

THE TIMES OF INDIA

INCLUSIVE OF DELHI TIMES (CIRCULATED ONLY IN DELHI NCR) | *APPLICABLE ONLY ON MONTHLY PURCHASE (IN DELHI NCR)

INDIA'S LARGEST ENGLISH NEWSPAPER



Soon after the Moscow terrorist attack, Russian forces launch an air barrage against Ukraine, including a missile that briefly crossed into Polish airspace, while Kyiv's forces strike two Russian ships off the annexed Crimean peninsula, P 14

International Astronomical Union working group for planetary system nomenclature approves name 'Shiv Shakti' for the moon landing site of Chandrayaan-3's lander. The name was coined by PM Modi soon after the historic touchdown in lunar south pole last Aug, P 6

BRO reopens Zoji La (pass), the main obstacle in Ladakh's lifeline via Srinagar, for vehicular traffic after 35 days of being under snow against 68 days last year — a record that reflects India's growing mountain road-building prowess, P 8

Rajasthan Royals (RR) skipper Sanju Samson equals Jos Buttler and Ajinkya Rahane for most fifty-plus scores for the franchise as he makes 82 n.o. off 52 balls and helps RR beat Lucknow Super Giants by 20 runs, P 15



Phone-tapping: LOCs against 2 former top cops

A day after two additional ASPs were arrested for their alleged roles in surveillance of CM A Revanth Reddy and other opposition leaders during BRS govt, Hyderabad police on Sunday issued look out circulars against former SIB chief T Prabhakar Rao and ex-DCP Radha Kishan in the case. P 6

2 women slip off Fbd platform, run over

Two women, aged 65 and 75, were crushed to death by a goods train after they slipped off a platform at Faridabad railway station Saturday. While the first lost her balance and fell on the tracks, her sister-in-law slipped trying to save her. P 2

46 years on, widow waits for pension

Orissa high court has given the Kendrapada district collector one month to make arrangements for the disbursement of family pension to Hara Sahoo, a 91-year-old woman whose husband, a school teacher, had died 46 years ago. P 6

Discounts on cars set to be back

Attractive discounts and rebates are likely to greet car customers in the new financial year, which may see muted growth and end of frequent price hikes with shrinking demand and inventories build-up at dealerships. P 13

HAPPY HOLI

Our office will be shut for Holi on Monday, so there will be no edition on Tuesday

Kangana, Cal HC ex-judge, Sita Soren, Jitin Prasada in BJP 5th list

Varun, Ashwini Choubey, Anant Hegde Dropped

Akhilesh.Singh @timesgroup.com

New Delhi: With BJP basking in the glory of fulfilling one of its oldest promises of building Ram temple in Ayodhya, Arun Govil, an actor who played Lord Ram in popular serial 'Ramayan', is in the fifth list of the party's 111 Lok Sabha candidates announced Sunday. Actor Kangana Ranaut, a staunch advocate of Hindutva, has been named from Himachal's Mandi, where she takes on Congress state president and incumbent MP Prabhakar Singh. In Jharkhand, BJP benched sitting MP Sunil Soren after announcing his name from Dumka earlier. He has been replaced by ex-CM Hemant Soren's sister-in-law Sita Soren, who recently shifted to the saffron camp. Among 14 new faces in BJP list of 19 from Bengal is Calcutta HC ex-judge Abhijit Gangopadhyay (Tamluk).

111 NAMES FROM 17 STATES

- ▶ Actor **Kangana Ranaut** fielded from HP's Mandi, her birthplace. **Arun Govil**, who played Ram in TV Serial 'Ramayan', is BJP candidate from Meerut
- ▶ **Abhijit Gangopadhyay**, who quit as Cal HC judge and joined BJP, to fight from W Bengal's Tamluk
- ▶ **Sita Soren**, JMM ex-MLA and sister-in-law of Jharkhand ex-CM Hemant Soren, to contest from Dumka (ST)
- ▶ UP minister **Jitin Prasada** (Pilibhit) and Atul Garg (Ghaziabad) replace sitting MPs Varun Gandhi and V K Singh respectively. Varun's mother **Maneka Gandhi** retained, to fight from Sultanpur

OTHER PROMINENT CANDIDATES: Jagadish Shettar (Belagavi), Dharmendra Pradhan (Sambalpur), Sambit Patra (Puri), Kiran Reddy (Rajampet), R K Singh (Arrah), Giriraj Singh (Begusarai), R S Prasad (Patna Sahib), Rajiv Pratap Rudy (Saran)

Jindal gets ticket hrs after quitting Cong

BJP fielded Naveen Jindal, chairman of Jindal Steel and Power Ltd, from Kurukshetra, hours after he switched over to the saffron party from Congress. The shift of Jindal, twice MP, is a blow to Congress as he was seen to be close to Rahul Gandhi. An accused in three 'Coalgate' cases, Jindal said he wanted to contribute to PM Modi's 'Viksit Bharat' dream. P 10

MP and Union minister Ashwini Choubey (Buxar) have been dropped. BJP has fielded the Kerala unit president K Surendra against Rahul Gandhi in Wayanad.

▶ **TMC defectors, P 16**

Phone charger sparks fire, 4 UP kids dead

Four children — Sarika (10), Niharika (8), Sanskar (6) and Anshu (5) — suffered severe burns and later died after a bed in their room caught fire due to a short-circuit caused by a mobile charger in Meerut on Saturday night. Parents Babita and Johnny rushed into the room to save their children, who were asleep, and sustained burn injuries in the process. P 6

Pak: Considering restoration of India trade ties

Pakistan's new govt may resume trade ties with India in deference to demands of local businesses, foreign minister Ishaq Dar said at the end of his Europe visit. Reacting to Dar's statement about ending the nearly five-year suspension of trade in protest against revoking of J&K's special status, India believes Pakistan must first reinstate its high commissioner. P 8

Vandalism in E Delhi area over rape of 4-yr-old

Pandav Nagar in East Delhi erupted Sunday following the rape of a four-year-old girl a day earlier. Police arrested Appu (34), who allegedly assaulted the girl — a student of his brother — in his house in Mandawali. However, rumours started swirling on social media about "police inaction", and soon local youths shouted slogans and vandalised cars. The girl is at AIIMS and is stable. P 4

Kejriwal's 'note' to Atishi from custody triggers ED probe

CM Directed Me To Resolve City's Water Issues: Min

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Even as opposition builds pressure on the Delhi CM to resign, Aam Aadmi Party signalled its strategy of not appointing anyone else to the post, with Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday issuing his first "direction" from Enforcement Directorate's custody. In a "written note", handed over via his lawyer to the chief minister's office, Kejriwal directed minister Atishi, who holds the water portfolio, to resolve water and sewer-related problems in some areas of the city; the party said. Reacting to the move, ED said it will probe the party's

Oppn to hold 'mega rally' on March 31

Opposition INDIA bloc will organise a "mega rally" at Ramlila Maidan on March 31 to protest against the arrest of CM Kejriwal. Addressing journalists along with AAP, Congress and Left functionaries, Delhi minister Gopal Rai said there was anger in the country over the arrest and PM Modi's "misuse" of central agencies. P 2

claim as no stationery is allowed for those in custody. Sources said Atishi will be questioned on the source of the purported "order", and who brought it and delivered it to her and when. Sources said the agency will verify the claim through CCTV footage.

▶ **Exchange barbs, P 2**

Left candidates sweep JNU student union polls

Shreya.Ghosh@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: The Left coalition again swept JNU Student Union elections late on Sunday, with its nominees or candidates supported by it winning all four top posts against the second-placed ABVP, after the elections had seen a 73% turnout, the highest in recent years. Dhananjay of AISA was elected JNUSU president, polling 922 votes more than Umesh Chandra Ajmeera of the RSS-affiliated ABVP. Dhananjay secured 2,598 votes as opposed to Ajmeera's 1,676. As in the recent past,

THE WINNERS

- ▶ **President:** Left candidate Dhananjay (AISA) wins, beats ABVP's Umesh Ajmeera
- ▶ **Vice-president:** Left's Avijit Ghosh (SFI) defeats ABVP's Deepika Sharma
- ▶ **General secy:** Left-backed BAPSA's Priyanshi Arya beats ABVP's Arjun Anand
- ▶ **Joint secy:** Md Sajid (SFI) defeats ABVP's Govind Dangi

major Left parties had contested the polls together under the banner of United Left.

▶ **4th sweep in a row, P 3**

IAF ex-chief Bhadauria in BJP on day VK leaves fray

New Delhi: Former IAF chief Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria joined BJP on a day former Army chief and two-time Ghaziabad MP V K Singh opted out of the Lok Sabha contest. Expressing gratitude towards the BJP leadership, Bhadauria said his most fulfilling years of service in the IAF were during the tenure of the BJP-led govt. Having retired in 2021, he lauded the past 8-10 years as a "golden period", commending the initiatives undertaken by the Modi administration to enhance self-reliance and modernise the armed forces. He highlighted that his new role presented an opportunity for him to contribute to the nation's development and progress. TNN

RETD GEN HANGS UP BOOTS

- ▶ **Union minister & 2-time MP from Ghaziabad Gen V K Singh (retd)** announces he won't contest polls. Party names Atul Garg as its candidate from seat
- ▶ **Former IAF chief ACM RKS Bhadauria (retd)** joins BJP, says his most fulfilling years of service in the IAF were during tenure of BJP govt

▶ **BJP govt best years, P 16**

7 of BSP's 25 nominees are Muslims; may hit Cong-SP

Lucknow: In a move that may adversely affect the prospects of SP-Congress combine on several minority-dominated western UP seats, the Bahujan Samaj Party fielded seven Muslim candidates out of 25 names it announced on Sunday. BSP released two lists Sunday. As many as 22 of the 25 names declared are for western UP seats. One of the key reasons for SP to forge a pact with Congress was to consolidate Muslim votes. "But if a Muslim candidate from BSP is able to take away a fraction of the Muslim votes, it'll dent chances of INDIA bloc," says an analyst. TNN

▶ **Solanki from GB Nagar, P 11**

JD(U) releases list of 16, drops 2 MPs

JD(U) dropped two sitting MPs and picked a pair of turncoats, both of whom joined the party recently, in a list of 16 Lok Sabha candidates announced on Sunday. P 10

TN MP tries to end life after denial of ticket

TN MP A Ganeshamoorthy of MDMK was critical after attempting suicide Sunday, triggering speculation he tried to end his life over being denied a ticket from Erode. P 10



S P Jain School of Global Management

DUBAI • MUMBAI • SINGAPORE • SYDNEY

Accelerate your career with an MBA from S P Jain Global

DISCOVER OUR DISTINCT MBA PROGRAMS TAILORED FOR PROFESSIONALS AT VARYING CAREER STAGES & ASPIRATIONS

Global MBA (full-time)

For professionals with 2+ years of work experience looking to elevate their global perspective, expand their network, and excel in global business environments.

AUDITED CAREER REPORT 2023

(Average pre-program CTC: 7.8 lakhs)

Average post-program CTC

32.1 lakhs

Average post-program salary increase

5-FOLD

54%

INTERNATIONAL JOBS

Remaining placements in TOP DOMESTIC COMPANIES

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- Study on-campus in Singapore (term 1), Sydney (term 2), and Dubai (term 3)
- Option to transfer to London at S P Jain London School of Management*
- Receive personalised career support across our global campuses
- Graduate with an Australian degree



Executive MBA (part-time)

For seasoned professionals with 3+ years of managerial experience aiming to enhance their leadership skills, and chart a path towards executive excellence, without interrupting their career.

STUDENT PROFILE 2023

Average in-class work experience

10 years

Senior management executives

74%

Geographic diversity

11 nationalities

COMPANIES OUR STUDENTS REPRESENT:

American Express, AXA, Citibank, DELL, Deloitte, Deutsche Bank, ExxonMobil, Google, HDFC, JPMorgan Chase, Maersk, Marriott Hotels, Netflix, Oracle, Standard Chartered, TCS, Tech Mahindra

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- Study online via Engaged Learning Online Technology (ELO) (Experience ELO: tinyurl.com/SPJainELO)
- Gain global exposure through immersion weeks in Dubai and Singapore
- Learn from international faculty educated at Harvard, Cranfield, London Business School, Cornell and Duke
- Graduate with an Australian degree

GLOBAL MBA: ADMISSIONS OPEN FOR OCTOBER 2024

For more information, contact: +91 77385 73615 | pg@spjain.org



Scan the QR code to start your application

EXECUTIVE MBA: ADMISSIONS OPEN FOR MARCH 2024

For more info, contact: +91 70454 53312 | embaindia@spjain.org



Scan the QR code to start your application

*We are offering students the unique opportunity to study in London at S P Jain London School of Management (SPJ London). SPJ London is a part of the S P Jain Group, but functions independently from S P Jain Global. | S P Jain School of Global Management Pty. Ltd. Provider Category: Institute of Higher Education. TEQSA Provider Identification: PRV12041. CRICOS Provider Code: 03335G | These programs are not accredited or approved by UGC or AICTE.



NGT seeks Delhi govt report on demarcation of Yamuna floodplain | 3

29.8° MAXIMUM
16.9° MINIMUM
FORECAST: Partly cloudy sky. Maximum and minimum temperatures will be around 32°C and 16°C
SUNRISE 6.16AM (TUE) MOONRISE 6.45PM (MON)
SUNSET 6.35PM (MON) MOONSET 6.45AM (TUE)

AQI IN DELHI ON SUNDAY (MODERATE CATEGORY)

MCD to take yet another shot at second phase of Heritage Park | 5



IT health score: 61% have high cholesterol, says study | 3

INDIA Bloc Plans Mega Rally On March 31 To 'Save Democracy'

Ramlila Maidan To Be Venue, AAP & Cong Share Stage To Announce Decision

Abhinav.Rajput@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: The Opposition INDIA bloc will organise a mega rally at Ramlila Maidan on March 31 to protest against the arrest of chief minister Arvind Kejriwal by Enforcement Directorate in the excise policy case.

Delhi minister Gopal Rai urged all spiritual, business and political groups to join the public meeting as a protest against "oppression by the ruling BJP" and to "safeguard the country".

Rai was addressing a press conference, along with ministers Atishi and Saurabh Bhadrwal and Congress leaders Arvinder Singh Lovely and Subhash Chopra. This is the second time that leaders of both parties were seen sharing the stage, the first being while announcing the alliance. CPM leader Rajiv Kumar was also present at the joint briefing at Constitution Club.

Rai said there was anger among people across the country over the way Kejriwal was arrested. "Delhi CM has been arrested by adopting dictatorship and ending democracy in the country. Every person who loves and respects the Constitution and democracy is angry. One by one, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is misusing central agencies to file fake cases against every opposition leader," he alleged.

Lovely claimed that democracy was in danger in the entire country. "When such a big attack is being launched on democracy, Congress won't take



Photo: Anindya Chattopadhyay

Arvind Kejriwal | CM
"I have learnt that there are significant water and sewage issues in some areas of Delhi. I am concerned about this. People should not suffer because I am in jail. Summer is approaching

Atishi | AAP minister
"I thought who else other than CM Kejriwal would be so concerned about Delhi's people in such dire circumstances... when he has been arrested and does not even know when he will be released from jail

Gopal Rai | AAP leader
"The way Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal has been arrested has angered people across the nation who love and respect the Constitution

"Where there is a shortage of water, arrange for tankers in adequate numbers. Give appropriate orders to officials, including chief secretary, so that people do not face any inconvenience. If necessary, also seek the cooperation of LG. He will also definitely help

Praveen Shankar Kapoor | BJP spokesperson
"Delhiites know it well that such melodramas will continue till the Lok Sabha polls, but this will not affect the mindset of people who have already decided to vote for BJP. People stand with development represented by PM Narendra Modi and reject the anarchic forces led by Arvind Kejriwal

Arvinder Singh Lovely | Delhi Congress president
"Democracy is in danger. Our leader (Congress MP) Rahul Gandhi is fighting to save democracy. We are standing strong with the partners of INDIA alliance

it lying down." He said Congress stood firm with all allies of INDIA bloc "in the fight to save the country's democracy with strength". He added: "This subject of sorrow and concern is not only for Congress, Aam Aadmi Party or INDIA bloc, but also for all Indians. Therefore, I want to appeal, especially to the youth of the country, to join in this fight for democracy." Lovely alleged that BJP-led central government didn't even want to give the opposition a "level playing field" in the elections and was not shying away from adopting any means for that.

"You arrest elected chief ministers like Hemant Soren and Arvind Kejriwal just before the elections. What kind of democracy do you want to bring in the country? This democracy reminds us of Rowlatt Act, in which there was no appeal, no lawyer, and no environment has been created in the country," he said.

Hitting back, Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva said, "If Kejriwal is innocent, why didn't he get relief from any court earlier and why is he not getting bail after arrest?" Sachdeva said most parties of the alliance, including Congress, were troubled by the investigations into scams from before 2014 or during the state governments' tenures. "For the past two years, Kejriwal has also been facing investigation and is under custody of the investigation agency, which has shaken the entire alliance," he claimed.

AAP, BJP exchange barbs after CM's 'note' to Atishi

Continued from P1

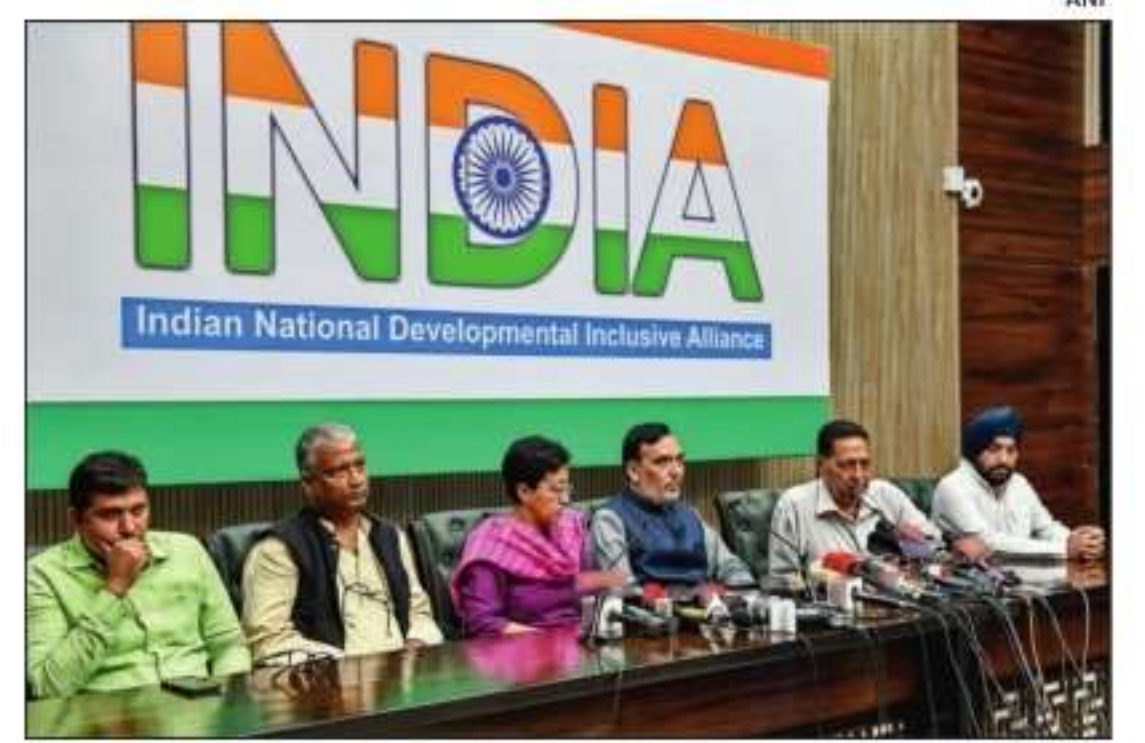
Earlier, Atishi revealed the contents of the CM's "note" to her. "I have learnt that there are significant water and sewage issues in some areas of Delhi. I am concerned about this. People should not suffer because I am in jail. Summers are approaching as well," Kejriwal wrote, as per the AAP minister.

Kejriwal, 55, was arrested by ED on Thursday from his official residence in connection with the Delhi excise policy case. A court on Friday sent the AAP national convenor to the central agency's custody till March 28. This was Kejriwal's first "communication" to a minister since then.

"Where there is a shortage of water, arrange for tankers in adequate numbers. Give appropriate orders to officials, including chief secretary, so that people do not face any inconvenience. The problems of the people should be addressed immediately and properly," the CM wrote, as claimed by Atishi. "If necessary, also seek the cooperation of the lieutenant governor. He will also definitely help," he added.

Sharing the details of the "note" at a press meet, Atishi said she had tears in her eyes as she read the instructions. "I thought who else other than CM Kejriwal would be so concerned about Delhi's people in such dire circumstances... when he has been arrested and does not know when he will be released from jail," she said.

"Without bothering about his own troubles, he is thinking about the water and sewer-related problems of the people of Delhi," she added. Atishi said, "I want to tell



AAP and Congress leaders at INDIA bloc press conference; AAP workers hang a banner that read 'Main Bhi Kejriwal' from ITO foot overbridge

the BJP that you can arrest Arvind Kejriwal, you can put him in jail, but you cannot imprison the love and responsibility he has for the people of Delhi. You cannot confine his dedication towards the people of Delhi."

Hitting back, Delhi BJP spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor said AAP leaders were "masters of gimmick" and Kejriwal's letter to Atishi was "nothing but a melodramatic effort to be in news".

The "letter" has intrigued ED officials. Kejriwal's personal assistant Bibhav Ku-

mar, who is already being probed for alleged destruction of evidence, including multiple handsets related to the alleged liquor scam, is also being questioned about the "order" issued on behalf of the office of the chief minister when Kejriwal is in custody. Sources said the ED probe would also cover the possibility of the "order" being taken out through one of Kejriwal's lawyers and his wife Sunita Kejriwal, who have met him in custody.

—With inputs from Abhinav Rajput

'Kejriwal won't resign, AAP will take orders from prison'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: AAP legislators, councillors and office-bearers assembled on Sunday to chalk out the future course for the party during which it was decided that the party will hold a 'Main Bhi Kejriwal' campaign.

The party scheduled its first meeting following the arrest of Kejriwal led by party's organisational general secretary Sandeep Pathak, who said: "It was decided that CM Kejriwal will not resign from the post, and ministers, MLAs and the party will continue to take his orders from jail."

He said: "Like Kansha knew his end will be in the hands of Krishna, Ravana knew that his end would come at the hands of Shri Ram, PM Modi also has this much understanding that his end will be brought by Kejriwal, which is why he started conspiring against him from the beginning."

He said the next step of BJP's conspiracy is to seek Kejriwal's resignation and after that break the party. "To arrest Kejriwal was in their hands, seeking help of ED and CBI, but now it is our job to counter that."

He asked party members whether

they felt that the arrest ordered by Modi was correct, should Kejriwal resign from the post of chief minister? Those present at the meeting said: "Sarkar chalegi jail se."

Pathak said: "On behalf of all volunteers, I request Arvind Kejriwal not to resign. The govt will run from jail."

Pathak said: "Earlier, we used to get orders from Civil Lines, now we will get orders from jail, and follow them."

He urged party leaders to organise zonal level meetings with MLAs and councillors to target 10 people from each booth to ensure they reach Ramlila Maidan on March 31.

Pathak said: "The Main Bhi Kejriwal campaign will start soon under which stickers will be pasted outside houses and on auto-rickshaws and hoardings. Those attending the rally should come with stickers of Main Bhi Kejriwal pasted on their vehicles."

Delhi BJP spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor said the meeting of party's elected representatives was a farce and Pathak's statement is political rhetoric being played to keep party intact. "To the best of my knowledge, not even half the party's MLAs and councillors turned up for the meeting."

AAP: Why is BJP silent on its ties with Aurobindo Pharma's Reddy?

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: AAP on Sunday questioned BJP's "silence" over its "relationship" with Sarath Chandra Reddy, whose companies allegedly donated Rs 60 crore to the saffron party through electoral bonds. Reddy of Aurobindo Pharma was arrested by the central agency last Nov in connection with the excise policy case.

There was no immediate reaction to the allegations from Delhi BJP.

Addressing the media, senior AAP leader and Delhi cabinet minister, Saurabh Bhadrwal, said: "Yesterday, we told everyone through the media how BJP secretly recovered donations amounting to around Rs 60 crore in the name of electoral bonds."

He added: "This is not an allegation of AAP against BJP. We have shown concrete proof. This is established on the website of Election Commission of India that BJP recovered do-

BHARADWAJ SAYS

This is not an allegation of AAP against BJP. This is established on ECI website that BJP recovered donations amounting to ₹60 crore from the prime accused in the alleged Delhi excise scam

nations amounting to Rs 60 crore from the prime accused in the alleged Delhi excise scam, Sarath Chandra Reddy, who was also titled as its 'kingpin', after his arrest," he said. Bharadwaj asked three questions of BJP at the press conference.

"The first question is how does BJP know Sarath Chandra Reddy? What is the relationship between them? How does BJP know the prime accused under PMLA? Which BJP leaders met him? When and where did they me-

et? What did they discuss before the transactions?"

The senior AAP leader further said that electoral bonds were not donated in vacuum. Electoral bonds couldn't be transferred directly to the accounts, but these were given physically to the party, he said.

"It is not that someone placed a bond of Rs 60 crore at their door, and BJP opened its office in the morning and suddenly saw 'Oh, there is a bond'. The accused must have given the bonds to someone in person, whether a minister or any chairperson," he said.

Bharadwaj said: "The second question is that why did BJP receive donations amounting to Rs 60 crore from Sarath Chandra Reddy through his companies?"

He added, "The third question: Why did BJP hide all these transactions from everyone? Why did BJP not disclose these facts to ED, CBI and the citizens of India, if it's not guilty?"

BJP, AAP carry out protests across capital, burn effigies

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Senior functionaries and party workers from both AAP and BJP carried out protest marches and indulged in effigy burning on Sunday.

Minister Atishi participated in a candle march in Govindpuri where effigies of BJP leaders were set on fire. INDIA Bloc candidate and MLA from East Delhi, Kuldeep Kumar, participated in a march at Ambedkar Park in Kondli. MLA Sanjeev Jha took part in a similar protest in Burari.

Atishi said: "Never in the history of the country has the national convenor of a national party been arrested just after the announcement of the elections. Its bank accounts have been frozen. For two days, roads leading to the office of AAP have been barricaded. All this is an attempt to stop opposition parties from contesting elections."

Atishi claimed that "even after two years of probe and hundreds of raids and deployment of thousands of officers, the investigating agencies haven't found a single penny of corruption from AAP. On the other hand, BJP received a donation of Rs 60 crore from a liquor businessman and the

party is silent on this".

Mayor Shelly Oberoi and minister Rajkumar Anand, along with AAP workers, also took out a candle march in West Patel Nagar. Earlier in the day, AAP workers demonstrated on ITO foot overbridge. The protesters, who hung a banner that read "Main Bhi Kejriwal" from the bridge, were removed from the spot by Delhi Police.

BJP workers, too, burnt effigies of Arvind Kejriwal across the city.

Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva led the protests at Connaught Place, while leader of opposition in Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri was seen at Mahipalpur and MP Manoj Tiwari at Nathupura.

Bidhuri, who is BJP's candidate from South Delhi, alleged: "Kejriwal is now being recognised as an evil. Therefore, this time it was decided to burn the evil of corruption on Holi." He added: "Kejriwal is unsuccessfully playing the sympathy card by putting forward his wife and family members, but the public has understood the reality."

He added that while the CM had been arrested in the excise policy case, investigations were on into alleged DJB scam and several other cases.

Mercury likely to rise further from today

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: A day after experiencing the warmest day of the year so far, some areas in the city saw traces of rain or drizzle on Sunday, which coupled with strong winds brought much-needed respite.

The maximum temperature on Sunday dropped by over three degrees Celsius. At the city's base station, Safdarjung, the maximum temperature was 29.8 degrees Celsius, two notches below normal, compared to 34.1 degrees Celsius a day earlier.

The minimum temperature was 16.9 degrees Celsius, the season's normal, compared to 16.2 degrees Celsius a day earlier. Lodhi Road and Ridge saw trace rain.

According to the weather department, temperatures will begin to rise on Monday.

The maximum and minimum temperature on Monday will hover around 32 and 16 degrees Celsius, respectively. By March 28, the maximum temperature may spike to 36 degrees Celsius. There may be respite again on March 29.

Meanwhile, the air quality improved to the 'moderate' category on Sunday. The AQI, on a scale of 0 to 500, was 194, against 232 a day earlier.

Safety derailed: Deaths while boarding trains surge

Abhay@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Data has shown a steep rise in deaths and injuries to passengers attempting to board trains at various stations across the city last year when compared to 2022.

Data shared by Railway Protection Force (RPF) showed that in 2023, 12 people died and 40 were injured while attempting to board trains at stations. This is higher than 2022, when there was just 1 death and there were 6 injuries.

New Delhi Railway Station saw the highest fatalities at eight. Anand Vihar Terminal, Adarsh Nagar, Old Delhi and Tughlakabad each reported one death last year. New Delhi Railway Station also recorded the most injuries at 29.

Shakur Basti followed with three, Delhi Kishanganj and Old Delhi each saw two injuries. Delhi Cantonment, Adarsh Nagar, Hazrat Nizamuddin and Delhi Shahdara Junction reported one injury each in 2023.

An RPF official said there were multiple reasons behind the accidents, including passengers reaching stations late and hurriedly trying to board running trains.

"Passengers who exited trains to buy items from platform stalls fell while trying to re-board as the trains departed," the officer said.

DEADLY TRACKS



| Deaths at each station | |
|---|--------|
| New Delhi Railway Station | 8 |
| Anand Vihar Terminal, Adarsh Nagar, Old Delhi, Tughlakabad | 1 Each |
| Injuries at each station | |
| New Delhi Railway Station | 29 |
| Shakur Basti | 3 |
| Delhi Kishanganj, Old Delhi | 2 each |
| Delhi Cantt, Adarsh Nagar, Hazrat Nizamuddin, Delhi Shahdara Junction | 1 each |

Causes of deaths and injuries
 > Reaching late for trains
 > Boarding the wrong train
 > Attempting to board a moving train or trying to get in after exiting to buy food or water

RPF's role
 > Conducting public awareness campaigns
 > Patrolling platforms during train departures
 > Enforcing regulations against trespassing

Boarding the wrong train and then attempting to alight while it's moving is another

cause for these accidents. Passengers disembarking from trains to fill water bottles at platforms taps and

then "rushing to board the moving trains" also suffer injuries, the officer added. Priyanka Sharma, senior

2 elderly women slip off platform at Fbd station, crushed by goods train

Mahesh.Buddi@timesgroup.com

Gurgaon: Two elderly women — aged 75 and 60 years — were crushed to death by a goods train after they slipped off the edge of a platform and landed on the tracks at Faridabad railway station on Saturday morning.

While Ramkali (65) lost her balance and fell on the tracks, her sister-in-law Murthi Devi slipped trying to hold her hand, officers in govt railway police (GRP) said.

The two women — one from Jind and another from Panipat — had come to attend a family function in Faridabad on Friday. On Saturday morning, they were waiting on platform no 2 to catch Gita Jayanti Express back home. Murthi Devi's brother Shaymlal — a retired postmaster — was accompanying them.

The train, scheduled for 7.30am, was running 30 minutes late. Ramkali, who was anyway standing too close to the platform's edge to avoid the crowd, peered out when she heard an engine approaching. "She didn't realise she had moved too close to the edge. Ramkali lost her balance and

fell off the platform. As she fell, Murthi Devi tried reaching out to her, but she slipped too. Before they could get up and move away, a goods train crushed them down," said Vishwas Gehlot, GRP sub-inspector at Faridabad station.

"The platform was crowded at that time. Ramkali was standing near the edge to

While Ramkali lost her balance and fell on the tracks, her sister-in-law Murthi Devi slipped trying to hold her hand, officers said

avoid the crowd. She was anyway anxious as the train was running late," he added. A GRP team rushed to the spot to tackle the crowd and prevent another untoward incident. The mangled remains were removed from the tracks.

"The bodies were sent for an autopsy. They were handed over to their families on Saturday," the SI said. Shaymlal lodged a complaint, following which a general diary entry was made under Section 174 of CrPC.

NDMC plans revamp of footpaths in Lutyen's Delhi

Vibha.Sharma
@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) is planning to reconstruct time-worn footpaths in Lutyen's Delhi. The council is conducting a detailed survey of areas to identify and finalise a list of such locations.

"While the work for improvement of dilapidated footpaths is a continuous process, NDMC now intends to do a comprehensive reconstruction of all damaged footpaths in its area. The task will be taken up in a phased manner, wherein contemporary design, technology, etc, will be used. We aim to introduce improved materials like permeable blocks which can enhance ground recharge in the future," said New Delhi Municipal Council vice-chairman Satish Upadhyay.

The project was approved in the budget for financial year 2024-25. Fund allocations would also be made to implement the task.

"On priority, the committee formed to do assessment on the ground will propose taking up footpaths not reconstructed or repaired for the last 10-15 years. All these footpaths will be constructed as per guidelines and in a uniform pattern. Eventually footpaths on other stretches will be taken up in the coming financial years," said an official.

Besides their uniform design, the council will ensure that the footpaths are made hindrance-free during their revamp.

