

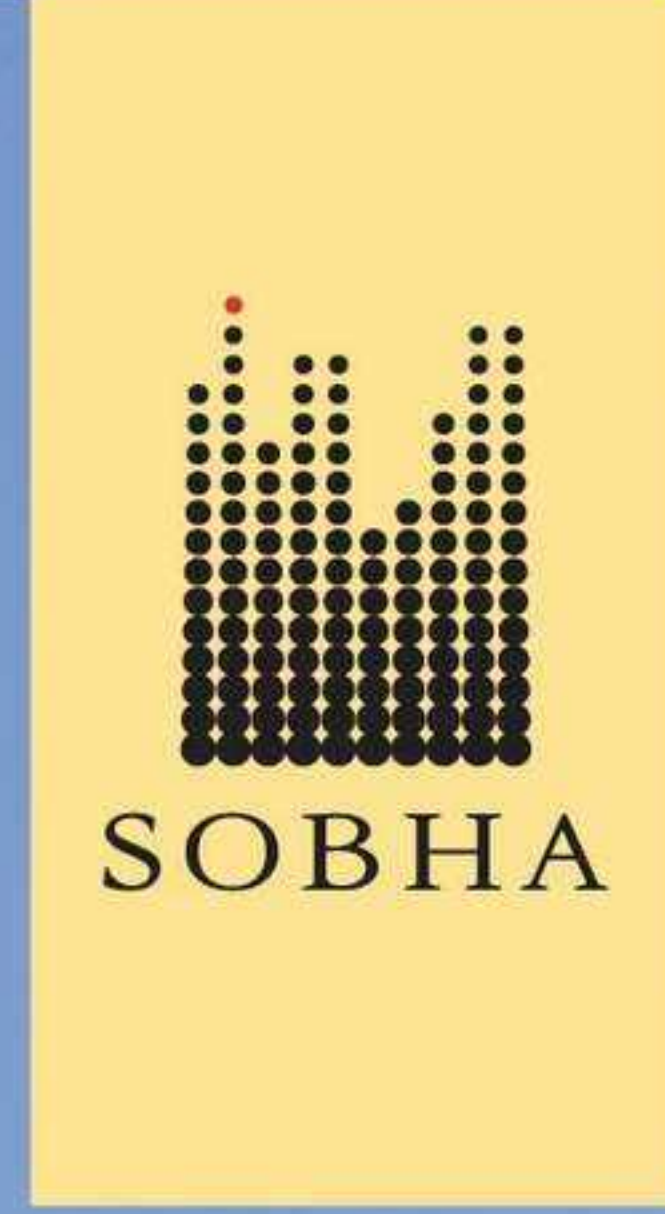


Hindustan Times

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Hindustan Times

Israel launches strikes; No damage, won't hit back: Iran

Agencies

letters@hindustantimes.com

DUBAI/CAPRI: Explosions were heard on Friday in Iran, reportedly part of Israel's widely expected retaliation to an earlier attack, but the full impact was not immediately clear with both Tehran and Tel Aviv downplaying the incident — a response that appeared gauged towards averting a region-wide war.

The apparent attack, the latest of the exchanges between the regional enemies whose long-running shadow war has broken into the open, came on Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's 85th birthday. The limited scale of the attack and Iran's muted response both appeared to signal a successful effort by diplomats who have been working round the clock to avert all-out war since an Iranian drone and missile attack on Israel last Saturday.

Air defence systems over several cities were activated, state media reported on Friday, after Iran's official broadcaster said explosions were heard near Isfahan city, in the central province of the same name, and over 800km away in Tabriz region.

Iran's army commander-in-chief Abdolrahim Mousavi attributed Friday's explosions to "the firing of anti-aircraft defence systems on a suspicious object". He said there was "no damage" and the scale of the incident was being assessed, according to Tasnim news agency.

Notably, Iranian media and officials referred to the incident as an attack by "infiltrators",

continued on → 6

Attack sees muted response

The latest exchanges have brought Israel and Iran's long-running shadow war into the open.

EXPLOSIONS HEARD

Air defence systems over several Iranian cities were activated and "three explosions" were heard close to Qahjavarestan, near Isfahan airport and the 8th Shekari army airbase. Army commander-in-chief Abdolrahim Mousavi attributed the blasts to "the firing of anti-aircraft defence systems on a suspicious object", adding there was no damage.

ISRAELI RETALIATION?

The Israeli govt didn't publicly comment but an official told The Post the "strike" intended to signal that Israel could hit inside Iran. Reports also said US officials had confirmed the attack

THE START OF DIRECT ATTACKS

Israel had vowed retaliation after Iran fired drones and missiles at it on April 13. The first direct strikes had been a response to Israel's April 1 strike on Tehran's embassy in Damascus.



WAR AVERTED?

The attack's scale and the muted response appear to signal successful diplomatic efforts to avert regional war. A senior Iranian official told Reuters there were no plans to respond against Israel.

US vetoes move to give a UN seat to Palestine

UNITED NATIONS: The United States vetoed a widely backed UN resolution on Thursday that would have paved the way for full United Nations membership for Palestine, a goal the Palestinians have long sought and Israel has worked to prevent.

The vote in the 15-member Security Council was 12 in favor, the United States opposed and two abstentions, from the United Kingdom and Switzerland. US allies France, Japan

and South Korea supported the resolution.

The resolution would have recommended that the 193-member UN General Assembly, where there are no vetoes, approve Palestine becoming the 194th member of the United Nations. Some 140 countries, including India, have already recognized Palestine, so its admission would have been approved, likely by a much higher number of countries. → P15

INDIA CAN PLAY A CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IN WEST ASIA, SAYS IRAN ENVOY

Rezaul H Laskar

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NEW DELHI: India can help address the tensions in West Asia in view of its relations with both Iran and Israel, and take on an active role in "preventing Israeli aggression", Iranian ambassador Iraj Elahi said on Friday against the backdrop of further escalation in the region. → P15

WOMEN OFFICERS IN ARMY MUST GET POSTS MATCHING ENTITLEMENT: SC

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court has said that empanelled women officers should get command posts matching their entitlement but refused to direct the Indian Army to give them a fixed tenure citing the operational requirement. The court passed the order while hearing an application moved by four women colonels who alleged the Army allocated regular billets to male officers while allowing women officers to command upgraded billets usually headed by junior officers. → P13

BHUJBAL SAYS NOT CONTESTING AFTER DELAY OVER SEAT ANNOUNCEMENT

HT Correspondent

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MUMBAI: Senior Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader and Maharashtra minister Chhagan Bhujbal said on Friday that he has decided not to seek ticket from the Nashik Lok Sabha constituency in Maharashtra so as to end the deadlock over the seat also coveted by the ally Shiv Sena. → FULL REPORT ON P11

Electoral bonds will be back after consultations: Nirmala

NEW DELHI: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) intends to bring back electoral bonds in some form after wide consultations will all stakeholders if it is elected back to power in the 2024 general elections. Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Friday, reposing her faith in the controversial political funding scheme that was scrapped by the Supreme Court in February but admitting that some changes were necessary.

In an interview to R Sukumar and Sunetra Choudhury, Sitharaman said the state of the economy was very relevant to the 2024 elections, took credit for keeping inflation under check, hit out at the Opposition over corruption and for fanning the north-south divide, and held out

a prescription to maintain economic stability. She also spoke about how 370 seats was a real target for the BJP in these polls, and why she believed the Dra-

vidian parties misled the people of southern India.

"We still have to do a lot of" continued on → 7
FULL INTERVIEW → P11

Case filed 1.5yrs after help raped, tongue chopped

Jignasa Sinha

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NEW DELHI: The Delhi police have filed a first information report in connection with a December 2022 gang-rape case after a local court pulled up officials over alleged inaction.

According to the FIR, filed on April 15, a 25-year-old woman was allegedly raped by her employers' son and his friends, who also chopped off a part of her tongue on December 29, 2022. The woman worked as a

house help in the Govindpuri area of southeast Delhi.

In her complaint, the woman has alleged that she and her family approached officers, including a deputy commissioner of police, a station house officer and other senior officers, but her complaints were "turned down".

The police, however, said the woman approached them only once. "The woman approached us in July 2023 and did not appear for further counselling or questioning," an official said. → P13

ORDER RESERVED BY SC ON MADRAS HC'S VERDICT IN CHILD PORN CASE

Abraham Thomas

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NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Friday reserved its order on a Madras high court decision that merely watching child pornography is not an offence, quashing a case against a 28-year-old man last month for downloading and watching pornographic content involving children on his phone. The March 11 order was challenged by a coalition of NGOs, Just Rights for Children Alliance. → P13

{ DOUBLE MURDER } CRIME AND THE CITY

Armed stalker, and a mother's bid to save her child behind B'loru killings

Coovercolly Indresh

letters@hindustantimes.com

BENGALURU: Just shy of 4.30pm on Thursday afternoon, at her Shankambari Nagar home in Bengaluru, 26-year-old Anusha received a phone call. Almost immediately, she told her mother, 48-year-old Geetha, that she was stepping out of the house, and would return in five minutes. Her mother was

instantly worried; her daughter had been troubled, and she sensed something was wrong. She followed Anusha to a park nearby, and from behind some bushes that gave her cover, watched as her daughter met a man and began a heated argument. As she watched with concern, the man pulled out a knife and attacked her daughter. She rushed to save her, assaulting the man with a brick that she

had picked up. A day later, both Anusha and 38-year-old Suresh are dead, and Geetha is in custody for murder.

Karnataka police officers on Friday said that a failed relationship, a man who refused to take no for an answer, and a failed attempt to save a life was behind the dramatic double-murder at the Sarakki Park in JP Nagar in Bengaluru on continued on → 13

NUMBER THEORY

Is Congress's political predicament tactical?

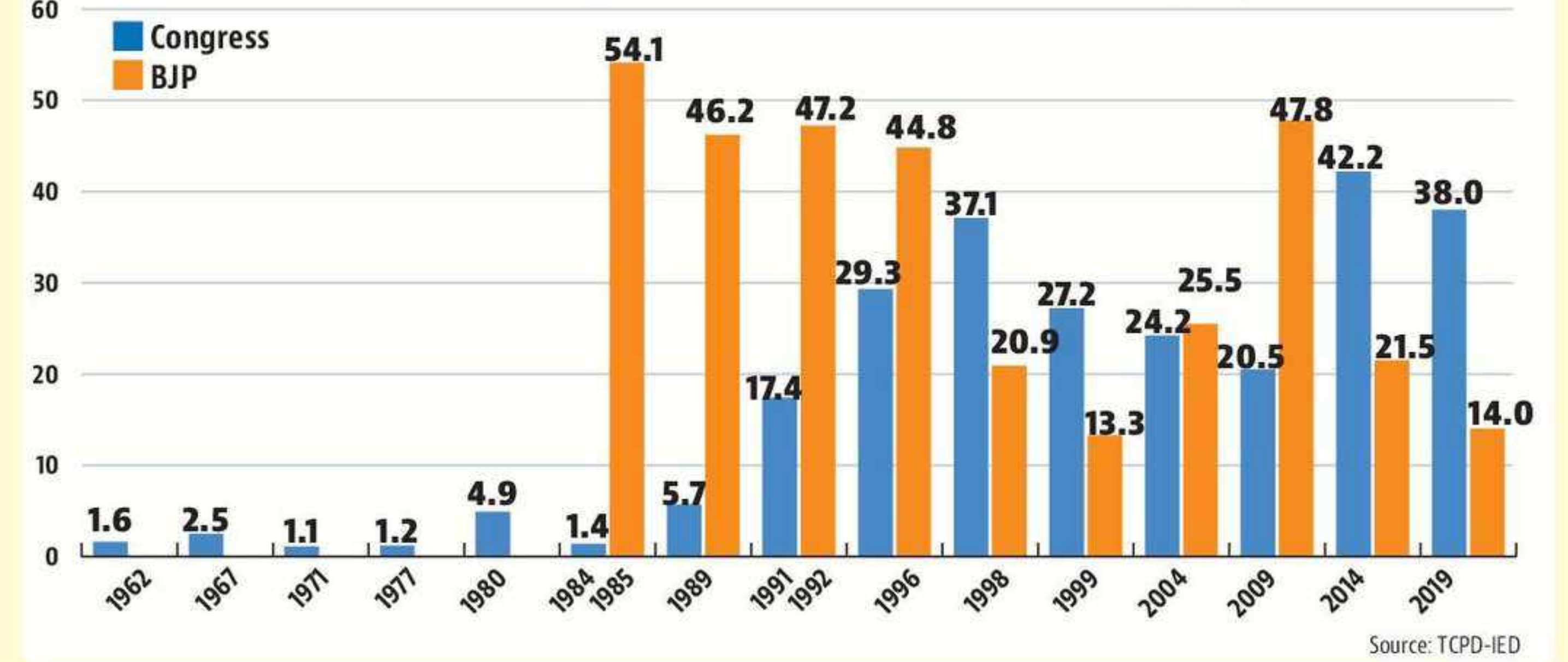
By Roshan Kishore and Abhishek Jha

The Congress, in the 2024 elections, will contest the lowest number of parliamentary constituencies (PCs) it has ever contested in a national election. Will this electoral tactic work for the Congress? Though the answer to this question will only be known when the results will be declared on June 4, it offers a good opportunity to ask whether electoral tactics played a role in the decline of the Congress, especially vis-à-vis the Bharatiya Janata Party, which replaced it as the dominant national party. Here are three charts which aim to answer this question.

1 At least on one metric, the Congress's electoral tactics in 2014 and 2019 were among the worst

What is the best way to see whether or not a political party is optimising its strength in an elections? An argument can be made that a party should not be fighting in constituencies where it finishing at the third position or lower. The share of PCs where the Congress finished on the third position or lower was 42% and 38% in 2014 and 2019 elections. These are the highest that these numbers have been for the Congress since the 1962 polls, the earliest period for which data is available in the Trivedi Centre for Political Data (TCPD) database. This suggests that the Congress should have contested fewer seats in the 2014 and 2019 elections.

Parliamentary constituencies (PCs) where the Congress and BJP finished third or lower as a share of PCs contested (in %)

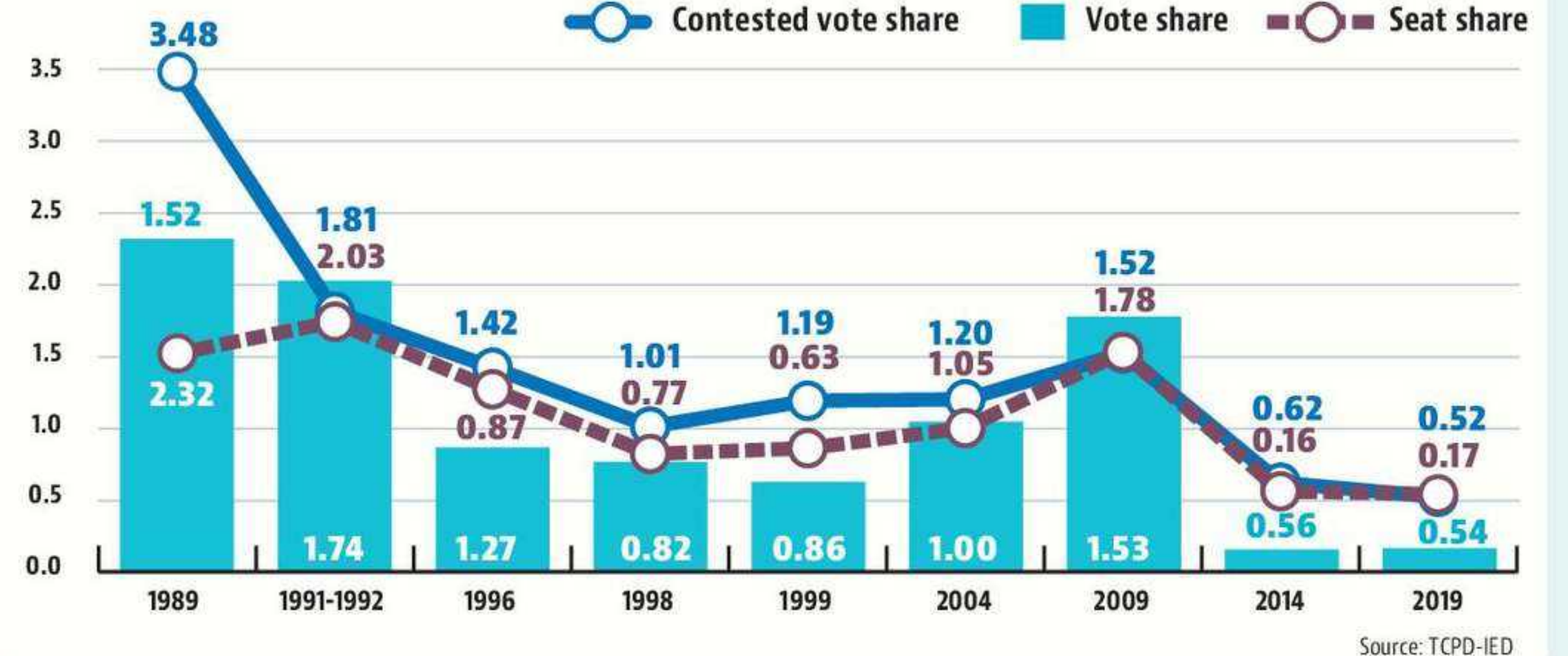


2 Congress's electoral confusion starts from the period of BJP's emergence

Chart 1 clearly shows that the Congress's marginalisation as the PC-level gained momentum after the 1989 elections, which is when the BJP first emerged as a serious political force. In the 1989 and 1991 elections, the BJP finished behind the Congress in terms of number of seats. In 1996, 1998 and 1999 elections, it surged past the Congress before falling behind again in the 2004 and 2009 elections. It was in the 1996, 1998 and

1999 elections that the BJP seems to have planned its electoral tactics much better than the Congress. While the Congress was ahead of the BJP in every elections between 1984 and 2009 in terms of overall vote share, the BJP was ahead of the Congress in terms of contested vote share in 1996, 1998 and 1999. This is likely to have been a major factor in the BJP getting more seats than the Congress.

Congress-BJP vote share, contested vote share and seat share ratio from 1984 to 2009



3 Will contesting fewer PCs help the Congress in 2024?

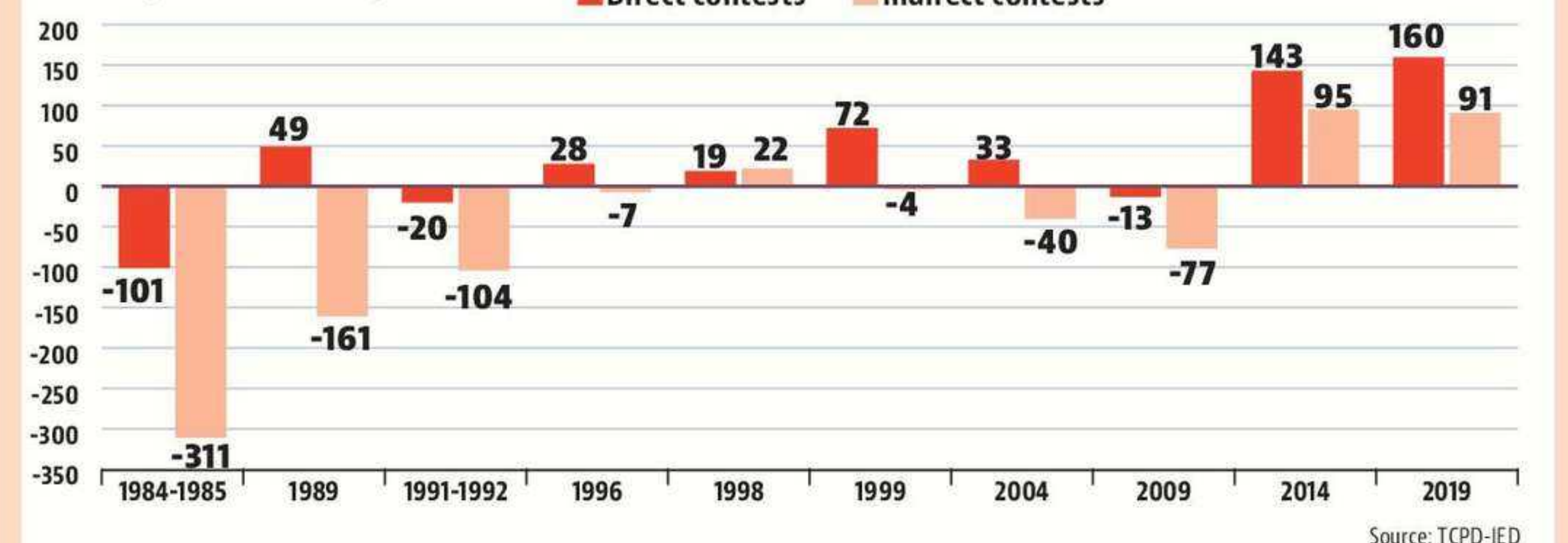
This is where an analysis of victories of the Congress and the BJP against different parties can help us understand the real picture. In order to answer this question, HT broke up every constituency won by the Congress and BJP into two categories: direct contest wins where the Congress and BJP finished first or second against each other, and indirect contest wins where the Congress or the BJP finished first but the other party finished third or lower or did not contest that PC.

The data is revealing. The BJP had a lead of 238 and 251 seats over the Congress's tally in the 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha elections, and 60% and 64% of this lead came from PCs where the Congress lost to the BJP in a

direct contest. One can argue that at least in these PCs, the Congress's major problem was the lack of appeal of its own politics rather than a wrong decision to contest a seat even when it was not in the reckoning. In fact, a long-term look at these numbers suggests that the Congress has been struggling with this challenge for a while.

The BJP has won more seats than the Congress in PCs where these two parties have finished first and second in every elections since 1996, except 2009. This also includes the 2004 elections when the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government suffered a shock defeat and the Congress formed a government with its pre- and post-poll allies.

Break-up of BJP lead over Congress in direct and indirect contest PCs (Number of PCs)



If the Congress has to surge past the BJP or even close its gap with it in the 2024 elections, it needs to win at least some of the seats where the BJP has been defeating it in a direct contest. The fact that it has been able to do this in only one elections (2009) after 1996 should give some food for thought to India's grand old party. The 2009 elections were the only one which the BJP contested

when Vajpayee was out of the reckoning for the prime minister's post, and Narendra Modi had not made his bid yet. The Congress, on the other hand, did not have a declared prime ministerial candidate in any election in this period, except 2009. This suggests that electoral tactics may not be effective in the absence of clear and capable political leadership.



Hindustan Times

FIRST VOICE. LAST WORD.



A woman casts her vote during the first phase of the general elections at a polling station in Jorhat, northeastern Assam, on Friday.

Kejriwal pushes back in 'sugary' jail diet row

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NEW DELHI: Chief minister Arvind Kejriwal on Friday approached a Delhi court asking that jail officials be ordered to administer him insulin, accusing authorities at the Tihar prison and Enforcement Directorate (ED) of depriving him of medication and of lying to the court that he was deliberately eating high-sugar foods to exacerbate his diabetes.

ED, in a submission on Thursday, said the CM was having mangoes and sweets and drinking tea with sugar "to create a medical emergency to obtain sympathetic treatment from the court".

Kejriwal's legal team hit back at these charges. "Out of 48 meals, mangoes were given to him only three

CM rebuts ED's claims

<p>ALLEGATION #1 Kejriwal deliberately eating mangoes, sweets to spike blood sugar levels</p> <p>AAP'S REBUTTAL Mangoes sent 3 times, sugar-free sweets 6 times in 48 meals</p>	<p>ALLEGATION #2 CM drinking tea with sugar</p> <p>AAP'S REBUTTAL The chief minister is using sugar-free sweeteners in tea</p>
<p>ALLEGATION #3 CM's diet causing spike</p> <p>AAP'S REBUTTAL Jail officials' refusal to administer insulin</p>	<p>ALLEGATION #4 CM using spike in sugar levels to create grounds for medical bail</p> <p>AAP'S REBUTTAL Shocking to suggest he would deliberately risk his life</p>

times... use of sugar being alleged is completely false, I use sugar-free in my tea... How petty can ED get? Their statements are completely false," said senior advocate Abhishek Manu

Singhvi, appearing for the Delhi CM.

In their submission on Friday, the CM's lawyers rebutted the claims on the meals and

continued on → 6

India inks: Phase 1 fate sealed

HT Correspondent
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NEW DELHI: More than 100 million people across 21 states and Union territories exercised their franchise for 102 constituencies in the first phase of the Lok Sabha polls on Friday, heralding the beginning of the world's largest democratic exercise that will continue for the next six weeks and see nearly a billion citizens vote.

The provisional turnout stood between 64% and 65%, said a senior official of the Election Commission of India (ECI).

It is expected to rise once the final numbers are tallied by ECI by Saturday morning, as long queues were seen outside polling

booths when voting officially closed at 6pm. In 2019, the turnout in these seats stood at 69.4%.

The EC, in a statement, said, "[V]oters reaching the Polling stations till the end of polling hour are allowed to cast their vote. Final figures will be known tomorrow after the scrutiny of form 17A." Form 17A is the register of voters for every polling station.

The highest turnout was reported from Tripura West constituency in Tripura, where the contest is between Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate Biplob Kumar Deb and Congress's Asish Kumar Saha.

The lowest turnout was reported from Nawada in Bihar,

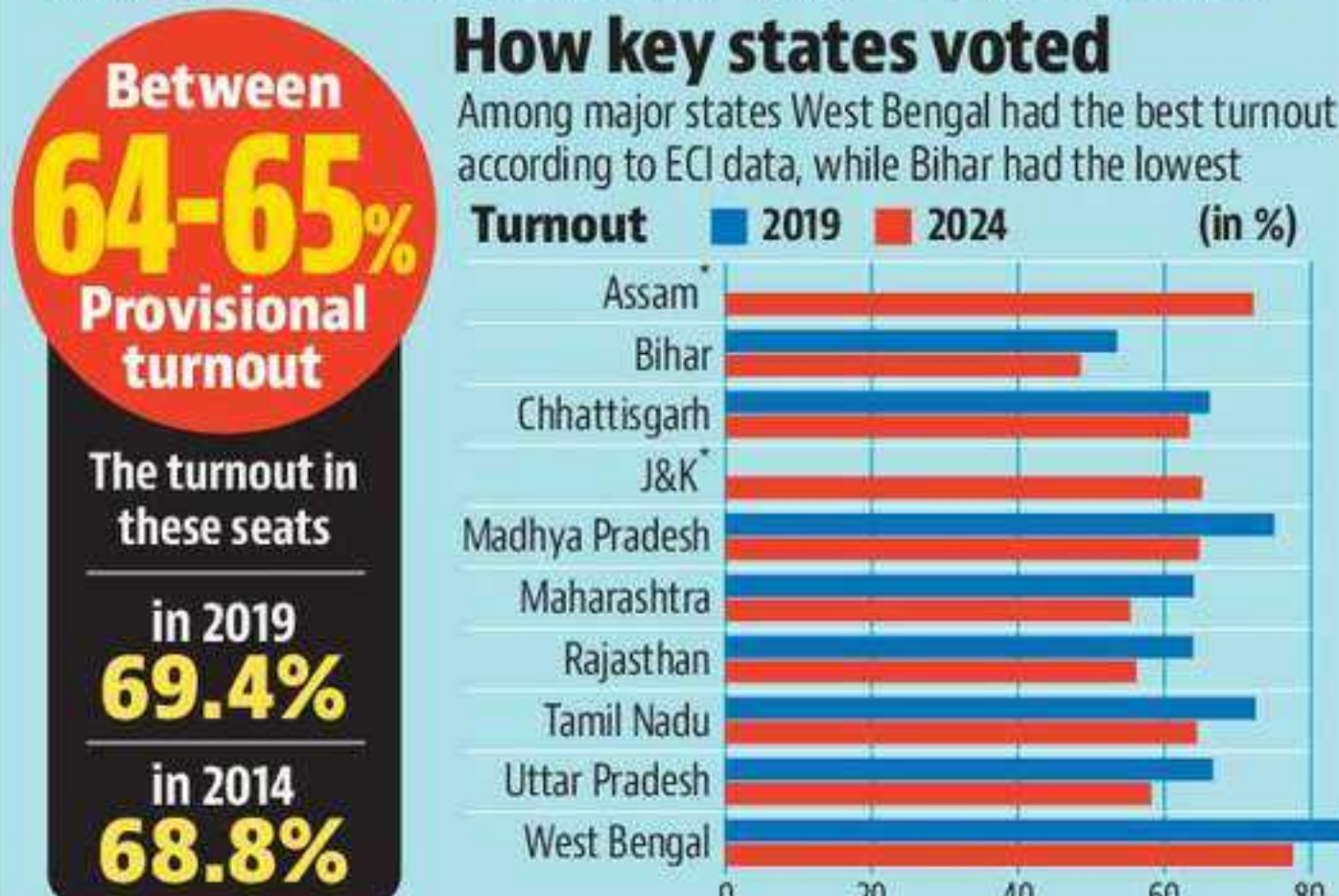
where Vivek Thakur (BJP), Shrawan Kushwaha (Rashtriya Janata Dal), and Ranjit Kumar (Bahujan Samaj Party) are in contest.

The first phase — which is also the largest of seven phases — saw all seats from Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Sikkim, Andaman and Nicobar, Lakshadweep and Puducherry go to the polls.

The other six phases will take place over the next six weeks, with the results on June 4. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is seeking a historic third consecutive term, hoping to become only the second PM after Jawaharlal Nehru to

continued on → 13

The turnout in first round



* Boundaries of 6 seats voting in this round in Assam and J&K were redrawn, data there can't be compared to past elections. Source: ECI's voter turnout app as on 11pm Friday. Final data to be updated on Saturday

{ MISLEADING ADS }

SC asks for status of cases against Ramdev

Abraham Thomas
 letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Friday asked Bihar and Chhattisgarh to share the status of criminal cases pending against yoga guru and entrepreneur Ramdev over his alleged derogatory remarks about modern medicine during the Covid pandemic three years ago.

The cases were filed by the Bihar and Chhattisgarh state units of the Indian Medical

Association (IMA) in response to a video that circulated on social media where Ramdev advised his followers not to rely on allopathy — as modern medicine is often referred to in India — for treating Covid-19. This statement was made in May 2021.

Ramdev's petition sought a direction to club the two first information reports (FIR) and hold the trial in Delhi. The two complaints against him were filed by the Bihar and Chhattisgarh state units of IMA. → P13

SC ISSUES NOTICE TO CENTRE OVER COUPLE'S PLEA ON SURROGACY ACT

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court has sought a response from the Centre on a petition challenging the bar under the Surrogacy Act that prevents married couples from having a second child through surrogacy. Issuing notice on a petition filed by a married couple from Hyderabad, the court noted that a matter related to the Act is already pending in the top court in which the amendments barring single women and homosexual couples are under challenge. The bench directed the matter to be heard on May 3. → P13

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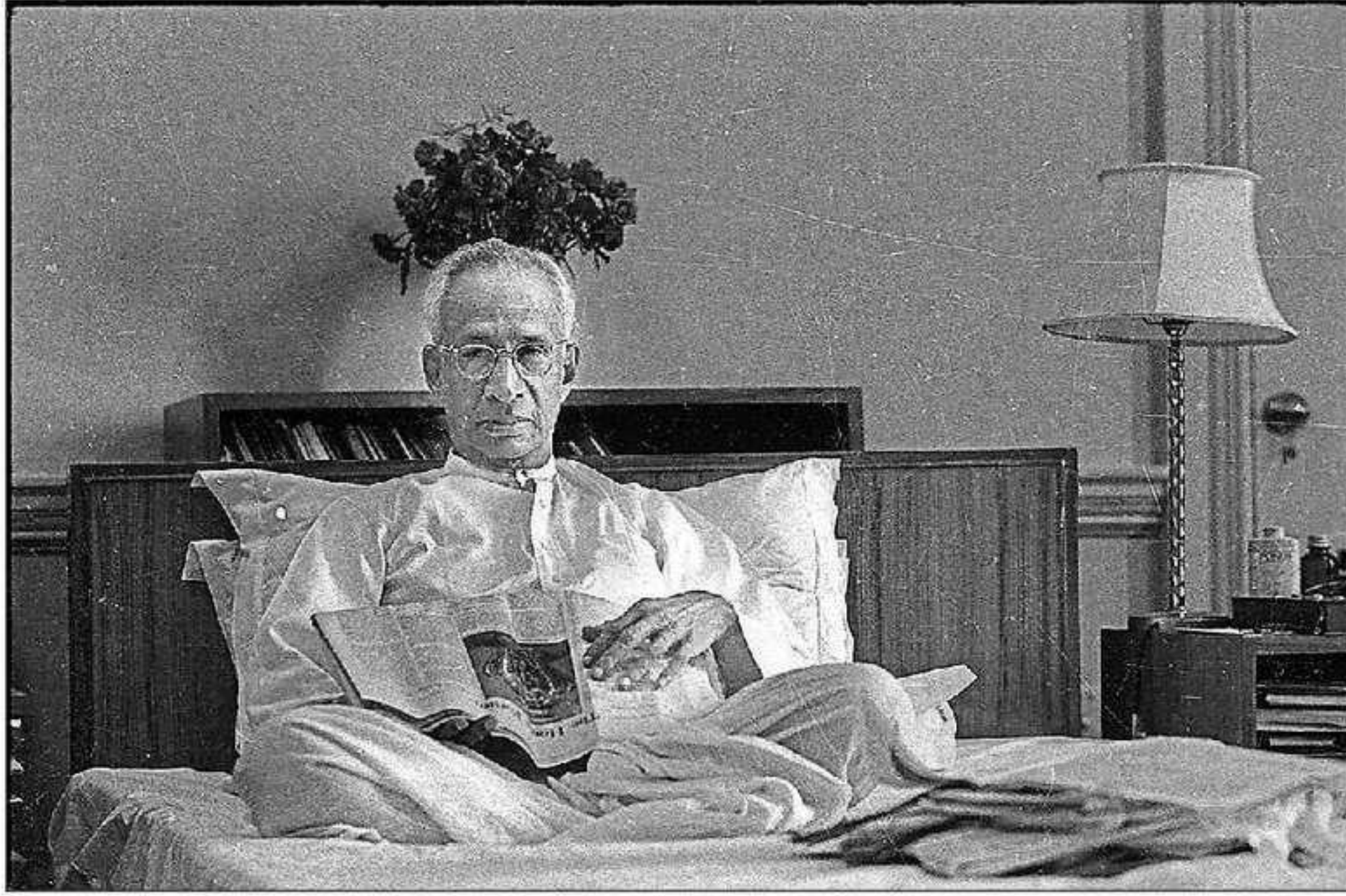
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From **HT** Archives

S RADHAKRISHNAN DIES, 1975



Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan died in Madras late on April 16, 1975, after a protracted illness. He was 86. HT ARCHIVE

A nation mourns the demise of its former President

Elected Prez in 1962, Dr Radhakrishnan was hailed as the philosopher-king of Plato's dream

HT Correspondent

Thousands of people from different walks of life paid a tearful farewell to Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan as the former President was cremated with State honours.

The philosopher-statesman died in Madras late on April 16, 1975 after a protracted illness. He was 86. Often described as the philosopher-king of Plato's dream and a bridge-builder between the East and the West, Dr Radhakrishnan entered a private nursing home on August 20 last for treatment of cerebral haemorrhage.

He suffered a cardiac attack in the morning and lost consciousness. He was revived by medication. But the condition was critical. His son and two daughters were at his side when the end came at 01.04am.

His body lay in state in the main hall of Dr Radhakrishnan's Mysore residence, Girija, from 9am to 3.15pm for mourners to pay their respects. The funeral procession started at 4.35pm. The body, draped in the Tricolour, was placed in a flower-bedecked gun carriage. The former President's son S Gopal, relatives, and G Parthasarathy, chairman of the external affairs ministry's policy planning committee, were seated on the carriage.

Men, women and children lined both sides of the one-kilometre route to the crematorium to have a last glimpse of the departed statesman and to pay homage to him. A wreath on behalf of British Queen Elizabeth was placed on the body by a representative of the British Deputy High Commission. Wreaths were also placed on the body on behalf of President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed and Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

Among the earliest to pay their respects to the departed philosopher statesman were chief minister M Karunanidhi and his cabinet colleague, KR Nedunchezhiyan. Former President VV Giri was also among the early callers at Girija.

A large number of schoolchildren filed past the body, paying homage to a man who had held the cause of education dear to his heart throughout his life.

The final rites at the Mysore crematorium were completed in just 10 minutes and were marked by solemnity.

Dr Radhakrishnan was born in the Saivite pilgrim centre of Tiruttani, Chittoor, in 1888. His family was orthodox and inevitably Dr Radhakrishnan became a deeply religious man.

From Tiruttani he migrated to Vellore and then Madras where he had a brilliant academic career at the Christian College. Here he became familiar with the New Testament and the criticisms levelled by the missionaries against Hindu beliefs and practices.

He was barely 21, when his writings in *The Monist* and *The Quest* gave ample evidence of the man who has since then been variously described as a savant and The Great Metropolitan of India.

Subsequently, the editors of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* asked him to contribute an article on Indian philosophy.

