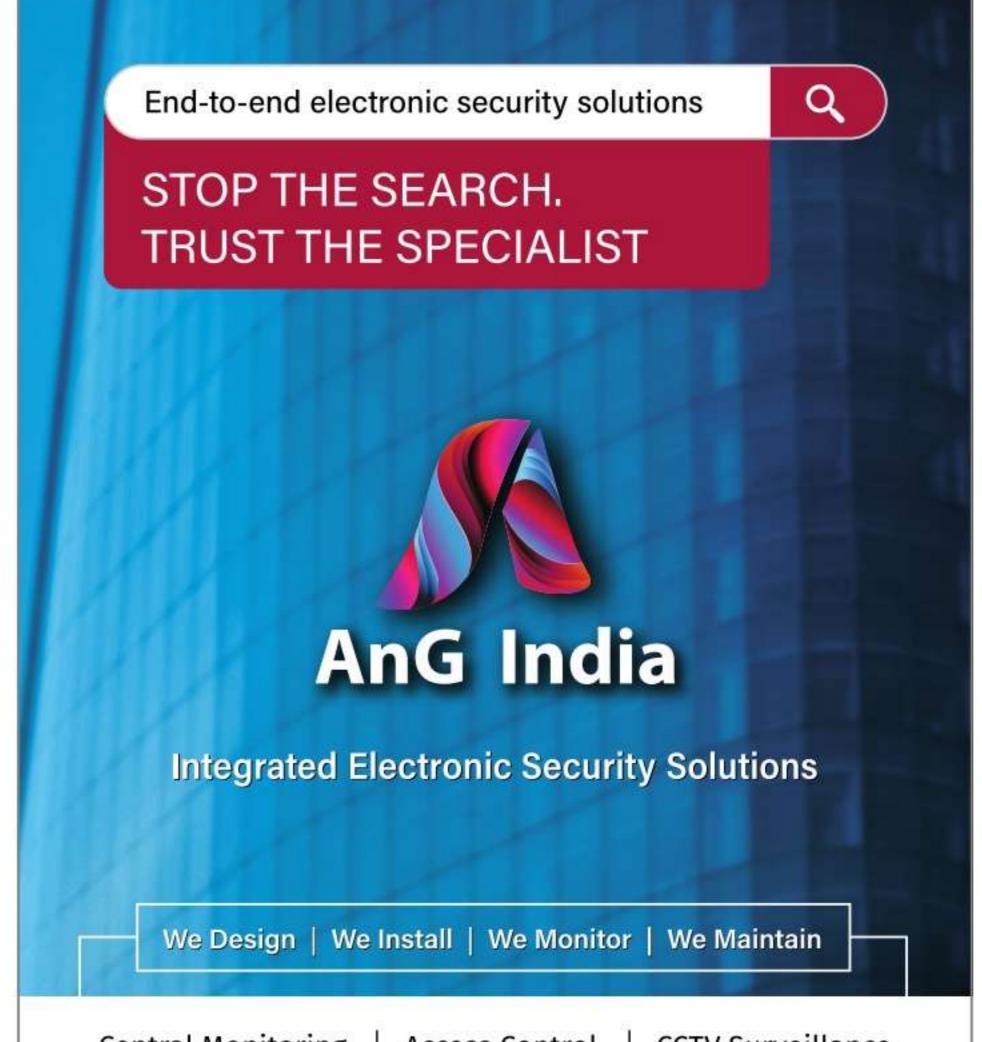
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Man on bike hit by cab in Ggn, dies

Gurgaon: A senior advisor at Concentrix, an American business service company located in DLF Phase-3, died in a road accident near Shankar Chowk in Udyog Vihar when a cab collided with his motorcycle on Friday morning. Subsequently, the cab crashed into a divider on the road. The deceased, Dharmender (37), resided in Delhi and was a native of Jhansi, UP. TNN

NDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY GANDHINAGAR PhD Admissions, Semester I, 2024-25 programmes in Biological Sciences & Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Chemistry Civil Engineering, Cognitive & Brain Sciences, Computer Science & Engineering, Earth Sciences, Electrical Engineering, Humanities & Social Sciences, Materials Engineering, Mathematics, Mechanical Engineering and Physics. Candidates can apply for PhD in the Regular category or under the Continuing Doctoral Programme (CDP). Candidates pursuing their PhD under the CDP category in the part-time mode are permitted to be employed elsewhere during their PhD tenure. Application deadline: 20 March 2024 (PhD-Regular), 03 April 2024 (PhD-CDP For more information, please visit: www.iitgn.ac.in/admissions



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YouTuber arrested for supplying snake venom at parties

Avishek.Kumar @timesgroup.com

Noida: YouTuber and reality TV star Elvish Yadav was arrested on Sunday for allegedly supplying snake venom to make opioids at rave parties.

Elvish was booked under IPC Section 120A (criminal conspiracy) and provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act on Nov 2 last year following a complaint by members of Maneka Gandhi's NGO. People for Animals.

DCP Vidya Sagar Mishra said Elvish was called for questioning on Sunday in connection with multiple videos where he can be seen with snakes.

"He arrived at Sector 20 police station around 1.30pm. He was asked whether he was involved in supplying snake venom at rave parties. He contested the allegations, but couldn't come up with a proper explanation. We have strong evidence against him. On the basis of our investigation, we added relevant provisions of the NDPS Act and sections 284 (negligent conduct with respect to poisonous substance) and 289 (negligent conduct with respect to animal) of the IPC against him," Mishra added.

Elvish, Mishra said, was fangs of eight. arrested around 3pm. He was produced before a court and remanded in judicial custody for 14 days. "We will apply for his remand after two weeks. We need to question him further to investigate the case properly," he added.

Elvish came under the the racket then too.



Elvish Yadav in custody

scanner of city cops in Nov last year following a complaint by Saurabh and Gauray Gupta of PFA. The NGO's representatives told police they had approached Elvish posing as rave party organisers and requested snake venom for an event at a Sector 51 banquet hall. They alleged that Elvish had referred them to a man named Rahul, who, along with four snake charmers, was supposed to meet

the PFA team outside the hall. A police team searched the hall on Nov 2 and arrested Rahul and four others with nine snakes, including five cobras and a python. A vial with 20ml liquid was also recovered from them. Samples were sent to a laboratory in Jaipur for tests, which revealed they were venom of cobra and krait.

Another medical report stated that the venom glands of all the poisonous snakes were missing and so were the

Additional DCP Manish Mishra said the forensic report was one of the strongest leads against Elvish and his associates. The YouTuber was questioned by police in the city on Nov 8 last year, but he denied any involvement in

Jamia sets up 3 more departments

New Delhi: Jamia Millia Islamia has established three new departments—for law, dental sciences, and medical sciences, according to an official notification released by the university recently. With the addition, JMI now has 47 departments distributed among 11 faculties that offer various courses to students.

"The President of India in her capacity as the visitor of JMI has been pleased to accord her kind assent for amendments/additions to the existing 'Statutes 20' for the creation of three new departments," the notification dated March 13 read. The university created the department of law under its law faculty, and the department of dental sciences and the department of medical sciences under its faculty of dentistry after making amendments to the existing rules, the notice said.

The Union ministry of education gave its approval to the departments in a letter dated March 6.

Nazim Husain Jafri, JMI registrar, said that no new courses will be announced under these departments. "Law, dental and medical sciences courses already existed but there was no separate department for them. We had faculties but no departments as such. We made amendments to the statute to



streamline courses and departments." TNN

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REGISTRAR

Robber involved in 40 cases arrested

New Delhi: Police have arrested a 25-year-old man who allegedly shot at two people when spotted stealing engine control modules (ECM) of a vehicle in south Delhi recently. Suspect, Shivam, has been found involved in 40 cases and his unrecorded involvements may go up to 200, police said.

The suspect was spotted stealing the ECM of a car by two drivers on the night of March 8 and when they tried to catch him, he allegedly opened fire injuring one of them, a police officer said.

Complainant, Shiv Kumar Yadav, was sleeping in his taxi near Safdarjung bus terminal when he heard some noise. Upon noticing someone trying to steal the ECM of a car parked nearby, Yadav called another driver Rakesh and tried to nab the suspect. But Shivam allegedly fired upon Rakesh and fled the spot after injuring him, the officer said.

CCTV footage revealed that the suspect fled on a scooter from Kotla Mubarakpur to Matiala. Further, manual surveillance confirmed that he was a resident of the area. Cops subsequently nabbed Shivam and seized the scooter used during the commission of crime, said Rohit Meena, DCP (Southwest).

"Police found two country-made pistols with two live cartridges, Rs 48,000 in cash, two screwdrivers, five spanners, five keys, and two hammers used to break mirror of cars," said the DCP.

During interrogation, the accused disclosed that after being released from jail in Sept 2023 for an earlier crime, he again started stealing, police said. TNN



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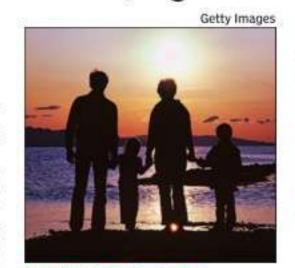
Male bias gone, Hindu couples prefer to adopt girls: Govt data

Punjab Leads The Trend, Figures For 2021-2023 Presented In SC Show

Dhananjay.Mahapatra @timesgroup.com

New Delhi: The traditional longing to adopt a male child among issueless couples under Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act (HAMA) for a variety of reasons, including performance of last rites of parents, is undergoing an epic change as the number of adoptions in the last two years across India show a remarkable tilt of preference to adopt a girl child, and most surprisingly

Punjab is leading the trend. The statistics presented by the Union govt through additional solicitor general Aishwarva Bhati amply reflected the bucking of the trend which is as old as the vedic ages. While 10 states did not furnish data relating to adoptions under HAMA as directed by the SC on November 20 last year, the ASG presented the data put on record



BUCKING THE TREND

by 11 states which recorded a total of 15,486 adoptions in the period 2021-2023.

Of the total adoptions recorded under HAMA, adoptive parents preferred to take home 9,474 girls as against adopting 6,012 boys. However, the preferred age of adopted children remained below six years of age, irrespective of their gender. The Central Adoption Resource Agency (CARA) tabulation indicates that 69.4% of registered prospective adoptive parents (PAPs) opt for children in the

age group of 0 to 2 years; 10.3% in the age group of 2 to 4 years; and 14.8% in the age group of 4 to 6 years.

Punjab and Chandigarh have emerged as leaders in India's march towards gender equality, which from data appear to be accentuated in adoptions. Of a total 7,496 adoptions registered under HAMA in the state, 4,966 were girls and 2,530 were boys. In Union Territory of Chandigarh, of a total of 167 children adopted, 114 were girls.

Himachal Pradesh couples adopted 2,107 children (1,278 girls); Tamil Nadu 1,671 (985 girls); Delhi 1,056 (558 girls); Uttarakhand 685 (472 girls); Andhra Pradesh 1,415 (835 girls); Odisha 291 (165 girls); and, UP 122 (66 girls). While Telangana's Hindu couples preferred adopting a male child (total 242, of which 48 were girls), in West Bengal couples reached the verge of bucking the trend (total 228,

KASHMIR IN FORMULA-4 LANE

of which 112 were girls). However, Union govt,

which compiled the data submitted by the states, placed the information with a caveat. "While some parents obtain adoption deed (under HAMA), which is a legal document formalising adoption, maximum do not choose to register the adoption document," it said.

"Unlike some other adoption systems, HAMA does not impose a mandatory registration process, nor is there a centralised authoring overseeing or controlling these adoptions... Since there is no restriction on relations, adoptions amongst known Hindus is a fact and the variability in adherence to legal formalities reflect on the informal nature of HAMA adoption," the Centre said.

CARA had informed court 2.146 children were available for adoption as against 30,669 PAPs registered.

Can't beat it? Embrace it: Schools in Mumbai transform AI into ally

Mohua Das & Hemali Chhapia

n a sunny Jan morning, uniformed kids-from preschoolers to high schoolers-from around 50 schools in Mumbai, streamed into St Willibrord High School in Nalasopara, making their way into classrooms that had transformed into AI wonderlands. Instead of textbooks and whiteboards, they were greeted by screens and questions about 'How do self-driving cars use AI to navigate through traffic?' or 'How is AI impacting jobs?'

One of the hotspots was the 'ChatGPT room' where students as well as parents and teachers tried their hand at prompt crafting to tackle everyday scenarios using ChatGPT--whether it was a doctor trying to organise a medics roster. a teacher struggling with dialogue for sports day, a parent stuck on scripting for a cooking channel on YouTube, or gamifying a subject for better understanding. It marked the incep-

day AI expo, that blended the ing. There's so much for us to Hindi term padhai (studies) with AI (artificial intelligence), showcased over 50 AI learners. If children are using tools and apps, all tailored for students and led by students themselves. It offered visitors, including teachers and to survive as a system," says parents, a taste of Gen AI.

For Willibrord George, chairman of St Willibrord group of schools and the mind behind PadhAI, it was about debunking the vilification of AI as a disruptor. "We designed the event as a positive first contact with Gen AI tools. Humanmachine integration can leverage knowledge and the expo allowed everyone to see AI more as an ally than a threat." When ChatGPT strutted in-

to our lives in 2022, educators got a bit jittery. The worry was that this shiny new AI marvel--capable of spitting out written material on just about anything in a flash—might lead to more plagiarised content, mess with learning, and make oldschool assignments obsolete. Yet, most schools and colleges now reckon it's too late to shoo



Now, schools are opting to groom students on how to use AI tools as a learning aid and work alongside it, responsibly

away this uninvited guest. Instead, they are opting to groom students on how to use AI tools as a learning aid and work alongside it, responsibly.

"The tide of AI tools will usher in the next big shift in The first of its kind two- classroom teaching and learndo as educators. Else, we risk becoming irrelevant to our AI tools for their assessment, let us then change the way we assess our learners, if we wish Francis Joseph, executive director (India), GEMS Education, one of the world's largest private school operators.

> At RN Podar School, academics are bullish on these new tech tools boosting both productivity and learning. Avnita Bir, the school's director-principal, sees it as more than just a shortcut. "Students use ChatGPT and other generative AI tools for better comprehension of concepts. It's like having a personal tutor hand-holding them to the solution, rather than fetching them the final answer," she says, foreseeing a future with less reliance on private tutors.

George, who runs a group of affordable private schools, shares the optimism that these tools could level the playing field for those without access

tech wave, St Willibrord has versed with their knowledge of signed to aid teachers in sav- ficiency," says Prasad. Howevwhile a chatbot for students promised work despite warnturns textbooks into interac- ings, it is considered "academgrating it with WhatsApp so adjusted accordingly. that our students have free ac-

conduct from the start."

to learn to ask better questions the course," she adds. to tailor these AI models and there can be errors and misin-teaching methods. terpretations, especially in subjects like maths."

has shared. The inability to ex- AI in the future.'

plain certain terms and actions mentioned in their work were the biggest red flags," says Ananta Prasad, senior teacher at BD Somani International School, recounting how the institution swiftly set rules for ChatGPT use. "We now show them how to cite sources, analyse what they find, and stress on the value of original ideas. We also integrate lessons on digital ethics into our curriculum," she explains.

This game of cat and mouse with students trying to outsmart the system isn't new. But now, schools and colleges are employing an arsenal of plagiarism detectors like Turnitin, Quillbot, Ouriginal, and Originality. AI as well as some nifty strategies to remind students that teachers aren't easilv fooled. "We make them to private tutors. To ride this aware that teachers are well crafted their own AI tools de- the content and linguistic proing time and lesson planning, er, if a student submits comtive tutors. "We are even inte- ic misconduct" and scores are

At Ananta International cess to a round-the-clock vir- University, students must cite tual tuition teacher," he says. ChatGPT when using it for When it comes to giving stu-writing or research. Faculty dents freedom with ChatGPT members are trained to idenand other AI tools, George says, tify AI-generated content have conversations through a two-step process: around ethics, morals, refer- "Faculty reviews the content encing versus research, inspi- first and then conducts a plaration, copying and copyright. giarism check to confirm sus-Kids want to do the right thing. picions," explains Ruchie They just need guidance. Hav- Kothari, joint director-acaing these conversations early demics at Anant Fellowship, helps them understand ethical where a student who uses "unauthorised" AI content faces At the same time, Bir is consequences based on the mindful of the fine line be- percentage of plagiarised tween using tech wisely and content. "This can include reslipping into misuse. "One has doing assignments or failing

At RD National College, create guardrails. Since the principal Neha Jagtiani stresstechnology is still evolving, es on investing in modern

To stay ahead of the curve BD Somani International Initially when the chatbot School is gearing up with an craze hit, schools managed to AI lab. Principal Navroz Billinipit in the bud. "Submissions moria explains: "This is to usually follow a discussion on hone our students' knowledge the content that the student and skills when negotiating

313 arrested for Bihar teacher recruitment exam paper leak

Patna: Economic Offences Unit (EOU) of Bihar Police has arrested 313 people in connection with alleged question paper leak during teacher recruitment examination (TRE) 3.0, conducted by Bihar Public Service Commission (BPSC) on March 15, reports Faryal Rumi. A Patna civil court remanded all those arrested in judicial custody on Saturday night and 266 of them, including 88 women, many of whom are pregnant, were lodged in Beur Central Jail on Sunday.

EOU seized gadgets, documents and question papers, matching with those produced by BPSC, from the arrested people. Among those arrested are members of an organised gang behind the leak, solvers, candidates and drivers.

EOU sources said they are yet to zero in on kingpin of the gang. "It is assumed that there could be multiple gangs. All those who are part of the examination process are within purview of the multifaceted probe," a source said.

EOU found that some aspirants were supplied with question papers and answers in lieu of Rs 10 lakh each. Following this, some gang members were arrested from Patna and Vaishali.

An SIT has been formed under SP (cybercrime) Vaibhav Sharma to probe the paper leak.

The incident, meanwhile, took a political turn with former deputy CM Tejashwi Prasad Yadav questioning NDA govt in state about fate of over four lakh TRE 3.0 aspirants. "...a leader had come to Bihar... who gave jobs to more than four lakh youths in 17 months. Had he not been betrayed, four lakh candidates would not have been affected after the paper leak," read a post by his office.



A Formula 4 race was held on Boulevard Road along the banks of Dal Lake in Srinagar on Sunday. The event was organised to promote motorsports in Kashmir. During the demo run, two cars hit the temporary barricades erected for the safety of spectators. However, no one was injured, officials said

22 mths after Moose Wala's death, his mom gives birth to boy at 58

Neel.Kamal@timesgroup.com

Bathinda: A turbaned, bespectacled man with a halfsmile cradling a newborn next to a framed portrait of a young Sikh with his arms crossed and the caption, "Legends never die", emblazoned across his white kurta.

This was how the family of slain singer-rapper Shubhdeep Singh, aka Sidhu Moose father of Sidhu Moose Wala, with Wala, chose to announce on Sunday the birth of a baby his 58-year-old mother Charan Kaur, nearly 22 months after her first-born was shot

dead in Punjab's Mansa. millions of followers of Shubhdeep, the almighty has blessed us with his younger brother. He is hale to all admirers," Balkaur Singh posted on Instagram after his wife gave birth.

A birthday cake with a back," said Balkaur, who re-

BUT THE REAL THING BUILDS YOUR

CAREER.



BUNDLE OF JOY: Balkaur Singh. the newborn on Sunday

boy conceived through IVF by lone candle in the foreground was the icing on the happy announcement.

The world came to know of Charan Kaur's pregnan-"With the blessings of cy on Feb 27 when an uncle of Moose Wala revealed why she hadn't been seen in public for months.

"Since the day Shubhand hearty. We are thankful deep was snatched away from us, we felt a void in our lives. With this child, we hope to feel his presence

tired from a state govt job last year and has been on a relentless campaign to get justice for his famous son.

Moose Wala was 29 when he was shot multiple times in his SUV at Jawahar Ke village near Mansa on May 29, 2022. Gangsters Lawrence Bishnoi and Goldy Brar are among the accused in the case.

The rapper had contested the Mansa assembly seat on a Congress ticket months before his death.

Punjab Congress president Amrinder Singh Raja Warring was among those who visited the hospital to congratulate Balkaur Singh on the birth of his and Charan Kaur's second child.

Dr Rajni Jindal, under whose care Kaur went through the challenge of a pregnancy, told TOI, "It was tough given the mother's age. but everything went smoothly. Charan Kaur is likely to return home in a week.'

Baghel named in Mahadev app **FIR**; political vendetta: Ex-CM

Raipur: Chhattisgarh Economic Offences Wing (EOW) has named former CM Bhupesh Baghel in an FIR in connection with alleged Rs 6,000crore Mahadev Book online betting scam.

The FIR, based on complaint by ED, was filed on March 4, but details emerged late on Saturday, a few hours after Lok Sabha elections

were announced. "It is a politically motivated FIR. While my name is included among the accused, contents of the FIR fail to reference me or provide any indication of my involvement. This is a targeted effort to tarnish my reputation through political vendetta," Baghel said in a press meet on Sunday.

EOW remained tight-lipped but a copy of the FIR shows that the case has been registered under IPC sections 120B, 34, 406, 420, 467, 468 and 471. TNN

Desi sickle cell anaemia drug to cost less than 1% of international versions

DurgeshNandan.Jha @timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Hydroxyurea, a medicine used for treating sickle cell anaemia patients, will now be available in India for Rs 600 per vial — less than 1% of the price of its imported versions.

Unlike the versions sold by global brands for around Rs 77,000 per vial, which need a storage temperature of 2-8 degrees Celsius, the Indian variant remains stable room temperature, claimed its manufacturer Delhi-based Akums Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd.

The company said Hydroxyurea will be available to govt at less than Rs 600, "thus embodying the spirit of Make In India and fostering widespread benefit to the masses".

Congratulating the com-

pany, Union health minister Mansukh Mandaviya wrote on X, "PM Narendra Modi had in 2023 launched National Sickle Cell Elimination Mission. This medicine will prove to be a blessing for

our tribal brothers, sisters

and children and we can

make India free from sickle

cell soon.' Sickle cell disease is a genetic disorder mostly prevalent in districts with high tribal populations. About one in 86 births among STs have sickle cell disease that affects haemoglobin in red blood cells, resulting in mor-

bidity and mortality. The exercise to encourage Indian companies to manufacture generic versions of drugs used in treatment of rare diseases, also referred to as orphan drugs, had started in July 2022 and discussions were held.

Criminal opens fire at Punjab cops during raid at home, kills 1

Hoshiarpur: A criminal wanted in eight cases opened fire at a police party on Sunday during a raid to nab him from his house at Mansurpur village in Mukerian, Punjab on Sunday. One constable was killed in the firing.

Acting on a tip-off, the police party reached the village in the morning to arrest criminal, Rana Mansoorpur. On spotting the cops, Mansoorpur fired shots and escaped. One of the bullets hit constable Amritpal Singh in the chest. He was taken to a hospital, where he succumbed to the injury.

Hoshiarpur police said they have sounded an alert across district and put up nakas in remote areas around Mukerian. Station house officer Parmod Kumar said Mansoorpur is wanted in eight criminal cases. TNN

4-yr-old drowns in UP pit: A four-year-old boy drowned in a pit filled with water at a brick kiln in UP's Moradabad on Saturday, reports Kanwardeep Singh. SHO Kundarki Sanjay Kumar said, "Prima facie, the incident seems to be a result of negligence on part of the victim's father as well as the brick kiln owner."

G2@ No.: SIG-WS-Cont-AGC-98 Dated: 15.03.2024

Dy. Chief Signal & Telecom Engineer/Con/Agra, North Central Railway Unit. Agra for and on behalf of the President of India invites open e-Tender from reputed contractors with adequate experience and financial capability, for the following work on Single Packet System up to 15.00 hrs. on the opening date of E-tender mentioned therein. If date of opening is declared a holiday or offer could not be opened due to technical issue, the offers shall be opened on the next working day. The details of the Tender are as under:

E-TENDER NOTICE (Single Packet) System

Name of work: "Infringement removal/Utility shifting of Signalling & Telecom cables and equipment's in connection with Double line work in Agra Fort-Bandikui section of Agra division of North Central Railway."

Estimated cost of work: Rs. 19694495.53 only Earnest Money: Rs. 248500.00/-Tender form cost: NIL., Completion Period: 24 Months., Availability of tender form: Tender forms shall be available on web site, www.ireps.gov.in. 21 days prior to date of opening of the tender., Closing Date/Time of Tender: 08.04.2024 before 15:00 Hrs., Tender Opening Date/Time: 08.04.2024 at 15:30 Hrs., Place of Opening: Through Online E-Portal www.ireps.gov.in the office of Dy.CSTE/C/AGC Office, AGRA (UP), Validity of Offer: 60 days from date of opening., Right of Railway to deal with tender: Railway administration reserves the rights to postpone/modify or to cancel the tender without assigning any reasons. Tenderers who wish to participate in tenders invited on www.ireps.gov.in have to register on the website mandatorily. Please refer to website for more details. Tenderers can submit EMD only through online mode. Online payment of earnest money can be made through net banking, debit/credit card etc. Further particulars can be obtained from Indian Railways 526/24 (P) website www.ireps.gov.in.

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Google labels childhood pic 'porn', blocks man's a/c, draws HC notice

Saeed.Khan@timesgroup.com

Ahmedabad: Gujarat high court has issued notice to state govt, Centre and Google India Pvt Ltd after the tech giant blocked an engineer's account citing "explicit child abuse". The engineer had uploaded a photo showing his grandmother giving him a bath as a two-year-old.

Neel Shukla, 24, suspects behind the blocking the role of an artificial intelligence (AI)-enabled programme that assesses users and judges humans based on its interpretations. He had uploaded his photos to Google Drive and his account was blocked in April last year. Google's AIbased applications have in recent times produced controversial outcomes.