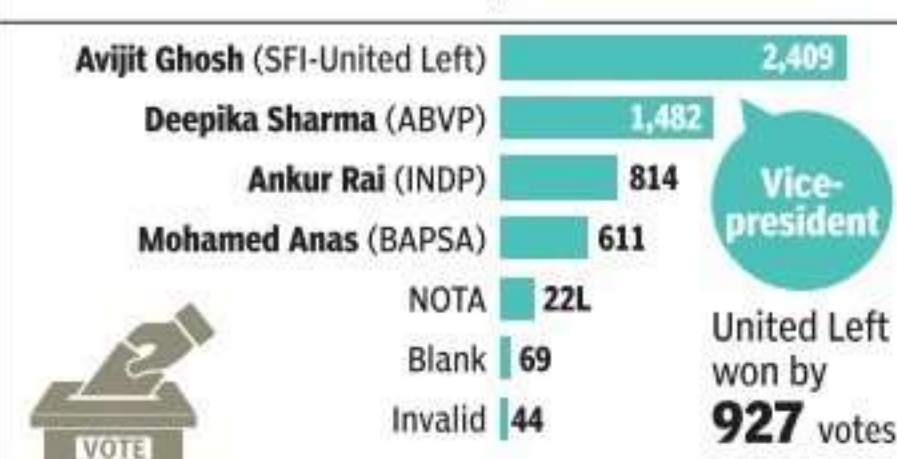
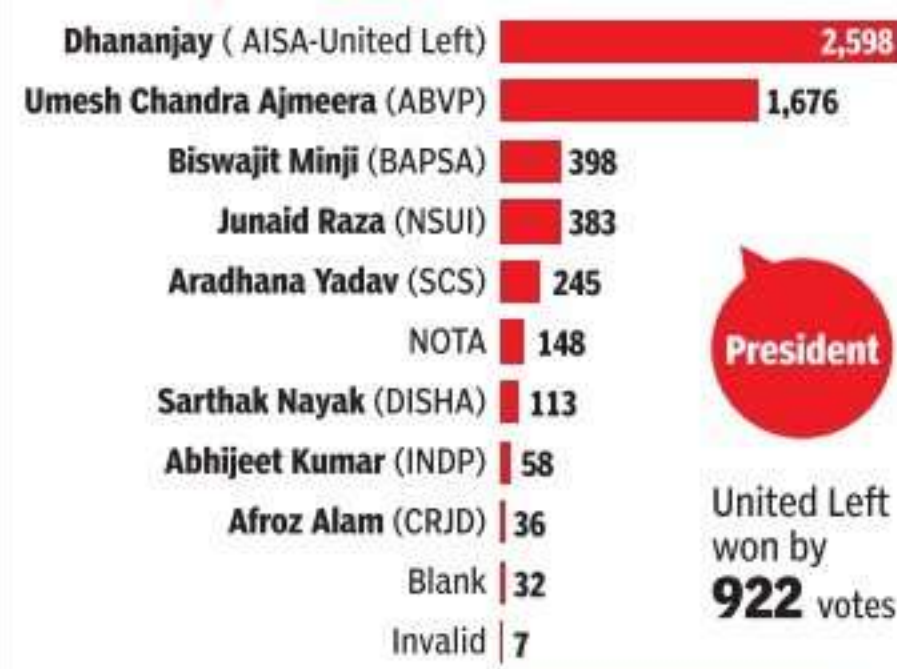
"As per the court's direction, we will remove any encroachment, signage and even electricity poles, etc, found to be installed in the middle of the footpath to make sure pedestrians can walk conveniently. These will have signs to guide, lights and other facilities," said the official.

The vice-chairman added that suggestions will be given to make designs for footpaths, central verge and side berms on NDMC roads — especially those close to India Gate (such as Connaught Place area) — similar to Kartavyapath, and use the same stone if possible. "This will give a uniform look to a majority of the areas," said the vice chairman.

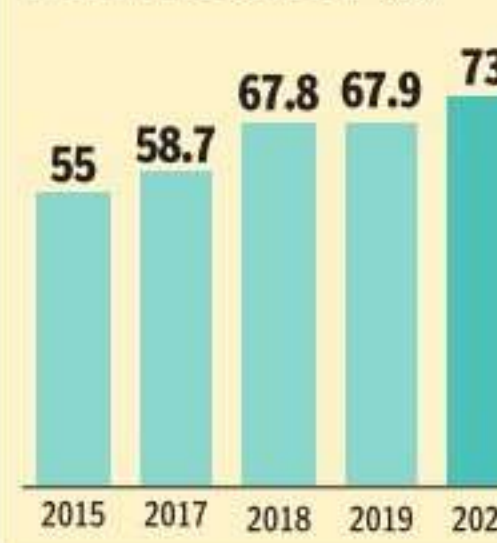
REPORT CARD

JNUSU CENTRAL PANEL

Final count | After 5,656 counted ballots



VOTER TURNOUT (%)



PAST RESULTS

2019
United Front of left student groups (AISA, SFI, AIFS, DSF) won all four central panel posts

President | **Aisha Ghosh (SFI)** with **2,313** votes
Defeated ABVP's Manish Jangid **1,128** votes

2018
United Left alliance retained all four seats

President | **N Sai Balaji** with **2,151** votes
Defeated ABVP's Lalit Pandey **972** votes

2019
United Left alliance secured victory in all four central panel seats

President | **AISA's Geeta Kumari** with **1,506** votes
Defeated ABVP's Nidhi Tripathi **1,042** votes



Winning candidates Dhananjay, Avijit Ghosh and Md Sajid

| General secretary | Joint secretary |
|---|-----------------|
| Priyanshi Arya (BAPSA*) | 2,887 |
| Arjun Anand (ABVP) | 1,961 |
| Fareen Zaidi (NSUI) | 436 |
| NOTA | 197 |
| Blank | 85 |
| Invalid | 90 |
| *United left supported Bapsa candidate won by 926 votes | |
| Md Sajid (AIFS-United Left) | 2,574 |
| Govind Dangi (ABVP) | 2,066 |
| Rupak Kumar Singh (BAPSA) | 539 |
| NOTA | 353 |
| Blank | 83 |
| Invalid | 41 |
| United Left won by 508 votes | |

Fourth sweep in a row for Left at JNU

Continued from P1

This is the fourth consecutive time since 2017 that the Left (or candidates backed by it) swept all four central panel posts of the student body, where elections were held for the first time since 2019.

For the vice president's position, Avijit Ghosh from SFI triumphed with 2,409 votes, beating ABVP's Deepika Sharma, who got 927 votes. Priyanshi Arya, a BAPSA candidate supported by United Left after its own candidate was disqualified hours before the voting, clinched the general secretary's post with 2,887 votes. Md Sajid (AIFS) was elected joint secretary by a margin of 508 votes. Sajid polled 2574 votes, ahead of ABVP's Govind Dangi (2,066).

The results were greeted with chants of 'Lal Salam' in the Left camp as students celebrated an early Holi with faces smeared in pink and red. Swati Singh, the Left's nominee for general secretary's post, sat on a hunger strike for over 32 hours claiming that her candidacy was revoked just hours before the elections.



NGT seeks larger, accurate data on Yamuna floodplain

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has asked Delhi govt to submit a report on the demarcation of Yamuna floodplains based on floods that occur once in 100 years. This will identify a much larger and more accurate area compared to govt's previous practice of using data of floods that can occur once in 25 years.

The tribunal bench headed by chairperson Justice Prakash Shrivastava pointed out that this will place on record the river's deepest flow into land. It has also asked the government to submit the standard operating procedure (SOP) followed by the NGT-constituted joint committee to do the demarcations.

The NGT has asked govt to submit a fresh report in three weeks.

Prof Shashank Shekhar from Delhi University's department of geology said, "The probable flood which in all likelihood will come once in 100 years is a mega event. It's the right way of demarcating any floodplain because this includes a larger area. Larger floods lead to the inundation of a bigger area. It will be genuine. That is the norm for defining floodplains. A flood that occurs once in 25 years might not be that big of a flood."

The order dated March 21 came after the tribunal in Oct 2023 took suo motu cognizance of the TOI report "Why Flooding Has Forced DDA's Master Plan Rethink".

The NGT, thus, formed a joint committee headed by Delhi

chief secretary to identify, demarcate and notify the floodplains of the Yamuna as per the River Ganga (Rejuvenation, Protection and Management) Authorities Order, 2016. It said that delineation of the Yamuna was required to prevent illegal developments in the floodplains. The committee had sought 12 weeks' time to submit the report.

NGT said it had clearly defined 'floodplain' to be "an area of the river Ganga or its tributaries which comes under water on either side of it due to floods corresponding to its greatest flow or with a flood of frequency once-in-hundred years."

On March 19, Delhi govt's environment department informed the tribunal that the process of demarcation was nearing completion. However, referring to Delhi govt's latest report, the tribunal sought more clarity.

"Nothing has been placed on record to show what criteria or SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) has been adopted for demarcation of floodplain or the contour intervals taken for demarcation of floodplain or the contour mapping which is done for that purpose. Therefore, prima facie it appears that no effective step till now has been taken for demarcation of the floodplain of river Yamuna for the stretch concerned, though an earlier order of the tribunal was passed in 2015," said the order, giving both Delhi govt and the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) three weeks to file a fresh action taken report.

Kamla Market To Get ₹1.2cr Makeover

Tower At Entrance, Common Area, Parking To Be Improved In Phased Manner

Vibha.Sharma@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has prepared a plan for revamp of Kamla Market in north Delhi and allocated a budget of Rs 1.2 crore for repairing the boundary wall, façade and clock tower.

The market's aesthetics, including signage, footpaths and overall layout, will be improved using white marble and the complex given a uniform look. The façade of the market will be developed along the lines of Connaught Place, said an official.

"The first phase of tender has already been invited for the project, which will include beautification, upliftment and renovation of the market. The tower installed at the entrance of the market,



HOW THE REVAMPED MARKET MAY LOOK LIKE

the common area and the parking facility will be improved in a phased manner," said the official.

"After the redevelopment,

the market's aesthetics, including signage, footpaths and overall layout, will be improved using white marble and the complex given a uniform look

form size and the façade across the market will have a uniform colour. The idea is to give a uniform look to the centrally located market," said the official.

Sites will also be identified for proper loading and unloading of goods.

The plan for the project was earlier prepared by the architecture department of MCD. The civic body has kept a budget of Rs 10 lakh for repair, painting and beautification of the clock tower, Rs 20 lakh for repair of the bound-

dary wall and Rs 90 lakh for the façade repair.

Kamla Market is situated next to Ajmeri Gate and came up in 1951. At the market, shops were allotted to the refugees who came from Pakistan during the Partition and the place was aimed at providing livelihood to the partition refugees. The market was inaugurated by the first president of India Dr Rajendra Prasad and it was named after the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's deceased wife.

After its establishment, the place became a hub for air coolers and later turned into a base for the city's goods transporters. However, because of lack of maintenance and encroachment, commuters find it challenging to walk in the market.

Youth chases and stabs 22-yr-old woman in northwest Delhi, held

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: A woman was chased and stabbed by a 22-year-old man in northwest Delhi's Mukherjee Nagar leaving her with injuries.

The incident took place on Friday. Police have arrested the suspect, who was identified as Aman. The girl was saved due to timely intervention of two passers-by. CCTV footage of the incident surfaced on social media on Sunday morning, sparking outrage. While police are still probing the reason behind the incident, they suspect that the accused wanted to avenge an insult. A stalking angle is also under investigation.

According to police, some students in Mukherjee Nagar used to make fun of the perpetrator and called him "crazy" as he used to keep wandering in the area aimlessly.

The accused told police that she also made fun of him,

VIOLENT STREAK

2024

JAN | A 19-year-old woman stabbed multiple times, her face smashed in Mayur Vihar. Police arrested her male friend

JAN | Man stabs woman 50 times in Shakurbasti for rejecting proposal of live-in relationship

2023

DEC | An 18-year-old boy murders a 21-year-old girl by stabbing her 50 stabs after online date goes wrong

OCT | A 23-year-old woman



FRIDAY'S ATTACK CAUGHT ON CAM

stabbed by stalker in Lado Sarai

SEPT | A 32-year-old woman stabbed to death

MAY | A 20-year-old man stabs minor girl over 20 times, smashes head with stone in Shahbad Dairy

which prompted him to pick up a knife from a nearby vegetable vendor and attack her in a fit of

rage. The woman who was attacked used to come to area to study in a library there. The

stabbing happened after an altercation between the woman and Aman, when she stepped out of the library to buy food. In the CCTV footage, the man can be seen running towards the woman and pushing her down to the ground, after which he stabbed her 4-5 times.

The woman did not receive grievous injuries as passers-by were quick to stop the man.

DCP (northwest) Jitendra Kumar Meena said that preliminary charges under section 324 of the IPC have been invoked for causing hurt by using dangerous weapons. Police stated that the accused was earlier also allegedly involved in teasing incidents. The victim, who lost her father earlier, was preparing for competitive examinations. The accused is stated to be a graduate, residing in Maurice Nagar, and is allegedly suffering from mental health issues.

Law student jumps to death into drain, blames 'sextortion call' in note

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Noida: A 25-year-old law student, who was allegedly being extorted by a gang that threatened to circulate his images and videos online, is believed to have jumped to his death into a drain in Greater Noida's Sector Beta-2 on Saturday.

The body of the man, a first-year student who worked part-time with a private firm, was found 2km from his house in Beta-2.

SHO of Beta-2 police station Munendra Singh said the student was reported missing by his family around 1pm on Saturday.

"The family told police that he was not at home when they woke up on Saturday morning. They thought he had gone out and would be back soon. They called him but he didn't take any calls. Later, they found his mobile phone in his room," the SHO said on Sunday.

The family also found a "suicide note", the SHO said, in which the 25-year-old wrote that some people were

threatening to circulate explicit photos and videos of him in a video call.

Singh said cops don't know how much amount the cyber frauds may have been trying to extort from the student.

"He received a WhatsApp video call from an unknown number on Friday night. Initial police investigation shows that he left his house around 4.30am on Saturday without informing anyone else," Singh said.

After the missing person complaint, police formed two teams to trace the student. "Around 5pm on Saturday, we got news that a youngster's body was recovered from a drain 2km from his house. Police called his family, and they identified his body. It was sent for a postmortem examination and reports are awaited," the SHO said.

Police did not receive any complaint from the family till Sunday evening.

"We will seize the deceased's mobile phone and laptop for investigation into the sextortion allegation," Singh said.

How's the IT health? Not good, sir, as 61% have high cholesterol, says study

Anuja.Jaiswal@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: About 77% of the 56,000 IT sector corporate employees in the age group of 25-40 years suffers from deranged values in several health parameters and 61% have high cholesterol, a clinical study conducted by HCL Healthcare has revealed.

The study was conducted on people working in the sector who underwent health checks and doctors' consultations at its onsite clinics.

The objective of this study was to underline the growing need for preventive care in the corporate spectrum of India. The clinical parameters studied included 8 key health conditions - obesity, prediabetes, diabetes, prehypertension, hypertension, anaemia, hypothyroidism and high cholesterol.

The study has revealed that high cholesterol (61%) tops the chart with nearly two-

The study was conducted on people working in the sector who underwent health checks and doctors' consultations at its onsite clinics

thirds of corporate individuals showing deranged values.

It is followed by obesity (around 22%), prediabetes (17%), hypothyroidism and anaemia (11% each), diabetes (7%), and then other health problems. The same individual can have more than one abnormal health condition.

It was also observed that nearly 44% of the younger population below 25 years of age also suffered from deranged cholesterol followed by anaemia (14%), obesity (13%), hypothyroidism (8%), and prediabetes (7%).

These chronic health conditions appear to be growing at a

rapid pace and with a higher prevalence among those with advancing age. "We see a considerable rise in the prevalence of these health conditions in the above-40 age group, with high cholesterol, obesity, pre-diabetes, and diabetes topping the list," quality data analysts said.

Only 23% of these employees had their health parameters within range. About 37% of the individuals who were studied had a single chronic health condition while 26% suffered from two conditions followed by 11% having three (comorbidities).

Doctors said that the above parameters make up a constellation of common lifestyle problems and noncommunicable diseases which mean that these conditions may have a common underlying cause and can co-exist in an individual. This is clinically called metabolic syndrome and requires timely intervention.

Shikhar Malhotra, vice-chairman and CEO of HCL Healthcare, said: "The data clearly shows the incidence of diseases and health abnormalities starting at a much younger age. The health issues that used to begin in the 40s have now shifted base to early 30s. Some fluctuations in health and vitality are normal, attributed to hormonal and metabolic shifts but what is concerning is the amplified stress and lifestyle-induced ailments that are becoming synonymous with such health issues now seen in the 30s."

He added that employers need to give access to basic health check-ups because early intervention in these conditions can help people control symptoms and find timely treatments. "Today, we suffer not just from health problems, but we suffer from a lack of awareness," he said.



AMUL DOODH PEETA HAI INDIA

Free HPV vaccine given to 135 survivors of sexual abuse

New Delhi: In a first-of-its-kind initiative in the country, a free HPV vaccination camp was organised in Okhla Phase-II for minor survivors of sexual abuse and girls from economically weaker families. Around 135 girls, aged 9-14 years, were vaccinated in the camp organised by India Child Protection Fund (ICPF), Dr BR Ambedkar Institute-Rotary Cancer Hospital (AIIMS), and Rotary Club, Delhi. ICPF took the initiative wherein a team of doctors, comprising Dr Sujata Pathak and Dr Prateek, administered the vaccines under the supervision of Dr Pallavi Shukla, assistant professor, preventive oncology, Dr BR Ambedkar Institute-Rotary Cancer Hospital. **TNN**

4-yr-old raped in east Delhi, mob vandalises cars

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: There was an uproar in east Delhi's Pandav Nagar area after a four-year-old girl was allegedly raped by a 34-year-old man in his house in Mandawali.

Police arrested the suspect after being alerted about the incident on Saturday.

However, rumours on WhatsApp and in locality about police "inaction" led a mob to create ruckus on Sunday. DCP East Apoorva Gupta said: "Rumours were spread that the girl's health was critical but this isn't true, her condition is normal. All legal proceedings are going on, medical (test) has been done and she is speaking well to the counselor. I appeal to the people to not fall for false information."

Outraged local people vandalised cars and shouted slogans. Police have controlled the situation and increased deployment.

The survivor was taken to Lal Bahadur Shastri Hospital from where she was referred to AIIMS for treatment. She is safe, police said.

Additional CP (eastern range) Sagar Singh Kalsi said that police got a complaint at Mandawali police station on Saturday. "We registered a case and the man was arrested. A rumour was spread that no action was being taken, so people gathered. There was some vandalism. Police reached the spot and the situation is peaceful," he added.

The suspect is the brother of the girl's tutor. The girl

used to go for tuition to the teacher's house. On Saturday, the tutor was not at home and she ran into his brother.

"The accused raped the girl on the pretext of teaching and threatened her with consequences if she revealed the incident to anybody," an officer said.

The girl went home crying and told her parents, who in turn approached police.

A case under sections of rape under IPC, besides POC-SO (Protection Of Children From Sexual Offences) Act was registered against the suspect. A team tracked him down on the basis of his mobile location. He was produced in court and sent to judicial custody.

Minister Atishi wrote to LG VK Saxena asking for strict action in the case.

"Article 239AA... gives you the responsibility for Police and Public Order. Kindly ensure that swift and strongest possible action is taken," she wrote.

"The victim has got medical assistance at AIIMS and is recuperating.... Her counselling is being done and criminal psychologists are attending to her. Experienced investigators are working on the case," a senior cop said.

"Requests shall be made for appointing a special prosecutor to present a robust case before the trial court and Delhi High Court shall be requested on the administrative side to assign the case to a fast-track court," a senior officer said.

HUES OF JOY!



Youngsters in a colourful mood on Holi's eve on Sunday. Delhi Traffic Police has increased surveillance across the city and set up checkpoints for the smooth flow of vehicles on Holi. In the New Delhi range, traffic police have deployed around 400 police personnel at 61 traffic points. Around 40 joint pickets have been set up with local police for the festival. Earlier on Saturday, traffic police issued an advisory on arrangements to check incidents of drunk driving, speeding and other violations

HC: Calling hubby impotent in front of others mental cruelty

Abhinav.Garg@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: To openly humiliate and call a husband impotent in front of others is mental cruelty, Delhi High Court underlined while granting divorce to a man and setting aside a trial court order denying him relief.

"We conclude that to be openly humiliated and called impotent by his wife in front of others and for the respondent to discuss their sexual life in the presence of family members can only be termed an act of humiliation causing mental cruelty to the appellant," a bench of justices Suresh Kait and Neena Bansal Krishna noted in a recent verdict.

The court was hearing a plea by a husband who had complained that despite the medical tests showing that the wife suffered from complications due to which the couple could not have a child, she blamed him.

The plea stated that after getting married in 2011, like any couple, the duo was interested in expanding their family. However, on account of medical limitations, no natural conception took place, and they had to resort to in vitro fertilization (IVF).

Unfortunately, despite having undergone IVF on two occasions, the couple was unable to have a child, due to which matrimonial differences started surfacing in their lives.

The husband alleged that his wife insulted him in front of her parents, sisters, and other family members by calling him impotent, without there being any basis or foundation.

"The appellant has claimed that false allegations of impotency were leveled against him time and again by the respondent even though he was perfectly fit and capable of establishing a physical relationship for mutual co-habitation," the court noted.

While the wife denied the allegations, she claimed that she was subjected to dowry harassment. But the court found no evidence to back her claim and noted that, apart from bare allegations, "there is no cogent evidence produced by the respondent to corroborate her allegations of dowry harassment. She has not been able to prove any conduct of the appellant or his family members from which it could be inferred that she has been subjected to cruelty on account of having brought less dowry."

The court concluded that after two failed IVF procedures, the wife became disgruntled and went away to her parental home. "Such withdrawal of the respondent from the matrimonial relationship unilaterally without any reason or basis, thereby depriving the appellant of conjugal bliss, since Oct 2013 till date, can only be inferred as an act of cruelty," it added.

'Employment mela' signals change at work places in city

Ambika.Pandit@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: A transman who hails from the small city of Chhabra in Rajasthan, Sarvagya Soni has overcome the odds to make it to a managerial role in Varun Beverages, the largest franchisee of PepsiCo in India. A year into his first job at their Gurugram headquarters, Sarvagya was seen confidently steering discussions with prospective job applicants as one of the representatives from many leading companies who participated in the 'Trans-Employment Mela' held in the national capital.

Held on Friday in Dwarka, the 'employment fair' saw youth from the transgender community come together, uninhibited, seeking jobs that hold the promise of letting them live a life of dignity.

As the applicants moved from stall to stall sharing their biodata and discussing job roles, it was evident that despite challenges like lack of family support and social acceptance, educated TG persons are coming out to seek better opportunities to live independent lives.

More than 20 companies, including Procter & Gamble, Varun Beverages, Vedanta, Capgemini, Deloitte, Shopper's Stop, Publicis Sapient, Ericsson, EY Foundation, Accenture, The Lalit and Roop Auto were seen actively engaging with applicants in interactions, interviews, and networking sessions, fostering an environment conducive to career exploration and advancement.

Over 227 candidates from the transgender community registered at the mela hosted by voluntary organisation TWEET Foundation and InHarmony - a diversity and inclusion advisory firm working to create inclusive workplaces in collaboration with the ministry of social justice and empowerment (MoSJE).

Speaking at the event Dr R Giriraj, deputy director at the MoSJE's National Institute of Social Defence, highlighted the importance of having events like the 'Trans Employment Mela' as it offers an exclusive job platform for the community.

As this correspondent walked past the stalls, one saw Sarvagya guiding applicants on the job prospects at his company in roles



GETTING A FAIR CHANCE

ranging from sales to technical work. On how inclusive workplaces are critical, he shared that when he was offered the job one of the key concerns for him was whether he will be able to use the male washroom. "My company was very supportive and now we are building washrooms in different operations keeping in mind the needs of trans persons," he added.

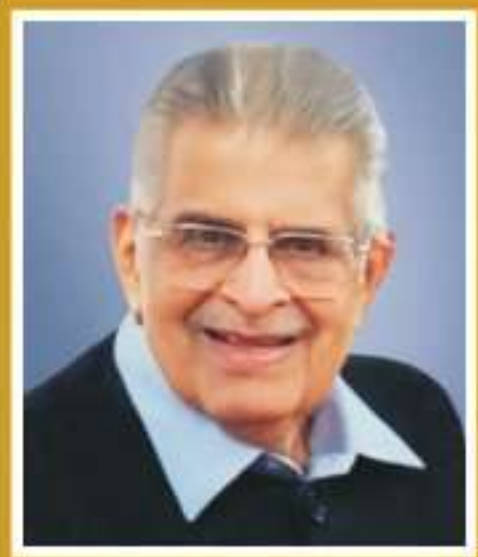
A graduate in history from Delhi University, Prerna Kumari identifies as a transwoman and hails from Meerut. She is currently working in a private company in Gurugram. "The place I work in claims to be inclusive but in reality I don't feel included. Despite my repeated requests the officials continue to refer to me by the name of the gender I was born with and not the name that I identify with. This is affecting me emotionally and so I am looking for a job that is truly inclusive and gives me dignity," she added.

There were also some highly qualified transgender persons at the mela like Neha Sharma who came from Haryana's Yamuna Nagar in search of a job. Holding an M.Tech degree, this mechanical engineer has worked as a teacher and in the corporate sector too.

Cases like that of Hansini illustrate that a transformation in outlook is underway. The Nagpur resident is currently pursuing her studies in Delhi and was at the job fair to understand the prospects for a young trans woman going forward. "I have the full support of my parents who accepted my identity but also organised a 'naming ceremony' recently where all relatives were present. Now I am Hansini for everyone," the confident transwoman shared.

TIMES TRIBUTE To book your ad Login to: ads.timesgroup.com or Call: 18001205474 (Toll Free) QR

Prayer Meeting



**WITH PROFOUND SORROW
WE ANNOUNCE THE SAD DEMISE OF
Shri Ashok Bhatnagar**
Former Chairman, Railway Board
on 23rd March, 2024 at Delhi

Prayer Meeting
will be held at Railway Officers' Club
Sardar Patel Marg, Chanakayapuri, New Delhi
from 5 - 6 P.M. on 26.03.2024

— In Grief —

Vijaya Lakshmi Bhatnagar (Wife)
Anukool & Sangeeta Bhatnagar (Son and Daughter-in-Law)
Suruchi & Madhav Lal (Daughter & Son-in-Law)
Anamika & Shri Manoj K. Akhouri (Daughter & Son-in-Law)

Astha, Ishan, Lavanya & Dinesh, Saumya
M: 7814300700, 9811077335, 9818264608

Forever in our hearts
Manju Rajpal




22nd June, 1946 - 24th March, 2024
With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of
Manju Rajpal, wife of Ramesh Rajpal, beloved mother & adored grandmother.

Cremation Venue: Lodhi Crematorium
Date: 25th March, 2024
Time: 4pm

Grief stricken, Ramesh Rajpal (Husband)
Rohit Rajpal (Son), Rahul Rajpal (Son), Rohan & Namrata Rajpal (Son and Daughter-in-law)
Rehan Rajpal (Grand son), Saisha Rajpal (Grand Daughter)
Serah Rajpal (Grand Daughter), Chopra Family
& Staff at Home, (Manjula Farm, Chattarpur, New Delhi)
Staff, Exotique Group of companies

Prayer Meeting
Wednesday 27th March, 2024
Time: 4pm to 5pm
at Chinmaya Auditorium 89 Lodhi Road, New Delhi

"HONOUR. COURAGE. BRAVERY." Three words that help us cope with your loss.
The silent joy of remembering a loved one. The moments you shared together. Little moments that make life beautiful. Share them. With Friends. Relatives. Neighbours. Colleagues. With all those whose lives the departed Soul has touched. Because while life goes on, when you share memories, they stay on forever.

| Publications | Total Outlay | SPACE FOR PHOTO |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| The Times of India (Delhi/NCR) | 5,600 | Yes |
| TOI-NBT (Delhi/NCR) | 8,800 | Yes |
| TOI+ET (Delhi/NCR) | 6,600 | Yes |

Maximum 10 lines

REMEMBRANCE
SHARING MEMORIES

For any information call
Vinod : 9958992088
Pankaj : 8130604727

TIMES TRIBUTES
RATE CARD

| Publications | Rates per sq. cms |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| TOID Capital + NBT (Delhi+NCR) | 1295 |
| TOID Full Run ## + NBT (Delhi+NCR) | 1360 |
| THE TIMES OF INDIA (Delhi+NCR) | 780 |
| THE TIMES OF INDIA (Delhi) Full Run## | 900 |
| NAVBHARAT TIMES (Delhi+NCR) | 595 |
| THE ECONOMIC TIMES (Delhi+NCR) | 715 |
| SANDHYA TIMES (Delhi) | 100 |

► Placement on specified obit pages only ► This rate benefit is extended up till the size of 320 sq. cm only ► ## Full run includes Delhi City + NCR (Including Gurgaon + Noida) + Chandigarh + Western U.P. + Uttarakhand ► TOI Capital (Delhi + NCR) Includes TOI Gurgaon & TOI Noida.

To place an Obituary announcement or Remembrance message please call
Vinod: 9958992088
Pankaj : 8130604727

In Loving Memory of



Smt. Kamlesh Magu
13.08.1946 - 25.03.2014

"A life well lived with dignity & honour"
We love you and miss you much more with each day that passes by. May God be with you always and bless you with eternal peace.

Deeply missed and fondly remembered by:
Dr. S.P. Magu (Husband)
& Other family members
Deepa & Sanjay Kakar
Sangeeta & Rajneesh Gandhi
Anita & Ajay Oberoi
Management & Staff
Jyoti Apparels

OBITUARY

REMEMBRANCES



Brig DKN Soni
You have forever nurtured, led and guided us, always inspiring and loving, our solid rock! We sense, feel you everywhere, all around us, blessing us, love you and miss you! Sonis, Chopras, Children, Grandchildren and Great-Grand-daughter.



ANKITA BIBRA
(06.08.1996 - 25.03.2018)
A heart of gold stopped beating, two shining eyes at rest. God broke our hearts to prove, He only takes the best.
Missed & Remembered by:
Family



SHRI KHATAR PAL SINGH MARWAH
(30.01.1930 to 26.03.2023)
Fondly Remembered by
Samar Kant & Geeta Marwah (Son & Daughter-in-Law)
Tony & Alka Marwah (Son & Daughter-in-Law)
Anita & Anil Malhotra (Daughter & Son-in-Law)
GRAND CHILDREN
Saloni & Vishal Minhas, Mohit & Saumya Marwah, Nimai & Aishwani Bhatt, Vishwani & Nikunj Biyani, Nikhil Marwah
GREAT GRAND CHILDREN
Taarika, Anisha, Inaya, Miraya.
9810510885
Phone:- 9810170671

To place an Obituary announcement or Remembrance ad

Call - Vinod :
9958992088
Pankaj :
8130604727



Scan QR Code

REMEMBRANCE

First Death Anniversary



Ram Ram Daddy Ji
First Death Anniversary

To place an Obituary announcement or Remembrance ad

Call - Vinod :
9958992088



Scan QR Code

To place an Obituary announcement or Remembrance ad

Call - Vinod :
9958992088
Pankaj :
8130604727



Scan QR Code

From Glory To Garbage: Buildings In Old Delhi Tell A Tale of Neglect

Trash In And Around Structures, Residents Say MCD Unwilling To Clear Mess

Vibha.Sharma@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Many old buildings are lying vacant and in decrepit conditions in old Delhi's Dariba Kalan. The mounds of garbage dumped in and around such structures have become a nuisance for other residents, who claimed the Municipal Corporation of Delhi was unwilling to get these spots cleaned up. Civic officials, in turn, argued that they were not responsible for clearing the muck. "The sanitation staff can book the house owner. The court issues a challan and the magistrate decides the amount of penalty to be levied," said an official.

According to one estimate, at least a quarter of the houses in old Delhi are fully or partially empty and have accumulated waste and detritus. TOI inspected some properties in Gali Guliyan and Gali Anar connecting with Kinari Bazar and found they were indeed tainted by garbage heaps.

Vijay Goel, former Union minister, said there were around 554 buildings in the Walled City that were considered to be of heritage status under Section 23 of Delhi Building By-laws. "Today, most of them are either dilapidated, vacant or being misused," Goel claimed. "This is because there is no law in place for mandatory restoration of the structures. Due to official negligence and disinterest of owners, no efforts are made to revive them despite their historic relevance."

Goel, pointing to a poorly managed property on Anar Gali, continued, "My haveli,



Photos: Tarun Rawat

Dharmapura, and other restored buildings get foreign tourists and it is important to

ensure the surroundings look neat and clean. I take personal interest in this and use

my own resources for the purpose. But how many worry about the pride for our city?

MCD to take yet another shot at 2nd phase of Heritage Park

Vibha.Sharma@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) is making a fifth attempt to begin work on the long-pending phase II of the Heritage Park project, opposite Red Fort.

The civic body plans to raise the boundary wall around the identified site on priority. The land is encroached or used for parking and the last four attempts to finalise an agency for doing the work remained unsuccessful.

"In the last four tenders, due to poor (single bid received) or no response, work could not materialise. Now, we have called fresh tenders from interested parties for the fifth time on March 8 and it will be open on March 26. The total length of the boundary wall will be around 150 to 200 metres and the cost of the project is Rs 2.2 crore (approximately). At present, a parking lot is there near the site," an official said.

Officials said that the design for phase II of the project was finalised and it will be on similar lines as Phase I of the Heritage Park. In March 2022, former President of India Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated Phase I, developed by erstwhile north corporation.

"Conceived in 2017, the park was proposed to have a beautiful boundary wall with rich carving on red stone, Mughal Baradari, Delhi quartzite stone and iron grilles, among other features. These features are included in Phase I and Mughal-style baradari is the main attraction," an official said earlier, adding that the total cost of developing two phases was Rs 17.68 crore.

Former Union minister Vijay Goel, who claimed to have made efforts in pursuing MCD to convert the site from a shambles to the Heritage Park, stated that the civic body was dilly-dallying on the project for 45 years even when they had the funds.

"It was encroached upon badly when we started the journey around seven years back. From getting the site cleared to arranging funds from many MPs (including KTS Tulsii, Parvez Hasmi, Roopa Ganguly, Swapan Das Gupta, Karan Singh and Mahesh Jethmalani), who came forward to help across party lines, we took several steps to add grandeur to



Tarun Rawat



WAITING FOR A MAKEOVER

The civic body plans to raise the boundary wall around the identified site on priority. The land is encroached or used for parking and the last four attempts to finalise an agency for doing the work remained unsuccessful

The place is surrounded by Jama Masjid, Red Fort and Jani Mandir, which will make it even more attractive for visitors once both phases are developed, local people said.

Between Part I and II of Heritage Park, there used to be a water body belonging to Delhi Development Authority (DDA). It is encroached upon now. There was a plan to rejuvenate it. On being asked, MCD said that correspondence had happened with DDA for developing the water body. "Also, there are Mughal era fountains between the Phase I and II sites, which will be restored whenever funds are available," an official said.

At the Phase I site, food stalls were supposed to be made for people to savour the delicious cuisine of Chandni Chowk and check out handicrafts of Old Delhi. But this part of the project was not implemented. The park remained shut most of the time, local people said.

this place. We even got encroachment removed from the Phase II site, but now things are the back to the same situation. Rather, a wall was demolished to allow parking here," Goel, who was the first to contribute funds, said.

The Heritage Park is named after Goel's father Chhatralal Goel, the first speaker of the Delhi Legislative Assembly and deputy mayor of the municipal corporation.