He later served with distinction on the League of Nations Committee on Intellectual Co-operation. He was a visiting Professor of Oxford University where he delivered many lectures on Indian philosophy. His inaugural lectures on his appointment as Spalding Professor of Eastern Religions and Ethics on The World's Unborn Soul are characterised by deep study and acute insight.

He was chosen to lead the Indian Delegation to Unesco at Paris on several occasions. On the first occasion he hit the headlines by his masterly speech, which won high praise from JB Priestley who said: "For the explanation of the aims and ideals of Unesco, the palm should be given to the Indian delegation." Speaking at the occasion, Radhakrishnan said: "No false word should escape our lips; no wrong thought should enter the mind. I am concerned that we in this body should stand above politics and for universal values."

Although never politically committed to a specific party, Dr Radhakrishnan was all along fearlessly patriotic and outspoken. During World War II he wrote and surprisingly had published in the Asiatic Review of Britain an article in which he bluntly stated that the Indian people could not really be inspired

continued on →13

{ BUSINESS } RANA KAPOOR

Yes Bank co-founder gets bail in fraud case



A special court in Mumbai on Friday granted bail to Yes Bank co-founder Rana Kapoor in the ₹466.51 crore bank fraud case lodged by the CBI against him and Avantha Group promoter Gautam Thapar, paving the way for him to walk out of jail after four years. The ED also arrested Kapoor in March 2020 in a money laundering case, and he has been booked in eight cases related to fraud at the bank. The banker has now secured bail in all the cases. His lawyer said they were trying to complete the bail formalities to facilitate his release as early as possible. PTI

{ BUSINESS } BEIJING'S ORDERS

Apple pulls WhatsApp from App Store in China



Apple said it had removed Meta's WhatsApp messaging app and its Threads social media app from the App Store in China to comply with orders from Chinese authorities. The apps were removed from the store on Friday after Chinese officials cited unspecified national security concerns. Their removal comes as US has threatened to ban TikTok over national security concerns. But while TikTok, owned by Chinese technology firm ByteDance, is used by millions in the US, apps like WhatsApp and Threads are not commonly used in China. →P19

{ WORLD } WARNING FROM C.I.A

'Ukraine could lose without fresh aid'



The CIA chief warned on Thursday that Ukraine could lose the war to Russia by the end of this year unless the US sends more military aid. The warning by Bill Burns came as a \$61 billion aid package for Ukraine has been held up by political wrangling in the US Congress. "Without supplemental assistance... there is a very real risk that the Ukrainians could lose on the battlefield by the end of 2024, or at least put [Russian president Vladimir] Putin in a position where he could dictate the terms of a political settlement," he said. →P15

{ CLIMATE CRISIS }

The aftermath of Dubai flooding

Dubai, a city in the desert proud of its modern gloss, faces the towering task of clearing its waterlogged roads and drying out flooded homes days after a record storm saw a year's rain fall in a day. But the fallout of the unprecedented floods extends beyond relief and rescue

WHAT HAPPENED

A slow-moving storm hit Oman on Sunday before it pounded the UAE on Tuesday, and transported abundant tropical moisture from near the equator. The rains began late on Monday. The storms intensified at about 9am on Tuesday and continued throughout the day, dumping more rain and hail onto Dubai

HISTORIC WEATHER EVENT

The state-run WAM news agency said the rain in Dubai surpassed "anything documented since the start of data collection in 1949"

142mm of rain soaked the sands and roads of Dubai by the end of Tuesday

230mm of rain inundated parts of Oman between Sunday and Wednesday. The average rainfall in the capital Muscat is about 100mm a year. Bahrain, Qatar and Saudi Arabia also witnessed rains

Record rainfall in Dubai

Rainfall estimates for Tuesday

1-10 20-70 120-200 350 600mm



DUBAI AIRPORT WORST HIT

Close to 127mm of rain fell at Dubai Airport, the world's busiest for international travel, where about 76mm of rain is normal annually



INTERNATIONAL AVIATION ROUTES IMPACTED

Emirates said check-in was suspended for connections but those travelling to Dubai as their final destination may check-in. Air India has cancelled its flights to and from Dubai

WHAT LED TO THE CRISIS?

UAE, like most nations in the arid, desert region of the Arabian Peninsula, does not receive a lot of rain except in the cooler winter months. The lack of drainage in urban centres leaves it unprepared to handle heavy rainfall, hence the vulnerability to flooding

CLOUD SEEDING CLAIMS RUN RIFE

Social media was rife with claims that the deluge was a result of cloud seeding, the manipulation of existing clouds to induce rain, attempts by the UAE. Reports quoted meteorologists as saying Dubai flew six or seven cloud-seeding flights before the rains started. According to reports, the seeding took place on Sunday and Monday, and not on Tuesday

BUT CLIMATE CRISIS AT PLAY: Global warming has resulted in "extraordinarily" warm water in the seas around Dubai, where there is also very warm air above. This increases both evaporation rates and the capacity of the atmosphere to hold that water, allowing bigger dumps of rainfall

{ WEST ASIA BACKDROP } CLOSER LOOK

How India's aerial defence repels attacks

Rahul Singh

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The interception of hundreds of ballistic missiles and drones Iran fired at Israel on April 13 demonstrated the robustness of the latter's multi-layered air defence network, and has also put the spotlight on how well India is prepared to defend itself from aerial threats, the existing weapons in its arsenal, and plans to enhance capabilities with new systems.

The latest flare-up of tensions on Friday saw Israel retaliating against the Iranian attack. Reports said Iran had activated its air defence system to protect itself from the expected retaliatory strike.

From developing ballistic missile defence (BMD) capabilities to intercept long-range missiles to deploying the S-400 air defence missile systems and fielding medium-range surface-to-air missile (MRSAM) systems developed jointly with Israel to indigenous weapons such as Akash and Samar; the Indian armed forces have a variety of systems capable of destroying aerial threats, including enemy missiles, fighter jets, helicopters, and unmanned aerial vehicles at different ranges, officials aware of the matter said on Friday.

The other air defence weapons in the Indian arsenal include the Israeli SpyDer, Soviet-origin systems such as Pechora, OSA-AK, Tunguska, Strela and Shilka, Zu-23-2B anti-aircraft guns, upgraded L-70 anti-aircraft guns (a legacy weapon manufactured by Swedish arms



The interception of Iranian missiles by Israeli defence network has put a spotlight on how well India is prepared to defend itself. AP

firm Bofors AB), and the Igla MANPADS (man-portable air defence system), the officials said, asking not to be named.

The S-400 is the latest missile system to be acquired by India. It ordered five S-400 missile systems from Russia for ₹39,000 crore in October 2018. The S-400 comes with a mix of radars and missiles that allow it to knock down threats at various heights and range bands, with the maximum range being 400km.

India has made significant advances in developing endo-atmospheric and exo-atmospheric intercept systems to destroy incoming hostile missiles within and outside the atmospheric limits respectively. The two systems have been integrated for a multilayered defence against ballistic missiles. In November 2022, the Defence

robust air defence architecture is critical, said Air Marshal Anil Chopra (retd), the former director general of the Centre for Air Power Studies.

The air defence weapon systems in the Israeli arsenal include the Iron Dome, David's Sling, Patriot and Arrow. Much of the focus was on the Iron Dome system, first deployed by Israel in 2011 to intercept rocket salvos fired by Hamas and protect its cities. It consists of detection and tracking radars, control stations calculating the likely impact points, and launchers for interceptor missiles to take down the threat.

India has a range of weapons that can create air defence bubbles around vital areas or installations and the deployment of these systems is dynamic based on the threat perception, Chopra said.

"India is doing well in surface-to-air missiles and radars. But there is a need to accelerate the design, development and production of indigenous air defence systems to cover a country as large as India," Chopra added. The countries that helped Israel defend against the Iranian attack involving more than 300 missiles and drones included the US, the UK, France and Jordan. The air defence weapon systems in the Israeli arsenal include the Iron Dome, David's Sling, Patriot and Arrow.

India is focused on strengthening its air defence capabilities. On March 1, in a big push for the ongoing self-reliance drive in the defence manufacturing sector, the defence ministry signed five contracts worth ₹39,125 crore, including two with Larsen & Toubro for close-in weapon systems (CIWS) worth ₹7,668.82

crore and high-power radars (HPR) with advanced surveillance features for ₹5,700 crore to boost air defence capabilities.

CIWS is planned for deployments at various locations across India to protect vital assets from all types of low-flying, low-signature aerial threats, including unmanned aerial vehicles. It consists of air defence guns, tracking radars and search radars linked to a command and control station.

HPR will replace existing long-range radars of the Indian Air Force with modern active aperture phased array radars with advanced surveillance features. It will enhance the terrestrial air defence capabilities of IAF with integration of sophisticated sensors capable of detection of small radar cross section targets. It will be the first of its kind radar built by the private sector in India.

In early April, the Indian Army began the induction of the indigenous Akasheer system to boost its air defence capabilities. The automated air defence control and reporting system will allow the army's air defence units to operate in an integrated manner.

The development came almost a year after the defence ministry signed a ₹1,982-crore contract with Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) to sharpen the army's air defence capabilities with the new system. It will enable the army to monitor low-level airspace over battle areas and effectively control the ground-based air defence weapon systems. It will enhance the operational efficiency and integration of the army's air defence mechanisms by digitising the entire process.



HT carried the news of Dr Radhakrishnan's death on its front page on April 17, 1975.

1.5 years later, FIR lodged over brutal rape of help in SE Delhi

Jignasa Sinha

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NEW DELHI: Nearly a year-and-a-half after a 25-year-old woman was allegedly gang-raped by the son of her employers and three or four of his friends, the Delhi Police lodged a first information report (FIR) at a police station in southeast Delhi in connection with the case on April 15 after directions from a Delhi court, police officers aware of the matter said on Friday.

According to the FIR, based on the survivor's submissions to the court, the woman alleged that a part of her tongue was chopped off during the incident. She has also alleged police inaction in the matter — that she and her family approached officers including a deputy commissioner of police, a station house officer and other senior officers but her complaints were "turned down".

However, police said the survivor approached them only once and did not turn up for further inquiry.

"The woman approached us in July 2023 and did not appear for further counselling or questioning. We were waiting for evidence and statements in the case. In compliance with the order by the Saket court, a first information report has been

Timeline of events

- 2022**
 - December 29** Woman gang-raped by son of her employers, his friends
 - December 30** Admitted to Ggm hospital, part of her tongue chopped off; flees from hospital
 - Jan 1st week** Survivor admitted to AIIMS
 - January 15** Survivor discharged from AIIMS
- 2023**
 - January-June** Multiple police complaints filed by survivor, family
 - July 27** Survivor writes to senior officers of the Delhi Police above DCP rank
- 2024**
 - March** Survivor approaches Saket court
 - April 13-14** Court hears her plea, asks Delhi Police to register FIR
 - April 15** FIR registered

registered. We will be recording the statements of the woman and the accused. Accordingly, legal action will be taken," said a senior officer aware of the case, requesting anonymity.

The court also pulled up the police for inaction and asked them to look into the matter at the earliest.

On April 15, a case under sections 376D (gang rape), 506

(criminal intimidation) and 328 (causing hurt by means of poison) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) was registered at Govindpuri police station. No arrests have been made in the case yet, police added. However, the FIR mentioned the names of the couple and their son as the "accused".

HT reached out to DCP (southeast) Rajesh Deo, who did not respond to queries

seeking comments on the case and the alleged delay in lodging an FIR.

The incident

According to the FIR, a copy of which HT has seen, the incident happened on the night of December 29, 2022, when the survivor worked as a help at a house in the Govindpuri area in southeast Delhi. Her employers — a married couple in their 40s — ran a spa near the house.

On December 29, the couple called the woman to cook food for the seven to eight guests who were arriving for their son's birthday party. At the time of the party, the couple's son, presently in his 20s, began "staring" at her and "touched her inappropriately", the FIR said.

Soon after, the woman was served a drink spiked with sedatives. "I woke up the next day and found myself in a private hospital in Gurugram. I had multiple injuries on my forehead, eyes, nose and face. My tongue had been chopped off and I had difficulty speaking. There was swelling and pain in my genitalia... There was blood everywhere. I found that my employers had admitted me using a false name 'Naina'," the FIR said, quoting the woman.

The survivor alleged that she was admitted to the private hospital by the couple. On December 30, 2022, she tried to

escape from the hospital but was "threatened by the couple of dire consequences". Police said the woman was admitted for weeks at the AIIMS.

"Later, I managed to escape wearing the hospital gown. I begged an unknown person to help me and called my parents. They then took me to a clinic and I was further shifted to the AIIMS trauma centre. My employers spiked my drink... their son and his friends gang-raped me. They tried to silence me by chopping my tongue and also threatened to kill me," the woman alleged in the FIR. The survivor and her family alleged they approached police a few days after the incident but their complaints were turned down.

Last week, a Delhi court heard her plea and ordered the Delhi Police to lodge an FIR and take action at the earliest. The plea was filed in March.

HT spoke to one of the cousins of the survivor who said that the woman has moved out of Delhi.

"She has been traumatised after the incident and stopped working. We approached the SHO, DCP and other senior officers multiple times but they never took our complaint. We had no other option but to approach the court. We just want the men to be arrested. My sister had suffered a lot," the cousin said.

MAN'S EARLOBE BITTEN OFF FOR OBJECTING TO FRIEND BEING HARASSED IN GGM

Debashish Karmakar

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GURUGRAM: A 29-year-old man's right earlobe was allegedly bitten off by another man during a brawl at a club in Sector 32, Gurugram, after the victim objected to one of his female friend being harassed, police said on Friday.

Investigators said the incident occurred outside the club around 1am on Thursday, when the victim Gaurav Dubey and his friends Tanuj Jaglan, Raman Chahar, along with two women, had just left the club.

Gurugram Police public relations officer, Sandeep Kumar, said they traced the SUV's registration number in which the suspects escaped. "They have been traced and will be arrested soon," he added.

A senior police officer said Dubey's friends rushed him to a private hospital where doctors treated him. "One of his friends alerted police following which a team reached the spot. By then, the suspects had escaped," the police officer said, requesting anonymity. According to the complaint, the suspect, who was inebriated, approached one of the women accompanying Dubey and started misbehaving with her. The friends objected to this following which the suspect got into a heated argument with them and started abusing them.

The prime suspect and his associate later assaulted the group and bit off Dubey's right earlobe before fleeing.

4 held over murder of man in Trilokpuri

NEW DELHI: At least four people have been detained on Friday in connection with the murder of a 27-year-old man, who allegedly humiliated his neighbour by forcing him to squat in a demeaning pose, and then posted a video of the incident on social media. The incident took place at Trilokpuri in east Delhi on Wednesday, officers aware of the matter said on Friday.

The victim, Ashok (identified by single name), was abducted and taken to a lane in Trilokpuri, where he was beaten to death by a group of people, who have been identified as friends of the man who was allegedly humiliated, they added.

"While two of the four people have been detained by the Mayur Vihar police, one suspect was taken into custody by a crime branch team. The fourth suspect has been detained by another team from the east district police. They have all denied their role in the murder. Once we collect evidence against them, we will place them under arrest," an officer, associated with the case, said on condition of anonymity.

Another video that captured the assault of the purported victim surfaced on social media on Friday. The video purportedly showed that 30-40 people are seen in a lane and some of them are assaulting a person. **HTC**

Man with links to fake immigration racket held

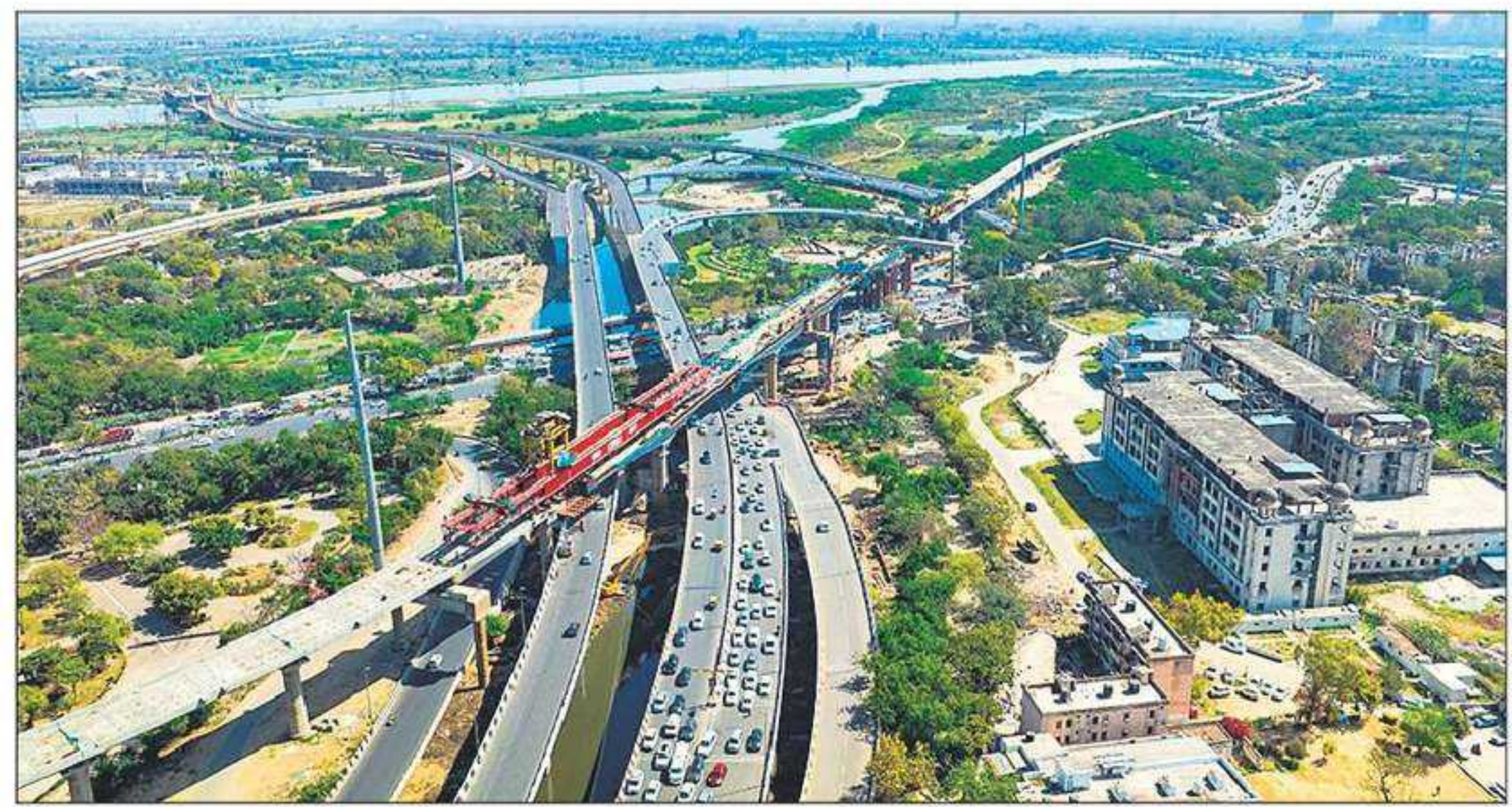
NEW DELHI: The Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport unit of Delhi Police on Friday said it arrested a 28-year-old man who is allegedly a member of an international fake immigration syndicate that sent people to the US and other countries through the donkey routes. The suspect was arrested in connection with a two-year-old case of cheating, in which a resident of Kaithal in Haryana was duped of ₹11 lakh.

The suspect, Sahil Verma, is a resident of Moti Bagh in south Delhi. He was arrested from near the Nepal border on April 14, police said.

"Verma arranged a fake

Schengen visa for Greece. The Kaithal resident, identified as Sanju Tamak, was caught at the Moscow airport and was deported to India in June 2022. Tamak was arrested by the IGI Airport police for travelling abroad on a passport that was tampered with," said deputy commissioner of police (IGI Airport) Usha Rangnani.

The DCP said that Verma was absconding since the arrest of Tamak. "He had fled to Dubai, from where he was primarily carrying out his illegal immigration business. A lookout circular (LOC) was issued against him," added DCP Rangnani. **HTC**



The work on the Delhi section will be completed with the stretch over Barapullah. **HT PHOTO**

25m high rail road to take RRTS train over Barapullah in Delhi

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NEW DELHI: A 260-metre-long special span being laid on a viaduct or rail road at a height of 25 metres — the second highest point on the Regional Rapid Rail Transit (RRTS) corridor — will be ready by month end, National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC) officials said.

The highest point on the 82-kilometre-long corridor between Delhi and Meerut is located at Ghaziabad RRTS station which is built at a height of 28 metres over the Red Line station of the Delhi Metro.

The highest point on the Delhi Metro network in the Capital is located at 23.6 metres on the pink line at Dhaula Kuan station.

"This area has dense traffic along the Barapullah flyover as well as the adjoining Ring Road. A special span had to be constructed to make this crossing to ensure minimum disturbance to

the ongoing traffic. Prefabricated structures are now a preferred way for such heavy construction. However, to place a prefabricated structure over Barapullah, we may have had to stop vehicle movement for some time. So, instead of prefabricated spans, we did in-situ construction from one side to the other going over the flyover," said an NCRTC official explaining why the rail road span was unique.

Of the total 82 kilometres length of the Delhi-Meerut RRTS corridor, a 14 kilometre section is in Delhi and the remaining 68 km is in Uttar Pradesh. In Delhi, of the total 14 kilometres stretch, 9 kilometres is elevated section and five kilometres runs underground. The construction work in the Delhi section will be completed with the stretch over Barapullah, officials added.

NCRTC officials said that most construction work has been done at Sarai Kale Khan

station, which is one of the largest stations along the entire corridor. NCRTC is also developing Multimodal Integration (MMI) nodes at its station to connect Veer Haqiqat Rai ISBT, Hazrat Nizamuddin railway station and Delhi Metro Pink Line, the officials added.

In Delhi, the RRTS stretch will have four stations Jangpura, Sarai Kale Khan, New Ashok Nagar and Anand Vihar.

The Nammo Bharat trains, which will run on the RRTS network, have a design speed of 180 kmph and a maximum operational speed of 160 kmph. The Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut RRTS corridor has a completion deadline of June 2025. It is expected to cut travel time between Delhi and Meerut from two hours to less than an hour.

Currently, 34 km of the RRTS corridor, from Sahibabad to Modinagar North, is operational, passing through urban hubs such as Ghaziabad, Muradnagar, and Modinagar.

Man held for hacking police website for CDR

NEW DELHI: A 38-year-old businessman, wanted in over six cases of hacking and theft of call detail record (CDR), was arrested by the Delhi Police's Crime Branch on Thursday. The suspect allegedly worked with detective agencies to steal CDR of individuals and companies for clients and also hacked the official website of the Rajasthan Police to access personal details of individuals, officers aware of the matter said on Friday.

The suspect, Saurabh Sahu, is the mastermind behind the scam, which has been reported in Delhi, Thane, Hyderabad and

Jaipur, they added.

Police said recently a man, Sohaib Khan, approached the cyber cell in Jaipur alleging that his bank account was frozen. "He alleged that he received emails from the Rajasthan Police's email ID. We found that the website and ID were compromised. The suspects also sent emails from the official ID of police to banks to freeze accounts of people," said an officer on condition of anonymity.

HT reached out to the Rajasthan Police, but did not get any response to request for comment. **HTC**

MINOR AMONG 4 HELD FOR KILLING BOY IN NARELA

NEW DELHI: Three men were arrested and a minor was apprehended after a 14-year-old boy was kidnapped and beaten to death over theft allegations at Lampur in Narela on April 1. The prime suspect, Deepak (identified by single name), 23, has already been arrested, officers aware of the case said on Friday.

Deepak alleged that the victim stole 30 to 40 batteries of emergency lights. The batteries belonged to Deepak, they added.

"A case of kidnapping and murder with common intention was registered at the Narela police station," said DCP (outer-north) Ravi Kumar Singh. **HTC**

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Battle of locals in Chandni Chowk

{ INTERVIEW } JP AGGARWAL, CONGRESS CANDIDATE

Former MP says that the Congress and the AAP will form coordination committees to work together to ensure the coalition candidates win

NEW DELHI: Jai Prakash Aggarwal, former MP and Congress candidate from Chandni Chowk, spoke to Saubhadra Chatterji and Snehi Sinha about his party's prospects in the elections and his plan for his constituency. Edited excerpts:

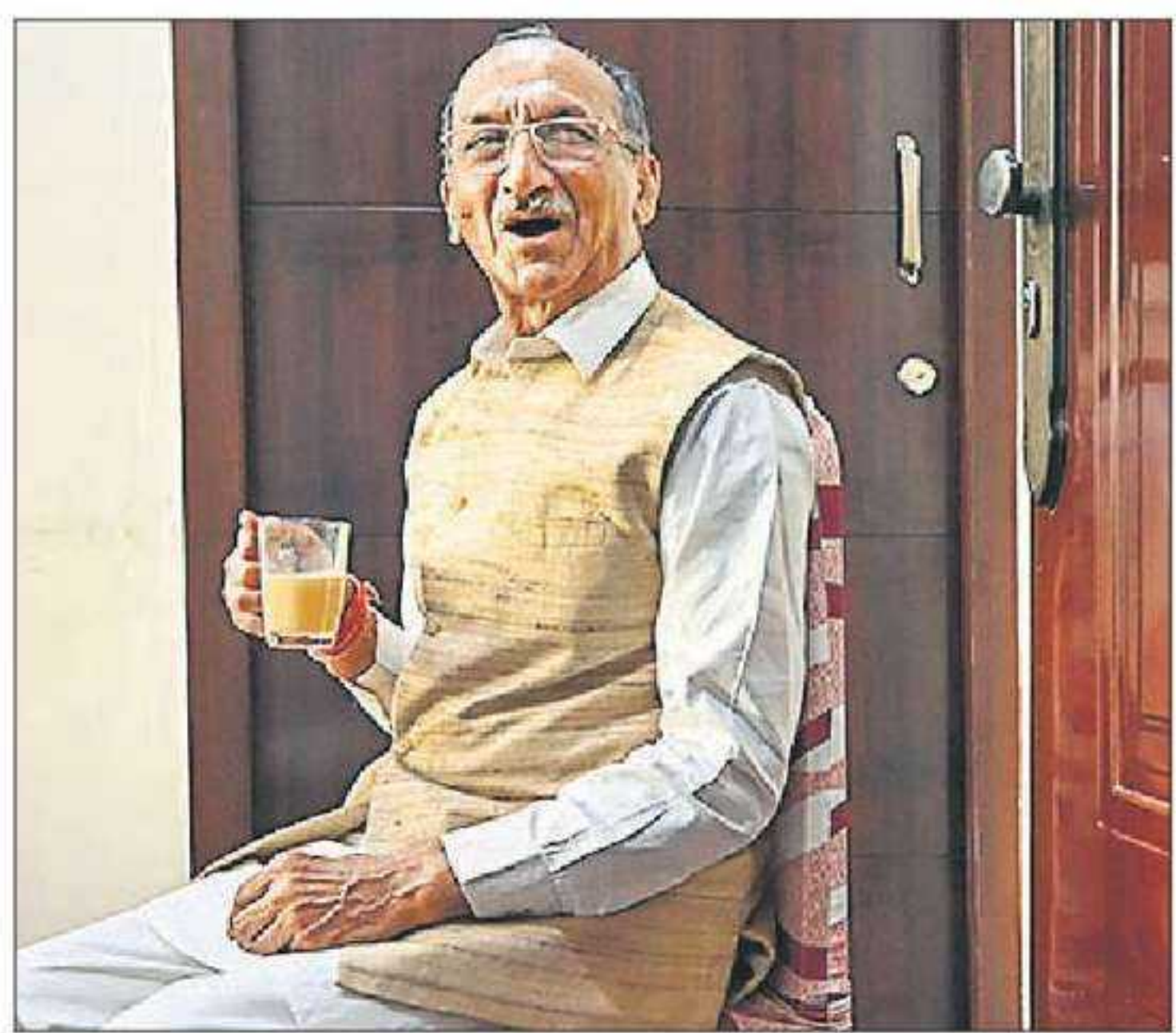
In 2019 Lok Sabha elections, the BJP won all seven Delhi seats. What gives you hope that you will change the tide?

Every election is different. No two elections are the same. There have been occasions in Delhi when the Congress won all the seats and the BJP or Jana Sangh scored nil. In this election, the biggest resentment is against the policies of the BJP government. The price-rise situation has jeopardised the budget of every family. Unemployment is so high that young people coming out of college are not getting jobs. The central government is reducing employment opportunities. There used to be small industries where young people would get jobs, but if you go to Noida or Gurugram, many of those industrial units are closed. People are in distress.

In all the assembly segments in your seat, you have AAP MLAs and AAP councillors in the wards. Will these MLAs and councillors garner support for the Congress?

You will see good coordination between the Congress and the AAP at the ground level. But you must give me time. The Congress has announced the Delhi candidates just a few days ago. They (AAP) have their own system. Coordination committees are being formed from the top to lowest level. We are not strangers to each other. We meet them regularly on different programmes. We have very good relationship between us. We are not enemies.

You won the seat three times — 1984, 1989 and 1996. After delimitation, the Chandni Chowk of 2009 has changed. It now appears to be a seat dominated by the BJP. How will you overcome it?



RAJ KRAJ/HT

I was born and raised in Chandni Chowk and know the issues of this area like the back of my hand.

Even after the delimitation altered the Chandni Chowk, Kapil Sibal (then a Congress leader) won the seat in 2009. I contested from Chandni Chowk in 2019. I know the constituency. I was born in Delhi. I am not new in Delhi. I have been the DPCC president for seven years. I know every corner of Delhi.

The AAP has changed its election campaign to highlight Kejriwal's arrest. Is that going to be your pitch too or do you have an independent plan? What are the issues of Chandni Chowk that you will address?

I'm not mute. I have raised questions in Parliament before and I will continue to do so. I was born and raised in Chandni Chowk and know the issues of this area at the back of my hand. This is my 19th election from the same address in Chandni Chowk's Paranthewali Gali. The Chandni Chowk assembly area is a wholesale market with issues of traders going up to Shahjahanabad. Fur-

ther, Model Town has plotted and multi-storied buildings with more civic issues to worry about. Wazirabad and around has industries and JJ clusters, which have their own concerns. Every area in this constituency has varied localised problems that I will address.

Your opponent Praveen Khandelwal is very active in the interest of traders. He has been trying to protect the traders' interests against online retail giants such as Amazon or Walmart.

The BJP has never done anything for the traders. I know the reality on ground, which is that the traders are troubled. They are concerned about GST, they are harassed, and asked for money. ED raids are conducted and the traders are threatened. Chandni Chowk is one of the largest wholesale markets and is full of traders, but the traders continue to suffer.

{ INTERVIEW } PRAVEEN KHANDELWAL, BJP CANDIDATE

Trader body leader says he will launch a programme to reach out to people and address problems at their doorstep if he wins the election

NEW DELHI: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has fielded trade leader Praveen Khandelwal from the Chandni Chowk seat for the upcoming general elections, replacing incumbent parliamentarian Harsh Vardhan. Khandelwal spoke to Alok KN Mishra about his campaign, and the challenges he faces. Edited excerpts:

How is your election campaign coming along?

At a public meeting in the Chandni Chowk area on ahead of Holi, a large number of people turned up. In the middle of the function, the stage broke, and I injured my left foot. It made my campaign challenging, but I have not sat idle even for a single day, and have continuously been meeting people.

I was born and brought up in Chandni Chowk, and have been working among the people as a trade leader for decades. I am getting good support from traders, RWAs, residents, markets associations — every section of society. The BJP will win all seven seats in Delhi, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi will return to power.

The AAP and the Congress have formed an alliance for the polls. Does the coming together of the two parties pose a bigger challenge to the BJP?

Their alliance is unnatural. Till a few months ago, the two parties used to attack each other, and today they have reached an alliance just for the elections. It is surprising that a large national party like Congress is contesting just three seats in Delhi, and is playing the role of a junior partner with the AAP.

Do you think there is sympathy for the AAP after Arvind Kejriwal's arrest?

I interact with a large number of people on a daily basis, and the people are happy that Arvind Kej-



HT PHOTO

I was born and brought up in Chandni Chowk, and have been working among the people as a trade leader for decades.

riwal went to jail. PM Modi said with conviction that the corrupt will go to jail, and investigations are on against those who have done corruption.

The timing of Kejriwal's arrest is being questioned...

ED sent him nine notices. Why did he not appear before ED? If you do not respond to summons of the investigating agencies, the arrest will happen by default.

The BJP has replaced the incumbent Chandni Chowk MP...

I have not found a single person who said 'I requested Dr Harsh Vardhan to do some work and it was not done'. He has done a lot of work in the constituency. Even now, the high mast lights are being installed with the MP's funds, and the work of development is still taking place. I will earn the dividends of the work done by Harsh Vardhan over the last 10 years.

What will your priorities be

if you win the election?

I will launch the 'Aap Ka Sand Aapke Dwar' (your parliamentarian at your doorstep) programme. Throughout the year, I will sit (by rotation) in all 30 municipal wards which fall in my constituency, where officials will also come and solve the issues of the people.

I will do so much work over the next six months that in the 2025 assembly elections the BJP will win all 10 assembly constituencies (which come under the Chandni Chowk Lok Sabha seat).

The Chandni Chowk constituency needs a multispecialty hospital. I will get the project to build a 200-bed multi-specialty hospital passed by the government within 100 days of winning the election... We have also identified land for it in Keshav Puram.

I will also implement a project for the putting overhead electric wires underground. These wires are a big threat to the safety of people.



Artists perform 'nukkad natak' organised by Delhi unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party on Friday. SANJEEV VERMA/HT PHOTO

{ 'FROM WAGON R TO TIHAR' }

BJP campaign to corner Kejriwal in street dramas

Alok KN Mishra

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NEW DELHI: The Delhi unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is planning to organise nearly 8,000 "nukkad natak" (street plays) and magic shows, along with performances by music bands and flash mobs across the seven Lok Sabha constituencies of the Capital from May 1 as part of its election campaign, party functionaries said on Friday.

A "nukkad natak" trial show was organised at the Delhi BJP office on Friday and was attended by several leaders of the party.

One of the themes of the street plays will be "from Wagon R to Tihar", which targets Delhi chief minister and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener Arvind Kejriwal over corruption charges. Another theme is "Wedding procession without groom", which aims to attack the opposition INDIA bloc for not declaring a prime ministerial candidate. However, the street plays will also include other themes that will focus on the achievements of the government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the last 10 years, they added.

Before becoming the Delhi CM, Kejriwal often used to travel in a blue Wagon R car, which was considered as a symbol of his simplicity. However,

after he took charge as the CM, he started using an official car as all incumbents do.

"As part of the election campaign, 'nukkad natak' will begin in different parts of the city from May 1. Street plays are a very powerful medium of communication and deliver messages to people effectively. They also play an important role in community engagement. Besides, puppet and magic shows, poetry recitals, music bands and flash mobs have also been lined up to apprise people of the Modi government's achievements. Through them, we will also expose the corruption and misuse of the Kejriwal government," said Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva.

Delhi will vote on May 25 to elect seven Lok Sabha MPs.

"As Delhi is a cosmopolitan city, some shows will be presented in English and some others in regional languages such as Bhojpuri, Maithili, Garhwali and Punjabi. This cultural campaign will continue till May 23," said Sachdeva.

An AAP functionary said the BJP only does "natak" and "nautanki". "BJP's track record speaks for itself, with a long history of such theatrics and charades, and is devoid of any action in the public interest. The previous MPs of Delhi were no exception, who engaged solely in 'Nautanki'," he said.



Elections 2024

Elections 2024

Wind from west (UP) will sweep away BJP: Akhilesh

Saptarshi Das

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SIKANDRABAD: Calling the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) "the biggest liar in the universe", Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav on Friday said the identity that the ruling party has created for itself in the last 10 years is that of "loot and lies".

"Voter turnout trends in the first phase indicate that wind from the west (meaning western Uttar Pradesh) will clean away BJP from Uttar Pradesh and their first show has flopped. Not only that, people don't even want to listen to their stories. Their image is painted with lies and theft... BJP is the party that lies the most," Yadav said while addressing a rally for Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) candidate and SP leader Mahendra Nagar in Sikandrabad in the state's Bulandshahr district.

Eight out of 13 seats in western Uttar Pradesh — Saharanpur, Kairana, Muzaffarnagar, Bijnor, Nagina, Moradabad, Rampur and Pilibhit — went to polls on Friday in phase one of elections.

According to the Election Commission of India (ECI) website, the eight seats recorded a provisional turnout of 59.98% on Friday. The final tally will be known only by Saturday, said



Samajwadi Party leader Akhilesh Yadav during a public rally in Sikandrabad, part of Gautam Budh Nagar constituency. SUNIL GHOSH

officials. In 2019, the average turnout in the eight seats was 66.54%.

Reacting to Yadav's speech, BJP district president Gajendra Mavi said his party always puts the interest of the nation first. "Whatever Yadav is saying is wrong and people of UP will show them (Opposition) whose side they are on."

Urging people to vote for Nagar, the SP chief said he was happy that his party had fielded a doctor to compete against another doctor (BJP's Mahesh Sharma).