Shukla's counsel Dipen Desai told the HC his client and his business was suffer- ing, saying Shukla had just re- to seek judicial remedy.



engineer approached it. The man had uploaded a photo of his grandmother giving him a bath when he was a two-year-old

ing. The blocking was like a loss of identity for Shukla, a computer engineer, most of whose business depended on communication through the internet. Shukla had requested Google to restore his ac-

count, but in vain. Desai stressed urgency could not even access email during the recent HC hear-

ceived a notice from Google saying the data linked to his account would be deleted in April, when it will be a year since it was rendered inoperative. Justice VD Nanavati then issued notice to the authorities and Google, seeking their replies by March 26. After the bathing picture

led to the block over alleged

"child pornography" and violation of Google's policy, Shukla's second email ID with another service provider also became inoperative as it had joint authentication with Google.

After his appeals to Google's faceless grievance redressal failed to resolve the issue, Shukla approached Gujarat police and the Centre's department of science and technology, the nodal agency for such matters in India. But Shukla said the authorities remained silent, forcing him



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A RESUME

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भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक RESERVE BANK OF INDIA

www.rbi.org.in

Redressal of complaints against entities regulated by RBI

Reserve Bank - Integrated Ombudsman Scheme (RB-IOS)

- The Reserve Bank has mandated all its regulated entities (REs) to have a mechanism at their end to resolve the complaints received by them from their customers, which is considered as the Internal Grievance Redress Mechanism of REs.
- The Reserve Bank has also put in place an expeditious and cost-free Alternate Grievance Redress Mechanism for resolution of customer complaints relating to deficiencies in services rendered by its REs through the Reserve Bank – Integrated Ombudsman Scheme, 2021 (RB-IOS).
- Banks, Non-Banking Financial Companies, Payment System Participants and Credit Information Companies are considered as REs under the Grievance Redress Mechanism.
- The RB-IOS adopts a "One Nation One Ombudsman" approach for all complaints against any RE. It is therefore no longer necessary for a complainant to identify
 under which Ombudsman scheme/office, he/she should file a complaint with the Ombudsman.
- The complaints against REs not covered under the RB-IOS, 2021 are handled at Consumer Education and Protection Cells (CEPCs) for resolution.
- The list of REs covered under the ambit of RBI-OS and CEPC can be accessed by visiting https://cms.rbi.org.in

What to do if you have a complaint?

Complainant must approach the concerned RE with the details of the grievance for redress.

When to approach the RBI Ombudsman?

You can approach the RBI Ombudsman, in case of:

- No reply is received within 30 days Anytime within one year and 30 days from the date of your complaint to RE.
- Unsatisfactory Reply Anytime within one year of receipt of reply from the concerned RE.

Note:

- The complaint should contain all requisite details / information as mentioned in the RB-IOS.
- The complaint should not have been dealt with / pending with any other forum (like Courts) or dealt earlier by the RBI Ombudsman.

How to lodge a complaint?

Complaint against the RE can be filed through any of the following modes:

- Online through the Complaint Management System (CMS) portal of RBI at https://cms.rbi.org.in
 - → File a complaint
- Physical complaint (letter / post) in the form as specified in Annexure in the RB-IOS, 2021 to "Centralized Receipt and Processing Centre, 4" floor, Reserve bank of India Sector-17, Central Vista, Chandigarh 160017"

How to know more about lodging a complaint with RBI?

- Any person can approach the Contact Centre of RBI for information / clarification on the grievance redress mechanism of RBI and to seek guidance in filing of a complaint / track the status of already lodged complaints.
- Contact Centre personnel are available on all working days from 8:00 am to 10:00 pm for Hindi and English and from 9:30 am to 5:15 pm in ten regional languages
 (Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Kannada, Marathi, Malayalam, Odia, Punjabi, Telugu and Tamil).
- Toll free number (14448) is also available 24 x 7 x 365 through Interactive Voice Response System facility.

For more information

PLEASE VISIT:

FAQs on RB- IOS, 2021 - https://www.rbi.org.in/scripts/FS_FAQs.aspx?fn=2745

Foreign students to be shifted to 'safer premises': **Guj varsity VC**

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Ahmedabad: The FIR filed in connection with the assault on foreign students at Gujarat University mentions unlawful assembly (IPC Section 143), rioting (147), common intention (149), causing hurt (323), causing hurt by dangerous weapon or means (324), endangering lives (337) and criminal trespass (447), among other charges.

Ahmedabad police commissioner G S Malik said nine probe teams had been formed, including four from the crime branch and five from local police under DCP.

"Whether the attack was planned or spontaneous is yet to be ascertained," said Tarun Duggal, DCP Zone-1.

The assault was reported at 10.50pm on Saturday in a hostel that houses around 75 of the 280 foreigners enrolled at Gujarat University. Besides Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Sri Lanka, these students are from various African countries.

"Between 20 and 25 people entered the hostel compound and objected to the international students offering namaz there. The mob asked them to pray in a mosque. They argued over it before assaulting and hurling stones at them. They also vandalised some rooms," police commissioner Malik said.

Foreign students who witnessed the violence alleged that outsiders had been spotted in the hostel compound over the past three days.

"We were in the middle of Taravih (special Ramzan prayers) when they entered the hostel and demanded to know why we were praying there. After issuing a threat, they returned with a mob armed with stones and iron pipes to attack us," said Navid Siddique, the Afghan student who was injured.

Police have deployed a team at the hostel to instil a semblance of safety. Vice chancellor Neerja Gupta said the foreign students would be shifted to "safer premises". "A new hostel block will be allocated to them in three days. The Study Abroad Program coordinator and NRI hostel warden have been replaced with immediate effect.

University officials said all hostel blocks would henceforth have ex-military personnel as guards.

Notification for LS polls Phase-1 on March 20

▶ Continued from P1

The Cabinet also initiated the process of notifying the dates of the seven-phase elections by sending Election Commission's recommendation to President Droupadi Murmu for approval. The first notification will be issued on March 20 for the first phase of polls on April 19 for 102 seats. The nomination process begins for a particular phase with issuance of the notification.

On March 3, the PM had asked ministers and secretaries to come up with new ideas to "reset" procedures and the manner in which govt works to achieve the goal of 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047. The meeting had brainstormed over vision document for developed India.

Won't reveal donors to protect anonymity: BJP

THE POLITICAL FUNDING UNIVERSE

Party	2017-18	2018-19	Apr 1 2019 to Apr 11, 2019	Apr 12, 2019 onwards	Total	Share (%)	
BJP	210.0	1,450.9	529.3	6,060.5	8,250.7		50.1
Congress	5.0	383.3	141.6	1,421.9	1,951.7	11.8	
Trinamool	0.0	97.3	10.0	1,609.5	1,716.8	10.4	
BRS	0.0	141.5	52.0	1,214.7	1,408.2	8.5	
BJD	0.0	213.5	30.5	775.5	1,019.5	6.2	
DMK	0.0	0.0	0.0	656.5	656.5	4.0	
YSRCP	0.0	98.7	64.1	337.0	499.8	3.0	
TDP	0.0	27.5	74.3	218.9	320.7	1.9	
Shiv Sena	0.0	60.4	7.6	159.4	227.4	1.4	
JD(S)	6.0	35.3	5.0	43.5	89.8	0.5	
RJD	0.0	0.0	0.0	73.5	73.5	0.4	
AAP	0.0	0.6	3.0	65.5	69.0	0.4	
NCP	0.0	29.3	5.0	31.0	65.3	0.4	^
SKM	0.0	0.0	0.0	36.5	36.5	0.2	T DO
JD(U)	0.0	0.0	10.0	14.0	24.0	0.1	
Janasena Party	0.0	0.0	0.0	21.0	21.0	0.1	
SP	0.0	0.0	0.0	14.1	14.1	0.1	
JMM	NA	NA	NA	13.5	13.5	0.1	
SAD	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.3	7.3	0.0	
AIADMK	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.1	6.1	0.0	
SDF	0.0	0.5	0.0	5.5	6.0	0.0	
MGP*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.6	0.0	*Maharashtrawadi Gomntak Party,
NC	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.5	0.0	
GFP**	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.5	0.0	** Goa Forward Party
Total	221.0	2,538.6	932.3	12,786.8	16,478.6	100.0	

▶ Continued from P1

the reason that parties cited for not disclosing details (or in some cases disclosing some donors, but not others) varied considerably. BJP, for instance, wrote to EC saying the EB scheme was devised to provide anonymity to donors and hence it would not reveal their identity. Congress did not provide an explanation. NCP stated that it had not maintained records of each donor, since it wasn't required to do so, but added that it was providing details "wherever possible".

Even among the parties that did disclose some details for the period from Jan to May 2019, JD(U) and RJD did not reveal all the donors.

An interesting pattern in the revelations was that several parties got significant donations from firms or individuals based in states in which

98% of RJD's EB donations from April '19 to Oct '23 came when it was in office in Bihar

ashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) got Rs 56 crore through electoral N bonds (EBs) between April 2019 and Oct 2023, of which 98% (Rs 55 crore) came in 2023 when the party was in office in Bihar, the recent set of data on use of EBs to fund political parties published by Election Commission on Sunday showed, reports Dipak Dash.

Data provided by RJD to EC in Nov 2023 showed that the party got Rs 55 crore in donations between July and Oct 2023. It did not give details of the donors in its submission.

RJD ranks 10th in the list of parties that got maximum donations through this instrument for political funding since it was launched in 2018. The party received Rs 73.5 crore through EBs till Feb when Supreme Court struck it down.

In an earlier submission to EC in May 2019, details of which were made public on Sunday, RJD had disclosed that it received Rs 1 crore through EBs from Delhi-based Prudent Electoral Trust just ahead of the last general election.

The party, founded by Lalu Prasad and currently headed by his son Tejashwi Yadav, had returned to office in the state in July 2022 in alliance with Nitish Kumar. The alliance of JD(U), RJD and Congress broke in Jan 2024 after Kumar went back to the NDA fold.

they have little or no pres- more comprehensive discloence. The details revealed on Sunday would only have

sure if and when SBI puts out details of the alpha numeric whetted the appetite for a codes assigned to each EB.

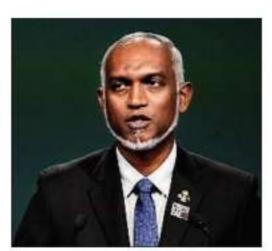
India & Maldives review troop pullout, discuss economic ties

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: In the middle of ongoing withdrawal of Indian military personnel from the Maldives, the two countries held another meeting of their high-level core group, reviewing deputation of Indian technical personnel who are replacing the military staff, to enable continued operation of Indian aviation platforms — naval choppers and a Dornier aircraft used mainly for medical evacuation.

While India has so far replaced military personnel with civilians for one of these platforms, Male said on Sunday that the personnel for the second platform will be replaced by April 10 and the third by May 10.

The Maldives had earlier given India time till May 10 to pull out its forces involved in the maintenance of the avia-



Maldives President Muizzu. So far, Indian military personnel in Male have been replaced with civilians in one aviation platform

tion platforms. The core group was formed after a meeting between PM Narendra Modi and President Mohamed Muizzu late last year in Dubai.

According to a Maldivian readout, both sides noted the progress that has been made in replacing Indian military personnel with civilians at the aviation platforms in the Maldives. "To date, military personnel in one such plat-

form have been replaced with civilians, and the remaining two will be replaced by civilians on 10 April and 10 May 2024," it said. "The high level core group

covered broad range of areas in economic and development cooperation between the two countries, and noted the capacity building programs recently concluded. Additionally, discussions covered areas related to bilateral cooperation aimed at enhancing the partnership, including expediting the implementation of ongoing developmental cooperation projects," added the

Maldives statement. In a separate statement, Indian govt said both sides reviewed ongoing deputation of Indian technical personnel to enable continued operation of Indian aviation platforms that provide humanitarian and medvac services to the people of Maldives.

3 secs of audio enough to recreate voice

▶ Continued from P1

ater, Sarita, mother of 19year-old Surbhi, told In- ✓ dore police: "It was Surbhi's voice. I could hear her crying and sobbing. I thought they would do something to her." There is a new scam in town even more sophisticated than fake FedEx packages, job offers or money for liking videos. It uses artificial intelligence-powered voice cloning software to recreate the voice of your loved one.

But how do the scamsters get their hands on voice samples? A study by software security company McAfee found that just three seconds of audio is enough to create an 85% match to the original voice. Their researchers surveyed seven countries, including India, and found that more than half (53%) of all adults share their voice at least once a week on social media, and about 77% of AI voice scam victims lost money.

grow as voice cloning software is freely available to proeo, according to former IPS of-voice. Without giving it a sec-rishnan, who deposited Rs

Triveni Singh. "These scammers are nei-

ther coders nor computer scientists. Anyone can operate these AI tools, look up numbers and record voices from social media and reproduce them as calls. But these are synthetic imitations, which can be identified as fake if the listener pays close attention," says case of Kaveri Ahuja, who recounted her experience of a voice scammer who used the voice clip of her daughter crying to claim she had been abducted. However, Ahuja caught on to the scam and posted about it on X. "However, most people get so scared that they panic trapped," adds Singh.

In Dec last year, a Lucknowbased govt official whose son studies engineering in Bengaluru got a call from an unknown number, saying his son had been caught with drugs. "They claimed he was in the po-my friend. He even came on a Such cases are only set to lice station and demanded Rs 1 lakh to let him go. I heard him

ficer and cybercrime expert ond thought, I transferred the money," says the official.

Cybercrime investigator Ritesh Bhatia says another ploy is to call from a foreign phone number. "They make the person believe that you are a friend who is unable to make a financial transaction, or your child or elderly parent is in distress."

Law enforcement officials Singh. He cites the most recent have found enough examples of video cloning as well.

In July last year, retired Coal India official PS Radhakrishnan received a message from an unknown number. His old friend of 40 years, Venu Kumar, had reached out after almost a year of no contact to seek his help for an urgent fiand that is how they are nancial transaction. Kumar said he was at Dubai airport and trying to deposit money for his sister-in-law's surgery at a Mumbai hospital but couldn't because of some issue with in-

ternational transfers. "He sounded exactly like video call and looked exactly like my friend, and we chatted saying 'papa mujhe bacha lo' for a long time before I duce deepfake audio and vid- which sounded like my son's agreed," remembers Radhak-

40,000 to an account that morning. "But then he asked for Rs 30,000 more for hospital fees, and that's when I knew something was seriously

wrong," says Radhakrishnan.

The con on Ghaziabad senior citizen Arvind Sharma went a step further with the criminals using a retired police officer's video and audio cloning to dupe him. According to daughter Monica, her father answered a video call on WhatsApp to find a nude person at the other end and ended it quickly. But, soon after, he received blackmail calls from a person and an embarrassed Sharma ended up shelling out Rs 74,000. Since he didn't have enough savings, he even took a loan to pay the amount.

Cyber lawyer Prashant Mali says that the IT Act has provision for imprisonment of up to three years and a fine for impersonation and identity theft and forging of electronic record (sound) but tracking these criminals is hard. Also, many people are too embarrassed to report the crime. *Names changed on request

(With inputs from Karish-

ma Kotwal in Indore)

CSK, India Cements top bond donors of AIADMK

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

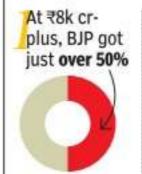
New Delhi: IPL franchise Chennai Super Kings and its promoter India Cements have emerged as the major of donors AIADMK through electoral bonds as disclosed by Election Commission on Sunday.

In fact, all bonds redeemed by AIADMK were issued by India Cements and Chennai Super Kings, barring two from one Gopal Srinivasan, an individual donor. The party received Rs 6 crore in electoral bonds. India Cements and Chennai Super Kings donated Rs 1 crore thrice and 29 bonds of Rs 10 lakh each. In contrast, Sharad Pa-

war's NCP received donations totalling Rs 65.6 crore from a range of sources. The diverse cast included Neotia Foundation, Bharti Airtel, Cyrus Poonawalla, United Shippers, controversial builder Avinash Bhosle who is being investigated by agencies, Bajaj Finserv,

THE BOND PICTURE, IN 5 POINTS

Key takeaways from masses of EB data Cong beat



TMC thanks to a 11-day

Top 5 | BJP, Cong, TMC, BRS, BJD got 94%

But they didn't disclose any

Atul Chordia, United Phosphorus, Oberoi Realty and Abhay Firodia.

JD(S) of Karnataka re-

ceived bonds of Rs 90 crore. Among those, it has declared as donors include the Embassy Group, Infosys, HealthCare Global Enterprises Pvt Ltd and Bicon Ltd (KM Hosur Road, Electronic City, Bengaluru), Megha Engineering & Constructions P Ltd, JSW Steel, Shahi Exports Pvt Ltd, Biocon group which is also under ED's scanner, Amara Raja group and Aditya Birla group.

Shiv Sena received

bonds worth Rs 227 crore, with details submitted by it showing bonds were issued to it from Mumbai, which accounted for the majority, and also from Hyderabad.

DMK only major

all donors

party that disclosed

Other parties, which disclosed their donors via bonds right up to the time EC sought the relevant details in Nov 2023 on the directions of Supreme Court, include Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party (MGP), Samajwadi Party, AAP, Goa Forward Party and Sikkim Democratic Front. SDF received Rs 50 lakh on Oct 12, 2018, from Vadodara-based Alembic Pharmaceuticals.

Identities can be established with help of unique numbers: TMC

Vishwa Mohan & Dipak Dash TNN

New Delhi: In its submis sion to Election Commission on May 30, 2019, Janata Dal (United) said that it opened an account in the SBI main branch in Patna and deposited the amount it had received, which was credited to the party account on April 10, 2019.

"In this view of the situation, we are unable to provide any more detail about the donors," JD(U) stated in its submission.

JD(U) emphasised that the party was not aware of the details of donors and said, "Neither we know nor we tried to know because when we received the bonds, order of Supreme Court was not in existence and only the gazette notification of Govt of India was in operation."

The party, however, dis-

Collected details from donors: DMK

▶ Continued from P1

MK, while submitting bond details to Election Commission on Nov 14, 2023, stated that with the electoral bonds scheme providing for non-disclosure of donor details by the authorised bank, "donors did not strictly adhere to the requirements of furnishing their details when they handed over the bonds to us". "Following the directions of Supreme Court, we contacted our donors and we were able to collect the details from them," it said.

closed the identities of two donors — Shree Cement Limited, Ajmer (Rajasthan) and Bharti Airtel Limited, Gurgaon (Haryana). While Shree Cement donated Rs 2 crore on April 16, 2019, Bharti Airtel donated Rs 1 crore on April 26, 2019.

TMC, on the other hand, did not disclose the identity of any donor. But the party pointed out that the identities could be established with the help of unique number of electoral bonds which were issued by State Bank of India.

It said, "We also understand that as per the electoral bonds scheme, SBI is the sole issuer of these bonds and that all the persons to whom the bonds were issubmitted have their KYC documents including their PAN card, identity proof, address proof and other supporting documents as per the requirement of the bank. Therefore, the bank has all the details of all the bond holders who have donated the bonds to us."

NCP got ₹65cr; **Airtel, Cyrus Poonawalla** among donors

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: NCP received donations totalling Rs 65.6 crore from a range of sources, as per information disclosed by Election Commission on Sunday. The diverse cast included Neotia Foundation, Bharti Airtel, Cyrus Poonawalla, United Shippers, controversial builder Avinash Bhosle who is being investigated by agencies, Bajaj Finserv, Atul Chordia, United Phosphorus, Oberoi Realty and Abhay Firodia.

Speaking about the disclosure made by the party, working president of NCP (Sharadchandra Pawar) Supriya Sule told TOI, "We are quite transparent in terms of working of our party and we expect other parties also to declare their donors."

"When the bill (on electoral bond) was being discussed, opposition had raised several concerns but despite those red flags, govt went ahead with the bill. We are thankful to Supreme Court that it has uncovered this issue," Sule added.

NCP (Sharad Chandra Pawar) national spokesperson Clyde Crasto said, "These people or companies have given money to help the party. This is not like BJP where companies were compelled or forced to pay money through bonds under pressure of investigative agencies. Companies that gave us money are genuine companies and they don't have lesser income than the bonds ...like in the case of companies that gave bonds to BJP. These companies were not raided by ED or CBI or Income tax and they didn't give the bonds to buy their freedom."

Most of the donors to NCP are Pune-based. Cvrus Poonawalla was in college with senior Pawar. At a public event recently, Pawar urged govt to confer Bharat Ratna on Poonawalla, who is chairman of Serum Institute of India. Builder Avinash Bhosle founded his business in Pune. Bhosale, arrested in 2021 and in jail since then in connection with DHFL loan case, was an influential builder during Congress-NCP rule in Maharashtra, Pune-based Atul Chordia of Panchshil Realty built Trump Towers in Pune's Kalyani Nagar.

THE SPEAKING TREE

ATIME FOR RENEWAL

His birthday fell on Nowruz. And while every other child got two gifts, one on their birthday and one on Nowruz, HOMAYUN TABA was the recipient of only one. For years he could not digest the injustice. Here he gives us a glimpse of the festival that

Zoroastri-

round forty-five years ago, if you were a young child in Iran, somewhere in the middle of March you would hear in the neighbourhood a cheerful jester character with blackened face, dressed in red, tambourine in hand, singing: 'I am Hajji Firoz, I come but once a year,' and you excitedly knew the Jashn-e Nowruz, new year festivities, were about to begin. Then at home you experienced a massive house cleaning ritual, strangely yet aptly called khane takaani, house shaking.

falls on spring equinox

After three months of a cold, dull and dreary winter, you would notice the first joyful NOWRUZ signs of Spring; the

melting of the snow, the first beautiful, delicate cherry blossoms. Symbolically, Nowruz is the triumph of goodness, of light over darkness. All related events and activities signify renewal of humans and nature.

The epic Shahnameh, by the 11th-century poet Ferdowsi, credits the mythical King Jamshid with establishing Nowruz after he saved humans from a harsh winter that was destined to freeze the planet. Several Central Asian countries

as well as the Iranian diaspora celebrate this time of great feasting. Nowruz, 'new day', generally falls on March 21, the spring equinox. Although a secular holiday, it's widely believed to be rooted in anism. The ancient Persians much like their Vedic cousins saw every seasonal change an occasion to celebrate. This 3,000-year tradition has survived and nearly 300 million celebrate it.

Nowruz is bracketed by two festivities, the first called chahar-shanbeh suri, on the last Wednesday of the old year. People gather to leap over small bonfires repeating a cleansing phrase - 'My yellowness, sickly pallor and afflictions to you; your redness, ruddiness and cheer to me' — the symbolic burning of all that was negative from the previous year while looking forward

to a new beginning. The second ritual, seezdah bedar marks the end of Nowruz which happens on the 13th day after getting rid of the unlucky 13. This is when the grown sabzeh, green wheatgrass that has been at home all through the celebrations, is taken outdoors and dropped into a flowing river, symbolising the return of the gift back to nature.

Central to Nowruz is the Sofreh, table cover, dastarkhan and the items on it. The word seven being a sacred number, seven items all starting with the let-

are placed here, all from nature each with a symbolic significance. The central piece is the above mentioned sabzeh, with seeb, apple for health, beauty; serekh, vinegar for longevity and patience; seer, garlic for good health, and other items signifying purity and abundance. Subsequently, non-natural things began to appear - a mirror, candles, decorated eggs, a bowl with fish.

Today, Nowruz is celebrated in several countries. One of the places that has been steadfastly holding on to several old Persian festivals is Tajikistan, which has a big maidan named Nowruz. It has also become a symbol of resistance that is reflected in a common greeting 'Nowruz pirooz', which means, 'Nowruz victorious'. Nowruz has fought for its existence, after the revolution in Iran when serious attempts were made to ban it as a pagan ritual. This failed because it is deeply embedded in the Iranian psyche. The same was the case in the former Soviet republics in

Central Asia. Today its existence is threatened in Afghanistan. Nowruz not only welcomes the

new year, it promotes solidarity, ap-

preciation of cultural diversity, val-

ues of peace and reconciliation between communities. For every-

one, it marks the season of renewal and a time of commitment to colour our lives with hope and harmony.

Anti-Bharat forces plotting new designs to disrupt: RSS

Hosabale Gets 3-Yr Extension As Gen Secy

Manash.Gohain @timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Akhil Bharatiya Pratinidhi Sabha of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) on Sunday extended the tenure of national general secretary Dattatreya Hosabale for another three years even as the highest decisionmaking meeting of the Sangh also passed a resolution urging people of the country to turn out in large numbers to exercise their franchise.

While describing the country's present "national "encouraging, positive developments", the Sangh in its annual report of 2023-24 stated that the year will be remembered as a "golden year", as it cited construction and consecration of Ram Mandir, success of Chandrayaan 3, and G20 summit which "resonated with 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' - the ancient vet immortal message of Bharat."

DSP held for

sexual assault

of minor house

help in Assam

Guwahati: Golaghat district

police on Sunday said they ar-

rested a deputy superintend-

ent of police (DSP) on charges

of sexual assault of a minor

working as a domestic help at

the officer's home, reports

Lachit Borphukan Police A-

against the accused at Der-

gaon police station on Satur-

day. He has been booked under

Section 376 and 506 of IPC,

apart from charges under Poc-

so Act, after the family of the

15-year-old girl made a com-

at, said as per the complaint,

the accused was sexually as-

saulting the minor girl for the

DGP, wrote, "The DSP was ar-

rested on the basis of evi-

dence that has come up during

investigation of the afore-

'Girl brooded over

incident for 2 days

before taking life'

¬he girl, whom her fam-

ilv described as "sensi-

tive", apparently br-

Police started a suo motu

ooded over it for a couple of

probe after hearing about the

circumstances of her death.

The deputy director of public

instruction in Bagalkot was

unavailable for comment de-

Lanka arrests

21 more Indian

fishermen

Colombo: Sri Lankan Navy

has arrested 21 more Indian

fishermen for allegedly poach-

ing into the country's territo-

rial waters, the latest such in-

cident this month. The arrests

come a day after Sri Lanka Na-

vy on Friday detained at least

15 Indian fishermen off the

coast of Karainagar in the

northern Jaffna Peninsula. PTI

spite several tries.

days before taking her life.