Four arrested with 'hawala' money near Subroto Park, ₹3 crore seized

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: In what is being termed as a major recovery of hawala money, Delhi Police have apprehended four people who were transporting Rs 3 crores near Subroto Park on Friday.

Two scooters were intercepted by cops during routine patrolling near Jharrera flyover on National Highway 48.

During police inspection, two black bags with plastic seals were confiscated, inside which large stacks of money was found. The accused told police that the cash was 'hawala money' and belonged to a scrap dealer in north Delhi's Shahdara.

The income tax department and election flying squads have also been informed of the developments.

The accused were identified as Mohd



HUGE HAUL

Shomeen (26), Jishan (27), Danish (22) and Santosh (22). All of them are residents of Shahdara.

On inquiry, the four accused told police that the bag contained a total hawala cash of Rs 3 crores which belonged to one Mohd Wakil Malik who works as a

scrap dealer in Shahdara. The accused could not show valid documents regarding the cash.

A senior police officer said that the money was being transported from Gurgaon to Karol Bagh and that the accused worked under Mohd Wakil Malik.

The four of them were held briefly by the cops after which their custody along with their mobile phones were handed over to the income tax department.

Police said that the I-T department will initiate appropriate legal proceedings to book a case against the accused.

Fire at Narela factory

New Delhi: A fire broke out at a footwear raw material manufacturing factory in Bhorganh, Narela Industrial area. A fire call was made at 12:02pm to the fire department urging for assistance. 26 firefighting units - with over a hundred firefighters - responded immediately to douse the flames. No fatalities or injuries have been reported. The cause of the fire remains unknown. TNN

Clean dhalao in Jangpura in 60 days, NGT directs MCD

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has asked the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) to ensure that all dhalao or garbage collection points in Jangpura Extension are cleaned within sixty days.

The order came after a Resident Welfare Association (RWA) shared pictures earlier this month of the three dhalao that the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) claimed in Jan to have cleaned.

The RWA stated that garbage was not being managed properly, and thus was lying scattered and causing pollution and health hazards.

The NGT directed the DPCC to inspect the area after sixty days, and if the area was not found clean, DPCC shall take appropriate action against the MCD.

The tribunal bench headed by chairperson Justice Prakash Shrivastava stated that while the DPCC claimed in its report that the problem had been remediated, the photographs shared by the applicant (RWA) show otherwise. The bench also granted the MCD 60 days to set up a compact transfer station for the dhalao.

"Photographs that are enclosed along with the objections dated March 3, 2024 filed by the applicant reveal that household garbage is lying scattered in these dhalao, meaning thereby there is violation of norms not only by the individual household but also by the MCD. Hence, if the needful is not done by the MCD within 60 days, DPCC will inspect all the three dhalao on the 61st day from today. If any violation is found, DPCC will take appropriate action expeditiously for imposition of environmental compensation on the MCD," stated the order dated March 18.

WITH **Education+TIMES.COM**

ALL ROADS LEAD TO EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

The all-new EducationTimes.com is here to change the way you pursue academics. Get access to a wide range of content/resources with this comprehensive education and career portal. And take your future towards the right direction.

THE NEW EducationTimes.com OFFERS:

- All-new website with improved UI/UX
- Vast listing of Counsellors
- Recent college placement reports
- Access numerous Webinars/Events
- Dedicated Q&A section

Scan the QR code to visit EducationTimes.com

Visit **Education+TIMES.COM** Today

RBI

RETAIL DIRECT SCHEME

Visit: <https://rbiretaildirect.org.in>

Invest directly in Government Securities

Including

- Treasury Bills
- Sovereign Gold Bond
- Floating Rate Savings Bond, 2020

- Zero Brokerage and no other fees
- Easy and convenient mode of payment

RBI Kehta Hai...
Jaankaar Baniye, Satark Rahiye!

Call 1800-267-7955 or +91-22-61546335 for more information: 10 am - 6 pm (Monday - Saturday)

Write to us: support@rbiretaildirect.org.in

Issued in public interest by

भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक
RESERVE BANK OF INDIA
www.rbi.org.in



RAJNATH PLAYS HOLI WITH TROOPS, SAYS LADAKH IS INDIA'S 'CAPITAL OF COURAGE AND BRAVERY' | 8



T'GANA EX-CM KCR'S NEPHEW & MP J SANTOSH RAO BOOKED IN ₹40CR HYDERABAD LAND-GRAB CASE | 16

For 46 years, Odisha widow, now 91, waiting for pension

HC Gives District Collector 1 Month To Disburse Entitlement

Lalmohan Patnaik
Cuttack: Orissa HC has given Kendrapada district collector Suryawanshi Mayur Vikas one month to make arrangements for the disbursement of family pension to a 91-year-old woman whose husband, a school teacher, died 46 years back.
 The direction comes four months after HC asked the Kendrapada district collector to sanction family pension to Hara Sahoo, whose husband passed away on Aug 26, 1977. The court asked for release of the pension from the date of entitlement "along with arrears within a period of two months from the date of receipt of order". The order was passed on Nov 15, 2023, but the woman did not receive her pension.



The direction comes four months after HC asked the Kendrapada district collector to sanction family pension to the woman 'within a period of two months from the date of receipt of order'. As she did not receive her pension, she filed a contempt petition

After she filed a contempt petition, single judge bench of Justice Biraja Prasanna Satapathy said on Friday, "This contempt petition is disposed of by granting one-month further time to the contemnor to comply with the order." He warned, "If the order is not complied with within the extended time, it will be held as deliberate violation of this court's order."
 The elderly woman stays with her son, a 60-year-old retired fisheries department employee, daughter-in-law, three grandsons and two granddaughters at Palei Derakundi in Kendrapada district.

As per case records, she has filed several pleas to the school and mass education authorities in Kendrapada since 1991, but in vain. On Aug 21, 2023, the Kendrapada district collector rejected her representation for family pension, gratuity, and other service benefits on the ground that the case was not eligible for family pension as the scheme was introduced in 1980-81, while the husband died in 1977.
 The woman filed a petition in HC on Oct 19, 2023. The court quashed the Kendrapada collector's order and said, had the husband been alive he would have retired in 1983, making him eligible for the pension scheme.

AGRA'S HOLI PRELUDE: COLOURS UNLEASHED



People play with colours a day before Holi in Agra on Sunday. On the eve of the festival, President Droupadi Murmu and PM Narendra Modi extended greetings to the people. 'May this traditional festival, ornamented with colours of affection and harmony, bring new energy and enthusiasm into all your lives,' the PM said in a post on X. **Mughal emperors celebrated Holi as 'Eid-e-Gulabi', P9**

Chandrayaan-3 landing site now officially called 'Shiva Shakti'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK
Bengaluru: Nearly seven months after PM Narendra Modi announced that Chandrayaan-3's landing site will be called "Shiva Shakti", International Astronomical Union (IAU) approved the name on March 19.
 "The IAU Working Group for Planetary System Nomenclature has approved the name Station Shiv Shakti for the landing site of Chandrayaan-3's Vikram lander," said Gazetteer of Planetary Nomenclature, which provides information about planetary names approved by IAU.
 Modi had made the announcement at the Isro Telemetry Tracking and Command Network (Istrac) in Bengaluru on Aug 26, 2023, three days after Vikram's historic Moon landing on Aug 23.
 "...In Shiva, there's resolution for humanity's welfare and Shakti gives us strength to fulfil those resolutions. This Shiva Shakti Point of Moon also gives a sense of connection with the Himalayas to Kanyakumari," Modi had said.
 According to Gazetteer, the origin of the name is defined as: "Compound word from Indian mythology that depicts the masculine ("Shiva") and feminine ("Shakti") duality of nature."
 Fifteen years before the Chandrayaan-3 soft-landing, India's Chandrayaan-1's moon impact probe (MIP) had touched the lunar surface on Nov 14, 2008. The site was called "Jawahar Point" or "Jawahar Sthal", as notified to IAU.
 Terming the "touchdown moment" one of the inspiring moments of this century, Modi said the world had witnessed and accepted the strength of India's scientific spirit and scientific temperament. Isro chairman S Somanath had said: "The PM was emotional about this historic event and all of us are very happy to know the naming of the two sites."

4 dead, 11 hurt as truck rams tractor-trolley

Bareilly: Four people, including three women, were killed, and 11 sustained injuries after a stationary tractor trolley was hit by a speeding dumper truck in Rampur on Saturday night, reports **Kanwardeep Singh**. All victims hailed from a village in Bareilly and were returning home from a function in Moradabad.
 According to tractor driver Vikram Singh, the vehicle had run out of fuel, prompting him to park it by the roadside to refuel. The incident occurred near Bypass Road on the Delhi-Lucknow National Highway in Milak area.
 SHO Milak police station, Dhananjay Singh, said, "An FIR has been filed against the truck driver under sections 304A (causing death by negligence) and 279 (rash driving) of the Indian Penal Code. The driver is currently at large."

LOCs issued against T'gana's 2 ex-top cops in snooping case

Srinath.Vudali@timesgroup.com
Hyderabad: A day after two additional SPs were arrested for their alleged roles in surveillance of chief minister A Revanth Reddy and other opposition leaders when BRS was in govt in Telangana, Hyderabad police on Sunday issued look out circulars (LOCs) against former Special Intelligence Bureau (SIB) chief T Prabhakar Rao and former deputy commissioner of police (task force) Radha Kishan in the case. "As they are not available, LOCs have been issued against them," he said.
 The source said police are also contemplating acting against a top leader of BRS, who held a powerful post during the K Chandrasekhar Rao govt, for using SIB — which is an anti-naxal intelligence unit — to gather political intelligence.



Police are also contemplating acting against a top leader of BRS, who held a powerful post in the K Chandrasekhar Rao govt, sources said

Prabhakar Rao is accused of allegedly tasking Praneeth Rao, who was his subordinate, and several other SIB cops with the job of carrying out surveillance against opposition leaders during BRS's tenure. Revanth Reddy's family and friends were also tracked.
 On March 26, Panjagutta police is expected to move an application seeking Praneeth Rao's custody yet again besides moving a similar plea for the custody of the two arrested additional SPs for further interrogation.

Prabhakar Rao is accused of allegedly tasking Praneeth Rao, who was his subordinate, and several other SIB cops with the job of carrying out surveillance against opposition leaders during BRS's tenure. Revanth Reddy's family and friends were also tracked.
 On March 26, Panjagutta police is expected to move an application seeking Praneeth Rao's custody yet again besides moving a similar plea for the custody of the two arrested additional SPs for further interrogation.

Mobile charger sparks fire, 4 UP kids burnt alive

Meerut: Four children suffered severe burns and later died after a bed in their room caught fire due to a short-circuit caused by a mobile charger in Meerut on Saturday night, reports **Krishna Chaudhary**.
 Their parents, Babita and Johnny, rushed into the room to save their children who were asleep, also sustaining burn injuries in the process. Babita is battling for life at Safdarjung Hospital in Delhi while Johnny is in a medical facility in Meerut, police said on Sunday.
 SP Ayush Vikram Singh said, "Victims were rushed to LLM Medical Hospital, where two of the children succumbed around 9.30pm. The third child died early on Sunday while being shifted to another medical centre. Sarika passed away a few hours later. Johnny, a daily wage labourer, is recovering."
 Since the incident was reported as an indoor accident, no police action was initiated in the matter, he added.

After arrest of IIT-G student for 'IS links', hunt on for another

Mukut.Das@timesgroup.com
Guwahati: An IIT-Guwahati student detained Saturday after he allegedly emailed an Assam top cop saying he was going to Afghanistan to join terror outfit IS was formally arrested Sunday and booked under the stringent UAPA.
 Assam CM **Himanta Biswa Sarma** described Delhi native Tauseef Ali Farooqui as "completely radicalised" and said he was one of two IIT Guwahati students suspected of having links with IS and trying to join the group. The other is yet to be tracked down.
 Tauseef's arrest came barely four days after IS India head Haris Farooqi and an aide were nabbed in Assam's Dhubri just after crossing over from Bangladesh. They duo have been handed over to NIA.
 A local court sent Tauseef to 10 days' police custody. Sarma said the family of the fourth-year BTech student from Delhi's Okhla area had been informed and central agencies alerted. "We believe there is another such student from Delhi's Okhla area had been informed and central agencies alerted. "We believe there is another such student from Delhi's Okhla area had been informed and central agencies alerted. "We believe there is another such student from Delhi's Okhla area had been informed and central agencies alerted."
 Police are probing and will most probably find the student soon.
 Police said they had seized a black flag, purportedly similar to that of IS, from Tauseef. "Further investigation is under way to unearth other aspects and links," a police officer said.
 Missing from his hostel since Saturday, Tauseef was traced to Hajo, about 20km away, around 7pm.



Monday | March 25, 2024

THE TIMES OF INDIA

www.educationtimes.com

Educational TIMES

educationtimes | _educationtimes_

THE PATH TO EXCELLENCE

Advertorial, Education Promotional Feature

EducationTIMES

BRAINSTRAIN

>> First three correct entries will win a 'pen drive.' Send in your entries only through e-mail with your Name, Address, Email, Tel no. and Profession to prabhat.kumar1@timesgroup.com

Each question is followed by four choices. Select the word that is similar in meaning (synonym) to the main word and mark that as your answer.

- Acumen**
 (a) Amalgamation (b) Ignorance
 (c) Alacrity (d) Insight
- Benevolent**
 (a) Spiteful (b) Compassionate
 (c) Boorish (d) Malevolent
- Doctrine**
 (a) Chronicle (b) Conundrum
 (c) Credo (d) Discrepancy
- Indolent**
 (a) Slothful (b) Indifferent
 (c) Vapid (d) Insolent
- Gregarious**
 (a) Raucous (b) Sociable
 (c) Eloquent (d) Craven

Each question is followed by four choices. Select the word that is opposite in meaning (antonym) to the main word and mark that as your answer.

- Corporeal**
 (a) Assuaging (b) Spiritual
 (c) Condoning (d) Tangible
- Exculpate**
 (a) Acquit (b) Exonerate
 (c) Absolve (d) Convict
- Doleful**
 (a) Melancholic (b) Meandering
 (c) Jovial (d) Disinterested
- Ameliorate**
 (a) Aggravate (b) Alleviate
 (c) Admonish (d) Abscond

Answer key for the last week's quiz: 1.d, 2.a, 3.d, 4.c, 5.a, 6.c, 7.d

Med grads object to MCC debaring 242 doctors from NEET PG 2024

The Committee has collected a seat-leaving penalty of Rs 1.21 crore from medical students

Shuddhanta.Patra@timesgroup.com
A total of 242 doctors who left their seats in the NEET-PG 2023 counselling have been debarred from appearing in the upcoming NEET PG 2024 exam, the Medical Counselling Committee (MCC) stated. The MCC's statement came as a response to an RTI application filed by RTI activist Dr Vivek Pandey. The debarred students are planning to file a PIL to reinstate the opportunity to appear for the NEET exam scheduled in June. Speaking to *Education Times*, a Health Ministry official says, "The MCC rule to disqualify such medical students has brought down the medical seat wastage under 300 which earlier used to range between 1000-1500. These 242 seats will lie vacant for the next three years and each medical seat costs crores of rupees to the government. The seats are blocked as per the candidate's preference. Despite choosing the seat himself, when the candidate is giving it up, he is not just giving up his/her chance to study that particular medical stream, but also not giving a fair chance to the other candidate who needs the seat. Candidates must choose the seats wisely."
 Dr Aviral Mathur, president, FORDA, says, "There must be some penalty for students flouting MCC rules but that must not go against their careers. These are the candidates blocking the seats as per their preferences,



Stray vacancy rounds

As per MCC rules, candidates who participate in the special stray vacancy round have to pay an additional Rs 50,000 as a security amount. The rules specify that in case a candidate has participated in the special stray vacancy round wherein he/she has been allotted a seat and fails to report to his/her college, such candidate will be debarred from participating in the upcoming NEET-PG exam and counselling along with forfeiture of Rs 50,000. In 2023, the MCC has collected fine from the candidates appearing in the special stray vacancy round a total amount of Rs 1.21 crore as penalty for leaving these seats.

later changing their minds and not reporting to the allotted college. They are eventually wiping out the chances for the students who need those seats. The students who are complaining about losing a year must have thought about the outcome before blocking seats. However, MCC must contemplate reasonable penalties like increasing the seat-leaving fine or cancelling the candidate's state quota." Dr Vivek Pandey says, "A few

students approached me regarding this issue, and they wanted the government to remove this debarring criteria if someone is unable to take an allotted seat. MCC is debaring students in the form of punishment because they left their allocated seats after counselling." He adds further, "Excluding students from upcoming exams and counselling amounts to a significant loss of a valuable academic year, inflicting considerable distress upon aspiring individuals. While it is appropriate for the government to impose fines, such penalties should remain within the bounds of affordability for the individuals involved. However, the act of debarring students constitutes a direct infringement upon their fundamental right to education."
Student woes
 A PG medical aspirant from UP, who appeared for NEET PG in 2022, was debarred from appearing in the exam in 2023. He says, "I was allotted a PG Surgery seat at a district hospital in West Bengal which did not have proper infrastructure and teaching faculty. Hence, I left the seat. The NMC is starting new courses in several medical colleges. But the government must do proper inspection before starting a medical course in any hospital. The course permission is sanctioned from Delhi offices, which has no iota about the actual situation in the institutes." The candidate will now appear for NEET PG 2024 exam.

APAAR ID for students as CBSE implements NCrF in classes VI, IX and XI

Sonal.Srivastava@timesgroup.com

The CBSE will implement the National Credit Framework (NCrF) in the 2024-25 academic session for classes VI, IX and XI. NCrF will be extended to classes X and XII in 2025-26, and the board exam marksheet will reflect the total credits earned along with the marks obtained by each student from the next academic cycle. "Students are required to get 40 credits in a subject within an academic year with 1200 National Learning Hours (NLH) in a year. Of this, 950-960 hours will be transactional in school and the rest will be allocated for activity, project work, exposure visits or any other enrichment activity that the child can carry out himself or under parents' supervision. A child can carry out on his/her own as this is a free learning course. The marksheet too will carry the total number of credits along with the marks. In the university system, there is the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC), we are carrying out the same exercise, the benefit of credits will be extended to children in schools through the unique APAAR ID," says Biswajit Saha, director, CBSE.
 Initially, the NCrF will be rolled out for classes VI, IX and XI to make schools understand the process. "Before the start of the next academic year, they can declare the result and also include credits in the school-based marksheets. Based on that understanding in the board examinations in 2025-26, we



will adopt this. Credits will reflect in the board exam mark sheet of the academic year 2025-26," says Saha.
 NLH is the time that the average student would be given to attend all classes, study for tests, and do assignments and homework. "These credits will be stored in the student's ABC, linked to their iDigiLocker," adds Saha.
 According to the NCrF document, the assignment of credits is independent of the streams, subjects or any learning and is subject to achieving the prescribed learning outcomes at a particular NCrF credit level post the successful assessment. Students also have the flexibility to take 1 course/programme/subject/project beyond 40 credits (within the curricular design) to get additional credits. For calculations under the NLH (NCrF), in general, 30 notional learning hours will be counted as one credit.
 While the NCrF will give students a variety of choices in terms of selecting the subjects and activities based on their interests, aptitudes, and career goals, its successful implementation will largely depend on teachers who are willing to adopt new pedagogical approaches.

T.I.M.E. Excellent Coaching for **CAT 2024**

Triumphant Institute of Management Education Pvt. Ltd.

2805 T.I.M.E. students into the IIMs alone in CAT 2022

*Results validated by VSMB and Associates on 05/10/2023

Inclusion of Data Science and AI a major reason for increase in GATE qualifiers

With the recent downturn in job placements, more students are inclined towards higher education to upskill for the job market

Rajlakshmi.Ghosh
@timesgroup.com



PHOTO FOR REPRESENTATION

Participation of women

Only four women were among the top scorers in GATE 2024, of which two are from Humanities and Social Sciences, and another two from Textile Engineering and Fibre Science, and Biotechnology. Prof Chandra Sekhar says, "The All-India Rank - 1 alone is not an indicator of gender diversity or inclusion. The representation of women is increasing overall. GATE has promoted the inclusion of women candidates by offering them incentives (50% application fees, for instance). Several institutes are also creating opportunities and providing incentives for women candidates to pursue STEM careers."

almost all engineering branches, students have also been given the option to choose a minor degree in one of the thrust areas particularly AI. "This makes it favourable for the students to appear for the DA paper. Post NEP 2020, we are encouraging students to acquire multiple skills and knowledge across disciplines to enhance their employability. Since GATE is an exit exam for engineering graduates, a good score will add value to candidates' profile specially if they are applying for jobs in the PSUs," Kumar says.

"The increase in registrations signifies a return to normalcy post-Covid, and with classes being held offline and with greater regularity, it is expected that the performance of graduating students would go up. Moreover, with the downturn in job placements, more students seem inclined towards higher education to upskill themselves for the job market," says Ramgopal Rao, vice-chancellor, BITS Pilani group. Over-hiring during Covid times led to subsequent layoffs in the corporate sector, and with the elections around the corner in many major economies around the world, the recruiters are resorting to a wait-and-watch policy leading to fewer placements. "This

has paved the way for students wanting to improve their qualifications, he adds. As for the introduction of DA in GATE 2024, Rao feels it has expanded the scope for not just Computer Science Engineering (CSE) students, but also those pursuing Civil and Mechanical Engineering since emerging technologies are being in-

tegrated into the core engineering curriculum. "But with limited requirement for new hires, most recruiters may choose CSE students, leaving students in the remaining branches with lesser job options. In such a scenario, a PG degree would be seen as the best bet for better employment," Rao says.

JAYPEE | IGNITED MINDS
EDUSPHERE | INSPIRED SOULS

JAYPEE INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(Deemed to be University)
AICTE Approved | UGC Approved | NAAC Accredited | NIRF Ranked

Shaping Leaders of Today's Specialised Economy

ADMISSIONS 2024

| PROGRAMS | |
|--|---|
| BTech (4 Years) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biotechnology / CSE / ECE / ECM / EE (VLSI) / EC (ACT) / IT / Mathematics & Computing (Option for Specialisation/Minor in AI & ML, DA, Cyber Security 5G & Advanced Technologies, VLSI Design & Technology and Universal Human Value) |
| Integrated MTech (4 Years) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biotechnology / CSE / ECE |
| Lateral Entry/Inter University Migration (To BTech 2 nd Year) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biotechnology / CSE / ECE / IT |
| Diploma Course (3 Years) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Computer Science and Information Technology Food Technology Electronics Engineering (Microelectronics) |
| MTech (2 Years) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biotechnology / CSE / VLSI Design |
| MSc (2 Years) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physics / Mathematics / Microbiology / Environmental Biotechnology/Economics |
| BSc (3/4 Years) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Computer Science |
| BCA (3/4 Years) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bachelor of Computer Applications |
| MCA (2 Years) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Master of Computer Applications |
| BBA (3/4 Years) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specializations: HR, Marketing, Finance, Information Technology, Business Analytics, Insurance and Banking, Family Business Entrepreneurship, Healthcare Management. |
| MBA (2 Years) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specializations: HR, Finance, Marketing, Operations, Information Technology & Business Analytics, Education Management and Hospital & Healthcare Management. |
| PhD | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biotechnology, CSE, Computer Applications, ECE, Humanities & Social Sciences, Management, Mathematics, Physics and Materials Science & Engineering |

Apply online at :
www.getadmissions.com/jaypee
www.jit.ac.in

Contact Admission Cell :
+91- 7428630800/600, +91 (120) 2594400/300
admission@jit.ac.in

ADMISSION ALERTS

■ IIM Kashipur invites applications for E-MBA
Eligibility: CAT/GMAT score
Deadline: April 5
Link: <https://www.iimkashipur.ac.in/academics/executive-mba>

■ IIT Madras inviting applications for

BS programme in Data Science and Application & Electronic Systems
Eligibility:
BS in Data Science and Applications- Students from all streams can apply
BS in Electronics Systems- Students who have studied Maths and Physics in their class XII can apply
Deadline: May 26, 2024
Link:
<https://study.iitm.ac.in/ds>
<https://study.iitm.ac.in/es>

9th, 10th, 11th & 12th Students

Career in Design & Architecture

NID | **NIFT** | **PARUL**
PEARL | **ISDI** | **UID**
GLS_{ID} | **AnantU** | **IIAD**
CHITKARA | **CEPT** | **NATA**

Best Design & Architecture Coaching Institute of India - MBA Awards 2023
Highest Selection record from BRDS as compared to any coaching institute in India*

99137 00910
www.rathoredesign.com

Delhi Malviya Nagar • Dwarka • Preet Vihar • Pitampura • Karol Bagh • South Ext. GTB Nagar • Janakpuri (W) • Gurgaon • Noida • Ghaziabad • Faridabad • Sonapat

CEPT UNIVERSITY

2024 ADMISSIONS OPEN

POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMS IN:

Architecture
Design
Management
Planning
Technology

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS IN:

Bachelor's in Design
(Hons.) with major in Communication / Product Design
Bachelor's in Civil Engineering (Hons.)
Bachelor's in Urban Design

APPLY NOW: Check eligibility and other details at admissions.cept.ac.in

For enquiries: Call 1800-270-4030
Or email at admissions@cept.ac.in

Any changes / updates will be posted on our website mentioned above.

30% of Postgraduate students admitted in 2023, received merit/means scholarships.

CEPT University, Kasturbhai Lalbhai Campus, University Rd, Navrangpura, Ahmedabad, Gujarat 380009

INDIA JAPAN INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIP

CONSUMER CONNECT INITIATIVE

Conquering the Ed-Tech Arena

With technology constantly empowering the education sector, NEDO organised India-Japan Innovation Symposium and a hackathon—Hack the Future 2024—in collaboration with Japanese universities and IIEC on March 11-12, 2024, to understand new advancements in technology and give students an opportunity to learn the dynamics of tech and innovation

Debjeni.Ghosh
@timesgroup.com

Permeating into the education sector, technology continues to evolve, creating a level-playing field for students. On this backdrop, India's collaboration with Japan for its educational needs provides them global education opportunities, offering a dynamic academic platform that transcends borders.

India and Japan are engaging in various activities towards a promising shared future with a view to strengthening the bond between the two countries. On March 11 and 12, 2024, a couple of such activities—India-Japan Innovation Symposium and Hack the Future 2024, a hackathon—were organised by New

Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization (NEDO), in collaboration with Japanese universities and IIT Gandhinagar Innovation and Entrepreneurship Centre (IIEC). Held at the IIT Gandhinagar Campus, Gujarat, Therefore, the event offered the hosts a golden opportunity to exchange and network with Japanese universities and research institutes to promote joint research, personnel exchange, and recruitment.

In his address, R A Venkatchalam from IIT Gandhinagar, said, "The event specifically witnessed academia, industry, and Japanese agencies coming together as a laboratory for collaborative efforts between India and Japan. Both the countries, very uniquely, value history as



well as heritage. At the same time, they are bravely looking forward to engaging with the technologically advanced and complex challenges of the growing world."

The inaugural session on Day One had Prof Amit Prashant, dean of R&D, Yoshiro Kaku, chief repre-



Students came up with innovative solutions to address various issues including undetected SoS from accidents in remote areas, inefficient positioning of ambulances in the city, integrated traffic congestion reduction in Ahmedabad, implementing data driven approaches to dynamically manage road disasters and catering to road safety issues, live bus tracking system and introduction of smart cars, reducing the uncertainty of overcrowding in public transport system et al

sentative of NEDO (India), and Rajat Seksaria, chief executive director of Adani Green Hydrogen, elaborating on the agenda of the event. There also was a presentation by Prof Pratik Mutha, dean of Institutional Advancement.

Yoshiro Kaku, chief repre-

said, "Since India is becoming a global leading-edge R&D centre backed by the production of a large number of highly skilled human resources and an increase in R&D-related FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) in India, it is important for Japanese industry, universities, and research institutes to promote technological demonstration and R&D with India. NEDO has supported India-Japan collaborations mainly in the fields of energy, environment, and deep-tech."

RESEARCH CAPABILITIES AND COLLABORATIONS
Japanese universities are known for their technological research, findings, and innovations. From international

academic collaborations and engagement with Japan to deep-tech (artificial intelligence and machine learning) and data science, India-Japan Innovation Symposium emphasised on every aspect that can enhance India's research capabilities and collaborations.

Among the Japanese universities, University of Tokyo, Tohoku University, Shimane University, and Keio University attended the event and made presentations.

Day One concluded with lab visits of Materials Characterisation and Maker Bhawan. Also, a visit to IIT-Gandhinagar's Fire Lab and Research Park including NAMTECH (New Age Mak-

ers' Institute of Technology) was arranged.

HACKING WITH INNOVATION

Day Two commenced with one of the most interesting and innovative aspects, as IIT Gandhinagar, in collaboration with NEDO, organised a hackathon on smart transportation. 'Hack the Future 2024' organised at the IIT Gandhinagar Research Park aimed to revolutionise smart transportation. With 'Ignite, Innovate, and Impact' being the theme for the hackathon, it gave the presenters an opportunity to conceive and propose solutions, revolutionising transportation, and travel for a smarter, safer, and more sustainable future.

The hackathon witnessed participation of 50 students from the institutes of higher learning from across the country. They were given 36 hours to innovate and pitch their ideas on smart transportation. After a lot of brainstorming, they came up with creative ideas potent enough to drive an impactful change in the transportation landscape of India. The participants were divided into 10 teams and worked continuously over the course of three days on different problem statements in the field of smart transportation and came up with innovative solutions on March 12, the day of hackathon.

Some of the carefully curated problem statements that the students worked on included undetected SoS from accidents in remote areas, inefficient positioning of ambulances in the city, inte-

grated traffic congestion reduction in Ahmedabad, implementing data driven approaches to dynamically manage road disasters and catering road safety issues, live bus tracking system and introduction to smart cars, and reducing the uncertainty of overcrowding in public transport system, among others.

This exciting event featured some cutting-edge solutions, which impressed the jury members that consisted of Mayur Shah, executive director of Suzuki R&D Center India; Tsuyoshi Morimoto, general manager of Denso; Parul Shah, head - IBU of Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group; Ajey Mehta, business leader, startup mentor, and investor; and Prof Neel-hara Misra from the computer science and engineering department of IIT Gandhinagar.

One of the participants of hackathon said, "It was an extremely exciting event for me as well as my entire team. We spent sleepless nights working on our presentation. At the end of it all, we received a lot of appreciation from the jury, which made it all worth the effort."

The first, second, and third prize winners—Zeta, Gamma, and Theta, respectively—bagged cash prizes worth ₹3 lakh, ₹1.5 lakh, and ₹50,000, respectively. The winning teams' solutions included 'Pathik: Public Transport Management System' which aimed at introducing innovations in the ticketing mechanism with a central portal for the bus conductor, passenger, and admin. Another team presented an end-to-end web or mobile based application which would increase coordination and help in management of road distress. The third winning team pitched an idea about a public transportation management system.



In a record, Zoji La reopens after 35 days against 68 in '23



An army convoy travels towards Leh through Zoji La in this 2021 photo. The reopening of Ladakh's lifeline in record time reflects India's growing mountain road-building prowess that has big upside for border defence as well as people's lives in the frontier region

Sanjay Dutta | TNN

New Delhi: Border Roads Organisation has reopened Zoji La (pass), the main obstacle in Ladakh's lifeline via Srinagar, for vehicular traffic after 35 days of being under snow against 68 days last year — a record that reflects India's growing mountain road-building prowess that has big upside for border defence as well as people's lives in the frontier region. The 439-km Srinagar-Leh road is the main link connecting Ladakh to Jammu & Kashmir and is the key route to move troops and supplies in the frontier region. The 11,540-ft Zoji La, about 100km from Srinagar, used to be closed for around 160-180 days during the winter some

years ago. But the closure period has come down in the last few years as a result of govt's thrust on developing border connectivity and deployment of latest machinery. The road had seen intermittent traffic disruptions as winter set in in the last few months. It was closed for a few days around Dec 23 but was reopened soon. Again on Feb 25, traffic was suspended because of heavy snowfall caused by a series of western disturbances. Early resumption of traffic in the last 2-3 years has allowed the forces to space out — instead of squeezing in 3-4 months earlier — the annual rotation of larger-than-usual number of troops deployed in the region since the May 2020

Galwan border clashes with the Chinese army. It will also allow trucking of civil and fresh supplies instead of costly air freight. Home-bound Ladakhis and guest workers will have a cheaper travel option than the prohibitively expensive flights that remain the only means when heavy snow snags road connectivity. The short closures of the difficult passes has demonstrated BRO's snow-clearing capability. Govt is capitalising this by boring a tunnel under Zoji La, set to be completed soon. Thermal tunnel will have major upside for defence preparedness, quality of life and tourism in the region by establishing connectivity throughout the year.

Mann meets kin of Punjab hooch tragedy victims, promises action

Bharat.Khanna@timesgroup.com

Patiala: Four days after the first deaths were reported due to consumption of spurious liquor in Gujran village of Dirba in Punjab's Sangrur district, CMBHagwant Mann and finance minister Harpal Cheema, who is Dirba MLA, visited the families of the victims on Sunday. The death toll has climbed to 21, while around 20 others are being treated at hospitals. Pointing out he had left the national capital early morning to meet the affected families, Mann promised to look after them and requested people to share details of liquor and drug smugglers to avoid such tragedies. "I will take care of the families of the victims, but I also request that you reveal such things beforehand. I just came to know from villagers that chitta (drugs) is also being sold here," he said. "Till the time I am CM, I won't let the fire in your kitchen stoves extinguish. If you don't like my work, you can remove me as CM," Mann added. He said 10 accused had been arrested and booked for murder, assuring villagers of apprehending the gang involved in sale and manufacture of illicit liquor. He announced Rs 5 lakh aid for victims' families.



Ready to consider resuming India trade ties: Pak minister

Remarks Come After Demands By Pak Traders

Omer Farooq Khan | TNN

Islamabad/New Delhi: Pakistan's new govt may resume trade ties with India in deference to the demands of local businesses, the country's foreign minister Ishaq Dar said at the end of his UK-Europe visit. Dar's statement about ending the nearly five-year suspension of trade over India revoking J&K's special status in Aug 2019 comes weeks after PM Shehbaz Sha-



Beating Retreat ceremony at India-Pakistan Wagah border post. Ties between the countries have been suspended for nearly 5 years

revoked the special status of the erstwhile state of J&K. Known to be a dove in India-Pakistan diplomatic parlance, Dar is a trusted aide of Nawaz Sharif, whose daughter is married to the foreign minister's son. India will wait though to see if the four-time finance minister's remarks have the backing of the army, given its own experience with the previous Sharif govt. Foreign minister S Jaishankar had only on Saturday accused Pakistan of promoting terrorism at "industry level".