"Some people used to tell me that I used to lose in this area as I could not field a candidate who is a doctor for this particular seat.

But I want to thank all my party members for preparing such a doctor who can heal generations to come," Yadav said.

He urged the people to "not vote for such a person (Sharma) who has not been able to make their (public) lives better". To this Mavi replied, "The work done in GB Nagar by Dr Sharma is what people will consider when they vote and it will be a historic win I hope."

The SP chief also took a potshot at BSP candidate Rajendra Solanki (hails from Rajput community) saying even his community is supporting the Samajwadi Party. Solanki did not respond to calls and messages seeking his comment.

VOTERS TO BE GREETED WITH FLOWERS AT MODEL BOOTHS

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NOIDA: Fifteen model polling booths are located in schools and colleges across Noida and Greater Noida, and educational institutions are resorting to creative ways to make polling day memorable and pleasant for those exercising their franchise.

According to Atul Kumar, additional district magistrate, of the 51 model polling booths in the district, 15 are in educational institutions.

"Eight schools in Noida assembly segment have been selected to have model polling booths, while two schools and one university in Dadri assembly segment will have model booths. In Jewar, four schools will have model booths. Arrangements are being made by the staff and management of the educational institutions to make voting day special," said Kumar.

Officials of Sharda University in Knowledge Park 3, Greater Noida, said voters will be greeted and assisted by international students on the day of polling.

In Noida, Pathways School in Sector 100 will greet first-time voters with red roses and 'I Voted' badges.

At the model polling booth at Vishwa Bharati Public School in Sector 28, Noida, special gifts await voters.

Jayant, Adityanath hold rally in Modinagar

Peeyush Khandelwal

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GHAZIABAD: Holding a joint rally with Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath in Modinagar on Friday, Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) chief Jayant Chaudhary invoked the region's connect with his late grandfather and former prime minister Chaudhary Charan Singh, and said the farmer leader's name was synonymous with the identity of the region and its people. Lambasting the Opposition, of which he was a part until recently when he left to join hands with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Chaudhary said "those who have lost heart, cannot win".

The rally by the two leaders came on a day when eight parli-



Jayant Chaudhary and Yogi Adityanath

mentary seats in western Uttar Pradesh voted in Phase One of 2024 Lok Sabha polls. Their rally was in support of RLD's Rajkumar Sangwan who is contesting from Bagpat as National Democratic Alliance (NDA) candidate.

Just before the Lok Sabha polls were announced, Prime Minister Narendra Modi conferred the Bharat Ratna, the country's highest civilian award, on three personalities, including Charan Singh.



The BJP is counting on RLD, which has a major presence in the agrarian belt of western UP and immense influence among Jat voters and farmers, to win the 13 seats from the belt.

"No matter which section of society you belong to, you always identify with the name of Ch Charan Singh. Bagpat has given leadership to this country... Chaudhary sahab (Ch Charan Singh) used to say that a leader should

have a clear consciousness and policies, otherwise they cannot work for the people," Jayant said.

Speaking at the rally, CM Adityanath said, "Today, phase I polling is going on across the country and the momentum of polling tells us about people's aspirations to bring Modi ji back to power for a third time... It was for the first time, Chaudhary Sahab (Charan Singh) was offered Bharat Ratna by PM Modi and this is a matter of honour for the people of UP."

Congress leaders said Chaudhary compromised with the ideology of late Ch Charan Singh, who was a tall leader who never compromised. "Jayant felt obliged by the Bharat Ratna given to Ch Sahab and so he joined the NDA," said Vinit Tyagi, district president, Congress.

Office of The Chief Electoral Officer, Delhi
Old St. Stephen's College Building, Kashmere Gate, Delhi-110006

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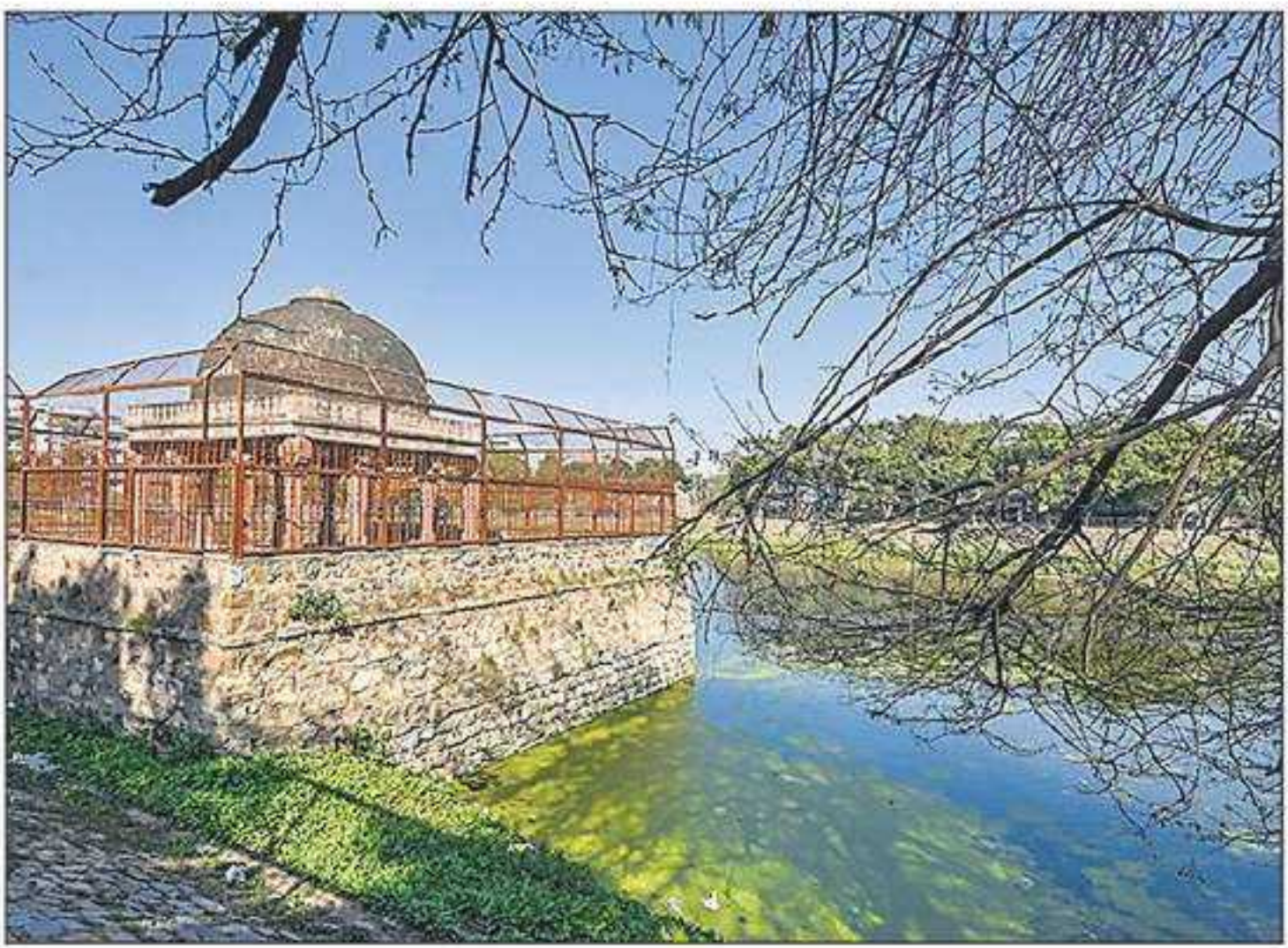
New sewage treatment plan for 13th-century reservoir

Aheli Das
letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Hauz-i-Shamsi, the 13th-century reservoir located in Mehrauli, might get a permanent solution to its long-standing problem of polluted water. Delhi Jal Board (DJB) plans to build a new sewage treatment plant (STP) in sector A of Vasant Kunj — 2.5 km away from Hauz-i-Shamsi — which will provide treated water directly to the water body, said a DJB official.

For over a decade, the residents of wards 6 and 8 who live near Hauz-i-Shamsi have complained of polluted drinking water, breeding grounds for mosquitoes — all attributed to the stagnant water in the reservoir, made worse by sewage water entering the reservoir. Since 2015, at least three attempts have been made by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to clean Hauz-i-Shamsi but none worked.

Protected by ASI, the reservoir was built by Delhi Sultanate ruler Shamsuddin Iltutmish on account of a dream of the prophet who had led him to discover the water body, according to a 20th century listing by the



Protected by the ASI, the reservoir was built by Delhi Sultanate ruler Shamsuddin Iltutmish. **RAJ K RAJ/HT PHOTO**

ASI. In its exhaustive volumes on Delhi buildings, Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) lists that Hauz-i-Shamsi, also known as Shamsi talab, once covered over 100 hectares. But with time, the talab has shrunk to 7.05 acres, said an ASI official.

Attempts at restoration
The first attempt to clean Shamsi Talab was made in 2015, after

which Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society (SEEDS), under the supervision of ASI, cleaned it in 2023, and then again in February this year. A recent spot check by HT, however, showed that the water quality had started to deteriorate again and the water level had gone down significantly compared to February.

The proposal sent by DJB to National Water Mission on April

9 this year, as seen by HT, mentions "construction of a one million gallons per day sewage treatment plant (STP) along with other associated works in sector A Vasant Kunj to feed treated water to the Shamsi Talab in Mehrauli."

"There already exists an STP under DJB where the new plant will be established. The new one will treat sewage coming from Vasant Kunj and send it to Hauz-i-Shamsi," said a DJB official. DJB has approached National Mission for Clean Ganga to carry out the work.

Merely two months after it was cleaned up by ASI and NGO SEEDS, sludge started to accumulate on the water. Heaps of garbage are back on the banks.

Lalit Gupta (44), a resident of ward 8 of Mehrauli and general secretary of the United Shamsi Talab Residents' Welfare Association, said, "We have tried to increase awareness among residents, and urged them to stop dumping garbage. We helped ASI add a fence around the water body to discourage people from throwing waste here but some people continue to do so. This has exacerbated the issue."

PG admissions begin at DU from April 25

Press Trust of India
letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Delhi University will start admissions for post graduate (PG) courses for the academic session 2024-25 from April 25, varsity officials said on Friday.

The registration for admissions into the PG courses will remain open till May 25, they said. Addressing a press conference, Haneet Gandhi, dean admissions, said university will start the admissions for undergraduate (UG) courses in the second phase after the Common University Entrance Test (CUET) UG examinations are conducted.

The dates for the UG admissions will be declared by middle

THE REGISTRATION PROCESS FOR PG ADMISSIONS WILL REMAIN OPEN TILL MAY 25, VARSITY OFFICIALS SAID

of May, she said.

According to the officials, this year, students will be admitted to 13,500 PG seats (including Non Collegiate Women's Education Board), 120 seats each for three B.Tech and 60 seats each for BA LLB and BBA LLB courses. The PG admissions this time will also include courses on MA Hindu Studies, MA Public Health, MA Chinese Studies, MA Korean Studies and MA Fine Arts.

FROM PAGE 1

KEJRIWAL

contended that "it is shocking to suggest that a person would deliberately risk their life by causing an alarming hike in sugar levels for getting medical bail".

The Rouse Avenue court of special judge Kaveri Baweja reserved order on the plea but noted that Kejriwal had appeared to have deviated from the diet prescribed by doctors.

Kejriwal, who has type-2 diabetes, first moved a petition to be allowed to consult his doctors on April 16, which prompted the ED response on Thursday. On Friday, the CM's lawyers likened ED's submissions as an attempt to "do a media trial" by blaming his worsening blood sugar levels to his diet.

"This is done to pre-empt and make media news before the applicant reveals the serious lapse and medical negligence of jail Authorities in depriving applicant of life saving drug: insulin. This is also to get facility of home cooked food withdrawn from the applicant," the lawyers contended.

Special public prosecutor (SPP) Zoheb Hossain, appearing for ED, opposed the application and said that all that he tried to submit on Thursday was that the diet given to Kejriwal did not match the regulated diet prescribed by the doctor.

Senior advocate Ramesh Gupta, also appearing for Kejriwal, interjected, saying: "Why should ED be heard? It is a matter of jail authorities as the person is in judicial custody and the counsel for jail authorities is here."

"There is no reference to any sweet in the chart. The diet that has been prescribed by the doctor is a very regulated diet which has no co-relation with the sweets or sweet fruits. Therefore, it is directly related to the issue," Hossain said, seeking time to file reply.

The court is likely to pronounce its order on April 22. In the fresh contentions in court, lawyers representing Kejriwal rebutted the specific contentions by the investigation agency. For instance, on ED saying that the 55-year-old was eating mangoes and sweets, the defence said Kejriwal had the fruit only on three occasions out of the 48 meals he ate in prison and the last time he did so was on April 8. The sweets he had were sugar-free and sent with six meals.

The CM's lawyer also said Kejriwal had only once eaten an aloo-puri meal, but ED cited it as an example of food that made his diabetes condition worse.

The real reason, the application stressed, was that "since his arrest on 21.03.2024, he has not been given insulin despite

repeated requests, leading to his blood sugar levels spiking to alarming levels ranging from 230-320 mg/dL between April 12-17".

ED's submissions in court showed that, on random testing, Kejriwal's blood sugar levels were largely well above normal, going from 139mg/dL on April 1 (when he was moved to Tihar) to 202mg/dL on April 10, 280mg/dL on April 12, 276mg/dL on April 14, 243mg/dL on April 15.

The levels dipped to 130mg/dL on April 16 and 181mg/dL on April 17.

Doctors said a normal blood glucose level on a non-fasting test is between 125 and 140mg/dL.

Kejriwal's health and his alleged ill-treatment in prison have been at the heart of a tussle between the AAP and ED since the chief minister's arrest last month. He was sent to Tihar jail on April 1 and the court allowed him home-cooked food in accordance with the diet prescribed by his doctors.

The counsel for Tihar informed court that when Kejriwal was brought to the jail, he said that he was taking insulin earlier but stopped a few months ago "Blood sugar levels have been maintained. He is not following the prescribed diet in the food being sent from home. He should follow the diet chart. If he has insulin now, sugar will drop, there have been some incidents of hike in sugar level otherwise it is being maintained." Tihar's counsel Yoginder Handoo said on Friday.

ED submitted that Kejriwal can be examined by an independent doctor from AIIMS and opposed his prayer for doctor consultation alleging that he had earlier misused the provisions for his legal consultation.

The special judge allowed ED and jail administration to file their responses by Saturday, while reserving the verdict. The court is likely to pronounce its order on April 22.

Kejriwal is the third AAP leader to be arrested in connection with the irregularities in the Delhi excise case after Delhi's former deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia and AAP MP Sanjay Singh. They have all denied charges and called the case a conspiracy to "finish the AAP". Sanjay Singh was granted bail by the Supreme Court on April 2.

ISRAEL-IRAN

rather than by Israel, obviating the need for retaliation. An Iranian official told Reuters there were no plans to respond against Israel for the incident.

"The foreign source of the incident has not been confirmed. We have not received any external attack, and the discussion

leans more towards infiltration than attack," the official said.

The Israeli government didn't confirm or deny the attack. But an anonymous Israeli official told The Washington Post the "strike" was retaliation for Iran's drone and missile barrage and intended to signal that Israel had the ability to hit inside Iran. Several media reports said US officials had confirmed Israel was behind the attack, adding that Israel's closest ally had been informed in advance of its plans.

Speaking at the G7 meeting in Capri, Italian foreign minister Antonio Tajani said the US received "last-minute" information from Israel about the attack on Isfahan. US secretary of state Antony Blinken did not dispute that when asked by reporters, but said, "We were not involved in any offensive operations."

Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu had vowed his country would respond after Iran fired drones and missiles at Israel on April 13. Tehran's first-ever strike on Israel had been in retaliation for a suspected Israeli air strike on Tehran's embassy compound in Damascus on April 1 which killed seven Iranian Revolutionary Guards. Khamenei had warned of retaliation.

The exchanges are part of a wider escalation since the fighting in Gaza began last year. Fears of a large-scale war had gripped wider West Asia after the Iranian strikes and Israel faced mounting international pressure, including from the US, not to respond too aggressively, if at all. On Friday, authorities said air defences fired from a major air base in Isfahan, which long has been home to Iran's fleet of American-made F-14 Tomcats — purchased before the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

Fars news agency reported "three explosions" close to Qahjavarestan, near Isfahan airport and the 8th Shekari army air base. Iran's space agency spokesman Hossein Dalirian, referring to a type of drone, said there was "a failed and humiliating attempt to fly quad-copters, which were shot down".

Isfahan city is home to around 2 million people, several military bases and facilities, and sites associated with Iran's nuclear programme, including its underground Natanz enrichment site, which has been repeatedly targeted by suspected Israeli sabotage attacks. It's believed to have been one of several launch sites for Iran's attack on Israel on Saturday night.

Tasnim published a video from one of its reporters, who said he was in the southeastern Zerdanjan area of Isfahan, near its "nuclear energy mountain". The footage showed two different anti-aircraft gun positions, and details of the video corresponded with known features of

the site of Iran's uranium conversion facility at Isfahan.

"At 4:45, we heard gunshots. There was nothing going on," he said. "It was the air defence."

State television described all atomic sites in the area as "fully safe." The UN nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency, also said "there is no damage to Iran's nuclear sites" after the incident.

The IAEA "continues to call for extreme restraint from everybody and reiterates that nuclear facilities should never be a target in military conflicts," the agency said. There was little information on whether any damage in the strikes occurred at all.

Around the time of the incident in Iran, Syria's state-run SANA news agency quoted a military statement saying Israel carried out a missile strike targeting an air defence unit in its south and causing material damage. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a war monitor, said the strike hit a military radar for government forces. It was not clear if there were casualties, the Observatory said.

Its chief Rami Abdurrahman said six Israeli fighter jets entered Syria's airspace and were flying east when they were spotted by the radar. The warplanes were seen around the time loud noises and drones were reported in Isfahan. That area of Syria is directly west of Isfahan, some 1,500km away, and east of Israel.

Iranian state-run media sought to downplay the incident after the fact, airing footage of an otherwise-peaceful Isfahan morning. That could be intentional, particularly after Iranian officials for days have been threatening to retaliate for any Israeli retaliatory attack on the nation.

Tasnim, citing "informed sources", denied that Iran had been attacked from outside.

"Contrary to the rumours and claims" made in foreign media, "there are no reports of an attack from abroad", it said.

G7 foreign ministers warned of new sanctions against Iran on Friday for its drone and missile attack on Israel, and urged both sides to avoid an escalation of the conflict.

The European Union foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said that the attacks overnight "confirm the need to avoid an escalation."

"Any erroneous calculation on others' reactions can provoke an escalation, which doesn't eliminate the risk of war," Borrell said after the meeting of the Group of Seven.

Far-right Israeli national security minister Itamar Ben-Gvir appeared to ridicule the Israeli strike, posting a single word to X: "Lame."

Delhiwale

EXPERIENCE YOUR CITY LIKE NEVER BEFORE



Mayank Austen Soofi



This way to Gali Jagat Cinema Wali

The Walled City dictionary

PUBLIC INTEREST As part of our 'Walled City dictionary' series, that is chronicling every Old Delhi street.

Excelsior, Moti, Kumar, Western, Novelty, Jubilee, Filmistan, Golcha, Ritz, New Amar (locals called it Newar), Jagat... these old Old Delhi single screens stopped screening films a long time ago, but the bulky edifices of a few of them continue to litter the Purani Dilli topography like forgotten bhule-bhisre ruins. One of these has created its own jagat, or world.

Gali Jagat Cinema Wali starts cinematically from the darkened bowels of Gali Gondni Wali, abruptly opens into an airy daylight yard ringed with tenements, before suffocating into a spindly long lane that ends at Urdu Bazar, where stands the Jagat.

The gali could as well have been called Gali Nishat Cinema Wali, in honour of the theatre's original name. By the time it ended its final show in 2004, the good name of Jagat had transmuted into the slangy "Macchhiwallon ka Talkies," apparently due to its proximity to the macchi, or fish, market that no longer exists. This afternoon, the metal grill guarding Jagat's foyer is shuttered, but the unlit cobwebby interiors can be seen through the gaps. There's the No Smoking sign beside the

Hall Exit Plan beside the Most Wanted Terrorists poster. A sofa is parked by the ticket window. The building is fronted by the pavement kiosks of tobacco seller Lail Ahmad, mobile phone repairer Shamsad Alam and paan wale Ved Prakash, who recalls that the last "picture" shown was the horror flick *Ek Raat Shaitan ke Saath*.

Jagat screened more esteemed movies during its heydays, including the classic *Mughal-e-Azam*. Meena Kumari's tragi-musical *Pakeezah* stayed on for six months. A resident of the nearby Matia Mahal neighbourhood would come daily to attend a show of *Pakeezah*, tiktoking on a tonga with the women of the family. The whole party would wait for the song 'Chalte Chalte' after watching which they would promptly march out of the auditorium. (This last anecdote has been fished out of Ziya Us Salam's book *Delhi 4 Show: Talkies of Yesterday*.)

Today, while Gali Jagat Cinema Wali's spindly long lane opens into the chaotic Urdu Bazar, it itself remains marooned in silence. A part of the lane is flanked by Jagat's ochre-coloured wall, in which lies preserved a small slotted ticket window of the theatre's cheap front-row stall. Another portion of the lane has Fabeeha Textile's hoarding (see photo) hand-drawn by Purani Dilli's iconic sign painter Shakeel Artist, whose studio-cubicle is steps away from Jagat, and who has already been celebrated in these pages.



READ: For more stories by Mayank Austen Soofi, scan the QR code

China, Iran's largest trade partner, said it will "continue to play a constructive role to de-escalate" West Asia tensions.

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak cautioned against escalation in West Asia, saying Britain was working to confirm the details around a reported Israeli

cross-border attack that killed 1,200 people in Israel and kidnapped 250 others.

Israel responded with an offensive in Gaza that has caused widespread devastation and killed more than 33,900 people, according to local health officials.

"As long as Iran continues to deny the attack and deflect attention from it and no further hits are seen, there is space for both sides to climb down the escalation ladder for now," said Sanam Vakil, the director of the Middle East and North Africa programme at Chatham House.

HT Homage

शान्ताकारं भुजगशयनं पद्मनाभं सुरेशं
विश्वधारं गगनसदृशं मेघवर्णं शुभाङ्गम् ।
लक्ष्मीकान्तं कमलनयनं योगिभिर्ध्यानगम्यं
वन्दे विष्णुं भवभ्यहरं सर्वलोकैकनाथम् ॥

WITH PROFOUND GRIEF AND SORROW WE REGRET TO
INFORM THE SAD DEMISE OF OUR BELOVED



Shri (Prof.) Vijay Bhushan Aggarwal

3rd October 1948 - 16th April 2024

A prayer meeting in his memory will be held on
Sunday, 21st April 2024 from 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM
at Chinmaya Mission, Lodhi Estate, New Delhi

In Loving Memory

Smt. Raj Rani Aggarwal (wife)

Himanshu & Shalini Aggarwal
(Son and Daughter-in-law)
Saanvi Aggarwal
(Granddaughter)

Varun & Anna Aggarwal
(Son and Daughter-in-law)
Naren Aggarwal
(Grandson)

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PRAYER MEETING



With a heavy heart we inform you of the passing
of our loving mother, beloved grandmother
and dearest great-grandmother.....

MRS. URMILA DEVI
Wife of late Mr. Chaman Lal Soi
18/03/1932 - 18/02/2024

PRAYER MEETING

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Arya Samaj Mandir
F-10/15, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi

In Grief:

Dr. Anuradha & Dr. Sunil Soi
Sonali & Dr. Sameer Soi,
Sangam & Jeff Stacko
Saavan Soi,
Laila & Anaya Stacko

Mrs. Meher Dinyar Dhondy
6th August 1929 - 19th April 2024
Loving Mother, Grandmother And
Most Loved Teacher Of Allahabad.

Funeral: 10 am. Sat, 20th April 2024
Navroz Baug, Parsi Cemetery
Behind Khan Market, New Delhi

Prayer Meet: 4 pm. Sat, 20th April 2024
Delhi Parsi Anjuman Hall
(Next to Maulana Azad Medical College)
New Delhi 11002

HT Unforgettable

**In Loving Memory of
Karri Narsimha**
24.07.1978 to 20.04.2021

Wanna convey our gratitude to
make us so strong in walk of
life. Life without you by our
side is possible because we
still feel your presence. Forever
in our hearts. **Reena & Vansh**

**Maj. Subhash Bhatnagar
(Maxi) Vippi**
08.04.1940 - 20.04.2018

We miss your thunderous
laughter; it tickled everyone's
hearts. Moments with you
are cherished memories that
keeps us strong and bound
together. Our hearts ache
knowing that we can not hug you any more, but
you continue to be our guiding light. We miss you
Papa, as you watch over us from heavens.
Remembered dearly, by Family & Friends

**In Loving Memory of
Mrs. Parveen Sharma**
8th Death Anniversary

Your memories and deeds are
in our heart forever and we all
love you; **Sharma Bhupinder,
Sharma Vineet, Amrita
and Amalra, Sharma Rachit,
Renuka and Riya, Sharma
Sumit, Namita and Varenaya.**

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Cannot pass 'blanket' orders under Sec 144 on account of elections: SC

Shruti Kakkar
letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Friday expressed surprise over passing of "blanket" orders under Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), prohibiting meetings, gatherings and processions on the grounds of impending elections in some states without prior permission of the local authorities, as it issued notice on a petition in a related matter.

In an order with pan-India application, a bench headed by justice BR Gavai directed that the competent authority will decide within three days of the filing of an application seeking permission for holding any public meeting or yatra.

SEC 144 ALLOWS THE EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE TO PROHIBIT 4 OR MORE PEOPLE FROM ASSEMBLING IN URGENT CASES OF NUISANCE

"How can such orders (under CrPC Section 144) be issued," the bench, also comprising justice Sandeep Mehta, remarked, seeking response from the Centre and Election Commission of India (ECI) in two weeks.

The bench was hearing a public interest litigation (PIL) filed by social activists Aruna Roy and Nikhil Dey, seeking an order to

restrain authorities from indiscriminately passing blanket orders under Section 144 ahead of every Lok Sabha or assembly elections and until the declaration of results. Section 144 authorises the executive magistrate of any state or territory to issue order to prohibit the assembly of four or more people in an area, in urgent cases of nuisance or apprehended danger.

The petition, filed through advocate Prasanna S, claimed that issuance of blanket orders was not a valid ground. "Unless there is genuine ground for breach of peace, you cannot impose Section 144... Just because there is election does not give you ground," advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for the petitioners, said.

2 DEAD IN CLASH AMONG SANGRUR PRISON INMATES

CHANDIGARH: Two inmates were killed and as many seriously injured in a clash among prisoners in a jail in Sangrur on Friday, said officials.

Police said they are investigating the matter and trying to ascertain what led to the clashes which injured the four, two of whom succumbed. A doctor at the government hospital in Sangrur told reporters, "Four patients (inmates) from the district jail were brought to the hospital, out of which two were brought dead. Two seriously injured have been referred to Patiala." Harsh and Dharmender were brought dead while Gagan-deep Singh and Mohd Schwarz are injured, the doctor said.

Singh and Schwarz have injuries on their backs, heads, arms and ears caused by a sharp object, he said.

NIRMALA

consultation with stakeholders and see what is it that we have to do to make or bring in a framework which will be acceptable to all, primarily retain the level of transparency and completely remove the possibility of black money entering into this," she said, adding that it was yet to be decided if the Union government will seek a review of the top court's order.

"What the current scheme which has been just thrown out by the Supreme Court brought in was transparency. What prevailed earlier was just free-for-all."

Introduced in 2018, electoral bonds were available for purchase at any State Bank of India branch. Donations made under this scheme by corporate and even foreign entities through Indian subsidiaries enjoyed

100% tax exemption while identities of the donors were kept confidential both by the bank as well as the recipient political parties.

On February 15, a five-judge Constitution bench struck down the scheme, declaring it "unconstitutional" because it completely anonymised contributions made to political parties, and added that restricting black money or illegal election financing - some of the articulated objectives of the scheme - did not justify violating voters' right to information in a disproportionate manner.

Sitharaman acknowledged that some aspects of the scheme needed improvement - for example, data made public by the Election Commission of India and State Bank of India suggested shell companies and loss-making companies contributed to parties - but added

that they could be brought back in some form after "a good consultation".

She hit out at the Opposition for alleging that the BJP ignored criminal charges of leaders who are defecting from other parties to the ruling party.

"The BJP can't sit here and say, you come to my party today, and the case will be closed tomorrow. The case has to go through the courts that have to take a call; they will not just say, 'Oh, he's come to your party, close the case.' Doesn't happen that way. So is this washing machine a term they want to use for the courts?"

She also laid out a road map for the economy to keep its growth momentum. "Stability in policymaking. Simplification of the process of taxation. GST rate rationalisation. Making it easy for investments to come

through into the country. And when I say that, it's not just from the central government. It has to be state governments. It has to be local bodies bringing in compliances which are simpler at the local body level. I would think these are larger issues."

When asked about the intense BJP campaign in Tamil Nadu, where no national party has had a significant presence since the late 1960s, Sitharaman said the state had a clear distinction - local regional parties for assembly and a national party for Parliament - but the Congress ceded ground to Dravidian parties.

"Everything that happens from Delhi, the good work for Tamil Nadu that can benefit Tamil Nadu - there weren't enough articulations of these in the state they left it to the regional party."

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Invitation for Entitles for supply of power on Medium-term basis No.HOD (PMG)/2024-25/306 Date: 19.04.2024

BRPL had invited proposals from Entitles for supply of 300 Mw (+additional 200Mw under greenfield option) power for 3 years from all sources including renewable under Lump Sum Tariff category (except coal) on medium term basis vide Tender document & Corrigendum's: HOD (PMG)/BRPL/2023-24/236 dated 30.01.2024, 251 dated 21.02.2024, 264 dated 06.03.2024 & 277 dated 19.03.2024

The last date of bid submission is hereby extended to 30.05.2024

Tender document and their details are available on www.bsesdelhi.com & www.mtsc.com

Head PMG (BRPL) _____

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Appointment for the post of Engineering Officers in Delhi Police Housing Corporation Limited on deputation basis.

It is proposed to fill up the post of 01 Assistant Executive Engineer (Civil) and 01 Assistant Executive Engineer (Elect.) in Delhi Police Housing Corporation Limited (DPHCL), Room No. 1319, 13th Floor, Tower-II, New Delhi Police Hdqrs. Bldg., Jai Singh Road, New Delhi, on deputation basis initially for a period of three years and extendable upto five years maximum by Engineering officers working in various Ministries/Departments of Central Government and the State Governments i.e., CPWD, MCD, PWD, DDA, DSICD, NDMC, DMRC, Delhi Jal Board, CAPFs/Govt. PSUs etc.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND DETAILS OF THE TECHNICAL POST OF ENGINEERING OFFICER TO BE FILLED-UP ON DEPUTATION BASIS IN DELHI POLICE HOUSING CORPORATION LIMITED

Sl. No.	Name of the Post	No. of Post	Terms & conditions of deputation/appointment
1.	Assistant Executive Engineer (Civil)	01	Eligibility Criteria: - Holding analogous post OR having four years experience as Junior Engineer (Civil) at Pay Band-3, Pay Scale of Rs.15600-39100 + Grade Pay of Rs. 5400/- (Group A Entry) of 6 th CPC now at Level 10 in Pay Matrix of 7 th CPC).
2.	Assistant Executive Engineer (Electrical)	01	Eligibility Criteria: - Holding analogous post OR having four years experience as Junior Engineer (Elect.) at Pay Band-3, Pay Scale of Rs.15600-39100 + Grade Pay of Rs. 5400/- (Group A Entry) of 6 th CPC now at Level 10 in Pay Matrix of 7 th CPC).

NOTE:-
The applications should be submitted through proper channel of the applicant's Department.

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- Post held with pay scale.....
- Date of continuous appointment in Govt. service.....
- Period of regular service in the present grade.....
- Permanent post and post against which permanently appointed.....
- Educational and Technical qualification - Candidate should be qualified in the required field (Please attach the copies of certificates duly attested).
 - Educational qualification.....
 - Technical qualification.....
 - Experience: a) Length of Service..... b) Field of expertise.....

Sl. No.	Ministry/Organisation	Designation/Duties of post	Scale of Pay	Period of employment from ----- to

ONLY FOR THE DEPARTMENT

To be certified by the respective Ministry/Department concerned. (Particulars should be duly verified by the Ministry/Department concerned without which the application will not be considered).

- Shri/Smt./Ms. _____ is free from vigilance angle.
- Complete CR dossiers are enclosed from the period _____ to _____.
- The particulars of Bio-Data of Shri/Smt./Ms. _____ have been verified and he/she is eligible for the said post.

Signature with official stamp of Head of Office

> The application of eligible and willing officers alongwith their up-to-date CR dossiers for the last 5 years and vigilance clearance may be sent in the given proforma so as to reach the undersigned **within 60 days** from the date of publication of the advertisement in daily newspapers. The last date of receipt of the application(s) through proper channel will be **18.06.2024**.

> The candidate should not be more than 55 years on the date of publication of this advertisement in daily newspapers.

> Appointment to these positions should be on the basis of deputation in terms of the orders in force from time to time.

> The terms and conditions of deputation employees to DPHCL will be decided in accordance with the rules of the Central Government applicable on that date.

Sd/-
(AALAP PATEL)
DY. COMMISSIONER OF POLICE
GM (Ops.), DPHCL, New Delhi

APPLICATION FORM FOR THE POST OF ENGINEERING OFFICERS

- Name in full (in block letters) : _____
- Father's/Husband's name : _____
- Date of birth (in Christian era) : _____
(In figures and words)
- Permanent Address : _____
(In block letters with PIN Code Number)
- Educational Qualification : _____
- Technical Qualification : _____
- Name of Department : _____
- Present post held : _____
- Experience : _____
- Date of appointment : _____
- Date of regular appoint. in the grade : _____
- Present pay matrix & pay level : _____
- Date of return from last deputation, and Name of Department, if any : _____
- Name of post applied for : _____
- PIMS ID No. for Engg., if any : _____
- Any other information : _____
- Mobile Number and e-mail : _____

DP/9653/DPHCL/2024 Signature of the applicant

ENERGY FOR EVER
IREDA
ONCE IREDA, ALWAYS IREDA

THE LARGEST PURE-PLAY GREEN FINANCING INSTITUTION IN THE COUNTRY

EXTRACT OF AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31.03.2024 (₹ in Crores)

Sl. No.	Particulars	Quarter ended March 31, 2024 (Audited)	Quarter ended December 31, 2023 (Audited)	Quarter ended March 31, 2023 (Audited)	Year ended March 31, 2024 (Audited)	Year ended March 31, 2023 (Audited)
1.	Total Income from Operations	1,391.64	1,253.20	1,036.32	4,965.29	3,483.04
2.	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	479.67	386.14	288.38	1,685.24	1,139.25
3.	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	479.67	386.14	288.38	1,685.24	1,139.25
4.	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	337.38	335.54	253.62	1,252.23	864.63
5.	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit/(Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	251.99	424.69	290.23	1,095.43	825.89
6.	Paid up Equity Share Capital (Face Value of ₹ 10/- each)	2,687.76	2,687.76	2,284.60	2,687.76	2,284.60
7.	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve)	5,871.66	5,446.80	3,650.57	5,871.66	3,650.57
8.	Securities Premium Account (net)	863.63	863.63	-	863.63	-
9.	Net worth	8,559.43	8,134.56	5,935.17	8,559.43	5,935.17
10.	Paid up Debt Capital/Outstanding Debt	49,686.86	41,700.70	40,165.28	49,686.86	40,165.28
11.	Outstanding Redeemable Preference Shares	-	-	-	-	-
12.	Debt Equity Ratio	5.80	5.13	6.77	5.80	6.77
13.	Earnings Per Share (of ₹ 10/- each) (for continuing and discontinued operations) -					
	A. Basic:	1.25	1.38	1.11	5.16	3.78
	B. Diluted:	1.25	1.38	1.11	5.16	3.78
14.	Capital Redemption Reserve	-	-	-	-	-
15.	Debenture Redemption Reserve	397.75	432.69	397.97	397.75	397.97
16.	Debt Service Coverage Ratio	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
17.	Interest Service Coverage Ratio	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

Notes:

- The above results have been recommended by the Audit Committee of Directors and approved by Board of Director in their respective meetings held on 19.04.2024 and have been audited by the Statutory Auditors of the Company.
- The above is an extract of the detailed format of quarterly and annual financial results filed with Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33&52 of the SEBI LODR Regulations. The full format of the said financial results are available on the website of the Company www.ireda.in and on the websites of Stock Exchanges www.bseindia.com & www.nseindia.com.
- For the other line items referred in regulation 52(4) of the SEBI LODR Regulations, pertinent disclosures have been made to Stock Exchanges and can be accessed at www.bseindia.com and www.nseindia.com respectively.