▶ Continued from P1

mentioned criminal case."

Taking to X, GP Singh,

Rajen Singh, SP of Golagh-

plaint, police said.

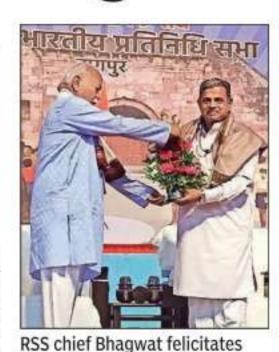
last couple of months.

cademy in Assam' Golaghat.

The DSP was posted at the

Police lodged an FIR

Mukut Das.



general secretary Hosabale in Nagpur on Sunday

Without naming anyone, though indicating the utterances by opposition political leaders on Sanatan Dharma or the playing of "North South divide," the report cautioned that "forces that are inimical to anything that is Bharat, Hindutva or Sangh, are ever active in search of newer plans and designs to disrupt or denigrate these three.'

RSS also underscored its concern as it highlighted farmers' agitation as an attempt to spread anarchy in Punjab, condemned atrocities in Sandeshkhali, and ex-

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Housing experts, industry

leaders and prominent builders con-

verged at the 8th edition of The Times

of India's flagship property Right To

Excellence in Gurugram on Friday to

focus on the country's real estate sector

and discussed issues ranging from in-

novation in the housing industry to the

future of urban planning and the ever-

Estate Summit, organised in associ-

ation with Housing.com parent REA

India, National Real Estate Develop-

ment Council (NAREDCO) vice-presi-

dent Gaurav Jain was all praise for Re-

ra. "What Rera has done is, it has put

the Amazons of the world on the same

level as mom-and-pop stores because

the compliance standards are the

same. Nobody differentiates between a

four-house project and a large develop-

ment of a couple of million square feet

On the growth of the Indian real es-

— the compliances remain the same."

tate sector, Vikas Wadhawan, CFO,

REA India and Business Head, Proptig-

er said, "We are seeing a rapid growth

in some of the markets, especially com-

ing out from a very long cyclical down-

Sanjib Chakraborty &

Subhro Maitra TNN

Bongaon/Malda: Faced

with spreading unrest in

Matua-dominated pockets

in Bengal, specifically tar-

geted against schedule 1A

of the CAA notification that

asks for Bangladeshi docu-

ments in order to apply for

Indian citizenship, junior

Union minister and Bon-

gaon MP Shantanu Thakur

said he will apply for citi-

zenship under CAA rules to

debunk TMC's "wilful mis-

on Saturday, came in the

backdrop of sporadic pro-

tests among Matua groups

in Nadia's Chakdah on

March 14 and the Sara Bha-

rat Matua Mahasangha's

(SBMM) Malda unit threat-

(for citizenship under CAA).

But I could not have done it

too. My grandfather had his

Thakur said: "I will apply

ening fresh protests.

Thakur's statement, late

information" against it.

turn in the real estate market, followed

Will apply under CAA

to debunk TMC claims:

Union minister from WB

In his keynote address at the Real

evolving realty market.

No need for Ram temple-like movement to reclaim other shrines, says Hosabale

Ramjanmabhoomi-like movement is not needed on other temple-related issues, RSS general secretary Dattatreya Hosabale said on Sunday in reference to Kashi and Mathura shrines, reports Shishir Arya.

"The matter (Kashi and Mathura) is being heard in court. Even the solution to the Ayodhya dispute finally came through courts. Where's the need for a movement of a similar scale if the matter can be resolved by the judiciary?" he asked. Speaking after being re-elected general secretary, Hosabale said, "There is a growing demand among saints and VHP for reclaiming Mathura and Kashi, but there cannot be a similar approach to every problem. Hindus under the leadership of social and religious organisations can take up these issues from time to time."

nic conflict in Manipur. RSS stated that importance of elections in a democracy cannot be overstated as it said that Swayamsevaks not only have to vote as their tion of the Ram temple in sacred duty, "but also ensure 100% polling. They should make plans in their area to

achieve this".

RSS will be celebrating its centenary year in 2025, and it said that its target of spreading its activities across all Mandals is yet to be achieved. It urged its cadres to resolve to fulfil the same in the coming year. "The situation is excellent. The centenpressed worry over the eth- ary year of Sangh is beckon- ests deepen the crisis..."

ing us. Let us advance with confidence; let us work with certitude. Time is ours: it is waiting for us."

Celebrating the consecra-

Ayodhya on Jan 22, the report also emphasised the need for unity in the face of divisive forces aiming to disrupt the nation. The report stated, "Although the new Ram Temple is a sign of heralding a new age of social harmony,... it is extremely painful and despicable that frequently we get the news of the excesses on the persons of Scheduled Caste ... in some cases vested inter-

'Realty sector has undergone

seismic shift in last 10-12 years'

Supreme Court advocate Avishkar Singhvi

RIGHT TO

BY THE TIMES OF INDIA

by Covid. When we came out of Covid,

we saw a very strong bounce back in the

market, and it was on the back of an ec-

onomic upturn and pent-up demand in

Tier 2 and Tier 3 markets, Amit Masal-

As the discussion veered towards

the real estate sector."

(Indian) citizenship card.

And he had migrated. I will

do it only to debunk the illog-

nerjee and her party TMC

have launched a stinging

anti-CAA campaign, alleg-

ing that applying for citi-

zenship afresh under CAA

would disentitle people

from existing Aadhaar-

linked social schemes and

impact their daily lives by

rendering all their existing

that CAA is linked to NRC.

Schedule 1A on the issue of

Bangladesh documents... is to ensure that no terrorist

bodies use it to give Indian

citizenship to anyone.

These Bangladeshi docu-

ments will help establish

one is a clean person. If you

do not have it, you have to

get a written certified un-

dertaking from a registered

body," Thakur said.

Banerjee has also said

"Whatever is given in

IDs useless.

Bengal CM Mamata Ba-

ical claims being made."

at the Real Estate Summit on Friday

CELLENCE

Arunachal inherent part of China, claims Chinese military

Beijing: The Chinese military has reiterated its claim over Arunachal Pradesh, calling the area an "inherent part of China's territory", days after India rejected Beijing's objection to PM Modi's visit to the state.

Chinese defence ministry spokesman senior colonel Zhang Xiaogang said the southern part of Xizang (the Chinese name for Tibet) is an inherent part of China's territory, and Beijing "never acknowledges and firmly opposes" the "socalled Arunachal Pradesh illegally established by India", official media here reported.

Zhang made the remarks in response to India's enhancement of its military readiness through Sela Tunnel in Arunachal Pradesh, according to a report posted on Chinese defence ministry's website Friday.

China, which claims Arunachal Pradesh as South Tibet, routinely objects to Indian leaders' visits to the state to highlight its claims. Beijing has also named the area as Zangnan.

India has repeatedly rejected China's territorial claims over Arunachal Pradesh, asserting that the state is an integral part of the country. PTI

At the summit, experts

from innovation in the

housing industry to the

and the ever-evolving

realty market

future of urban planning

dan, CRO, Housing.com said: "As ur-

banisation is growing and the kind of

infrastructure push we have seen in

the last couple of years, we are seeing a

lot of demand from Tier 2 and Tier 3 ci-

ties. When Covid happened, compa-

nies started work from home. That led

to people going back to their homes and

there was huge demand from such ci-

ties. We are seeing the trend continue."

laws, SC advocate Avishkar Singhvi

said, "The real estate sector over the last

10-12 years has undergone a seismic shift

in terms of regulation, proactive ap-

proach by courts and several other mea-

sures that have been taken at the state

level. Land is a state subject, so no matter

how many central regulations come in

the form of Rera Act or Consumer Dis-

putes Act or any other legislature by Par-

liament, the states will have to nuance

and develop their own remedies on the

basis of the problems that they face."

During a fireside chat on real estate

discussed issues ranging

'Tainted': TN guv nixes Stalin bid to reinduct ex-minister Ponmudy

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Chennai: Tamil Nadu governor RNR avi has rejected chief minister M K Stalin's recommendation to appoint and swear in K Ponmudy as minister again. In a communication sent by Raj Bhavan and addressed to the CM on Sunday evening, Ravi said since Ponmudy remained "tainted of corruption, re-induction as minister would be against constitutional morality".

Ponmudy, who was the higher education minister, ceased to be a minister after Madras high court convicted him in a corruption case in Declast year. On March 11, Supreme Court stayed the conviction, following which govt sent the recommendation to the governor.

In his communication to the CM on Sunday, the governor said, "It is pertinent to note that SC, in the light of Sec 8(3) of Representation of the People Act 1951, in the said order has suspended the conviction by way of interim relief to Dr K Ponmudy. It means the conviction of Ponmudy though exist-

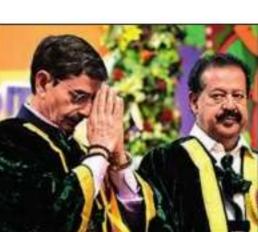


Corrigendum

1. Tender No. 01235356 for Commissioning of Crew voice & Video Recording System (CVVRS) integrated with Railway Driver Assistance System (RDAS) in Locomotives with 03 years warranty followed by 05 years CAMC". Tender Closing Date/Time stands revised/extended upto 11.04.2024 (15:30hrs.) Corrigendum issued for other aspects also.

2. Tender No. 01235357 for "Supply, Installation & Commissioning of IP based Closed Circuit Television Surveillance System (CCTVSS) in Coaches With 03 years warranty followed by 05 years CAMC". Tender Closing Date/Time stands revised/ extended upto 11.04.2024 (15:30hrs.) Corrigendum issued for other aspects also.

3. Tender No. 01245066 for Supply Installation & Commissioning of IP based Closed Circuit Television Surveillance System (CCTVSS) in EMU/MEMU Coaches AND Crew voices & Video Recording System (CVVRS) integrated with/without Railway Driver Assistance System (RDAS) in Driver Cabs of Driving Motor Coaches with 03 years Warranty followed by 05 years Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract (CAMC) Total number of EMU/MEMU Coaches is 8563. Tender Closing Date/Time stands revised/ extended upto 11.04.2024 (15:30hrs.) Corrigendum issued for other aspects also. For further details, please visit IREPS website (www.ireps.gov.in). CRIS/New Delhi



Governor R N Ravi (L) said Ponmudy as minister would be against constitutional morality

ent has been made non-oper-

ative. It has not been set aside." It further said, "The offences for which he has been held guilty are very serious relating to corruption he committed as a public servant. As he remains tainted by corruption, re-induction as minister would be against constitution-

al morality. Hence unable to accede to your request."

Last week, Stalin had sent a communication to Ravi "to appoint and swear in" Ponmudy as minister "either on Wednesday evening or Thursday morning". The governor left for Delhi on Thursday morning and returned on Saturday. He returned to Chennai on Wednesday evening after taking part in PM Modi's rally at Palladam in Tirupur district.

On March 13, two days after Supreme Court suspended Ponmudy's conviction and sentence in an assets case, assembly speaker M Appavu said his previous notification announcing vacancy of Tirukkovilur assembly seat represented by the former minister would become inoperative.

Government of India Office of the Director General of Income Tax (Investigation) Uttar Pradesh & Uttarakhand IMPORTANT NOTICE

The Investigation Directorate of Income Tax Department, Uttar Pradesh & Uttarakhand, Lucknow, appeals to the people of Uttar Pradesh to join the hands of the Income Tax Department to fight and curb the use of black money during the period of General Election to Lok Sabha 2024. The General Public is advised not to hesitate in reporting or informing about black money/ unaccounted money suspected to be used in election, movement of cash/distribution of cash for use in said General Election to Lok Sabha in 2024. The identity of the informants will be kept secret.

The information can be provided to the following Toll free Number, Whatsapp etc:

: 1800-180-7540 Toll free number

Fax No. for giving information: Fax 0522-2233306 & complaints

: 6388736373 WhatsApp Number

Courtesy: Addl. Director of Income-tax (Inv.)(HQ)/ State Nodal Officer,

Expenditure Monitoring, Uttar Pradesh O/o.the Director General Of Income-Tax (Inv.), Lucknow

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice No. JHS/Br/L/2023-24/26

E-TENDER NOTICE

(Two Packet System)

Dy. Chief Engineer/Bridge/Line/Jhansi, North Central Railway, Jhansi for and on behalf of President of India Invites open E-tenders on the prescribed forms for the under noted work :-

Tender no.: Br-JHS-2023-32 Name of Work: Mahoba-Khajuraho Section Construction of ROB (End-to-End including approaches) in lieu of Level Crossing No. 2 at Km 1296/11-12.

Tender no. : Br-JHS-2023-33 Name of Work : Mahoba-Khajuraho Section Construction of ROB (End-to-End including approaches) in lieu of Level Crossing No.3 at Km 1315/3-4.

Approx. Cost of work: Rs. 37.52 Crore/-, Bid Security (Earnest Money): Rs. 20,26,100/-, Date of closing of Tender: 08.04.2024, Completion period: 12 Months, Eligibility Criteria for similar work: Any bridgework involving erection/launching or Regirdering of open web girder. OR Any bridgework involving erection/launching or Regirdering or Bowstring arch Bridge. Note: 1: The complete information along with tender document of above E-Tenders are available on Website www.ireps.gov.in. up to 15:00 hrs. on the due date of tender closing i.e. 08.04.2024. 2: Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with Digital Signature Certificate issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. 3: Rates entered into Financial Rate page and duly signed digitally shall be considered. Rates and any other financial entity in any other form / letter head if attached by vendors shall be straightway ignored and shall not be considered. 4: Document being attached should be signed by the tenderer on its body. 5: Payment of Bid Security (Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) in respect of e-tendering shall be accepted through net banking or payment gateway only. 6: In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. 7: Tender on line can be submitted up to 15.00 hrs. on dated 08.04.2024. 515/24 (AN)

Morth central railways ⊕ www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in
 @ @northcentralrailway
 @ CPRONCR



Department of Defence Research and Development, Ministry of Defence, Government of India DEFENCE INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY (Deemed to be University Under Section 3 of UGC Act, 1956) Girinagar, Pune - 411 025 | Tel. No. 020-2460 4411



Date: - 14.03.2024

E-mail:- jr@diat.ac.in ADMISSION NOTICE: DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY & POST GRADUATE PROGRAMMES-2024

Defence Institute of Advanced Technology is an autonomous organization, fully funded by the Department of Defence Research & Development, Ministry of Defence established with the objective of imparting Post Graduate Education in Engineering and Applied Sciences on thrust area relevant to Defence, and to conduct research in the core areas of Defence Technologies.

DIAT invites applications for the Ph.D, MS (by Research), M.Tech, and M.Sc Programmes for sponsored/self-sponsored/selffinance/scholarship categories in various

Schools/Departments. Details of Branches/ Programmes, application forms, eligibility criteria and other terms and conditions are available at website www.diat.ac.in.



WT.5694,2024

BJP neta touts 'circumcision test' for citizenship seekers, stirs row

Kolkata: A post from BJP leader Tathagata Roy on his X handle — suggesting that circumcision "must" be the test to determine the religious identity of a male seeking citizenship under CAA — has raised a political storm, reports Rohit Khanna.

TMC has termed it a "vulgar jibe", questioning the "narrative BJP wanted to put forward."

CAA aims to grant Indian citizenship to persecuted minorities - Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis, Christians — from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan who arrived in India by 2014. "A Hindu, Buddhist or Christian fugitive must be presumed to be entitled to citizenship. The test tained? Circumcision could be a way.

of the religious status of a male must be circumcision or otherwise. All females accompanying a male so found to be Hindu must be presumed to be entitled to citizenship," Roy said.

Later, speaking to TOI, Roy said there could be challenges to ascertain the religious identity of a person who files an application under CAA. "How would a Hindu fugitive, who fled Bangladesh in the face of torture, earn citizenship? Citizenship under CAA will be given to a Hindu, Buddhist or Christian who had to flee the country due to religious persecution. What could be the determining factor if his religious identity has to be ascer-



VACANCIES ARMY PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN DELHI

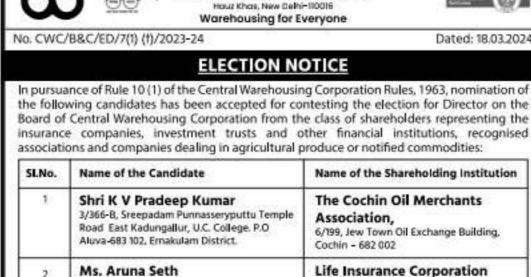
Army Public Schools in Delhi require competent and experienced teaching & non-teaching staff for the academic session 2024-25. For details visit school website of Army Public School Dhaula Kuan;

www.apsdk.com. Qualification as per CBSE norms. CTET (Mandatory for PRT & TGT) and Proficiency in English and Computer is mandatory.

Interested candidates to download the Application Form from school website and submit hard copy of the same, duly filled, to Army Public School Ridge Road, Dhaula Kuan along with self-attested copy of all relevant certificates/ testimonials by hand / by post so as to reach th school latest by 06 Apr 2024 (02:00 PM) alongwith Demand Draft for Rs.100/- in favour of Army Public School, Dhaula Kuan. No application will be accepted/entertained thereafter. Application(s) received through email will also not be entertained.

Only shortlisted candidates will be called for interview through emai Tentative date of interview: last week of April 2024 onwards The school reserve the right to cancel candidature of one / al candidates without any notice.





The Election will be held on 16.04.2024 (Tuesday) from 02.30 P.M. to 04.30 P.M. in the Auditorium of the Central Warehousing Corporation, "Warehousing Bhawan", 4/1, Siri Institutional Area, August Kranti Marg, Hauz Khas, New Delhi-110 016. This notice is being published as required under Rule 10(3) of the Central Warehousing Secretary, CWC

AGRICULTURE INSURANCE COMPANY OF INDIA LIMITED

Regd. Office: Plate B & C, 5th Floor, Block 1, East Kidwai Nagar,

New Delhi-110023 CIN: U74999DL2002PLC118123

of India

Central Office, Yogakshema,

Jeevan Bima Marg. Mumbai - 400 021

Tender for Hiring of Media Monitoring Agency Open Tender No. TSU/04/2022-PMFBY (FTS-117899)

Rajabai Patel Lane, Bhulabai Desai Road,

Agriculture Insurance Company of India Limited (AIC) on behalf of "IEC Advisory Committee under PMFBY" invites bids (Technical & Financial) from eligible bidders for "Media Monitoring" services for the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) and Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (RWBCIS).

Interested Bidders can download the tender document containing the detailed terms & conditions, free of cost from website www.aicofindia.com OR https://eprocure.gov.in/cppp/

Last date and time of submission of Bids is 09-04-2024 upto 3:30 p.m.

Please visit our official website www.aicofindia.com for any updates regarding this tender notice.

Date: 18.03.2024

www.aicofindia.com

General Manager









CONTRAPUNTO

Horse sense is the thing a horse has which keeps it from betting on people

-W C FIELDS

Plenty At Stake

All LS elections are consequential. But 2024's may be more consequential than most

The model code of conduct that kicked in on Saturday will continue till June. The actual polling will start on April 19 and run over six weeks. The electorate is now around 969 million. But even accounting for that number, this is a long-drawn exercise for 21st century India, which is retooling itself as a digital economy. Given that election duty will be first priority, even everyday governance will be affected for an unusually long time. The election cycle needs to be shrunk to minimise inconvenience for people.

Big third? | Every LS election is unique. And consequential. A special feature of the coming election is that Modi is aiming to become PM for the third straight term. If he does achieve it, he will equal Nehru's record of three successive victories. Just a decade ago, India was still in its coalition era and even a simple majority for a political party seemed a tall order. And three consecutive, clear victories were inconceivable.

Atacrossroads | Congress, India's dominant party for the first four decades after Independence, is at its lowest point. It suffered big defeats in 2014 and 2019. Its combined seats in these two LS

> 2009, when it anchored a coalition. Another drubbing will make it hard for the party to revive. While it has pockets of strength, a central leadership that appears incapable of winning can lead to state units peeling away into regional outfits. If Congress has to be seen as a serious contender at the national

level, it needs a big improvement on

rounds were not even half of what it got in

BJP's missing link | BJP's dominance of India is dissimilar to that of the erstwhile Congress. In its core region such as the Hindi belt and western India, BJP's victory margins are huge. But in most of south India and parts of eastern India, it has met with stiff opposition from regional parties. Congress at its peak had a wider geographical footprint. Modi's frequent trips to TN in the recent past indicate that the party is putting in extra effort to deepen its roots in these regions.

its last result.

Regional parties, dwindling returns | Regional parties in the period between 1989 and 2014 punched above their weight in Delhi. In 1990s, the combined vote share of regional parties more than doubled from the earlier level of 20%. Majority govts since 2014 have reduced the clout of regional parties. The bigger risk for them in 2024 is if Congress improves its performance, it's most likely to come at the expense of regional parties.

LS 2024 may see big realignment of social blocs, and that could influence political trajectory over the next decade.

How The Election Economy Works

Nothing official about it

Narendar Pani



The election economy will make its presence felt in the coming weeks through the massive expenditure that is the hallmark

of Indian polls. There is scope for moral outrage over the size of this expenditure, especially when it is done by individuals with modest beginnings. But that must not take attention away from how the election economy came to be what it is.

This is not just a popular story of the moral turpitude of political parties and their leaders, but also one that draws on the everyday life of common Indians.

The uncertainty that marked traditional Indian occupations, especially agriculture, has been altered, rather than removed, by economic transformation. There is uncertainty over

work as employers no longer guarantee long-term jobs, even as workers explore alternative avenues of career growth. Greater aspirations also encourage wor kers to operate at the edge of their economic resourwith little leeway when things go wrong. When things fall apart those at

the bottom of the pyramid expect

state support. The combination of uncertainty in earning and increased aspirations has contributed to families seeking support for a much wider range of requirements, from school fees to hospital bills. A politician who meets these requirements from personal funds must find ways to raise these funds, even if they are not legal. And not only must they provide the support but must be seen to be able to do so, contributing to their leading ostentatious lifestyles. These costs are expected to be compensated as and when they get to power.

The emergence of a large number of such politicians alters the nature of political parties. The parties need to attract the politicians who can bring the largest number of such cultivated supporters.

In elections where there is an overriding political issue, like Ram temple, politicians will seek the party that is associated with a winning theme. Parties then have to give the impression that they have the winning narrative. This involves from that result.

the expensive task of influencing, if not controlling, a narrative across multiple avenues, from social media to cinema.

To complicate matters further, parties need to park their money outside the country between elections.

Political parties thus have to develop the fine art of raising funds, parking them outside the country, and bringing them back at election time. The magnitude of funds to be raised usually means parties turning a blind eye to corruption, if not actually encouraging it. Since, however, getting caught can have serious political consequences, much ingenuity is spent on devising means to collect funds, park them outside, and get them back, within

When parties are in power there is a temptation to do so by simply extending legal boundaries. Electoral

the boundaries of legality.

bonds were a good example of legalising a form of collection of political funds. But in the sense of immediacy that dominates all politics, they may well be grateful for the six years the Supreme Court took to arrive at

They may also take comfort from the fact that they have had greater

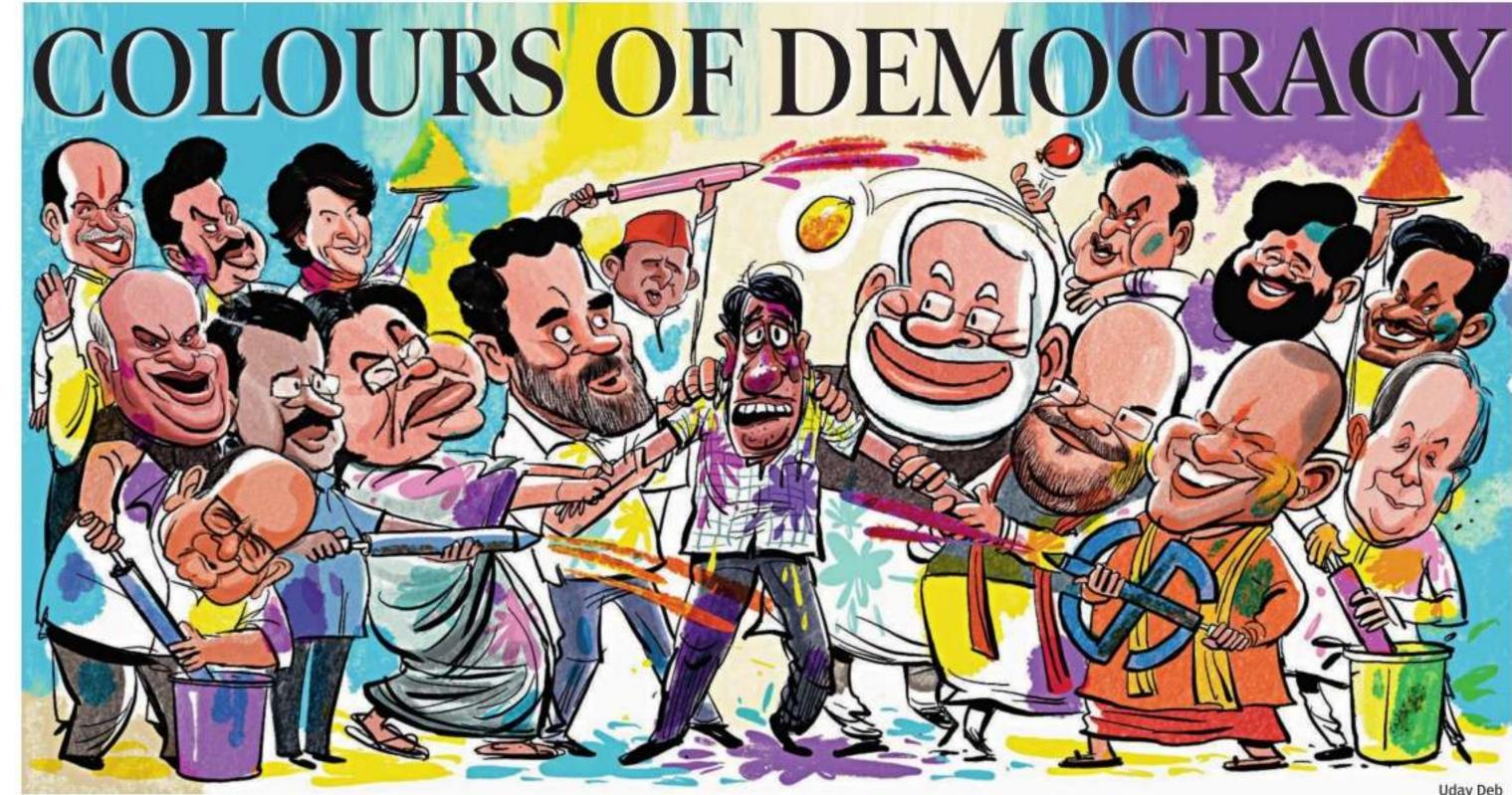
the decision.

success in legalising other elements in processes that were earlier

considered illegal. There was a time when politicians needed havala transactions to get back money stored abroad. This route is no longer always necessary.