"Pakistani businessmen want to trade with India... govt will examine the possibility by holding consultations with all stakeholders," Dar said in London Saturday. Pakistan could prioritise reviving the economy before considering normalising ties with India, he indicated even as he broached Kashmir. "In-

dia took extreme steps in Aug 2019 by making a constitutional and legal amendment that was painful," he said, mentioning "UN Security Council resolutions on Kashmir" and a "dispute that lingers". "But I believe the Pakistani business community has been making this appeal and demand (to resume trade with India)," he said. The geopolitical divide has impacted businesses on both sides, mainly those focused on cross-border commerce like textiles, agri-products and medical items. "They (businesspeople) pointed out that imports are continuing via Dubai and Singapore with extra freight and transportation costs," Dar said. "Let's see what can be done, at least to the extent of economic activities and trade. You can't change your neighbours. We have to coexist."

India took extreme steps in Aug 2019 by making a constitutional and legal amendment that was painful," he said, mentioning "UN Security Council resolutions on Kashmir" and a "dispute that lingers". "But I believe the Pakistani business community has been making this appeal and demand (to resume trade with India)," he said. The geopolitical divide has impacted businesses on both sides, mainly those focused on cross-border commerce like textiles, agri-products and medical items. "They (businesspeople) pointed out that imports are continuing via Dubai and Singapore with extra freight and transportation costs," Dar said. "Let's see what can be done, at least to the extent of economic activities and trade. You can't change your neighbours. We have to coexist."

Pak again links Kashmir issue to peace efforts

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Peaceful coexistence based on equality and mutual respect serves as guiding principles of Pakistan's foreign policy and the same also underpins Islamabad's desire for a peaceful relationship with India, the new govt said on the country's National Day. Islamabad, however, also said peace and stability in the region can only be achieved through a peaceful settlement of all issues, including the "core" issue of Jammu and Kashmir. "Sofar there has been no indication of any initiative by either side for a breakthrough in ties that remain downgraded since India revoked the special status of J&K in Aug 2019. "The quest for sustainable peace and stability in South Asia could only be achieved through a peaceful settlement of all issues including the core J&K dispute," said Pakistan charge d'affaires Saad Ahmad Warraich. "Our desire for peace is reflective of the constructive and positive outlook of a strong and self-assured nation," he added.

India took extreme steps in Aug 2019 by making a constitutional and legal amendment that was painful," he said, mentioning "UN Security Council resolutions on Kashmir" and a "dispute that lingers". "But I believe the Pakistani business community has been making this appeal and demand (to resume trade with India)," he said. The geopolitical divide has impacted businesses on both sides, mainly those focused on cross-border commerce like textiles, agri-products and medical items. "They (businesspeople) pointed out that imports are continuing via Dubai and Singapore with extra freight and transportation costs," Dar said. "Let's see what can be done, at least to the extent of economic activities and trade. You can't change your neighbours. We have to coexist."

Rajnath plays Holi with soldiers, says Ladakh is capital of valour

Saleem.Pandit@timesgroup.com

Srinagar: Defence minister Rajnath Singh showered praises and gulas on soldiers in Ladakh on Sunday, celebrating Holi with them and extolling their exemplary valour in bone-numbing conditions. "Your commitment deserves applause. You perform your duties despite severe cold conditions in Ladakh. The nation is highly indebted to you," Singh said, accompanied by Army chief General Manoj Pandey and other officers. Singh was to celebrate Holi with soldiers in Siachen, the world's highest battlefield, but his visit was called off due to bad weather. "Today, it was not possible to go to Siachen. Therefore, I wish all soldiers there Happy Holi," Singh said. Later, he spoke with some soldiers in Siachen over



Defence minister Rajnath Singh celebrates Holi with soldiers in Leh on Sunday

the phone, extending Holi greetings and promising to visit them soon. He recalled that he had visited Siachen first after taking charge as defence minister five years ago. Singh laid a wreath at a War Memorial in Ladakh to pay tributes to martyred soldiers and described Ladakh "as the national capital of courage and

bravery". He told soldiers, "Like we have the national capital in Delhi, the economic capital in Mumbai, and the technological capital in Bengaluru, Ladakh is India's capital of courage and bravery. When everyone wants to hide in their homes due to extreme weather, you are doing divine work, ready to fire at the enemy and take a bullet to your chest. It is due to this that the people of the country can celebrate Holi peacefully. I feel all of you are no less than protector-gods for us." Singh reiterated PM Narendra Modi-led govt's commitment to the welfare of the armed forces and their families. He also urged the three service chiefs to start a tradition of celebrations with soldiers a day before a festival and urged them to make these "an integral part of our culture". (With inputs from agencies)

Jobless couple pose as NIA sleuths, abduct woman; nabbed

Soumitra.Bose@timesgroup.com

Nagpur: The lure for fast money landed a young live-in couple from Maharashtra's Bhandara in jail on charges of abduction and ransom on Friday. Swapnil Maraskolhe (25) and Chetna Burade (23) had shifted to Nagpur two years ago and did odd jobs for a living. But they wanted big money. Taking inspiration from a crime web series, they hatched an abduction and extortion plan. After two months, they zeroed down on a 23-year-old woman IT professional. Posing as National Investigation Agency (NIA) sleuths, they intercepted her at Hingna T-point Wednesday morning. Zonal DCP Anurag Jain, who led the case under CP Ravinder Singal, said Wednesday that Chetna stopped the young woman at a desolate place and demanded that she accompany her in a bomb blast investigation case. But the young woman paid no heed and walked on. In the evening, while returning from work, the woman rode a two-wheeler. But Chetna, also on a two-wheeler, stopped her again and flashed a fake NIA ID card. As soon as the young woman stopped, Swapnil appeared and hopped onto the victim's two-wheeler holding a gun. On Swapnil's directions, the woman drove to the duo's rented accommodation. She was locked there inside a room. The next day, the duo made the ransom call for Rs 30 lakh in Bhojpuri using Google Translate. When the woman's father could not find her, he filed a police complaint. On Friday, the woman came out of the room to use the wash-room. She started shouting for help. Cops nearby rushed to the spot and nabbed both Chetna and Swapnil. The two were produced before court on Saturday which remanded them in police custody till March 27.

Swapnil Maraskolhe (25) and Chetna Burade (23) had shifted to Nagpur two years ago and did odd jobs for a living. But they wanted big money. Taking inspiration from a crime web series, they hatched an abduction and extortion plan. After two months, they zeroed down on a 23-year-old woman IT professional. Posing as National Investigation Agency (NIA) sleuths, they intercepted her at Hingna T-point Wednesday morning. Zonal DCP Anurag Jain, who led the case under CP Ravinder Singal, said Wednesday that Chetna stopped the young woman at a desolate place and demanded that she accompany her in a bomb blast investigation case. But the young woman paid no heed and walked on. In the evening, while returning from work, the woman rode a two-wheeler. But Chetna, also on a two-wheeler, stopped her again and flashed a fake NIA ID card. As soon as the young woman stopped, Swapnil appeared and hopped onto the victim's two-wheeler holding a gun. On Swapnil's directions, the woman drove to the duo's rented accommodation. She was locked there inside a room. The next day, the duo made the ransom call for Rs 30 lakh in Bhojpuri using Google Translate. When the woman's father could not find her, he filed a police complaint. On Friday, the woman came out of the room to use the wash-room. She started shouting for help. Cops nearby rushed to the spot and nabbed both Chetna and Swapnil. The two were produced before court on Saturday which remanded them in police custody till March 27.

Two militant camps in Manipur busted, 13 held

Guwahati: Security forces busted two militant training camps, rescued a captive, and arrested 13 members of banned Kangleipak Communist Party in Manipur's Imphal West on Saturday night, police said, reports Kangkan Kalita. "Three of the arrested militants are women in their 20s. Four carbines, two grenades with detonators, an AK rifle, an Insas rifle, among other arms & ammunition, 14 mobile phones, 7 vehicles were seized. Kangleipak Communist Party (People's War Group) is involved in kidnapping and extortion also," Manipur Police wrote in a post on X. The raids were carried out by security forces at Kameng Sabal and Loitang Sandum areas of the district, police said.

Guj man indicted in US in \$4,00,000 ponzi scam

Ashish.Chauhan@timesgroup.com

Ahmedabad: A 23-year-old man from Gandhinagar has been indicted in a case of ponzi scam worth \$4,00,000 in Alabama in the US. The accused, Pathyam Patel, began selling securities without registration and kept collecting money after guaranteeing huge returns which he never invested in securities. Instead, he used them to meet his personal expenses. According to officers of Alabama Securities Commission (ASC), Pathyam Patel, who is also known as Pat Patel and was staying in Alabama, was arrested on March 6, 2024, based on nine counts of securities law violations. "The indictment alleges that Patel sold in excess of \$4,00,000 in investment contracts to at least six investors. Patel represented that he was associated with Infinity Wealth Management, an investment advisory firm, which he claimed was registered with the US Securities

and Exchange Commission," said a statement by ASC. Patel claimed he could earn substantial profits for investors by investing their funds and guaranteed no loss of their principal amount. After receiving the investors' funds, Patel represented to certain investors that they had to pay additional fees to maintain their investments. "Patel did not invest the investors' funds as communicated to them. Instead, he used them for gambling on sporting events, personal expenses and paying other investors. Patel had no ability to guarantee that the investors would not lose their principal (amount)," ASC added.

and Exchange Commission," said a statement by ASC. Patel claimed he could earn substantial profits for investors by investing their funds and guaranteed no loss of their principal amount. After receiving the investors' funds, Patel represented to certain investors that they had to pay additional fees to maintain their investments. "Patel did not invest the investors' funds as communicated to them. Instead, he used them for gambling on sporting events, personal expenses and paying other investors. Patel had no ability to guarantee that the investors would not lose their principal (amount)," ASC added.

Corrigendum

For E-NIT No. PHE/MRD/TS/ 168 of 03/2024 DT: - 22-03-2024 published vide Nos: 2024_PHE_247689_1, 2 & 3 are hereby cancelled.

No: PHE/MRD/6313-17
Dated: 23-03-2024
Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
PHE Mechanical Rural Division,
Srinagar.

DISTRICT POLICE HEADQUARTERS SAMBA

"LOOK OUT NOTICE"

SHO P/S Bari Brahmana has intimated vide letter No 481/5-1/PSBB, Dated 02-03-2024, that one lady namely Sonia Devi W/O Som Nath R/o Bari Tehsil, Bari Brahmana, District Samba has been missing from the market of Bari Brahmana. Her search was conducted but not traced out till date and her missing report has been entered at P/S Bari-Brahmana vide DDR No 09 dated 27-02-2024. Through the medium of this LOOK OUT NOTICE, it is informed to all the Police Establishments/General Public that my information related to the missing lady may be communicated on following contacts:-

1. PCR Samba - 01923-246333, 9541649001
2. SSP Samba's email ID: ssp@samba@jkpolice.gov.in
3. SHO P/S Bari Brahmana - 94191-38824

The description roll along with photograph of missing lady is as under:-

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Name :- | Sonia Devi |
| Husband Name :- | Som Nath |
| Address :- | Bari Tehsil, Bari Brahmana District Samba |
| Age :- | 35 years |
| Height :- | 5'-1" feet (approx) |
| Complexion :- | Wheatish |
| Face :- | Oval and cut mark of forehead |
| Hair :- | Black |
| Language :- | Hindi and Dogri |
| Built :- | Normal |
| Clothes :- | Salwar Kameez |

No. CB/look/2024/
Dated :- 03.2024
DIP No: DIPA-18190/23/23.03.2024
Sd/-
Sr. Superintendent of Police,
Samba.

Isro gets US aviation award for Chandrayaan-3 mission

Surendra.Singh@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Isro has received US's Aviation Week Laureates Award for its achievements in the Chandrayaan-3 mission, which made India the first country to land on Moon's south pole on Aug 23 last year. In another accolade for the space agency, International Astronomical Union (IAU) working group for planetary system nomenclature has approved the name 'Station Shiv Shakti' for the landing site of Chandrayaan-3's lander. The approval was given on March 19.

Deputy ambassador at the Indian embassy in the US, Sripriya Ranganathan accepted the award on Isro's behalf. The Indian embassy later posted on X: "...The award noted Chandrayaan-3's landing at the lunar South Pole, its confirmation of the presence of water there, as well as the presence of sulfur nearby — all at a cost of \$75 million!" The gazetteer of planetary nomenclature, on IAU's recognition of the name 'Station Shiv Shakti', stated, "Compound word from Indian mythology that



The Chandrayaan-3 mission made India the first country to land on Moon's south pole

depicts the masculine ('Shiva') and feminine ('Shakti') duality of nature; Landing site of Chandrayaan-3's Vikram lander." Soon after Chandrayaan-3's Vikram lander landed on the Moon's south pole on Aug 23 last year, PM Modi had on Aug 26, 2023 named the landing site 'Shiv Shakti'. According to Gazetteer, planetary nomenclature, like terrestrial nomenclature, is used to uniquely identify a feature on the surface of a planet or satellite so it can be easily located, described, and discussed.

TIMES interact Connecting People, Connecting Needs.

To book your ad Logon to: ads.timesgroup.com or Call: 18001205474 (Toll Free)

tender & notices

PUBLIC NOTICE

ENTIRE BUILT-UP PROPERTY BEARING NO. D-19 (New) C-42 (Old), MAHARANI BAGH, NEW DELHI

Be it known that my Client intends to purchase the above captioned property from its Owner MR. SIDHARTH DESHPANDE (S/o Late Shri Deshraj 'Owner' who is the absolute owner and in peaceful and physical possession of the above captioned property. The originals of the below captioned documents as reported to have been missing, lost, mislaid or misplaced and are not traceable.

- i. General Power of Attorney executed by Mr. Ashok Deshraj (elder brother of the Owner) in favour of Dr. (Mrs.) S. Deshraj (mother of the Owner) dated 26.09.1967.
- ii. Death Certificate of Mr. Ashok Deshraj dated 26.09.1967.
- iii. Surviving Member Certificate of Mr. Ashok Deshraj.
- iv. Mutation Letter from MCD in favour of Mr. Sidharth Deshraj and Mr. Arvind Deshraj.
- v. Sanction Plan, Completion Certificate & Occupancy Certificate, Will of Dr. S. Deshraj dated 02.08.1989.
- vi. Death Certificate of Dr. S. Deshraj dated 21.06.1994.
- vii. The Family Settlement Deed executed between Dr. Chandrasheela Deshraj, Mr. Sidharth Deshraj and Mr. Arvind Deshraj dated 05.07.1994.
- viii. Death Certificate of Dr. Chandrasheela Deshraj.
- ix. Mutation Letter from MCD in favour of Mr. Sidharth Deshraj.
- x. General Power of Attorney dated 26.11.1969, executed by Mr. Sidharth Deshraj in favour of Mr. Arvind Deshraj, bearing Document No. 7525, Book No. 4 on pages 148 to 150.

The necessary FIR/Police Complaint vide LR No. 157549/2024 dated 22.03.2024, has also been lodged by the aforesaid Owner regarding the aforesaid lost documents.

It is notified that if any Person, Bank, NBFC, financial institution, governmental, statutory or non-statutory authority, agency, tax or any other department or any other entity etc. has or claims any rights, title, interest, lien, mortgage, demand, charge or claim on the basis of the aforesaid lost/misplaced documents or by way of ownership, possession, mortgage, surety, guarantee, gift, inheritance, agreement, purchase, HUF arrangement, lease, license, understanding, etc. or any other claim, rights, etc. of any nature whatsoever in the above captioned documents or in part thereof or against the Owner or has any sort of dispute/litigation or otherwise has any objection for its absolute sale/transfer/ conveyance to my Client, then such Person, Bank, NBFC, financial institution, governmental, statutory or non-statutory authority, agency, tax or any other department, or any other entity, etc. should forthwith notify the undersigned in respect of the same along with valid Documentary Proof of such claim, dispute, etc. within a period of 21 (twenty one) days from the date of publication of this Notice, failing which it will be deemed that the above captioned property is absolutely free from all sorts of encumbrances of any nature whatsoever and the above named Owner is vested with absolutely perfect, clear and marketable title in respect to the above captioned property with absolute right to sell the same to my Client and to make my Client the sole, absolute and exclusive owner in actual, peaceful and physical possession of the same with clear, clean, indisputable and marketable title of the same and any claim and/or objection raised thereafter shall be considered as waived and abandoned and the same shall not be binding upon my Client.

Vishal Yadav (Partner)
A-379 Defence Colony New Delhi 110024
Ph: 9818500797 | E-mail: vishal@spnlegal.com

real estate

FOR SALE

DELHI

200 sq yds Factory. 20x90 plot, 3.5 floors, 2 power connections and new office in Friends Colony Ind Are, GT Rd Shahdara. 9212420817, 9810038580

DLF

4 BHK (3900 Sqfts) For Sale in DLF - The Arbour, Higher Floor, Good Location, Very Low Prices. Contact - 8700182009

business

BUSINESS PROPOSALS

CARBON BLACK FROM EUROPE

We can offer quality stocks at low prices on a monthly basis as below:

CARBON BLACK N-220 100 MT

Please contact
Euro Exim Ltd
Manchester (UK)
Email: euroeximtd.co.uk

personal

CHANGE OF NAME

I, R Premalatha D/o V S Ramachandran R/o A-284, Second Floor, Kendriya Vihar, Sector-51, Noida, UP-201301, have changed my name to R Premalata for all purposes.

PROPERTY FOCUS

FARM HOUSE & LANDS

Westend Green Rajokari
Chattarpur Vasant Kunj
The Green Kapashera Estate
Bilwasan, Pushpanjali, Palam Farms
Chhawan Kadigarh, Country Club, Uppal Farms, ITC Classic, Silver Limes Farms
Westend Farm Sohna, 1-10 Acres
WAREHOUSE & LANDS

Gurgaon Industry & Lands
NCR Commercial FSI, IT Building, Residential FSI NCR, Institutional, School, College, University & Lands
Hotel, Motel Resort, Banquet & Lands
Agriculture and Solar Projects
Lands 1-100 Acres

Details in all type of Land
Delhi, Gurgaon, Rajasthan
Contact: Harpreet
9810308343, 9810408343

TIMES interact Connecting People, Connecting Needs.

TO ADVERTISE IN MATRIMONIAL

PLEASE CONTACT:

Anshul: 9310298131
Rajeev: 9560002888

Readers are recommended to make appropriate enquires and seek appropriate advice before sending money, incurring any expenses, acting on medical recommendations or entering into any commitment in relation to any advertisement published in this publication. The Times of India Group doesn't vouch for any claims made by the Advertisers of products and services. The Printer, Publisher, Editor, and the owners of The Times of India Group publications shall not be held liable for any consequences, in the event such claims are not honoured by the Advertisers.

TIMES interact Connecting People, Connecting Needs.

TO ADVERTISE IN CLASSIFIEDS PLEASE CALL:

| | |
|--|---|
| TENDER / PUBLIC NOTICE: 9312633518 | CHANGE OF NAME / LOST & FOUND: 8130604727 |
| PROPERTY: 9999499496 | RECRUITMENT & EDUCATION: 9811790649 |
| MATRIMONIAL: 9310298131 | SHOPPING: 9312633518 |
| BUSINESS: 9312633518 | SERVICES / VEHICLES & TRAVEL: 9999499496 |

Betting on hi-tech and the whole genome to beat TB

Malathy.Iyer@timesgroup.com

Mumbai: Treating drug-resistant tuberculosis has not been easy as it could take months to find out just how many anti-TB drugs a patient is resistant to. The delayed diagnosis would mean a delay in starting the patient on the right treatment that would result in him/her spreading the highly infectious bacteria around.

However, last week, the World Health Organisation (WHO) made the detection process a bit easier by putting out an advisory on a single test that can rapidly detect drug resistance to the 18-odd drugs, including new ones, used to treat TB. Instead of nine weeks that a traditional culture test would take to detect resistance to that many drugs, the whole genome sequencing (WGS) would take about two weeks.

BMC First
However, in Mumbai, doctors in the private sector have been using WGS in an increasing manner for the last year.

TIMES Special

The BMC, too, started a pilot project on World TB Day 2023 using WGS to study samples of 2,500 patients with drug-resistant TB.

"Over 1,000 samples have already been tested using WGS," said BMC executive health officer Dr Daksha Shah. "The use of WGS or next-generation sequencing holds a lot of promise for a city such as Mumbai where multi-drug resistance is an issue," said Dr Shah. The city already has the infrastructure to carry out sequencing in a big way: It has multiple private labs and BMC itself has a state-of-the-art gene lab in Kasturba Hospital, Chinchpokli. WGS is not only a good tool for surveillance (to find disease patterns in an area), it will also detect which drug is the most effective for the patient.

WGS Boom in 2 Years
Dr Anirvan Chatterjee of Haystack Analytics, which is conducting the pilot project for the BMC, said India has already moved into molecular diagnostics (in which genomic variants are detected) in a big way. "While we were among the first to start WGS for TB a few years back, there are at least 15 laboratories that have published academic studies in this sphere in recent years," said Dr Chatterjee. He said India would be at the forefront of WGS in the next two years. The only thing needed right now is central health authorities including WGS in the national TB guidelines. In the past two years, Haystack Analytics alone has

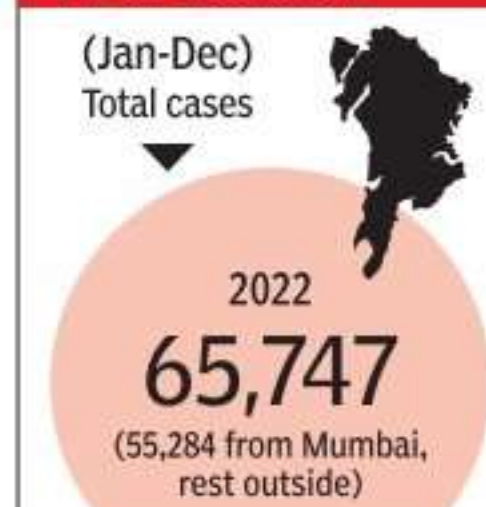
1 TEST TO DETECT RESISTANCE TO 18 DRUGS

Tuberculosis (TB)

- Caused by bacteria (mycobacterium tuberculosis) and affects the lungs more than any other organ
- It spreads through the air when people with lung TB cough, sneeze or spit
- Every year, 10m people fall ill with TB
- Despite being a preventable and curable disease, 1.5m people die of TB each year—making it the world's top infectious killer



TB in Mumbai



been able to analyse 15,000 samples from over 100 cities across the country. "We have tied up with national-level laboratories to provide the test in the private sector at Rs 6,500," he said, adding that the country already has the capacity to carry out 1.5 lakh WGS tests per month. "It could be India's genomic moment as, given our unique public-private partnership in TB management, we would have the largest WGS TB data in the world within a few years."

For Difficult Cases
Pulmonologists Dr Vikas Oswal from Chembur has been prescribing WGS for patients who return with a re-infection. "Many doctors now prefer to simultaneously test the patient with WGS and GeneXpert (a decade-old test that detects resistance to one drug),"

he said. At present, in a city such as Mumbai with a high density of drug-resistant cases, GeneXpert is recommended for all patients in both the public and private sectors. Dr Oswal said he used WGS for a patient who had to travel from Pune because her TB was progressing despite being on medication for months. "Poonam (name changed) was diagnosed with spine TB in her hometown when she was pregnant, and medicines seemed to help her for the next few months," he said. However, a couple of months after her daughter was born, her condition seemed to deteriorate. "There was a time when Poonam was in the ICU for 40 days, had a severe headache, suffered a stroke and could not get out of the bed," said her brother, who came from Pune to consult Dr Oswal in Chem-

bur. "Time was crucial for Poonam, so I asked the family to conduct a WGS," said the doctor. The tests conducted at Bengaluru-based MedGenome showed that Poonam was in pre-XDR stage (severe drug resistance) and was resistant to five of the main drugs given to her. She was started on a new combination of drugs and "got out of the ICU in two days," said her brother. MedGenome's Dr Gunisha Pasricha said, "We are seeing an exponential rise in the number of doctors recommending WGS for patients." The new WHO recommendation is much needed, she said, because resistance to new and repurposed drugs is gradually increasing in the community. "It is important that the National TB Elimination Programme consider these recommendations and implement them."

Tech Boost

➤ The World Health Organisation (WHO) said global efforts to combat TB have saved 75m lives since 2000

➤ On March 20, WHO gave guidelines on the use of a new class of diagnostic technologies: Targeted next-generation whole genome sequencing tests to quickly diagnose drug-resistant tuberculosis (TB)

Current Practice

- In many countries, TB is still diagnosed in sputum samples (mucus coughed-up from the trachea and bronchi) using a microscope
- This method lacks sensitivity and hence misses many TB cases
- In 2013, WHO recommended the use of Xpert MTB/RIF for initial TB diagnosis
- Xpert MTB/RIF detects TB as well as resistance against a single medicine (rifampicin)
- But some TB germs could be resistant to multiple drugs
- The method to find all the drugs that a sputum sample is resistant takes months
- So, a patient cannot be started on appropriate treatment immediately and, therefore, remains infectious

What is WGS

- The genome is the genetic material of an organism, its DNA
- It carries information necessary to create and maintain the organism
- The genome of mycobacterium tuberculosis is a sequence of 4m letters called nucleotides

How WGS Can Help

- WGS, a lab procedure, will reveal the entire genome of an organism in one process
- Instead of nine weeks or more, WGS results take up to 15 to 20 days
- Doctors can identify the best treatment regimen for the patient at the earliest and public health specialists can find resistance patterns over an entire area

Mughal emperors celebrated Holi as Eid-e-Gulabi, says ASI ex-director

Deepak.Lavania@timesgroup.com

Agra: Unlike popular perception that Holi is a festival of Hindus, Muslims, too, had been celebrating the festival with fervour over the centuries, especially during Mughal times.

According to former regional director of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and Padma Shri awardee KK Muhammed, Holi was celebrated like Eid at Agra Fort and Red Fort in Delhi.

"It was called Eid-e-Gulabi (pink Eid) or Aab-e-Pashi (shower of colourful flowers)," he said.

He added that Abul Fazl wrote in his work Ain-i-Akbari that the Mughal emperor used to collect beautiful water guns (pichkaris) of different sizes throughout the year and awaited the festival of colours with excitement. Muhammed told TOI that "this used to be one of the rare occasions when emperor Akbar would come out from his fort in Agra and play Holi with even the common people".

In Tuzuk-e-Jahangiri, emperor Jahangir mentions that he played Holi actively and organised gatherings that were known as 'Mehfil-e-Holi'. Paintings of Jahangir playing Holi with his wife Noor Jahan, have been done by many artists like Govardhan and Rasik. In an interesting painting, Mughal



Mughal emperor Jahangir playing Holi. Abul Fazl wrote in his work Ain-i-Akbari that the emperor used to collect beautiful water guns (pichkaris) of different sizes throughout the year and waited for the festival of colours with excitement

emperor Mohammed Shah Rangila is shown running around the palace with his wife following him with a pichkari. Under the pen name 'Sadarang', Rangila through this composition vividly describes the scenes of Holi. Last Mughal

emperor, Bahadur Shah Zafar, whose Holi phags (songs) are relished even today, allowed his Hindu ministers to tinge his forehead with gular each year.

Throwing more light on the subject, historian Raj Kishore Raje, writer of 'Tavarikh-E-Agra', a book based on the history of Agra, said, "Holi was celebrated in Agra Fort during the reigns of Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan. The practice was continued by their successors, excluding Aurangzeb Alamgir. Bahadur Shah Zafar was another Mughal ruler who loved to celebrate the festival with the Hindu community."

"Not just emperors, Sufi poets used this festival as an opportunity to propagate the message of brotherhood. Sufi saint Sayyid Abdullah Shah Qadri, popularly known as Baba Bulleh Shah, equally revered in India and Pakistan, wrote 'Hori khelungi, keh Bismillah; Nam nabi ki ratan chadi, boond padi Allah; Rang rangeeli ohi khilave, jis seekhi ho fanaa fi Allah' (I will play Holi, while saying Bismillah; like a precious stone in Prophet's name, every drop falls with the rhythm of Allah, only he who has learnt to lose himself in Allah, may play with these colours)," said Ali Nadeem Rezavi, general secretary of Indian History Congress and senior professor at the Aligarh Muslim University.

3 fishermen drowned in Tripura lake during storm, 1 missing

Agartala: Three fishermen drowned in Dumbor Lake, Tripura's biggest water tourism spot in Gomati district, during a storm on Saturday. Another fisherman is feared dead, reports Biswendu Bhat-tacharjee. Police on Sunday initiated a massive search operation. They recovered the body of Hari Das and later of two more fishermen. Search operation is on for the fourth missing person, police said.

All four are from MR Das para in Dhalai district and went to the lake together around 9.30pm for fishing. They took shelter in the middle of the lake, but the wind was too strong which is why they presumably drowned, police said.

"I convey my condolence to the bereaved families and govt will stand by the victims' family in this difficult time," said Tripura CM Manik Saha.

2 govt docs 'reeking of alcohol' at hospital in dry Wardha booked

Nagpur: Two govt doctors have been booked in Maharashtra's Wardha district, where prohibition is in force, after they were found in an inebriated condition while examining a child at Pulgaon rural hospital, police said, reports Soumitra Bose.

Dr Praveesh Dhamane and Dr Maniklal Raut were found "reeking of alcohol" on duty and a bottle containing around 180ml left-over liquor was recovered from their car, police said. Various sections of Maharashtra Prohibition Act have been invoked against them. Their blood samples have been collected and sent for testing to Regional Forensic Science Laboratory in Nagpur.

Sources said the incident occurred on Thursday. The child's family and

friends were furious on finding the doctors drunk. They alerted Wardha police control room. A mob gathered at the hospital by the time police reached there, sources said, adding the offence was registered on Thursday night. A video of the incident also went viral on social media.

Probationary IPS officer Rahul Chavan, holding charge as Pulgaon SDPO, said while offence has been registered, the state health department would be informed.

Deputy director of health services Dr Kanchan Wanere said an inquiry has been initiated under assistant director of medical services Dr Pramod Gavai. "We are waiting for the report to initiate further action," she said.

'Shoddy probe', says father of kids murdered in Budaun

Bareilly: The man whose two minor sons were killed by a saloon owner in UP's Budaun last Tuesday set his bike on fire and threatened to immolate himself on Sunday, demanding answers to why his children were killed and protesting "shoddy police investigation" in the case, reports Kanwardeep Singh.

Vinod Kumar, a 40-year-old contractor said, "I am not concerned with the encounter of the accused or the arrest of the second accused. All I want to know is why were my children killed."

Officials claimed they responded swiftly and assured Kumar that a thorough investigation was in progress.

Meanwhile, SHO Gaurav Vishnoi refuted claims of Kumar attempting self-immolation, attributing his actions to a "severe bout of depression".

Bharat Biotech begins clinical trials of more effective TB vaccine in India

Swati.Bharadwaj@timesgroup.com

Hyderabad: Bharat Biotech, based in Hyderabad, has started clinical trials of MTBVAC, the world's first Mycobacterium tuberculosis vaccine derived from a human source, in India.

The clinical trial will evaluate the vaccine's safety, immunogenicity and efficacy. It is being developed by Spanish biopharma player Biofabri in collaboration with Bharat Biotech.

Sources said Bharat Biotech will have exclusive global manufacturing rights for the live attenuated vaccine that is being developed for newborns, adolescents and adults.

MTBVAC is being developed as a more effective and potentially longer-lasting vaccine than BCG vaccine, that is over 100 years old. It will be for newborns, as well as for the prevention of TB in adults and adolescents for whom

FIGHTING TB

- It's claimed to be world's first Mycobacterium tuberculosis vaccine (MTBVAC) from a human source
- MTBVAC is considered a more effective and potentially longer-lasting vaccine than the over 100-year-old BCG
- The live attenuated vaccine is meant for newborns as well as adolescents and adults

there is currently no effective vaccine, sources said.

The existing BCG vaccine is an attenuated variant of the bovine TB pathogen and has limited effect on pulmonary TB, which is responsible for the disease transmission.

Studying the safety, immunogenicity and efficacy of MTBVAC in the most populated country in the world and one with the highest number of TB cases is key to continue the advancement of the vac-

MTBVAC is currently the only TB vaccine undergoing clinical trials based on a genetically modified form of Mycobacterium tuberculosis, that, unlike BCG, contains all the antigens present in strains that infect humans

cine, which has undergone over three decades of research.

Biofabri CEO Esteban Rodriguez called it a "giant step to test in adults and adolescents in the country where 28% of the world's TB cases accumulate".

Termining the clinical trials in India as a big step in the goal to develop TB vaccines to prevent the life-threatening disease in adults and adolescents, Bharat Biotech executive chairman Dr

Krishna Ella said, "Our quest for a more effective vaccine against TB received a big boost today, with clinical trials in India."

MTBVAC is currently the only TB vaccine undergoing clinical trials based on a genetically modified form of the pathogen, Mycobacterium tuberculosis, that, unlike BCG, contains all the antigens present in strains that infect humans.

The vaccine was developed in Spain's University of Zaragoza's laboratory in collaboration with Dr Brigitte Gicquel of the Pasteur Institute in Paris. Biofabri is Zaragoza University's industrial partner.

The vaccine has recently completed a Phase-2 dose finding trial. A double-blind, controlled Phase-3 clinical trial in newborns was started in 2023 in South Africa, Madagascar and Senegal to compare it with the only TB vaccine in use, the BCG vaccine.

Citizenship Act supersedes passport rules: HC

New Delhi: Delhi HC has noted that Citizenship Act of 1955 supersedes provisions outlined in Passport Manual of 2020. The HC underlined that a subordinate legislation cannot override primary legislation. Justice Subramaniam Prasad passed the order recently on a plea by two minor children challenging the authorities' decision to revoke their Indian passports and refusal to reissue them. The children, born to Indi-

an parents who later migrated to the US, sought the court's intervention to get the authorities to issue them Indian passports free of charge. The plea highlighted that their father had selected to retain his Indian citizenship, while their mother acquired US citizenship under Section 9 of the Citizenship Act.