For and on Behalf of the Board of Directors
Sd/-
Pradip Kumar Das
Chairman & Managing Director
DIN No. 07448576

INDIAN RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY LIMITED
(A Government of India Enterprise)

Registered Office: 1st Floor, Core-4A, East Court, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003, Tel: 011-24682206-19, Fax: 011-24682202
Corporate Office: 3rd Floor, August Kranti Bhawan, Bhikaji Cama Place, New Delhi-110066, Tel: 011-26717400-12, Fax: 011-26717416
Business Centre: NBCC Office Complex, Office Block No. II, Plate B, 7th Floor, East Kidwai Nagar, New Delhi-110023, Tel: 011-24347729-99
Website: www.ireda.in, CIN: L65100DL1987GOI027265

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PROPERTY/DLF - SUSHANT LOK

ULTRA SPACIOUS LUXURIOUS APARTMENTS

DLF - THE ARBOUR

SECTOR 63 A, GURUGRAM

AMONGST THE MOST ICONIC UPCOMING RESIDENCES

SIZE: 3940 SQFT

STARTING PRICE **8.5 Cr** onwards

+91 9810199927

AVAILABLE Prime Land Parcels In Goa

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WANTED/SALE

EMAAR URBAN OASIS Sector-62

PURI THE ARAVALLIS Sector-61

+91 72 92 06 06 06

RENTED BROKERS WELCOME

TENANT	RENT/M	TENANT	RENT/M
DD Reg	56,000/-	Archer & Bull UAE	3.46 Lacs
Planet Cosmo	72,000/-	Axis Bank	3.50 Lacs
SBI Bank	2.08 Lacs	Gonzo Retail	5.76 Lacs
Dominos	2.15 Lacs	NITERRA	6.57 Lacs
Swiss Beauty	2.88 Lacs	Indp. Bldg.	10.25 Lacs
Rank PLC	2.91 Lacs	Indp. Bldg.	20.00 Lacs

Rajeev Saluja | 99100-72803 | 98104-92803

CONFIRM DEAL

DLF 1000 Sq. Yds. Plot Arjun Marg @ 38 Cr.

SOUTH CITY-1 1004 Sq. Yds. Plot E Block, 18 Mtr Road

SOUTH CITY-1 500 Sq. Yds. Plot D / H / J / K Block @ 13 Cr.

316 Yds, Plot Bodhi Marg, 24 Mtr Road @ 13 Cr.

Kothi & BHK 502 Sq. Yds. Duplex, Swimming Pool, Theater @ 16.5 Cr.

NC REALTY 9810 599 833

DLF - SUSHANT LOK

MIGLANI REALTORS 9990660129

1022 SQ.YDS Prime Plots available for Sale at Arjun Marg & Kachhar Marg. Marvellous Locations. For more details please contact: 9990660129

DLF - SUSHANT LOK

SABHARWAL ASSOCIATES 9958492130

SUSHANT LOK-1 block 41/42 near park 270.300.502/2 plots, 3-BHK 300Yd East, North, 502Yd Plots, 215 to 102Yd More deals also available prime locations 9958492130

MIGLANI REALTORS 9990660129

502 SQ. YDS East Facing Kothi for Sale in DLF-1 on 12 Mtr Wide Road. Very well maintained. Peaceful Location. For more details Contact: 9990660129

SABHARWAL ASSOCIATES 9810652416

LUXURY FLRS Nirvana Country 500y 46.25cr 360sqft+4.65cr 270sqft+1.5cr 18mtr Road, 500yd North, 12mtr Road, Suncity-360yd Corner, 12mtr Road -9811196843

MIGLANI REALTORS 9873039929

ULTRA LUXURY Floors available for Sale in DLF-1/2/4, Malibu Town, Sushant Lok 1/2/3, South City 1 & 2, Nirvana Country. All Sizes. Best Prices. Contact: 9873039929

SABHARWAL ASSOCIATES 9811196843

PLOTS DLF ph-IV, 360yd North Facing, 500yd South DLF Ph-III, 500yd, 18mtr Road, 500yd North, 12mtr Road, Suncity-360yd Corner, 12mtr Road -9811196843

MIGLANI REALTORS 9999070007

270 SQ. YDS Plot available for Sale in Ansal Vastu, 2 Side Open, Park Facing on 12 Mtr Wide Road. For more details Contact: 9999070007

SABHARWAL ASSOCIATES 9910026336 | 9810026076

DLF-1 ASHOK Crescent / Paschim Marg 502 sq. yds. Plot @ wide road. Call: 9810026076, 9910026336

AARIDDI ASSOCIATES 98101-71345

DLF-1 Plots-200/500/12/18 mtrs 215 Yds, 316 Yds, 402 Yds, 502 Yds @ best price. SL-1, 418y 5B/R fully furnished duplex bungalow wide road @ lucrative price.

SABHARWAL ASSOCIATES 9711776151

WANTED/AVAILABLE Plots & Builder Floors Golf Course Extn Irdco City Adani Anantraj Estate Emerald Hills Ansal Essencia/Versalia Alameda 200-300-400-500-700-1000y9711776151

GANGA PROPERTIES 9999970994

DLF PHASE-3, Plots & Builder Floors 215 Yds, 316 Yds, 402 Yds, 502 Yds @ 1022 Yds North-East Facing / Park Fac. Corner Options Also Available. Ganga Properties, 9999970994

TRIUMPH ESTATES 9999036127 | 9911773375

FOR SALE / lease Exclusive mandate deals for independent floors in DLF, South City, Sushant Lok, Top Line, Finishing, Best Location, Vastu Compliment, Reputed Builders.

Dwarka Expressway Puri Diplomatic Residences SECTOR -III

Sobha Vista Residency SECTOR -108

+91 72 91 89 89 89

SUNCITY PLATINUM MG ROAD

ALBAN SPR SECTOR-71

+91 72 91 08 08 08

PRIME SHOPS WANTED/SALE

Ireo City Centre SMARTWORLD ORCHARD STREET

+91 98 10 24 79 99

IMT MAESAR FOR SALE

4 ACRE : 200000 Ft. RCC
2 ACRE : 50000 Ft. Shed
5500 MTR : 70000 Ft. RCC
4000 MTR : 70000 Ft. RCC
4800 MTR : IMT Sohna

SAYA ESTATE Naresh Kumar 9810235126

EXCLUSIVE PREMIUM MANDATE DEALS FOR SALE in DLF-II at Best Price

500yd+500yd PAIR for SALE on Akashneem Marg Wide Road (Mandate)

500yd Well Maintained Kothi for SALE Gated Lane Near by NH-8 Highway, MG Road, Best price.

Booking for 500yd Luxury Triplex Builder Floor SAUDAGAR PROPERTIES PVT. LTD 9811221207

DLF - SUSHANT LOK

SOUTH CITY-1 360 Sq Yd Beautiful Kothi GF+FF (Floor-wise) With Basement, 8/9 Years Old Apex Cheque Flexible Circle to Max. Call: 9915131048

DLF - SUSHANT LOK

Dholera Smart City 9818547276

INVEST In Authority approved residential plots near international airport in. Starts from 11 lacs channel partners welcome

Millennium Real Estate 9871177425

MGF The Villas 360yd Villa 50HK+50 7500Hr area with 3car parking. Gated community power backup, clubhouse, vastu compliant. All inclusive @15.50 cr onwards. Call now 9871177425

RENTED

HITACHI	31,000	62.50 L
MCKINSEY	33,900	55.00 L
AIR INDIA	51,000	1.22 CR
DELOITTE	67,000	1.60 CR
LIFESTYLE	70,000	1.30 CR
ICICI BANK	3.08 L	9.70 CR

SPACE CREATORS 9711622995

EXCLUSIVE RENTED FOR SALE

TENANT	RENT(PM)
TATA ZUDIO	70,000
DECISION TREE	1,00,000
QUAMPENTENCE	1,55,664
REDCLIFFE LIFETECH	2,78,077
TRAFALGAR INDIA	3,01,432
ZEIL TECHNOLOGIES	3,91,060
SOUL CAFE	8,36,225

9311854949 | 9971490726

OM SAI RAM

DLF-II 300 YDS LOW CHEQUE 400 YDS LIVEABLE KOTHI

DLF-IV 270 YDS WIDE ROAD 360 YDS NORTH FACING SUSHANT LOK-1

215 YDS 500 YDS EAST GARDEN CITY 300 / 500 SQ YDS WANTED

215 - 1000 SQ YDS PLOTS / HOUSES DLF I / II / IV SL I / II / III SOUTH CITY/SUN CITY Dhawan Estate Consultants 98100 70834 | 7878-3030-78

CONFIRM PLOTS

1000yd Park Facing (DLF-3)
1000yd Shaoot Marg (DLF-1)
813yd Gated (SL-1)
682 yd M-1 Lane (DLF-2)
500yd Park Facing (DLF-3)
500yd Mousari Avenue (DLF-3)
400yd W Block (DLF-3)
316yd NE Facing Gated (DLF-3)

GANGA PROPERTIES 99999-70994

DESRAJ (SDR Prop) Builder's Floor 98110-72035

DLF-1000/800/500 Yds Super Luxurious 4/5 Bedrooms /N/Facing Entire Floors Independent Stills Parking Sq. Details 9811072035

Millennium Real Estate 9810112870

PLOTS UPPAL Southend 750yd Pair 24 Mtr Road (nominal price)/Chq. Greenwood City 1000 Corner Building, SL-3 240 Facing Golf Course Extn Road. Call for details 9810112870

BAHLSONS PRIME PLOT A BUY/SELL COMPANY 98100-17982 | 98103-64472

DLF CITY Phase-4, Gurgaon (300) Yds Irregular, 2 side open, rectangular Plot in well developed gated colony, east facing, close to huge park, back side green area at very reasonable price

DLF - SUSHANT LOK

CONFIRM DEALS DLF-1

1000 Kachnar / Arjun/ Shahtoot Marg 500 Kothi @Plot 9mtr 500 Kothi @Plot 12mtr 500 Ashoka (North) 500 12 Mtr @12cr 300 12 Mtr East

DLF-II 300 North K-Blk SUSHANT LOK-1 300 B-Blk North 270 A-Blk 24 Mtr East (Laburnum)

SABHARWAL ASSOCIATES 9811081738

DLF - SUSHANT LOK

DLF PH-4 24mtr rd built-up 270yd & 270yd 15mtr. rd also DLF-1 built-up 200yd & DLF Garden City Sec-91.92 (A-BK) 502yd East Fac. 12mtr rd # My Real Home-9810320735

BUILDER FLOORS

DLF-1,2,4 & S.LOK-1

1000y 5 BHK @ 9.99 cr.
800y 5 BHK @ 8.25 cr.
500y 4 BHK @ 4.99 cr.
400y 4 BHK @ 3.99 cr.
300y 4BHK @ 2.99 cr.

SABHARWAL ASSOCIATES 9810099173 | 9810061698

SAUDAGAR PROPERTIES PVT. LTD. 9990556669

BOOKING FOR Luxury Triplex and Top with Roof Floor DLF Phase 2-500yd Exclusive Mandate Floorwise Building for Sale Saudagar Properties Pvt.Ltd. 9990556669

SAUDAGAR PROPERTIES PVT. LTD. 9718511207

EXCLUSIVE CORNER Plots For Sale DLF Phase 1-1100 Yds Green Belt 500yd/500 Yds duplex kothi, Best Price. Saudagar Properties Pvt. Ltd. 9718511207

SAUDAGAR PROPERTIES PVT. LTD. 9718511207

ULTRA LUXURY Floors Sushant Lok 1-300yd 4 BHK, 418yd 4 BHK Lift Stilt Parking Floors Best Price. Saudagar Properties Pvt. Ltd. 9718511207

SAUDAGAR PROPERTIES PVT. LTD. 9718511207

EXCLUSIVE MANDATE Kothi for Sale DLF phase 2-200yd Two Side Open Floorwise Building /215yd Duplex Kothi. Also at Best Price. Saudagar Properties 9990556669

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EXCLUSIVE MANDATE Premium Plot for Sale DLF Phase 2-320 Yds 18 Mtr Road East Facing Near Market, Metro, NH-8 Highway Best Price. Saudagar Properties 9718511207

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EXCLUSIVE PLOTS for Sale in Sushant Lok 1-300yd East Facing /DLF Phase 1-200yd Duplex Kothi, best peaceful location best price. Saudagar Properties 9718511207

SAUDAGAR PROPERTIES PVT. LTD. 9718511207

PREMIUM PLOTS for Sale DLF Phase 2-400yd Park Facing Two Side Open /400yd Kachhar Marg Best Price. Saudagar Properties Pvt. Ltd. 9718511207

SAUDAGAR PROPERTIES PVT. LTD. 8279676861

SUPER LUXURY builder floors for Sale Sushant Lok - 450yd 4 BHK Corner Park Facing 500yd 4BHK Lift Stilt peaceful location best price. Saudagar Properties 8279676861

DESRAJ (SDR Prop) Builder's Floor 98110-72035

DLF-1000/800/500 Yds Super Luxurious 4/5 Bedrooms /N/Facing Entire Floors Independent Stills Parking Sq. Details 9811072035

BAHLSONS PRIME PLOT A BUY/SELL COMPANY 98100-17982 | 98103-64472

DLF CITY Phase-4, Gurgaon (300) Yds Irregular, 2 side open, rectangular Plot in well developed gated colony, east facing, close to huge park, back side green area at very reasonable price

DLF - SUSHANT LOK

DLF PH-4 24mtr rd built-up 270yd & 270yd 15mtr. rd also DLF-1 built-up 200yd & DLF Garden City Sec-91.92 (A-BK) 502yd East Fac. 12mtr rd # My Real Home-9810320735

DLF-I BUILDER FLOOR H-1/27 (3rd & 4th Floor with Roof) • Stilt Parking • Latest Construction Brokers Welcome

Call: 98100-79730

SHOP FOR SALE GALLERIA 1st Floor 630 sq.ft (Corner+Sector Road facing) Brokers Welcome

Call: 98100-79730

RETAIL SHOP Sector -65 For Sale Ground Floor 1040 sqft. Main Road Facing, Low Maintenance Market. Elegance: 9810980000

LUX. FLOORS DLF-1,2,4, S.LOK 1 HIGH END SPECIFICATIONS Park/Corner/Wide Road/Top With Terrace

215 Yds UGF Near Park 215 Yds Top with Terrace 250 Yds Top with Terrace 300 Yds UGF Park Facing 300 Yds Top With Terrace 400 Yds UGF Gated Lane 400 Yds 2F Going Cheap 400 Yds Top with Terrace 500 Yds UGF Two Side Open 500 Yds Top with Terrace

2Cr to 7 Cr Many more options available

DLF-2 AVL FULL BUILDING 300 yds North East facing Stilt+ four floors Brand new construction

300 Yds @ 08 Cr
400 Yds @ 10 Cr
500 Yds @ 12 Cr

PLOTS WANTED / AVAILABLE 200 - 1000 Yds Ready buyer Spot payment best price Brokers Welcome Anurag Nagpal 9911223922

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EXCLUSIVE CORNER Plots For Sale DLF Phase 1-1100 Yds Green Belt 500yd/500 Yds duplex kothi, Best Price. Saudagar Properties Pvt. Ltd. 9718511207

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ULTRA LUXURY Floors Sushant Lok 1-300yd 4 BHK, 418yd 4 BHK Lift Stilt Parking Floors Best Price. Saudagar Properties Pvt. Ltd. 9718511207

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DLF CITY Phase-4, Gurgaon (300) Yds Irregular, 2 side open, rectangular Plot in well developed gated colony, east facing, close to huge park, back side green area at very reasonable price

SOUTH DELHI

GREATER KAILASH-1 740 sq yds Kothi Two & a half storey Built for Immediate Sale.

VASANT VIHAR 1st Floor (200 yds) 3 Bedrooms att. bath, DD, Servant Qtr, Car Parking Price @ 3.50 Cr.

ANAND NIKETAN 1st Floor (200 yds) 3 Bedrooms att. bath, Drawing/Dining, Servant Qtr, Car Parking.

SIDDQUI ESTATES: 9810265671

SOUTH DELHI

KOTLA MUBARAKPUR OPP DEFENCE COLONY 1400 sq.ft Commercial Space for Sale

PANCHSHILLA PARK 2nd Floor (500 yds) 4 Bedrooms att. bath, D/D S.Qtr, Car Parking available for Immediate Sale.

SARVODAYA ENCL Ground Floor (238 yds) Park facing, 3 Bedrooms, D/Dining, Servant Qtr, Car Parking @ 4 Cr.

SOUTH DELHI

C 44 Anand Niketan 400 yds Corner, Adjoining Park, Diagonal Parks, Original Booking Basement & Gr. Floor with Independent Lift ENTIRE 1st FLOOR ENTIRE 2nd FLOOR ENTIRE 3rd FLOOR with Terrace North East Facing

RAJAT SETH 9810877429

GREEN PARK East Facing 200 Yds Ground Floor. Value For Money. Green Park 311 Sq Yds Amazing Location & Reasonable price. Many more options available. 9810877429

SOUTH DELHI

Bricks n yards 9971110380

GREATER KAILASH-2, 1000 Yds Ready to Move in, Third floor with terrace 13.5 Ft Ceiling height, 10 Car Parking, top line const. reputed builder. For more details & visit Call: 9971110380

RAJAT SETH 9810877429

GREEN PARK East Facing 200 Yds Ground Floor. Value For Money. Green Park 311 Sq Yds Amazing Location & Reasonable price. Many more options available. 9810877429

NEELAM M.Sc. B.Ed. 9873255806

BASEMENT SALE 1/2 of 500y like GF GK-1 / Kothi & Floor 500 & 1000yd GK-2/280-200Yd Vasant vihar/Anand Lok / Neeti bagh / Def-col / NFC & areas around Neelam 9873255806

VASANT VIHAR (1250) Bungalow., 9810030231

SAUDAGAR PROPERTIES PVT. LTD. 9718511207

EXCLUSIVE CORNER Plots For Sale DLF Phase 1-1100 Yds Green Belt 500yd/500 Yds duplex kothi, Best Price. Saudagar Properties Pvt. Ltd. 9718511207

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EXCLUSIVE MANDATE Kothi for Sale DLF phase 2-200yd Two Side Open Floorwise Building /215yd Duplex Kothi. Also at Best Price. Saudagar Properties 9990556669

SOUTH DELHI

Buniyad REAL ESTATE SERVICES 7838871114

BUNGALOW FOR SALE Panchsheel Park, Area 800yds, NRI Selling, Call Only Genuine Buyers, Call 7838871114

OWNERS-3BHK GF DDA Flat facing park, newly renovated in GK3 @ 2.60 cr. Also Ludhiana - Model Gram 375y old bungalow, 8Bhk, Residential/commercial use @3.75cr # 742893509

QUTUB GREEN Apts., Dada Badi, Mehrauli for SALE, renovated, 4th floor, lift, 2 BR, 2 Bath, 1 Balcony, Atrium view, 1150 sqft, Natural light, Bank Loan. Owner 9810695080

SOUTH DELHI

G.K.-III (MASJI) Moth 250 Yds, Park Facing Newly Built Floor 4 Beds, D/D, 5.0Cr, Lift, Stilt Parking also 217 Yds, Booking 3 BHK Floors, Best Location, Wide Road, contact: 9811-91901

WEST END (500) second & third floor with terrace, 9810030231

Neelam M.Sc. B.Ed. 9873255806

NICELY BUILT-UP 5.5 acre Farm & Land 1/2.5 acre Westend Green/1 acre Vasant Kunj/1 acre DLF/Ansal /mother Teresa / Built Beta Mandi & area around Neelam 9873255806

Sandeep Soorma 98101-73551 | 92666-00627

MAHARANI BAGH 800 B+GF 4BR @ 16, 500Y SF, 4BR, Park @10, FF 4BR, Lift, stilt@ 9.50, NFC 500Y, TF+1, lift, stilt @ 9.50, SF 4BR @ 9 FF @ 4.75, B+GF 4BR @ 7.50, 9810173551, 9266600627

WEST END (500) Third floor with terrace., 9810030231

FINANCERS ALERT- Vast Kunj - 3 bhk GF 250 & 5 bhk 3rd lift @ 4.5, GK1 FF 3BR, Stilt @ 8.50, GF 3BR @ 8cr, K Col 3rd @ 7.5, Def Col GF @ 7.5, Goa Villa @ 6cr # 932502224

FLOORS @5-15 9811522900

GK / South Ext-2 B+GF 300yd stilt@ 5 & 500yd TF @ 6; Def Col @ GK 325yd stilt TF & 1r @ 5.50K, GK 550 TF & 1r stilt @ 11; GK 300y @3.5-SDA 300y GF @ 5.5, sakt 500@6 koti GK 9811522900

US CON REALTY 7011901987

COMMERCIAL SHOP GK2 M block Market Ground Floor exclusive property golden opportunity near rentee. South Ex 2 Ground Floor rented 9 lacs rent 4.5K ROI @900 sq.ft.

KALKAJI, 200 sq yards, Luxurious G.K-1/2, 3 Bedroom D/D, Servant in Stilt, Raman - 9810062871 Amt 981

SPOTLIGHT ELECTIONS 2024

Ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, HT looks at some key constituencies across India that encapsulate the issues shaping the elections In southern powerhouse, dreams of a better future

Divya Chandrababu
letters@hindustantimes.com

SRIPERUMBUDUR: For someone who grew up running through verdant fields of paddy, squeezing your life into a 10x12 sq feet cubby hole is never easy. It gets worse when there are eight other people under the same cracked concrete roof. And that's on a good day.

Yet, there is no doubt in V Keerthika's mind that she is better off. In life, and at work. Work is the drab assembly lines of Sriperumbudur. In the last three years, the 28-year-old has held three separate jobs in the industrial powerhouse of town on the outskirts of Chennai. Every evening, she returns to her crowded room that she rents for ₹1,500 a month, in the hope that her station will rise with the next job she holds.

Her tryst with the town began in the shadow of Covid. In 2021, as the pandemic ravaged the country, Keerthika sat along with 68 other women in a line for six days a week, eight hours a day, hunched over an assembly line in a Foxconn facility. Her job was to check the colour quality of the iPhone. "I was very proud to hold an iPhone every day," she said. "I felt important that I was part of a global company and the entire factory was run with just women. Even our supervisors were women."

In the factory that manufactured the world's most coveted mobile phones, trajectories such as that of Keerthika were common — young, educated women from the agrarian hinterland dazzled by the lure of working for the world's second most valuable company. For many — Keerthika estimated around 70% of the employees were women — it was the first taste of freedom from their orthodox homes, and also their first real money.

"In our village, women weren't going out for work but I convinced my parents. Because of that my family situation has improved," she said. "I loved the job. I got paid ₹14,000, the highest income in my family ever."

But behind the shimmer of her new salary, a storm was brewing. Work hours often spilled beyond the prescribed limit, bathroom breaks were frowned upon, and the food was inedible. On occasion, workers fell ill. In hostels where Keerthika lived, surveillance was common and blunt, they were forced to sleep on the floor, and the authorities clamped a limit on water usage in toilets.

Eventually, her family found her a match, she got married and returned to her village, roughly 300 km away, where her parents worked as farm hands. It was just as well. Days later, Foxconn temporarily closed its facility on December 18, 2021 after protests over a major food poisoning episode which left 159 employees hospitalised. Eventually, the factory reopened in January 2022.

"Throughout the episode, I was in touch with my friends because I was worried about their safety," said Keerthika. The relief was short-lived. Back in Tiruvuru, the college graduate found little prospects. She briefly worked in a private company as an administrator for ₹6,000, less than half of what she was making in Sriperumbudur.

By the summer of 2022, she was back. She took a job at electronics company Korea Fuel Tech India. The hours were brutal, and sometimes her health gave way, but getting paid a commensurate salary was like a drug. "There are so many companies here and we can easily find a job. We don't need much experience. The skills are easy to pick up. It gives me confidence."

She now works in the security team of a private company. With her new salary of ₹18,000, she feels financially stable. She also takes up extra shifts which earn another ₹5,000 a month, allowing her to send money back home.

"I have taken care of my ageing parents. And I helped my two younger sisters and a younger brother study," Keerthika said, adding proudly that her salary helped all her siblings go to private colleges. "And it was all due to Sriperumbudur."

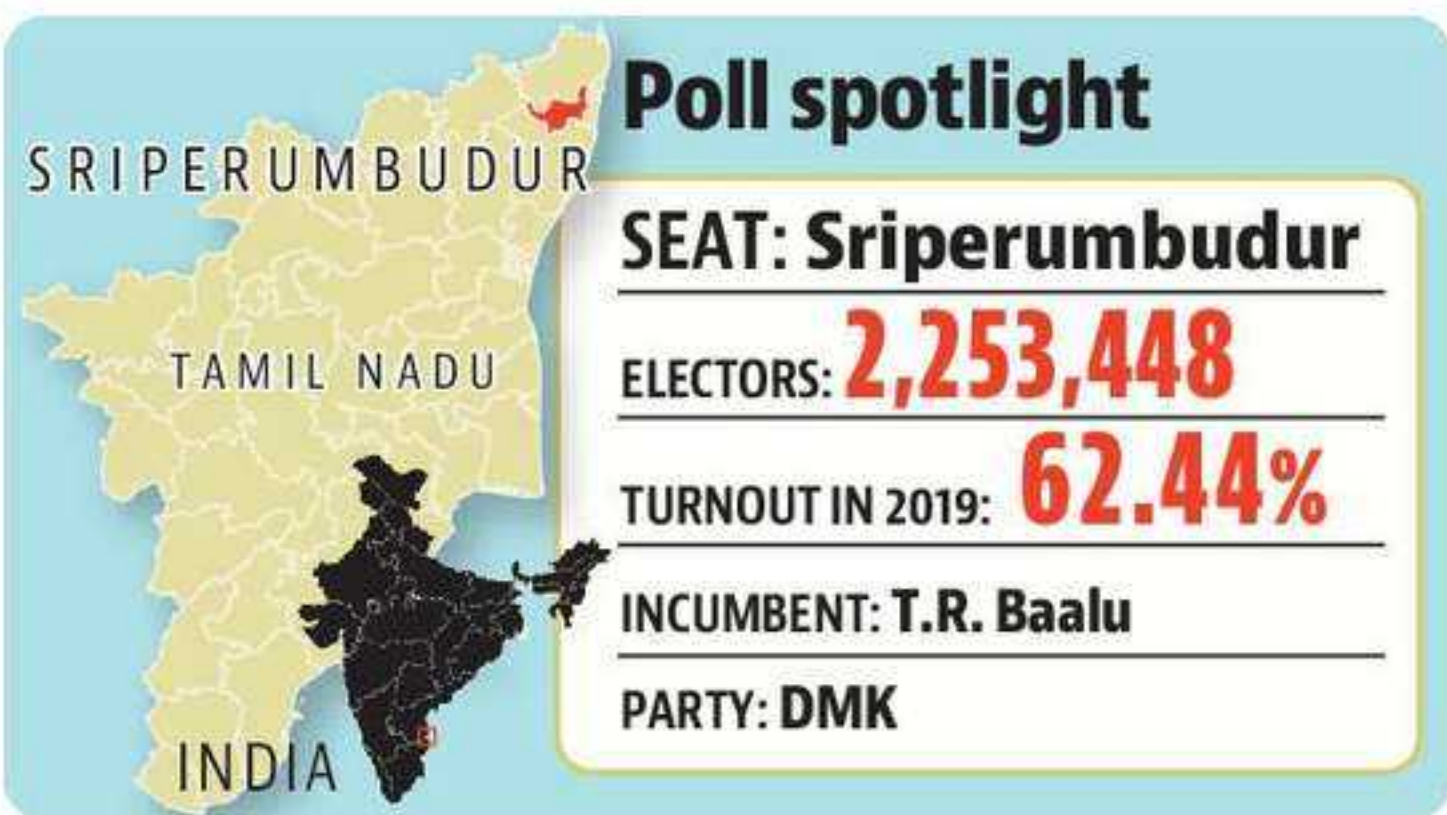
Industrial corridor

An hour's drive out of Chennai, the town of roughly 200,000 people first jumped into the news in 1991, when former PM Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated near the town. Today, the hub boasts of at least 500 companies that manufacture automobiles and electronics such as Hyundai, Salcomp, TVS, and Pegatron. Between neat, tree-lined avenues are rows upon rows of mechanised facilities, assembly lines and factories, bright green boards outside them announcing government-mandated details. In many ways, it represents the strides made by the state with the second-largest economy and is often touted as proof of the success of the Dravidian model of development.

The fuel running this powerhouse is its female workforce. "In Foxconn alone, there are 25,000 women working. There is no data on the total number but we estimate it to be around 65,000 in Sriperumbudur," said a labour department official who did not wish to be named. Experts say that this vast pool of educated women is a key reason behind Tamil Nadu galloping ahead in industrialisation. In 2022-23, Tamil Nadu rose to the top spot as the exporter of electronic goods, nearly tripling in a year at \$5.37 billion from \$1.86 billion in the previous year, according to data by the National Import-Export for Yearly Analysis of Trade (NIRYAT). 40% of smartphones from India were exported from Kancheepuram district (of which Sriperumbudur is a part), according to NIRYAT. 43% of all women factory workers in India came from Tamil Nadu, Sriperumbudur, and especially its women, are now at the heart of India's manufacturing push in critical sectors such as mobile phones, trying to cash in on a world economy trying to diversify away from China due to geopolitical worries.



Foxconn temporarily closed its facility in Sriperumbudur on December 18, 2021 after protests over a major food poisoning episode. Eventually, the factory reopened in January 2022.



Challenges at work

K Kanagavalli doesn't know about China. When the 37-year-old came to work in Sriperumbudur in 2008, there were no iPhones either. A generation before Keerthika, Kanagavalli was among the first group of women workers who came to work in this hub, in the first wave. Back in the mid 2000s, Nokia, then the world's largest mobile phone company, set up a factory, its largest, in Sriperumbudur. A clutch of its suppliers followed. But the company would go on to be laid low by the touchscreen revolution that it ignored, and the factory by regulatory trouble.

For the last nine years, Kanagavalli has worked at an aluminium filtration company. "I'm exposed to dust. This has given me a skin allergy. Initially, my face was filled with pimples and rashes; now that I've been doing it for nine years, my body has become used to it,"

Kanagavalli said. "Some of my colleagues wheeze often. We all go to the dermatologist at least once a month."

Yet, she cannot get out of the industrial hub, because outside the only jobs available are that of a coolie or as a beneficiary of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS). "I work in an air-conditioned office. Compared to what's outside, I'm living a good life so the skin allergies seem like a small price to pay," she said.

She now earns ₹25,000 monthly, only ₹10,000 less than her husband. The double income has ensured that her older daughter can study microbiology at a private college while her younger daughter is enrolled in a private school. It has given her more leeway at home, and the ability to run the show. Across Sriperumbudur, this is the new normal. D Vanmathi moved here in

2021 with her family after her husband — the only male member in the family — was killed in a road accident.

Now, her mother is a caretaker at the creche where staff leave their children, her older sister a supervisor and she is a security guard. When she first came to Sriperumbudur, she worked as a labourer at a company which manufactures products for medium and heavy commercial vehicles. "I had to stand for eight hours and deal with heavy machinery. And we had a target to complete every hour," said Vanmathi. "I often cried thinking why I was born as a woman."

The work gave her stomach and back pain. And yet, she woke up at 3.30am to cook for her eight and six-year-olds before reporting to duty by 6am. The 29-year-old is more content now, having joined as a security guard in another private company for ₹16,500 a month. "I am happy now. The financial independence lets me steer my life," Vanmathi said.

The women here now often come together — pooling money in medical emergencies, helping each other during family weddings or bereavements, or just finding an outlet for fun. "The men working one floor below us always joke that our floor always has money," she said.

Dravidian politics

In any such industrial corridor in the heartland — think of Ghaziabad, Gurugram or Kanpur — the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) would hold the edge. But in Sriperumbudur, listed among the biggest Lok Sabha constituencies in the state, it is the two Dravidian giants that have held a stranglehold on the seat.

The constituency comprises six assembly segments across three districts — Madhavayal, Ambattur and Alandur in Chennai, Pallavaram and Tambaram in Chengalpattu district and Sriperumbudur in Kancheepuram district. Five of these are held by the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) and a sixth by its ally Congress. In 2019, DMK leader TR Baalu won by a massive 500,000, flipping the seat from the All India Anna Dravida

Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) which had won it in 2014, courtesy a massive wave of women's support in favour of late chief minister Jayalalitha, for whom it would be her last general election. A smattering of other political parties — such as the AMMK, PMK or NTK — have never found much favour especially among the women, who form the majority of the local electorate.

"We have only chosen between the DMK and AIADMK except once when the Congress won," says Kanagavalli. "This time too it will be one of the Dravidian parties who will win."

This time, in the rest of the state, there is (at least on paper) a triangular contest between the DMK-led coalition, AIADMK, and the BJP-led alliance, which includes TTV Dhinakaran's Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam (a breakaway faction of the AIADMK), the Pattali Makkal Katchi, the Tamil Maanila Congress, Indiya Jananayaka Katchi and Puthiya Needhi Katchi.

In Sriperumbudur though, the DMK's rising sun symbol blankets the campaign, clearly ahead of the two-leaves symbol of the AIADMK. BJP ally TMC(M) is the third force fighting here.

Many issues in this election are national — DMK's Baalu has campaigned on Tamil pride, the importance of showcasing the Dravidian model of development, upholding federalism and scrapping the National Education Policy, 2020 and the Citizenship Amendment Act.

"Sriperumbudur is all about inclusive growth which is our Dravidian model of governance," said deputy secretary of DMK's I-T wing, Salem Dhananidharan. "65% of women work in factories in Tamil Nadu of which the majority are in Sriperumbudur. Our government is building a women's hostel for companies such as Foxconn to source employees and for these women employees to have a good standard of living. The DMK is comfortable in all constituencies and the fight is between the AIADMK and the BJP for the second and third position."

AIADMK has similarly

focused on civic issues in Sriperumbudur, promoting infrastructure projects to ease traffic congestion.

The AIADMK has traditionally enjoyed the vote bank of women who outnumber male electorates in Tamil Nadu. While campaigning for the AIADMK candidate in Sriperumbudur, party general secretary Edappadi Palaniswami (EPS) said that MSMEs were affected here as the government hiked the electricity tariff. "Under the present government, educated youngsters don't have jobs and those who have businesses are also unable to sustain them. If this needs to change, the AIADMK needs to come back to power," EPS said recently. "The DMK has not fulfilled even 10% of its election promises."

But the women factory workers have ensured that a smattering of local issues close to them get space too. "During the monsoon, we have to face the floods and during the summer, we don't have access to enough drinking water," said Kanagavalli. "The lake near my home is contaminated by a painting company."

Keerthika wants safety for women in public spaces and transport. "And, there are so many women who cannot afford a room's rent. So, the government has to build hostels for us," she added.

"I will vote for a party that will give us better public toilets and transport facilities," said first time voter S Saranya.

With campaigning winding down and elections over on Friday, some women are looking forward to a rare day out this weekend. "Our group has 50 women and we recently bought matching blue sarees to visit Queensland Amusement Park a day after the polls," said Kanagavalli.

Keerthika, though, is certain she cannot take her mind off work. "I only have a Vivo phone," she said. "Someday, I want to buy an iPhone of my own."

This is the tenth in a series of election reports from the field that look at national and local issues through an electoral lens.

RIS
Research and Information System for Developing Countries
Call for Applications for ADVISER (DIGITAL SOLUTIONS)
Applications are invited from interested candidates for the position of Adviser (Digital Solutions) of DAKSHIN (The Global South Centre of Excellence) at the Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), New Delhi.
Initially, the engagement of selected candidates would be for a period of one year, which may be extended further depending on assessment of overall performance.
Remuneration: Equivalent to the post of Associate Professor. Detailed advertisement, including qualifications and experience, for the post may be viewed from RIS website at www.ris.org.in.
Interested candidates may send their CVs and other supporting documents, including academic qualifications and experience certificates to RIS by email: recruitment@ris.org.in latest by 30 April 2024. Those applied earlier, need not apply.