A local representative of a political party, for instance, can invest heavily in a penny stock. If done over a sufficiently long period of time it need not have any immediate effect on the price of that stock. Closer to election time, a friendly FII can invest the money parked abroad in a way that raises the price of that stock. If the local representative of the party then sells the stock at the new higher price, thereby making a substantial profit, the money would in effect have been transferred back into the country legally.

These processes do not leave the larger economy untouched. It is quite possible when large political parties move their resources back home through the stock market, Sensex would see a rise. But a ruling party worth its salt would have no difficulty gaining political mileage



What To Watch Out For As India Gets Ready To Vote: 10 Takes From 2 Columnists

R Jagannathan



the voter's mind.

With EC firing the starter's gun for the question to ask is not who will win or lose, but what will

influence the outcome. There is no shortage of issues on which various regions will vote. These range from economic (inflation, jobs) to social (caste, religion) to political (scams, corruption, electoral bonds, CAA etc), and personal (who do I like most among the candidates?). However, most elections are not won for one-two reasons alone, unless a huge triggering event causes a landslide in one direction or the other. So here are five things to watch out for. Election results will depend on how these factors play out in

Can one charismatic leader decide the **vote?** And that too after 10 years in power? BJP is seeking a mandate in Modi's name. Every poster, every

The real imponderable, which we will know only on voting day, is whether Modi's committed voter will assume victory and stay at home, thus causing some upsets. Or will a demoralised opposition vote bank stay at home and make Modi romp home relatively easily?

communication talks of Modi Sarkar Ki Guarantee. The idea is to trump the freebies and specific social guarantees being offered by opposition parties, especially Congress, which is the only other party with a national footprint. Personality-based campaigning is peaking in India, and June 2024 will tell us if one man can win the vote all by himself.

Do arithmetic alliances work for opposition? As well as for BJP? It has much smaller allies in most states. This means allies cannot demand too much from BJP, and also depend on the Modi charisma themselves. In the case of opposition, some states have clear alliances between national and regional parties (UP, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Assam), but in others they are in conflict. Question is whether allies without chemistry will see effective vote transfers between one partner and the other.

Will BJP expand its footprint in the south and east? And will Congress regain its mojo in the Hindi belt, where it is often the main opposition to BJP? In the east,

YOU JUST HAVE

NO SENSE OF

Calvin & Hobbes

YOU AND I ARE THROUGH!

I'LL TEACH YOU TO TRICK

ME, YOU BIG HAIRBALL!

BJP is not the dominant party in three big states (Bengal, Bihar and Odisha), and in the south it is not No. 2 anywhere except Karnataka. Congress is No. 2 in biggest democratic three Hindi states, but not in the biggest exercise in human Hindi-speaking states of UP and Bihar. history, the immediate BJP has wrapped up alliances in Bihar and in Bengal, where it is already No. 2 and making a bid for No. 1. In Odisha, it is staking a claim to become No. 2 after Naveen Patnaik leaves the scene some time - which partially explains its efforts to sew up an alliance with him this time.

> In the south, BJP is trying to open its account in Kerala and Tamil Nadu, and emerge as the No. 2 party in Telangana. In Andhra, it is merely seeking a foothold in alliance with Telugu Desam and Pawan Kalyan's Jana Sena. While nobody is expecting any miracles from Congress in the Hindi belt, BJP is widely forecast to emerge stronger in the south, if not in terms of seats, at least in terms of vote share.

> A big question mark hangs over Maharashtra. It has 48 Lok Sabha seats, the second largest number after UP. With both fronts having multiple allies with different voter allegiances, the issue is whether supporters of ideologically incompatible allies will vote for the others. Sena-BJP transfers will probably happen reasonably smoothly, but vote transfers to NCP and vice versa may not happen as smoothly. The same applies for the opposition front.

> What will be the impact of electoral **bonds judgments?** How much of a role will ongoing disclosures about who made the most out of electoral bonds play in these elections? Opposition will clearly go hammer and tongs against BJP on this front, and as the ruling party it will be more vulnerable to accusations, especially since it has made anti-corruption its calling card over the last 10 years. As of now, it does

not seem that the voter is too concer-

ned about corruption, since it is not as

in-your-face as it seemed in 2014. But

we will know if this assumption is

right or wrong on June 4. We will also know on June 4 if Ram Mandir in Ayodhya and CAA both of which impact religious sentiment – will play a big role in electoral outcomes. The relative importance of freebies in tilting the vote, will also be revealed. A larger question the voter will answer is whether BJP's boast - 370 seats on its own, and 400-plus for NDA is just a stretch target for internal party

consumption or something realistically

achievable.

I DO TOO!

THAT WAS A

TERRIBLE,

NASTY, AWFUL

AND I'LL NEVER

FORGIV.. HUH?

THING TO DO,

IT'S JUST

Which voter will stay at home? The real imponderable, which we will know only on voting day, is whether Modi's committed voter will assume victory and stay at home, thus causing some upsets. Or will a demoralised opposition vote bank stay at home and make Modi romp home relatively easily?

Asim Ali



NDA remains the clear favourite, judging from both opinion polls and anecdotal evidence. Yet, Lok Sabha elections remain notoriously hard to predict. Judging from Lokniti-CSDS data going back two decades, around a third of Lok Sabha's electorate (27%-32%) are late

Incumbent Modi-led

choice only at the fag end of campaigning. Trend's been for late deciders to swing towards perceived winners, increasing the frequency of wave elections at both the Centre and states. Given this chunk's size, a decisive swing in either direction opens up a range of possibilities: from NDA fulfilling its dream of 400+, to, on the flip

deciders. These are weakly-partisan

voters who conclusively decide their

side, struggling to cross majority mark. Beyond the sound and fury, it's electoral strategy that creates the momentum that sweeps up undecided voters. As war strategist Lawrence Freedman defines it: "Strategy, the central political art...is about getting more out of a situation than the initial balance of power would suggest." 2024's winning strategy would likely be the one that optimises five critical factors, weaving them into a superior campaign narrative.

Coalitions | Given BJP's dominance, it was vital that opposition put together a superior alliance. This didn't materialise, little change is expected now. On the contrary, BJP's aggressively expanded its coalition umbrella.

 Compared to 2019, BJP-led coalition lost Shiv Sena (Thackeray faction), AIADMK and Akali Dal-the latter two being wooed back. It's gained TDP, JDS and RLD, possibly BJD. Congress-led coalition gained SP and AAP, lost JDS. Both coalitions seem to have marginally expanded, squeezing the space for any third front. BSP and YSRCP aside, once neutral players BJD, AAP, TDP have been pushed to take a side. NDA's strategy has been superior-for instance by bringing JDU back, it undercut INDIA's agenda on caste census.

Incumbency Of last four elections, two can be characterised as anti-incumbency ones (2004 NDA and 2014 UPA losses), and two as pro-incumbency polls (2009 UPA and 2019 NDA wins). NDA's riding on high levels of popular satisfaction. In the latest CVoter survey, 40% of respondents projected high satisfaction with govt performance, while 26% claimed dissatisfaction. A large proportion reported 'middling' satisfaction, representing a catchment area of the undecided.

 INDIA partners have struggled to put across a common governance agenda. Thus, NDA's pro-incumbency bloc, bound by a clear ideological agenda (on Ram Temple, CAA, UCC, Article 370) reflects more resilience.

Battleground states | India's political geography's become more polarised in

SUS IE:

MA Ba!

you Smell !

the last decade. The biannual MOTN survey last month portrayed a similar state of play to 2019's, in many large states. BJP's expected to sweep the northwest saffron corridor again, from UP to Rajasthan and Gujarat. MP, Chhattisgarh and Haryana appear secure in BJP's grasp. Similarly, opposition's expected to

sweep Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Punjab.

 Battleground states make up the middle. Andhra, Telangana and Karnataka are three volatile south states with 70 seats up for grabs. Elections in Bihar and Bengal, and possibly, Assam and Jharkhand still look open, with 110 seats all told. Maharashtra (48 seats) has the highest potential for opposition gains. NDA made inroads in 2019 in Odisha (from 1 to 8 seats) and Bengal (from 2 to 18).

This time, the PM-led push has come to south India, with rallies in Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Telangana. Congress's campaign on social justice and welfare (caste census, NYAY programme) might also find hospitable terrain in these states.

Swing seats | Congress's caste census agenda is meant to make the party com-

A third of voters decide who to vote for at campaigning's fag end. Electoral strategy creates the momentum to sweep up these voters. As war strategist Lawrence Freedman put it, the central political art is about getting more out of a situation than the initial balance of power suggests

petitive in the Hindi heartland, and pave the way for smooth vote transfers between Congress and its Mandal alliance partners (SP in UP, RJD in Bihar). NDA banks on mobilising poorer segments as welfare beneficiaries, and roping in smaller caste parties in large state-level alliances.

Leadership | NDA's campaign would likely focus on making campaigning a clear presidential-style contest, with a 'Modi vs Rahul' or 'Modi vs Who' narrative. The 'Modi ki guarantee' billboard theme personalises NDA's campaign as a referendum on his leadership. CVoter survey showed the Modi-Rahul popularity gap persists – 62% wanted Modi as next PM vs 27% rooting for Rahul.

 INDIA knows its only hope lies in fragmenting the Lok Sabha election into state-by-state battles. As CVoter data shows, Modi's popularity in Maharashtra, Bengal and Bihar remains higher than satisfaction levels with the Centre.

Thus, NDA's strategy hinges on reinforcing centrality of credible leadership, whereas INDIA needs a collective push in foregrounding issues like inflation and unemployment, on which govt performance evokes dissatisfaction.

Sacredspace



How solemn... deeply pathetic our life does loom in its once-and-doneness, how inexorably

linear, even though our rotating, revolving planet offers us the cycles of the day...year to suggest that existence is...cyclical, a playful spin...there will always be tomorrow...

John Updike

Master The Art Of Cultivating Power

HEYYYYY, YOU'RE

RIGHT! IT 15

FUNNY! HA HA

HA! "OK! WE'RE

PALS AGAIN!

Thich Nhat Hanh

It is true that if you do not have power, you cannot do anything. Money is power. There are those who have a lot of money. They are so rich, but they also suffer so much from loneliness, depression, and fame. There are many film stars and others who are very famous, but when you look deeply into their lives, you see that they also suffer very deeply. These kinds of powers can be real powers, but you can easily become their victims.

But there are other kinds of powers that can make you strong. The first power is the power of cutting off. You

are attached to a number of things, so bound to them that you lose all your freedom. You know they are destroying you, enslaving you. But you have no courage to cut off. And that cutting off can impart freedom. There are those of us who are bound to a number of things and that makes us powerless. You may think that you cannot survive without it, without him, without her, without that

kind of position. But maybe, it is the

very obstacle for your true happiness.

So how to release, cut off? You need

power. That is the first power that is

needed to set you free. The second power is to forgive and

to love. Even if that person is not lovable, you can still love him because you are capable of

seeing the suffering in him. And your love grows, and you become more powerful, that is true love - love without frontier, without discrimination. You have THE SPEAKING TREE to train yourself in order to love like that. You don't

leave anyone outside of your love, it is

allembracing. The third power is the power to understand. You are no longer afraid.

When you understand, you are no longer angry or fearful. And that requires meditation or contemplation. Looking deeply to get insight: the vision of inter-being, the vision of interconnectedness. And that kind of understanding removes all discrimination, all separation. These are very powerful kinds of energy. If there are people who have these kinds of powers in our community, then it is certain that we can change history. Ahimsa Trust that represents Thich

Nhat Hanh in India is organising a series of programmes in March/April. Visit www.ahimsatrust.org or write to

India, Africa See Surge In **Investment Inflows: Report**

Investment announcements into India have surged, driven by economies spanning Asia, the US, and Europe. But those from China have declined

Asean economies have seen rise in investment announcements from China, Europe, and the US

China and Europe have announced increased investment into Africa, Central Asia and West Asia, and developing economies in Europe

Source: McKinsey & company

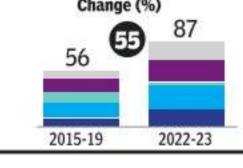


Average annual cross-border greenfield investment inflow (\$ billion)

Source economy

Rest of world US and Canada Greater China Advanced Europe

Advanced Asia



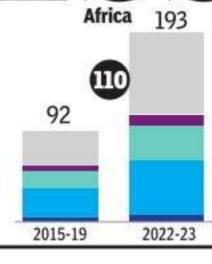
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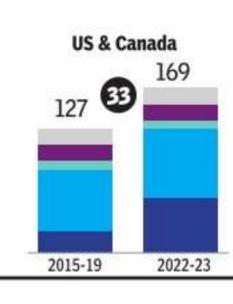
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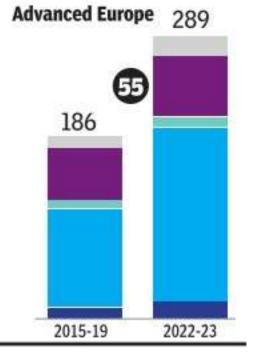
China

2015-19 2022-23

Russia







D-St gears up for election volatility

Indian Stocks Have Surged In 9 Of Last 11 Election Years, Say Analysts

Yogesh.Kabirdoss @timesgroup.com

Chennai: Stock markets are likely to remain volatile as India enters into a multiphase general election spread over the next 78 days. Analysts are forecasting that auto, banking and infrastructure are among the sectors that are looking prospective in this calendar year.

Motilal Oswal Financial Services underscores that equity markets will keep a watch on the outcome of this election, as it will have a significant bearing on short-term market behaviour. Siddharth Khemka head (retail research), Motilal Oswal Financial Services, said, Nifty has rallied 10-35% for six months (Nov-May period)

All eyes on

US, Japan

central banks

nvestors may glean more

on the US Federal Reserve's

resolve to ease and how clo-

se Japan is to finally exiting

negative interest rates as cen-

tral banks set policy for al-

most half the global economy.

world's biggest collection of

decisions for 2024 to date, in-

cluding judgments on the cost

of borrowing for six of the 10

most-traded currencies. The

collective outcome may un-

derscore how monetary offi-

cials' perception of inflation

risks is diverging noticeably.

be the Federal Reserve's deci-

sion on Wednesday, which

may reveal whether still-ro-

bust economic data are giving

Washington officials cause to

dial back intentions to cut ra-

tes - or whether their outlo-

ok for three reductions this

year remains on track. The

Bank of Japan's announce-

ment on Tuesday is also pivo-

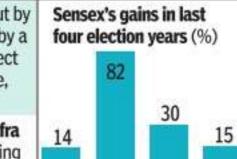
Most consequential will

This week features the

LONG-TERM INVESTORS CAN SIT BACK

Nifty has a tendency to bottom out by March in an election year, followed by a pre-election rally. We therefore expect Nifty to head towards 23,400 by June, said an analyst at ICICI Direct

Analysts say auto, banking and infra are among the sectors that are looking prospective in this calendar year



2004 2009 2014 2019

Block deals boost FPI flows in March

New Delhi: Foreign funds have turned big buyers in Indian equity markets this month, picking up shares worth Rs 40,710 crore in the first fortnight of March. The inflows came after a modest investment of Rs 1,539 crore in Feb and an outflow of Rs 25,743 crore in Jan, data with the depositories snowed. The March figure includes some bulk deals executed

through the stock exchange. AGENCIES

election results in the past five consecutive Lok Sabha elections, from 1999 to 2019. "Markets are likely to till the announcement of into the elections. That be-vegiven positive returns in from premiumisation play bust over the long run.

ing said, history, however, is in favour of a pre-election rally," he said.

ICICI Direct noted that

nine out of the past 11 general election years.

"Key takeaway for investors, in our view, is that election year volatility should be embraced as a buying opportunity going by historical inference. Further, Nifty has a tendency to bottom out by March in the general election year, followed by a preelection rally. We therefore expect Nifty to head toward the 23,400-point mark by June 2024 with a strong support at 21,500 levels," Pankaj Pandey, head of retail research, ICICI Direct, told TOI.

From a sectoral perspective for a medium to long term, he said, banks have entered a good credit growth cycle, which will lead to business growth and provide operating leverage. "Auto is another sector we are buland EV adoption at an inflexion point," he added.

Apart from the public sector banks, the infrastructure sector in the railways, roads, port and highways, where govt is driving the capital expenditure initiative, are looking good for this calendar year, said Dharmesh Kant, head (equity & derivative research), Cholamandalam Finance.

"Basically, this is a very safe election for the markets to go into," he said. Building material supplies, metals, electronics and power sectors are also prospective winners, he said.

Meanwhile, in a recent statement, Value Stocks, a smallcase manager, said that short-term volatility closer to election results is expected, though markets remain volatile heading Indian equity markets ha- lish on, with the tailwinds will continue to remain ro-

Count existing investments as incentives, say German car cos

Pankaj.Doval @timesgroup.com

New Delhi: German and some other multinational companies are concerned at Govt's new incentive scheme to push investments into electric vehicle manufacturing, fearing that they may not get a "level-playing field" as special import duty rates would be given only to new entrants but may not be extended to existing players.

German makers such as BMW, the Volkswagen group and Mercedes-Benz are already mulling their official position on the matter, with their Indian subsidiaries briefing global headquarters about the new tax regime that has been announced by the Indian govt last week, sources told TOI.

The new policy, which

NEW EV POLICY

German and some other MNCs fear that they may not get a "level-playing field" after govt announced new incentive scheme to push investments into EV manufacturing > They feel special import duty rates would be given

only to new entrants but

may not be extended to

existing players

for those who commit at least \$500 million (Rs 4,150 crore) of investment towards local manufacturing, apart from commitments on domestic value addition, is being seen as favourable for new players, such as, Vietnamese as well American Tesla, both of whom had pitched for lower import rates in the initial part of their In-

ries a tax of 70% or 100% on imported EVs, depending on their value.

companies such as Korean

German and some other

Hyundai and Kia, apart from some of the Indian homegrown makers, feel their "early investments in the electric space should be coretrospectively. unted" "The companies feel that they should not be 'penalised' just because they were the early ones to invest for electric vehicles production and localisation in India in line with govt's thinking. The companies want govt takes into account funds they have already put in towards green technology in their local set-ups he-

re." one of the sources said. "They don't want to be 'left out' of any incentive scheme just because the govt is now rolling out sops to attract new investors.

Their early commitment to India should also be factored in," the source said.

Some of the multinational companies are also planning to involve their local embassies in India to press ahead their demand towards driving in a 'levelplaying field'. "The embassies are also looking into the matter over the past few months, especially as a policy like the one announced was already being expected where new entrants were to be incentivised for entering India."

In its discussions with govt last year, the Elon Musk company had indicated that it may use India as a hub to produce lower-cost vehicles for the domestic market and for exports. VinFast had announced a plan to invest \$2 billion in India in setting up a facility in Tamil Nadu.

State govts to raise ₹50k cr in a day, set bond record

Partha.Sinha@timesgroup.com

Mumbai: On Tuesday, when 17 states together would borrowalittleoverRs50,000crore through auction of bonds, it would be the highest such borrowing amount on a single day either by central or state govts in India's bond market history. The record high amount, however, is unlikely to disrupt the prevailing yields in the market given the way RBI and central govt together have managed the gilt auctions this fiscal, bond dealers and fund

In recent times, the highest amount raised from a single-day gilt auction was on Feb 2 this year when central govt borrowed Rs 39,000 crore.

managers said.

On Friday, March 15, RBI announced that 17 state govts together would borrow Rs 50,206 crore through auctions on Tuesday, March 19. Of the 17, at Rs 8,000 crore, UP is slotted to be the biggest borrower, followed by Karnataka, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, at Rs 6,000 crore each.

The higher borrowing amounts by state govts came in the absence of borrowing by central govt after Feb 15 as there is robust long-term domestic investor demand owing to jump in investable flows towards the end of the fiscal.

This is reflected in the spread between yields on state govt bonds and central govt bonds (gilts). From a spread of more than 50 basis points (100bps = 1percentage point) on 10-year state bonds over 10-year gilts about two months ago, it has come down to 35bps. And this happened despite higher borrowing by state govts.

This difference could get narrower. "Considering the softening outlook of the interest rate and history of much lower state borrowing during the first quarter of the fiscal, the spread between state govt bonds and gilts is expected compress over the next quarter," said Ram Kamal Samanta, senior VP - investment, Star Union Daiichi Life Insurance.

THE WINNERS

REFORMER OF THE YEAR

YEAR | State Bank of India

BUSINESS LEADER OF THE

YEAR C K Venkataraman

BUSINESSWOMAN OF THE

YEAR | Hina Nagarajan

ENTREPRENEUR OF THE

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

GLOBAL INDIAN OF THE

EMERGING COMPANY OF

THE YEAR | HDFC Bank

THE YEAR | Adami Green Energy

CONSCIOUS CORPORATE OF

YEAR Ramesh Juneja

& Rajeev Juneja

AWARD A M Naik

YEAR Leena Nair

COMPANY OF THE

Insurance rates for IPL biz vault over polls clash

Insurers Turn Cautious Due To Higher Risk Of Cancellations

Mayur.Shetty@timesgroup.com

Mumbai: Even as stakes have gone up in IPL with two more teams and record bids for players, insurers are turning cautious as the season coincides with general elections and the risk of cancellations due to unforeseen circumstances rises. For various stakeholders—franchise owners, sponsors, and broadcasters - the quotes are coming in 30-35% higher.

"All stakeholders, starting from BCCI, the franchise owners, the sponsors, and the broadcasters, are seeking insurance cover. The stakes are significantly higher this year because of the addition of two more teams and the record bids for top players," said Abizar Bohra, head of sports and entertainment, Global Insurance Brokers.

The cover is primarily for event cancellation, which results in a loss for all stakeholders. "In India, event cancellation happens largely due to adverse weather. Last year, the weather was good in major parts of the country. As a result, there were no large claims," said Bohra. The 2024 IPL, also branded as Tata IPL, will start on March 22, with the final scheduled on May 26. The Lok Sabha elections will be held between

April 19 to June 1. "Even though there were no major claims last year, rates have increased this year and we are seeing 30-35% higher quotes. Buyers are talking to insurance companies, and the contracts are expected to be finali-

COS STUMPED

> IPL matches are scheduled between March 22-May 26, while elections will be held between April 19- June 1

As IPL coincides with general elections, likelihood of cancellations have increased

Hence, despite any major claims last year, rates have increased this year by 30-35%

sed once the full schedules are out," said Bohra.

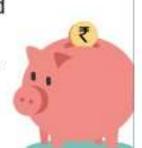
"The fresh challenge this year is because of elections. The polls are likely to take place in the midst of the IPL season, which adds to the risk of cancellation." Bohra added. The event cancellation cover being a specialised one is largely broker-led. The larger covers are usually underwritten by state-owned insurers like New India Insurance and National Insurance. According to a PSU insurance official, restrictions on gathering during polling could impact matches, but he was not sure if the risk would be covered.

This year's total insurance exposure is not known yet as stakeholders are still to buy cover. Last year, the total exposure was estimated at Rs 10,000 crore. The insurance bought by broadcaster Star India for ICC World Cup had risen to Rs 1,800 crore. This did not include the cover purchased by other stakeholders.

TOI

How Many Schemes Should You Have In Your MF Portfolio?

ealth managers believe investors should diversify their mutual fund portfolios across various asset classes like equity, fixed income and gold, in such a way that they can reach their financial goals. This would mean adding more than one scheme to their portfolio.



Why Do Investors Diversify MF Portfolios?

Investors have various life goals and objectives, which need to be reached over different periods. To reach these goals one would require different asset classes like equity, fixed income and gold or a combination of them. Hence, portfolios need to be diversified across asset classes and different schemes.

Why Invest In More Than 1 Scheme?

Every scheme has a different utility in an investor's portfolio. For example, to meet your emergency needs you would invest in a liquid. ultra-short-term fund or arbitrage fund; to pay for children's education one year down the line or plan for a holiday that is 1-2 years away, you could invest in an equity savings fund. If you intend to tuck away money safely for say five years down the line, you may use a target maturity fund, while a gold fund would be used as a hedge against inflation. On the equity side, one could invest in a small-cap fund to generate alpha and meet goals that are 10 years away, while to save tax under Section 80 C of the Income Tax Act, there are ELSS funds. To allocate to large-cap stocks, one could use a passive index fund. Investors confident about a particular broad theme and confident of timing the market will invest in a technology fund or a thematic fund like a business cycle fund, while those looking for international exposure to geographically diversified portfolios will buy a US-based or Nasdaq fund. All these lead to investors owning more than 1-3 schemes in their mutual fund portfolios.