In its verdict in favour of the children, HC made it clear that they fulfilled the criteria outlined in Section 4(i)(A) of

Citizenship Act, which stipulates that a minor holding citizenship of India and another country must renounce one of them within six months of reaching adulthood to retain the Indian citizenship.

"The Passport Manual is at variance with Section 4 of Citizenship Act, which will undoubtedly prevail over Passport Manual. It is clear that subordinate legislation cannot override the parent legislation," the court said. **TNN**

CHITTARANJAN LOCOMOTIVE WORKS
CORRIGENDUM
No. PCMM/CLW/HWH/E-Procurement/CORRIGENDUM/24/06 Dated: 21.03.2024. The following Corrigendum of E-Tender's is for supply of materials for manufacture of Electric Locomotive. The Prospective/likely suppliers are requested to look up the website www.ireps.gov.in for detailed instructions. These are E-Tenders only electronic offer bids shall be accepted. Sl. No.: 01. Tender Notice no.: Sl No. 035 of PCMM/CLW/HWH/E-Procurement/24/12 Dated: 27/02/2024. Tender No: 14242566. Tender Opening Date: Tender Opening Date is to be read as "09/04/2024" instead of existing entry. PR3-355 PCMM/CLW/Howrah
Like us on: www.facebook.com/cvrrailways

On the occasion of World TB Day
All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi
presents
PUBLIC LECTURE & PANEL DISCUSSION ON
Prevention from TB, Treatment & Role of Nutrition

Welcome & Introduction
Prof. M. Srinivas, Director, AIIMS, New Delhi

Moderator
Prof. Urvashi. B. Singh
Prof. Anant Mohan

Speaker & Panelists
Dr. Amar N Shah, Dr. Sanjeev Sinha, Dr. Rakesh Lodha
Dr. Achal Srivastava, Dr. Govind Makharia, Dr. J. B. Sharma
Dr. Bhavuk Garg, Dr. Rakesh Kumar

Date : 26.03.2024 (Tuesday)
Time : 4:00 to 5:00 PM
Venue : J.L. Auditorium, AIIMS, New Delhi

Scan QR code for live telecast

ENTRY FREE

All are cordially invited
(Please take your seat by 3:45 PM)
Programme will also be live streamed on YouTube AIIMS Channel
<https://youtube.com/live/O14vkN2oY-Q?feature=share>

Please join for tea after the lecture
Parking available at Multi Level Underground Parking (Near Masjid Moth Campus, AIIMS)
For more information please contact:
Media & Protocol Division, AIIMS, New Delhi
Ph: 011- 26593400, 26593514, 26549131

CBC 17/11/21/004/32324

JD(U) releases list of 16, drops 2 MPs, picks pair of turncoats

Party's Nominations Mirror Findings Of Bihar Caste Survey

Manoj Chaurasia
@timesgroup.com

Patna: Bihar CM Nitish Kumar's JD(U) dropped two sitting MPs and picked a pair of turncoats, both of whom joined the party recently, in a list of 16 Lok Sabha candidates announced on Sunday.

Former MP and gangster-politician Anand Mohan's wife, Lovely Anand, was fielded in the Sheohar seat within days of jumping ship. Vijayalaxmi Devi, who joined JD(U) on Saturday, got the ticket for Siwan.

JD(U) fielded Bihar legislative council chairperson Devesh Chandra Thakur in Sitamarhi in place of sitting MP Sunil K Pintu, who had been critical of CM Nitish after the latter parted ways with BJP in August 2022 to form a new govt with RJD and Congress.

While Nitish is now back in NDA, Pintu's outburst



JD(U) leaders release party's list of LS candidates in Patna on Sunday

seems to have cost him a ticket for re-election.

"We have selected the candidates after much deliberations. All our candidates will emerge victorious," said BJP's national vice-president Vashishtha Narayan Singh, who announced the names.

JD(U)'s list suggests the party and its partner BJP have

given weightage to caste while selecting the candidates. The list mirrors the findings of the caste survey in Bihar that identified extremely backward classes (EBCs) and other backward classes (OBCs) as the largest social groups in the state. The two communities together account for 63% of Bihar's population.

Of the 16 candidates fielded by JD(U), 11 represent these two groups.

The party chose Alok Kumar Suman for the Gopalganj seat, which is reserved for Scheduled Castes.

Three candidates represent the upper castes - Rajiv Ranjan, alias Lalan Singh (Munger), Devesh Thakur (Sitamarhi) and Lovely (Sheohar). The list includes a lone Muslim candidate.

Some of the contenders who made the cut are Sunil Kumar (Valmiki Nagar), Rampriti Mandal (Jhanjhanpur), Dileshwar Kamat (Supaul), Mujahid Alam (Kishanganj), Dulalchandra Goswami (Katihar), Santosh Kumar (Purnia), Dinesh Chandra Yadav (Madhepura), Ajay Kumar Mandal (Bhagalpur) Giridhari Yadav (Banka), Kaushendra Kumar (Nalanda), and Chandeshwar Prasad (Jehanabad).

Cong ex-MP & industrialist Jindal joins BJP, bags ticket

Manash Gohain
@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: BJP on Sunday decided to field Naveen Jindal, who heads steel and power giant JSPL, from Kurukshetra, hours after he switched over to the saffron party.

Jindal—an accused in the coal scam, which was a key election issue for BJP in 2014—was twice elected to Lok Sabha from Kurukshetra. In 2014, he had finished third when BJP's Raj Kumar Saini won, and was not fielded by Congress in the 2019 polls.

The youngest son of OP Jindal, he serves as chairman of Jindal Steel and Power Ltd (JSPL) and also leads lobby group Indian Steel Association. A keen polo player, Naveen Jindal is credited with ensuring that restrictions on flying the Tricolour were eased. His father was power minister in Haryana govt, while mother Savitri Jindal also served as minister in the state till 2014.

Apart from being an accused in three 'Coalgate' cases, his company JSPL was also being probed by the Enforcement Directorate for foreign exchange related viola-



Steel magnate Naveen Jindal being welcomed by BJP general secretary Vinod Tawde in New Delhi on Sunday. Jindal, an accused in the coal scam, was twice elected to Lok Sabha from Kurukshetra

violations. In 2015, govt had cancelled two coal blocks allocated to JSPL during an auction suspecting bid rigging.

Although there was a buzz of his joining BJP, the move is a setback for Congress as he was seen to be close to Rahul Gandhi, the former party president.

"I represented Congress Party in Parliament as MP from Kurukshetra for 10 years. I thank the Congress leadership and the then PM

Manmohan Singh. Today I am resigning from the primary membership of the Congress Party," said Jindal on social media before making the switch. The businessman said he wants to contribute to PM Narendra Modi's 'Viksit Bharat' dream.

Jindal joined BJP in the presence of its general secretary Vinod Tawde, who said the steel tycoon's presence in the party will help govt's agenda of boosting the country's economy and prosperity.

After being denied LS ticket, MDMK MP tries to kill himself

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Erode: Sitting Tamil Nadu MP A Ganeshamoorthy of MDMK was in critical condition after purportedly attempting suicide at his home on Sunday, triggering speculation that he tried to end his life over being denied a ticket to seek re-election from Erode.

A family member told TOI that Ganeshamoorthy, 76, started vomiting and complained of uneasiness around

A family member said that Ganeshamoorthy, 76, had 'consumed insecticide-laced water'

10.15am. "He told us that he has consumed insecticide-laced water."

The three-time MP was hospitalised in Erode, from where he was referred to a private hospital in Coimbatore at around 2.30pm. Till late on Sunday, there was no statement from MDMK on Ganeshamoorthy being disheartened about not being fielded in Erode for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

Day after raids, Mahua asks EC for poll curbs on central agencies

Kolkata: Trinamool's Krishnanagar candidate Mahua Moitra filed a complaint with Election Commission on Sunday, alleging that the CBI raids on her home and election offices after the model code of conduct kicked in were nothing but an attempt to "throttle" her campaign.

Moitra urged the poll panel to issue or create guidelines for central agencies till the model code of conduct remains in force, barring them from "coercive action" against candidates and other political leaders.

She said the CBI search of her home yielded nothing, proving it was a smear campaign to benefit her political opponent. Such a ploy, she said, runs contrary to EC's objective of providing a "level-playing field" to all parties.

Moitra was disqualified from Parliament last year. TNN

DMK mantri's rant against PM, Sanatan draws BJP fire

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Lashing out at the INDIA bloc for making derogatory remarks against PM Modi and 'Sanatan Dharma', BJP leader Anurag Thakur demanded an apology for the disparaging comment made by Tamil Nadu minister Anitha R Radhakrishnan and questioned the silence of senior Congress leaders.

BJP said it would approach the EC seeking action against Radhakrishnan after he used expletives against Modi at a public rally. Calling DMK MP Kanimozhi a pseudo-feminist as she was on the stage and did not protest, BJP leaders shared the clip on social media in which the minister purportedly used an expletive in Tamil.

Criticising Congress's "hateful" politics and contrasting it with BJP's "commitment to development",



Every time the opposition hurled abuses at the PM, he emerged more popular, Thakur said

Thakur slammed Radhakrishnan for his "nauseating act". "Yesterday, one minister of the INDIA Alliance, in front of a female leader of his party, used very derogatory remarks in a very objectionable language for the prime minister of the country. The words he used for the most popular leader in the world are condemnable and there is no place for such things in a democracy. Derogatory comments against the PM are objectionable. Democracy has no place for such abusive language. INDI must apologise for its minister's abusive comment. Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge are silent on the incident. It proves they are trying to end Sanatan," Thakur said.

K Annamalai, BJP's state chief, claimed that DMK leaders had reached a new low in their "uncouth behaviour" and said BJP would take up the matter with the EC and the state police chief seeking the "strictest action" against Radhakrishnan.

Stating that every time the opposition hurled abuses at the PM, he emerged more popular, Thakur said, "When destruction befalls man, it is the conscience which dies first. The conscience of those in INDI Alliance is dead." He added that the number of abuses hurled at Modi by opposition leaders had reached 120.

Every time the opposition hurled abuses at the PM, he emerged more popular, Thakur said

Thakur slammed Radhakrishnan for his "nauseating act". "Yesterday, one minister of the INDIA Alliance, in front of a female leader of his party, used very derogatory remarks in a very objectionable language for the prime minister of the country. The words he used for the most popular leader in the world are condemnable and there is no place for such things in a democracy. Derogatory comments against the PM are objectionable. Democracy has no place for such abusive language. INDI must apologise for its minister's abusive comment. Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge are silent on the incident. It proves they are trying to end Sanatan," Thakur said.

K Annamalai, BJP's state chief, claimed that DMK leaders had reached a new low in their "uncouth behaviour" and said BJP would take up the matter with the EC and the state police chief seeking the "strictest action" against Radhakrishnan.

Stating that every time the opposition hurled abuses at the PM, he emerged more popular, Thakur said, "When destruction befalls man, it is the conscience which dies first. The conscience of those in INDI Alliance is dead." He added that the number of abuses hurled at Modi by opposition leaders had reached 120.

OPPOSITIONS TURN ALLIES FOR 'PALM SUNDAY'



Union minister & BJP candidate Rajeev Chandrasekhar greets Congress candidate Shashi Tharoor on the occasion of 'Palm Sunday' in Thiruvananthapuram on Sunday

2 key anti-CAA figures in Assam come together for poll meet

Dibrugarh: Akhil Gogoi, president of Rajgor Dal and MLA from Sivasagar, took to streets of Moran town in Dibrugarh district on Sunday to campaign for Lurinjyoti Gogoi, who is standing from Dibrugarh in general elections on Assam Jatiya Parishad (AJP) ticket, reports Rajib Dutta.

The two prominent figures of the anti-CAA movement in the state, Akhil and Lurinjyoti, walked side by side engaging in conversations with locals, and showcasing a unified front.

The campaign received an overwhelming response from residents, who gathered in large numbers to hear the two men speak. Local shopkeepers, vendors, and the youth were seen enthusiastically listening to and pledging their support for the AJP candidate.

Akhil, known for his grassroots activism and vocal criticism of the incumbent govt, brought his fiery energy to the campaign trail as he urged the people of Moran town to rally behind Lurinjyoti and AJP.

"Lurinjyoti represents new hope for Assam. I urge you to support him. It is high time that we stand together and fight for our rights," he said.

Cash-hit K'taka Cong pins hopes on netas to foot kin's poll bills

Sandeep Moudgal
@timesgroup.com

Bengaluru: Congress nominate sons, daughters and relatives of top functionaries and ministers in Karnataka for the Lok Sabha elections may have come in for severe flak, but sources suggest it is a shrewd move given the serious financial crunch the party is facing. Of the 24 candidates named so far, eight are close relatives of ministers and another four of top functionaries.

The party had initially planned to field ministers themselves, but the move was met with stiff resistance. Also, the possibility of creating several vacancies in assembly segments and hence giving BJP the chance to topple the govt through 'Operation Lotus' prompted the party to settle for kin of these ministers.

Now, Congress is facing allegations of dynastic politics, but functionaries say the party is hoping seniors will foot the campaigning bill of their kin. Moreover, ministers in charge of districts will now be held re-



Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah said that the party adhered to 'people's opinions' while picking nominees

sponsible for losses. "The leadership has given district in-charge ministers the responsibility of ensuring win for their kin and the party," said a senior functionary. "An added insurance is that they will spend serious time and money on polls."

The leadership is hoping that it will ease the "financial burden" on the party. "We expect they will raise funds locally and not be dependent on the party which is facing a serious financial crunch after its bank accounts were frozen," said a party functionary.

Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah continued to toe the official line that the party adhered to "people's opinions" while picking nominees.

'I could've been a cabinet minister in 2017, but I chose the harder path'

Team TOI

Baramati is set to witness one of most interesting poll battles in the 2024 Lok Sabha election, with Supriya Sule, the three-time MP from the constituency, pitted against her sister-in-law Sharad Pawar, whose candidature is almost certain. Sule, the working president of the NCP (Sharadchandra Pawar), said the BJP had to field 'a Pawar against a Pawar' to make a dent on veteran leader Sharad Pawar's home turf. She recently visited TOI's office in Pune where, during an interview, she said if her ideology was not strong, she would have

The Interview KEY PLAYER

been a cabinet minister in 2017 (that is, during Narendra Modi's first term as PM). She did not go into details. She also said the possibility of reconciliation with cousin Ajit Pawar is unlikely. Excerpts:

Q. Does the party's split hurt emotionally and politically?

Supriya Sule: Time is the biggest healer. I cannot sit and cry over things that happened in the past. I have moved on. It is really overwhelming to see the support that my party and I get from the people. Politically, I feel a sense of responsibility. People listen with a lot of expectation, and I feel that I should not let them down. It is not a personal battle anymore. We are in politics to serve people.

Q. Any possibility of reconciliation with Ajit Pawar?

Sule: When one makes a mistake once (Ajit Pawar joined the BJP and was sworn in deputy CM in 2019), it is understandable, but if he keeps making the same mistake again and again, it is not a mistake but a choice. There is no probability (of reconciliation

There is no probability (of reconciliation with Ajit Pawar). That ship has sailed



— Supriya Sule | BARAMATI MP & WORKING PRESIDENT, NCP (SHARADCHANDRA PAWAR)

with Ajit Pawar). That ship has sailed. Now he (Ajit Pawar) has his organisation and we have ours. But, I bear no grudge. The others (from Ajit Pawar's party members) are still in touch with me and I meet many of them socially. I even speak to Narendra Modi and Amit Shahji when we meet in Parliament.

Q. Any communication with Ajit Pawar after the split?

Sule: I am happy to talk to him. He has to respond, but he does not.

Q. How has senior Pawar personally reacted to the split in the NCP and family?

Sule: He (Sharad Pawar) is the same person in his personal life as he is in public life. He does not dwell on the past. He accepts the present situation immediately and moves on. He is practical, which helps him in decision-making.

Q. Was Sharad Pawar aware of Ajit Pawar's oath ceremony in 2019?

Sule: Since the offer came to us from them, what was the harm in considering it? However, if my ideology was not strong, I would have been a cabinet minister in 2017. I had the option then, and even with

Sule: We never denied that we were in a dialogue with the BJP, but a dialogue and an oath ceremony are two entirely different things. It does not give you any authority to close the deal. If we had supported the oath ceremony (in 2019), why would we have taken him (Ajit Pawar) back? What happened in 2023 would have happened in 2019. If Sharad Pawar had supported that oath ceremony, why did we fight back? Were negotiations on (with BJP)? Yes. Were we considering it? Yes. But, were we told about the oath? The answer is: 'No.' If we had supported it, we would have also gone with him.

Q. Why did your party consider joining hands with the BJP in 2019?

Sule: Since the offer came to us from them, what was the harm in considering it? However, if my ideology was not strong, I would have been a cabinet minister in 2017. I had the option then, and even with

60 SECONDS WITH SULE

Scan this QR Code to watch a VIDEO of Supriya Sule talk about her favourite hobby, author and what she would've done if she wasn't a politician

Pallavi Dempo 1st woman in Goa to get BJP LS ticket

Panaji: One of the most influential business families of Goa, the Dempos, have entered the poll fray with BJP on Sunday giving the South Goa ticket to group director and chairman Shrinivas Dempo's wife Pallavi, reports Murari Shetye.

This is the first time in Goa's poll history that BJP has picked a woman candidate for Lok Sabha polls. Dempo's foray into the rough and tumble of political life comes over 60 years after Vaikunthrao Sinai Dempo, Shrinivas's great uncle, contested the first assembly polls in 1963 after Goa's Liberation on a Congress ticket.

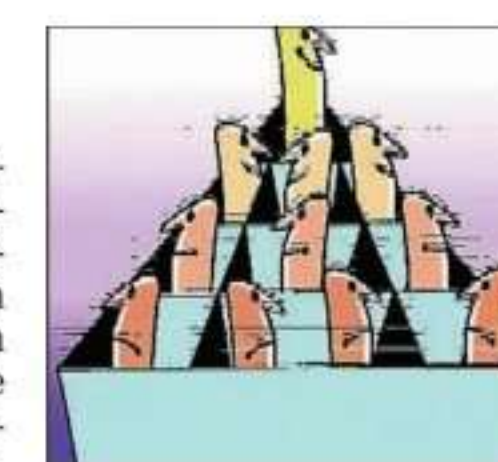
BJP's decision to pick a woman candidate over its party cadre comes after a nudge from PM Modi and the failure of the state unit to present a winnable face, who would be able to pull the weight over and above the party's vote bank.

Cong vows SC/ST/OBC quota in private higher edu institutes

Subodh Ghildiyal
@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Congress will introduce reservation for backward classes in private institutions of higher learning in line with quotas in force in govt institutions, with the party manifesto set to promise a clutch of affirmative action plans catering to Dalits and Mandal groups.

The party's 2024 election manifesto states that if voted to power, Congress will bring legislation to introduce SC/ST/OBC quotas in graduation and post-graduation courses in private universities. While the Congress-led UPA govt had introduced the 93rd constitutional amendment to enable quotas for OBCs as well as SC/STs in public and private institu-



tions, the enabling Act limited it to introducing OBC reservation in govt's higher education institutions, which extended Mandal reservations to IITs and IIMs, sources said.

Now, Congress will go a step further and promise that it will bring a law in Parliament to extend caste reservations for all backward classes in private universities. This would be a novel social justice move in view of the proliferation of the private sec-

tor in education, with universities run by private bodies coming up in large numbers to make up for the shortfall in intake capacity.

The idea during the UPA, sources recalled, was apparently to extend quota frontiers to the private educational sector, but the Centre had balked in view of the controversy triggered by the move to implement 27% OBC quota in IITs and IIMs among others.

As per sources, the manifesto is also set to take a major policy step with the objective of promoting greater intake of SC/ST/OBCs in private firms. The party is in favour of setting up a "diversity commission" that would be mandated with "measuring, monitoring and promoting" diversity in public and private firms and educational institutions.

After backlash, Cong drops Jaipur pick Sunil Sharma

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Jaipur: Days after a controversy erupted over the candidature of Congress's Sunil Sharma from the Jaipur Lok Sabha seat, the party on Sunday replaced him with former minister Pratap Singh Khachariyawas as the party's new nominee from Jaipur.

Sharma's candidature, despite his reported association with 'The Jaipur Dialogues', a platform for "right-thinking people" that frequently indulged in criticising the Congress first family, had triggered surprise and sharp reactions from within the party, including from former Union minister Shashi Tharoor.

Quoting Sharma's tweet where he had called Tharoor "Rahul Gandhi with a thesaurus he stole from a library on his way out!", Tharoor had made his surprise over Sharma's candidature public. "He must have undergone some sort of Pauline epiphany on the road to 24 Akbar! This is just one of several dozen tweets from his handle attacking me," Tharoor said on social media.

Though Sharma denied being associated with the controversial platform or its anti-Congress content, his candidature also saw a backlash from Congress workers and supporters, who demanded that the party should reconsider its decision to field him from Jaipur.

Sharma's replacement, Pratap Singh Khachariyawas, a prominent leader of the Congress and former minister in the Ashok Gehlot govt was pressed into service even though it was widely believed that Khachariyawas was not keen to contest. He had lost the 2023 assembly polls to debutant BJP candidate Gopal Sharma.

On Sunday, Congress also nominated Murari Lal Meena, a Sachin Pilot loyalist and the party's sitting Dausa legislator, to contest from the Dausa Lok Sabha seat. In 2003, Meena contested from Bandikui on a BSP ticket and won the polls. He later joined the Congress and shifted to Dausa, from where he had won the assembly polls twice.

A QWERTY KIND OF LOVE

How Typewriters Are Charming Their Way Back Into The Digital Age



NOLAN, THE SCRIPT-TYPER

This year's Oscar-winner, 'Oppenheimer' director Christopher Nolan, a confessed 'Luddite' (an individual who prefers not to use new technologies), is reported to type out the original idea for his movies on his father's old typewriter as well as a computer that has no internet

KEY HITS

Before Independence, there were no manufacturers of typewriters in India. More than 20 international brands marketed their brands here and drove sales

After 1947, govt issued an order to manufacturers that unless they collaborated with India, they would not be allowed to operate

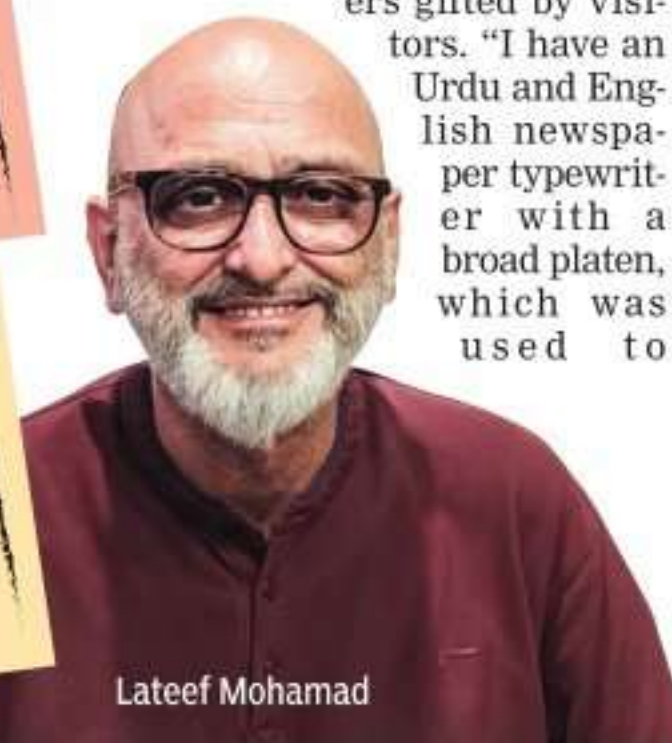
The American brand Remington was the first to collaborate with India to manufacture typewriters, and the Remington Brand India Limited was formed

Muskaan.Ahmed@timesgroup.com

At the Old Curiosity Shop in Chennai, you cannot just buy a typewriter, you have to earn it. You have to convince Lateef Mohamad of your genuine appreciation and reverence for the instrument. "Unless I'm convinced about a customer's sincerity towards typewriters and am confident they are not merely looking to 'buy' something because they can, I don't give them anything," says the antique store owner, who has more than 150 typewriters of varying vintage on his shelves.

Of late, say Lateef and other antique store owners, 'genuine' enthusiasts are streaming in, mostly young adults and vintage enthusiasts, who are rediscovering the charm of typewriters. Alongside Lateef, several typewriter collectors, preservers and guardians of typewriter heritage are constantly working towards keeping the art alive.

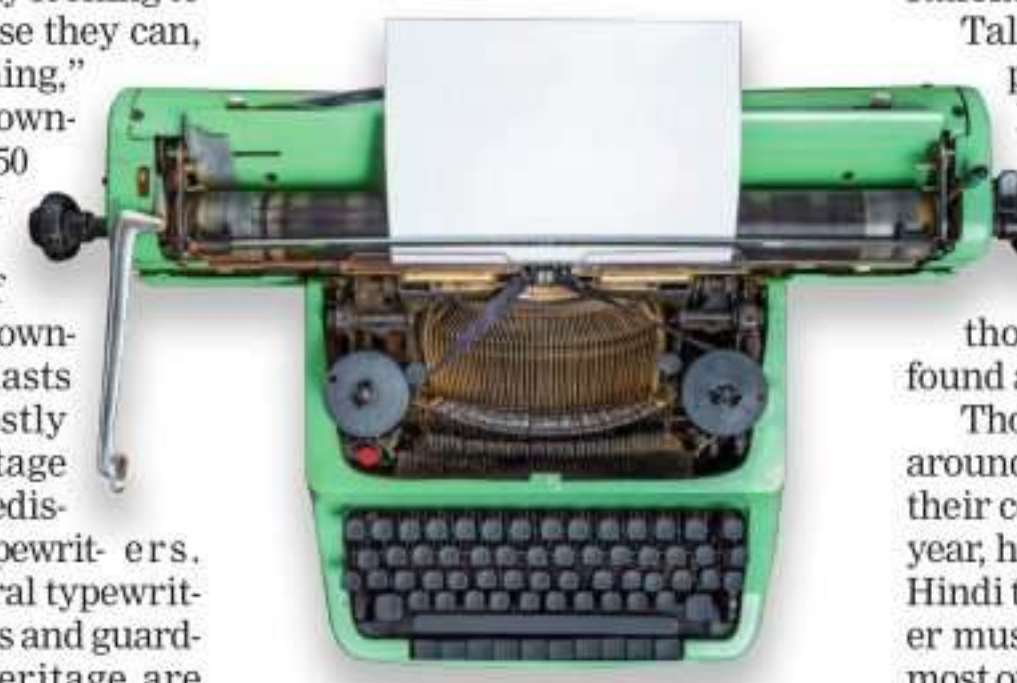
As a part of his collection, Lateef has a variety of Hermes, Remington Rand 1910, Remington Silent, Brother, and Blinkensderfer, some rescued from scrap collectors, others gifted by visitors. "I have an Urdu and English newspaper typewriter with a broad platen, which was used to



Lateef Mohamad

make newspapers in the early 1910s. These are two of the rarest I own. I also have a cursive English typewriter and one with the English keyboard QWERTZ, which came before the more well-known QWERTY."

In New Delhi, Rajesh Patla, who runs Universal Typewriter Company, a 112-year-old typewriter sales and preservation business, says he is surprised at the number of people



who want to use a typewriter. "In this digital age, where you can easily get distracted by looking something up on your computer, youngsters prefer using typewriters. Many of them call me after a month or two of buying a typewriter, saying they were able to finish their script or a novel they had been working on at a much faster pace. And since there is no room for error, unlike the backspace option on our computer keyboards, they are more focused," he says.

Keertana G Krishna, a first-year MA English student, decided to buy a typewriter two years ago for personal correspondence. "People love the typewritten letters and notes I send on special occasions. It's become a hit among friends," she says.

Rajesh says he has more than 100 typewriters for sale on his

website and has some of the rarest ones too like the Hermes (Baby model), which is said to be one of the smallest and lightest to ever be produced. Made in Switzerland in 1959, it weighs only 1.8kg. "I have a 125-year-old Corona machine, which has a three-line keyboard. I also have typewriters in regional languages such as Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada, Urdu, Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi and Bengali as well as a Russian keyboard."

Talking about the restoration process, the 71-year-old says he 'cannibalises' a typewriter for the parts he cannot find. "It is the process of fitting parts of one typewriter to the other if those parts cannot be made or found at all."

Though he gets enthusiasts from around the world looking to add to their collection — for example, last year, he had a French couple buy a Hindi typewriter for their typewriter museum in Paris — Rajesh says most of his regular buyers are from typing institutes in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Karnataka, states that still promote typewriting.

M Murali, who runs a typewriting institute in Chennai, says, "We keep thinking that enrolment may dip but every year we see more people signing up for classes. We get IT professionals, engineers, and govt job aspirants enrolling them."



Rajesh Patla

self to pass the speed test at their job interviews," he says. "Since juniors are supposed to type at a speed of 30 words a minute, seniors 45 words a minute, and the higher levels at 60 words a minute, their typing speed increases as they advance to the other levels. That's why many people join the course and learn it in two to six months."

The number of typewriter mechanics, however, is dwindling. "There are only a handful who can be trusted to get the job done," says Murali. Since there are no manufacturers anymore, getting spare parts is not all that easy but D Dhayalan, a 60-year-old mechanic, knows where to get them. "I've been repairing typewriters for more than 45 years now, and know where to source the parts, which is mostly Delhi. But the youth should learn how to repair typewriters themselves, as those in the field are reducing," he says.

Helping those who cannot find a local mechanic, M Prakash, who runs a YouTube channel with the same name, posts videos on how to look after the machine and also teaches typewriting. "Being able to find an authentic typewriter mechanic is such a hassle. So, I teach my subscribers how to remove and replace parts and keys and help them find suitable washers to fit into the machine, and even teach them basic maintenance," says Prakash.

DIVING TO SAVE CORALS



Muskaan.Ahmed@timesgroup.com

Even before seeing the world beneath the ocean, 59-year-old Uma Mani from Dindigul was already trying to capture their shapes, colours, and beauty through her paintbrush. "But it was only after my first dive at the age of 49 that I realised I had not been doing justice to the beauty of what lies beneath. At the same time, seeing the amount of waste in the water broke my heart; I had to do something about it," says Uma, a painter and Professional Association of Diving Instructors-certified diver who was recently named Sony BBC Earth Champion for her work as a coral reef activist.

Uma had always been passionate about painting, but her grandmother felt it was a waste of her time and paper and she told her to focus on 'looking after' her family. At 45, after her son began going to college, she revived her passion for painting. "Initially, it was all tulips and roses. One of my friends even decided to exhibit a few of my paintings. But after I attended a documentary by a French filmmaker on coral reefs, everything changed for me, and that's how it began," she says.

This incident, which piqued her curiosity, also grew into a newfound passion for preserving the delicate and important ecosystem through her art. She began watching countless diving CDs from divers in the Maldives and would spend hours at the Marine Research Institute Maldives, Male looking at pictures of coral reefs. "From 2012, I began extensively painting coral reefs



THE CORAL WOMAN: Uma talks to a few scientists to learn more on coral reef conservation; Uma's paintings

and would put up an exhibition every World Earth Day in April to spread awareness about the need to conserve them. In one of the exhibitions, a visitor asked me if I had ever seen the reefs. I was taken aback by the question, but at the same time I challenged myself," she says.

Uma learned to swim and did her first dive in 2014. "It changed my life. It was as though the ocean was engulfing me in its beauty, and I didn't want to come up for air. I noticed the way fishes swam across, around, and through the reefs. But at the same time, I saw waste settled on the seabed and plastic covers just floating around. That motivated me to learn more about the ecosystem and paint about it," says Uma, who now meets scientists, marine biologists, and researchers to learn more about coral reefs; recently a documentary was made on her titled 'The Coral Woman'. "Coral reefs are home to more than 4,000 species of fishes. They also act as natural barriers in case of high tides, hurricanes, storms, and tsunamis. By managing our waste properly and not polluting water bodies, we will be saving our planet from disasters."

Uma says she pays 50% of what she makes from her coral reef paintings to coral restoration groups. She has an international exhibition coming up this year.



Uma Mani

Women at centre of Cong's '30L new jobs' LS poll pledge

To Create 20L Additional Govt Posts At Cost Of '₹1,200Cr'

Subodh.Ghildiyal @timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Congress's promise of creating 30 lakh new jobs in the central govt is part of an elaborate plan the party has worked out for women's empowerment.

The 'Yuva Nyay' of 2024 manifesto pledges that if voted to power, Congress govt will create 30 lakh new jobs besides giving "assured first job" to youth below 25 years through year-long apprenticeship in private and public companies.

The party has identified 10 lakh vacancies in various central govt departments, and promised to fill them according to a calendar that will be worked out. The rest of the 20 lakh new jobs would be exclusively for women at various levels.

Sources said govt will create



IN FRONT SEAT

ate 14 lakh additional posts of 'anganwadi' workers, and each village with a population above 2,500 persons will be allocated an additional ASHA worker, which will result in four lakh new posts. Similarly, more midday meal workers will be de-

puted, taking the total number to 20 lakh.

As per the calculations, the new posts will cost the Centre an additional monthly expense of Rs 1,200 crore.

Besides, every gram panchayat will create positions of 'Adhikar Maitri', which

Cong fields tribal face from Bastar

Congress has nominated its senior tribal leader and former minister Kawasi Lakhma to contest the Bastar (ST) seat in Chhattisgarh, replacing its sitting MP Deepak Baij, who is also the president of state Congress unit. With the nomination of Lakhma (71) from Bastar, Congress has announced its candidates for seven constituencies out of the 11 Lok Sabha seats in the state. **TNN**

will be manned by women who would provide para legal services to women about their legal rights. There will be a total of 2.5 lakh such posts across gram panchayats, and they will receive honorarium from panchayats.

Freedom of religion should be respected: Kerala church

Chethan.Kumar @timesgroup.com

Kochi: Freedom of religion should be respected in the country, said Archbishop of Verapoly Joseph Kalathiparambil in a statement issued by public relations department of the archdiocese of Verapoly in Kerala on Sunday.

The archbishop called for continued prayers so that the upcoming elections take place as per God's will. He also called for prayers for a governing system in the country, which would uphold human dignity, and is bound to ensure justice, equality and fraternity.

In accordance with the call by Catholic Bishops' Conference of India to observe March 22 as national day of fasting and prayers across all dioceses in India, Kalathiparambil led the prayer gathering at St Francis Assisi Cathedral in Ernakulam on Friday, the statement said.