WEST BENGAL STATE ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION COMPANY LIMITED
(A Govt. of West Bengal Enterprise)
Regd. Office: Vidya Bhawan, Block-D, Sector-II, Bidhanagar, Kolkata-700091
2nd Extension of Time
Ref. Original NIT No.: WBSEDC/Communication/Tender/2023-24/SCADA/WB/1583, Dated: 08.02.2024 of the Chief Engineer (Communication Cell). Submission Date is hereby extended upto 17.05.2024 (12:00 hrs).
For details, visit <https://wbstenders.gov.in> & www.wbseid.in

NORTHERN RAILWAY
OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE
Invitation of tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement System)
The Sr. Divisional Engineer-IV, Northern Railway, Delhi Division for and on behalf of President of India invites E-Tender on prescribed form for the following work:
1. TTR (TWS+WCMS) Complete renewal of points & crossing of on PSC sleepers in the section of SR. DEN-IV on DL-BTI section. (NIT 01-W-IV-24-25)
2. Construction of LHS with roof covering for pedestrian at km. 316-4 near Devi Lal Chok at Jind on JHI-PNP section under ADEN/JHI. (NIT 03-W-IV-24-25)
3. Approx. cost of work: (1) Rs. 3,48,64,286.60 (2) Rs. 3,56,74,857.06
4. Earnest money: (1) Rs. 3,24,300.00 (2) Rs. 3,28,400.00
5. Date and Time of submission of tender and opening of tender: Bidding Start date for work no. Up to 15:00 hrs. on 26.04.2024 opening of Tender at 15:00 hrs. on 10.05.2024
Website particulars, published e-tender, notice location etc. complete details of tender can be seen and web site where the tender can be downloaded
Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in
No. 128-W/260/Tender Notice/01/803-W/IV/24-25 Date: 16.04.2024 1172/2024
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Bureau of Investment Promotion
Udyog Bhawan, Tilak Marg, Jaipur
BIP/CGM (F&A)/ Notice Inviting Bid Date :- 18/04/2024
Bids for Procurement of services from reputed, interested, eligible and experienced Professional consultancy firms for Bureau of Investment Promotion, Jaipur (an Government of Rajasthan undertaking) are invited from interested bidders up to 2:00 PM on 13.05.2024. Other Particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portals : (<http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in>) and (<http://sppp.raj.nic.in>) of the state.
UBN No. : BIP24255LOB00001
Raj.Samwad/C/24/40 Commissioner (Inv. & NRIs)

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY
E-Tender Notice
T. Notice No. 230-Elect/TRD/PRY/JE-Tender Notice/2024/523 Date 16.04.2024
Sr. Divl. Electrical Engineer/TRD/N. C. Rly/Prayagraj, for and on behalf of the President of India, invite the following E-Tender, the details of the tenders are as under:
T.No. Advertised value Bid Security
230-TRD-WC-913-2024 ₹ 1,25,10,215.65 ₹ 2,12,600/-
Description of work: 25 kV OHE modification work due to construction of 4 Lane ROB near Subedaraganj Railway Station and construction of FOB at Jhijhah & Kurastikalan Railway Station over IR & DFCCIL Lines of Prayagraj Division (Third Call).
Completion Period: 12 Months, Bidding System: Single Packet, Tender Closing date & Time: 09.05.2024 & 14.00 Hrs., Tender Opening date & Time: 09.05.2024 & 15.00 Hrs.
Note: 1. The complete information along with tender document of above E-Tenders shall be available on Website www.ireps.gov.in 21 days prior to the date of opening of the tender. 2. Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with Digital Signature Certificate. 3. In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. 698/24 FA
North central railways @CPRONCR @northcentralrailway www.norcentralrailways.gov.in

UJVN LIMITED
H.O.: "UJJWAL", Maharani Bagh, G.M.S. Road, Dehradun-248006
Telephones: 0135-2763808, Fax: 0135-2763508
CIN No. U40101UR20015SGC025866, Website: www.ujvn.com
Letter No: 427 Date Extension Notice-02 Date: 18/04/2024
Due to unavoidable reasons, the Date of Submission & opening of the e-NIT No. 32/EE/PCM-DKP/TN/2023-24 invited by the office of the Executive Engineer Project Civil Maintenance-Dakpathar is being extended as below:
Last Date & Time for submission of bids on e-portal Upto 15:00 hrs of 27.04.2024
Last Date & Time for Submission of hard Copies Upto 17:00 hrs of 27.04.2024
Date & Time of Opening of bids on e-portal at 11:30 hrs of 29.04.2024
Other Terms & Condition will remain same.
Information regarding Addendum/Corrigendum/Cancellation etc. of tender may be obtained from the website.
Full & Further Details of tender can be seen from the e-procurement portal "<https://uktenders.gov.in>".
Executive Engineer
Project Civil Maintenance-Dakpathar
"AVOID WASTEFUL USE OF ELECTRICITY"

CHITTARANJAN LOCOMOTIVE WORKS
ENGAGEMENT OF HONORARY VISITING SPECIALISTS IN RAILWAY HOSPITAL, CLW/CRJ
Notification No. GMA/GS/Engagement of HVS (Medical) Date-10.04.2024. Principal Chief Personnel Officer, CLW/CRJ for and on behalf of the President of India invites applications for engagement of the following for providing specialist healthcare services at Railway Hospital, Chittaranjan Locomotive Works, Chittaranjan: [I]. 03 (Three) nos. of Honorary Visiting Super-Specialists (HVS), each one Specialities of: 1. Nephrologists, 2. Neurologist, 3. Cardiologist. [II]. 05 (Five) nos. Honorary Visiting Specialists, each one specialities of: 1. Physician, 2. Surgeon, 3. Anesthesiologist, 4. Psychiatrist, 5. Orthopedics.
Detailed terms and conditions are as per Railway Board's letter No. 2014/H-1/12/HVS/Policy dated 19.06.2018. The detail document and Application form are also available on CLW's website: <https://clw.indianrailways.gov.in> [Under the link: News & Recruitment → Recruitment → Notification for engagement of Honorary Visiting Consultant → Download].
The application forms duly filled in with supporting documents should be sent via registered post to: E-II (Gaz. Sec.), PCPO's Office, CLW, PO- Chittaranjan, Pin-713331 or send through email to: dycpoang@clw.railnet.gov.in with CC to shuvamkumar.mondal3@gov.in & cmoclw@gmail.com.
Last date of receipt of application on or before 13.00 hrs of 30.04.2024.
(S. K. Maity)
Dy. Chief Personnel Officer (G&A) for General Manager (P).
PR2/386
"Like us on: www.facebook.com/clwrailways"

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY
Corrigendum No-1
First corrigendum to tender notice no. JHS-ENGG-HQ-2024-68
It is notified that the following corrections are made in the tender invited by Divisional Railway Manager (Works) North Central Railway, Jhansi vide Tender Notice no. JHS-ENGG-HQ-2024-68 dt. 16.04.2024, which is due to be opened on 09.05.2024, the following correction is being made:-
Existing Tender Description of work.
Jhansi Division: Providing and erecting "W" metal cattle barrier along the track to prevent CRO in Jhansi-Parana section under ADEN/HQ-I/JHS in connection with "Jhansi Division: Providing and erecting "W" metal cattle barrier along the track to prevent CRO in Jhansi-Kanpur section."
Modified Tender Description of work.
Jhansi Division: Providing and erecting "W" metal cattle barrier along the track to prevent CRO in Jhansi-Parana section under ADEN/HQ-I/JHS. Other terms and conditions of the original tender notification shall remain unchanged. 700/24 (AN)
www.norcentralrailways.gov.in @CPRONCR

Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs
(Ministry of Corporate Affairs)
Plot No. P-6, 7, 8, Sec-5, IMT Manesar, Distt. Gurgaon, Haryana
Invites applications from eligible and interested candidates for filling up the following posts on Direct Recruitment/Deputation/Contract basis:
1. Chief Finance Officer- Level-13 in Pay Matrix
2. Associate Professor- School of Competition Law & Market Regulations (reserved for SC) - Level-13 A (Academic)
For more details please visit our website <https://iica.nic.in/Opportunities.aspx>

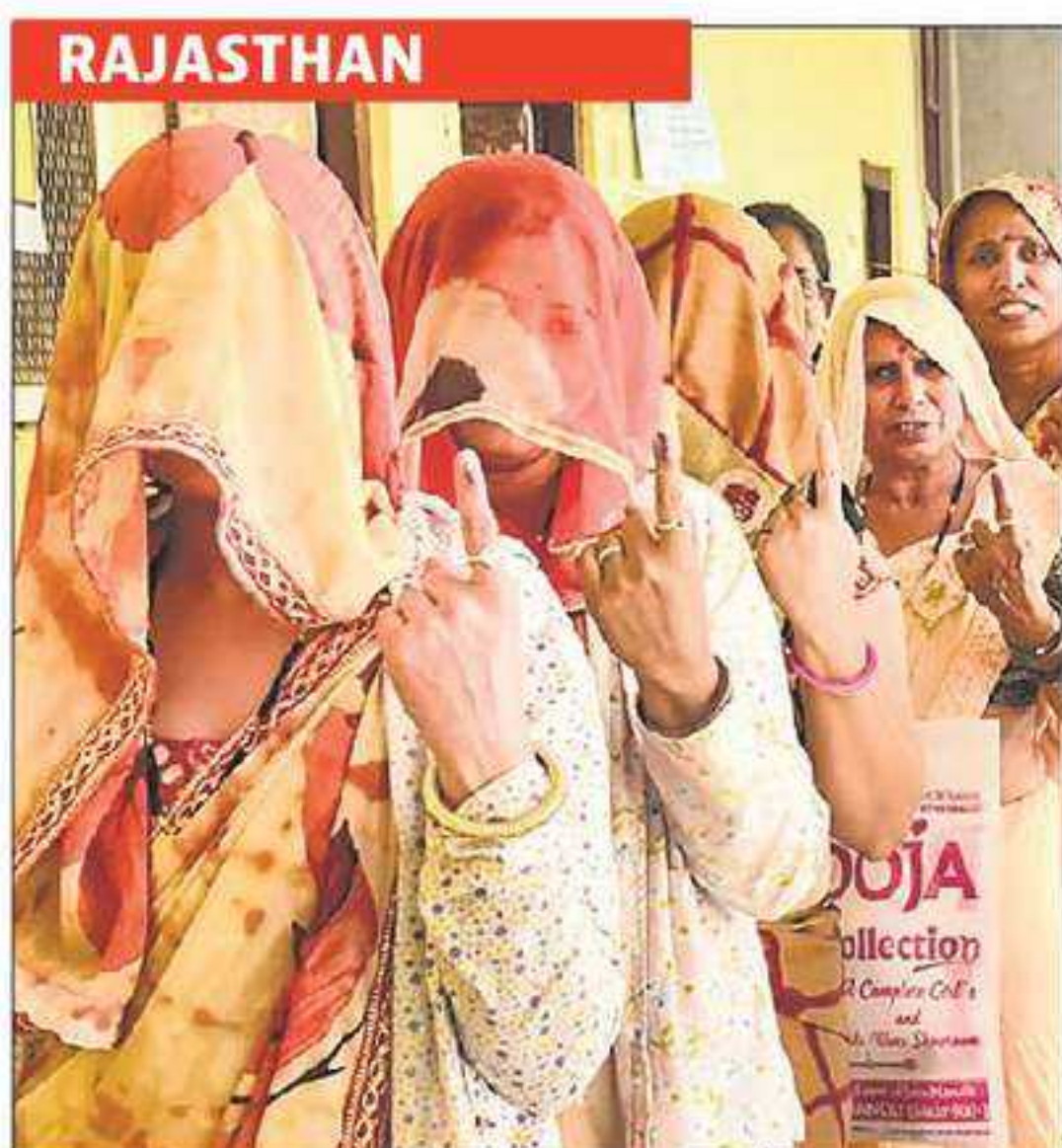
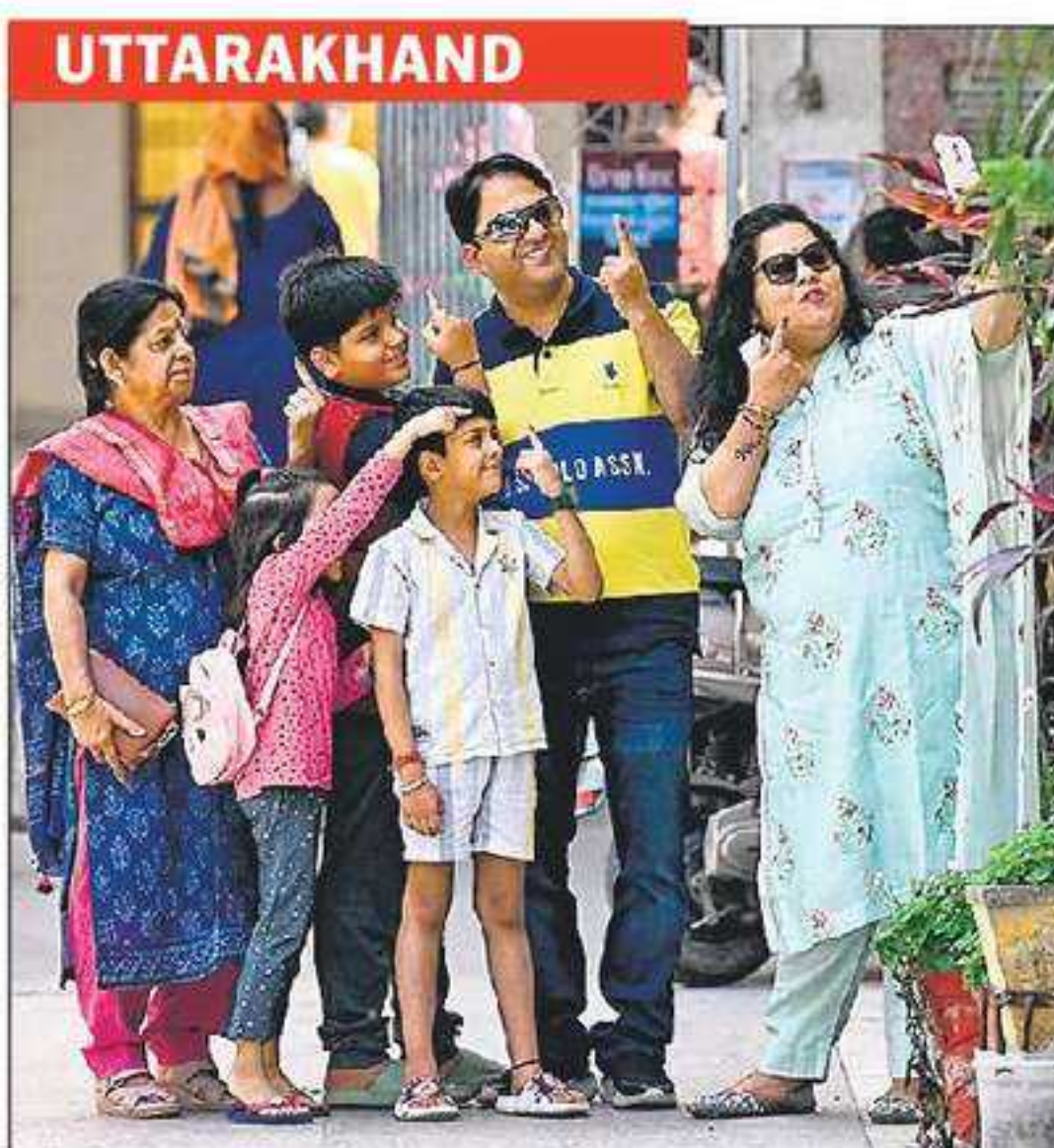
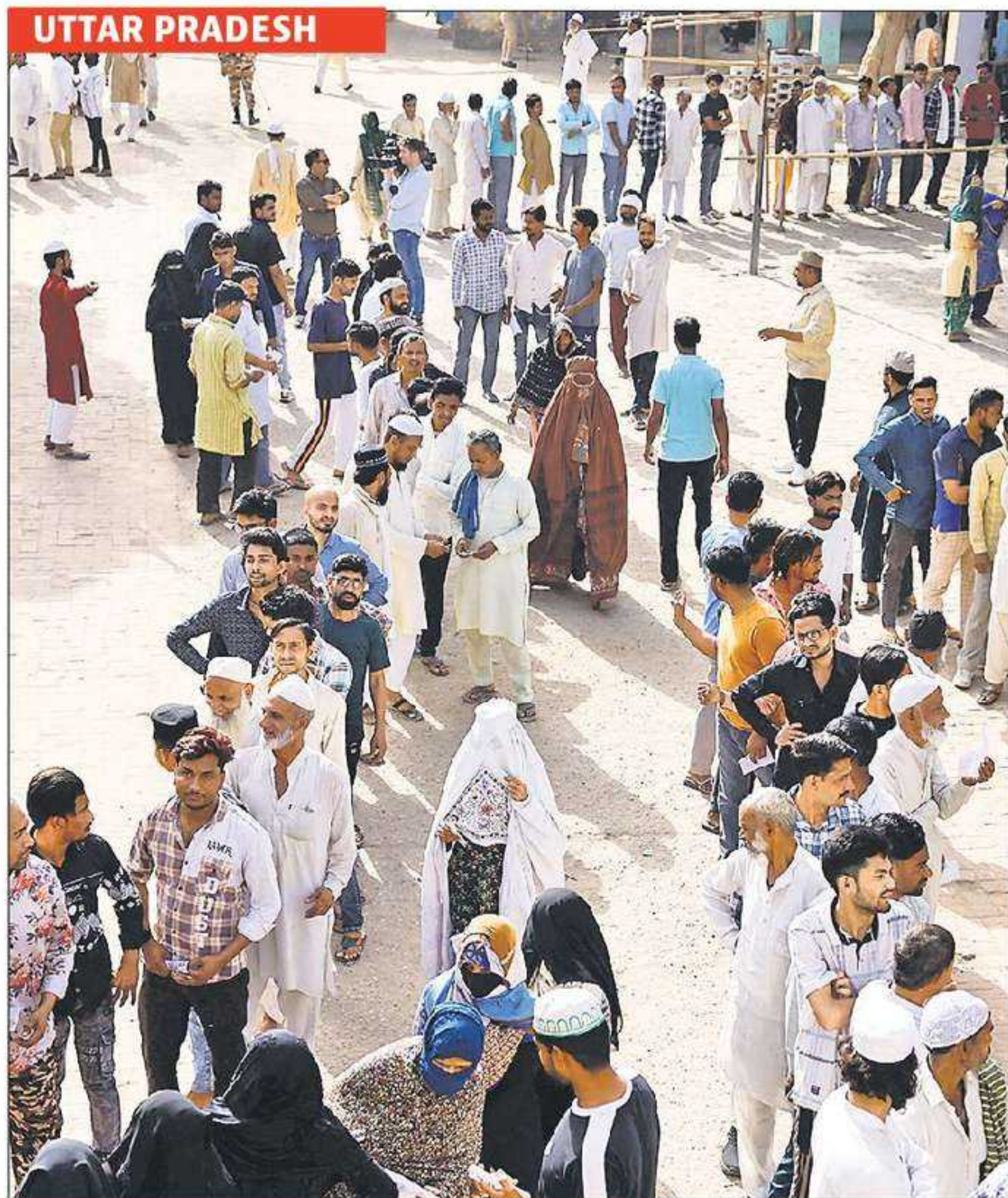
पावर ट्रांसमिशन कारपोरेशन ऑफ इंडिया लिमिटेड
(विद्युत संचालन निगम लिमिटेड)
अधीनस्थ अभियंता (जानपद) परिपंचन/पिटकुल/वित्त/संचालन, नवदीह-आंदोलन/पिटकुल, कोसिंग, सारनपुर रोड, मारवा, देहरादून-248002, दूरभाष सं. 7088117360
निविदा विस्तारित सूचना 1-55/SE(C)O&M/E-Tender/PTCUL/Dun/2023-24 की खारनलोडिंग, प्राप्ति एवं खुलने की तिथि क्रमशः दिनांक 30.04.2024 तक विस्तारित की जाती है। निविदाएं दिनांक 30.04.2024 समय 1:00 बजे तक अधीक्षण अभियंता (जानपद) परिपंचन/पिटकुल, वित्त/संचालन, मारवा, देहरादून के कार्यालय में प्राप्त की जाएगी। तथा निविदा के तकनीकी भाग को उसी दिन दिनांक 30.04.2024 समय 4:00 बजे जानपदीय कार्यों हेतु पंजीकृत इच्छुक फर्मों के समक्ष खोला जायेगा। निविदा सम्बन्धित अन्य विस्तृत विवरण ई-निविदा वेबसाइट www.uctenders.gov.in/PTCUL एवं ई-निविदा सूचना पिटकुल की वेबसाइट www.ptcul.org से खारनलोड किये जा सकते हैं। ई-निविदा से सम्बन्धित जानकारी हेतु अथवा किसी भी सहायता के लिए PH.No. 91-8899890000, +0120-4200462, 0120-4001002, 0120-4001005, 0120-6277787 से सम्पर्क स्थापित करें।
पत्रांक: 141/अधीनस्थ(जानपद)परिपंचन/पिटकुल/देहरादून/टी-1 दिनांक: 18.04.2024
अधीनस्थ अभियंता (जानपद) परिपंचन/पिटकुल
"सम्पन्न हित में बिजली बचाव"

JAMMU AND KASHMIR POLICE DISTRICT POLICE HEADQUARTERS JAMMU
0191-2561578 (O), 0191-254780 (F)
email:- sspjammu@jkpolice.gov.in
LOOK OUT NOTICE
SHO P/S R.S. Pura intimated that accused named Natha Singh S/O Dhyana Singh R/O Korotana Khurd Tehsil Suchetgarh, District Jammu had gone missing, since 29.12.2022. Accordingly, his missing report was entered at P/S R.S. Pura, Jammu vide DDR No. 21 dated 29.12.2024. Despite thorough search his whereabouts are still unknown.
As such photograph of above named missing is being published for the information of Police establishments/public in general and if anybody having any clue related to his whereabouts/present location, kindly communicate the same on the below mentioned contact/Telephone numbers.
Description Roll:-
Name : Natha Singh
S/O : Dhyana Singh
Address : Korotana Khurd Tehsil Suchetgarh, District Jammu
Height : 5'2"
Age : 55 years
Complexion : Wheatish
Build : Normal
Face : Oval
Eyes : Black
Dress : Pent, Shirt
Contacts/Telephone Numbers:-
1. DPO, Jammu : 0191-2547807, 0191-2561578
2. SSP Jammu Mail I.D. : sspjammu@jkpolice.gov.in
3. PCR Jammu : 0191-2542000
4. SP Hqrs, Jammu : 0191-2439919
5. SDPO R.S. Pura : 01923-250240
6. SHO P/S R.S. Pura : 01923-250221
DIP-J-173-24 For Sr. Superintendent of Police, Jammu

NORTHERN RAILWAY
Tender Notice
Re-Invitation of Tenders through E-Tendering (E-Procurement System)
S N Tender Notice No. & Date Name of work with its location Approx Cost of work Amount of Earnest Money Completion period of the work Date & time for submission of tender & opening of tender
1 32-W-BR-222A-36-DL Dt. 19.04.2024 Replacement of top flange plate of girder, cross frame at Br. No. 222A (2x12.2m) on MB-G2B section & Strengthening of rail & cross girder, providing screen over web of cross girder on Br.No. 36 UP (3x30.5M) & 36 DN (4x30.5M) on G2B-SRE section under jurisdiction of AXEN/BL/TKJ. 1,37,30,825.73 2,16,700/- (06) Six Months Upto 15.00 hrs on 13.05.2024 Opening of tender after 15.00 hrs on same day
Note: Above tenders are available on website, IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in, where complete details of Tender can be seen & downloaded. 1176/2024
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SPOTLIGHT ELECTIONS 2024

Voting across 17 states and 4 Union territories



Voters outside polling stations in various areas across six states, as people across 21 states and Union territories exercised their franchise for 102 constituencies in the first phase of the Lok Sabha polls on Friday.

First phase concludes, six more to go

{ CHHATTISGARH }

Jawan injured in blast; 1 dead in accidental firing

HT Correspondent
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RAIPUR: An assistant commandant of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) deployed on poll duty was injured after an improvised explosive device (IED) planted by Maoists went off, and a constable died when a shell of Under Barrel Grenade Launcher (UBGL) accidentally exploded, in Bastar region of Chhattisgarh on Friday, officials said.



Voters outside a polling booth in Dugeli village of Dantewada.

The two incidents took place when the security personnel were out on an area domination operation in Bijapur district, which comes under Bastar Lok Sabha constituency, amid voting during the first phase of the elections.

"Constable Devendra Kumar, belonging to CRPF's 196th battalion, suffered grievous injuries in the blast and was airlifted to Jagdalpur for treatment. He succumbed to injuries during treatment," the officer said.

"Manu HC, an assistant commandant of CRPF's 62nd battalion, came in contact with the IED planted by Maoists in Bhairamgarh police station area of Bijapur district. He sustained injuries on his left leg and hand, and is undergoing treatment," a senior police officer aware of the details said.

A team of experts was sent to Galgam for investigation into the explosion, the officer added.

Separately, CRPF constable Devendra Kumar was killed when a shell of an UBGL accidentally exploded near a polling booth in Galgam village under Usoor police station limits.

Meanwhile, a voter turnout of over 67.56% was recorded in the constituency that is reserved for Scheduled Tribes, according to data provided by the Election Commission on its Voter Turnout app at 11pm.

{ WEST BENGAL }

Sporadic violence hits 1st of 7 phases

HT Correspondent
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KOLKATA: Sporadic incidents of violence marred the first phase of Lok Sabha elections in West Bengal's three seats, with reports of clashes emerging from Cooch Behar between workers of the Trinamool Congress (TMC) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), even as a 78.82% voter turnout was recorded till 11pm, officials familiar with the matter said.



A senior citizen being assisted outside a polling booth in Alipurduar on Friday.

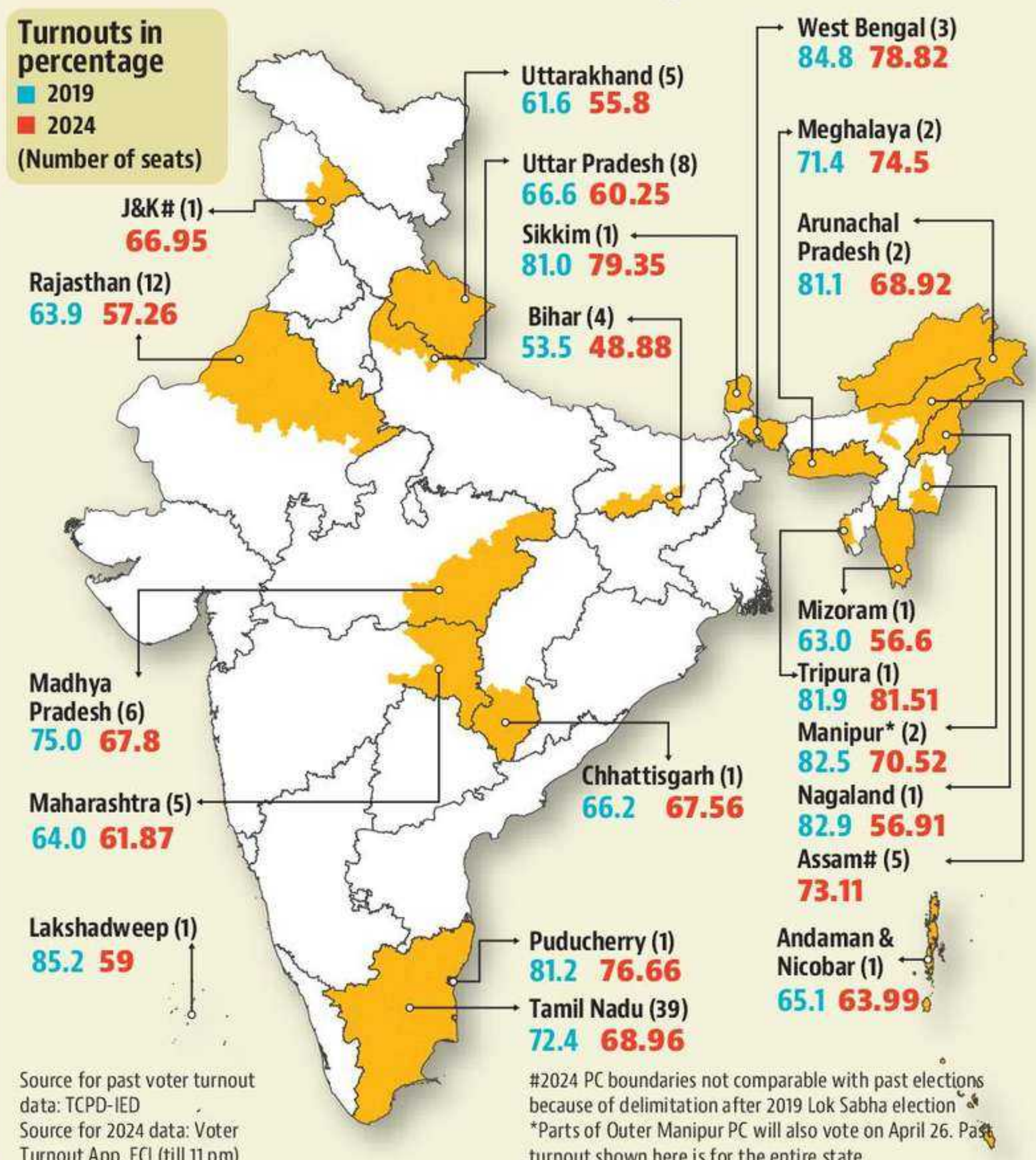
Besides Cooch Behar, two other north Bengal seats — Alipurduar and Jalpaiguri — also voted in the first phase. In 2019 polls, the BJP had won the three seats. While Cooch Behar logged a voter turnout of 77.7%, Alipurduar and Jalpaiguri recorded polling percentage of 75.5% and 79.3%, respectively, till 5pm. The overall turnout stood at 78.82%, according to the Election Commission's Voter Turnout app.

"The contest in the eastern state is largely between these two parties — some people were injured. At Chandmari village near Cooch Behar town, workers of both parties clashed over placing an agent in a polling booth. One person was injured, officials said. Reports of violence also poured in from Bhetaguri in Dinhat block, where the TMC alleged that crude bombs were hurled and its block chief Anant Barman was injured and admitted to the hospital. The husband of a BJP panchayat member was arrested in the incident.

The state will vote across all seven phases of the Lok Sabha polls. "The voter turnout in the three constituencies till 5pm was 77.57%. Barring a few sporadic incidents voting went off peacefully," a senior EC official said. "ECI received 556 complaints from the three districts, of which 269 came from Cooch Behar." Though no casualties were reported in the clashes between the workers of the TMC and BJP

State minister Udayan Guha, who visited the village, faced a protest from women. "It was staged. BJP sent them," Guha said. Union minister and BJP leader Nisith Pramanik hit back, saying Guha received what he deserved. "He is reaping what he has sown all these years. One shouldn't insult the common people..." he said.

How turnouts have changed since 2019



Source for past voter turnout data: TCPD-IED. Source for 2024 data: Voter Turnout App, ECI (till 11 pm). #2024 PC boundaries not comparable with past elections because of delimitation after 2019 Lok Sabha election. *Parts of Outer Manipur PC will also vote on April 26. #Part turnout shown here is for the entire state.

{ MANIPUR }

Firing, threat to voters mar polls

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GUWAHATI: Incidents of shooting, intimidation, damages to electronic voting machines (EVMs) and alleged irregularities in the polling process marred voting for the first phase of the Lok Sabha elections in violence-hit Manipur on Friday, officials said.



A view of a polling station that was damaged by a crowd in Khurai in Imphal East.

Polling was held in Inner Manipur parliamentary seat and some areas of Outer Manipur (Scheduled Tribe) seat, which saw an overall turnout of 70.52%, according to data provided by Election Commission. The remaining areas of the second seat will vote during the second phase, on April 26.

According to a polling official, one person was injured after unidentified men allegedly fired several rounds in the air near a polling booth in Khurai assembly seat in Imphal East in Inner Manipur Lok Sabha constituency.

"There were also reports of violence, including between two groups in Bishnupur in Inner Manipur seat. We received complaints about intimidation and

damages to EVMs at a few polling stations. Unknown men also fired several rounds in the air," chief electoral officer Pradeep Kumar Jha said. A second polling official said firing was reported near a polling booth at Thamanpokpi in Bishnupur. While reports suggested three people were injured, police and election officials are yet to confirm the same.

{ NAGALAND }

Zero turnout in 6 distts over statehood protest

Alice Yhoshü
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KOHHIMA: In a rare occurrence, six districts of Nagaland reported zero turnout during voting for the state's lone Lok Sabha seat amid an election boycott called by the Eastern Nagaland Peoples' Organization (ENPO) over the Centre's delay in the creation of a separate frontier state.

ENPO, which represents the Chang, Khiamniungan, Konyak, Phom, Sangtam, Tikhir, and Yimkhiong communities, has been demanding a separate Frontier Nagaland state since 2010 over alleged issues of discrimination, particularly on development. The demand gained momentum in 2022 and the organisation had threatened to boycott electoral processes should the Centre fail to address its demand.

According to people aware of the details, voters in Mon, Tuensang, Kiphire, Longleng, Noklak and Shamair did not turn up at the 738 polling stations set up in these areas to cast their ballot. Twenty MLAs and incumbent Rajya Sabha member Phangnon Konyak, who is also from the eastern district of Mon, were not allowed to cast their votes.

"While no violence was reported, it is learnt that tribal volunteers kept vigil outside the residences of the legislators to deter them from going out to cast their vote," one of the persons cited above said, seeking anonymity. ENPO president R Tsapikiu Sangtam said the boycott was a "voluntary initiative" by the people. "There is no question of coercion..." Chief minister Neiphiu Rio said the actions of civil society organisations are of their "own mind" but the government is determined to ensure peaceful polling.

{ J&K }

66% turnout till 5PM in UDHAMPUR amid heavy rains

SRINAGAR: An estimated voter turnout of 66% was registered till 11pm in Jammu & Kashmir's Udhampur parliamentary constituency and was scheduled to end at 6pm, the officials said, adding there are 12 candidates in the fray. EC's Voter Turnout app showed a turnout of 66.95% at 11pm.

This is the first major electoral battle in Jammu & Kashmir after the abrogation of Article 370 and the division of the erstwhile state into two Union territories in 2019. Braving inclement weather in most parts of the constituency due to heavy rains and strong winds, early voters were seen heading for polling stations before the start of voting, the official said.

{ RAJASTHAN }

Over 70% voting in five Assam seats; 35 candidates in fray

GUWAHATI: The five parliamentary constituencies in Lok Sabha, which went to the polls on Friday, registered a turnout of 73.11% till 11pm during the first phase of the general elections, officials said. Polling was held Dibrugarh, Jorhat, Kaziranga, Sonitpur and Lakhimpur. Thirty-five candidates are in the fray, including Union minister Sarbananda Sonowal (Dibrugarh) and Congress deputy leader in Lok Sabha, Gaurav Gogoi (Jorhat). In the 2019 elections, the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party in the state had won four of the above five seats and the Congress one.

{ UTTAR PRADESH }

All five constituencies register turnout of 55.8% in Uttarakhnad

DEHRADUN: A voter turnout of 55.8% was recorded in the five parliamentary constituencies of Uttarakhnad where polling was held in a single phase on Friday, according to the Election Commission. The final figures would be released later as data from some polling stations takes time to reach and it does not include the data of voting by postal ballots, polling officials said. The voter turnout in the 2019 general elections was 61.6%. As many as 55 candidates are in the fray. Voting began at 7am and ended at 5pm. Polling was peacefully conducted, the officials said.

{ TAMIL NADU }

12 CONSTITUENCIES IN RAJ REGISTERS TURNOUT OF 57%

JAIPUR: The 12 parliamentary constituencies of Rajasthan recorded a voter turnout of 57.26%, according to data provided by the Election Commission on its Voter Turnout app at 11pm. As many as 114 candidates are in the fray in the first phase of polling that began at 7am and ended at 6pm in the state. There are 25 Lok Sabha seats in Rajasthan and the remaining 13 will go to polls in the second phase on April 26. Rajasthan governor Kalraj Mishra, chief minister Bhajanlal Sharma and former deputy chief minister Sachin Pilot cast their votes in the initial hours of polling.

{ TAMIL NADU }

68.96% turnout in one-phase polls

CHENNAI: Tamil Nadu recorded a voter turnout of nearly 69% in the Lok Sabha elections held in a single phase on Friday, sealing the fate of 950 candidates across 39 constituencies in the southern state, where the contest is largely three-cornered among the alliances led by the DMK, AIADMK and BJP. According to data provided by the Election Commission on its Voter Turnout app at 11pm, the state recorded an overall turnout of 68.96%. Earlier in the day, polling officials aware of the details said Kalkurichi in northern Tamil Nadu saw the highest turnout of 75.67%



Tamil Nadu chief minister MK Stalin at a polling booth in Chennai on Friday.

KOHIMA: In a rare occurrence, six districts of Nagaland reported zero turnout during voting for the state's lone Lok Sabha seat amid an election boycott called by the Eastern Nagaland Peoples' Organization (ENPO) over the Centre's delay in the creation of a separate frontier state.

ENPO, which represents the Chang, Khiamniungan, Konyak, Phom, Sangtam, Tikhir, and Yimkhiong communities, has been demanding a separate Frontier Nagaland state since 2010 over alleged issues of discrimination, particularly on development. The demand gained momentum in 2022 and the organisation had threatened to boycott electoral processes should the Centre fail to address its demand. According to people aware of the details, voters in Mon, Tuensang, Kiphire, Longleng, Noklak and Shamair did not turn up at the 738 polling stations set up in these areas to cast their ballot. Twenty MLAs and incumbent Rajya Sabha member Phangnon Konyak, who is also from the eastern district of Mon, were not allowed to cast their votes. "While no violence was reported, it is learnt that tribal volunteers kept vigil outside the residences of the legislators to deter them from going out to cast their vote," one of the persons cited above said, seeking anonymity. ENPO president R Tsapikiu Sangtam said the boycott was a "voluntary initiative" by the people. "There is no question of coercion..." Chief minister Neiphiu Rio said the actions of civil society organisations are of their "own mind" but the government is determined to ensure peaceful polling.