Invesco Mutual Fund

An investor education and awareness initiative

For Know Your Customer (KYC) guidelines along with the documentary requirements and procedure for change of address, phone number, bank details, etc., please visit the Education and Guidance section on www.invescomutualfund.com. Investor should deal with only SEBI registered Mutual Funds, details of which can be verified under "Intermediaries/Market Infrastructure Institutions" on https://www.sebi.gov.in/index.html. For any grievance / complaint, please call us on 1800-209-0007 or write to us at mfservices@invesco.com. Alternatively, complaints can be registered on the SEBI SCORES Portal at https://scores.gov.in

Mutual Fund investments are subject to market risks, read all scheme related documents carefully.

What Is The Optimum No. Of Schemes?

Financial planners say it is difficult to put a cap on the number of schemes in an investor's portfolio, as investors increasingly use mutual funds to meet both long-term and short-term goals. However, they feel investors should restrict themselves to 10 schemes, as a higher number is difficult to monitor and manage.

One way to have a lower number of schemes in portfolios is to check on overlaps with a similar scheme. For example, if an investor has a large-cap scheme in the portfolio, s/he should look at how high the overlap is before adding a flexi-cap fund or another large-cap fund or an index fund. A high overlap indicates that there is no benefit of diversification and will not lead to any extra returns to the portfolio.

-PRASHANT MAHESH

tal. BLOOMBERG mandates a 15% import duty dia plans. India currently le-Big change is the only constant in eco: India Inc

Industry Leaders, Ministers Discuss New Sectors, Investor Mindset, CSR Mantra At ET Awards

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: India's economy is changing fundamentally, and for the better. Tech is a key driver. Finding enough capital is the big challenge. Computer chips and critical materials are among the new stars. And business, the locus of much of this change, must also take the lead in recognising that human enterprise can't flourish if humans keep obliterating all other species.

Those were the key messages from speakers and panel discussions at The Economic Times Awards for Corporate Excellence, held in Mumbai on Friday.

FM Nirmala Sitharaman, addressing issues of employment and private investment, said: "When we look for data, we tend to look only at the formal sector ... we don't care about infor-

Deloitte.

FOR CORPORATE EXCELLENCE

THE ECONOMIC TIMES AWARDS

mal. (Also) we don't look at new and emerging sectors, where huge changes are happening." She spoke of semiconductors, renewable

energy, storage capacities,

railroads, and materials as

sunrise sectors drawing new capital. S Jaishankar, external affairs minister and winner of 'Reformer of the Year' award, said foreign investors have started noticing India's resilience amidst a general global slowdown. "Today, the world sees a country that's able to seek its

own solution, speak its

mind and stand up, which it

did when it came to energy

choices," he said. Meera Jain, founder of Times Evoke, said CSR must



Venkataraman, Chanel CEO Leena Nair, Mankind Pharma co-founder Rajeev Juneja, L&T chairman emeritus A M Naik, external affairs minister S Jaishankar, Mankind Pharma co-founder Ramesh Juneja, HDFC Bank group head (CSR) Ashima Bhat, and Diageo India CEO & MD Hina Nagarajan



Samir Jain of The Times of India with finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman and external affairs minister S Jaishankar

humans. Jain pointed out that business often works under the illusion that "only human lives matter because only humans can create value". But nature creates value in trillions, "ecosystems create \$140 trillion in value each year" she said. If companies work to protect this, it's "smart business". She pointed to Anant Ambani's Vantara initiative to rehabilitate rescued animals and Ratan Tata's as examples of a new, muchneeded approach that valu-

es non-human lives. To grow, India needs investment. Will there be enough of it, asked Ajay Piramal, chairman, Piramal Group. "For GDP to reach \$10 trillion, the financial sector has to grow at least 18%. My concern is that there will not be enough capital. History shows that debt is what takes us forward," he said. He argued that crea-

Ananya Hits A New Note

ntrepreneur and musician Ananya Birla, who is also a director of Aditya Birla Group, wore a non-corporate hat at the ET Awards. She was co-host, and her short speech made the audience chuckle more than a few times.

"I see that everyone here is looking so beautiful, so elegant, just looking like a wow," she said. The viral social media meme is rarely used to describe India Inc heavyweights. And that's what made it charming. "I cannot believe that my dad used this phrase to describe the state of the Indian economy," she joked as Kumar Birla, seated at one of the top tables, glowed with paternal pride.

She got more laughs with her take on India's economy. "Already, here we are up and running, moving from Kaun Banega Crorepati to Kaun Banega \$10-trillion economy." TNN

should be allowed to take deposits, and a long-term bond market were pivotal. Satyan Gajwani, vice-

chairman, Times Internet, spoke of India's transformation in the 25 years since ET Awards were instituted in 1998. He pointed to big changes in public markets, retail investment and entrepreneurship. "Retail investors across all income levels are becoming savvier", he said. Striking a positive note on the civilisation that gave the world the concept of Maya. So, it should come as no surprise that we are taking to AI with such gusto". S N Subrahmanyan, cha-

irman, Larsen & Toubro, speaking at a panel discussion, pointed to digital adoption, geopolitical changes, alternative fuels and sustainability goals as drivers of change. He also said private investment is picking up. "During Covid, our order bo-'focus on all life", not just hospital for small animals ting thriving NBFCs, which AI, Gajwani said, "We are ok was nearly 95% govt. To-leave work".

day, it's around 65% govt. Private orders are kicking in and this trend will increase," he said

Rohit Jawa, CEO & MD, Hindustan Unilever, said "the India tech stack is a productivity (tool) that is going to last a long time". He said out of HUL's three million retailers, 1.3 million use the HUL app, which generates data, enabling them to get personal and business loans.

"When many developed economies are staring at a recession or a slowdown, India has shown resilience and emerged stronger," said Romal Shetty, CEO of Deloitte South Asia. "India would remain the fastest-growing economy for the next few decades.'

AM Naik, Larsen & Toubro chairman emeritus, perhaps summed it all up for industry leaders in the audience. He said he could helm L&T for so long because "when you rush to work, you know you are going to enjoy it. You know you are leaving your enjoyment behind when you hesitate to THE TIMES OF INDIA, NEW DELHI | MONDAY, MARCH 18, 2024

AKIRA, MAKING A RETURN AFTER 7-YR HIATUS, SAYS SHE PUT REER 'ON HOLD' SO EX GERARD PIQUE COULD PLAY FOOTBALL

CARA DELEVINGNE'S \$7M MANSION IN LA DESTROYED BY FIRE; MODEL THANKS FIREFIGHTERS FOR SAVING 2 PET CATS

Putin leads Russia election with 88% of vote, show early results

In Navalny-Inspired Protest, Opponents Crowd Poll Stations At Noon; 80 Held

Moscow: Russian officials released early returns Sunday showing President Vladimir Putin has nearly 88% of the vote in an election where he stifled the opposition. The vote, which holds little suspense, is taking place against the backdrop of the harshest crackdown on political opposition and freedom of speech in Russia since Soviet times. Only three token candidates - and no one who opposes his war in Ukraine — were allowed to run against him as he sought a fifth term. Russia's Central Election Commission says Putin has 87.9% of the vote with 24.4% of the precincts counted.

The early result means Putin, who came to power in 1999, looks to have easily won a fifth six-vear term that would enable him to overtake Josef Stalin and become Russia's longestserving leader for more than 200 years. The election comes just over two years since Putin triggered the deadliest European conflict since WWII by ordering the invasion of Ukraine.

War has hung over the three day election: Ukraine has repeatedly attacked oil refineries in Russia, shelled Russian regions and sought to pierce Russian borders with proxy forcesa move Putin said would not be



Russian election commission said Putin has 87.9% of the vote with 24.4% of the precincts counted. The early result means Putin, who came to power in 1999, looks to have won a fifth six-year term that would enable him to overtake Josef Stalin & become Russia's longest-serving leader for more than 200 years

left unpunished. While Putin's re-election is

not in doubt given his control over Russia and the absence of any real challengers, the former KGB spy wanted to show that he has the overwhelming support of Russians. Several hours before polls closed at 1800 GMT, the nationwide turnout surpassed 2018 levels of 67.5%.

Supporters of Putin's most prominent opponent Alexei Navalny, who died in an Arctic prison last month, had called on Russians to come out at a "Noon against Putin" protest to show their dissent against a leader they cast as a corrupt auto-



To mark protest, huge lines formed outside Russian missions in London. Paris and cities with large Russian communities. Alexei Navalny's widow, Yulia, joined the line at the embassy in Berlin at noon, a strategy endorsed by the critic before death

crat. Lines outside a number of polling stations both inside Russia and at its embassies around the world appeared to swell at that time. Among those heeding call was Yulia Navalnaya, Navalny's widow, who joined a long line at the Russian embassy in Berlin as some in the crowd applauded and chanted her name. She spent more than five hours in the line and told reporters after casting her vote that she wrote her late husband's name on the ballot.

Some Russians waiting to vote in Moscow and St. Petersburg told AP that they were taking part in the protest, but it

wasn't possible to confirm whether all of those pictured in line were doing so. Independent Russian media posted images of spoiled ballots posted by voters, with "killer and thief" inscribed on one, and "waiting for you in The Hague" written on another, in a reference to an arrest warrant issued for Putin on war crimes. Still, some people said that they were happy to vote for Putin. Dmitry Sergienko, in Moscow, said, "I'm happy and want everything to continue as it is now."

Voting took place over three days at polling stations across the vast country's 11 time zones. in illegally annexed regions of Ukraine and online. While polls closed Sunday night in Russia, voting continued at some embassies around the world. Despite tight controls, several dozen cases of vandalism at polling stations were reported across the voting period.

Several people were arrested, including in Moscow and St. Petersburg, after they tried to start fires or set off explosives at polling stations while others were detained for throwing green antiseptic or ink into ballot boxes. The OVD-Info group that monitors political arrests said 80 people were arrested in 20 cities on Sunday. AGENCIES

Surveillance of Maldives' territory shouldn't be a concern of 'external parties', says prez

To Double Coast Guard Capacity, Expand Air Fleet

Male: President Mohamed Muizzu has said the surveillance of Maldives' territory



announced measures to boost its de-

fence forces, including the maiden deployment of drones to guard the archipelagic nation in the Indian Ocean.

Muizzu's comments came while speaking at a ceremony to launch Maldives National Defence Force's Air Corps and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, a press release by President's Office said. Muizzu also announced new initiatives to strengthen Maldives' military capabilities.

The pro-China leader's remarks came days after the first batch of Indian military personnel operating a helicopter gifted by India left the country after Muizzu stepped up his anti-India rhetoric.

Asserting that Maldives isn't a small nation, Muizzu said the country is capable of monitoring its jurisdiction. "Maldives isn't a small nation," he said, noting the island nation stretches along 900,000 square kilometres and is capable of monitoring

Ballot boxes for Maldives polls to be placed in India, Sri Lanka & Malaysia

allot boxes for Maldives' April 21 parliamentary elections will be placed in India, Sri Lanka and Malaysia, after around 11,000 Maldivians submitted re-registration requests to relocate their polling stations, the country's election commission said Sunday.

EC said ballot boxes will be placed in Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala, Sri Lanka's Colombo and Malaysia's Kuala Lumpur after at least 150 people re-registered to vote in the three countries. PTI

its jurisdiction. "Maldives is an independent and sovereign nation and that surveillance of Maldives' jurisdiction should not concern any external parties," he said, without naming any country.

He said this would not impede Maldives' close relations with all countries. Muizzu said his govt would double the capacity of coast guard, expand air corps fleet and enhance land-based vehicles and platforms. Muizzu "affirmed the

importance of Maldives navigating its course towards self-reliance and remaining an independent and sovereign nation in every aspect," the press release said. PTI

US PREZ CANDIDATES ROAST & BOAST THEIR WAY FOR WIN

Biden: Between 2 picks, one Trump: If I don't win, it's

he said. "The other's me," Biden quipped.

ming from the president at the annual Gridiron Club and Foundation Dinner, as Biden de flected ongoing criticism that his memory is hazy and he appears confused, instead highlighting moments when the 77-year-old Trump has slipped up, too.

"Don't tell him, he thinks he's running against Barack Obama, that's what he said," said Biden, 81, who also quipped that he was staying up way past his bedtime.

It was the first time Biden has attended the dinner during his presidency, and comes as the 2024 election looms and the rematch between Biden and Trump heats up. AP

mentally unfit & other's me going to be a bloodbath

Washington: The big news this week, Presi- Ohio: Donald Trump, at an event Saturday dent Joe Biden said at a weekend Washington ostensibly meant to boost his preferred candiroast, was that two candidates had clinched date in Ohio's Republican Senate primary ratheir party's nomination for president. But ce, gave a freewheeling speech in which he one was too old, too mentally unfit for the job, used dehumanising language to describe immigrants, maintained a steady stream of in-The digs against Donald Trump kept co-sults and vulgarities and predicted the US wo-

> uld never have another election if he did not win in Nov. While discussing the eco-

nomy and its auto industry, he promised to place tariffs on cars manufactured abroad if he won. He added: "If I don't get elected, it's going to be a bloodbath

for the whole — that's going to be the least of

it. It's going to be a bloodbath for the country." On the influx of migrants, he asserted, without evidence, that countries were emptying their prisons of "young people" and sending them across the border. "I don't know if you call them 'people,' in some cases," he said. "They're not people, in my opinion." NYT

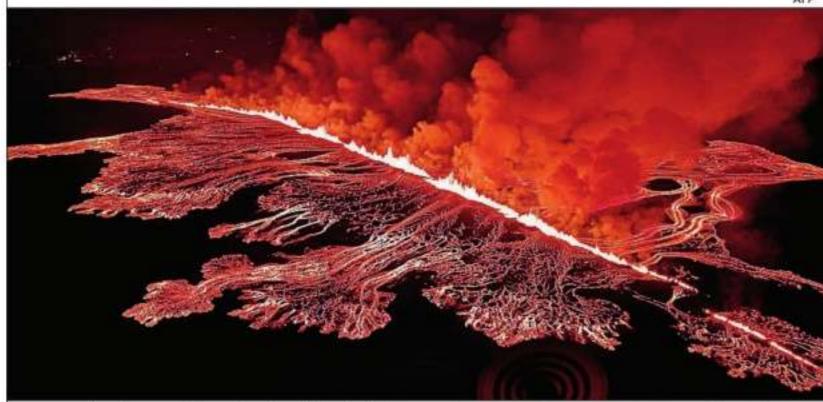
Niger junta ends US military deal,

seeks troops' exit

Tiger's ruling junta ended an agreement that let US military staff operate from a \$110 million drone base, paving the way for Russian troops to move in. The military leaders revoked the deal with "immediate effect," seen as ending the US presence in the sub-Saharan country. The decision is a setback to Washington, which had been forced to suspend operations at Air Base 201 in Agadez after a July coup and was pushing to keep its most strategic military asset in the region afloat.

The US has about 1,000 troops in Niger as part of an effort to battle Islamist insurgency in the Sahel region and Libya. вьоомвекс

ICELAND VOLCANO ERUPTS FOR 4TH TIME IN 3 MTHS



ava flows from a volcano in Iceland that had lit up the night sky on Saturday slowed on Sunday. The eruption - the fourth since Dec - sent fountains of molten rock soaring from a 3 km-long fissure. Man-made barriers appeared to be successful in steering the lava away from infrastructure, including a nearby fishing town. Authorities had warned for weeks that an eruption was imminent on the Reykjanes peninsula just south of Iceland's capital Revkjavik, as magma had been accumulating

underground. Video on Sunday showed lava flowing just a few hundred metres from Grindavik, a town of some 4,000 residents that was evacuated during an eruption in Nov and again for the last eruption in Feb. A few residents who had since returned home were evacuated on Saturday. Officials were monitoring lava flowing towards the peninsula's Svartsengi geothermal power plant. The nearby Blue Lagoon geothermal spa, a major tourist attraction, closed as it did during previous eruptions. REUTERS

UK Tories divided on leadership, Sunak faces calls to step

tion expected later in the year.

be growing at a steady pace.

Transport secretary Mark

even if in the short term they are

not necessarily popular." According to Daily Telegraph, a meeting took place this weekend between leading figures on the right wing of Tory party and prominent supporters of Mordaunt who expressed the view

The pressure on Sunak is likely to intensify after local council and mayoral elections across England on May 2, when Tories are expected to suffer losses. PTI

HOW THEY HELP

WE ARE

Constructed

TALKING

CONLANGS

languages, known

languages created by

individuals or groups,

unlike the ones you

and we speak, which

evolve naturally over

time. Conlangs are

designed for use in

books and movies

like The Hobbit and

the setting more

Star Trek. They make

immersive, heighten

unique features of the

story and characters

fictional worlds within

as conlangs, are

World building | Constructed languages add depth and authenticity to fictional worlds, making them feel more real and immersive

Creating cultural depth | Conlangs help to differentiate cultures within a story, highlighting each one's unique characteristics and traditions

allow writers to explore different moods and soundscapes, expanding on thematic possibilities, characters Political statement | In some

Artistic expression | Conlangs

cases, constructed languages are used to convey themes such as importance of communication or diversity of TOI Explains cultures



Dothraki and High Valyrian, created by linguist David J Peterson

Avatar has the Na'vi language, spoken by the indigenous people of Pandora. It was

Paul Frommer Star Trek features the Klingon language, used by an alien race. It was developed by Marc Okrand

HOLLYWOOD

SCIENCE, OR LITERARY INSPIRATION?

It is both a scientific and artistic endeavour. Conlangs can be inspired by real languages but are not necessarily based on them. They may borrow elements from existing languages, like the vocabulary or grammatical structure, but not necessarily. Some have roots in Latin,

Arabic, Hebrew or other ancient

HOW TO DEVELOP A CONLANG

- Linguists start by defining purpose and context in which the language will be used.
- 2 They create phonemes (system of distinctive sounds), syllable structure, and phonotactics (rules governing arrangement of sounds).
- A structure is developed for words, including how they are formed and how they change, to express different meanings or grammatical functions.
- Rules are devised for constructing sentences. 6 For the vocabulary, words are
- formed to fit culture and concepts of the fictional world. It can involve coining new words or borrowing and adapting words from existing languages.
- 6 The grammar is developed encompassing all rules of phonology,
- A script is created if the language is intended to have a written form, which can range from an alphabet to

The Dune Effect

Language spoken by the Fremen in Frank Herbert's 'Dune' series is called Chakobsa, a mix of Arabic, Turkish and other tongues but not directly derived from them. The result is something foreign and uninterpretable, but not gibberish.

Muad'Dib | Name given to the main character by the Fremen. It refers to a desert mouse and symbolises the man's role as a leader and prophet.

Shai-Hulud | Fremen term for the giant sandworms of Arrakis, revered as sacred creatures.

Sietch | A community or stronghold, often hidden in the desert.

How Na'vi Has Prospered Na'vi language used in 'Avatar' has a

vocabulary of over 2,000 words, and it continues to grow as Paul Frommer adds new words in response to requests from the 'Avatar' fan community.

Na'vi includes uncommon sounds such as ejective consonants (pops or clicks) found in languages like Quechua and Amharic.

Though a constructed language, Na'vi draws inspiration from natural languages, including Polynesian, African, and Native American languages.

> In the film, the language is mainly spoken, but a written form appears in its art and merchandise. It

> Na'vi has a dedicated following and there are online forums and courses available for those interested in learning Na'vi.

was designed by artist Lisa Starr.



Do You Know Kiliki? Baahubali, the Telugu-language franchise, featured the

conlang 'Kiliki'. The language was created by lyricist and dialogue writer Madhan Karky for the Kalakeya, shown as a barbaric people. Characterised by a lot of clicking sounds, it has over 50 words and grammar rules, too.

ve. "We will operate in Rafah. This will take several weeks, and it will happen," he said, without clarifying whether the assault would last for weeks or would begin in weeks. He later said after meeting German Chancellor Olaf

Scholz in Jerusalem that Israel would not leave civilians trapped in Rafah when its forces begin their assault. Israel's allies repeatedly urged Netanyahu not to attack Rafah, where more than

a million displaced people

from other parts of the encla-

ve have sought shelter, witho-

At a joint news conferen-

ut a plan to protect civilians.

PM Benjamin Netanyahu dis-

missed international pressu-

re and said he would keep on

with the military campaign

against Hamas in Gaza, whe-

re aid agencies say famine is

looming, while ceasefire talks

ting Sunday, Netanyahu said

Israel would push into Rafah,

the last relatively safe place in

the tiny, crowded Gaza encla-

Speaking at a cabinet mee-

were set to resume.

ce, Scholz said he had spoken with Netanyahu about the need to provide comprehen-



Defying West, Israel PM says will

press ahead with Rafah invasion

TRUCE TALKS REVIVE: Amid public pressure in Israel to reach a hostage deal, the head of Mossad spy agency would join a delegation attending talks with Oatari, Egyptian and American mediators. Hamas presented a ceasefire proposal last week. including an exchange of Israeli hostages & Palestinian prisoners

sive humanitarian aid to the people in Gaza. "We cannot stand by and watch Palestinians risk starvation," Scholz said, echoing a call from European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, visiting neighbouring Egypt at the same time, for a ceasefi-

Israel election inappropriate: Bibi sraeli PM Netanyahu said

Sunday US senate majority leader Chuck Schumer's speech in which he urged new elections in Israel was "totally inappropriate". Schumer, a longtime supporter of Israel and the highest-ranking Jewish US elected official, had called for new elections in Israel and said that Netanyahu was an obstacle to peace. "I think what he said is totally inappropriate. It's inappropriate to go to a sister democracy and try to replace the elected leadership there,"

that short? Have you so quick ly forgotten Oct 7, the most horrific massacre of Jews since the Holocaust? Are you so quick to deny Israel the right to defend itself against

Hamas offered a new proraeli govt will discuss it before the Qatar meet. REUTERS

promote rest, said Guadalupe

re deal and more aid for Gaza. At the cabinet meet, Netanyahu had hit out at his allies,

saying: "Are your memories

Netanyahu told CNN. REUTERS

the Hamas monsters?" posal last week including an exchange of Israeli hostages and Palestinian prisoners. Is-

AROUND THE WORLD

n one of Mexico City's busiest neighbourhoods on Friday, about 200 people took a collective nap in the middle of the street to celebrate World Sleep Day. Lying in the heat on synthetic mats, their necks resting on pillows and their eyes covered by masks, participants tuned out the chaos of Mexico's capital as part of what organi-

sers described as "a peaceful

demonstration for the right to



With collective siesta, Mexico City promotes right to sleep

sleep". "The idea is that sleeping well, or having this event attract attention, can help launch new public policies" to

Teran, a doctor with Center for Sleep and Neuroscience, which organised the event with the Mexican govt. "We have long working days, but there are no spaces at workplaces to guarantee the time for a siesta," she said. Thanks to a guided meditation session, some nap participants sank into a deep sleep while others at least managed to relax for a moment.

down ahead of polls London: A UK minister came out

strongly in defence of his party leader Rishi Sunak Sunday as the increasingly beleaguered PM attempts to ride out infighting within the ranks, with sections to the right of the governing Conservative Party calling for a leadership change ahead of a general elec-

The 43-year-old leader has ruled out the prospect of an early election in May and with possibly months before he decides to go to the electorate, murmurings of rebellion within the Tory ranks fearful of losing their seats seem to

Harper was asked during a television interview if he thinks Sunak will be the leader of the Conservative Party at the general election. "Yes he will, and he'll take us into that election and he'll set out very clearly that we're a govt with a

plan," Harper told Sky News. On rumours that a group of Tory MPs are keen to replace Sunak with Penny Mordaunt, Harper added: "What I would say to all my colleagues is this; I spend my time as transport secretary focusing on doing what I think is the right thing for the country, making decisions that I think are sensible. That is the approach the PM takes as well. He focuses on making the right decisions

they were prepared to back her.

Nepal govt formally declares Pokhara its tourism capital

Kathmandu: Nepal's govt Sunday declared Pokhara, a picturesque city in Gandaki province, as the tourism capital of the Himalayan nation. The formal declaration was made during a special ceremony organised at Barahi Ghat, located on the shores of Phewa Lake, PM Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' presided over the special programme which featured musical performances by veteran and popular singers.

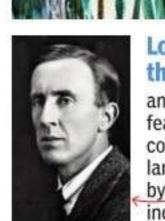
Despite being recognised as a tourism hub for quite some time now, Pokhara was designated as the tourism capital only after fulfilling all essential criteria. Pokhara mayor Dhanaraj

Acharya said declaring Pokhara

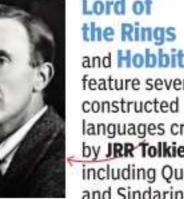
the tourism capital will help es-

tablish it as a recognisable syntax, etc. 'brand' globally. It was also announced that business activities including discos, nightclubs, and live music venues will remain open all night from Sunday. PTI

(Elvish languages),







HOLLYWOOD NGOP

MIP LI'FYA ALUNTA

Avatar, would say, "Hollywood's creating new languages

Gibberish? No, that's how the Na'vi, natives of Pandora in the film

because..." Other conlangs or constructed languages, such as

Klingon in Star Trek and Chakobsa in Dune, have made these

films more immersive and given fans new idioms to bond over





Khuzdul



TIMES SPORT

CASEMIRO OUT OF BRAZIL SQUAD WITH INJURY, PORTO FORWARD PEPE TO TAKE HIS PLACE

SWISS ACE GUT-BEHRAMI CROWNED OVERALL WORLD CUP SKI CHAMPION

All-Round Display



ROYAL SHOW IN THE RCB Win Maiden WPL Title With An CAPITAL

Hindol.Basu@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: What the men haven't been able to do, the women have done! And done with great poise.