Vicar generals of Verapoly archdiocese Monsgr Mathew Kallunkal, Monsgr Mathew Elanjitmatom, Chancellor Fr Ebbin Arackal, Fr Peter Kochuveetil and Fr Emmanuel Panackal, along with hundreds of devotees took part in the gathering. **TNN**

22 fined ₹1.1L for car wash with potable water in parched B'luru

Chethan.Kumar @timesgroup.com

Bengaluru: Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) has collected Rs 1.1 lakh in fines in 3 days from 22 cases of violations related to using potable water from Cauvery river and borewells for car wash.

BWSSB issued a notice on March 10, informing the public of a fine of Rs 5,000 for each violation of potable water use. It specified activities for which potable water is banned, such as car washing, gardening, and large construction projects.

"The city is facing a water crisis, and our orders were in line with that. We started enforcing the orders on restrictions only from Friday after carrying out awareness until then. Between Friday and today (Sunday), we have booked 22 cases and collected spot fines from people and given them receipts like traffic police do," BWSSB chairman V Ram Prasath Manohar told TOI.

While there are six major



A child carries a bucket to fill water in Bengaluru on March 14

activities that the board is looking at, the focus in the first phase of enforcement has been car washing, he added. "People are using sprays and hoses connected directly to taps and a lot of water is wasted. All cases were based on our spot inspections and complaints from local residents. We will continue with our drive," he said.

According to BWSSB, most cases came from board's southeast division — 13 cases worth Rs 65,000 — while the remaining are spread across east, north, northeast and southwest divisions. Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah, deputy CM and Bengaluru development minister DK Shivakumar, and officials from BWSSB and BBMP have been allaying fears of the city completely running out of water this summer, but none of them have denied the crisis at hand.

With both southwestern and northeastern monsoons having failed to recharge groundwater tables in the city, BWSSB had, as early as second week of Jan, written to Cauvery Neeravari Nigama (under water resources department) to prioritise Bengaluru's drinking needs and reserve water at the KRS and Kabini reservoirs.

Conceding that a crisis was imminent if not acted, BWSSB engineer-in-chief Suresh B had said the demand was to reserve 12mcm of the 30mcm available at KRS and Kabini dams together at the time.

About 6,900 out of the 14,000 govt borewells in the city are dry as on date and the Karnataka CM is on record to say there is at least a 500 MLD shortage in Bengaluru.

DMK, AIADMK to team up against me: BJP TN chief

Coimbatore: BJP's TN president and Coimbatore LS candidate K Annamalai predicted on Sunday that rivals DMK and AIADMK would soon join hands in their desperation to defeat him. He slammed DMK for not developing Coimbatore and AIADMK for allegedly looting the state when it was in govt. Annamalai said one of the parties would slow down their campaign, enabling the other to gain the upper hand so that BJP could be defeated.

"DMK and AIADMK are not together, but they will be after April 10," he told reporters. "They will enable vote transfer to the other party. We will still emerge victorious."

Dismissing AIADMK candidate Singai Ramachandran's challenge to a debate on "BJP's contribution to Coimbatore", Annamalai said his fight was not with candidates. "People will soon know what BJP has done for the city." **TNN**

BSP fields Solanki from GB Nagar, Cong neta's daughter from Agra

Continued from P1

BSP has fielded Majid Ali from Saharanpur, dropping its winner Haji Fazlur Rahman and Vijendra Singh from Bijnor, ignoring Malook Nagar who had won the seat for BSP in 2019. Similarly, Mozahid Hussain has been fielded from Amroha as the party sacked its MP Kunwar Danish Ali, who is now a Congress candidate from the same seat.

Among other candidates, Shripal Singh has been fielded from Kairana, Dara Singh Prajapati from Muzaffarnagar, and Mohammad Irfan Saifi from Moradabad. From Rampur, it has given tickets to Zishan Khan, Shaikat Ali from Sambhal, Devvrat Tyagi from Meerut and Praveen Bansal from Baghpat.

Rajendra Singh Solanki from Gautam Budh Nagar,



The lists also included the name of Sarika Singh Baghel, who had become the youngest woman MP in 2009 Lok Sabha elections

Abid Ali from Aonla, Anis Ahmad Khan Aanis Phool Babu from Pilibhit and Dodaram Verma from Shahjahanpur (SC) complete BSP's first list.

While the first list had 16 candidates, the party released another list later on Sunday evening, with nine more names. It included Sarika Singh Baghel, who had become the youngest wom-

an MP in 2009 Lok Sabha elections which she contested from Hathras on RLD's ticket, from Etawah reserved seat. She has been associated with both SP and BJP. The other woman candidate, Puja Amrohi, is the daughter of prominent Congress leader Satya Behan, who was a Rajya Sabha member from UP. She has been fielded from Agra.

Maha MLA quits Cong for Sena, in line for ticket

Pearl.DSouza@timesgroup.com

Nagpur: After almost a month of dilly-dallying, Maharashtra's senior leader and Congress Umred MLA Raju Parwe resigned from state legislature and joined the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena on Sunday, reports Abhishek Choudhari.

Parwe's prize for switching loyalty is almost certain to be a ticket for Ramtek Lok Sabha constituency.

Parwe was welcomed into Sena by Shinde at his official residence in Mumbai. He had been in talks with Sena since earlier this month, but at that time BJP was aggressively pushing for the Ramtek seat.

As reported by TOI on Friday, BJP seems to have decided to give Ramtek seat to Sena. This again opened the gates for Parwe to step in.

Bengaluru: At a time when Bengaluru is reeling under severe water crisis, a 75-year-old retired army officer strapped on his shoes and set off to live his dream 18,000km away amidst penguins and humpback whales on sheets of ice. On Feb 14, Lt Col (retd) Upendra Kalyan left his hometown for a rendezvous with Antarctic islands.

He was one of the only 10 from a group of 140 expeditioners to dare to back-dive into the frigid waters of the Atlantic Ocean.

Kalyan was among 12 Indians who were part of the expedition. The Indian team first flew from Mumbai to Argentina via Dubai, before setting sail aboard Ocean Albatross from Ushuaia, a seaport at the southern tip of



Kalyan was among 12 Indians who were part of the expedition

the South American nation. The team crossed the Drake Passage, known for its tough sea conditions, between South America's Cape Horn and the South Shetland Islands of Antarctica. "The crossing took 36 hours, during which several passengers experienced seasickness," he said.

The ship anchored a few kilometres off the shore of

the main island of Antarctica, from where zodiac motor boats connected them to the island. This was followed by a trek of two to three hours braving extreme cold and strong winds, with penguins, seals and birds of the Antarctic ecosystem in plain sight.

"Despite spending nights on the ship because of regulations, it was a lifelong ambition fulfilled at the age of 75. It was an incredible achievement and an unforgettable experience," said Kalyan.

One of the most memorable moments for him was on the evening of Feb 23, when the ship's captain invited volunteers to participate in the 'polar plunge' into the freezing Atlantic Ocean.

"...Out of the 140 expeditioners, only 10 volunteered, and I bravely did a back-dive into the ocean," Kalyan said.



CONTRAPUNTO

What is happiness? It's a moment before you need more happiness

-DON DRAPER OF MAD MEN

Phony Joys

When the young are less happy than the old, personal tech could be the reason

It's a near-universal phenomenon: The cult of youth. Books to movies and music, most countries' cultural indicators would have us believe that it is their young who are really living it up. While the elders are sighing it down. In reality, the picture is rather uneven. This is an interesting aspect of World Happiness Report 2024. It highlights a wider social science finding that there is divergence between countries on whether the young or the old report greater life satisfaction. India, interestingly, is an outlier among its income-group peers.

Happy old men | Generally, high-income countries report overlapping increases in age and life satisfaction. Highly representative of this income-group is US, with those under 30 seriously lagging those 60 and older. Many experts put the blame squarely on social media and an overall decline in "pro-social behaviour". India is at a very different stage of economic development. What would explain younger people already showing lower life satisfaction here?



Happier old women | Equally interestingly, higher levels of life satisfaction are reported for older Indian women than older men. Here, too, a crucial hinge is older women's wider and more diverse social networks, including more friends and confidants. Loneliness can be hydra-headed in its impact on perception and memory, leading one to attach more importance to the negative aspects of one's life.

Group pic | Thinking seriously about these fuzzy matters is quite important. Not to lock everyone into the same idyllic picture of youth or age. Or push some draconian mass treatment. Individual experience of well-being forms the bedrock of the collective experience. Policymakers need to learn the right lessons, to nudge the collective in the direction of greater overall well-being.

Young and stuck | The shortage of quality jobs has to be taking a toll. Fixing this is obviously imperative. But another reason Indian and US youth could be experiencing something similar despite living in different-stage economies, is that the smartphone became our naveline at the same time. In both countries, influencers could be shaping unrealistic expectations of work-life balance to comparable degrees.

Holi-by-self | There will be infinite Holi selfies today. And these will tell us little about how much happy exchange of colours is taking place between family, friends and strangers. Watching cricket on a personal screen is one thing, playing it in the neighbourhood gully quite another, endorphins wise.

Piscean Story

Indians are eating more fish. Great. And more Indians are eating fish. Even better

Welcome to the blue foods club, said Coastal India, fabled lovers of all things fish, to India's new fish frat. In 2005-06, about 73cr Indians ate fish. By 2019-20, almost 24cr more are consuming fish – considered among the healthiest proteins. This was the finding of the recent 'Fish consumption in India: Patterns and Trends' study by WorldFish India in collaboration with Indian Council of Agricultural Research and other govt and global bodies.

Existing consumers of fish are eating more: per head they're consuming 12.3kg per year, up from 7.4kg in 2005-06. Of course, the India average of 9kg per head is still nowhere near the world average per capita fish and seafood consumption of 20.5kg, but, it is a healthy growth that's expected to continue. Fish on the menu has the additional advantage of being a low-emission animal protein, farm to finger.

The rise in demand is attributed to increasing incomes and availability. With farming, processing, and supply chains improving, availability in landlocked states in the country's north has expanded exponentially. Add to that the fact that a 2023 study by Central Marine Fisheries Institute found 91% of 70 species had healthy numbers. This was heartening given the global picture – 34% of stocks are overfished, 60% are being fished at maximum sustainable levels.

The trend of more men eating fish that the study reported is backed by widely observed anecdotal evidence. Men eat out more often – the daily working lunch for instance – and cleaning and cooking fish at home is not everyone's cup of tea, as it were. That said, the explosion of tips and tricks online, to flip fry that fish just right, has done great service in reeling in the fish, all the way to the dinner table. May the tribe grow.

Bygone brand

How expat fam lost its status

Bikram Vohra



Columnist based in Dubai

In the early days when Indians were mad about 'phoren' goods it was so easy to give gifts on trips home and win the love and gratitude of sundry family members and friends. Packets of orange-flavoured Tang and huge tins of powdered milk were par for the course.

If one overlooked a fond relative, well, a little clever mixing of two used perfumes or colognes did the trick and if someone noticed the seal was broken, we could blame the nasty little Customs who, before the turn of the century, were heartily loathed for their hostility to us Gulfis. Open your bags, was a common airport mantra.

Then we bought cheap ripoffs of clothes, fake Belgian chocolates and 'branded' watches made in China.

Everyone was happy and even daughters-in-law were forgiven their trespasses because they came laden with gifts. If one of those was a gold disco chain, life was a double bed of roses. Even Quaker Oats, cornflakes and Cheerios were given a warm welcome as were tins of tuna and cheese of all sorts. Cheddar, Brie and Camembert were shared with inordinate pride, evidence that son had done well abroad. And, of course, clothes, especially jeans, were the cherry on the sundae. How could we not be showered with affection, for thoughtfully bringing in mayo in glass jars.

Cosmetics were another winner: Shampoos smelling of apples and lemons, foundations and creams, and lipstick were distributed with zest like we were Santa on steroids. Everything was good enough.

That has all gone now. Expats find shopping for presents tedious and intimidating. What can we possibly take that will be welcomed with glee when it is all available at home, and it's fresh and of global standards. New gen fam members know fake from real and you can't play anymore con games by wrapping up seconds and passing them off. Unless you are buying real 24k gold or 18-year-old single malt or a 50-inch TV and a high-end mobile phone, no one is impressed. Gone are the days of fobbing off Meera aunty with a dollar spray or thinking you have got uncles Ramesh, Raj and Mani thrilled by the battery-powered razors that were 70% off as a set and you tore the foil to make three separate gifts.

Actually, shopping has gone into reverse. Us Gulf types are the big shoppers back home, landing with half-empty suitcases and returning loaded with Made in India stuff. Way beyond 30kg per person. Way to go.

Holi, IPL, Elections

All festivals have their unsavoury bits. But they give us distinct forms to express ourselves individually and collectively. Festivals bring us together. So our need for them endures

Santosh Desai



Nothing looks and feels more like a festival than Holi. To be sure Diwali, the other big name on the festival calendar, has its moments. Diwali is the time to buy things, stuff ourselves with food, play cards with real money, and the sound and fury of the fireworks that begin well before the actual festival and end well after. Diwali also has the advantage of being attached to other holidays – Dussehra, Durga Puja and Navratri – which makes the entire period feel like an endless celebration.

But even so, Holi done well, is special. No other festival carries with it the kind of unadulterated joy, the licence to let go a little, to shed inhibitions and become part of an undifferentiated mass of humanity.

We use colours to brighten up our lives. We wear them on our person. We decorate our homes with colour's evocation of life.

We are timidly coloured when it comes to our bodies; we need to augment our essentialness, drabness with colours borrowed from nature. On Holi our everyday colourless lives get a shock of vibrance, and a splash of water to shake us out of the routine we are locked into. Symbolically we wear spring on our faces and celebrate its fecundity.

To see so many people with faces obscured by colour, unrecognisable as they go about greeting others with an openness that is less discerning and discriminatory than is the case in our regular lives. The idea of hugging each other and taking the liberty of smearing gulaal on friends and strangers alike is really the essence of what festivals should be about – a reminder of what unites us.

With age, one has to admit that the form in which one enjoys the festival has changed. Gone is the exuberant excitement of youth that revelled in making as much noise as possible during Diwali. The excited hoarding of fireworks, the careful sequencing of fireworks with the relatively tame stuff being used first and the blockbuster items like rockets and atom bombs being preserved for later have given way to a focus on more material sources of enjoyment. Food, drink, the occasional card game now take precedence.

Similarly with Holi, water and fast colours that took weeks to scrub off, and that too never quite completely with portions behind the ears and fingernails carrying tell-tale signs of Holi well into summer, are now off the table. What has taken its place is the polite and ceremonial exchange of pinches of gulaal. Other pleasures such as bhanga that were not permitted in one's youth are now accessible. But are dealt with cautiously given the unpredictable nature of said stimulant.

has come to typify these events, on-the-ground elections resemble just another mass festival.

Posters, street signs, loudspeakers on tempos, door-to-door contact programmes, mass rallies that are like a paid outing for the participants combine to create a sense of a community festival. Rise of social media has dimmed some of the fervour we see on the streets as now it is possible to carry out much of the campaigning in the virtual domain, but even so elections are still fought, mohalla by mohalla, polling booth by polling booth by way of personal contact.

The other big festival that shares some characteristics with Holi is IPL. While cricket is clearly at its heart, there is a lot more going on. The more hedonistic aspects of IPL with its wild after-parties and salacious stories may now be a thing of the past, but the atmosphere it conjures up both on the ground and off it is noisy, joyous and celebratory. With time, some franchises have built strong loyalties and this shows in the raucous enthusiasm they display in support of their heroes. For viewers at home too, it is a two-month-long diversion, default programming that one can always tune into.

All festivals come with their issues. With Diwali, there is the question of noise and air pollution, and with Holi the question of hooliganism and safety, particularly for women. Elections bring with them a whole world of unsavouriness, with ugly conflict, unaccountable sources of money and gutter level language. IPL, too, comes with a lot of baggage – of crass commercialism and excess.

But sometimes it is necessary to look beyond these issues and connect instead to the intent behind the festivals. Festivals exist to bring us together and give us reasons to express ourselves individually and collectively in ways we don't otherwise.

In an earlier time, we lived from festival to festival, anticipating the next one as soon as the current one finished. Today we have a lot more going on to engage us. Even so festivals retain their magic, fuelled by consumption and affluence. They may have changed character, but our need for them continues. And nothing captures the spirit of festivals more than Holi.

The writer is a leading advertising professional



Social media has dimmed some of the poll fervour on the streets. Still, posters, loudspeakers on tempos, door-to-door campaigning, mass rallies that are like paid outings for the participants, make elections feel like another mass festival

This year, Holi is part of a larger festival season. Two other events are coinciding with Holi. The first are the elections. In India, for all the unsavoury controversies that surround the political landscape, with electoral bonds, alleged scams committed by various parties, arrests of chief ministers and the charged rhetoric that

'Who decides what core values of nationalism are? Is dialogue possible or is it all exclusive?'

Anthropologist, expert in politics of memory, and president, Goethe-Institut worldwide, Carola Lentz, on her first India visit, tells Narayani Ganesh nationalism's a double-edged sword, that knowing languages is the first step to intercultural understanding, that aging Germany can't do without its young migrant populations.

Germany is the world's third largest refugee-hosting country. How does it affect the cultural fabric?

Germany has mostly regular immigrants and a small portion is of refugees. The most visible impact is on cuisine since the 1970s. In my apartment complex in Munich, there are two Indian restaurants, south and north Indian.

In theatre, literature, sports, many non-Germans are there, and they've greatly enriched German culture. Someone who fled Sarajevo is an important German writer today. Similarly, we have writers of Japanese origin.

Notwithstanding this, we have rightwing nationalists who think we need to return to 'purity', thereby trying to negate this enriching trend.

Q&A

Does such nationalism impact society?
Many leaders of independence movements would've seen nationalism as an integrating force. Nationalism and patriotism were indeed seen as being very close.

But nationalism does have the tendency to see others as strangers, and then it becomes narrow. Context and interpretations make nationalism positive or negative. Nationalism is a double-edged phenomenon. I've worked in Ghana – their nationalist movement was against colonial domination, and even among early nationalists, views differed on what kind of nationalism.

The central question for me is who gets to decide what the core values are, and is dialogue possible or do you want to make it exclusive?

If you associate values with ideological or religious trajectories, then you'll categorise non-Germans living in Germany as outsiders – so we need to be as

liberal as possible.

Has Germany's refugee & immigration policies adversely impacted job opportunities for locals?

No, that's not true. Germany is an aging society. We desperately need skilled and unskilled labour, more than the German population can provide. Imagine if all the immigrant nursing staff and doctors left. What will happen to our health services and old age homes? Engineers...and others...



Rightwing activists who protest are mostly in areas where there are very few immigrants.

Does collective remembrance help people move on?

It depends how memory sites and memorials are constructed. If a family has experienced Partition in India, for example, we know from psychological studies that these memories continue to work at a subterranean level – the way forward perhaps is to have societal dialogues and help them overcome these.

As for Germany's Holocaust memory, it's so important a reminder to young people that it should never happen again. More importantly, it's a reminder that it could happen again. It's not so much about emotions but about knowledge. You need to know how it came

about, so we can prevent future recurrence.

9/11 is contemporary. I found it intriguing that they had a room of remembrance with ashes of unidentified victims, including undocumented workers from Philippines, so people could mourn them and communicate with the dead.

9/11, like all memory sites, has multiple layers of how you could direct collective memory in a positive direction. A civic association organised the 9/11 monument and events around it. The high-ranking bankers, firemen, all are accommodated.

Flip side, can it reinforce hatred and animosity?

Well-constructed inclusive memory politics can help us be free to reach a better future. But it can also be buttressed to boost hatred, to not get anywhere, so it is tricky. How inclusive can you make it? Of course, ideological entrepreneurs – not only state agents but even universities and individuals – who propagate a certain agenda try to hijack memories. Then, it is a problem.

What has Goethe-Institut's experience been in promoting intercultural understanding?

An important aspect is language teaching. Mutual understanding isn't possible without language. It transports world views, creates possibilities of different perspectives, making understanding possible. Goethe-Institut's (Max Mueller Bhavan in India) language courses enable mobility and increase cultural knowledge. We offer spaces for exchange, cultural events, discourse, discussion, so that Indian spectators can know more about Germany. And discuss. Uniquely, the Institut isn't a govt organisation. It is independent.

As anthropologists, our trademark is the politics of listening, of trying to understand world views and actions of others, before judging. This is relevant to Goethe-Institut, to bring mutual understanding and dialogue.

Problems we face as humankind are global. Over a third of our population is not of German origin. So, the world is at home in Germany, hence it's important to respect international perspectives.

Calvin & Hobbes



Sacredspace

Love life. Live your life totally, be drunk with the divine through life. I am in tremendous love with life, hence I teach celebration. Everything has to be celebrated, everything has to be lived, loved. To me nothing is mundane... All is sacred.

Osho

When Do You Plan To Be Happy?

Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

All the world's teachings speak of finding great happiness because they know it's what everyone is ultimately searching for. Happiness doesn't depend on what we have or don't have; it's simply a state of mind. It's not something you can buy; it's already within you, right here and right now. Everything we really want outside is already within us.

In life, there are always things that bother us. This is called maya, delusion. For example, if someone loves you, that can be a botheration and if they don't love you, that's also a botheration. Friends and enemies can both be a source of botheration. That's why it's important to hold onto a resolve: 'No matter what happens, I will not lose my happiness.' Even if you face losses in business, relationships, or any other

aspect of life, you should not lose your happiness. This is a measure of your growth. When you go to the source of happiness, your senses become stronger, your mind becomes content, and things start going in your favour.

Don't stress about being perfect. If you're too focused on perfection, you'll end up feeling angry. The world might seem imperfect, but deep down, everything is perfect. Perfection is hidden, while imperfection is visible. Wise people look beyond the surface. In this world, things can't always be perfect. Also, don't make the mistake of constantly pointing out others' mistakes. Mistakes happen all the time. To correct them, you need both authority and love. Authority without love feels oppressive. Love without authority lacks depth.

When you accept that mistakes can happen, you can be both firm and kind.

Everyone keeps delaying their happiness. A child thinks they'll be happy when they go to college. In college, they think they'll be happy when they start earning. Then they think they'll be happy once they are married. The cycle continues, and that special day never arrives. It is like trying to make your bed whole night and not being able to sleep. Instead of waiting to be happy in the future, choose to be happy now.

Look at the world where there are bigger problems, so your problems seem smaller. This gives you the energy and confidence to deal with them. Reflect on your own past. You've faced many problems before, and they've all passed. This problem will also pass, and you have the strength to

overcome it. Practice breathing exercises, meditation, and relaxation techniques. Instead of giving up in anger, say, "I give this problem up to the Divine." Have confidence that you will be helped. Turn your mind inward for solutions. Spend a few minutes in deep introspection each day.

Smiling when everything is going well is easy, but if you can smile and stay positive even when facing challenges, you'll find tremendous inner strength, and the problem will disappear. Remember, you are responsible for your happiness. Be determined to not let anyone take your happiness away. Consider all situations as opportunities for your spiritual growth.

Go inward to find the source of happiness. When you connect with that source, your senses will be strong, your mind will be content, and things will start going your way.



THE SPEAKING TREE

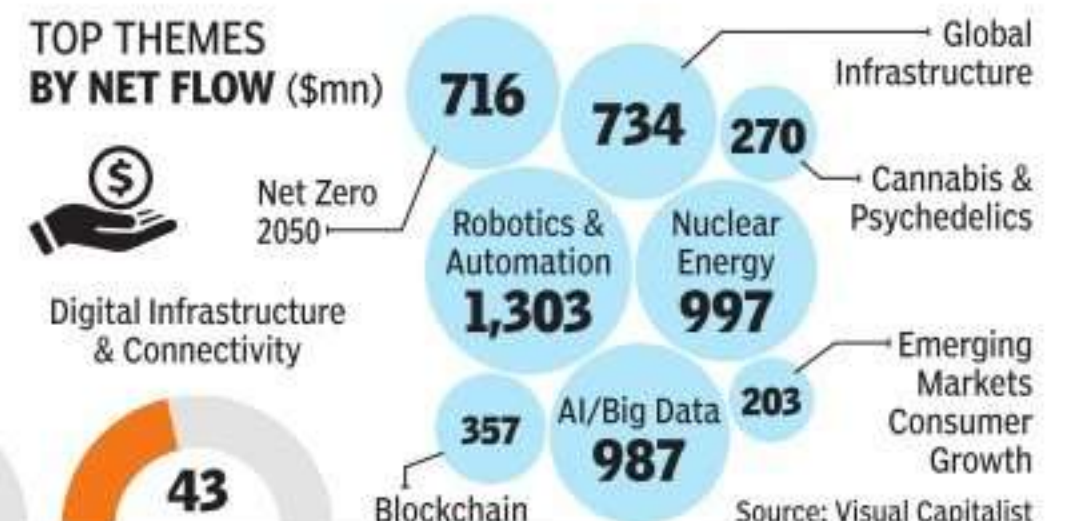
Blockchain ETFs Witness Highest Returns, Robotics Most Inflows

With 82% returns in 2023, blockchain ETFs outperformed all other themes in the US as bitcoin prices witnessed sharp surge. ETFs focused on robotics & automation saw highest net flows amid wider deployment of these technologies across factories, healthcare, and transportation activities

INVESTMENT THEMES
(With highest returns (%) in 2023)

TIMES BUSINESS

THE TIMES OF INDIA, NEW DELHI | MONDAY, MARCH 25, 2024



FY25 to greet car buyers with discounts as demand shrinks

Growth Likely To Be Muted As Inventories Rise, Say Cos

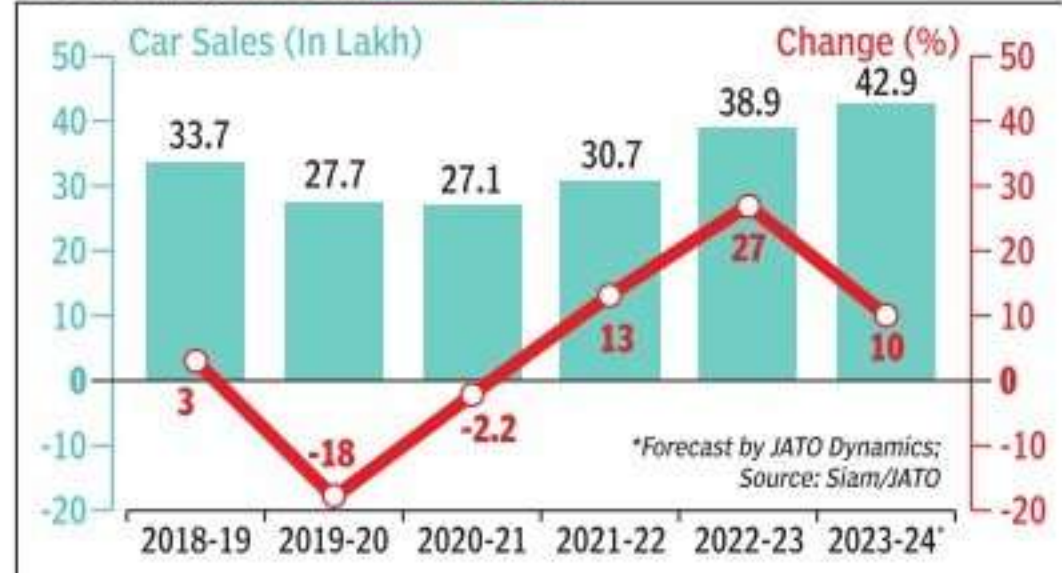
Pankaj.Doyal@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: After being made to wait for car deliveries during the years of production shortages and hyper growth in the Covid period, the customer finally makes a comeback and returns as the king, with lucrative discounts and attractive offers likely to come up in the new financial year. And, the era of frequent price hikes comes to an end.

So, 2024-25 could be the year when the car industry, which has been moving up strongly for past three years, witnesses muted growth as demand shrinks and inventories build-up at dealerships, industry officials and analysts told TOI.

According to experts, the car market, which is likely to close the current fiscal on record volumes of 42.9 lakh units, has developed a heavy base and may "see some time"

LOSING MOMENTUM



before it starts to grow fast again. Also, pace at which consumers booked and bought cars during last three years may now see a slowdown as the pent-up demand has been fulfilled and a breather comes into play.

"There are a variety of factors that will keep growth muted in FY25. Apart from a heavier base, the reasons also include cars getting expensive

during the previous years and Covid production shortfall being met subsequently," says Ravi Bhatia, president and director at research firm JATO Dynamics. "Also, used cars will take up a share from new car sales, especially in the entry category."

After the initial worries around demand during the outbreak of Covid in March 2020, the pace of turnaround

in sales had taken almost everyone by surprise

The phenomenon, which coincided with severe global shortages in supply of semiconductor, saw huge waiting periods across brands, with pending deliveries rising to as high as 7 lakh units at one point in time. With companies gradually ramping up production and semiconductor availability easing up, most of the pent-up demand has been fulfilled, leading to a situation where companies are now pushing models through special campaigns and discounts.

"Going by the current analysis, it looks like growth would be muted, or at best be in low single digit," Shashank Srivastava, senior executive officer (sales & marketing) at Maruti Suzuki, says.

Kunal Behl, VP (marketing & sales) at Honda Cars India, also says that going may get tougher for the industry.

GTRI: Push for EVs may lead to big entry of Chinese firms

New Delhi: Govt's push to boost domestic manufacturing of electric vehicles (EVs) may lead to large-scale entry of Chinese auto firms in the local market, a report by think tank GTRI said on Sunday.

China's automotive industry, buoyed by substantial state support, has grown rapidly in electric vehicle technology, making it a leading exporter of EVs and related components, the Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said.

The renewed policy push to make India a hub for e-vehicle manufacturing and efforts of the private sector will lead to a sharp increase in dependence on auto component imports from China, the report said.

India's auto component imports were \$20.3 billion in 2022-23 of which 30% came from China. As the EVs are getting greater focus in the country, the auto component imports from China may increase further because it has a greater hold over the EV components' global supply chain. According to estimates, China has 75% of the world's battery production capacity and battery accounts for 40% of the cost of an EV. It also accounts for over 50% of global EV production and exports.

The report said that in the "next few years, every third electric vehicle and many passenger and commercial vehicles on Indian roads could be those made by Chinese firms in India alone or through joint venture with Indian firms".

GTRI founder Ajay Srivastava said that Indian market entry provides a much-needed relief to Chinese firms. "China's EV exports to the EU and the US are declining due to anti-subsidy probes and increased trade restrictions," he said. AGENCIES

Auto players line up new EVs amid fresh govt push

New Delhi: The Indian auto industry is gearing up to roll out an array of electric vehicle models over the next few years amid a renewed push by govt to encourage environment-friendly mobility solutions with the unveiling of a new policy.

Mass market players like Maruti Suzuki, Hyundai, Mahindra & Mahindra and Tata Motors are lining up new models to cater to demand across segments.

Mahindra & Mahindra CEO automotive sector Nalinikant Gollagunta said that starting Jan 2025, the company will be rolling out five new battery electric vehicles in the coming years. "We expect 20-30% of our portfolio to be electric by 2027," he noted.

Maruti Suzuki India executive officer (corporate af-

GREEN DRIVE

M&M to roll out five battery EVs starting Jan 2025

Maruti Suzuki | Six EVs in 7-8 years

Tata Motors | 10 EVs by 2026

Mercedes-Benz India | 12 new products in 2024, of which three will be BEVs

Audi India | 50% sales from EVs by 2030

as per multiple industry estimates, EVs are projected to contribute around 20% of India's automotive market by 2030. Hyundai plans to invest around Rs 26,000 crore over 10 years in Tamil Nadu. This investment will also include setting up a battery assembly plant in the state.

A Tata Motors spokesperson said that the company aims to have 10 EVs by 2026. The company plans to introduce four more EV models this year, including Curvv EV and Harrier EV.

Luxury carmakers are also gearing up to enhance their EV lineup. "We are invested in the market, having an aggressive product strategy with more than 12 new products planned for debut in 2024," a Mercedes India spokesperson said. AGENCIES

'No GST on women hostels as end-use not commercial'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Chennai: Pointing out that rentals attract GST only if the rented building is used for commercial purposes, Madras high court has quashed GST demand on hostels for working women and girls.

Justice Krishnan Ramaswamy, setting aside the GST demand notice, said: "While advertising to the imposition of GST on hostel accommodation, it has to be looked into as to whether the inmates of the hostel rooms are using the premises as their residential dwelling or commercial purpose since renting of residential unit attracts GST only

when it is rented for commercial purpose." Since the end-use of the property is for residential purposes, it would not attract GST, he ruled.

"So, in order to claim exemption of GST, the nature of the end-use should be residential and it cannot be decided by the nature of the property or the nature of the business of the service provider, but by the purpose for which it is used," Justice Krishnan Ramaswamy added.

Therefore, this court is of the considered view that the issue of levy of GST on residential accommodation should be viewed from the perspective of the recipient of service and not from the perspective of service provider," the court said.

service and not from the perspective of service provider, who offers the premises on rental basis, the judge said.

The court passed the order while allowing a batch of pleas moved by management of private hostels for working women and girls challenging an order passed by TN State Appellate Authority for Advance Ruling dated Aug 31, 2023, imposing 18% GST on such hostels. "In the present case, the imposition of GST on the hostel accommodation should be viewed from the perspective of the recipient of service and not from the perspective of service provider," the court said.

IL&FS looks to sell stake in insolvent cos' with a 'haircut'

New Delhi: IL&FS group has approached the NCLAT to seek permission to sell its stake with a "haircut" and without shareholders' approval in its companies, which are insolvent with unsustainable debt and placed under Category II list of resolution framework.

Govt sought time to file a reply from NCLAT in the last hearing earlier over IL&FS' interim application to sell a stake in group entities falling under Category II, whose highest bid amount was lesser than their debt.

In this process, "lenders, as well as shareholders, would anyway have to take a haircut for their respective debt/and equities," IL&FS said, adding that it would also ensure the revival of such entity, balancing the interests of stakeholders. The resolution of such companies is in line with the process followed under the Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code, where the requirement of seeking consent from shareholders is dispensed with, IL&FS has submitted. AGENCIES

Vedanta plans to invest \$6bn across biz

New Delhi: Mining conglomerate Vedanta will invest \$6 billion across businesses that span from aluminium and zinc to iron ore, steel and oil and gas as it looks to add at least \$2.5 billion to annual EBITDA, its executives said in an investor meeting.