{ UTTAR PRADESH }

60.25% polling recorded in eight western seats

HT Correspondent
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LUCKNOW: A voter turnout of 60.25% was recorded on eight seats of western Uttar Pradesh, where polling took place in the first phase of the Lok Sabha elections on Friday, according to data available on the Election Commission's Voter Turnout app at 11pm. "Voting at most of the polling stations was completed by 6pm. Exact polling figures along with comparative figures of the 2019 Lok Sabha polls will be given on Saturday. The polling was completely peaceful and no information of any untoward incident was received," Uttar Pradesh's chief electoral officer Navdeep Rinwa said. Rinwa also said that 50 ballot units, 50 control units and 152 VVPATs were changed till 5pm following complaints from various districts. According to polling officials, people in some areas of Pilibhit district announced a poll boycott as a protest against alleged lack of civic amenities. Meanwhile, Samajwadi Party candidate Harendra Singh Malik alleged booth capturing in a village in Muzaffarnagar district, a claim denied by district election officer Aravind Mallappa Bangari.

SPOTLIGHT ELECTIONS 2024

{ INTERVIEW } NIRMALA SITHARAMAN, FINANCE MINISTER

'Economy relevant to elections... People can see govt taking up issues of their well-being'

R Sukumar and Sunetra Choudhury
letters@hindustantimes.com

Finance minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** has been on the campaign trail, across southern India, and also parts of the North-East. She spoke to HT on polling day (for the first phase of the Lok Sabha elections), and discussed her party's prospects in Tamil Nadu, electoral bonds, charges that federal agencies go easy on people who join the BJP, and the state and outlook for the economy. **Edited excerpts**

We are speaking on voting day and if the Bharatiya Janata Party has to touch its target of 370, this phase is critical. How is the party poised?

I've spent some time campaigning in the South. Clearly, there is a good buzz about the BJP. Across Kerala or Tamil Nadu, there is an openness to talk about the party, openness to talk about how every one of the schemes has reached every corner of the country, also to see that in the 10 years, majority of what was promised in previous manifestos have seen the light of day. So there's this goodwill coming through in public perception. Our vote shares will go up, and how many will transfer into seats [is to be seen].

The intensity of your campaign in Tamil Nadu, a state where no national party has had a significant presence since the late 1960s, suggests you are sensing on the ground. What?

Tamil Nadu had this very clear distinction: local regional parties for assembly and a national party for Parliament. The late 1960s, early 1970s onwards, Congress has been, knowingly or unknowingly, actually conceding that space even for Parliament [seats].

Everything that happens from Delhi, the good work for Tamil Nadu that can benefit Tamil Nadu — there weren't enough articulations of these in the state. They left it to the regional party. And for negative things like the Tamil fishermen issue (when the Sri Lankan navy picks them up while they are on fishing trips in international waters), the blame used to go to the Centre. So, as a result, it was an open field for the Dravidian parties to say nothing is being done in our interest in Delhi. In 10 years of UPA, which ended in 2014, you had nearly nine ministers from DMK, but despite that, you had a ban on Jallikattu, and decisions taken about Tamil Nadu's economy which

didn't reach them. The decision about Katchatheevu in the 1970s highlights the larger point that I want to make: the DMK has been blaming the Centre for this. All these years, they said it happened against Tamil Nadu's will, and that the state government didn't know anything about it. That's not the truth. What we wanted to bring out is the hypocrisy, the lies, that the DMK has been propagating. We've heard it for 50 years, and the Congress has played, "who cares?" As a result, they never said the then chief minister Karunanidhi was informed of this decision [to recognise the island as part of Sri Lanka].

What we see is clearly the failure of both the Dravidian parties. They conveniently built an argument that "we are very different people, our problems are something which only our parties that can understand, nobody cares for us because the people from North are different from us; and their language and our language is very different". They have gone to the extent of carrying that message forward in an extreme language. The extreme language is also thanks to EV Ramasamy, Periyar.

Which states do you think you'll see gains in? Is 370 a rhetorical figure?

No, it's been said by the Prime Minister and also the party units in every state want to do better. So, if every state is trying for that one additional seat, you get it to 25. That is why we are also trying our best in states such as Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Puducherry and Kerala.

How relevant is the current state of the economy, how people feel about the economy to these polls?

It's very relevant because, probably for the first time, people have seen issues pertaining to their economic well-being being taken up and being implemented. The word beneficiary, laabharathi, is everywhere in the country. I was in Mizoram day before (Wednesday) and I asked them, "have you all received houses?" Their hands went up. Ujwala (cooking gas)? "Yes." Even in a place like that, which is closer to Myanmar rather than to Delhi, people had received piped water, gas, toilets, were benefiting from the Mudra yojana. The way in which implementation of these people centric schemes has been done is astonishing. So, coming back to your question, the economy matters to the common man.

Are you worried about inflation being a factor?

Despite so many odds, we've kept the inflation within the tolerance band (of RBI under 6%). And there weren't so many challenges even after the global financial crisis. Back then, for 22 months, food inflation was in double digits till May 2014. I want to list out all that I have done. Procuring wheat; branding atta under the Bharat brand and selling it to the common man;



SAMIJRANA/HT

getting onions when onions are becoming expensive by importing them from different parts [of the world]; working with the states so that the hoarders who are sitting over stockpiles of pulses release them; opening up the import doorways for getting the imports without duties for urad dal, moong dal and so on; importing edible oil.

Would you think, the Reserve Bank of India, through its monetary policy, would take an accommodative stance if they were worried about inflation? Understandably it wants to help this economy grow, but if inflation was such a threat, do you think it would have kept its stance accommodative?

Three related issues; a recent paper that came out highlighted the issue of inequality; the Congress manifesto also talks about this, and Rahul Gandhi's followed this up with comments about redistribution of wealth. What are your views on these?

The Congress party should be guided by the so many economists who guide us, meaning they sit along with the Congressmen and keep guiding us. I listen to their guidance. How can he be talking about redistribution of wealth? Let him just try it out within his party.

Will people who have made wealth, genuinely — I don't want to distrust or mistrust anybody — with their enterprise, with their talent, with their skill, either as exporters, importers, traders, businessmen, manufacturers... can we ask them to redistribute it? Is that possible?

Is wealth redistribution a solution or wealth creation a solution? This is a typical socialist attitude. This is absolutely about

transparency and completely remove the possibility of black money entering into this. What the current scheme which has been just thrown out by the Supreme Court brought in was transparency.

What prevailed earlier was just free-for-all. You could walk around with bags, suitcases, gold or paper for a flat or a property or a sack full of cash with no one asking the question as to where that money came from.

Of course there was this element of confidentiality but that was made as a part of the electoral bonds which came out of a parliamentary act. The whole scheme was approved in Parliament. So those who are now speaking about confidentiality, they knew it all. It was passed in the Parliament and you benefited from it, you've also got the money through the bond. Suddenly you're now playing as though you didn't know that those who were giving money wanted the confidentiality. So I find it outrageous that sheer opportunism is making political parties point a finger at BJP, but they have taken the money also through the bonds.

But there are some aspects that have been highlighted which clearly suggest avenues for improvement. Like for instance, we have all realised that shell companies have been giving. We have all realised that loss-making companies have been giving, and maybe those are areas that need to be improved.

Yes.

So we can expect them to be brought back in some form?

Yes, after a good consultation.

The Opposition has raised a washing machine metaphor — that people being investigated by the Enforcement Directorate and CBI saw cases being closed after they joined your party.

The BJP can't sit here and say, you come to my party today, and the case will be closed tomorrow. The case has to go through the courts that have to take a call; they will not just say, "Oh, he's come to your party, close the case." Doesn't happen that way. So is this washing machine a term they want to use for the courts?

The last five years have been pretty challenging because there was the pandemic and then you had the Ukraine war, now of course there is the West Asia crisis. You were in charge of the economy. We don't know who the next finance minister is going to be. But since you are the current finance minister, if you were to just tell us what the next step for the economy is, what do you think needs to be done to keep

this momentum going? Because India is the fastest-growing major economy, but it needs to continue to grow fast. What do you think needs to be done?

Stability in policymaking. Simplification of the process of taxation. GST rate rationalisation. Making it easy for investments to come through into the country. And when I say that, it's not just from the central government. It has to be state governments, it has to be local bodies bringing in compliances which are simpler at the local body level. I would think these are larger issues.

Newer and very, very significant areas of industry will have to be given a lot more policy support, whether it is renewable energy, whether it is handling the rare earths, whether it is India's capability in terms of artificial intelligence with proper, soft touch regulation, making sure that scaling up includes a lot of these Industrial Revolution 4 techniques, making sure that people coming out of our medical institutions and engineering institutions have skill sets which make them ready for recruitment.

Is there a reason why so many ministers are contesting? Is it because of the 370 target?

No, it's not because of 370. I think it was fair of the party to ask people to go to the ground, contest elections. It will bring in greater connect with everybody. In my case also, I was asked whether I want to contest from Tamil Nadu or Andhra.

Your comment about not having the money to contest elections caused a stir?

I was bantering with the moderator but this came from my heart. The fact remains that over and above whatever I may say, it's the party which has to tell me what to do. I may say anything, but if the party still says "contest", I will. Nobody in the BJP can put their foot down [and say no] because we are all well trained in that manner. So despite what I said, if the party had chosen to have me go and fight the elections, I would have definitely done so.



ELECTION INTERVIEW

Despite so many odds, we've kept the inflation within the tolerance band (of RBI under 6%). And there weren't so many challenges even after global financial crisis.

clear distinction: local regional parties for assembly and a national party for Parliament. The late 1960s, early 1970s onwards, Congress has been, knowingly or unknowingly, actually conceding that space even for Parliament [seats].

{ MODI HOLDS RALLIES ACROSS 3 STATES }

'Cong yet to shed mindset of imposing Emergency'

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MUMBAI/BHOPAL/LUCKNOW: The Congress knows it will not win the Lok Sabha elections and, therefore its "yuvraj" is threatening that the country will be on fire if the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won. Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Friday, adding the opposition's mindset of "shackling the Constitution" and imposing Emergency has not changed.

Attacking the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) bloc, saying it did not have any "pro-development ideas", Modi — who addressed poll rallies at Wardha in Maharashtra, Damoh in Madhya Pradesh and Amroha in Uttar Pradesh — added that polling for the first phase of the elections, which began in the morning, showed that his government was set to win a third term.

"When its 'yuvraj' says the country will be on fire, (it indicates that) Congress's mindset of shackling the Constitution and imposing Emergency has not changed," Modi said, in an apparent reference to Rahul Gandhi's remarks.

Gandhi, while addressing an INDIA bloc rally in Delhi on March 31, had said that if the "BJP wins these fixed elections, and changes the Constitution, the country will be on fire."

Conversing from BJP candidates from Wardha and Amravati constituencies, which will go to polls on April 26, Modi said: "The 2024 elections are for fulfilling the dream of Viksit (developed) and Atmanirbhar (self-reliant) Bharat. The country is all set to take a decisive step in this direction."

At Damoh rally, Modi said war clouds were hovering over the world and under these circumstances a strong BJP-led government with an absolute majority

RALLY TRACKER

CONGRESS 1 Mallikarjun Kharge, Congress chief Bihar: Kishanganj, Katihar
BJP 1 Narendra Modi, Prime Minister Maharashtra: Wardha Madhya Pradesh: Damoh Uttar Pradesh: Amroha 2 Amit Shah, Union home minister Gujarat: Gandhinagar Rajasthan: Jodhpur
SP 1 Akhilesh Yadav, SP chief Uttar Pradesh: Gautam Buddha Nagar
AITC 1 Mamata Banerjee, West Bengal CM West Bengal: Murshidabad

was needed to protect the country's interests and tackle any eventuality. "You all are seeing that war clouds are hovering over the world. When there is an atmosphere of war in the world... the country needs a strong government that is capable of protecting it in any situation. And this can happen only when there is a BJP government with an absolute majority," he said. The remarks came in the backdrop of the ongoing conflict in the Gaza Strip, Iran's missile and drone attack on Israel and rising tension in West Asia.

In a veiled dig at Pakistan, which is facing a host of economic issues, Modi said a neighbouring country which was a "supplier of aatak (terror), is now struggling for supply of aata (flour)."

Attacking the opposition for boycotting the consecration cere-

mony at the Ram temple in Ayodhya on January 22, Modi praised Iqbal Ansari, a former litigant in the Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri Masjid case, for accepting the invitation to attend the event. "Ansari is from a normal family. Look at his behaviour and those of Congress leaders..." Modi said. Damoh, along with six other Madhya Pradesh seats, will vote in the second phase of elections on April 26.

In Amroha, Modi took a veiled dig at Rahul Gandhi and Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav, saying: "The shooting of the film 'do shehzade ki jodi (a pair of princes)' is going on. But their film has already been rejected by people." Amroha will also vote on April 26 in the second phase.

"Appeal to everyone to exercise their right to vote given by the Constitution," he said.

It's clear people across India voting for NDA in record numbers: PM Modi

NEW DELHI: As the first phase of Lok Sabha polls ended on Friday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserted he was getting excellent feedback and it was clear that people across India are voting for the BJP-led NDA in record numbers.

"First phase, great response! Thank you to all those who have voted today. Getting EXCELLENT feedback from today's voting. It's clear that people across India are voting for NDA in record numbers," he said in a post on X. The election commission said an aggregate 60.03% voter turnout was recorded in phase one of the Lok Sabha elections.

Kerala CM says Left leaders not afraid of jail, targets Rahul Gandhi, Cong

KOZHIKODE: A day after Congress leader Rahul Gandhi targeted Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan and asked why he was not interrogated or arrested by federal agencies, the Left leader on Friday said he was not afraid to go to jail, unlike Congress leaders. Gandhi on Thursday lashed out at Vijayan and wondered why he was being targeted while he was fighting against the BJP. Gandhi said he was questioned by ED for 55 hours, his LS membership and residence were taken away, but none of these were happening to Vijayan.

{ FISSURES IN RULING MAHAYUTI? }

NCP's Bhujbal pulls out of race for Nashik seat

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MUMBAI: Senior Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader and Maharashtra minister Chhagan Bhujbal said on Friday that he has decided not to seek ticket from the Nashik Lok Sabha constituency in Maharashtra so as to end the deadlock over the seat also coveted by the ally Shiv Sena.

The sitting MP from the north Maharashtra seat, Hemant Godse, belongs to the Shiv Sena led by chief minister Eknath Shinde.

Speaking at a press conference in Mumbai, Bhujbal said that during the seat-sharing talks with the ruling Mahayuti allies — Shiv Sena and BJP — NCP chief and deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar staked claim to the Nashik seat, saying that his party had more MLAs.

"When we were asked about the candidate, the name of former MP (Chhagan Bhujbal's nephew) Sameer Bhujbal was proposed. But (BJP leader) Amit Shah said I should contest even though I had not asked for a ticket," he said.

CM Shinde, however, demanded the seat as the incumbent MP is from his party, he



Chhagan Bhujbal

added. No decision was taken for three weeks while the opposition MVA's candidate had already started campaigning, he said.

"I asked deputy CM Devendra Fadnis and state BJP president Chandrashekar Bawankule about the announcement of Sameer Bhujbal's candidature, and both said the BJP leadership wanted me to contest," the senior minister said, claiming that "all sections of society expressed support for my candidature for the development of Nashik" but his name was not announced. "To end the deadlock, I have decided to withdraw from the race..." Bhujbal added.

NCP chief Sunil Tatkare said he was not aware why Bhujbal took the decision. "I am busy campaigning in my constituency in Raigad,"

IN MURSHIDABAD, MAMATA ATTACKS BJP FOR VIOLENCE

KOLKATA: West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee on Friday accused the BJP of inciting violence during Ram Navami celebrations in the state.

Stones were allegedly pelted at a Ram Navami rally in the Shaktipur area of Murshidabad on Wednesday, injuring 20 people, police said. BJP alleged that TMC instigated the violence.

Addressing a rally at Hariharpara of Murshidabad district, Banerjee said the 2024 Lok Sabha polls are nothing less than a "second battle for the country's independence," as BJP's return to power for the third consecutive term would endanger the existence of the constitution and democracy. "The BJP only believes in bloodshed and violence to serve its political purpose. The BJP is stoking violence in the state. Why did BJP leaders conduct processions with weapons and flout court orders? Who told them to conduct rallies with weapons? Who permitted them?" she said.

BJP has dismissed the CM's allegations, and demanded an NIA probe.

ECI suspends two police officers in Bengal over Ram Navami violence

KOLKATA: The Election Commission of India (ECI) on Friday suspended two police officers in West Bengal for failing to prevent riots during Ram Navami celebrations in Murshidabad district on April 17. "The commission has found that the officers-in-charge (OCs) of Shaktipur and Beldanga police stations have failed in containing and preventing repeated communal violence in areas under their jurisdiction and have directed to place them under suspension," EC said in an order. "The commission has also directed that charge-sheet shall be issued to the suspended officers by the competent authority forthwith," the order stated.



Union home minister Amit Shah files papers from Gandhinagar. ANI

Polls all about giving Modi 3rd term: Shah

GANDHINAGAR: Union home minister Amit Shah on Friday filed his nomination from Gandhinagar Lok Sabha seat as the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate and appealed to the people to ensure a third term for Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"This election is all about making Narendra Modi our PM for the third time. Modi ji has resolved to turn India into a developed country by 2047 and number one in all sectors. The next five years are crucial if we want to achieve that because the last 10 years went into filling pits (gadda) made by the previous UPA government," Shah told reporters after submitting his nomination papers to Gandhinagar collector and district election officer M K Dave.

Thanking the BJP for nominating him from the seat once represented by stalwarts Atal Bihari Vajpayee and LK Advani, the Union minister said the seat holds significance because Prime Minister Modi is a registered voter from here.

Shah, a former BJP president, won from the Gandhinagar constituency by a margin of more than 500,000 votes in the 2019 general elections. The opposition Congress has fielded party secretary Sonal Patel from Gandhinagar. Voting for all 26 Lok Sabha seats in Gujarat will be held in the third phase on May 7. HT



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SC asks two states to give status of cases on Ramdev

Abraham Thomas

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Friday asked Bihar and Chhattisgarh to share the status of criminal cases pending against yoga guru and entrepreneur Ramdev over his alleged derogatory remarks about modern medicine during the Covid pandemic three years ago.

The cases were filed by the Bihar and Chhattisgarh state units of the Indian Medical Association in response to a video on social media where Ramdev advised his followers not to rely on allopathy — as modern medicine is often referred to in India — for treating Covid-19. This statement was made in May 2021. Ramdev's petition sought a direction to club the two first information reports (FIR) and hold the trial in Delhi. The two complaints against him were filed by the Bihar and Chhattisgarh state units of IMA.

"These cases are of 2021. Charge sheet would have been filed by now. If this prayer (for clubbing) has to be considered, we need to know what the status of these cases is," a bench of justices MM Sundresh and PB Varale said in a larger case against Ramdev, filed by the national chapter of IMA, is going on in court, and Ramdev and Patanjali managing director Balakrishna have been facing the ire of a bench of justices



Hima Kohli and Ahsanuddin Amanullah over misleading advertisements that they published in leading newspapers in December 2023 and January this year. In an earlier case, the IMA served him a defamation notice of ₹1,000 crore and demanded an apology. Later, Ramdev wrote a letter to the then Union health minister saying he meant no ill-will as he had great regard for doctors. The court on Friday also allowed Ramdev to implead the complainants who have lodged cases against him, meaning that IMA state units will now get a say before any decision is taken on Ramdev's plea for clubbing or quashing the cases.

The IMA, which filed complaints in 2021 alleging that Ramdev's remarks were likely to cause prejudice to Covid control mecha-

nisms and may dissuade people from availing proper treatment, will need to be heard despite objections from the solicitor general.

A bench of justices MM Sundresh and PB Varale was hearing Ramdev's plea seeking a stay on criminal proceedings. The court granted Ramdev liberty to implead the complainants and posted the matter for hearing after the summer vacations, which start on May 20 and end in July. Senior advocate Siddharth Dave, appearing for Ramdev, told the court that he will add the complainants in the two FIRs and objected to a short affidavit filed by IMA opposing the petition. Although the IMA's central body was represented in court, the bench directed the two state IMA units to be added as a party to know their response on the

petition. The court directed the Bihar and Chhattisgarh governments to file the status of the two FIRs in two weeks.

Solicitor general Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, said, "We can't have strangers to a proceeding to be given a say. The petition for clubbing is between the complainant and the accused. We have serious objection to IMA as they are opposed to Ayurveda."

Advocate Prabhas Bajaj, appearing for IMA, informed the bench that IMA is appearing in this case as it has been named as a party in the petition and notice was issued to it by the top court on October 9, 2023.

In its affidavit, IMA said, "The petitioner (Ramdev) has shown complete disdain of the rule of law...and does not deserve any indulgence by this court in exercise of its extraordinary and equitable jurisdiction under Article 32 of the Constitution of India. The present writ petition deserves to be rejected on this ground alone."

Ramdev withdrew his statements after receiving a letter from then Union health minister Harsh Vardhan, who called his remarks "inappropriate". Senior advocate Dave, appearing for Ramdev, said, "The yoga guru had made a statement in 2021 that he does not believe in allopathic medicines to which some doctors took offence and lodged multiple cases against him."

INDIA DELIVERS 1ST BRAHMOS BATCH TO PHILIPPINES

NEW DELHI: India on Friday delivered the first batch of BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles and launchers to the Philippines, two years after the countries signed a deal worth almost \$375 million to equip the Philippine Marines with three batteries of the missiles, officials aware of the matter said.

India flew the consignment to the south-east Asian country in an IAF C-17 transport aircraft, the officials added.

The January 2022 deal was seen as a shot in the arm for New Delhi's efforts to emerge as an exporter of major defence hardware. This is the first export order for the BrahMos missile developed by BrahMos Aerospace, a joint venture between India and Russia. The deliveries to the Philippines were held up as the two nations hadn't signed a non-disclosure agreement, HT has learnt.

BrahMos is the fastest cruise missile in the world with a speed of Mach 2.8, nearly three times the speed of sound. BrahMos variants can be launched from land, air and sea, and all three variants are in service in the Indian armed forces. The ones being exported to the Philippines can strike targets at 290 km, though India has also developed another variant with a range of almost 500 km. In February, the Cabinet Committee on Security approved the acquisition of more than 200 BrahMos missiles and associated systems that will be fitted on Indian warships, with the significant capability enhancement for the navy expected to cost around ₹19,000 crore. India has set a defence export target of ₹35,000 crore by 2024-25.

SC seeks Centre's reply over bar on surrogacy

Abraham Thomas

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Friday sought the response of the Centre on a petition challenging the bar under the Surrogacy Act that prevents married couples who already have a child from having a second child through surrogacy.

Issuing notice on a petition filed by a married couple from Hyderabad, a bench of justices BV Nagarathna and Augustine George Masih noted that a matter related to the Surrogacy Act is pending in the top court in a petition filed by IVF specialist Arun Muthuvel in which the amendments to the law barring single unmarried woman and homosexual couples are under challenge. The bench directed the matter to be heard on May 3.

Advocate Mohini Priya, who filed the latest petition, told the court that it challenges the constitutional validity of Section 4(iii)(C)(ii) of the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021, which makes an intending couple ineligible to avail of surrogacy if they have any healthy surviving child biologically or through adoption or surrogacy, thus excluding married couples suffering from secondary infertility.

"The choice of reproduction has been held to be a part of the right to life under Article 21 by



The bench directed the matter to be heard on May 3.

the Supreme Court, and the said choices also fall within the right to privacy and that the Act severely regulates these rights, so much so, that the fundamental rights under Articles 14 and 21 stand defeated," the petition said. The petitioner couple, aged 45, got married in 2012 and had their first child within a year.

Although, the wife was pregnant again in 2015, she suffered a miscarriage. Medical reports diagnosed one of the partners to have Autoimmune Enteropathy, an autoimmune disorder that possibly led to the miscarriage.

It was then that the couple decided to opt for surrogacy but faced the legal bar in having a second child.

"Limiting the number of children a couple can have through surrogacy imposes a restriction on their personal autonomy and family planning choices. Moreover, allowing married couples to have a second child through surrogacy can contribute to fam-

ily formation and support those who are unable to conceive or carry a child themselves," the petition said.

This amounts to interference by state in private lives of citizens, Mohini argued, pointing out how law failed to acknowledge secondary infertility.

According to National Family Health Survey data, the petitioner pointed out, the trend of primary infertility depicts a gradual decrease over time. However, it is opposite with secondary infertility. It was around 19.5% in 1992-93, remained almost the same in 1998-99, and increased in the recent decadal period of 2015-16 touching 28.6%.

Terminating the bar on surrogacy against married couples having a child as "irrational, discriminatory and without any sound determining principles", besides being in violation of the reproductive rights of a woman under Article 21, the petition said that India promotes two-child policy as an accepted familial norm.

"Having two children helps inculcate values of sharing and caring and strengthens family bonds. It is in the best interests of the surviving child to have a genetically linked sibling. A biological sibling could be a match for bone marrow, tissue or organs in the event that a need for any of it arises" the petition said.

WOMEN OFFICERS ALLEGE DISCRIMINATION Posts of officers should match entitlement: SC

Abraham Thomas

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Friday said that the empaneled women officers should get command posts matching their entitlement but refused to direct the Indian Army to give them a fixed tenure of nearly two years as these posts citing the operational requirement of the armed forces.

A bench headed by CJI Dhananjaya Y Chandrachud passed the order while hearing an application moved by four women colonels who alleged discrimination on the grounds that the army allocated regular billets (or major units) to male officers while allowing women officers to command upgraded billets usually headed by junior officers. A status report submitted by the Indian Army denied the charge and said that three of the applicants were given regular command posts while the fourth will be assigned one from May 1.

The bench, also comprising justice JB Pardiwala, said, "They (Army) will not put you into a billet lower than your entitlement after our order."

The women officers led by senior advocate V Mohana said that all 225 male officers empaneled have got regular posts,



SC was hearing an application moved by 4 women colonels.

while only 32 of the 108 women empaneled officers have been given regular posts commensurate with their rank.

The army's report indicated that 20 women officers who were earlier given upgraded units have been issued regular units. Seven women officers have requested to continue at their present command assignments while two have superannuated. Senior advocate R Balasubramanian, appearing for the army, told the court that the remaining women officers will be gradually accommodated as each command has a minimum tenure of 22 months.

Some women officers urged the court for a direction to consider keeping them on the command posts for 22 months. But the bench said: "We cannot pass such an order as there are certain matters which can affect operational requirements of the Indian Army."

Next navy chief known for his decision-making, love for tennis

Rahul Singh

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: India's next navy chief Vice Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi enjoys a formidable reputation among his peers as a communication specialist who could solve relative velocity problems in his head while steering frontline warships in the right direction on the high seas with ease.

The government named Tripathi as the next navy chief on Thursday night.

He will pick up the four-star rank and take over the top job on April 30 when Admiral R Hari Kumar retires after heading the service for two years and five months. By appointing him as the chief, the government has followed the seniority principle — Tripathi will be the most senior officer in navy the day Kumar retires.

He is currently the navy's vice chief. "As a communication specialist, he has always been the man on the ship's bridge alongside the captain and the navigator. The communicator gets the signal, and he interprets where the ship needs to go. By the time the navigator could take the Battemberg course indicator for speed and distance calculations, Tripathi would have solved relative velocity problems in his



Vice Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi

head," said a senior officer who asked not to be named.

Tripathi's love for sport, especially tennis and badminton, and singing is also well known in military circles. "He likes to sing Kishore Kumar songs," said another officer. Tripathi was the Western Naval Command chief before he was appointed the navy's vice chief in January 2024 and earlier served as the navy's chief of personnel.

An alumnus of Sainik School, Rewa and National Defence Academy, Khadakwala, he was commissioned into the navy on July 1, 1985. A communication and electronic warfare specialist, he served on front line warships as signal communication officer and electronic warfare officer, and later as the executive officer and principal warfare officer of guided missile destroyer INS Mumbai.

Tripathi, who turns 60 in May, will serve as the navy chief for two years and one month.

SAINIK SCHOOL ALUMNI SCALE NEW HEIGHTS IN ARMED FORCES

NEW DELHI: The Sainik School in Madhya Pradesh's Rewa town is on a roll, with its alumni scaling new heights in the armed forces.

Vice Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi, who will take over as the navy chief on April 30, is an alumnus of the school set up in 1962 and the army's vice chief Lieutenant General Upendra Dwivedi also attended the same school. Dwivedi is the front-runner for the army chief's post as he will be the senior-most officer in the service when General Manoj Pande retires on May 31.

Like several other Sainik Schools in the country, Rewa has produced a battery of high-ranking officials who have filled key roles in the armed forces, including Lieutenant Generals KT Parinaik (retd), AK Singh (retd), AT Parinaik, Vinod Bhatia (retd), Munish Sibal (retd), DS Chauhan (retd) and Sandeep Singh (retd), Vice Admirals Atul Kumar Jain (retd) and Dinesh Prabhakar (retd), and Air Marshal PK Roy (retd).

Sainik Schools were established in the 1960s.

POLLING FOR PHASE 1 achieve this feat.

"First phase, great response! Thank you to all those who have voted today. Getting EXCELLENT feedback from today's voting. It's clear that people across India are voting for NDA in record numbers," Modi tweeted late on Friday.

BJP lawmaker Sudhanshu Trivedi said there is a wave of support in favour of PM Modi and it was evident from the

voter turnout in the first phase.

"By the end of the first phase, one more thing became clear... Rahul Gandhi has still not been able to muster the courage to file nomination from Amethi," he said, adding that the BJP is confident that it will be successful in increasing its victory margin by winning more seats in the first phase than the last time.

The Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) is hoping to use a mix of regional leaders, local issues and discontent over jobs to deny the BJP a third straight victory. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge urged voters to cast their ballots carefully and asserted that a new era of economic empowerment and equal opportunities beckons them.

"The fight to protect our Constitution and Democracy begins today," he said in a post on X. "My dear citizens, from 21 States and UTs who are voting in the First Phase of the Lok Sabha elections, I request you to carefully cast your vote. A future where NYAY (justice) awaits you. A new era of Economic Empowerment and Equal Opportunities beckons you," the Congress chief said.

Sporadic violence was reported from the restive Manipur, where social media images showed armed miscreants roaming freely on the streets

and gunshots being fired near one polling station. One voter sustained bullet wounds, said an official aware of the matter. The provisional turnout in the state — which has two Lok Sabha seats — stood at 69.5%, compared to 82.5% in 2019. Some sections of the Outer Manipur seat will go to the polls in the second phase on April 26.

In Nagaland, people from six eastern districts refused to cast their votes in a unified display of protest against the government's failure in finalising the creation of autonomous Frontier Nagaland Territory (FNT) for the region. The state recorded a provisional turnout of 56.9%, compared to 83% in 2019.

In Bengal, where three seats went to the polls, a clash broke out between Trinamool Congress and BJP workers near Cooch Behar town. There were reports of stone pelting and at

least one person was injured. Reports of violence also poured in from Bhetaguri in Dinhatra block where the TMC alleged that crude bombs were hurled and their block president Anant Barman was injured. He was hospitalised, according to reports. The state recorded a turnout of 77.6%, compared to 84.8% in 2019.

The largest chunk of seats were in Tamil Nadu, where all 39 seats went to the polls. The INDIA bloc holds 38 out of these seats and the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam-led grouping in the state is hoping for a repeat performance. Battling the ruling coalition is its traditional Dravidian rival, the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, and a resurgent BJP that has put in enormous energy and resources into a state that is considered a bridge too far for the party. The state recorded a provisional turnout of 68%, compared to 72.4% in 2019. To be sure, the state bureau gave a 72.09% turnout as of 7pm.

Focus was also on the 12 Lok Sabha seats in Rajasthan, where the other 13 go to the polls in the next phase. The BJP had swept Rajasthan in 2019 and is contesting all seats.

The Congress, on the other hand, is contesting 22 and left three to its alliance partners Rashtriya Loktantrik Party (RLP), Communist Party of

India (Marxist) and Bharat Adivasi Party (BAP). The state recorded a turnout of 57.3%, compared to 63.9% in 2019.

In Uttar Pradesh, eight seats in the western part of the state went to the polls. The state recorded a turnout of 59.8%, compared to 66.6% in 2019. In Assam, five of the 14 seats went to the polls. The state recorded a turnout of 72.4%, but a comparison with previous elections was not possible because of seats being redrawn.

In the Maoist-ravaged Bastar, an assistant commandant of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) sustained injuries when a pressure cooker bomb planted by Maoists exploded and a CRPF jawan died in accidental grenade explosion during an area domination exercise.

The seat — the only one to go to the polls in Chhattisgarh on Friday — recorded a turnout of 67.1%, compared to 66.2% in 2019.

For the first time, people in 56 villages in Bastar in Chhattisgarh cast their vote in polling booths set up in their own villages, said the poll body said in its statement.

The poll body pointed out that in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, voters belonging to the tribal communities came out in large numbers. The Shompen tribe of Great Nicobar made history by casting a vote for the

first time.

In 2019, the general elections recorded a turnout of 67%, the highest since the first election in 1951-52.

B'URU KILLINGS

Thursday, Lokesh Jagalsagar, deputy commissioner of police, Bengaluru South division, said, "Anusha told her mother that she was going out to meet someone and will be back in five minutes. Suspecting something amiss, her mother followed her and saw Anusha meeting Suresh. They were having a heated discussion and suddenly Suresh attacked her with a knife. She ran to save her daughter and attacked Suresh with a brick multiple times on the head."

Senior officers said that Anusha and Suresh, both residents of Shankambari Nagar, met in June 2018. Anusha worked as a caretaker in a private hospital, and Suresh, who was married, worked at an event management company in Bengaluru. "They developed a relationship," the officer said.

Officers said that as their relationship grew, Anusha asked for stability in their relationship, and asked him to marry her, and separate from his family. "He refused but wanted to continue the relationship, which caused confrontations between them. She did not

want this," the officer said.

From early this year, officers said, Anusha began to avoid Suresh, and he suspected that she was growing closer to another man. On Thursday, when they met, Anusha was clear that she wanted to end the relationship between the two, and saw no future for them.

"He questioned her about the other man he had suspicions about, and she refused to

answer. He grew increasingly enraged, pulled out a knife, and attacked her in the chest and head. Geetha then rushed in and attacked him from the back, hitting him with the brick till he collapsed on the ground," an officer said.

Even as the dramatic events unfolded in full public view, passersby called for an ambulance and rushed the two to a hospital.

FROM PAGE ONE PLUS

A NATION MOURNS

by the war effort unless freedom was assured - a line that Mahatma Gandhi adopted in 1939. The second instalment was seized by the censors. During the later part of the freedom struggle, though then a Knight of the British Empire, he firmly resisted attempts to shut down Banaras University — one of the major centres of the 1942 movement.

In one of his addresses at a convocation presided over by a particularly strong Governor, Sir Maurice Hallett, Dr Radhakrishnan eulogised Gandhi — "one of the immortal voices of the human race in all that relates to the highest effort of man."

During the last five decades of his working life he had to change roles frequently — scholar to parliamentarian to

diplomat in the cold Moscow of Stalin's day; then Vice President and ex-officio Chairman of the Upper House of Parliament (1952 to 1962) and finally President of the Republic.

His election as President in 1962 was widely hailed the world over as an experiment of Plato's concept of the philosopher kings. During the decade-and-a-half between Independence and his election as President he had shown himself an able administrator as well as an astute diplomat and a foresighted statesman.

His tenure as President was singularly eventful — twice the country was faced with a war situation and twice with the death of a Prime Minister. It called for a tremendous capacity for adjustment with new personalities at the helm of affairs and a readjustment of roles.

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OPINION

The
Hindustan Times
ESTABLISHED IN 1924

{ OUR TAKE }

Pursuit of peace in the shadow of war

Israel and Iran should cease hostilities. Global diplomacy must work for de-escalation and the long-term objective of a Palestinian State

For several days now, the situation in West Asia has teetered precariously close to spiralling out of control and the latest Israeli strikes with drones on at least two Iranian cities on Friday will only add to fears of a wider conflict engulfing the region. The drone strikes targeted Isfahan, home to some of Iran's most important nuclear facilities, and could have been perceived by Tehran as a dangerous escalation. Iranian officials have apparently decided to play down the strikes, describing them as the work of "infiltrators" without any direct reference to Israel, and thus indicating there may not be any further retaliation. These Israeli drone strikes were retaliation for Iran's first direct attack on Israel with hundreds of drones and missiles last week, which in turn was a response to Israel's brazen attack on an Iranian diplomatic compound in Syria. Sure, both attacks have been calibrated, but it's worrying that there has been no cessation of hostilities.

The Iran-Israel tensions and the Israel-Hamas conflict, now into its seventh month, highlight the need for concerted global diplomacy aimed at the more immediate goal of de-escalation and the long-term objective of a two-state solution to Palestine. The US and its close partners have done too little to rein in Israel as it unleashed the unprecedented bombardment of the Gaza Strip and killed nearly 34,000 people. It is also difficult to buy into the argument proffered by Israeli officials that they didn't expect Iran to react strongly to the strike on the diplomatic facility in Syria. With public opinion turning against Israel's actions in Gaza in the US and large parts of Europe, US President Joe Biden and his European partners need to do more to pull the region back from the brink.