Finalists in the 2009, 2011 and 2016 Indian Premier League, the Royal Challengers Bangalore men couldn't clinch the ultimate prize. The RCB women did it in their first Women's Premier League (WPL) final itself. As Richa Ghosh smashed a length ball from Arundhati Reddy over extra cover for a four, RCB not only won its maiden WPL title but also their first-ever silverware in any competition.

As the captain of the side, Smriti Mandhana accomplished what her male counterparts like Anil Kumble (2009 IPL captain), Daniel Vettori (2011 IPL captain) and Virat Kohli (2016 IPL captain) couldn't do - and that's to was a horror show on the part of lift the winners' trophy.

It was a convincing and professional effort from the girls in red and black, emerging victorious by eight wickets against Delhi Capitals – the team dubbed to be the favourites before the final.

The chase of a modest 114 sixes from the get-go. went smooth for RCB as their top Smriti Mandhana (31 off 39b; 3x4), Sophie Devine (32 off 27b; 5x4, 1x6) and Ellyse Perry (35 off 37b; 4x4) completed the formalities with comfort.

The DC innings could easily be divided into two halves - the Powerplay overs and the overs post that. While Shafali Verma (44 off 27b; 2x4, 3x6) was at her destructive best in the first six, RCB's spinners hogged all the limelight later.

tack comprising Shreyanka Patil (4/12), Sophie Molineux (3/20), Asha Sobhana (2/14) and Georgia

around the Delhi batters and they Renuka gave away 28 runs in her

crowd at the Arun Jaitley Stadium were left disappointed. The start, however, was to the liking of the crowd as Shafali

and Meg Lanning (23 off 23b; 3x4) started hitting fours and Shafali landed the first blow

in the Powerplay with a massive six over long on off Molineux's left-arm spin. The ball was in the arc of Shafali's bat swing, and it went out of the park as a result.

The duo of Shafali and Lanning were particularly severe on the medium-pace of Renuka Singh. Renuka didn't look in rhythm and was mostly floating it up to the two batters. In the fourth over, Shafali planted her front foot and hit it over Renu-RCB's four-pronged spin at- ka's head for another maximum. Lanning too joined in on the fun and smashed the medium-pacer for back-to-back boundaries. The Wareham (0/16) spun a web overproduced 19 runs for DC, as

crumbled like a pack of cards. It two-over spell in the Powerplay. Shafali kept the charge on

DC batters as the 28,000-strong and gave Perry the same treatment, clobbering another one down the ground for a 75m six. It wasn't just brute force, Shafali also brought some deft touch to her game when she picked the gap between backward point and short third with a well-timed shot.

At the end of the Powerplay, DC were motoring along at 61/0. However, Molineux turned the match on its head with three big wickets in the 8th over. First she had Shafali holing out to deep midwicket where Wareham held onto a well-judged catch. A ball later, Jemimah Rodrigues played a horrible swipe and the ball crashed into the middle stump. If Jemimah's shot was bad, the next batter, Alice Capsey, played a terrible one. She walked across the stumps, and tried to scoop one. The ball went past the bat and hit the stumps.

Brief Scores: Delhi Capitals 113 in 18.3 overs (Shefali Verma 44, Meg Lanning 23, Shreyanka Patil 4/12) lost to Royal Challengers Bangalore 115/2 in 19.3 overs (Smriti Mandhana 31, Sophie Devine 32, Ellyse Perry 35*)

> tally average of 69.40, including two fifties, in nine innings by

Ellyse Perry is the highest by any batter in the WPL 2024. Her tally is the highest by any batter in a WPL competition, eclipsing Lanning's 345 (ave 49.29) in nine innings in 2023.

Shreyanka Patil has → produced her best bowling figures in the WPL. This is also the best performance by any bowler vs Delhi Capitals in the WPL.



Sophie Molineux (3/20) started DC's downfall, picking up 3 wickets in the 8th over.

Number of sixes registered by Shafali in 18 innings, extending her WPL record. RCB's Sophie Devine has the next best tally -20 in 18 innings.

ggregate at an average of 51.05 registered by Shafali and Lanning for the first wicket in 18 innings, including three century stands and five fifty-plus - the highest by any pair for any wicket in the WPL. -Stats: Rajesh Kumar

A chance CSK contract 16 years ago, and how it all changed for R Ashwin

Shrivathsan.S@timesgroup.com

Chennai: With a spring breeze blowing across MA Chidambaram Stadium, it was an evening to remember for R Ashwin and all those who lenging battles against former Tamil turned up on Saturday. Ashwin, who recently achieved the milestone double of playing 100 Test matches and picking up 500 wickets in the longest format, was being felicitated for his achievements and the Chennai cricket fraternity did its bit to make it me that day and I got him out at the special for their No. 1 star.

for the champion offie as he recalled out to me again." how the seeds of the journey were sown about 16 years ago. "I would not forget to mention how special the definitely not be able to sleep tonight if I do not recall this instance," said Ashwin, who was presented by TNCA with a cheque TNCA. Tomorrow I might not be worth Rs 1 crore, special mace and mementos.

"In 2008, I was playing a (TNCA first-division) game for Jolly Rovers CC against India Cements (Vijay CC). I picked up six wickets and went back home with the 'Man of the Match' trophy. K Srikkanth was the chief guest that night. He picked up the mic and said: 'Ashwin, you bowled superbly. You should go to Chennai Super Kings and learn from Muttiah Muralitharan.

"I was famished because I was not in the (CSK) team. We did not have auctions (for domestic players) at that time. He turned to Kasi (CSK CEO KS

taking him in the team?" That particular line changed my life altogether. I received a contract from CSK the next day," said Ashwin, as the crowd cheered him on.

former BCCI president N Srinivasan for backing him when he was on the verge of being left out from the Test squad. "In 2013, Srinivasan called me and said: 'They want to drop you, but I put my foot down and said that you were the 'Player of the Series' in the

last series. You have to continue with him'. He asked the team to play two off-spinners if they wanted to," added Ashwin.

According to Ashwin, his chal-Nadu batter S Sharath made him a better off-spinner. "One day, somebody told me: 'If you are that good an off-spinner, try and get this guy (Sharath) out'. I was playing for SPIC at that time. Sharath did not quite rate Guru Nanak Ground, caught at slip. It was a trip down memory lane It is only fair to say that he never got

> Before signing off, Ashwin did TNCA and Chepauk are to him. "This place has given me so much. I always keep coming back to the



HONOURED: Ashwin and family with Anil Kumble during the felicitation ceremony in Chennai

Viswanathan) and said: 'Are you not alive, but my soul will be hanging around this place," he said.

Srinivasan, Srikkanth, BCCI president Roger Binny and former India captain Anil Kumble were present on the occasion. Referring to Ashwin as Ashwin extended his gratitude to his 'son', Srinivasan said: "There will be a place in history for an outstanding off-spinner from Chennai."

> While Kumble praised Ashwin for not allowing challenges to halt his progress over the years, Binny emphasized that the 37-year-old brought the 'spin genius' back into the game.

There is a culture of insecurity in the Pakistan side, says pacer Naseem

'Seniors Don't Take Breaks Out Of Fear

Karachi: Pakistan fast bowler Naseem Shah has come out in the open about the culture of insecurity in the national side, saying senior players are afraid of taking breaks to rest their bodies, fearing replacement by younger players.

the 50-over World Cup in India last year due to a shoulder problem, added that even he was afraid about losing his place in told Cricwick. "This fear does the side due to the injury.

are afraid of giving their bodies could end," the youngster said. rest even when they know they



"The Pakistan cricket culture is such that if a new player comes in and performs in a match or two, you don't now if he will replace you permanently in the team. In other countries, if a main player is given a break he is assured he will not be dropped..." -Naseem Shah

stan cricket culture is such that Shah, who was ruled out of if a new player comes in and performs in a match or two, you don't know if he will replace you permanently in the team," Shah not allow players to rest because ment comes in and performs in "Honestly, the main players you are scared your careers

Naseem said there was a commitment in Pakistan is ques-

need a break because the Paki- need for clarity and better communication between senior play-

a match or two," he said.

ers, team management, selectors

and the board. "In other coun-

tries, if a main player is given a

break he is assured he will not

be dropped in case his replace-

tioned if he says he is not feeling 100 per cent or his body needs rest. The bowler felt that the physio, bowling coach and trainer should decide before a series how many matches a player should play, which will eliminate insecurity and confusion.

Shah, who returned to action in the Pakistan Super League after a shoulder injury, said if the players have clarity, there will fewer long-term injuries.

"I had stiffness in my shoulder but after warm-ups it would get better and I played through it. But during the Asia Cup, I had a tear and felt something tearing He also said that a player's inside me," he said. The tear was about "4 or 5 cms" long, PTI

PCB search for foreign coach fruitless as Watson, Sammy turn down offers

Karachi: Pakistan's search for a foreign coach has hit hurdles with former Australian allrounder Shane Watson and former West Indian captain Darren Sammy dropping out of the race for the next head coach of the national team.

While Sammy turned down approaches by the PCB citing he is already contracted with the West Indies board as head coach of the WI white-ball teams, Watson returned home on Saturday night after rejecting the offer from the Pakistan board.

A well-informed source aware of the developments said that senior PCB officials had held detailed talks with Watson in Karachi during the PSL matches offering him the head coach position.

"Watson had initially shown interest

conditions to accept the offer," the against New Zealand from April 14 in source said.

"But after the board more or less accepted Watson's financial demands the Australian was not happy that details of the proposed package were leaked out in the Pakistan media and social media."

The Australian then politely turned down the offer insisting he had prior commitments as a commentator in the IPL and also in the major USA league besides wanting to give more time to his young family in Sydney. The PCB reportedly had agreed to a USD 2 million dollar annual fee for Watson.

PCB is now expected to go for an interim arrangement for the national team to supervise the training camp in Kakul from March 25 to April 8 ahead and kept certain financial and other of the home five-match T20 series

Lahore and Rawalpindi.

"A team of local coaches as an interim arrangement for the camp and NZ series is the only available option for the PCB now and Chairman Mohsin Nagvi will be required to make a call after the PSL final on 18th March," the source said.

Nagyi has made it clear that he is keen on appointing foreign coaches for the national team on a long term basis, covering the World T20 Cup in West Indies and USA and Champions Trophy early next year in Pakistan.

The source said that former Pakistan captains Younis Khan, Muhammad Yousuf, Inzamam ul Haq, Moin Khan were also under consideration for the time being, PTI

GALLERY

Curry shines as Warriors beat **LA Lakers**

Stephen Curry returned from a sprained ankle to score 31 points and reserve Klay Thompson added 26 to spark Golden State over the Los Angeles Lakers 128-121 in an NBA showdown on Saturday. The Lakers, who lost forward Anthony Davis after the first quarter to a poke in the left eye, squandered a 40-point performance by LeBron James in falling to the Warriors.

Ramkumar claims title in Delhi: Ramkumar Rama-

nathan needed an hour and 27 minutes to tame Karan Singh 6-2, 6-2 and clinch the \$25K ITF men's singles title in New Delhi on Sunday. It is the fourth title in six months for the 29-year-old from Chennai. Meanwhile, Shrivalli Rashmikaa failed to cross the final hurdle as she fell 3-6, 2-6 to second seed Dalila Jakupovic of Slovenia in summit clash of the \$25K ITF women's tennis event in Indore. TNN/AGENCIES

ACTION TODAY

BASKETBALL: NBA, 7 am (Jiocinema)

CRICKET: Bangladesh vs Sri Lanka, 3rd ODI, 9.30 am (Fancode); Afghanistan vs Ireland, 3rd T201, 9.30 pm (Fan-

code) HOCKEY: Women's Nation-

als, 7 am onwards (Fancode)

I got injections, had blood clots removed from ankle: Pandya

Mumbai: In his desperation to regain fitness for the remaining World Cup matches last year, India all-rounder Hardik Pandya said he resorted to extreme measures like taking multiple injections and removing blood clots from his ankle but pushing the boundaries only aggravated the injury, forcing him to sit out of the showpiece.

during India's fourth World Cup game against Bangladesh while bowling his first over of that match, and had to limp off the field with the help of the team physio. He did not play any further part in the tournament.

Pandya injured his ankle

"I got injections done on Pandya recalled. my ankles at three different places and I had to remove blood from my ankle because of the swelling. I didn't want to give up (on playing the remainder of the World Cup); for the team I will give my best. If there is one percent chance that I can be with the team I will try my best," Pandya told Star Sports. However, Pandya said he

was aware that pushing himself hard could bring adverse results, but that's the risk he took to be with the team during a home World Cup.

"I was aware that (if) I keep pushing myself I might get injured for (a) long time. For me, that was never the an-

injury," he added. Pandya said that not being able to play fully in the World Cup would always weigh heavily on his heart. "For me the biggest pride "While I was pushing my-

Hardik Pandya

three-month injury. I was not

able to walk but I was trying

to run (at) that point of time,"

old was confident of coming

back in five days, but the re-

cuperation took much longer

field following injury), I in-

formed team that I will be back

in five days. I tried to push my-

self for 10 days, took pain-kill-

ers to make a comeback and re-

join the team. But this was a

freak injury and very few peo-

ple know about it. My injury

got extended and I had to take

more time because when I got

than he expected.

At that time, the 30-year-



Virat Kohli on Sunday returned to India, following the birth of his son Akaay, and is set to join his franchise Royal Challengers Bangalore's training camp ahead of the upcoming IPL. Kohli had opted out of the

India-England Test series citing "personal reasons". Later on, it was announced that the break was taken so that the batting star could be present for the birth of his son in the UK.

"@imVkohli HAS AR-RIVED ... and that moment is here! The Red King is back in India, ready to start his #IPLonStar campaign on "When I came out (of the March 22 v CSK," IPL broadcaster Star Sports tweeted.

"Get ready to cheer for the King and groove to some Kingly beats as Star Sports' new anthem - Kohli Calling has dropped on all platforms. And tune in only to Star Sports (as always!) for 'all things Kohli'this IPL.'

The batter landed in injured, it was a 25-day rehab Mumbai on Sunday, and he is expected to join the training camp of Royal Challengers Bangalore soon. Despite his brilliance for the side over the years, RCB are still yet to get their hands on the coveted self, I had this re-occurrence is to play for the country. This IPL trophy. Kohli aggregated

Gulveer shatters 16-yr-old national record in 10000m

New Delhi: Asian Games bronze medallist athlete Gulveer Singh shattered a 16-yearold national record in the men's 10000m to finish second in his heat at The Ten in San Juan Ca-

pistrano in California. The 25-year-old clocked 27.41.81 on Saturday to better the earlier national mark of 28:02.89 by over 20 seconds that stood in Surendra Singh's name since 2008. However, Gulveer's effort was not enough for Olympic qualification as he missed the Paris Games qualification time of 27:00.00 by over 41 seconds.

The other Indian in the heat Kartik Kumar finished ninth in the race with a timing of 28:01.90, which was also better than Surendra's earlier national record.

Avinash Sable, who was competing in the same event, did not finish (DNF) his heat, pulling out of the race in the 15th lap at the 6000m mark. In the women's 10000m, Parul

Chaudhary finished a disappointing 20th, clocking 32:02.08. She too missed the Paris qualification, which stands at 30:40.00. PTI

BACK IN TRAINING



FIT AND FINE? Kolkata Knight Riders captain Shreyas Iyer during a training session at Eden Gardens in Kolkata on Sunday, ahead of the IPL

India rope in goalkeeping coach van de Pol

New Delhi,: India have roped in Dutch goalkeeping expert Dennis van de Pol to aid the men's hockey team's preparations for the Paris Olympics.

A well-known hockey goalkeeping coach, Van de Pol has been working with the Indian keeping camp, overseen by goalies for nearly four years (of injury) and it became a was my baby; playing the 639 runs in last year's IPL. PTI : now, with his first stint in 2019. end on March 26, a week be- Hockey India President Dilip ahead of the Asian Games. PTI

He will join the ongoing na- fore the team leaves for the tional coaching camp at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, where he will work closely with PR Sreejesh, Krishan Pathak and Suraj Karkera.

The 10-day special goal-

Australia tour. "This is a very important phase for the Indian men's team. In their quest for another podium finish at the Olympics, Hockey India is ensuring the team is provided with all the necessary support chief coach Craig Fulton, will they need to fulfil this dream,"

Tirkey was quoted as saying in a media release. "We have re-emphasised the importance of these specialised coaching camps in goalkeeping and drag flicking. Van de Pol had conducted

two camps with the team last year in July and September

FA CUP OF: TEN HAG'S RED DEVILS PIP LIVERPOOL 4-3 IN A THRILLER; CHELSEA TOO

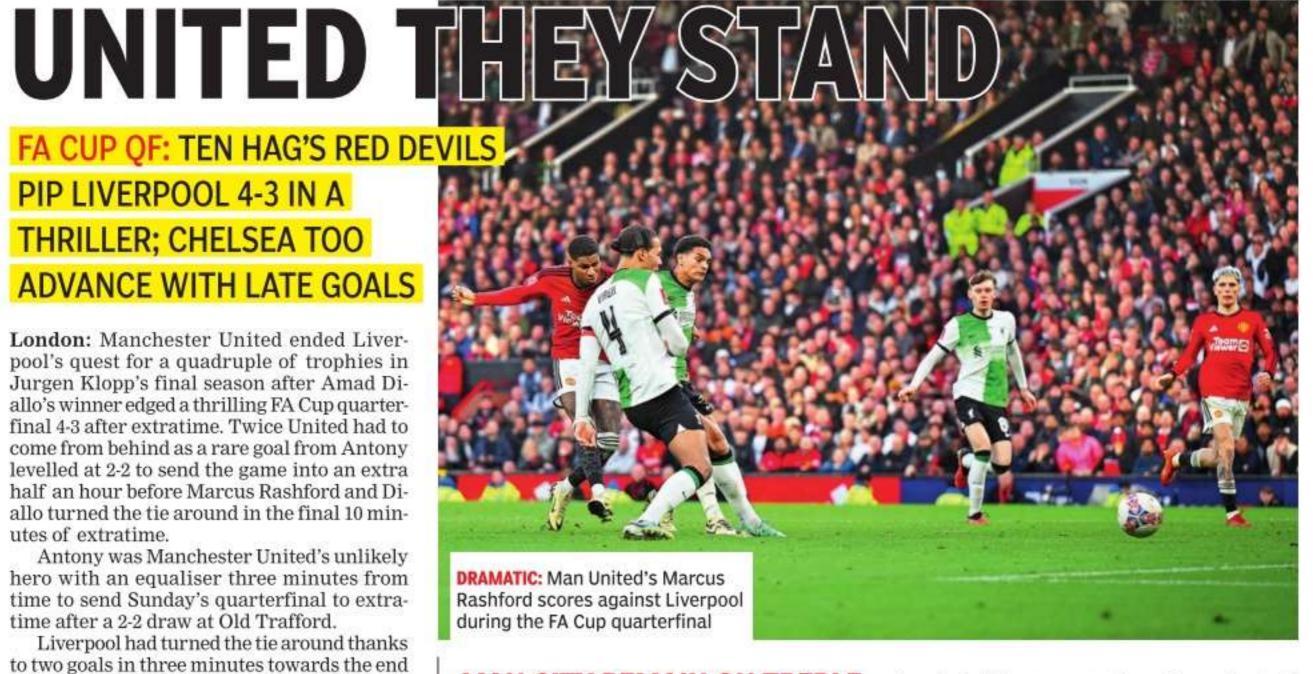
London: Manchester United ended Liverpool's quest for a quadruple of trophies in Jurgen Klopp's final season after Amad Diallo's winner edged a thrilling FA Cup quarterfinal 4-3 after extratime. Twice United had to come from behind as a rare goal from Antony levelled at 2-2 to send the game into an extra half an hour before Marcus Rashford and Diallo turned the tie around in the final 10 minutes of extratime.

ADVANCE WITH LATE GOALS

Antony was Manchester United's unlikely hero with an equaliser three minutes from time to send Sunday's quarterfinal to extratime after a 2-2 draw at Old Trafford

Liverpool had turned the tie around thanks to two goals in three minutes towards the end of the first half from Alexis Mac Allister and Mohamed Salah after Scott McTominay opened the scoring during a bright United start. Antony had scored just once in his previous 38 matches but came off the bench to fire into the far corner and United should have then won it at the death when Marcus Rashford fired a great chance wide.

Earlier, Carney Chukwuemeka rescued Chelsea with a stoppage-time strike that inspired a 4-2 win over 10-man Leicester in an FA Cup quarterfinal thriller on Sunday. Mauricio Pochettino's side were fortunate to survive a stirring fightback from Championship promotion chasers Leicester amid a mutinous atmosphere at Stamford Bridge. Chukwuemeka netted in the closing minutes to save Chelsea from the embarrassment of being forced into extra-time. Noni Madueke added Chelsea's fourth. For the sixth time in the last eight years, the Blues have advanced to the last four in the FA Cup. But this was hardly a triumphant afternoon for Blues boss Pochettino, whose inconsistent team blew the twogoal half-time lead given to them by Marc Cucurella and Cole Palmer. AGENCIES



MAN CITY REMAIN ON TREBLE **COURSE AS SILVA FIRES; COVENTRY STUN WOLVES**

Manchester: Bernardo Silva scored twice as Manchester City beat Newcastle 2-0 to reach the FA Cup semifinals on Saturday, while Coventry struck twice in stoppage time to stun

Wolves 3-2. Holders City remain on

course to repeat their treble triumph CITY ARE INTO THE FA CUP of Premier League, Champions LAST FOUR FOR THE League and FA Cup last season as Pep Guardiola's men stretched their EIGHT SEASONS unbeaten run in all competitions to 22 games. Fortune favoured the Eng-GUARDIOLA lish champions, though, as twice Silva's shots took deflections to wrongfoot Newcastle goalkeeper Martin Dubravka. The Portuguese international opened the scoring on 13 minutes when his effort looped in off Dan Burn. Silva's second deflected off Sven Botman, but Dubravka should still have done better as the ball trickled underneath him.

At the other end, City's number one goalkeeper

Ederson was not missed as Stefan Ortega pro-

duced a brilliant save to deny Alexander Isak pulling a goal back for Newcastle.

By contrast, Coventry reached their first semifinal since they won the competition for the only time in 1987 in a five-goal thriller at Molineux. The Sky Blues led early in the second half through Ellis Simms' controversial opener.

> But the Championship side looked to have blown their chance to reach Wembley when Wolves themselves scored twice in the final seven minutes of the 90.

Rayan Ait-Nouri pounced on an error from Joel Latibeaudiere to smash home the equaliser and then set up his fellow left-back Hugo Bueno to fire into the bottom corner for his first senior goal.

However, Simms' second goal of the match levelled in the 97th minute before he teed up American international Haji Wright to fire into the corner three minutes later. The drama did not end there as Wolves boss Garv O'Neil labelled Coventry manager Mark Robins' celebrations in the face of a teenage ball boy "disgusting". AGENCIES

HARRY KANE COULD MISS FRIENDLIES AFTER INJURING ANKLE IN BUNDESLIGA Darmstadt (Germany): England captain

Harry Kane is a doubt for upcoming international friendlies against Brazil and Belgium after sustaining an ankle injury while playing for Bayern Munich on Saturday. "He twisted his ankle in the goal net. He's cooled it with ice. We don't have a (final) diagnosis yet. We have to wait and see and hope that it remains a scare," Bayern coach Thomas Tuchel said after the team's 5-2 win over Darmstadt in the Bundesliga. Kane crashed into the post late in the game as he tried to reach the ball when it rebounded off the crossbar from Jamal Musiala's effort. He appeared to be in pain and received brief treatment on the field before going off.



GETAFE DAMAGE GIRONA'S FADING TITLE DREAM

Getafe: Girona's slim hopes of taking the La Liga title race to the wire faded further on Saturday as they fell to a 1-0 defeat at Getafe. Yellu Santiago's 33rd minute strike means Real Madrid lead the league by 10 points ahead of second place Girona, after their 4-2 win at Osasuna earlier on, Getafe were able to inflict a fourth consecutive away defeat on Michel Sanchez's side.

Ivan Martin came close in the first half for Girona while Mason Greenwood, on loan at Getafe from Manchester United, fired narrowly off target at the other end.

The hosts took the lead through young midfielder Santiago, who finished well. Agencies

A new start for a healthy heart gammo fortune rice bran health Fortune Rice Bran Health is only a brand name Mere consumption of edible oil does not improve nealth and it is not substitute of medication, Fortune recommends balanced diet and regular

Paris Games could feature only 40 Russian athletes: IOC

Sydney: Senior International Olympic Committee (IOC) vice-president John Coates is unsure how many Russian athletes will compete as neutral athletes at the Paris Games, but thinks reports that it might be as low as 40 could be close to the mark.

Under sanctions put in place because of the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine, for which Belarus acted as a staging post, the IOC is allowing only some Russian and Belarussian athletes to compete in Paris under tight restrictions.

The inclusion of the neutral athletes remains a contentious issue, with Ukraine Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba describing December's decision to allow them as "shameful", and Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo saying last week she hoped they would not come.

"The issue is how many of them are going to be there too,

they can't compete as Russia," Coates said in Sunday's edition of Sydney's Daily Telegraph. "And then anyone who is prepared out of the Russian military clubs, they're not going. I don't know, but obviously some athletes might choose not to go if they're not competing for Russia. I mightn't be right, but I think that I've read something that it might be as little as 40."

Neutral athletes will compete only in individual sports without flags, emblems or national anthems, and athletes who actively support the war in Ukraine, or are contracted to the Russian or Belarusian military, are not eligible.

Moscow, which describes the invasion as a "special military operation", called the restrictions "illegitimate, unfair and unacceptable", but Russia's Olympic chief, Stanislav Pozdnyakov, has confirmed its athletes would not boycott the Games. REUTERS

"We got down to work because they're not going to be straightway in Saudi Arabia,' in any team sports because Stimac said on Sunday. "The idea was to get the boys loose propriating funds that are sup-Schauffele takes

lead at The Players Ponte Verda Beach: Xander Schauffele kept his head down and tried to post his best score Saturday in his bid to make up a four-shot deficit in The Players Championship,

and he did better than that. A bold shot from the pine straw led to one birdie. A 60-foot birdie putt gave him his first lead. And a superb up-anddown on the 18th gave him a 7under 65 and allowed him to stay one shot ahead of U.S. Open champion Wyndham Clark. "At times in the past I'll get a bit ahead of myself and lose a little bit of confidence when I shouldn't," Schauffele

said. "Today I tried to stay in my own little box there."