It has a pipeline of more than 50 active projects and expansions to drive growth, which is expected to generate incremental revenue of over \$6 billion and boost EBITDA from an expected \$5 billion in the current fiscal ending March 31 to \$6 billion in the next and up to \$7.5 billion by FY27, they added.

Vedanta chairman Anil Agarwal, according to a presentation made at the investor meeting, said the company "will get to a different level in the next 25 years". His brother and vice chairman Naveen Agarwal gave details of the plans. AGENCIES

RBI to conduct special audit of IIFL Fin, JM Fin Starts Process For Appointment Of Auditors

New Delhi: IIFL Finance and JM Financial Products (JMFPL) will undergo a special audit to further probe their regulatory breaches, as the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has initiated the process for the appointment of auditors. The RBI has floated two separate tenders for the appointment of auditors for special audits of these two non-banking finance companies.

Audit firms empanelled by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) for forensic audit can participate in the tendering process, and the last date for submission of bids is April 8, as per the tender document published by RBI.



FACING SCRUTINY

The selected firms will be awarded work on April 12, 2024, as per the bid documents. Earlier this month, the RBI put a curb on these two entities for non-compliance of regulatory guidelines. The central bank barred IIFL Finance from sanctioning or disbursing gold loans after certain material supervisory concerns were observed in its gold loan portfolio.

The RBI had said an inspection of the company was carried out by it with reference to IIFL's financial position as of March 31, 2023. A day after, the Reserve Bank imposed restrictions on JM Financial Products following the finding that the company indulged in various manipulations, including repeatedly helping a group of its own customers to bid for various IPOs by using loaned funds. AGENCIES

Drone co IdeaForge to enter new segment

Saurabh.Sinha@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Indian drone major IdeaForge is now going to enter "logistics at scale" by developing unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) that can carry payloads of up to 100 kg to a distance of 100 km. This, the company's co-founder & CEO Ankit Mehta says, could "potentially its foot in the door for developing urban air mobility solutions."

The company has recently set up a subsidiary in the US and is showcasing its products to end customers there. "None of our critical subsystems come from geography of concern (read China) and that puts us in a unique position. We have given a stock and sell licence to our subsidiary there. Our products are used extensively for surveillance and mapping," Mehta said.

"We are very vertically integrated in technology. We get (some) subsystems from geographies that are not of concern. The ability to ship from here as become real. North America has a very clear embargo on specific Chinese OEMs, as well as they have embargo on components coming from specific countries in the world. We are exploring some other markets also," he said.

Western geographies are moving away from China in critical areas due to many risks with respect to cyber security. The US had banned China-made UAVs in 2020 due to security concerns. Many other countries, including India, share the same. The rapid evolution drone ecosystem in India over the last two-three years has made desi UAVs acceptable in all such geographies.

"Our drones are being extensively used for the Swamitva scheme in India that involves landholdings in all villages to give ownership titles," Mehta said.

Hiring of women in C-suite roles going up: Survey

Rupali.Mukherjee@timesgroup.com

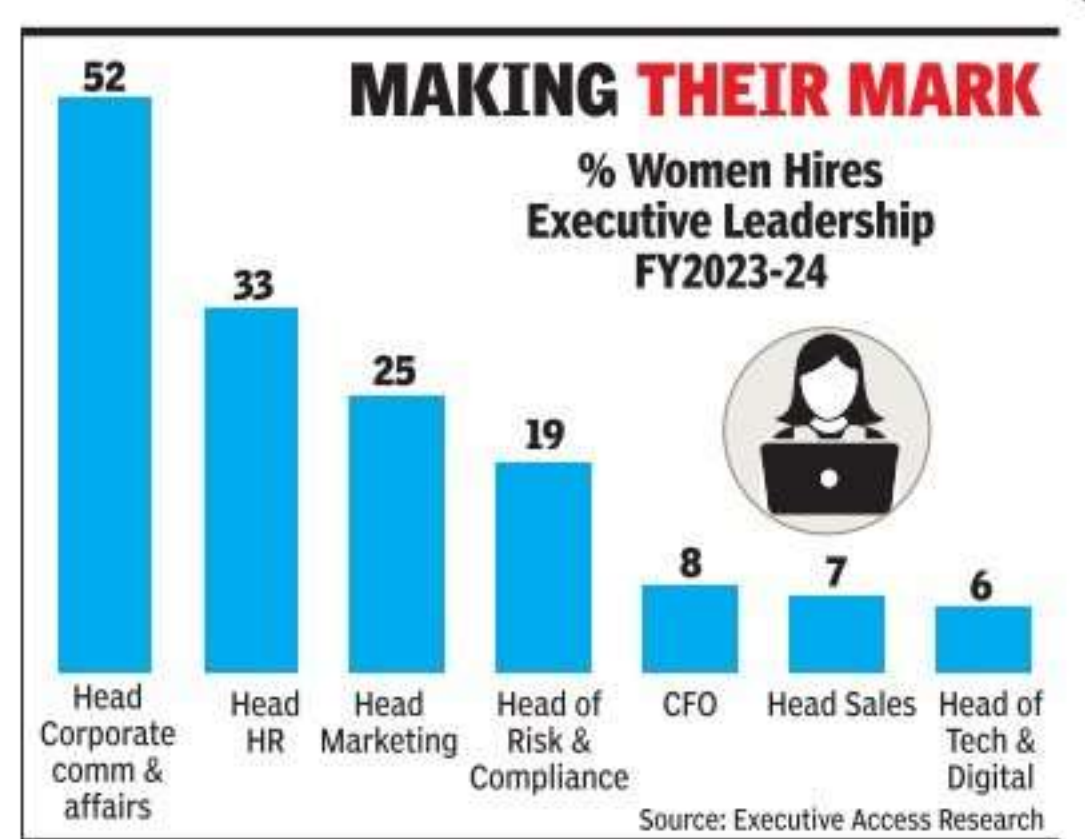
New Delhi: This could be heartening news for women executives aspiring to reach the top as also for the diversity efforts being made by India Inc. The number of women hired in C-suite roles has moved up. Now around 16% of all women hires are CXOs, and 8% are CEOs or MDs, a survey by Executive Access, done exclusively for TOI, showed. A decade back the number of women CEOs was around 2%, while their percentage in CXOs was 7-8%.

Women are moving up the ladder in terms of top roles in marketing and finance — job functions which are typically traditional male bastions. But, the real litmus test of diversity is how inclusive the sectors like manufacturing, construction and project management are, HR experts told TOI.

"The good news is that there has been progress particularly during the last three years,

though much more needs to be done. With the momentum likely to grow stronger, the figure in next three-four years is likely to increase by minimum 50-60% because there are outstanding capable women waiting in the wings. There is no paucity of high-quality women talent today," said Ronesh Puri, MD, Executive Access (India).

The survey covered 1615 placements in over 1200 companies from January 2023 to mid-February this year. "Women are moving up the ladder in terms of top roles in marketing, project management and finance, where typically they have been largely absent so far. There has been an uptake in finance roles — a male-dominated territory. Women are coming up in finance roles, where those armed with MBAs can also fulfill. The diversity quotient is higher in senior roles related to sustainability and ESG, while earlier it was just CSR. There has been an improvement in senior leadership roles in manu-



facturing and technical functions too. One of our plants in chemicals manufacturing unit in Gujarat is staffed entirely with women. We have started the journey with a special focus on hiring and grooming women for executive leadership." Sandeep Girotra, executive director & CHRO, DCM Shriram said.

Widening the talent pool, empowering women to access

leadership roles and creating a more inclusive work environment, can drive better business outcomes, said experts.

"If we don't embrace diversity, we are missing half the talent pool. While the sectors like IT, ITeS, financial services, banking, telecom etc have high diversity quotient due to the nature of the work, the real litmus test of diversity is how inclusive and diverse the

sectors, like manufacturing, construction, projects etc are. Organisations will have to take concrete steps and make it attractive for women to work on the shop floor. The second metric we have to track is the number of women dropping out of the workforce after marriage and once they have children," Prem Singh, president — group HR, JK Organisation & President, National HRD Network said.

At JK Organisation, about 35-40% of the management trainees recruited each year are women, he added. Tractors and Farm Equipment (TAFE) chairperson and MD, Mallika Srinivasan and Kinetic Green, the EV making arm of Kinetic group, led by Sulajja Firodia Motwani, are a few examples of women leaders in manufacturing companies.

Recently, FMCG company Dabur set up an all-women production line at its largest-ever greenfield plant near Indore. According to research

from Harvard Business Review Research, women in leadership positions are perceived just as — if not more — competent as their male counterparts. In an analysis of thousands of 360-degree assessments, women were rated as excelling in taking initiative, acting with resilience, practicing self-development, driving for results, and displaying high integrity and honesty. In fact, they were thought to be more effective in 84% of competencies that we most frequently measure.

It is not surprising that a majority of the hires in corporate communications function are women (see graphic). They have a natural flair to this function as they are better communicators, Puri adds.

Women have a natural instinct for finance but somehow seem to prefer HR, marketing and corporate communication. Technology and supply chain are other functional areas that saw hardly any women talent being hired at the top.

What You Need To Know To Begin Your Mutual Fund Journey

With many beginners rushing into mutual funds, money managers believe they should be careful with their paperwork, bank account, nominee and choice of the proper scheme.

What Documents Do You Need To Start?
To start your mutual fund investments, you need a PAN card, proof of address (such as Aadhaar), and a copy of a cancelled cheque.

While making a physical investment (offline mode at a fund house office or distributor), you'd need these copies and need to mention the details correctly. Write the name in the MF application as per the PAN record. If there is a mistake, get it rectified in the PAN record. The income tax department has instructed MF registrars that the name and date of birth of an investor appearing on the PAN record and the mutual fund folios should match completely. If there is a mismatch between the name or the date of birth, the registrar will reject the transactions, including SIPs (systematic investment plans) and redemption requests.

Why Link An Active Bank A/c To The Folio?
When you wish to redeem an MF scheme, the money is credited to the bank account mentioned in the account opening form. Hence, do not let this account go dormant. Also, do not close it without updating your folio with a new bank account. If you place a redemption request and the fund house cannot credit your account directly, a cheque will be sent, which may take 5-7 days to get encashed.

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.

Why Choosing The Right Scheme Is Key?

The right scheme for investment should be chosen based on the time horizon, risk profile and tax implications.

For example, if you are looking to invest for a 1-2 year horizon and can take some risk and want tax efficiency, you could choose an equity savings fund rather than a pure equity fund or a debt scheme.

If you choose a debt fund, the gains will be subject to tax in line with your income, while an equity fund could lead to losses in the short term if markets go down. Changing a scheme mid-way could lead to an exit load or higher short-term capital gains tax.

Is A Nominee Needed In Your MF Folio?
It is important to make the right nomination as that ensures your loved ones receive their rightful share promptly and without hassles and complications. In case you wish to have more than one nominee, you can add them and mention the percentage share for each of them.

— PRASHANT MAHESH



JENNIFER GARNER DRAWS PRAISE FOR SAXOPHONE SKILLS AFTER ACTRESS POSTS JAZZY TRIBUTE ON REESE WITHERSPOON'S B'DAY



WILLIAM-KATE SAY 'ENORMOUSLY TOUCHED' BY PUBLIC SUPPORT AFTER CANCER REVELATION, REITERATE REQUEST FOR PRIVACY

Russia marks day of mourning for concert hall victims, toll 137

IS' Social Media Accounts Post Graphic Video Of Attack



People hold a vigil for the victims at a makeshift memorial in Moscow

Russia was observing a national day of mourning on Sunday for victims of a fiery terrorist attack on a suburban Moscow concert venue, as the death toll climbed to 137 and questions lingered about the identities and motives of the perpetrators. People laid flowers and lit candles at a memorial set up outside the concert hall. Flags were lowered to half-staff at buildings across the country, and state media released a video of President in Putin lighting a memorial candle in a church. The deceased included three children, and about 180 people were injured. As rescuers continued to search the damaged building and the death toll rose as more bodies were found, some families still didn't know if relatives who went to the event targeted by gunmen on Friday were alive. Moscow's department of health said Sunday it has begun identifying the bodies of those killed via DNA testing, which will need at least two weeks. Islamic State group's Afgha-

Were gunmen from Tajikistan? Its prez says 'terrorists have no nationality'

The president of Tajikistan on Sunday condemned the Moscow attack in a call with Russian leader Vladimir Putin, amid allegations the gunmen were Tajik citizens. Russian media have alleged that the four suspected assailants were Tajiks. "Terrorists have no nationality," Emomali Rahmon told Putin. The statement contained no direct reference to the shooters' citizenship. The IS-K group is active in Tajikistan, which shares a border with Afghanistan. AFP

nistan affiliate, IS-Khorasan, claimed responsibility for the attack, but Putin has not publicly mentioned the Islamist militant group in connection with the attackers, who he said had been trying to escape to Ukraine. He asserted that some on "the Ukrainian side" had been prepared to spirit the gunmen across the border. Ukraine has denied any role in the attack. Russian authorities arrested four suspected attackers on Saturday among 11 people detained over suspicion of involvement in the attack. Though no court hearing has been officially announced, there was a heavy police presence around Mos-



A shooting suspect is escorted to an investigative panel HQ in Moscow

cow's Basmanny district court. Footage released by Russia's Investigative Committee showed the suspected attackers being dragged while blindfolded into the state body's headquarters in Moscow. Officials have not named the shooters, but said they were all foreign nationals. In video footage published by Russian media and Telegram channels with close ties to the Kremlin, one of the suspects said he was offered money to carry out the attack. "I shot people," the suspect, his hands tied and his hair held by an interrogator, a black boot beneath his chin, said in poor and highly accented Russian. When

asked why, he said: "For money". The man said he had been promised half a million rubles (a little over \$5,000). One was shown answering questions through a Tajik translator.

Also, a video lasting about a minute and half, apparently filmed by the gunmen, was posted on social media accounts typically used by IS, according to the SITE intelligence group. The video, which appears to have been filmed from the lobby of the concert venue, shows several individuals with blurred faces and garbled voices, firing assault rifles with inert bodies strewn on the floor and a fire starting in the background.

Russian investigators said that after walking through the theatre shooting spectators, they set fire to the building, trapping many inside who died from smoke inhalation. It was the deadliest attack on Russian territory since the 2004 Beslan school siege, when Islamist militants took more than 1,000 people, including hundreds of children, hostage. AGENCIES

Jaishankar dials Lavrov, conveys condolences on Moscow attack

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Following PM Narendra Modi's condemnation of the Moscow terrorist attack, foreign minister S Jaishankar also spoke to his counterpart Sergey Lavrov and conveyed his "deepest condolences on the loss of lives in the horrific terrorist attack in Moscow". According to a Russian readout, Jaishankar vehemently condemned the "inhumane" terrorist attack on the Crocus City Hall concert venue, which claimed the lives of more than 130 civilians.

"He reaffirmed India's resolution to continue fighting terrorism in all its manifestations together with Russia. He offered words of support and asked to convey his sympathy to the families of the victims, and wished a speedy recovery to the injured," said the readout.

Modi on Saturday had condemned the attack, calling it a heinous terrorist attack. "We strongly condemn the heinous terrorist attack in Moscow. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of the victims," he said in a post on X.

US denies Ukraine role; UK says Russia creating 'smokescreen'

Washington: Ukraine had "no involvement whatsoever" in the Moscow concert hall massacre, the White House said Sunday, after President Putin suggested a Kyiv connection.

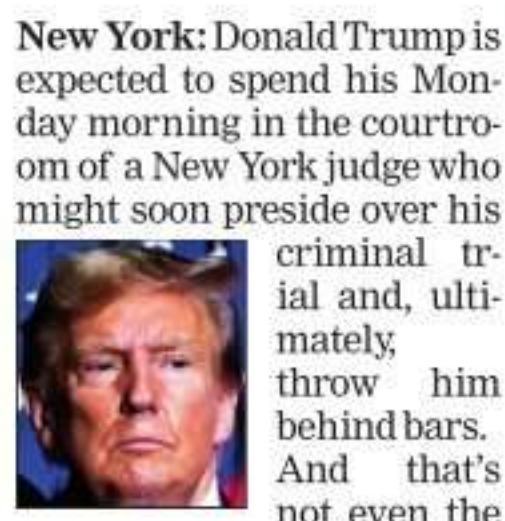
"IS bears sole responsibility for this attack," said White House national security council spokeswoman Adrienne Watson. "IS-Khorasan is actually, by all accounts, responsible for what happened," agreed Vice President Kamala Harris in an interview, referring to the IS's branch in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

In London, UK finance minister Jeremy Hunt said the British government "very little confidence" in Russia's statements, accusing it of trying to "defend" it "assault on Ukraine." "We know that they are creating a smokescreen of propaganda to defend an utterly evil invasion of Ukraine," he said. AFP

Russia scrambles jets

The Russian defence ministry on Sunday said it had scrambled a MiG-31 fighter jet after the approach of two US B-1B bombers towards the Russian border over the Barents Sea. The US bombers turned away from the Russian border after the approach of the MiG-31, the ministry said. REUTERS

Trump to face his greatest fears as 2 legal threats coincide today



New York: Donald Trump is expected to spend his Monday morning in the courtroom of a New York judge who might soon preside over his criminal trial and, ultimately, throw him behind bars. And that's not even the legal predicament that worries Trump most that day.

The hearing in his Manhattan criminal prosecution — in which he is accused of covering up a sex scandal to pave his way to the presidency — comes as he races to fend off a financial crisis arising from a \$454 million judgment in another case. New York Attorney General Letitia James, who brought that civil fraud suit against the former president and his family business, might begin to collect as soon as Monday.

To avoid a mortal threat to the Trump Organisation, Trump must persuade another company to post a bond on his behalf, promising that it will cover the judgment if he loses a pending appeal and fails to pay. Yet Trump's lawyers in court papers said that securing the bond would be a "practical impossibility", because he would need to pled-

The twin threats crystallise two of Trump's longest-held fears: a criminal conviction and a public perception that he does not have as much cash as he claims

ge about \$550 million in cash and liquid investments as collateral to the bond company — an admission that laid bare Trump's cash crunch. Unless Trump strikes an eleventh-hour deal, James could freeze his bank accounts, and begin the long and complicated process of seizing some of his properties. And barring Trump's lawyers achieving an improbable legal triumph, the judge in his criminal case could set a trial date for as soon as next month. The twin threats — on the same day, in the same city — crystallise two of Trump's greatest and longest-held fears: a criminal conviction and a public perception that he does not have as much cash as he claims. Trump has conceded that the charges pained him. "Nobody wants to be indicted," he said in June. NYT

Ireland set to get its youngest PM as Simon Harris, 37, elected party leader



Harris, a 37-year-old minister best known for helping steer the country's initial response to Covid-19, will be voted in as Ireland's youngest ever prime minister when parliament next sits on April 9 thanks to support from coalition partners.

He will have no more than a year to save the coalition from defeat at parliamentary elections. Polls for the last three years have put Sinn Fein, a left-wing party that backs unification with British-run Northern Ireland, as the favourite to head the next govt. "This is a moment for Fine Gael to reset," Harris told hundreds of members at a packed party event in the midlands town of Athlone.

Varadkar announced his departure to widespread shock Wednesday, catching even his closest allies by surprise, saying Fine Gael would stand a better chance of re-election under another leader. REUTERS

Indian dies in car accident in Pennsylvania

New York: In a tragic incident, a 24-year-old Indian professional was killed in a car accident in the US state of Pennsylvania. Arshia Joshi lost her life on March 21, the Consulate General of India in New York said in a post on X on Saturday, expressing deep condolences to her family. Joshi had completed her graduation last year.

The consulate said it is in touch with Joshi's family and local community leaders. "Extending all possible assistance to transport her mortal remains to India at the earliest," it said, without divulging more details about the deceased.

Volunteer-based nonprofit organisation TEAM Aid is assisting in sending Joshi's mortal remains to Delhi to her family. TEAM Aid's primary focus has been to help members of the Indian community who are either travelling or living abroad and face dire situations such as accidents, suicides, homicides or sudden death of loved ones. In the past week alone, TEAM Aid has sent the remains of five individuals to India and organised three local funerals, founder Mohan Nannapaneni said. PTI

Russia launches massive missile attack on Ukraine, one briefly enters Polish airspace

Kyiv: Russian forces launched an air barrage against Ukraine on Sunday, including a missile that briefly crossed into Polish airspace, while Kyiv's forces struck two Russian ships off the annexed Crimean peninsula. Ukrainian air defence downed 18 out of 29 missiles and most of 28 Shahed drones fired by Kremlin forces, the country's Air Force command said. Local authorities reported 10 missiles downed over Ukraine's capital and almost 20 missiles and seven drones aimed at the Lviv region in the country's far west, near the Polish border. The Russian cruise missile entered Polish airspace for 39 seconds, the country's military said. Authorities in Warsaw notified Nato allies about the incident.



Ukrainians rally in Kyiv on Sunday to raise awareness about the fate of their country's prisoners of war

The attack damaged energy facilities in west Ukraine. No casualties were reported. While Ukraine continued to repel attacks along the 1,200km

Poland demands explanation from Russia

Poland demanded an explanation from Russia on Sunday after one of its missiles strayed briefly into Polish airspace. Armed Forces Operational Command of Poland, a member of Nato, said in a statement that there was a violation of Polish airspace at 4.23am (local time) by one of the cruise missiles launched by Russia against towns in western Ukraine. The object entered near Oserdow, a village in an agricultural region near the border with Ukraine, and stayed in Polish airspace for 39 seconds, the statement said. Polish defence minister Wladyslaw Kosiniak-Kamysz later told reporters in a televised news conference that the Russian missile would have been shot down had there been any indication that it was heading towards a target in Poland. Polish and Nato F-16s were activated as part of the strategic response. He said the missile penetrated Polish airspace about a kilometre or two as Russia was targeting the region around Lviv in western Ukraine. AP

frontline, they also took aim at targets inside Moscow-controlled areas. Kyiv's forces struck Russian vessels and military installations in annexed Crimea. Landing ships Yamal and Azov were struck, as well as a communications centre and other military infrastructure in Sevastopol. BLOOMBERG & AP



People celebrate Holi in Nairobi, Kenya, on Sunday

'A Chinese-owned tanker hit by Houthis in Red Sea'

Dubai: A Chinese-owned oil tanker was attacked off Yemen Saturday by ballistic missiles fired by Houthi rebels, who have intensified strikes on Red Sea shipping, the US military said. The Panamanian-flagged, Chinese-owned and operated Huang Pu issued a distress call but did not request assistance, US Central Command (CENTCOM) said. "No casualties were reported, and the vessel resumed its course," the statement said. CENTCOM and the British navy's United Kingdom Marine Trade Operations (UKMTO) said a fire had broken out on board the ship but was extinguished within 30 minutes. The Marinetrack tracking website later had the vessel sailing out of the Red Sea into the Gulf of Aden heading for its next port of call which, according to maritime security agency Ambrey, was New Mangalore in India. AFP

Israel has besieged 2 more Gaza hosps, demanding evacuations: Palestinians

Cairo: Israeli forces besieged two more Gaza hospitals on Sunday, pinning down medical teams under heavy gunfire, the Palestinian Red Crescent said, and Israel said it had captured 480 militants in continued clashes at Gaza's main Al Shifa hospital. Israel says hospitals in the Palestinian enclave, where war has been raging for over five months, are used by Hamas militants as bases. It has released videos and pictures supporting the claim.

Hamas and medical staff deny the accusations. The Palestinian Red Crescent said one of its staff was killed when Israeli tanks suddenly pushed back into areas around Al-Amal and Nasser hospitals in the southern city of Khan Younis, amid heavy bombardment and gunfire. Israeli forces began operating around Al-Amal, the mili-



A man helps a child injured in Israeli bombardment at the al-Najjar hospital in Rafah

tary said, following "precise intelligence... which indicated that terrorists are using civilian infrastructure for terror activities in the area of Al-Amal". Israeli armoured forces sealed off Al-Amal Hospital and carried out extensive bulldozing operations in its vicinity, the Red Crescent said in a statement. "All of our teams are in extreme danger at the moment and are completely immobilised," it said. The Red Crescent said Isra-

eli forces were now demanding the complete evacuation of staff, patients and displaced people from Al Amal's premises and were firing smoke bombs into the area to force out its occupants.

A displaced Palestinian was killed inside the hospital compound after being hit in the head by Israeli fire, the Red Crescent said in a later update.

The health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza said dozens of patients and medical staffers had been detained by Israeli forces at Al Shifa in Gaza City in the enclave's north that has been under Israeli control for a week. The Hamas-run government media office said Israeli forces had killed five Palestinian doctors during their seven-day swoop on Al Shifa.

The Israeli military did not immediately respond to a request for comment on that report. REUTERS

AROUND THE WORLD



GET, SET, SERVE: Waiters take part in a 2-km race in Paris on Sunday where they have to single-handedly carry a tray bearing a coffee, a glass of water and a croissant. Speed is of essence in the race but points are deducted for spills. The race was first held in 1914

Hit by manpower shortage, German cities get students to drive trams

Seated before the tram's control panel, Benedikt Hanne, 24, deftly steered the red and white wagons, hours before heading to Nuremberg university to study for a social work degree. Squeezed by a serious manpower shortage, public transport operators like Nuremberg's city service VAG have had to find new sources to expand their pool of workers. The VAG needs to recruit 160 new drivers annually to run its metro, trams and buses. The transport company put out an advert targeted at university students, offering a part-time job to drive trams outside school hours. To qualify, they need a regular driver's licence, be above 21 years of age, and be "reliable and suitable for driving and shift work". Many

sectors in Germany, like other European countries, are suffering from a serious manpower shortage. Public transport operators have warned they may have to reduce the number of buses, trams or metros. Other German cities like Mannheim and Munich have also begun tapping students as part-timers to fill public transport gaps.

Japanese baseball fans bid farewell to 'lucky' KFC statue A plastic statue of Kentucky Fried Chicken's founder Colonel Sanders that was a lucky charm for superstitious Japanese baseball fans has been "disposed of" 15 years after being dredged out of an Osaka river. Jubilant supporters of Osaka's Hanshin Tigers flung the effigy — and themselves — into Dotonbori river in 1985 after winning Japan's version of the World Series. KFC said the statue was now "too dilapidated to maintain". A ritual "showing gratitude" was held at a temple and attended by baseball fans.

A rock fell from space into Sweden. Who owns it on Earth?

Stockholm: The iron rock's journey from the depths of space ended with a thud in a pine forest, north of Stockholm, on a Nov night four years ago. Its trajectory was caught on several cameras used to track meteoroids. That led to a weeks-long hunt and an even longer court fight over an unusual question: Who owns an unearthly object that falls to Earth?

Days after the rock landed, Anders Zetterqvist, a geologist, found the site where it first hit the ground. After several weeks of searching, his friend, Andreas Forsberg, a fellow geologist, found the 30-pound chunk sticking out of the moss where it had ricocheted, about 230 feet away. "It was the find of a lifetime for me," he said. Most meteoroids that make it to the Earth's atmosphere burn up on entry, leaving only a trace of light — called a meteor — in the sky. So-called fresh-fall meteorites are compared to old ones found buried in the ground. The meteorite north of Stockholm, made of iron, was the



Falls of iron meteorites are rare globally. Laws regulating the ownership of found meteorites vary from country to country. In Sweden, there are none. In France, the first to put his or her hands on it has ownership of it. In Denmark, they are the property of the state

10th fresh-fall meteorite to have been found in Sweden, and one of only a handful of fresh-fall iron meteorites found in the world, Forsberg said. The men took the rock to the Swedish Museum of Natural History, where it has been held since 2020. A week after the geologists went public with their find, the owner of the estate where the meteorite had been found, Johan Benzelstierna von Engestrom, sent a letter to the museum claiming ownership. Laws regulating the ownership of

meteorites vary from country to country. In Sweden, there are none. In France, "the first to put his or her hands on it has ownership of it. In Denmark, they are the property of the state." In Dec 2022, the a district court ruled in favour of the geologists, deeming the meteorite movable property. Engestrom appealed. On Thursday, the appeals court in Stockholm ruled in favour of him. Judge Robert Green said the appeals court's ruling turned on two questions: whether meteorites could be

considered "immovable" property and the extent of a Swedish customary law, known as "Allemansrätten," that provides the right of public access. "The point of departure regarding immovable property is that the landowner has the right to it," he said. The geologists have not decided whether to appeal to the Supreme Court. Forsberg was disappointed. "It's sad for all enthusiasts. If people don't think they'll get a reward, how are we going to get people out searching?" NYT

TITANS APPLY CHOKE ON MI

Gujarat Pip Mumbai By 6 Runs In Marquee Clash

Sabu.Cherian@timesgroup.com

Ahmedabad: At 107/2 in 12 overs chasing 168 set by Gujarat Titans, five-time champions Mumbai Indians were looking to kill the chase with balls to spare. But, the Titans, like they have done in their previous two seasons, applied the squeeze by delivering tight overs and eking out a six-run win in their opening match of the 17th edition at the Narendra Modi Stadium, in Ahmedabad.

Left-arm spinner R Sai Kishore (1/24) trapped a dangerous-looking Rohit Sharma (43 off 29b; 7x4, 1x6) in front in the 13th over. Veteran pacer Mohit Sharma (1/32) had Dewald Brevis (46 off 38b; 2x4, 3x6) caught off his own bowling while Afghan leg-spinner Rashid Khan threw in two miserly overs to apply the choke on Mumbai Indians, who lost yet another opening match.

Afghan pacer Azmatullah Omarzai had earlier dismissed opener Ishan Kishan (0) and number three batter Naman Dhir (20) to leave Indians at 30/2. Sharma and Brevis stitched together a strokeful 77-run partnership for the third wicket to put the Indians in ascendancy before they lost their way in the middle overs.

Earlier, Mumbai Indians' pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah delivered four masterful overs of T20 bowling to stifle Gujarat in their much-anticipated clash. Bumrah showed what the five-time champions missed in the last edition as the local boy recorded figures of 3/13 to help restrict the Titans to 168/6 in 20 overs.

If not for southpaw Rahul Tewatia's 15-ball 22 (2x4, 1x6), which included an 19-run over off left-arm pacer Luke Wood, Titans were staring at a below-par total.

At the toss, Mumbai captain Hardik Pandya called correctly and elected to bowl first. Opening the proceedings, his first ball was cut to the point boundary by opener Wriddhiman Saha while new captain Shubman Gill

too clipped him neatly off his legs for another boundary in the opening over.

With the ball holding up in the pitch slightly, run scoring was difficult and the introduction of Bumrah in the fifth over saw the pacer clean up Saha for 19 (15b; 4x4) with a yorker.

Though Gill (31 off 22b; 3x4, 1x6) hit left-arm spinner Shams Mulani for a six and four in his first over, he was finding it difficult to up the ante and in a bid to break the shackles, he tried to loft leg spinner Piyush Chawla over the fence, only to be caught by Rohit Sharma.

Gill's middling contribution meant Titans were looking at a less than competitive total. New Afghan recruit Azmatullah Omarzai (17) was undone by the pace of South African Gerald Coetzee while Bumrah outfoxed David Miller (12) with a slower one.

Southpaw Sai Sudharshan, who held one end up with a vital contribution of 45, was also caught by Tilak Varma in the deep off Bumrah's bowling.

It was not until Tewatia, who smacked a six and two boundaries over the third man of the 18th over bowled by Wood, that Titans managed to cross 150. Coetzee (2/27) and Bumrah closed out the innings giving away just 14 runs from the two overs to keep the Titans to 168.

MI have lost their opening IPL fixture in twelve successive years — between 2013 and 2024.

3/14

Bumrah has produced his best bowling performance vs GT in the IPL. In his only previous game against them, he had gone wicketless in 2022.



OLD MATES! Hardik Pandya walks back after his dismissal as GT's Umesh Yadav and Shubman Gill look on

Skipper Samson shows the way as RR win their opener

Mandakini.Shalya@timesgroup.com

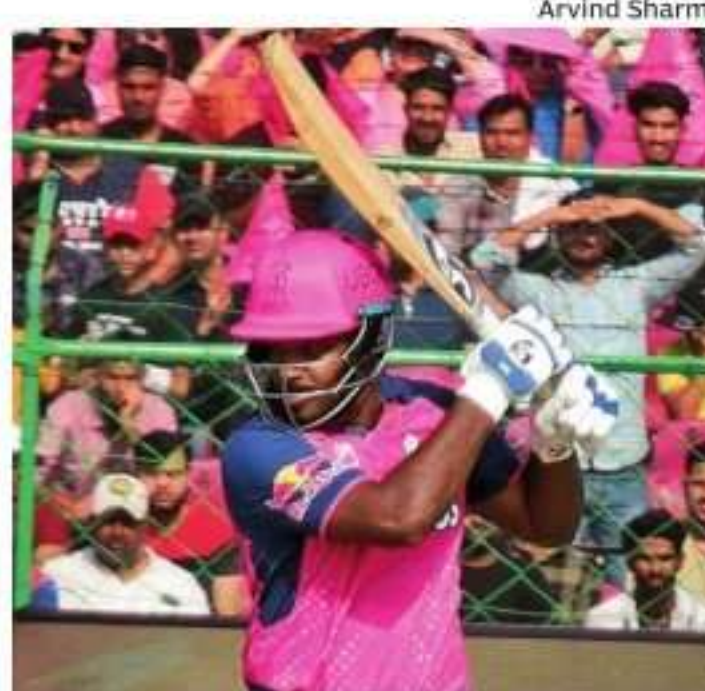
Jaipur: Rajasthan Royals tasked Sandeep Sharma with a tough job — to stop the growing partnership of 85 off 51 balls between KL Rahul (58 off 44 balls) and Nicholas Pooran (64 not out off 41 balls) as Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) needed 49 from 24 balls. The seamer did not disappoint and eliminated the threat in the 17th over with Rahul's wicket.

Ravichandran Ashwin followed it up with Marcus Stoinis' (3 off 4 balls) scalp before Avesh Khan successfully defended 27 runs in the last over to ensure Royals opened their campaign with a 20 runs victory at the SMS Stadium here on Sunday.

Pacers Trent Boult and Nandre Burger got the Royals' defence off to a perfect start. Bowling in tandem, the duo reduced LSG to 3-11 in 3.1 overs.

Earlier, having elected to bat first, it was Royals skipper Sanju Samson who propped them up with a smartly curated unbeaten 82 off 52 balls, which included 3 fours and 6 sixes, to help set a solid target of 193/4 in 20 overs.