Diplomacy in West Asia has never been for the faint-hearted, and even more so now, and the US and its partners need to get back to the drawing board to come up with a solution that will address both the security imperatives of Israel and the need for a state for the Palestinian people. The West will need to engage with Tehran to ensure the success of efforts to find a lasting solution. Iran, for its part, will have to take a relook at its dangerous policy of arming and supporting a range of proxy forces in Lebanon, the Gaza Strip, Syria and Yemen as part of Tehran's efforts to extend its influence in West Asia since this has only exacerbated tensions across the region.

For a country that describes West Asia as part of its extended neighbourhood and has tremendous stakes across the region, India has appeared more as an onlooker amid the latest round of tensions. External affairs minister S Jaishankar recently spoke to his Iranian and Israeli counterparts to convey New Delhi's concerns and to emphasise the need to dial down the tensions. But West Asia watchers have for long believed India can play a much larger role in addressing the long-standing problems of the region because of its close relations with Israel and Arab states. India needs to leverage these relations to help bring the key actors to the table instead of merely insisting that dialogue and diplomacy are the only way forward. The costs of a wider conflagration in West Asia will be very high for India, which has nine million expatriates spread across the region. Besides the remittances from these Indian nationals, West Asia remains a key trading region and the primary source of energy.

No wave in sight, big surprises are unlikely in offing

State-level and local factors may acquire more salience in the 2024 elections in comparison to the two previous elections

Polling for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections began on Friday, involving 102 parliamentary constituencies or nearly one-fifth of the country. Pre-poll surveys by several agencies have indicated a comfortable victory for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) led National Democratic Alliance (NDA), without any significant change in the strength of the Opposition parties.

What are the risk factors associated with these estimates? And, what do they indicate about the emerging nature of politics in India?

First, while the BJP's campaign narrative focuses on national resurgence under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, there are no big emotive issues that could rile up sentiments nationally.

However, the BJP has made every effort to link the redrawing of the ideological arc of India's political mosaic to rising global prestige and the dream of a developed nation status for India by 2047, linking it to the idea of civilisational assertion. The Congress and other Opposition parties have stressed on economic issues (price rise and unemployment), independence of institutions, political corruption (electoral bonds), targeting of the Opposition and civil society institutions, and have termed this election as a battle to save India's democratic soul.

The pre-poll surveys have recorded significant anxiety over economic issues, but there is also support for the BJP's ideological projects. It remains to be seen which electoral narrative would voters repose their faith in, but this fault-line is likely to get shriller, and the gap between the two camps will get wider.

Second, there is a general refrain that despite

these narratives, the campaign in this election is rather muted. Party workers are not running around with enthusiasm and voters are not showing signs of any great excitement. While the big rallies by the top leadership on both sides are happening, street-level mobilisation is missing. The lengthy campaign period owing to seven-phased elections and heat cannot explain this as the last three elections too happened under similar conditions.

Is the campaign quieter this time because there is no big emotive issue or no new leadership on the campaign trail nationally? Or is it because of the inevitability of the outcome, in which the BJP is largely expected to retain power? It seems that muted election campaigns are likely to be the new norm as campaigning has become personalised, with the massive penetration of smartphones and access to social media platforms.

Third, while Modi enjoys considerable popularity in public opinion polls, there is no big pro-incumbency mood outside the core base — the so-called "wave election". The proportion of respondents in the Lokniti pre-poll surveys who said that the government should get another chance was lower than the PM's popularity rating and the NDA's projected vote share.

Will this muted campaign and the high probability of the incumbent's return as projected by the surveys, impact the intensity of political mobilisation, and therefore, result in lower turnout? Did Modi anticipate this when he gave the call for 370 seats for the BJP to entice party mobilisers? Indeed, there is a symbolic messaging behind the "abki baar 400 paar" pitch — keeping the organisational machinery agile and not letting it fall into complacency.

However, a higher turnout may not come about this election cycle. In 2019, the turnout in these 102 constituencies stood at 70%, two percentage points higher than the national average. The provisional figures from phase I indicate that we might have a lower-than-average turnout this election.

Fourth, while the aggregate picture may still



Rahul Verma

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In West Asia, the game of deterrence has changed

On April 19, US officials anonymously confirmed that Israel had executed a drone strike near Isfahan, Iran's response has been to downplay the strikes, which can be characterised as Israel's response to the Iranian drone/missile attack on Israeli territory on April 13. While Iran and Israel have now both struck each other, the deterrence balance has effectively shifted in Iran's favour.

Deterrence, according to economic Nobel Laureate Thomas Schelling, can be characterised as preventing an adversary from any undesirable action by imposing a credible fear of consequences. The credibility of the threatened consequences is married to the actual ability to carry it out, should the adversary continue to act in an undesired way. When this ability is doubted, even if the adversary's action continues, deterrence fails. This failure is in turn associated with the red line that a state had set, for its threatened consequences to be triggered.

Hence, red lines also create commitment traps. In West Asia, the most famous red line in recent memory was the one set by Barack Obama in 2011: That if Syria's Bashar-al-Assad employed chemical weapons amidst the growing civil war, it would cross the United States' red line, drawing "enormous consequences".

The Syrian Arab Army eventually crossed this line with a devastating Sarin gas attack on a rebel-held Damascus suburb, killing 1,400. Looking to avoid a direct war with Syria, the United States failed to execute its threat; "The President blinked", as David Ignatius of the *Washington Post* later said.

Across the decade since, it has been hard to set red lines in West Asia. The conflict landscape features a diverse set of armed groups, including those funded and sustained by Iran's formidable paramilitary, the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC). The large presence of the IRGC in Iran allied with Iraq and Syria, has made it a plump target for Israeli air action, allowing Tel Aviv to avoid direct engagement with Iran. Since Iran itself prefers to keep the IRGC's extraterritorial activity largely discreet, its own response is indirect. It targets other pressure points, such as proxy-led attacks on the forces of Israel's main backer — the United States. Israel itself has long conducted direct (on Iranian soil) but covert (with plausible deniability) attacks on Iran, including cyber attacks and assassinations of nuclear scientists. Hence, both Iran and Israel have historically preferred a cat-and-mouse approach with plausible deniability, without setting overt commitment traps.

While the Israeli strike on the IRGC on April



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All indications suggest that 2024 has characteristics of a normal election, in which the social basis of power remains unchanged and the incumbent, by and large, is retained

hide the variation within groups, the final seat tallies of parties may also be reflective of whether they managed to get their prospective voters to the polling booth or not. For example, the 2019 elections indicated a rise in turnout among women, while the turnout among Muslims was lower than the average. Generally, a lower turnout is not a cause of worry for cadre-based parties like the BJP as it is expected that with their organisational machinery, they may still be able to get their own voters out. In 2019, the BJP had another advantage in the pre-poll surveys: Those who preferred the BJP were more likely to come out and vote for it, while the Opposition voters in the survey were less sure of turning out to vote for the party of their choice. The analysis of the 2014 and 2019 elections also indicates that the BJP had a higher probability of winning a seat where the turnout rise was higher. The pattern for the Congress party in these elections was the opposite, indicating the very different mobilisational capabilities of the two parties.

Fifth, all indications suggest that 2024 has the characteristics of a normal election. Political scientists distinguish a normal election from a critical one. In critical elections, the social basis of power is completely realigned, and the incumbent is much more likely to lose. In a normal election, the social basis of power remains unchanged and incumbent, by and large, is retained. The 2014 Lok Sabha elections was a critical election in that sense, and 2019 consolidated the patterns of the BJP's national dominance. Such levels of political dominance require extraordinary mobilisation to challenge the incumbent. Everyday issues do not provide

sufficient ammunition to break through the walls of systemic dominance.

However, it is possible that the state-level and local factors may acquire more salience in the 2024 elections in comparison to the last two. And, given that the BJP has not re-nominated more than 100 incumbent MPs and a similar number of party's candidates are defectors from other parties, there is going to be a lot of friction within the BJP internally. This may increase the uncertainty around the final outcome in several constituencies. Such cases would get cited in political discussions to make several types of claims and counter-claims.

Does this mean that the outcome of the 2024 elections is a toss-up? Is it possible that we may see a repeat of 2004 in 2024? The BJP was expected to be the single-largest party in 2004, but eventually, the Congress emerged as the largest player. However, these two elections are poles apart in a number of ways. The Congress was a bigger party in terms of voter share then, and the gap between the seats was marginal. In this decade, the BJP is twice the size of the Congress in terms of vote share and five to six times bigger in seats. The BJP's national footprint today is larger than the Congress, both socially and geographically.

The Congress would need a double-digit swing in its vote share to be able to reach a three-digit seat total. Such swings are rare in normal elections. So while it is highly likely that the BJP may not achieve its target of 370 seats, the base effect of 2019 would be in play.

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The unprecedented nature of the Iranian strike cannot be overstated

REUTERS

I was not unprecedented, the damage to the Iranian Consulate in the process compelled Iran to declare it as a red line, especially in the face of recent Israeli rhetoric calling to fight Iran directly. Tehran's response, in turn, was at a higher rung on the escalation ladder — using drones and missiles for a direct (on Israeli soil) and overt (without plausible deniability) attack on Israel. The minimal damage caused and the impressive effectiveness of the combined air defence aside, the step-up along the escalation ladder was unarguable.

The unprecedented nature of the Iranian strike cannot be overstated, especially for Israel which effectively links deterrence to its survival as a nation. Hence, Iran arguably matched its threatened consequences, breaking from the cat-and-mouse mode of engagement and setting new terms. Naturally then, Israel, which

has never suffered a direct attack on its soil by Iran, declared this as a breach of Tel Aviv's own red line, and a declaration of war. However, while the Israeli strike on April 19 was direct (on Iranian soil), it remained covert, with Tel Aviv refusing to take responsibility, and implying that the United States leaked the information needlessly. In any case, Washington had been asserting since April 13, that it would not support Israel in a direct war with Iran (while imposing fresh sanctions) and coaxing Israel to view the successful air defence as victory in itself. Effectively then, with its hand restrained (and neither Washington nor Arab capitals showing appetite for military entanglements with Iran), Israel refrained from climbing up the escalation ladder with a higher-rung response. It reverted to the old modus operandi of direct but covert attacks within Iran.

At the end of it, Israel's red lines created a commitment trap, with Tel Aviv eventually seeking escalation control by not claiming the Isfahan strike; National Security Minister Ben Gvir implicitly even termed the Israeli response, "lame". With Iran having thrown the plausible deniability approach out the window through its large drone/missile strike, it is Israel that is staring at deterrence failure in the long run. Hence, instability in West Asia can only be expected to increase as Israel works to restore deterrence, even as the war in Gaza continues, now having killed almost 34,000.

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Why we need to highlight clean air as a poll concern

With the 2024 elections now underway, we find ourselves at a juncture where political choices intersect with the realities of our environment — the need for decisive action is more urgent than ever.

The United Nations (UN) has declared access to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment as a universal human right. Organisations like Friends of the Earth in the UK and the National Environmental Scorecard in the US are urging political leaders to prioritise climate and nature action. However, in the vast democratic landscape of India, a dichotomy persists. While Indians express support for climate action, the issue fails to garner attention as compared to other concerns like inflation and employment. Climate Trends polls revealed that only a small

percentage of citizens view the climate crisis as a major issue. Even though the climate crisis found its way into the election manifestos of major parties in 2019, the ground reality reveals a gap between promises and perception. According to the 2023 World Air Quality Report by IQAir, India is the third most polluted country in the world. Not only has Delhi been the world's most polluted capital city for four years in a row but 83 of the world's 100 most polluted cities are in India.



Bhavreen Kandhari

is an advocate for clean air and environmental justice. The views expressed are personal

The 2019 poll manifestos acknowledged the need to combat toxic air, unlike the silence on the issue in the 2014 elections. The National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) in India aims to achieve a 40% reduction in PM10 and PM2.5 by 2026, as revised from the initial target of 20-30% by 2024. Amidst these electoral dynamics, the role of citizens, particularly

mothers, becomes crucial. With nearly half of India's population being female and a significant number of female voters, there is a collective voice that can shape the electoral narrative. Citizens must demand clean air as a fundamental electoral issue. We need a new pledge from our politicians, transcending mere promises to tangible second-generation measures. The success of past initiatives should embolden leaders to make hard decisions in the interest of public health, demonstrating that effective city governance can prevail without external pressures.

The fight against India's toxic air is not just an environmental concern but a matter of public health and survival. As citizens, this is our chance to advocate for #SwachhHawa-Chunav and #CleanAirElections.

As mothers and parents, our advocacy for clean air gains more resonance when we consider the profound impact on the well-being of our children and the next generation. A recent study conducted by the Potential Energy Coalition and Yale Program on Climate Change Communication revealed a compelling message that resonates globally. The study underscores that the most influential message transcends economic factors or policy considerations — it is the profound love for our children

and the desire to protect the planet for the next generation that moves the world to take action on climate. This unifying sentiment, identified as 12 times more popular than creating jobs, serves as a galvanising force for individuals and communities worldwide. In alignment with this message, parent movement organisations like Our Kids' Climate, Warrior Moms and Parents For Future Global supported by parents in over 40 countries, play a pivotal role. The data affirms the message these mothers bring loud and clear into a shared human aspiration — to hand down a safe, healthy planet to future generations.

As mothers and parents, our collective voice gains strength from this universal desire to safeguard the well-being of our children. This reaffirms that our message carries a unique power in the electoral agendas, emphasising the need for clean air not just as an environmental imperative but as a fundamental act of love and responsibility toward the generations that will inherit the Earth. Let's not shy away from demanding it now. Later is too late!

Bhavreen Kandhari is an advocate for clean air and environmental justice. The views expressed are personal

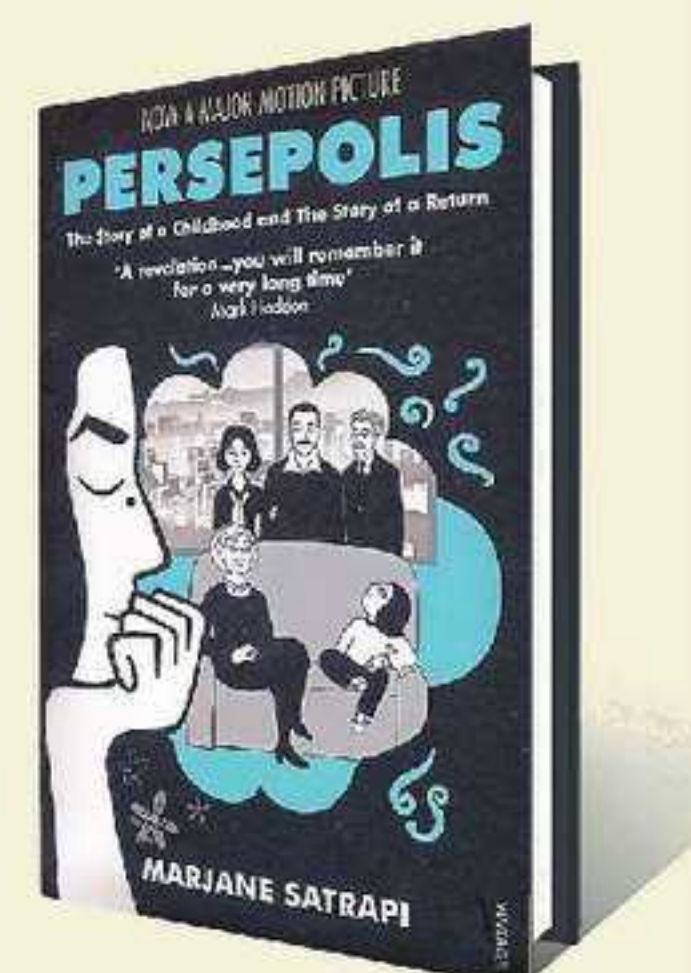
{ EDITOR'S PICK }

HT's editors offer a book recommendation every Saturday, which provides history, context, and helps understand recent news events

UNDERSTANDING IRAN

The situation in West Asia has turned volatile, with Israel hitting Iran with missiles on Friday. The missile attack was in retaliation to Iran launching more than 300 missiles and drones into Israel after the latter targeted a diplomatic compound in Syria causing the death of two Iranian officials. The spotlight has now shifted from Gaza to Tehran and Tel Aviv as the fear of escalation in hostilities looms.

This week, we recommend *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi. This autobiographical graphic novel focuses on a ten-year-old girl's experiences growing up during the Islamic Revolution in Iran in the 1980s. Marjane Satrapi paints a vivid portrait of the internal struggle of her protagonist contrasted with the tumult in Iran following the revolution, which culminated in the devastating Iran-Iraq war. Through this deeply personal story, Satrapi shines a light on what brought about the creation of the Iran that we know today and serves as a stark reminder of the human cost of war and political repression.



Persepolis: Marjane Satrapi
Year: 2000

US vetoes Palestine's UN membership bid

Twelve countries vote in favour of the draft resolution recommending full Palestinian membership

Agence France-Presse
letters@hindustantimes.com

UNITED NATIONS: The United States on Thursday spoiled a long-shot Palestinian bid for full United Nations membership, vetoing a Security Council measure despite growing international distress over the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

The move by Israel's key ally had been expected ahead of the vote, taking place more than six months into Israel's military offensive in the besieged Palestinian territory, in retaliation for the deadly October 7 attack by Hamas militants on southern Israel.

Twelve countries voted in favour of the draft resolution recommending full Palestinian membership. Britain and Switzerland abstained.

Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas's office called the US veto "a blatant aggression... which pushes the region ever further to the edge of the abyss". "The fact that this resolution did not pass will not break our will, and it will not defeat our determination," Palestinian Ambassador to the UN Riyad Mansour said, in tears.

"We will not stop in our effort. The state of Palestine is inevitable. It is real. Please remember that once this session adjourns, in Palestine there are innocents paying the price with their lives... for the delay in justice, freedom and peace," he added, as others in the room also cried.

The draft resolution called for recommending to the General Assembly "that the State of Palestine be admitted to membership of the United Nations" in place of its current "non-member observer state" status, which it has held since 2012.

Despite the US veto, Ambassador Amar Bendjama of Algeria, which introduced the draft, said the resolution's "overwhelming" support "sends a crystal clear message" that the Palestinians belong as a full member state and that their backers "will return stronger and more vocal."

Two-state solution

The United States, Israel's main ally, has not hesitated in the past to use its veto to protect Israel, and did not hide its lack of enthusiasm for Palestinian UN membership in the weeks leading up to the vote.

Washington has said its position is unchanged: that the UN is not the venue for recognition of a Palestinian state, which must be the result of a peace deal with Israel. "The United States continues to strongly support the two-state solution," US Deputy Ambassador Robert Wood said after the vote on Thursday.

What we know about the strike on Iran

Explosions rocked Iran's central Isfahan province on Friday, according to state media, as Israel carried out a retaliatory strike on the Islamic republic.

WHAT WAS HIT?

Early on Friday, Iran's Fars news agency said "three explosions" were heard near the Shekari army airbase in the northwest of Isfahan province. Iran's space agency spokesman Hossein Dalirian said several drones had been shot down and there had been "no missile attack for now". An unnamed US official told CNN the target of the Israeli strike inside Iran was not nuclear. Iran's Tasnim news agency said the "nuclear facilities in Isfahan province are completely secure".

HOW DID IRAN RESPOND?

Air defence systems over several Iranian cities were activated. Flights to the cities of Tehran, Isfahan and Shiraz were suspended, as were airports across several parts of the country. Flight-tracking software showed commercial flights avoiding western Iran, including Isfahan, and skirting Tehran to the north and east.

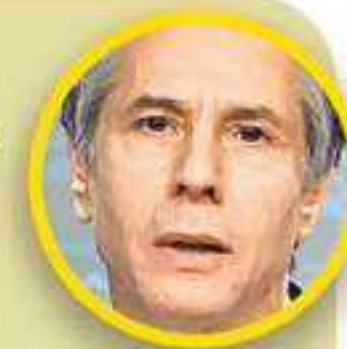
WHY NOW?

Iran-backed armed groups across the region have carried out attacks on Israeli since the war in Gaza broke out in October. In response to a deadly Israeli attack on the Iranian consulate in Damascus on April 1, Tehran fired hundreds of missiles and drones at its arch-foe. Israel had vowed to respond to that onslaught launched last Saturday, which was mostly intercepted and caused no deaths.



A man walks past a banner depicting missiles along a street in Tehran, an anti-Israel billboard (top) with a picture of missiles in Tehran and a nuclear facility in Isfahan (above). AFP/REUTERS

The US has not been involved in any offensive operation.
Antony Blinken, Secretary of State, US



China opposes any action escalating tensions in the Middle East after the Israeli attack on Iran.
Chinese foreign ministry

Significant escalation is not in anyone's interest. What we want to see is calm heads prevail across the region.
Rishi Sunak, Prime Minister, UK

We urge all parties to work to prevent further escalation. The G7 will continue to work to this end.
G7 foreign ministers

We call for the scale of the engagement against the (Israeli) occupation to be expanded in response to the war of genocide in Gaza and the escalation in the region.
Sami Abu Zuhri, senior Hamas official

It's becoming clear that tensions between Iran and Israel risk "turning into a permanent conflict".
Turkish foreign ministry

It is high time to stop the dangerous cycle of retaliation in the Middle East.
Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General, UN

HARD-TO-OBTAIN MEDICAL DEVICES 'PURPOSEFULLY BROKEN' IN GAZA HOSPITALS: UN

GENEVA: The UN decried on Friday the intentional destruction of complex and hard-to-obtain medical equipment in Gaza's beleaguered hospitals and maternity wards, further deepening risks to women already giving birth in "inhumane, unimaginable conditions".

Recent United Nations-led missions to 10 Gaza hospitals found many "in ruins" and just a couple capable of providing any level of maternal health services, said Dominic Allen, the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) representative for the State of Palestine.

He said that what the teams found at the Nasser hospital complex, long besieged by Israeli forces during their operations in the southern city of Khan Yunis, "breaks my heart".

Speaking to journalists in Geneva via video-link from Jerusalem, he described seeing "medical equipment purposefully broken, ultrasounds — which you will know, is a very important tool for helping ensure safe births — with cables that have been cut".

"Screens of complex medical equipment, like ultrasounds and others with the screens smashed," he added. The World Health Organization has described the difficulty of bringing such equipment into Gaza even before the current war erupted following Hamas's October 7 attack inside Israel.

Meanwhile at Al-Khair, another specialised maternity hospital in Khan Yunis, "it didn't seem as if there was any piece of working medical equipment", he said, lamenting that the birthing rooms "stand silent". "They should be a place of giving life and they just have an eerie sense of death."

Only 10 of Gaza's 36 hospitals are currently even partially functioning.

And Allen said that only three of those were now capable of providing assistance to the estimated 180 women giving birth across Gaza every single day — around 15% of whom suffer complications requiring significant care.

Man held in Paris after Iran consulate incident

Agencies
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PARIS: French police on Friday arrested a man who had threatened to blow himself up at Iran's consulate in Paris, but on being searched was found not to be carrying any explosives.

A police source told Reuters the man was seen at about 11 am (local time) entering the consulate, carrying what appeared to be a grenade and explosive vest. Police cordoned off the area.

The man later left the consulate and was then arrested, a police source said. The TV channel BFM said he had been carrying replica grenades.

A police source said it was the same man who had been suspected of attempted arson near the Iranian consulate in an incident last September.

Le Parisien newspaper said on its website that, according to several witnesses, the man had dragged flags on the floor of the consulate and said he wanted to avenge the death of his brother. It was unclear whether the incident had any link to current tensions between Iran and Israel.

Traffic was temporarily suspended on two metro lines that pass through stops close to the consulate, Paris transport company RATP said.

'India can help address tensions in West Asia'

Rezaul H Laskar
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NEW DELHI: India can help address the tensions in West Asia in view of its relations with both Iran and Israel, and take on an active role in "preventing Israeli aggression", Iranian ambassador Iraj Elahi said on Friday against the backdrop of further escalation in the region.

Amid reports of an Israeli drone strike targeting at least two cities within Iran, Elahi sought to play down the matter and said in an interview with HT that there was "no military operation in Isfahan and other cities". He added: "This is just a media war. Israeli authorities are trying to compensate [for] the strike of Iran by [such] shows."

Asked what role Iran sees India playing in the current situation and whether New Delhi can help in any form of mediation, Elahi replied: "We have good relations with India and, of course, India has a close relationship with the Israeli regime. India can play an active role in preventing Israeli aggression."

Accusing Israel of "all kinds of crimes" against the people of Gaza, Elahi said: "Is it right to remain silent in the face of such a crime?"

Soon after Iran carried out its first-ever direct attack on Israel by launching hundreds of drones and missiles on April 13, India expressed serious concern about the increase in hostilities in West Asia and called for immediate de-escalation. External affairs minister S Jaishankar



Iraj Elahi
IRANIAN EMBASSY

spoke separately to his Iranian and Israeli counterparts on April 14 and conveyed India's concerns and emphasised the need to avoid escalation.

The Iranian attack on April 13 was a response to an Israeli airstrike on an Iranian diplomatic compound in the Syrian capital on April 1 that killed seven people, including a senior general

of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).

Elahi described Iran's strikes with drones and missiles as a "proportionate military action" that targeted "some military centres in occupied Palestine within the framework and based on the inherent right of self-defence according to Article 51 of the United Nations Charter".

"Before carrying out the attack, we had informed the neighbouring countries that were in the path of the missiles because of maintaining the safety of passenger planes. After the operation, [Iran's] foreign minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian had a telephone conversation with Mr Jaishankar, the minister of foreign affairs of India, and informed him about

the details of the operation," he said.

Asked about India's concern over the situation in West Asia, especially because of the presence of nine million expatriates in the region, Elahi contended that Iran "has never sought to spread war and harm civilians". He added, "The security of people is important, and it doesn't matter if they are Indian or Iranian or Palestinian or any other nationality... In our operation, we never sought to harm people and only targeted military bases."

According to Elahi, the way forward in the Israel-Hamas conflict is to refer the matter to a referendum and "ask the opinion of the original inhabitants of this land, whether Muslim, Christian or Jewish".

{ UKRAINE-RUSSIA WAR } \$61BN AID PACKAGE STUCK IN U.S. CONGRESS

Ukraine could lose war this year without aid: CIA

Agencies
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WASHINGTON/KYIV: The CIA chief warned on Thursday that Ukraine could lose the war to Russia by the end of this year unless the United States sends more military aid.

The grim warning by Bill Burns came as the US House of Representatives is scheduled to vote on Saturday on a \$61 billion aid package for Ukraine that has been held up for months by Republican lawmakers allied with Donald Trump as he seeks re-election.

The administration of President Joe Biden has been warning as it lobbied to send more ammunition and other material to Ukraine that the pro-Western US ally could lose territory to Russia's invasion forces unless it got more American help.

But on Thursday, in a speech at the George W Bush Center, Burns said the stakes are now much higher.

"With the boost that would come from military assistance, both practically and psychologically, I think the Ukrainians are entirely capable of holding their own through 2024," Burns said.

"Without supplemental assistance, the picture is a lot more dire," he added.

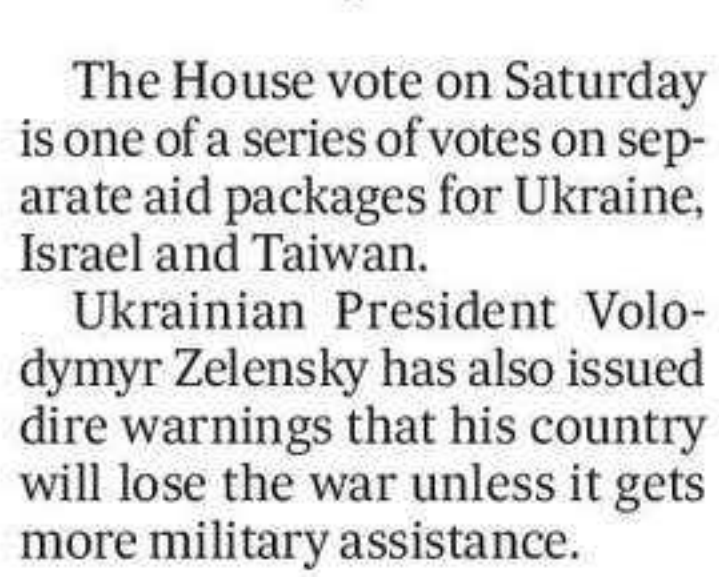
"There is a very real risk that the Ukrainians could lose on the battlefield by the end of 2024, or at least put Putin in a position where he could dictate the terms of a political settlement," he said, referring to Russia's president.

Burns did not specify what he meant by "lose" the war.

He also tried to illustrate how hard up the Ukrainian forces are for fresh ammunition. Burns said two brigades — 2,000-plus-soldier units — had "15 artillery rounds per day" and "a grand total of 42 mortar rounds", respectively.



Rescuers extinguishing a fire at the site of a missile attack in Dnipro on Friday; the remains of a Russian Tu-22M3 bomber (right) in an agricultural field outside Urochislte.



The House vote on Saturday is one of a series of votes on separate aid packages for Ukraine, Israel and Taiwan.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has also issued dire warnings that his country will lose the war unless it gets more military assistance.

The Tu-22M3 was downed some 300 kilometres from the Ukrainian border after launching missiles, Ukraine's military intelligence, or GUR, said on its website. It was the first successful hit against this type of bomber since the start of Russia's invasion, GUR said. Ukraine's defence ministry also

confirmed the strike.

At least one of pilots was killed, two survived, and another was missing, TASS reported, citing the local governor in Stavropol. Russia's military hasn't commented on the crash so far.

Kyiv has been secretive about its capacity to down targets inside Russia. The jet was destroyed using the same type of weapon previously used to down an A-50 radio surveillance airplane, GUR said without elaborating.

Ukraine reported downing an A-50 near the Sea of Azov in January and another in February over Russia.

JAPANESE WORKERS ESCAPE SUICIDE ATTACK IN PAK

KARACHI: A suicide bomber detonated his explosive-laden vest near a van carrying Japanese autoworkers in Pakistan's port city of Karachi on Friday, police said. They narrowly escaped the attack but three bystanders were wounded.

The attack on the van happened when it was heading to an industrial area where the five Japanese nationals worked at Pakistan Suzuki Motors, local police chief Arshad Awan said. He said police escorting the Japanese returned fire after coming under attack, killing an accomplice of the suicide bomber whose remains were found at the scene of the attack. "All the Japanese who were the target of the attack are safe," Awan said.

Biden steps up prez campaign as Trump remains caught up in trial

Agence France-Presse
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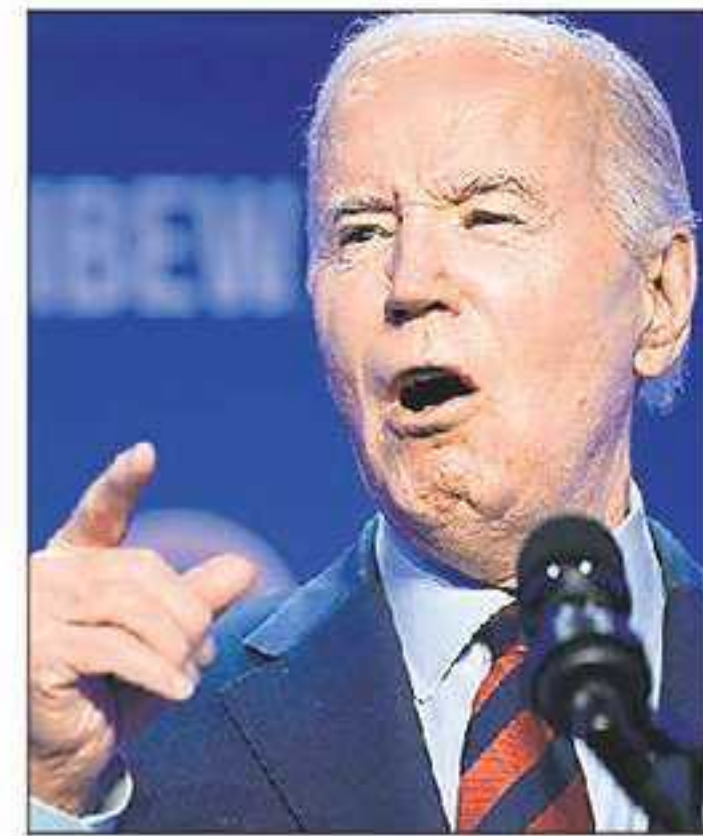
WASHINGTON: Joe Biden hopes to capitalise on Donald Trump being stuck in court as he hits the US presidential election campaign trail — and can't resist poking fun at his rival's predicament.

While Trump was in his historic hush money trial this week, Biden embarked on a three-day swing through his birthplace, the crucial battleground state of Pennsylvania.

He visited his childhood home and campaigned with the Kennedys, while Trump complained about being in a "freezing" New York courtroom unable to campaign.

"Under my predecessor — who's busy right now — Pennsylvania lost 275,000 jobs," the 81-year-old Biden deadpanned in reference to his rival's situation, while his audience at a steelworkers' union laughed.

It was the first time Biden



US President Joe Biden

had publicly acknowledged Trump's criminal trial since it got underway in New York on Monday, and a departure from his previous silence on the matter. "Let's call it the Trump's in the courtroom, Biden's in Pennsylvania strategy," former White House communications director Kate Bedingfield said.

The Democrat has previously appeared keen to avoid the appearance of tipping the scales

of justice, knowing it could give Trump ammunition for claims that he's the victim of a Biden-led witch-hunt.

The White House said he was not following the trial, adding that his "focus is on the American people".

Man sets self on fire outside Trump trial

A man set himself on fire on Friday outside the court where Donald Trump is standing trial in Manhattan, New York police said, with officers rushing to extinguish the flames.

TV reporters described the scene that unfolded moments after the full panel of 12 jurors and six alternates was selected for the trial of the former president in a hush money cover-up case.

"A male did light himself on fire outside of the Supreme Courthouse. We're still gathering details from the field," said a spokesman for the New York Police Department.

{ NASA } SPACE MISSION TO JUPITER REVEALS COMPELLING DISCOVERIES

Juno mission gives insights into Jupiter's moon

HT Correspondent
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NEW DELHI: In a groundbreaking announcement, scientists from NASA's Juno mission to Jupiter have revealed compelling discoveries gleaned from recent flybys of the gas giant's enigmatic moon, Io.

During two close encounters with Io in December 2023 and February 2024, Juno captured unprecedented data. This data has now been transformed into captivating animations showcasing two of Io's most striking features: a towering mountain and a vast expanse of cooling lava resembling a glass-smooth lake.

The mission's principal investigator, Scott Bolton, shared

insights into the findings during a news conference held at the European Geophysical Union General Assembly in Vienna.

"Io is simply littered with volcanoes, and we caught a few of them in action," said Bolton. "There is amazing detail showing these crazy islands embedded in the middle of a potentially magma lake rimmed with hot lava," he added.

Moreover, maps generated with data collected by Juno's Microwave Radiometer (MWR) instrument unveiled Io's relatively smooth surface compared to Jupiter's other moons, along with colder poles. The mission also allows for improved resolution of Jupiter's northern polar cyclones.



Taylor Swift

Taylor Swift's new album released

NEW YORK: Taylor Swift released her highly anticipated record "The Tortured Poets Department" on Friday — the 11th studio album from the megastar who is already having a blockbuster year.

"New album The Tortured poets department out now," she wrote on her Instagram account, ending the announcement with a heart emoji. The working theory has been that the album centres on her ex, British actor Joe Alwyn, who Swift dated starting in 2016 until they broke up a year ago.