Clark had his head down for another reason. His sand wedge to an island green at the par-317th came up some 15 yards short of dry land and he stooped over in disbelief. Remarkably, he reloaded and hit the next one to 7 feet to escape with bogey.

Diksha makes cut

Longwood: Diksha Dagar had six birdies and an equal number of bogeys as she carded an even-par 71 to make the cut at the IOA Golf Classic here. AGENCIES

LEVERKUSEN EDGE

CLOSER TO MAIDEN

LEAGUE TITLE

Freiburg: Leaders Bayer Leverkusen beat hosts Freiburg 3-2 on Sunday to stay 10 points clear at the top of the league standings and edge closer to a first ever Bundesliga title.

BUNDESLIGA

Florian Wirtz put the visitors, who are unbeaten across all competitions this season, in front after two minutes with a

clever shot in the 10th drew Freiburg level. Leverkusen, who face West Ham in the Europa League quarter-finals next month, went back into a deserved lead in the 40th when Adam Hlozek tapped in from close

scintillating solo run before Ritsu Doan's



had spilled the ball into his path following superb early work from Wirtz.

Patrik Schick's stunning flick, with the ball going in off the post in the 53rd, gave them a two-goal cushion and should have killed off the game.

Instead they eased off, allowing Freiburg more space, and Yannik Keitel cut the deficit after some sloppy defending in the 79th to inject some late drama. REUTERS

TOTTENHAM NEED TO **INTROSPECT, SAYS SON**

London: Tottenham Hotspur captain Son Heung-min said the players needed to look in the mirror after a damaging 3-0 loss at Fulham cast doubt on their Premier League top four credentials on Saturday.

They produced a limp display as Rodrigo Muniz scored twice for the hosts, "It is very disappointing and very frustrating.

"Everybody has to look in the mirror and say 'it is my fault'," said Son, who wasted one chance when the score was 0-0.

"It was not good enough. We didn't put in the effort we have put in this season. The

performance, the attitude was not good

enough. Everyone needs a big wake-up call."

The performance was all the more surprising given Tottenham's clinical 4-0 win at Villa last weekend and it ended their run of scoring in every Premier League game this season. Son was certainly not mincing his words. "In the Premier League if you are not ready you get punished. Aston Villa are an amazing team, but so are Fulham. If you are not giving 100% you get punished. You don't get three points for free," he added. AFP

Afghan players continue boycott Marcus.Mergulhao

MAN

Panaji: Ashley Westwood was in Qatar for the Asian Cup early this year and carefully took notes during India's games, all of which they lost. Seated next to him was national team de-

> Westwood, now the Afghanistan national team coach, has previously spent considerable time in India and won a major trophy during each of his hugely-successful first three years at Bengaluru FC.

fender Haroon Amiri.

@timesgroup.com

His understanding about Indian football is better than most foreign coaches

Now, as Afghanistan and India meet in home-and-away clashes in the Fifa World Cup 2026 qualifiers, Westwood's homework may not be enough as the hosts are left with just four players from the full-strength squads that played, and won, the playoffs against Mongolia.

Eighteen players have since

team, protesting the "substand- Arabia. ard treatment" by the Afghanistan Football Federation (AFF). The players have alleged that senior officials have been misap-

ing football in the country. According to sources, only three players - midfielder Rahmat Akbari, Omid Popalzay and Mosawer Ahadi – have now re-

posed to be invested in develop-

WC QUALIFIER VS INDIA

turned to the national team, while influential players like captain Farshad Noor, his predecessor Faysal Shayesteh, and Southend United's Noor Husin have not changed their boycott

field a much-weakened side," a source told TOI. "India should be clear favourites for both the away and home clash."

If Afghanistan have any advantage, it will be playing at Abha, their home venue at 2,470 then boycotted the national metres above sea level, in Saudi hati on March 26.

after a long flight and get them acclimatised to the altitude as much as possible. Since our match will kick off at 22:00 here (due to Ramzan, the holy month for Muslims who fast from dawn to dusk), we have moved our daily schedule forward a few hours so that players can adjust their biorhythm accordingly."

Afghanistan have lost both their games against Qatar (1-8) and Kuwait (0-4) and are at the bottom of the four-team pool.

India on the other hand are third due to their inferior goal difference, after an away win "Afghanistan are forced to against Kuwait and a home defeat against Qatar (0-3). A toptwo finish will guarantee progression to Round 3 of the qualifiers, something that India have never achieved before.

India's home clash against Afghanistan will be in Guwa-

Alcaraz books final date with Medvedev

Indian Wells: Defending champion Carlos Alcaraz handed Australian Open winner Jannik Sinner his first defeat of 2024 on Saturday to set up an Indian Wells final against Daniil Medvedev.

Alcaraz's 1-6, 6-3, 6-2 victory ended Sinner's 19-match winning streak, including a 16-0 start to the year, and ensures Alcaraz will remain No. 2 in the world rankings next week.

INDIAN WELLS

"To be able to end something like this, it's incredible for me," Spain's Alcaraz said of busting the Italian's streak.

Sunday's final against fourth-seeded Russian Medvedev is a repeat of last year's championship decider. Medvedev also had to fight

back in a 1-6, 7-6 (7/3), 6-2 victory over 17th-ranked American Tommy Paul. In the final he'll be out to thwart Alcaraz's bid to become the first repeat Indian Wells ATP champion since Novak Djokovic won three straight titles from 2014-2016.

Alcaraz and Sinner's semi-final was disrupted by a three-hour rain delay at 2-1 in returns. AFP



Carlos Alcaraz on Saturday

the first set but proved worth the wait as the 20-something stars put on a show.

"Matches with Jannik are always special," Alcaraz said. "We know we have to play at our highest level to win. We have to put magic on the court, unbelievable points and for the crowd it is also wonderful."

Sinner quickly seized the initiative when play resumed, winning four straight

games to pocket the first set. He saved the only break point he faced, and gained the insurance break for a 5-1 lead. pouncing on a short ball for a stinging cross-court passing winner on break point.

Alcaraz turned it around in the second set with a savvy change of style, backing up to give himself more time on the

'Red Bull employee lodges complaint against Horner'

The female Red Bull employee at the centre of allegations against Christian Horner has lodged an official complaint to Formula 1's governing body the FIA, the BBC reported on Saturday. Allegations of inappropriate behaviour against Red Bull's embattled team principal have overshadowed

F1 season. Horner was cleared of wrongdoing by an internal investigation carried out by Red Bull's parent company last month. However, the saga has not ended there as an anonymous email was sent to Formula One staff and media the next day containing alleged messages from Horner to a female the opening weeks of the 2024 member of the team. AFP



Central Delhi: Khandelwal Motorcraft: 9810704006 | East Delhi: ASCO Motors: 7061000010 ; Nastroj India Private Limited: 8588804615 | Shadara: Nastroj India Private Limited: 9205539413 | North Delhi: Ashvar Motors Pvt Ltd: 8588858700 | South Delhi: Swati Motors: 9810289087 | New Delhi: Swati Motors: 8383044406 | West Delhi: Khandelwal Motorcraft: 9267937154; T-1 Riders Private Limited: 9599292821 | Faridabad: Northern Motor: 9136793819 | Ghaziabad: E V Trades: 8766398319 | Gurgaon: Chaahal Automobiles: 9891608555 | Rewari: Chakshu Automobiles Private Limited: 7419741011

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President Muizzu

says surveillance of Maldives' territory

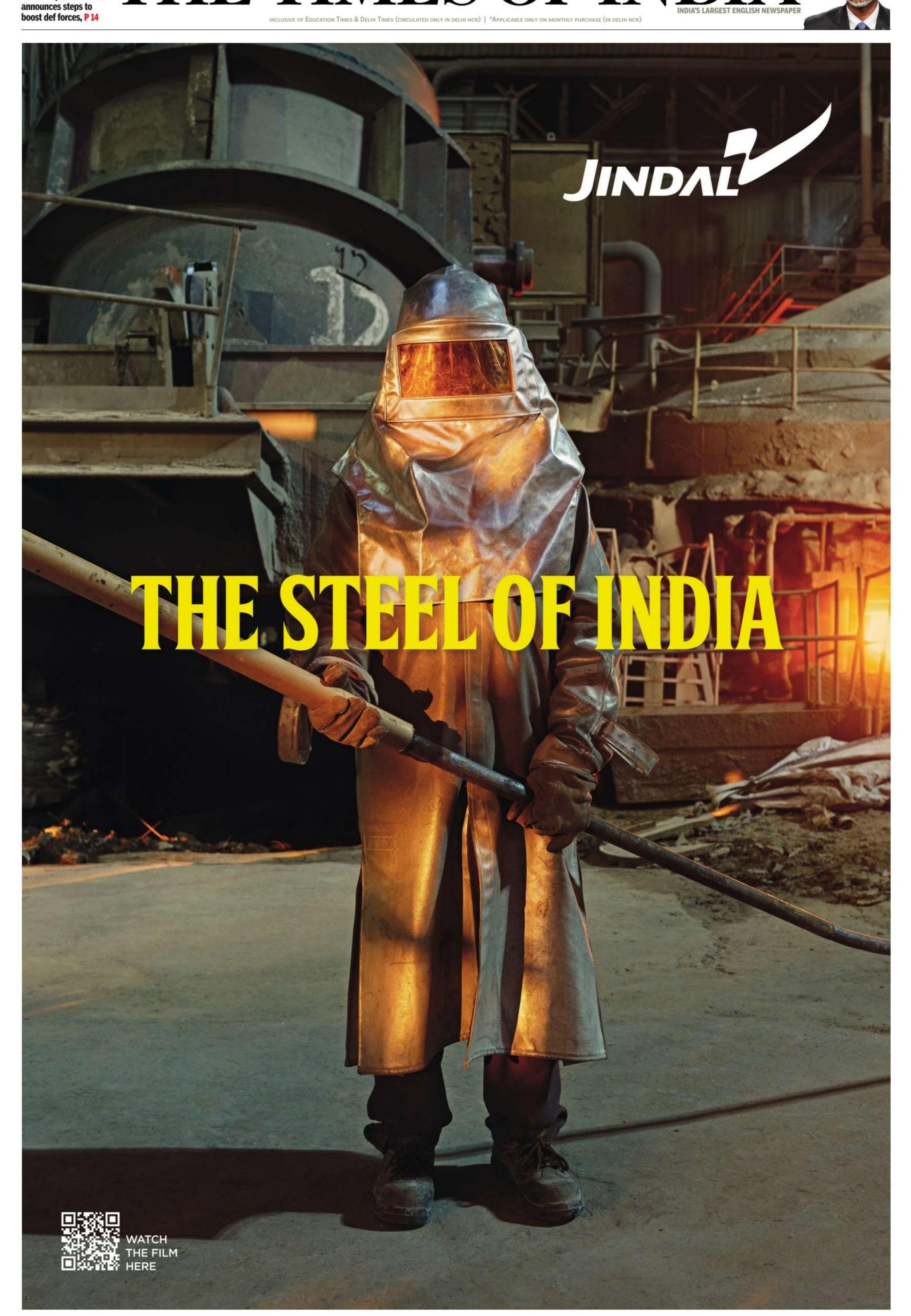
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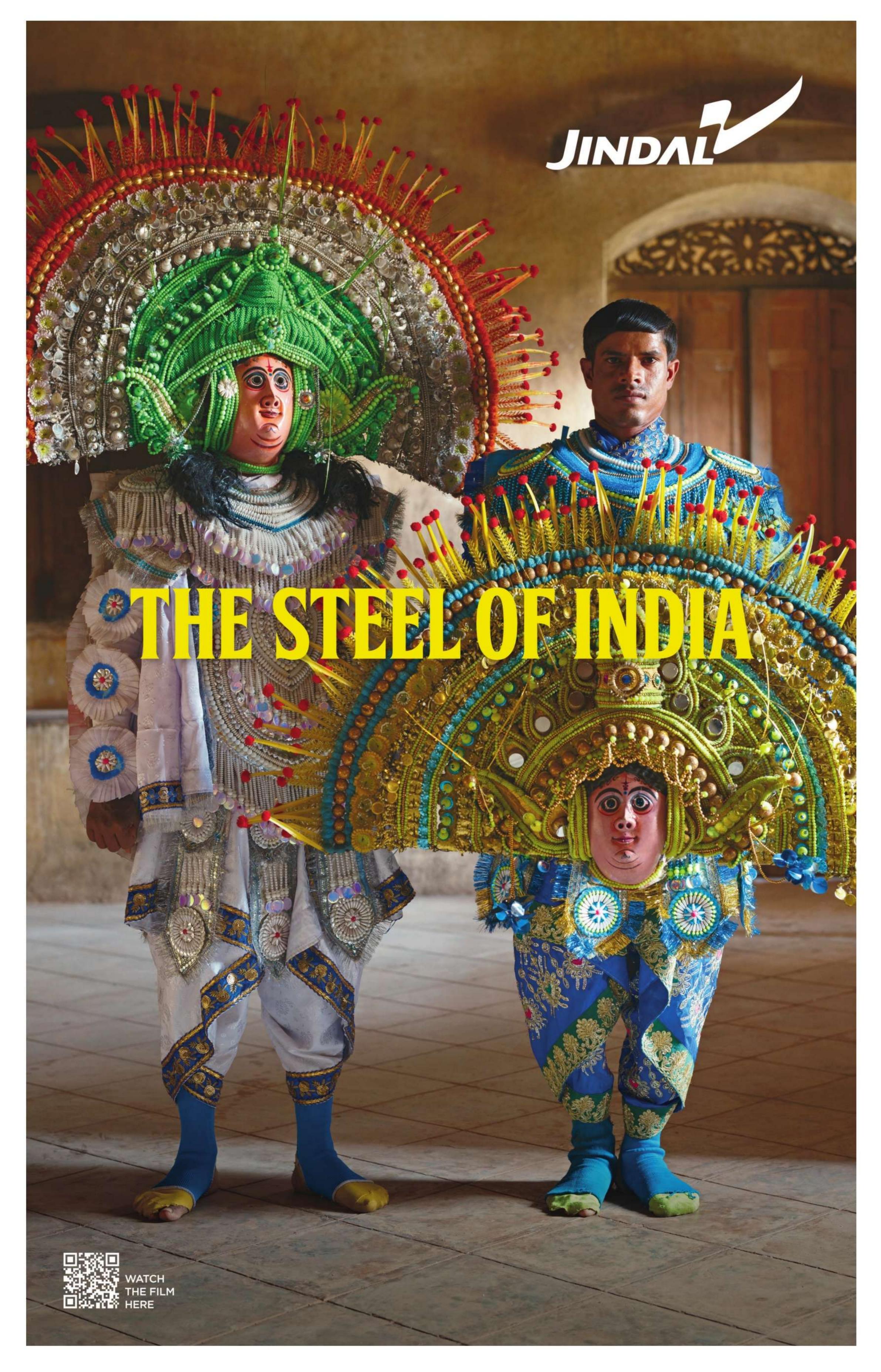
'external parties' as he

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Rahul: BJP has no courage to change Constitution



JP makes "a lot of noise" D but does not have the courage to "change the Constitution", Rahul Gandhi said, asserting that the truth and the country's people were on his side. Rahul launched the INDIA bloc's campaign for Lok Sabha elections with a mega rally at Shivaji Park on Sunday, a day after concluding his Manipur-Mumbai Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra in Dadar. FLAP INSIDE

DANCE of **DEMOCRACY**

ECI changes date of counting of votes for Arunachal & Sikkim assembly polls from June 4 to June 2. Decision has been taken because terms of 2 assemblies are till June 2, which means polls have to be wrapped up on or before that date | INSIDE FLAP

In a jolt for SP & Cong, Mulayam-loyalist Kunwar Devendra Singh Yadav & 3-time MLA from Badrinath R S Bhandari join BJP | INSIDE FLAP

A Latin Archdiocese circular read out in Kerala's churches condemns what it calls a rise in attacks on minorities. Circular assumes significance as it comes a day after poll dates were announced | INSIDE FLAP

Baghel named in Mahadeo scam: says it's 'vendetta'

hhattisgarh economic offences wing named ex-CM Bhupesh Baghel in an FIR on the alleged Rs 6,000-cr Mahadeo Book online betting scam. Terming it "political vendetta", Baghel said the FIR fails to give any hint of his involvement. P8

YouTuber Elvish held over snake venom

......

7ouTuber & reality TV star Elvish Yadav was arrested on Sunday for allegedly supplying snake venom to make opioids at rave parties. He was remanded in judicial custody for 14 days. P7

China: Arunachal is our inherent part

+++++

hinese military has reiterated its claim over Arunachal, calling it an "inherent part of China's territory", days after India rejected Beijing's objection to PM Modi's visit to the state. P11

Gang sending SIM cards abroad busted

irport police busted a 1 scam involving smuggling of Indian SIM cards to foreign countries by intercepting a FedEx package. The mastermind is a Chinese national, sources said. P4

Do not miss **Education Times**, a 4-page pullout with today's issue

Mum schools transform Al into an ally

two-day expo at St Willi-Abrord High School in Mumbai — PadhAI — blended the Hindi term padhai (studies) with AI (artificial intelligence), showcasing over 50 AI tools and apps, tailored for and led by students. It offered visitors, including teachers and parents, a taste of Gen AI. One of the hotspots was the 'ChatGPT room' where students, parents and teachers tried their hand at prompt crafting to tackle everyday scenarios using ChatGPT—whether it was a doctor organising a medics roster or a parent stuck on scripting for a cooking channel on You'l'ube. P8

Day after bail, Kejriwal gets 2 ED summonses

Told To Appear In DJB, Liquor **Policy Cases**

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: With the courts affirming the validity of

ED's summons to him, the agency issued a fresh one to Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwaltojoin

its investigation into the alleged liquor scam while asking him to also join the probe into alleged money laundering related to Delhi Jal

In the DJB case, Kejriwal has been asked to appear before the investigators on Monday while the liquor case summons — the ninth one — is for March 21.

Kejriwal, who had so far refused to appear before ED dubbing its summons "illegal and vague", had to appe-

BID TO STOP CM'S LS CAMPAIGN: ATISHI

Kejriwal has been asked to appear before ED in DJB case on March 18

> In the case related to alleged irregularities in the Delhi liquor policy, CM has received ninth ED summons, this time on March 21

> Kejriwal has so far refused to appear before the agency and dubbed its summons 'illegal and vague'

CM's questioning in both the cases is with regard to

ar before the sessions court on Saturday after the agency moved court against him for resisting the probe. He was allowed bail on furnishing a bond of Rs 15,000 and a surety of Rs1lakh.

ED started investigating the alleged DJB scam based on a CBI FIR into allegations of bribery against senior officers of DJB and AAP functionaries for awarding a contract to NKG Infrastructure when the company did not fulfil the technical eligibility

his role as the national convenor of AAP

> AAP minister Atishi Marlena says DJB case is 'fake', accuses ED of trying to frame CM to arrest him and prevent him from campaigning for the Lok

Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva says ED is 'working independently', accuses Kejriwal of repeatedly flouting the law

Sabha elections

norms. In Feb, the agency searched the premises of Kejriwal's personal secretary Bibhav Kumar and AAP treasurer N D Gupta in connection with the DJB probe. Kumar was asked about Kejriwal's visitors and certain mobile phones which have allegedly

> gone missing. ED had then claimed that bribes were received by AAP functionaries and used by the party for elections.

▶Summons for convener, P 2

PM to mantris: Carry on work as usual, draw up plan for 1st 100 days of next govt

New Delhi: PM Narendra Modi on Sunday told cabinet ministers to carry out govt



business usual during the poll season even if they are busy campaigning and contesting

Chairing the cabinet meeting a day after the Election Commission announced the LS poll dates, Modi asked ministers to draft the roadmap for the first 100 days and the next five years of the new govt that will take charge in June. He also asked ministers to hold discussions with secretaries concerned on effective implementation of the central plans soon after govt is formed. "The message was clear that while we are busy in elections and focusing on winning, there should be no Notification for polls, P 10

TALK TO SECYS: PM

PM Modi asks ministers to hold discussions with secretaries concerned on effective implementation of central plans soon after new govt is formed

Sources say the focus of the first 100 days of new govt will be on taking major initiatives and decisions that can bring 'transformative' changes in governance and people's life

slow down in govt business, said a source. Sources said the focus of the first 100 days of the new govt will be on taking major initiatives and decisions that can bring "transformative" changes in governance & people's life, TNN

Strip-searched at school, 14-yr-old

Bagalkot: A14-year-old Karnataka schoolgirl who had been allegedly strip-searched along with four other students after a teacher reported a theft on campus ended her life on Saturday afternoon, two days after the incident, reports Sangamesh Menasinakai.

Foreign students attacked over namaz at Guj Univ hostel, MEA vows action

Ahmedabad: Three foreign students of Gujarat University were assaulted in their hostel compound late Saturday by a mob of outsiders that allegedly objected to them offering namaz in the open, triggering a row that prompted MEA to issue a statement Sunday saying the BJP govt there was "taking strict action against the perpetrators".

Two of the suspects-Hitesh Mewada from Sola and Bharat Patel from Vastral were arrested for the assault on a student each from Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and Turkmenistan at the university's A Block hostel. All three were hospitalised.

spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said one of the students had been discharged. As videos purpor-

2 SUSPECTS HELD

Mob of 20-25 enter hostel compound, object to foreign students offering namaz, ask them to pray in a mosque, hurl stones at them

- 3 students from Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and Turkmenistan - hospitalised
- Police form nine probe

teams, 2 suspects held tedly showing the assault added to the outrage, Centre swung into damage-control mode. Jaiswal said Centre was in touch with state govt and keeping a close watch on the situation. DGP Vikas Sahay promised "stern consequences" for "vitiating the peaceful atmosphere of Ah-

▶Shifted to safer place, P 10

medabad and Gujarat". TNN

Guv snubs Stalin's plea to swear in Ponmudy as min

ramil Nadu governor R N Ravi has rejected CMMK Stalin's recommendation to appoint and swear in K Ponmudy as minister again. In a communication sent by Raj Bhavan and addressed to the CM on Sunday evening, Ravi said since Ponmudy remained "tainted of corruption, re-induction as minister would be against constitutional

morality". Ponmudy, who was higher education minister, ceased to be a minister after the Madras HC convicted him in a corruption case last Dec. On March 11, the Supreme Court stayed the conviction, following which govt sent the recommendation to the governor. Last week, Stalin had sent a communication to Ravi "to appoint and swear in" Ponmudy as minister "either on Wednesday evening or Thursday morning". P11

RCB WOMEN BREAK FRANCHISE'S TITLE DROUGHT



Royal Challengers Bangalore have yet to win the IPL. But they clinched the Women's Premier League title on Sunday as hosts Delhi Capitals finished runners-up for the second year in a row. Playing despite a hairline fracture in her left hand, Shreyanka Patil took 4/12 as DC were dismissed for 113. RCB (115/2) chased down the target with 3 balls to spare as superstar all-rounder Ellyse Perry hit an unbeaten 35. RCB's Sophie Molineux, who reduced DC from 64/0 to 64/3 in one over, was declared player of the match while Deepti Sharma of UP Warriorz was player of the tournament | FULL COVERAGE, P 15

girl kills herself

Police said the deceased and the other four girls, all studying in a govt school at Bagalkot, were hauled up after a language teacher suspected them of stealing Rs 2,000 from her. The teaching staff, including the headmaster, allegedly got the girls to strip before taking them to a temple to "prove" their innocence. Bagalkot SP Amarnath Reddy said the girl's elder sister, who is a student in the same school, told their parents about what happened on campus.

▶Brooded over case, P 11

Whole nation is saying June 4 ko 400 paar': Modi at AP rally

Shares Stage With Naidu At Poll Meet For 1st Time In 10 Years

Srikanth.Aluri@timesgroup.com

Vijayawada: A day after EC announced the schedule for Lok Sabha elections, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday moved in swiftly to weave in the date of results, June 4, with NDA's slogan of 'Ab Ki Baar, 400 Paar'.

"The entire country is saying, '4 June Ko 400 Paar'. For a developed India, 400 Paar; for a developed Andhra Pradesh, 400 Paar," he said while addressing the first joint rally of BJP-TDP-Jana Sena combine at Boppudi village in Palnadu district after the trio forged an alliance earlier this month.

Dubbing Congress and Andhra Pradesh's governing party YSRCP as "pieces of the same cloth", PM urged people of the state not to make "the same mistake" again of perceiving them as two separate Chandrababu Naidu to the



PM Modi with TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu at Palnadu on Sunday. He described Congress and YSRCP as 'pieces of the same cloth'

are run by the same family and thus they are same. Andhra unit of Congress is headed by YSRCP president and CM Jagan Mohan Reddy's sister, YS Sharmila.

Pitching for a double engine govt for the development of Andhra Pradesh, Modi said NDA has gained strength with TDP and Jana Sena joining it. He said NDA will take forward the regional aspirations and national interests together.

The meeting witnessed the return of TDP president and former chief minister N entities. He said both parties NDA fold after a gap of six

years. This was also the first time in a decade that both Modiand Naidu shared stage at an election meeting. Naidu left NDA before the 2019 elections to join hands with Congress. After losing in 2019 AP assembly polls, Naidu remained neutral maintaining equidistance be-

tween NDA and UPA. Modi and Naidu shared several lighter moments at the venue amid applause

from the large crowd. The public meeting was dubbed 'prajagalam' or people's voice. Criticising the govt headed by YSRCP president YS Jagan Mohan Reddy,

Modi said his ministers are competing with each another in corruption. "The Andhra people have resolved to unseat the corrupt govt, and to bring NDA govt both at the Centre and in the

state," he said. Showering praise on Naidu and Jana Sena chief Pawan Kalyan, the Prime Minister said that both have been fighting for the rights of people and development of And-

hra Pradesh for long. Modi said the NDA govt between 2014 and 2019 sanctioned 11 central institutions to make Andhra Pradesh a hub of education sector and promised to take infrastructure projects in the state forward along with a port-led blue economy.