Since 2020, Samson has made it a sort of ritual to score at least a half-century in the opening game of the Royals. And



Sanju Samson in action on Sunday

Sunday afternoon was no different.

In 2020, he logged 74 (32) against Chennai Super Kings, in 2021 it was 119 (63) against Punjab Kings, and in 2022 and 2023 he struck 55 (27) and 55 (32) versus Sunrisers. Throughout his stay, the 29-year-old never looked in a hurry or inclined to go for glory shots. Samson simply played his natural game.

The Royals captain took the crease in the second over. The IPL veteran first built a third-wicket partnership of 93

The game is built by perception. Sandeep (Sharma) has been an unsung hero. He stepped up for Prasad (Krishna) last year. He (Sandeep) is a character; it's about the fight they have. A bowler for a fight is way more valuable than a bowler with a skill." —R Ashwin | RR

82 Sanju Samson's knock is the highest individual score for Rajasthan Royals vs LSG in the IPL. The previous best was 59 off 36 balls by Shimron Hetmyer in Mumbai on April 10, 2022.

runners with Riyan Parag (43 off 29 balls). It was a tricky rebuilding period after Royals were 49/2 in 5 overs and needed a partnership to flourish. Later, Samson joined hands with Dhruv Jurel (20 not out off 12 balls) in the 17th over as the duo thrashed 43 runs in collaboration.

Royals' plan to give Parag 'a perfect position to bat' this year paid dividends, at least in the first outing. Instead of sending him at the usual sixth or seventh slot, the Assam youngster was made to play at No. 4 and he responded well to the situation.

There was much hype around Royals openers, but they failed to click. Only two overs into the match and Jos Buttler (11 off 9 balls) was dismissed. Yashasvi Jaiswal failed to build his innings after making 24 off 12 balls.

SCOREBOARD (GT VS MI)

GT: W Saha b Bumrah 19, S Gill c Rohit b Chawla 31, S Sudharsan c Tilak b Bumrah 45, A Omarzai c Tilak b Coetzee 17, D Miller c Hardik b Bumrah 12, V Shankar not out 6, R Tewatia c Dhir b Coetzee 22, R Khan not out 4; Extras: (lb4, w7, nb1) 12; Total: (6 wks) 168; FoW: 1-31, 2-64, 3-104, 4-133, 5-134, 6-161; Bowling: Hardik 3-0-30-0, Wood 2-0-25-0, Bumrah 4-0-14-3, Mulani 3-0-24-0, Chawla 3-0-31-1, Dhir 1-0-13-0, Coetzee 4-0-27-2.

MI: I Kishan c Saha b Omarzai 0, R Sharma lbw b Sai Kishore 43, N Dhir lbw b Omarzai 20, D Brevis c b Mohit 46, T Varma c sub (A Manohar) b Johnson 25, T David c Miller b Mohit 11, H Pandya c Tewatia b Yadav 11, G Coetzee c b Johnson 1, S Mulani not out 1, P Chawla c Rashid b Yadav 0, J Bumrah not out 1; Extras: (w3) 3; Total (9 wks) 162; FoW: 1-0, 2-30, 3-107, 4-129, 5-142, 6-148, 7-150, 8-160, 9-160; Bowling: Omarzai 3-0-27-2, Yadav 3-0-31-2, Rashid 4-0-23-0, S Kishore 4-0-24-1, Johnson 2-0-25-2, Mohit 4-0-32-2.

SCOREBOARD (RR VS LSG)

RR: Y Jaiswal c Pandya b Mohsin 24, J Buttler c Rahul b Naveen 11, S Samson not out 82, R Parag c sub (Hooda) b Naveen 43, S Hetmyer c Rahul b Bishnoi 5, D Jurel not out 20; Extras: (lb1, w6, nb1) 8; Total (4 wks) 193; FoW: 1-13, 2-49, 3-142, 4-150; Bowling: Mohsin 4-0-45-1, Naveen 4-0-41-2, Krunal 4-0-19-0, Bishnoi 4-0-38-1, Thakur 3-0-43-0, Badoni 1-0-6-0.

LSG: Q de Kock c Burger b Boult 4, KL Rahul c Jurel b Sandeep 58, D Padikkal b Boult 0, A Badoni c Buttler b Burger 1, D Hooda c Jurel b Chahal 26, N Pooran not out 64, M Stoinis c Jurel b Ashwin 3, K Pandya not out 3; Extras: (lb5, w9) 14; Total (6 wks) 173; FoW: 1-4, 2-10, 3-11, 4-60, 5-145, 6-154; Bowling: Boult 4-0-35-2, Burger 3-0-31-1, Ashwin 4-0-35-1, Avesh 3-0-21-0, Chahal 3-0-25-1, Sandeep 3-0-22-1.

'Russell world's best on his day'

Archiman.Bhaduri@timesgroup.com

Kolkata: Andre Russell repaid the faith Kolkata Knight Riders have had on him over the years at the Eden Gardens on Saturday. The knights were looking down the barrel against Sunrisers Hyderabad, having lost four wickets inside eight overs, but Russell's power hitting saw them end up at 208 for seven. Opener Phil Salt, who had played alongside Russell in Manchester Originals in The Hundred, was excited watching the West Indian hit seven sixes and three fours in his 25-ball unbeaten 64.

"He's a phenomenal ball striker. The best in the world on his day," Salt said after their four-run win. "So, to see him do what he did, obviously is incredible. Love watching it, but, you know, it's no surprise to me. I don't think it's a surprise to anybody on the ground. When he's on, he's incredible."

Sunrisers Hyderabad must have fancied their chance till Russell appeared with his sledgehammer. "You feel like you've some control, but because of the power and the skill, he (Russell) takes the game away," SRH coach Daniel Vettori said. "At this ground (Eden) in particular and how good the surface is, it's very tricky (to challenge Russell). Obviously, you get some chances when balls go in the air, but his power is second to none," Vettori added.

Ramandeep, Harshit make an impact: The SRH coach felt it was young Ramandeep Singh who made a huge difference. The 26-year-old scored vital 35 runs off 17 balls but more importantly put together 54 runs with Salt that steadied the KKR innings. "Ramandeep's innings set up the platform for Russell," Vettori said. "I don't think we underestimated him (Ramandeep), but the shots he played were fantastic and put the pressure back on us," the former New Zealand spinner said. "With Salt well set at the other end, it allowed him to play his game, and there was no pressure for him to take too many risks."

RCB seek home comfort Play Next 3 Games In Bengaluru, Punjab First Up

Ashim.Sunam@timesgroup.com

Bengaluru: A good start usually sets the tone for the season, and on that count the Royal Challengers Bengaluru got off the wrong foot. They lost their IPL season opener to Chennai Super Kings on Friday. But Faf du Plessis and his men have a golden opportunity to set things right as they play their next three games on home turf.

First up, they face Punjab Kings at the M Chinnaswamy stadium here on

Monday. The visitors will be high on confidence following their four-wicket win over Delhi Capitals on Saturday. If RCB, who won three of the seven games at the venue last season are to deliver in the 17th edition, they need to make their home advantage count at a venue which is primarily a batting paradise. RCB have the batters to exploit such conditions.

Virat Kohli, who batted for almost 30 minutes at the nets on Sunday, Glenn Maxwell and skipper Faf Du

RCB VS PBKS

Last season I kept wickets in a few games, and it gave me confidence. I'm looking forward to contributing more as a wicketkeeper-batter. The communication (from the team management) has been very clear — I have to bat in the middle order." —Anuj Rawat | RCB

Plessis form the fulcrum of the lineup. With Cameron Green and Rajat Patidar in the middle order, the trio, which showcased a rich form last season, can play freely. After falling to 78/5 against CSK, Bengaluru's top five will be determined to put up a good

show in front of their home fans.

It would also be fair to say that RCB, compared to last season, have better batting depth. Anuj Rawat's 25-ball 48 in the last game will inspire confidence, while the seasoned Dinesh Karthik is a proven good finisher. Green is another middle-order bat who has it in him to win matches single-handedly. Patidar will be itching to make an impact too.

On paper, a fascinating contest is on the cards between the RCB batters and the all-round Punjab bowling unit. In Sam Curran, Kagiso Rabada and Arshdeep Singh, the away team has a potent pace attack. The spin duo of Rahul Chahar and Harpreet Brar provides balance.

Meanwhile, their new acquisition Harshal Patel, who was surprisingly released by RCB ahead of the last auction, brings an intriguing subplot. The death over specialist knows his opposition well and will be keen to prove a point on a ground where he has been successful.

On the other hand, the hosts must up their bowling game plan significantly. Mohammed Siraj's ability to take early wickets holds the key, but death bowling continues to be a pressing concern, where Alzarri Joseph needs to come good.

With such a below-par attack, Punjab batters Shikhar Dhawan, Liam Livingstone, Jonny Bairstow among others will be eager to dominate.

GALLERY Amir comes out of retirement

Karachi: Controversial Pakistan left-arm pacer Mohammad Amir has decided to come out of international retirement and make himself available for selection for the upcoming T20 World Cup in the Americas in June. Amir wrote on 'X': "There has been few positive discussions between myself and the PCB where they respectfully made me feel that I was needed and can still play for Pakistan. After discussing with family and we'll wishers I declare that I am available to be considered for upcoming T20WC, I want to do this for my country as it comes before my personal decisions. Donning the green jersey and serving my country has always been, and will continue to be, my greatest aspirations."

Shubankar finishes tied 7th in Singapore: Shubankar Sharma briefly shared the lead on the back nine of the final day, but the Indian dropped two crucial shots and finished tied-seventh at the Porsche Singapore Classic in Singapore on Sunday. Sharma shot rounds of 68-69-68-71 for a 12-under total and ended five behind the eventual winner Jesper Svensson.

Twin ambitions for Rasmus

Highest-Ranked Player At Indian Open Aims To Join His Brother On The PGA Tour, And Secure A Fifth European Win

Moushumi.Bora@timesgroup.com

Guess which Hojgaard is coming to town?

Identical twins Rasmus and Nicolai have been turning a few heads in Europe for a few seasons now. And while fans have been deceived by the appearances of the 23-year-old Danish golfers, their unique styles give the names away to the more discerning observer.

It will be Rasmus showing his skills at the Hero Indian Open in Gurgaon this week. Last year, it was Nicolai who made the journey. "I have spoken to my brother a little about the course and what to expect, but we don't tend to share 'tips' as we have very different games," the four-time winner on the European Tour shared in an e-mail interaction with TOI. "I've heard great things about the country, culture and the DLF golf course so I'm looking forward to visiting India for the first time," he added.

The success stories of the first brothers to win back-to-back titles on the European Tour have had a certain pattern. Rasmus, the fastest Dane to a European Tour title at 18 years and 271 days, had been stealing the show but it was his twin who was a captain's pick for the 2023 Ryder Cup team and crossed the Atlantic with the coveted PGA Tour card. "It was always inevitable our careers would develop at different stages," Rasmus explained, laying down the facts. "Nicolai started off strong with his second place at the KLM Open, then I managed to secure my card at Q-school and win shortly after, then he has had his recent success. We know we will probably never become completely separa-



Rasmus Hojgaard

te 'entities' as we look the same, but we try to look at our careers individually."

Rasmus also got a taste of the Europe vs US showdown as an assistant to Thomas Bjorn, but missed the American dream by a whisker. Swinging fortunes may have split their pathway, but Rasmus is confident that he will be joining his sibling soon on US shores.

He understands there will be more ups and downs in golf than any other sports, but is aware of his capabilities. "Given how much of the season I missed last year (two-and-a-half months) due to a shoulder injury and how long it took my body to feel healthy, I reflected positively on the season, despite the disappointment. If I remain fit, I should be able to achieve one of the 10 cards this season. I can accept the ebbs and flows of the sport, so I try not to let it get to me too much."

The brothers have been used to "mixed emotions" over the years. "Nicolai and I have a very healthy, competitive relationship. I wouldn't call it a 'rivalry' as we are very supportive of each other, but it's always been competitive since we were young. If Nicolai is per-

FAST FACTS

- Rasmus Hojgaard (Denmark)
- *Born 12.03.2001 (23 years)
- *World No. 76, highest-ranked golfer at the Hero Indian Open this week; Race to Dubai position: 9
- *Surname pronounced "Hoy-gor"
- *He and his twin brother Nicolai were the first brothers to win in consecutive weeks on the Tour (Aug-Sep 2021)
- *In just his 5th start on the European Tour, became the third youngest player in history to win (in 2020)
- *4-time winner on the European Tour
- *Best this season: 2nd at the Ras Al Khaimah Championship; Two other Top 10s.

forming well, it makes me even more focused and that has helped us get to where we are today," he said.

It has been more of a struggle for dad Ole and mom Tina. "In the early years, yes, as they didn't know how to celebrate with one and support the other, but that's become a lot easier over time. They understood our careers were not always going to be side-by-side."

The World No. 76 is currently third in the race for two slots in the Denmark Olympic team, behind his brother (37) and Thorbjorn Olesen (66). Is twinning in Paris on his mind? "It's another goal that I can only control by playing good golf. It's a motivator but not something I'm particularly thinking too much about at this stage."

Sri Lanka push Bangladesh to brink after de Silva, Mendis feat

Sylhet: Dhananjaya de Silva and Kamindu Mendis both slammed their second century of the match as Sri Lanka set up a 511-run target for Bangladesh before pushing the hosts to the corner in the first Test on Sunday. The visitors were all out for 418 in their second innings at Sylhet, with Mendis making 164 runs to go with his 102 in the first innings and De Silva, who also scored 102 runs in the first innings, adding 108. Sri Lankan pacers began the victory push immediately, reducing Bangladesh to 47-5 at stumps, with 464 more needed for an unlikely win.

imed a wicket as Mahmudul Hasan (0), Najmul Hossain Shanto (6), Zakir Hasan (19), Shahadat Hossain (0) and Litton Das (0) all departed. "Of course, it's a bad thing, because we're all doing bad together," Mehidy Hasan Miraz said of Bangladesh's batting. "Everyone has to play well in Test cricket, otherwise it will be difficult." The sorry display from Bangladesh batsmen came after de Silva and Mendis had dominated the bowlers for the better part of the day, becoming only the third pair in Test history to score a century in both innings. The Chappell brothers, Greg and Ian, of Australia

achieved the feat against New Zealand in March 1974, before Misbah-ul-Haq and Azhar Ali emulated it against Australia in Abu Dhabi in 2014. The pair, who shared 202 runs in Sri Lanka's first innings total of 280 runs, put on 173 runs together this time. "I'm very happy... the main reason is the talent and determination these players possess," Sri Lanka batting coach Thilina Kandamby said. Mehidy broke their partnership, before finishing with 4-74 for Bangladesh. Resuming on 119-5, the visitors lost night-watchman Fernando (four) early to Khaled Ahmed, before de Silva and Mendis took control. AFP

Troubled Aryna exits in Miami

A traumatic week for world No. 2 Aryna Sabalenka came to an end with a third round, three set loss in the Miami Open to Ukrainian Anhelina Kalinina on Saturday. The 6-4, 1-6, 6-1 win for the 36th ranked Kalinina prompted Sabalenka, who had kept her emotions in check through both of her games at Hard Rock Stadium, to smash her racket violently into the court. On Monday, Belarusian Sabalenka's former boyfriend, ex-NHL player Konstantin Koltsov, died in



Aryna Sabalenka gestures during her match against Kalinina

Miami after what police called an "apparent suicide". The pair had been in a relationship until recently and Sabalenka only announced they were no longer together following

the death. On Friday, she looked in control as she defeated her close friend Paula Badosa of Spain in straight sets. But given the late slot on the main stadium court, Sabalenka looked to be feeling the strain more as she struggled for any kind of consistency. After losing the opening set, she utterly dominated Kalinina in the second, with her serve and powerful backhand too much for the Ukrainian. Once Kalinina broke in the third, Sabalenka's focus and composure deserted her. AFP

● SOUTHGATE UPBEAT DESPITE ENGLAND LOSS ● WIRTZ SCORES GERMANY'S FASTEST GOAL

A fresh start

Endrick Makes History As Brazil Beat England In Friendly To Launch New Era

London: Real Madrid-bound Endrick became the youngest men's player to score an international goal at Wembley as Brazil beat England 1-0 in a friendly.

Endrick, who will move from Palmeiras to Madrid at the end of the season when he turns 18, struck nine minutes after coming on as a second half substitute.

"My family is here, my girlfriend, my agents. I am not much of a crier, I am holding myself, but this is something unique and I am very happy," he said.

Based on his second half cameo, Madrid has secured another major talent for the future.

Coming on for Rodrygo in the 71st minute, Endrick wasted little time to make his mark, firing into an empty net after Vinicius Junior was denied by England goalkeeper Jordan Pickford. Endrick could not hide his delight as he raced away in celebration and dropped to his knees — even though he did have to wait for VAR to confirm the goal following a check for offside.

It was his first senior goal for Brazil and, at the age of 17 years, 246 days, a record for an international game at Wembley, according to statistician Opta.

He might have scored another, but could not beat Pickford with a late chance.

"All of this affected me a little at the end, the chance I had at the end. I will not lie," Endrick said. "I was just thinking about scoring. I could only think about that. I couldn't think about the match any longer."

Ultimately, his one goal was enough to win the match and end England's 21-game unbeaten streak at the national stadium.

"We know he's a dangerous player. He's managed to follow in the goal," Three Lions manager Gareth Southgate said. "We should have defended the goal better than we did. It's a brilliant moment for him." AGENCIES



ENDRICK (NO. 21) CELEBRATES HIS FIRST GOAL FOR BRAZIL

On only a few occasions has a Brazil side won in England which must say something about us. But we must not lose sight of the fact that this is just the start of our work.

—Dorival Junior, BRAZIL COACH

17 Endrick became the youngest player to score for Brazil since Ronaldo in 1994. He became the youngest male goalscorer for club or country at Wembley at just 17 years and 246 days.

Defeat a wake-up call for France, says Tchouameni

Lyon: France were completely outclassed by Germany in their 2-0 defeat on Saturday and should treat the loss as a wake-up call ahead of the European Championship, midfielder Aurelien Tchouameni said.

Florian Wirtz scored Germany's fastest international goal after seven seconds before the Euro 2024 hosts doubled their lead early in the second half through Kai Havertz to earn victory in the Lyon friendly. "I think we were outclassed in every department," Tchouameni told French TV network TF1.

"We couldn't put our game plan in place. We came up against a great team. We need to do better, individually and collectively. It's a wake-up call, but there's no need to overreact either. We are aware of and confident in our qualities." AGENCIES

Tony Kroos, coaxed out of international retirement for the upcoming European Championship, wasted no time with a precise pass for Wirtz, who let fly from outside the penalty area to score in off the crossbar after seven seconds. Kroos later confirmed they worked on the move in training.

The German soccer federation said it was the quickest goal ever scored in a national team game. The previous best was nine seconds by Lukas Podolski in a 2013 win over Ecuador.

"It was an important step forward," Kroos said after his first Germany game for nearly three years.

"It was clear to us with regard to the European Championship that we were getting to the last opportunities to build some confidence and we'll take that today." AGENCIES

FERGUSON FLUFFS PENALTY AS IRELAND DRAW WITH BELGIUM

Dublin: Ireland striker Evan Ferguson missed a first-half penalty as interim manager John O'Shea began his tenure with a 0-0 home draw against Belgium in a friendly on Saturday. The home side were awarded a spot-kick, but Ferguson's penalty was poor and Belgium goalkeeper Matz Sels saved it with his feet. Belgium have now gone 11 games undefeated under coach Domenico Tedesco since a disastrous 2022 World Cup campaign in Qatar.

6 SECONDS! BAUMGARTNER SCORES FASTEST GOAL FOR AUSTRIA

Austria's Christoph Baumgartner scored six seconds after kickoff in Saturday's 2-0 friendly win over Slovakia, the fastest recorded goal in international football. The 24-year-old sprinted from the centre circle and skipped past three challenges before firing a low shot from outside the box into the bottom corner. AGENCIES

F1: Sainz wins Australian GP after Verstappen retires early

Melbourne: Ferrari's Carlos Sainz surged to victory at the Australian Grand Prix Sunday to snap Red Bull's winning start to the season after three-time world champion Max Verstappen sensationally failed to finish.

The Spaniard, who had appendicitis surgery two weeks ago, took the chequered flag 2.3 seconds ahead of teammate Charles Leclerc, with McLaren's Lando Norris a bold third. It was his third grand prix win and first since Singapore last year. "I'm happy to be in a one-two with Charles here. It shows that hard work pays off," said Sainz, who missed the last race in Saudi Arabia and was bed-ridden for a week afterwards.

"Life sometimes is crazy... the podium in Bahrain, then the appendix, the comeback, the win. It's a rollercoaster but I loved it and I'm extremely happy."

While he celebrated, it was a disastrous day for pole-sitter Verstappen, who limped out with smoke billowing from his car after being passed by front-row partner Sainz on lap two.

The Dutchman blamed a brake issue for his first retirement in two years. "What we can see so far from the data is that as soon as the lights went off the right-rear brake just stuck on," he said.

"It just caused the damage and it kept on increasing so it was also basically driving with the handbrake on."

It was also a horror race for Lewis Hamilton in his inconsistent Mercedes, with the British seven-time world champion suffering engine



DOMINATING SHOW: Ferrari's Carlos Sainz celebrates on the podium

"I'm happy to be in a one-two with Charles (Leclerc) here (Melbourne). It shows that hard work pays off. Life sometimes is crazy... the podium in Bahrain, then the appendix, the comeback, the win. It's a rollercoaster but I loved it and I'm extremely happy."

Carlos Sainz | DRIVER, FERRARI

failure on lap 17. To add to Mercedes' woes, teammate George Russell crashed heavily on the last lap with the car ending on its side.

Russell climbed out unscathed, with Aston Martin's Fernando Alonso faulted for "potentially dangerous" driving over the incident and slapped with a 20-second penalty. Verstappen emphatically won the opening two grands prix of the season in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, with both a Red Bull 1-2, and was hot favourite to make it three from three.

He had been aiming to

match his own record set last year of 10 consecutive wins — one more than Sebastian Vettel in 2013 — and was unbeaten in his last 18 starts from pole position. But while Verstappen was favoured to win, the Ferraris had proved highly competitive in practice and qualifying on the fast and flowing Albert Park track. Despite not being fully fit, Sainz, whose seat at Ferrari is to be taken by Hamilton next year, topped Q1 and Q2 to fire a warning shot.

Oscar Piastri in the other McLaren was fourth ahead of Red Bull's Sergio Perez. Alonso dropped to eighth after his penalty with teammate Lance Stroll elevated to sixth and RB's Yuki Tsunoda to seventh. Haas pair Nico Hulkenberg and Kevin Magnussen rounded out the top 10. "It feels good mostly for the team of course, first and second didn't happen since Bahrain 2022," said Leclerc. "Carlos has had an incredible weekend to come back from his surgery, he's done an amazing race." AFP

Rampant Odisha claim maiden title

Sudeshna Ghosh
@timesgroup.com

Kolkata: It was a thriller of a finale to the seventh season of Indian Women's League (IWL) as Odisha FC clinched their first women's title by beating Kickstart FC 6-0 at Kalinga Stadium

WOMEN'S LEAGUE

Odisha FC clinched their first women's title by beating Kickstart FC 6-0 at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar on Sunday. Odisha FC's ambition for the Indian top-tier title has been evident in their two years in the league. From roping in Crispin Chhetri, who had guided Sethu FC to the final in 2022, at the helm to luring in the best performing Indian

players in the league — in the likes of Indumathi Kathiresan from defending champions Gokulam Kerala — and providing them with the top-class facilities, Odisha had left no stone unturned in their hurried quest for the women's crown.

"This win is massive and Odisha deserves to be in AFC with all the infrastructure they are building," coach Chhetri told TOI from Bhubaneswar after the triumph.

However, with just two points separating them from Gokulam when they took field against Kickstart on the day, they could not afford a final-day

stumble and the Odisha coach knew the task at hand.

"Champions don't need to be asked to do extra work. They do it. They understand that excellence involves doing more than what's required," Chhetri wrote on the dressing room board ahead of the match.

And they responded like true champions by mustering the must-win scenario with ease as Lynda Kom (11', 66' 77') hit a hat-trick, Pyari Xaxa (13', 22') ended her season with eight goals including a final-day brace and Karthika Angamuthu (58') scored a screamer for the new champions.

TIMES NATION

BJP picks Sandeshkhali survivor, royal scion, TMC defectors for Bengal seats

Continued from P 1

bypoll in 1988. So far, BJP has released five lists with 398 candidates. Mithilesh Tiwari, state general secretary of the party and an ex MLA, has replaced Ashwini Choubey in Buxar while V K Singh has been replaced by MLA Atul Garg in Ghaziabad in UP. Rama Devi and Chhedi Paswan are the other prominent omissions.

Ramesh Awasthi, a former journalist, who had recently organised Sanatan Yatra, has replaced Satyadeo Pachauri in Kanpur.

Unlike previous occasions, the BJP brass, however, has not sprung any major surprises as most sitting MPs have been repeated even as there was speculation that they might be dropped since their candidatures were put on hold.

However, known as a Hindutva firebrand who recently touched off a controversy by demanding changes in the Constitution, six-time Uttara Kannada MP Ananthkumar Hegde has been replaced by former speaker of assembly Visheshwar Hegde Kageri.

Hegde, who had earlier indicated about abstaining

from polls owing to health reasons, had sought the party ticket to contest again.

Prominent among those who figured in the fifth list were former CM Jagadish Shettar and former minister K Sudhakar who will be contesting from Belagavi and Chikkaballapura. Shettar, who was denied the ticket for assembly polls, contested as a Congress candidate but lost. The Lingayat leader recently returned to the fold.

With all seats announced in Karnataka, independent MP from Mandya Sumalatha Ambareesh, who aligned with the saffron party, appears to have been "sidelined" by BJP, with the seat going to alliance partner JD (S). Sumalatha was expected to be accommodated either in Bangalore North or in one



A BJP campaign poster in Varanasi

of the few Vokkaliga-dominated seats.

In its second list of 13 candidates for UP, the BJP benched nine sitting MPs. Besides Varun, the eight others include Santosh Gangwar (Bareilly), Satyadev Pachauri (Kanpur), Rajveer Diler (Hathras), Upendra Rawat (Barabanki) and Akshay Lal Gond (Bahraich).

The party also denied ticket to its Budaun MP Sanghmitra Maurya, daughter of Swami Prasad Maurya who has been issuing controversial statements against Hindutva and Sanatan.

BJP benched two more sitting MPs — from Dhanbad and Chatra. In Dhanbad, it picked Bagmara MLA Dhullu Mahato over sitting MP P N Singh while in Chatra, it denied the ticket to sitting MP Sunil Singh and gave it to Kalicharan Singh.

Amongst the 19 candidates announced for Bengal, the party has leaned on experience by retaining five sitting MPs, dropping one, while former state BJP president Dilip Ghosh was shifted from Midnapore seat he won five years ago and asked to fight

from Bardhaman-Durgapur. The list does not name party candidates for Diamond Harbour, Jhargram, Birbhum and Asansol, after Bhojpuri singer Pawan Singh withdrew his nomination.

Among the 14 new faces who figure in BJP list are Sandeshkhali survivor Rekha Patra in Bashirhat, royal descendant Amrita Ray to take on TMC's Mahua Moitra in Krishnanagar, and advocate Kabir Shankar Bose to take on former father-in-law Kalyan Banerjee in Sreerampore. TMC defectors have been awarded with Tapas Roy nominated for Kolkata North and Arjun Singh in Barrackpore. Former Union minister Debashree Choudhury has been asked to move from Raiganj to Kolkata (South).

In Bihar, RS member Vivek Thakur has been nominated for Nawada seat which was won by LJP candidate Chandan Singh last time, while former Union ministers Ravishankar Prasad and Rajiv Pratap Rudy have been retained for Patna and Saran, respectively. Union power minister R K Singh will contest the Ara seat again.

KCR's nephew booked in ₹40cr Banjara Hills land-grab case

Hyderabad: A criminal case was filed against ex-Telangana CM Chandrasekhar Rao's nephew and Rajya Sabha MP J Santosh Rao and an associate for allegedly grabbing prime land worth over Rs 40 crore in Hyderabad's upscale Banjara Hills. Santosh termed the action "politically motivated".

The case is based on a complaint filed by a firm, Navayuga Engineering Company Ltd (NECL), three days ago. Navayuga claims Santosh and co-accused Linga Reddy Sridhar grabbed its 1.350-square yard land and that it got to know about the fraud recently when it found the duo were paying property tax, but with different plot numbers.

Santosh and Sridhar have been booked under Sections 420 (cheating), 120(B) pertaining to criminal conspiracy and other IPC provisions and probe is on, Banjara Hills ACP S Venkat Reddy said.

NECL claims it had purchased the plot in 2010 from a couple in two parts and recently learnt that two rooms were constructed there, police said. Enquiries with civic body GHMC and local sub-registrar revealed that Santosh and Sridhar were paying the tax by allegedly fabricating plot numbers, NECL alleged.

Santosh denied the allegations. In a statement on Sunday, he said he had "legally purchased" the land in 2016. "I am ready to fight this case. I will initiate legal action against those damaging my reputation by spreading baseless rumours," Santosh said. TNN

FM trashes Sidda claim of Centre stalling ₹5,495cr aid

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday denied claims by Karnataka's Congress govt that Centre had withheld a special grant of Rs 5,495 crore recommended by 15th Finance Commission.

Speaking at an event in run-up to Lok Sabha polls, Sitharaman said the commission's final report did not contain any such recommendation. She accused the Siddaramaiah-led state govt of "misleading" people and criticised "My Tax, My Right", a state govt narrative.

Siddaramaiah hit back at the claims. "One expects the country's finance minister to speak the truth. Unfortunately, she has been consistently denying the written word," he posted on X.

He attached an interim report of finance commission which purportedly recommended Rs 5,495 crore in its interim report and Rs 6,000 crore in its final report. "Ministry of finance under the leadership of Sitharaman refused to accept these two recommendations, thus denying the rightful share for Karnataka," Siddaramaiah wrote.

Earlier, Sitharaman had admitted that Karnataka contributed significantly to central tax pool but contended that expecting proportionately higher returns was "a narrow-minded approach". As an example, she said many people from other states like Chhattisgarh and Bihar work in Bengaluru, contributing to taxes. Citing this, she questioned the fairness of denying their home states development funds.

Sitharaman brushed off previous claims by Siddaramaiah and his deputy DK Shivakumar on the state's share of taxes and funds, saying Karnataka had received every penny due, often "two months ahead of schedule". According to her, Karnataka's share of GST compensation of Rs 1.1 lakh crore has been fully paid, with no outstanding dues as of March 1, 2024.

Sitharaman insisted that PM Narendra Modi's "guarantees" had been met nationwide, explaining that these were "not mere promises but actual deliverables" that had reached the people.



Sitharaman said the finance commission's final report did not contain any recommendation and accused the Karnataka govt led by Siddaramaiah of misleading people

Krishna water tribunal gets 1 more extension

New Delhi: Krishna Water Disputes Tribunal, constituted for adjudicating dispute and river water sharing between Maharashtra, Karnataka and erstwhile Andhra Pradesh in April 2004, has got another extension till July 31, 2025 with effect from April 1, reports Vishwa Mohan.

Terms of reference of the 20-year-old tribunal was amended last year to accommodate water-sharing concerns of Telangana as well.

As part of its latest extension, Centre on March 21 notified that the tribunal may now submit its report on addressing water-sharing disputes among four states by July 31 next year.

BJP govt yrs best part of my IAF stint: Ex-chief

Continued from P 1

I thank the party leadership for giving me this opportunity to contribute to nation-building once again. I served the IAF for more than four decades, but the best time of my service was the last eight years under the leadership of BJP govt. Tough steps taken by this govt to empower and modernise our armed forces and make them self-reliant have not only given rise to a new capability in the forces but also given them a new confidence," ex-IAF chief Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria said.

Bhadauria was IAF chief from Sept 2019 to Sept 2021. He won the coveted 'Sword of



Former IAF chief Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria (retd) joins BJP in presence of Union minister Anurag Thakur in New Delhi on Sunday

Honour' at National Defence Academy, flew indigenous Tejas fighter prototypes as a young test pilot and later led commercial negotiations for the Rs 59,000-crore deal for 36 French Rafale jets in Sept

2016 as IAF deputy chief, which emerged as a major bone of contention between BJP and Congress in the run-up to Lok Sabha polls in 2019.

Bhadauria, along with former MP Tirupati Varaprasad Rao Velagapalli from YSRCP, were inducted into the party by BJP general secretary Vinod Tawde and Union minister Anurag Thakur at the party headquarters in New Delhi.

As per BJP sources, Bhadauria is being considered for an LS seat in Uttar Pradesh while Velagapalli has been named from Tirupati seat. The development came as VK Singh said he was opting out of electoral politics. Later in the day, he was replaced for Ghaziabad LS

seat by MLA Atul Garg.

Singh, a third-generation officer of Rajput Regiment who had topped both commando course at Infantry School in Mhow and Rangers combat-leadership programme at Fort Benning in US as a subaltern, was Army chief from April 2010 to May 2012. He was the first serving military chief to controversially drag govt (UPA-2) to court over his date of birth because he believed he had been wronged by the system and victimised by earlier Army chiefs Generals J J Singh and Deepak Kapoor. There were also reports of UPA-2 govt being "spooked" by unauthorised movement of two Army units towards New Delhi in Jan 2012.

2 out on bail killed over sand transport rivalry in J'khand

Daltonganj: Rivalry over sand transport claimed two lives in Jharkhand's Palamu on Sunday, police said, reports MF Ahmad.

"Both the deceased were out on bail since Aug 2023. They were at loggerheads with a powerful local family, the Chowdhurys, over sand transport. The attack was most probably a fallout of the enmity," said SDPO (Sadar)

Mani Bhushan Prasad.

The assailants first stabbed Rajesh Gupta (22) several times before slitting his throat at around 7am in Semar Tarn under Chainpur police station.

Sujit Bhuiyan (36), who witnessed the murder of his friend, tried to flee by crossing the dry Koyal river, but could only cover 2km before falling down from ex-

haustion, police said.

The assailants caught hold of Sujit, took him to a secluded place in Nawa Toll under Daltonganj town police station where they slit his throat at around 7:45am, police said.

Sujit had bought a tractor in 2020 to transport sand with support of Rajesh. Both the deceased were residents of the Semar Tarn locality of Chainpur village.