Invoking Telugu pride, Modi said the founder of TDP, NT Rama Rao, had always fought for the Telugu self-respect, the poor and the farmers. He said NDA govt respected NTR by releasing a special coin to commemorate him on his birth centenary. Another legendary Telugu leader PV Narasimha Rao whom Congress "insulted" was also respected by NDA govt by bestowing Bharat Ratna on him, he added.

BRS MP and MLA cross over to Cong

Hyderabad: A day after Lok Sabha poll schedule was announced, Congress on Sunday dealt a major blow to main opposition BRS by inducting its Chevella MP G Ranjith Reddy and Khairatabad MLA Danam Nagender into the party, reports Roushan Ali.

Addressing a 'meet the press' programme, Telangana chief minister Revanth Reddy said Congress has opened its gates for politicians, MPs and MLAs of other parties as a counter strategy to foil BRS and BJP threats that his govt will fall after the Lok Sabha elections.

Badrinath Cong MLA joins BJP

......

Dehradun/New Delhi: In a significant setback to Congress in Uttarakhand a day after announcement of poll dates, its three-time MLA from Badrinath, Rajendra Singh Bhandari, joined BJP on Sunday. Bhandari's move marks the second high-profile departure of a senior Congress leader after Manish Khanduri, son of former CM Bhuwan Chandra Khanduri, who resigned a week ago and moved to the saffron fold.

Bhandari told reporters, "I am very much impressed with PM Modi's policies for the welfare of the poor." TNN

2 UBT Sena netas with Shinde now

Mumbai/Kalyan: As the poll season hots up, Shiv Sena (UBT) has lost two old hands to the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena: Nandurbar MLC and key tribal face Aamshya Padavi, and Kalyan district president Chandrakant Borade.

Padvi joined Shinde Sena on Sunday, while Borade jumped ship the previous night. Padvi is said to have left Sena (UBT) because was interested in fighting Nandurbar seat, but the seat is purportedly going to Congress. Maha Vikas Aghadi is yet to announce the allies' seat share. TNN

Ex-Cong leader wept, said was forced to join BJP, says Rahul

Prafulla Marpakwar

Mumbai: Rahul Gandhi launched the INDIA bloc's campaign for the Lok Sabha elections with a mega rally at Shivaji Park on Sunday, a day after concluding his Manipur-Mumbai 'Nyay Yatra' at Chaityabhoomi in Dadar.

Flanked by opposition leaders including Sharad Pawar, Uddhav Thackeray and M K Stalin, Rahul dwelt on the twin themes of corruption and the autonomy of democratic institutions in a man personally spoke to Sospeech that lasted an hour. "Our country is passing through a critical period, democracy is in danger, democratic institutions have been

Congressman and said the there was a reference to the



Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Vadra at INDIA bloc's mega rally in Mumbai on Sunday

nia Gandhi and literally wept while confessing he had no energy to take on BJP and lin, RJD's Tejashwi Yadav, that he feared jail. Though Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Udd-Rahul did not name the leaddestroyed. It is our duty to er, he was believed to be referrise to the occasion for the ring to former chief minister mer J&K CMs Farooq Abcause of democracy," he said. Ashok Chavan, who joined He said the BJP cannot BJP and was immediately win elections without EVMs, nominated to Rajya Sabha. In Jharkhand CM Champai ED, CBI and the I-T depart- the white paper submitted by Soren, and Priyanka Gandhi ment. Hereferred to a veteran NDA govt in Parliament, were among those present

'BJP has no courage to change statute'

JP makes "a lot of noise" but does not have courage to "change Constitution", Rahul Gandhi said, while asserting that the truth and the country's people are on his side, reports Chaitanya Marpakwar. Rahul said the current fight is between two

Adarsh housing scam during

"expressions of India" and not

just between BJP & Congress.

Chavan's tenure as CM. Tamil Nadu CM M K Stahav Thackeray, NCP (SP) president Sharad Pawar, fordullah and Mehbooba Mufti, VBA's Prakash Ambedkar,

'Bid to create communal divisions': Kerala church slams attack on minorities

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Thiruvananthapuram: A Latin Archdiocese circular read out Sunday in Kerala's churches condemned what it called as an increase in attacks on minorities in the country, especially Christians, and attempts to create "communal divisions".

The circular issued by Thiruvananthapuram Archbishop Thomas J Netto, also calls for a fast on March 22 for "unity and peace". It assumed significance as it came a day after the Lok Sabha poll dates were declared and amid BJP's efforts to woo Christians in the Leftgoverned state.

By contrast, the Left government, which had strained ties with Latin Archdiocese following protests over the Vizhinjam port project, withdrew cases against most agitating fisherfolk last week in an apparent placatory act.

CALL FOR UNITY

According to Sunday's circular, democracy is facing a threat as divisive attitudes and hate speeches undermine the pluralistic ethos of the country, its Constitution, fundamental rights and minority rights. Attacks on minorities, especially Christians, went up from 147 in 2014 to 687 in 2023, the circular says.

EC advances vote count for Sikkim, **Arunachal polls by** two days to June 2 New Delhi: The Election

Commission on Sunday advanced the counting of votes for the assembly polls in Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim to June 2 from June 4 as the term of the legislative assemblies of the two states expires on June 2.

The two northeastern states are due to see simultaneous polls to the Lok Sabha and assembly. Polling for both the states will be conducted on April 19. EC on Sunday clarified that the counting schedule for the parliamentary seats in the two states would remain unchanged. Results will thus be out for all the 543 Lok Sabha seats, including the two seats in Arunachal Pradesh and one in Sikkim, on June 4. TNN

Left will disappear from Tripura & Bengal after LS polls, Cong will suffer badly: Saha

Biswendu Bhattacharjee | TNN

Agartala: Left parties will disappear from Tripura and West Bengal, as also rest of the country, after this Lok Sabha election and Congress will suffer badly for their poor governance in the past, Tripura CM Manik Saha said on Sunday.

Speaking to TOI in an exclusive interview, Saha, who assumed charge in June 2022, said BJP is a natural choice for Indians because of its pro-people activities. Tripura has two Lok Sabha seats and Saha predicted

BJP will win both easily. "BJP doesn't require any special strategy for this general election. PM Narendra Modi has set the winning target of 370 seats. Social security schemes for the poor and the marginalised have brought back the confidence of the citizens," said Saha, adding that



BJP is a natural choice for Indians because of its pro-people activities, said Tripura CM Manik Saha

the 35-year rule of the Communists in Bengal and 25 years in Tripura saw only violence and bloodshed.

"It was a regular phenomenon and development didn't get priority. Unfortunately, Trinamool Congress in Bengal has inherited the culture of violence and corruption from Leftists, which people do not like. They also want respite from TMC's suffocating politics," said Saha (71).

"If we compare the pace

of development between Congress and BJP, it is clearly visible how in 60 years of Congress rule, India suffered internally and externally. They joined hands with Communists and some other parties to win polls, but people of the country have decided to reject them again. Lotus will bloom across India," Saha added.

The CM, who completed one-and-half years in office, said as a doctor, his priority is to provide best healthcare for the people of Tripura.

Saha joined BJP in December 2016 and after the party came to power, he became the president of Tripura Cricket Association in 2019 and slowly went up the ranks due to his organisational skills.

Welcoming Tipra Motha into the NDA fold, Saha said both parties are fighting the Lok Sabha polls together against Congress and CPM.

tors became members of the cabinet. As a result, they are now a part of the policymaking process and will contribute to governance for inclu-

sive development," Saha said. Talking about the progress of the Southeast Asian trade corridor through Tripura, Saha singled out the Maitri (friendship) Setu over River Feni in South Tripura as one of the biggest gifts from the Centre for the northeastern states. These states will now get direct access to the Chittagong sea port of Bangladesh and will open up a new horizon of development for Southeast Asian countries, he said.

"The SEZ at Sabroom will facilitate international investment with the proximity of the seaport. As a result, goods coming from other parts of the country and abroad could be ferried within an hour to the logistic hub "Two of Motha's legisla- of Tripura," added Saha.

TIMES CITY

LG clears hurdle for FOB at Majnu Ka Tila

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The construction of foot overbridge (FOB) at Majnu Ka Tila gurudwara on Outer Ring Road is likely to pick up as lieutenant governor VK Saxena has approved usage of the land owned by Delhi Development Authority, said Raj Niwas officials.

The stretch between Civil Lines Tjunction and Signature Bridge is signal free without any facility for pedestrians to crossover, forcing them to

risk their lives while crossing the road. The spot was identified as accident-prone zone by a high-level committee two years ago.

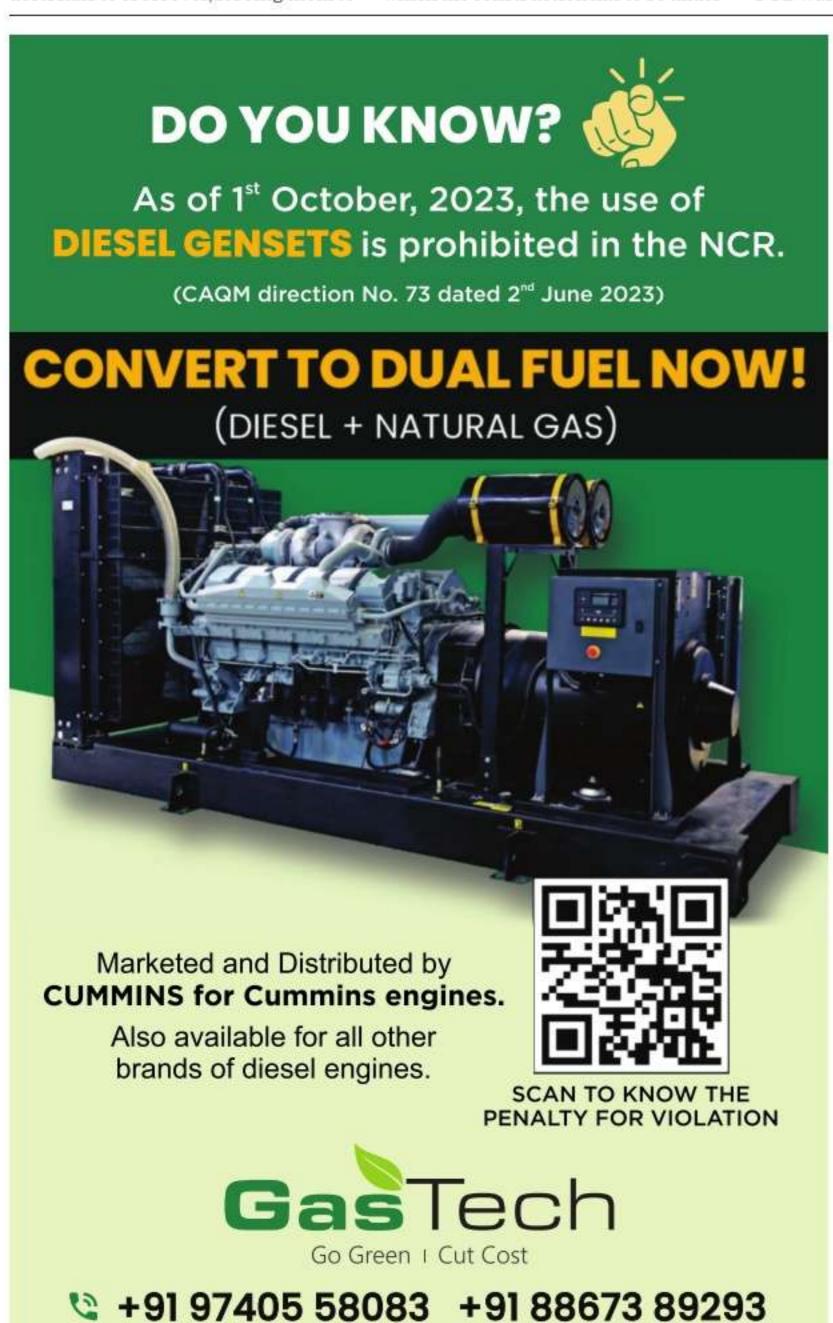
In July last year, Public Works Department had started the process of constructing an FOB at Majnu ka Tila in front of the gurudwara. PWD had even floated Rs 3 crore tender to construct a steel foot overbridge on road number 45 within six months.

According to officials, the land on which the construction has to be under-

taken belonged to DDA. PWD had sought DDA's permission to construct footing, staircase and lift on its land at the east side end of proposed FOB.

The FOB will be designed and constructed in such a manner that it can be dismantled or relocated easily.

As per officials there will be two passenger lifts on each side of the FOB along with escalators for the public. As part of the 77 road interventions project across the city, the construction of this FOB was to be taken up on priority.



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TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: A Delhi court has convicted an Afghan national of attempt to murder and grievously injuring a vendor and his brother at Afghani Chowk near the Central market in

The court of additional sessions judge Geetanjali, in the judgment dated March 11, noted that the testimonies of the witnesses confirmed that the accused caused injuries to the victims under a pre-meditated plan and the fact that he came armed with a knife also reflected his intention to kill the victims.

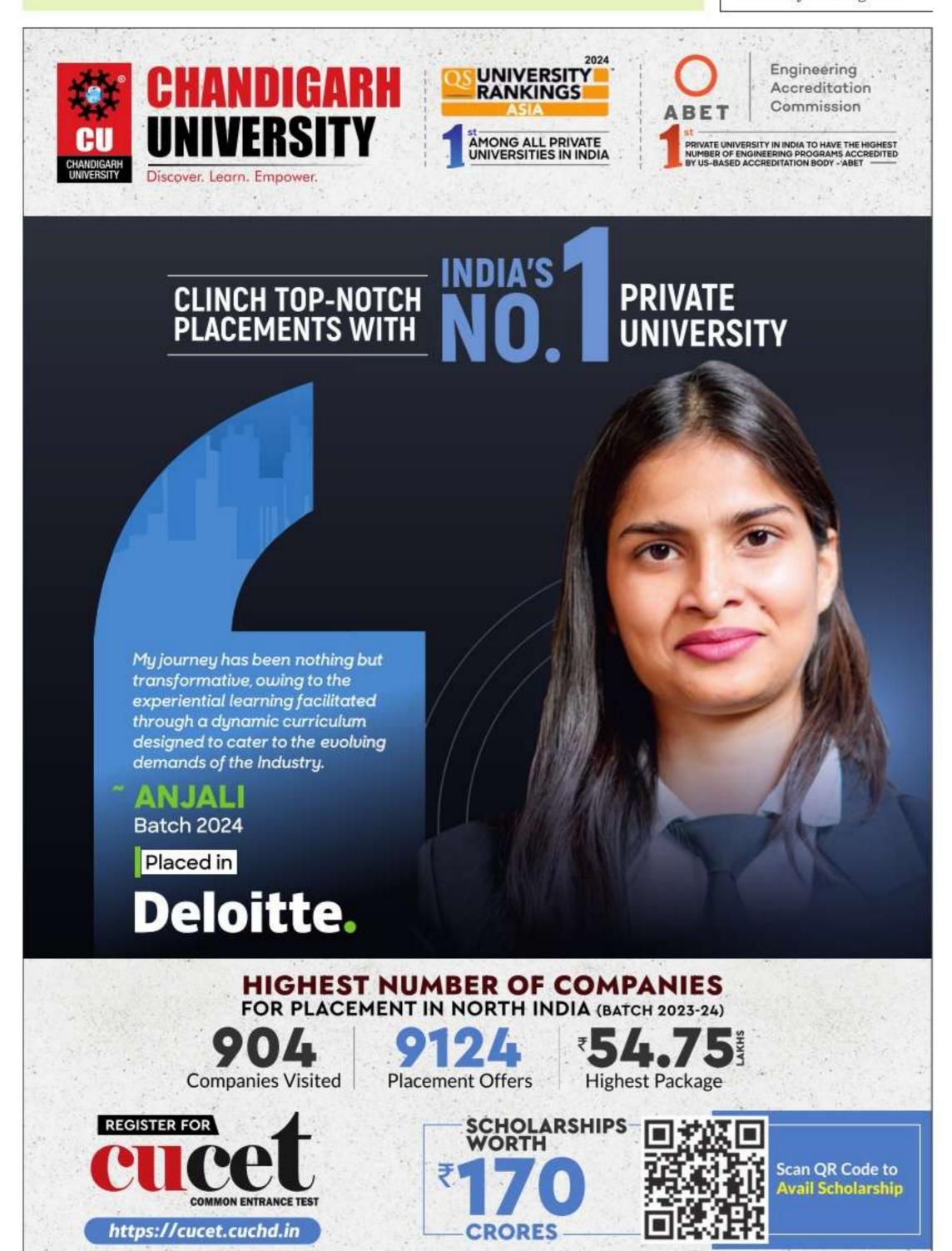
The court was hearing a case against Abdul Basir Akhondzada alias Samir, a resident of Kabul, against whom cops of Lajpat Nagar police station had registered a case for various offences, including attempt to murder.

The prosecution submitted before the court that Akhondzada stabbed cart vendor Rampreet Yadav and his brother, Rajesh Yadav, after the seller asked him to pay on

Jan 2, 2019.

The court posted the matter for filing of the victim impact report (VIR) and other procedural documents on March 28. The arguments on sentencing would begin once the documents were submitted.

The court also convicted the accused under Foreigners Act for overstaying in the country and voluntarily causing hurt.



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Missing Green Nod Delays 4 Key Road Projects In City

PWD Writes To Forest Dept For Speedy Disposal Of Matter

Siddhanta.Mishra @timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Four major road infrastructure projects are facing delays because of lack of clearances from the city's forest department, Public Works Department officials have claimed.

The four projects are Barapullah Phase-III, Punjabi Bagh-Raja Garden elevated corridor and a flyover each at Nand Nagri and Anand Vihar. Together, these projects will cost approximately Rs 1,951 crore to the public exchequer. PWD is learnt to have recently written to forest department, requesting it to expedite the permissions to avoid an "increasing burden on the exchequer".

Responding to a query from TOI, a forest official said Delhi High Court had stayed felling of trees since Aug 31 last year.

"The projects in question got approval from UTTIPEC after obtaining consent from all stakeholders. During the planning phase of the project, representatives of forest department had not notified or recorded that the above-mentioned land fell in deemed forest area," wrote Shashanka Ala, special secretary, PWD, in her letter to forest department.

According to officials, Anand Vihar flyover came to a standstill after forest department received complaints of a few trees being illegally felled at the project site. Talks between PWD and forest officials were ongoing for past 2-3 months, but without any headway, an official said. The project involves construction of a flyover between Anand Vihar railway overbridge and Apsara Border. With the work yet to be completed, the area is marred by heavy congestion.

"It was not possible for PWD to know that the land was a deemed forest because a road already existed on that location. Accordingly, work

NO HOPE FOR NOW?

BARAPULLAH PHASE-III

Started in 2015 No. of trees to be transplanted after permission

274 Estimated cost of the Status project Was ₹1,068 CR supposed to

be completed in 2017 **PUNJABI BAGH FLYOVER**

Started in 2022 No. of trees to be ₹308 CR transplanted 39

Status | Was supposed to open in Jan-Feb 2024

ANAND VIHAR FLYOVER

₹334

CR

₹241

CR

Started in 2022 No. of trees to

be transplanted 75 Status | Was expected

2023 NAND NAGRI FLYOVER

to be completed in Dec

Started in 2023 No. of trees to be transplanted 118

Status | Expected to be completed in Oct 2024



was started on the stretch. The paved road, along with the right of way of 60m, is part of the road and is not a part of the deemed forest. In view of the above, it is requested that the agency be allowed to resume work at Anand Vihar to avoid time and cost overruns," the letter further stated.

Barapullah Phase-III, a project that has long been facing issues related to land acquisition and other hindrances, has also come to a stands-

till, with the permission to cut or transplant 274 trees awaited. The project envisages seamless connectivity between Mayur Vihar-I and Sarai Kale Khan, where the corridor will merge with existing Barapullah Phase-I and provide signal-free connectivity between east Delhi and AIIMS. Phase-III of the project, entailing the construction of a 3.5km-long

stretch, started in April 2015

and was to be completed in

Oct 2017. But it has yet to see the light of the day.

At Punjabi Bagh, the project was supposed to be completed in Jan this year. That dream remains distant, and the area continues to see heavy congestion. Similarly, in Nand Nagri, PWD had started construction work as per the original plan of building a 1.5km-long flyover comprising six lanes to make the route signal-free. But clearances from forest department are awaited here too.

HC implements SOP to deal with tree offence under DPTA

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New Delhi: In the absence of a standard operating procedure with Delhi forest department to act against a tree offence or a complaint under Delhi Preservation of Trees Act (DPTA), 1994, Delhi High Court has ordered a draft SOP to be implemented.

According to officials of forest department, tree activists and experts, Delhi didn't have a roadmap or protocol to be followed while dealing with tree offences so far. There were also no guidelines for an ordinary citizen to proceed with for protection of trees.

The order followed an old petition that led to submission of a draft SOP, prepared by forest officials and experts, in Delhi High Court in 2022. The SOP, now implemented but yet to be notified by Delhi govt, was accepted and implemented by HC, until the time Delhi govt notifies it or brings in amendments.

The single judge bench of Justice Jasmeet Singh stated that the SOP only sought to streamline the processes mandated under DPTA. It pointed out that the court had, earlier on July 13, 2023, highlighted the urgency of the matter as "GNCTD has no guidelines whatsoever for ordinary citizens and also there is no roadmap as to how they should proceed with respect to protection of trees and in implementa-

tion of DPTA". It stated that the SOP had been framed with only one aim that "the objectives of DPTA

are met on a regular basis". The order also pointed out that since July 2023, Del-

GREEN GUIDELINES

Delhi Preservation of Trees Standard Operating Procedure, 2023 implemented by HC

> Will help in responding against complaints under Delhi Preservation of Trees Act, 1994

Quick Response Teams (QRTs) to be formed. Will stop offence, collect evidence and detain suspects

Beat officer to record complaint, investigate, detain, send notices and take other legal actions

STEP 1

Forest control room

ensures response

(1) If response not

(3) If QRT also not

initiated, headquarters-

level QRT is dispatched

available, forest control

room will inform police

> Dedicated mobile app & website, forest stations and prosecution cell to be established

room or beat officer STEP 2

Divisional control room checks with beat officer for response If response not initiated, divisional QRT is dispatched

immediately Divisional control room to inform police if needed

ACTION

PLAN

On receiving complaint

via helpline and/or

website, notification to

be sent to forest control

room, divisional control

hi govt had been "considering the said SOP and only indicating that they are in on Saturday, stated. the process of implementing

the same". "For the said reasons, till the time the draft SOP is notified, respondent No. 1 (Delhi govt) shall implement Delhi Preservation of Trees Standard Operating Procedures, 2023, annexed with the petition... There is nothing adversarial as far as the draft SOP is concerned. The draft SOP shall be implemented in its true, letter, spirit and intent and, in case there is any objection regarding any of the clauses in the implemen-

tation, the respondent is at li-

berty to approach this court," the order dated Feb 23

When contacted, a senior forest department official said: "The draft SOP was designed so that there was no confusion among forest staff while handling a complaint related to DPTA... it also talks of basic tools needed such as wireless talkies while handling such complaints, just like police does."

The draft SOP, now implemented, considers that "trees provide substantial health, social and economic benefits and, therefore, their protection and preservation is essential to ensure preven-

collection kit, etc STEP 3 Beat officer informs divisional control room about the action (1) If beat officer fails to respond, range officer is intimated Beat officer may also call

divisional and forest control

rooms for urgent help

QRT & forest officials concerned

to be equipped with | Body

protector, wireless set,

public address system,

GPS set, handheld video

recording device, medical

kit, fire extinguisher, evidence

tion of urban heat islands, control of particulate matter, etc". It has thus constituted a chain of command, stressing on the formation of a quick response team and forest stations, and also elaborated on a standard procedure to be followed once a complaint is received under DPTA.

The SOP gives a list of important tools with which QRT and forest officials must be equipped, such as protective gears, GPS, wireless devices, cameras etc. and stresses on collection of evidences, investigation and even detention of offenders,

72 univs, including foreign institutes, at KK Luthra moot court

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Providing a platform for the exchange of ideas among budding legal minds, the Campus Law Centre at Delhi University hosted the KK Luthra Memorial Moot Court Competition on Friday, marking its 20th anniversary.

Established in 2005 in honour of the late Senior Advocate K.K. Luthra, this distinguished event continues to inspi-

re legal excellence. In total, 72 universities, including

and several colleges from India, partici-

pated this year. This year's Moot problem invites teams to explore the interplay of laws relating to international diplomatic relations and criminal investigation and procedure. Whiledoing so, the participants advanced their arguments on issues such as illegally collected evidence and disclosure

statements, among others. The chief guest for the event, Justice Hima Kohli, Judge, Supreme Court of India, reiterated the words of Thomas Jeffergeria, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Zimbabwe, the harder I work, the more I have of it."

Kohli, an alumni of the campus law centre, shared the skills to know as a professional. She said the lawyer should think carefully and then speak with confidence and not ramble on.

Suryaprakash V. Raju, additional solicitor general, Supreme Court of India, was the guest of honor. He advised the students to focus on the trial process, to marshal the facts, to know the law, and to know the judge. He advised participants and the students to do a local inspection of the scene of the event and to make a those from Singapore, Bangladesh, Ni- son: "Iamagreat believer in luck, and I find credible defence out of it to break the