WHO approves new oral cholera vaccine

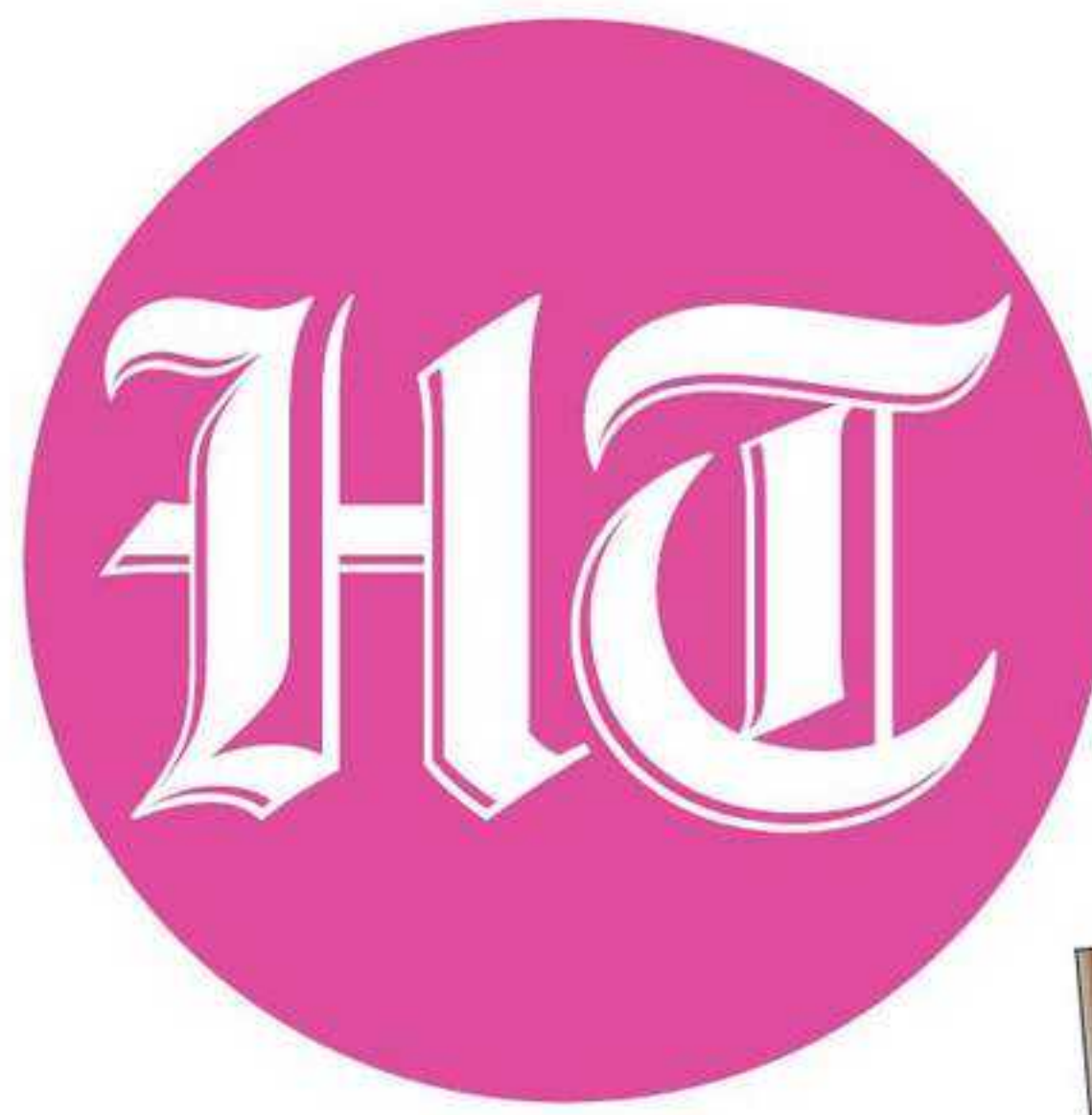
GENEVA: The WHO announced on Friday it had approved a new, simpler version of an existing oral cholera vaccine, which should help increase the number of available doses as global cases surge. The Evuichol-S vaccine is a simplified formulation of Evuichol-Plus, with fewer components — which should allow for larger volumes to be produced faster.

28 Syrian govt forces killed by IS attackers

BEIRUT: Islamic State (IS) group fighters on Thursday killed 28 Syrian government forces in two attacks on government-held areas, a war monitor said. IS overran large swathes of Syria and Iraq in 2014, proclaiming a so-called caliphate and launching a reign of terror.



The JunoCam instrument on NASA's Juno spacecraft captured this view of Jupiter's moon Io, on April 9.



RELAX. THE WEEKEND'S HERE brunch



So much more in HT Brunch! Stories about life, love, good times and good vibes. People, places, and strange new worlds. All a swipe away in the compact, shareable, e-magazine out every Saturday. Check it out. It's free!



{ HOW ARE WE FEELING? }
This week, we're...

Prepping for April 25



Because if you've watched Miss Congeniality (2000), especially the pageant Q&A round, you'll know it's Miss Rhode Island's idea of a perfect date. April 25 is "not too hot. Not too cold. All you need is a light jacket". Actual dating is mostly rubbish anyway. We'll take this perfect date, even if it's on a calendar.

Gonna need a moment

We just found out that Nicola Coughlan, bona fide Derry Girl and little Penelope Featherington, is actually 37 years old. She's played nubile nutcases so convincingly, we thought she was a decade younger. We're shipping #Polin anyway. IYKYK.

All about the hide.

We learnt, last week, that Lenny Kravitz, 59, wears leather pants when he's pumping iron at the gym. Of course he does, right? This is the guy who recently got roasted by his own daughter for wearing mostly see-through shirts. He's rocked scarves as big as blankets, high heels, feather and fur. But leather for workouts? Must get a bit stinky.

Team Vick Hope.

Who? She's Calvin Harris's wife and a radio host. Harris dated Taylor Swift between 2015-2016. Hope recently shared that when her husband's away, she listens to Swift's songs. No one's immune. Joe Jonas' ex-wife Sophie Turner does it, as does Taylor Lautner's wife Taylor Dome. Look what you made them do, Taylor!

Thank you, next

How much can you decode from a man's dating bio? We got actor Alaya F to suss out a few profiles and tell us what how to spot a creep from a keeper via just a few lines

Karishma Kuenzang
letters@hindustantimes.com

Photographed by Alaya F. Styled by Sheefaj Gilani, assisted by Jhanvi Khatwani. Make up by Mitali Vakil, hair by Sourav Roy. Outfit by Massimo Dutti, Amritraj Bora. Jewellery by Viangevintage.



Surely, the dating-app bio is the literary art form of our time. A whole personality squeezed into a few upbeat lines. Hobbies are played up (I travel! I eat! I spend Sunday recovering from Saturday night!). Anxieties are played down (I'm tall... enough! I'm not too needy! I can take a joke!). Some throw in a bonus: A pop-culture reference, a pun, a possi-

bly stolen playlist. Some, seal their own fates, opening with a joke so off-colour, there's no need to read on.

Actor Alaya F, 26 and single, has seen them all. So, what does make someone dateable in 2024? Fresh off her summer release Bade Miyan Chote Miyan, and as she waits for her next, Srikanth, she looks through 15 dating bio prompts and picks what she'd swipe right on.

Mr Has-too-many-gym-pictures. They're all shirtless (hello nipples!). He never skips leg day. His sweaty face is not bad-looking.

I know the best place in town for: Gymming. My typical Sunday: Workout, followed by a healthy breakfast.

Alaya says: I'd swipe left. It's important to take care of your body. But it can't be your whole identity. If he had balanced all the gym stuff with other things he does, or pictures with other people, it might give the idea of a more rounded life. As an actor, I'm used to meeting people who are self-involved and into their looks. It makes me wonder about their personality.

Mr Who-cares-about-grammar? He's wearing sunglasses in every picture. He types lyk dis. My pet-peeve: Mah lyf mah rulz. My biggest fear is: Yes.

Alaya says: Bad grammar and texting hygiene is a turnoff. But it's not a character flaw. It's an easy fix. If there's more to the person, swipe right. There

Would you date a guy who dated your friend?

Alaya says: I'd call my friend and get a low-down on the guy. There are so many reasons a date doesn't work out. Maybe they're both chill people who just didn't vibe.



Don't be like Arjun Kapoor, who woos Kareena by comparing her to a pasta dish in Ki and Ka (left, 2016). The worst conversation starter is, "So, do you like cheese?", made iconic in She's The Man (right, 2006). (Inset) Don't try the smoulder like Flynn in Tangled (2010).



are worse things out there.

Dude with Dogs. Every picture with a different dog. **Dating Me Is Like:** Living on a dog farm. **The first line of his DM:** "Hi, I'm new to this. I think you're attractive and I'd love to take you out and see if we gel".

Alaya says: I'd swipe right. I love dogs. Though two pictures suffice to deliver the message. Either this person really likes dogs or is trying to hide something. You only understand so much about a person through a dating bio. If the animal pictures are date-bait, you won't be able to fake it past a few meetings. And shame on you!

The smooth talker. A good mix of pictures. Says he's a foodie. Manages to reference Rumi, Dumbledore, and Taylor Swift.

My love language is: Annoying you. **A random fact I love is:** We are all gonna die.

Alaya says: On the surface, he seems sweet. There's nothing upsetting. But he does seem to be someone who's a simp but is also pretentious. Sometimes, smooth can come across as cheesy or creepy. I'm up for being honest. But if you're smooth all the time, then it's a crutch. I wouldn't swipe immediately, but take my time.

Mr traveller. Selfie on mountain. Airport shots tagged "Guess where?". **My typical Sunday:** Taking off to somewhere new.

This year I really want to: Work on my temper. **Alaya says:** Swipe right, give him a

Prajakta Koli got it right in Mismatched (right, 2020). Opening with "Hello, my future wife" DESERVES a cold coffee thrown in your face. In an episode of The Bold Type (below, 2017-2021), Jane, Kat and Sutton use an app which lets the user's friends pick their dates. It doesn't end well.



chance. The admission that he's working on his temper is a little too forward for a dating profile. It's not the first thing someone should know about you. But it shows that he is self-aware and wants to work on it. Be open while swiping, but do evaluate after.

Captain Punchline. Pictures of him dancing at parties. And one with a poster of SRK. **Dating me is like:** Dating ubbleby chawal. With the right company, I can be biryani.

I'm weirdly attracted to: GIFs. **Alaya says:** He seems like a nice, sweet and fun guy. I like the quieter type because I am extroverted. That poster of SRK and being the life of party shows that he's loud and funny. A lot of girls love that.

The Bollywood diehard Sunset photo. Looks like he might be shorter than you. **Together we could:** Do dhamaal! **First round is on me if:** You dance to '90s and '00s Hindi gaane.

Alaya says: If he's shorter than me, it's a no because I am already 5'3". He seems fun and very filmy. But, I'd swipe left, because I can learn choreography and dance one time. I won't remember it for life.

The Daddy. He's at least twice your age in his pictures, though his profile claims he's in your age group. **I'd fall for you if:** You're slim, pretty and innocent looking.

This year I really want to: Travel. **Alaya says:** Swipe left. I hate these people who say they are looking for someone who's manipulable. I also hate it when people are hyper specific about what they want, but don't offer the same thing.

Mr Footsie. He's a cat dad. He's shared pics of his favourite perfumes. He says he's attracted to good footwear.

My most irrational fear: A break-up. **Together we could:** Delete this app. **Alaya says:** The footwear comment seems odd. Hopefully, he means that he's a sneakerhead. So, I'd swipe right. The fact that he's saying that he's scared of breaking up makes it seem like he's someone who wants a relationship, which is sweet.

The Poly guy. There are only group pictures, so you aren't sure which one he is.

I'm all about: Dating without getting married to each other.

I'm looking for: A rebound relationship. But, you won't hear about my ex from me, #guaranteed.

Alaya says: Swipe left, and run. It's definitely not cool to advertise that you are looking for a rebound. If you aren't looking for something serious, use the term "something casual" instead. This is just disrespectful to women.

{ LISTICLE }

Drawn of a new age

Anime heroes and heroines are finally growing up. They're chivalrous, cheeky and vulnerable. Here are our favourites from the last few years



Christalle Fernandes
christalle.fernandes@hindustantimes.com

Kiyoka Kudou.

The ash-blond commander from My Happy Marriage (2023) is gifted with electrokinetic and pyrokinetic powers, but hides a surprisingly gentle heart beneath his stern exterior. His patient side emerges when his engagement is arranged with Miyo Saimori. Our hero gradually helps her shed the baggage from the abuse she's experienced from her family. Both the anime series and live-action Japanese film are on Netflix.

Hori Kyouko.

Hori-chan, the heroine in Horimiya (2021), is a typical teacher's pet, obsessed with academics and being the popular girl at school. In reality, she's secretly dealing with an absent mother and struggling with adult household responsibilities. When she forges a friendship with the outcast Izumi Miyamura, she learns that being responsible isn't a bad thing. Streaming on Netflix.

Tōru Kirishima.

The Demon of Sakuragi shines in his unlikely role as babysitter of his boss's seven-year-old daughter, Yaeka, in The Yakuza's Guide to Babysitting (2022). Wry, larger-than-life, and with a sense of humour as sharp as his incisors, Kirishima is tender and patient with his shy ward, eventually drawing her out of her shell. Streaming on Netflix.



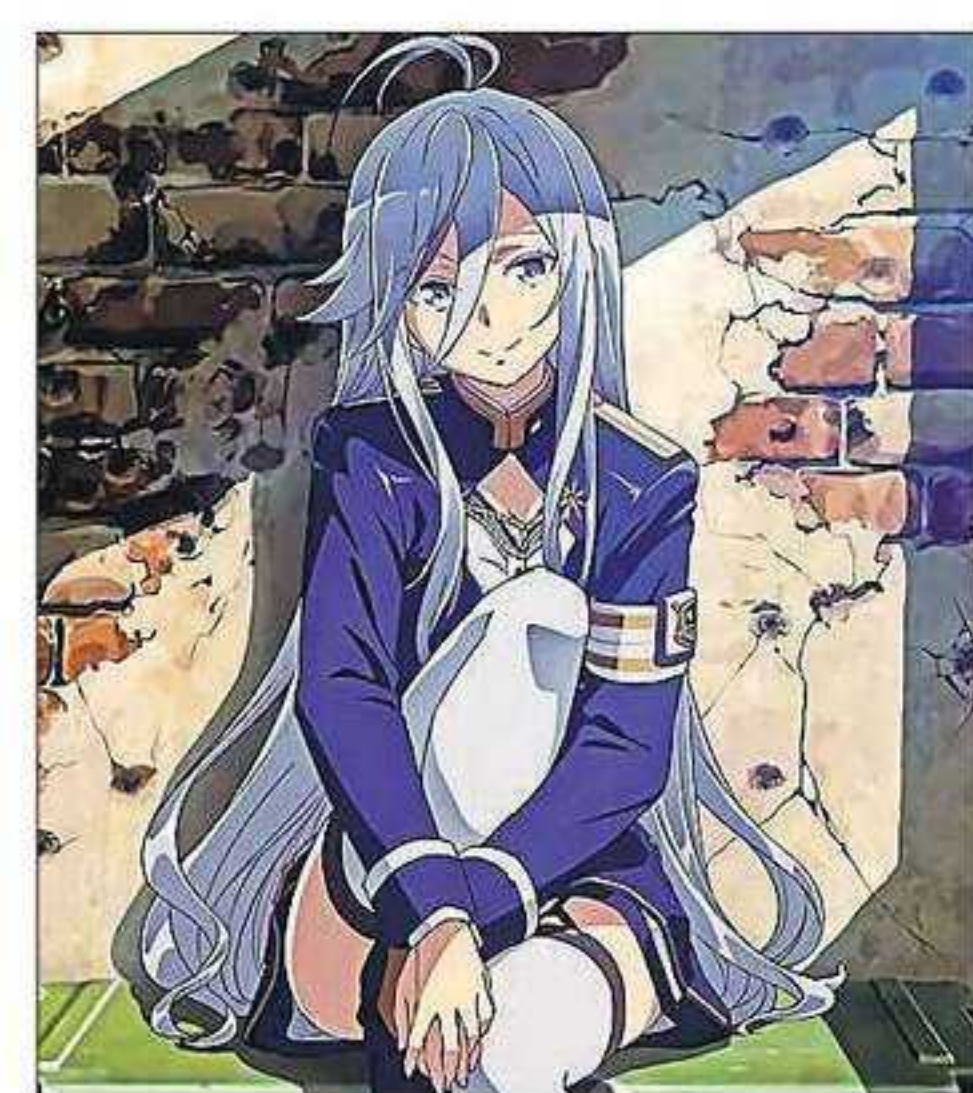
Kunieda Kei.

The gregarious TV anchor in Yes, No, or Maybe? (2020) presents a cheerful, extroverted version of himself to the world. It's at odds with his inner self: he's often pessimistic and depressed, and in the process of confronting his queerness. Animator Ushio Tsuzuki ends up falling for the real him, making for a very complicated story. Streaming on Crunchyroll.



Tohru Honda.

The 16-year-old orphan girl at the heart of Fruits Basket (2019) is the kind of tirelessly cheerful Pollyanna that can grate on an audience's nerves. But there are bitter ingredients in the sweet mix. The story starts when she moves in with the Sohma family after losing her mother in an accident. That optimism is merely a shield against a magic secret she's struggling with. Streaming on Netflix.



Vladilena Milizé.

The misunderstood warrior from 86: Eighty-six (2021) is battling the empire that's attacking her nation. But she doesn't really know what she's fighting for. Still, she's earnest, determined to win freedom for the 86 veterans she commands. She'll stop at nothing, and isn't above a little manipulation. Hey, it's for the greater good, right? Streaming on Crunchyroll.



Loid Forger.

A spy who grew up as an orphan, Loid's calm demeanour hides the trauma of his past. The efficient, smooth, calculating hero of Spy x Family (2022) is so committed, he even marries a woman he just met, and adopts a daughter, just so he can infiltrate her school and spy on a politician whose son studies there. Streaming on Netflix.



Elise De Clorance.

Reincarnated in another timeline, Elise from Doctor Elise: The Royal Lady With the Lamp (2024) heals people with her modern-day medical knowledge. The petite, princessy blonde is bold and spirited, fighting misogyny and superstition. She also uses her knowledge of the future to save her family from a disaster. Streaming on Crunchyroll.

Park Hyeong-Seok.

In Lookism (2022), the Korean high-schooler is your every-day not-so-handsome protagonist, who wakes up one day in a much hotter body. He must choose between making the most of his looks and developing who he always was inside. Cheer him on, on his path to acceptance—there's angst, romance, even street fights. Streaming on Netflix.



Kaguya Shinomiya.

Clad in a neat black-and-white uniform with her hair done up with a red handkerchief, the female lead of the romance comedy Kaguya-sama: Love is War (2019) is attractive but insecure. Nothing, no one, gets in the way of her academic goals. But she has a soft spot for the male lead, Miyuki Shirogane, who gets her to loosen up and enjoy life. Streaming on Netflix.

{ RIGHT NOW }

Small batch, big worry

Artisanal goods cost more. But they also stand for a different way of living and doing business. See how some of them are crafting change

Shraddha Chowdhury
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Artisanal producers aren't just hoping to lure customers away from large impersonal (but cheaper) retail stores, they're also in competition among themselves. Eleftheria Cheese is priced out by imported processed cheese. The Green Collective works with women who turn foraged pine needles into décor products. It's hard to deliver bulk order in a short time.

Pop quiz: What word shows up on a cheese menu, at a chic boutique, in a home-décor business, on handmade soaps and candle brands, in studio pottery and on Insta Reels? It also dominated last weekend's flea market. We'd give you 10 points for guessing "artisanal", but alas, we only have eight. As with everything artisanal, supply is limited.

Most modern small businesses define artisanal in the usual way. It's a trade or craft practised using traditional skills, to make high-quality products in small batches. This supports traditional techniques and preserves fast-vanishing skills. It also offers customers an alternative to impersonal mass-manufactured items.

In big cities, where modern artisanal brands have mushroomed over the past decade, the term often just means over-fragranced, over-packaged and overpriced. "It's overused and often improperly understood," says Ishita Sudha Yashvi, who co-founded Tinkaa Tinkaa Clothing that made modern casual Indianwear in hand-crafted cotton. "Very few consumers understand the value of artisanal labels."

It's only one of the challenges artisanal brands face after their initial burst of earnest success. See how some well-loved companies are struggling to stay focused and to scale up against the odds.

Distance learning

Most brands that sell in cities rely on the handwork of artisans in far-flung villages, rather than a factory. It means that logistics are a constant challenge. A single spell of rain can mean that a batch of handmade burrata will spoil before the little refrigerated van makes it to the shops. Mausam Narang, founder of Eleftheria Cheese, says

that establishing a cold-chain logistics network in Mumbai was the primary challenge for her nine-year-old business. "Sourcing high-quality raw materials, especially milk, is also difficult, despite India being one of the largest milk producers," she says.

In smaller towns, power cuts are frequent, stalling work. And even if all goes well, a successful new brand will, sooner or later, run into an old problem: How to scale up. Akanksha Batra's The Green Collective works with rural women who forage for pine needles on the forest floor, sort them by quality and use the best ones to hand craft coils that are turned into home-décor products. "You can't compare this beautiful process to a machine-made piece," she says. "But the women can only make a limited number of products in a day or week. They cannot churn out large volumes like machines. This can be daunting when we receive bulk orders with a short turnaround time."

Package deal

It's a tough market. Artisanal producers aren't just hoping to lure customers away from large impersonal (but cheaper) retail stores, they're also in competition among themselves. How to convince a young Indian shopper that handmade, natural-vanilla-scented soaps offer a better experience than the 5+1 free deal at the supermarket? How might they then pick from the 50 handmade soap brands sold online or hawked out of cottage-core kiosks at the weekend bazaar?

"The majority of the online retail market, artisanal or not, is dominated by a few aggregators," says Yashvi. They operate on larger scales, have bigger marketing budgets and are able to advertise on billboards, top-tier websites, blitz their ASMR clips on Reels, and offer quick delivery. "It makes it nearly impossible for small, artisanal brands to wrest business away from them."

Eleftheria Cheese is routinely undercut by low-priced imported processed cheeses. But with boutique fashion, it's possible to chart a new path. Designer Sanket Bhansali set up his label, Bougainvillea, in 2020, selling natural-fabric, hand-printed dresses, co-ord sets and jumpsuits as an alternative to fast fashion. The challenge, he says, is to survive, especially in the first two years.

Sanket Bhansali set up his label Bougainvillea in 2020, selling natural-fabric, hand-printed dresses, co-ords and jumpsuits. The challenge, he says, is to survive, especially in the first two years. "Then you thrive by scaling up."

"Then you thrive by scaling up." The brand has a flagship store in Pune and one each in Mumbai and Hyderabad. The bulk of the business happens on their website, via ads on social media. To expand, they simply explored new territories abroad.

Scaling up

Most artisanal enterprises have no option but to stay small, even if they build demand. So they get creative within their self-enforced spheres. Narang says her cheese brand eliminates middlemen and supplies directly to consumers, "to maintain control over product quality and integrity".

Others work towards educating potential consumers on what makes their products so special, playing up the skilled handcrafts, delicate flavours that emerge from small-batch processes, the focus on sustainability and fair trade. "Good craftsmanship should not be cheap," says Yashvi.

Around the world, customers who've switched loyalties from mass-produced to artisanal have learnt to live with the quirks: Handmade products will vary from batch to batch; they cost more because they're made differently; stocks often run out; and there's rarely an exploitative discount.

Bhansali says producers must do their bit, too. "Be honest with the craft and customer. Work with newer technology if it means producing the same thing with less effort," he says. And stay focused on what makes the brand artisanal in the first place, adds Batra: "Remain original and authentic to your art, your purpose, your artisans, and the ecosystem that builds your brand. It's what will carry your story most beautifully."

though. It gained a reputation abroad and was later launched in the Indian market.

Fifteen years ago I interviewed Jagdale for Brunch and asked him if he thought others could also make good malt whiskies in India and go beyond our much-derided IMFL. He responded that other distilleries were also sitting on stocks of good malt whisky and if the industry chose to, then India could easily go beyond IMFL.

At the time, both Jagdale and I were sceptical that this would happen and it did take a while. But it's certainly happening now. Real whisky is being made and such brands as the highly regarded Paul John have found success in the market and Indri is so popular that it is served everywhere.

It was only a matter of time before the big international companies got interested. The process was led by Diageo which took a niche/craft approach. It first launched a limited-edition whisky called Epitome, the first batch of which was made from old barrels of rice spirit that Vijay Mallya (who owned

{ PERSONAL AGENDA }

Ayushmann Khurrana

Actor, @AyushmannK

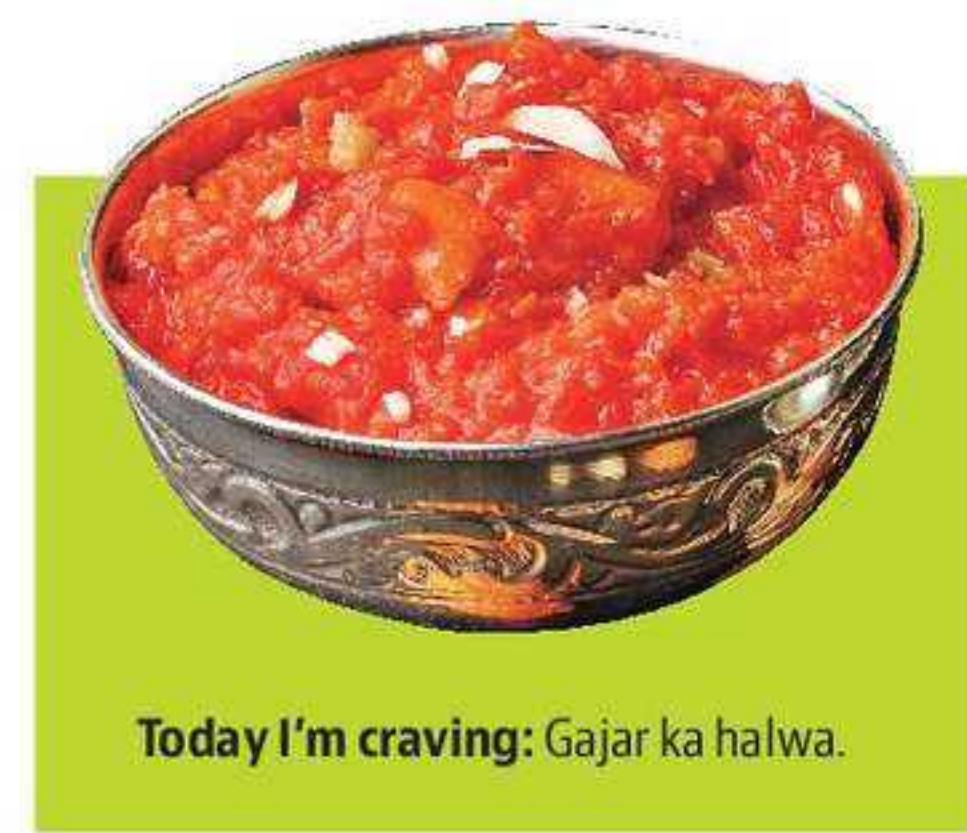
Veenu Singh

letters@hindustantimes.com

Currently I am:
At the launch of the Bulgari B zero1 kada bracelet.

On my playlist:
Sirens, by Monolink; Sans Toi, by Pomme; Ausgehen, by AnnenMayKantereit.

One thing I would never buy:
Instagram followers.



Today I'm craving: Gajar ka halwa.

App I check before going to bed:
WhatsApp.

My favourite subject in school:
Hindi and History.

I'd swipe right on:
Many things, but nothing on Tinder.

My secret skill is:
That I can fall asleep anywhere.

A superpower wish I had:
The ability to eat everything and still keep my abs firm.

My favourite Sunday memory:
Sleeping and eating. As an adult, it's just not the same.

My most star-struck moment:
Seeing Shah Rukh Khan for the first time when I was working in radio.

My favourite bad habit:
I often think that I'm too contented, almost complacent and lazy. I keep trying to find a balance between ambition and satisfaction in life.

If I could travel back or forward in time:
I'd travel back and spend more time with my father before he passed away.

The best thing about fame:
The love you receive from people.

The worst thing about fame:
You can't be yourself everywhere. And it's challenging to keep your guard up, your persona shining, all the time.

Last thing I ordered online:
CrossFit shoes.



column { rude drink }

A stirring in our spirits

India drinks more whisky than any other country. But most of it has been flavoured neutral alcohol. The real stuff, made from grain, is now brewed locally, and has fans the world over. Pour a large one and cheer



VIR SANGHVI

Are you surprised by all the hype around high-quality Indian whisky? A little taken aback, perhaps, by claims that Indian whiskies are among the best in the world? Staggered by the number of awards Indian whiskies are supposed to have won at international competitions that you have never heard of?

And, in the midst of this blizzard of hype, do you ask yourselves the obvious question: Wasn't Indian whisky supposed to be so substandard that those who could afford to buy it always drank Scotch instead? How then did Indian whisky suddenly reach these heights?

If you do, then don't be overly impressed by claims that Indian whisky is better than Scotch or any other whisky.

Because it is not that simple. First, a little background. India has long been a whisky market, thanks to the British. Until the 1950s, the whisky-drinking classes drank imported Scotch. Then, as import controls were imposed, duties shot up and it became more and more difficult (and prohibitively expensive) to import Scotch.

Many Indian entrepreneurs rushed to fill the vacuum. Importers of Scotch now tried to produce domestic

whisky. But none of it ever really tasted like Scotch for a very good reason: The way we made it.

Scotch is usually made from barley. Indian whisky was traditionally made by taking neutral spirit (alcohol) made from a variety of sources (sugarcane and molasses in legend, but more likely to be rice these days), to which was added some kind of whisky flavouring, perhaps a real malt whisky. This was rarely aged for as long as Scotch. And so, when it hit the market, it was never as good as Scotch. But it was much, much cheaper. We called it IMFL (Indian Made Foreign Liquor) to distinguish it from local country liquor.

It was IMFL that had a negative image (not entirely undeservedly) and many countries (the UK, the EU etc) wouldn't even let us call IMFL 'whisky' on the grounds that it was just flavoured neutral alcohol.

But even as the world sneered, it needed the huge Indian market more than we needed the world. For instance, an Indian brand McDowell's is the largest-selling whisky in the world, on the basis of the vast volumes it sells at home.

India did make some real whisky. Solan Number One (ask your parents about it) was a genuine malt whisky and in the days when Vijay Mallya owned McDowell's, the company produced a hard-to-find malt whisky, bottles of which were sent to Vijay's friends and acquaintances.

But the pioneer of the whisky boom you hear so much about these days was a man called NR Jagdale, who made malt whisky, which was sold to firms who blended it for their own whiskies. After 1990, when the big international companies entered the fray, there was less demand for Jagdale's malts.

Jagdale had the idea of using his malts for a whisky he could sell directly to customers. He called the whisky Amrut and went straight for the international market. It took three years, but eventually Amrut broke



Read more: A closer look at India's whisky obsession, in HT Wknd.



Real whisky, made in India, is well loved and regarded. Indri is served everywhere. Amrut went for the foreign market, earned a good reputation, and then launched here.



the company before Diageo took it over) must have laid down years ago.

And then it went for broke, launching Godawan, an artisanal whisky created in Rajasthan to reflect the terroir. Godawan has two variants. The first is on par with any good Scottish malt. The second is more easily accessible to people with no background of malt drinking, and can make a base for cocktails.

I went for the Godawan launch party in New York and was astonished to see how much the whisky was appreciated by a room full of F&B professionals and spirits experts.

Diageo has now followed up on Godawan's success by launching a McDowell's malt whisky. This is a new product, unrelated to the old malt Vijay Mallya used to make. And just as Godawan reflects Rajasthan, this uses the terroir of Nasik and water from a local river. It is made according to a complicated process, in which the whisky goes through three to four stages of barrel ageing. (Bourbon casks, virgin oak, Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz barrels.) It is a very small production (6,000 bottles) but it will be available in the shops.

A McDowell's single malt? Why would you name such a high-quality malt whisky after a mass-market IMFL whisky? I put the question to Ruchira Jaitley, Diageo's chief marketing officer, and the answer I got was that Diageo was very proud of McDowell's century-plus heritage, and wanted to build on that tradition. I tried the new whisky



Scotch is usually made from barley. McDowell's new single-malt, made in a small batch of 6,000 bottles, has a rich flavour reminiscent of Christmas pudding.



BOOKS

Celebrating the 131st birth anniversary of Joan Miro



The work of Joan Miro (April 20, 1893 - December 25, 1983), the Spanish-Catalan painter, sculptor, muralist, ceramicist and installation artist, still stands out for its originality. Though initially influenced by the Surrealists, his work had a distinct style that went on to inspire both the Abstract Expressionists and the Colour Field painters. Some of his most famous works include paintings such as *The Farm* (1920-21), *Catalan Landscape* (1923-24), and the sculpture *Woman and Bird* (1982). Above, Miro at his studio.

ALAIN DEJAN / SYGMA VIA GETTY IMAGES

{ MANOJ KUMAR JENA }
EDITOR, WAYS OF BEING INDIAN

The mytho-epic imagination in India provides a shared collective unconscious.

On the Books & Authors podcast on www.htsmartcast.com

{ INTERVIEW } YUVAN AVES, AUTHOR, INTERTIDAL: A COAST AND MARSH DIARY

‘Sometimes I write to think’

On evoking how our identity is interlinked with the landscape

Chintan Girish Modi

letters@hindustantimes.com

1 *Intertidal* is based on a diary you kept in Chennai between 2020 and 2022. What made you record your “observations of coast, wetland, climate and self” in such detail? Did this start out as something personal, or was it meant to be public?

There were multiple entry points into this book. Deep observation, note-making and writing have been my practice when I’ve had any close engagement with a local landscape or the natural world, or an environmental campaign.

Between 2020 and 2022, I was becoming deeply involved with multiple coast-related campaigns. In the process of advocacy, travel, campaigning, conversation and ground work, I also wanted to create a literary work that would evoke these landscapes powerfully in people’s minds, in such a way that would be able to appreciate how our identity is indelibly interlinked with these spaces that are so important for us and all manner of life.

Sometimes I write to think; sometimes I write to express and put things out in the world. It resulted in a detailed documentation of a large stretch of coast, local biodiversity and local communities, threads connecting with them, and a constant effort to create material such as citizen-science data and educational resources.

2 How do you explain what “intertidal” means to people unfamiliar with this word?

When you go to the beach, you find that the waves, the ocean, the water level... the tides, go in and come out at six-hour intervals because of the combined pull of the sun and the moon. The space that is uncovered during low tide, and covered during high tide, is called the intertidal. That, of course, is the physical or oceanographic definition. But the intertidal is also a very rich metaphor in terms of metaphysical space — a space where land and ocean meet, merge and blur boundaries.

This space is ecologically vulnerable but also very rich in life. Any intertidal space can help one think about other intertidal spaces; for instance, the intertidal space between self and other. What is the blurring boundary between these?

When one stands on the coast, one wonders: Where does the ocean start? Where does the land begin? As such, the binary between land and water is broken. Similarly, we can think about the intertidal space between inner and outer; the intertidal space between human and non-human. All these clean binaries, these broad strokes of categorisation, influence so much of our thinking, and limit it in a way. The intertidal helps us perceive in a richer, deeper way.

3 For whom did you write this book?

For whoever picks up the book and reads it! One of the principles I’ve followed is to make action — a campaign, direct observation, conservation, or work in nature education and self-enquiry — my fuel. In hindsight, I can say a high-school child can read this book and find meaning in it. But while writing the diary, I wasn’t thinking about the target audience or who would read it. I was trying to get at the essence of what I wanted to say, and at the feelings that were coming up while writing.

Syed Saad Ahmed

letters@hindustantimes.com

“Everybody has a story to tell,” emphasises K Saradamoni (1928-2021), in the prologue and epilogue to her memoir. An academic and activist associated most notably with the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI), she has a trove of stories.

Born in Kollam, Kerala, where she went to school, she subsequently studied in Trivandrum, Madras (where she was the only woman student in the Economics Department), and in Paris.

Her first job was with the Bureau of Economic and Statistical Studies of the Kerala state government, following which she joined the Planning Unit of

ISI in Delhi. She wrote her PhD thesis in French and later published it in English as *The Emergence of a Slave Caste: Pulayars of Kerala*, heralded as a pioneering work on caste slavery in the state. Her scholarship focused on caste, gender, labour and agrarian issues. A year after her retirement from ISI in 1988, she moved to Trivandrum, where she was part of many scholarly and social endeavours. Despite her professional achievements, the memoir is not skewed towards them.

What I found most interesting about the book is the glimpse it offers into the milieu and spaces the author inhabited. Saradamoni mentions seemingly unimportant but insightful details about the everyday, such as how tomatoes and footwear

were uncommon when she was growing up in Kerala, or how the train journey between Kerala and Delhi became easier over the years.

Many of the people she mentions have fascinating trajectories, such as the Thorners, a couple who were forced to leave the US during the McCarthy era and found asylum in India thanks to the renowned statistician PC Mahalanobis. Saradamoni travelled frequently for work and leisure and chronicles these voyages at length. Thus, her observations over nine decades also provide a sweeping portrait of the

changes India and the world have undergone.

In the chapter on her life in France, where she pursued a PhD under the social anthropologist Louis Dumont, she talks about navigating a new country and culture, fostering friendships, learning French. She barely dwells on her doctorate.

One of the few instances is when she touches upon the genesis of her thesis: “It all began with my finding [at the India Office Library in London] a dilapidated file with the caption, *Slavery in Kerala* — something I had never

In Search of Answers: A Memoir
K Saradamoni
260pp, ₹995, Tulika Books

heard of. Neither did I have a deep knowledge of slavery or the slave trade.” At other times, she is forthcoming. About her initial years in ISI, she writes, “I came to Delhi after getting a job, but not exactly knowing what I would be doing at ISI. It was difficult to understand what the Planning Unit was a whole did.”

In a diary entry from 1968, reproduced in the appendix, she talks about her eventual disillusionment with economics: “Where is the political economy today? Economists and mathematical economists and statisticians have come to the forefront. To them, models, equations and high-sounding words are more important. Man does not find a place anywhere in their picture.” More than half a century after she wrote this,

many contemporary students and practitioners of the subject continue to echo her concern.

Saradamoni is an earnest raconteur. While she completed the first draft of the book in early 2015, there were challenges in bringing it to publication. Her daughter Asha writes: “For some, her life story was something that would be of relevance only to her family and... friends, and not a wider audience. For others, she needed to fit into a ‘women’s studies’ slot for easier marketing. So they wanted her to rewrite the book!” Saradamoni’s work might not be easily pigeonholed, but she reminds us that everybody has a story to tell. And hers is an insightful one.

Syed Saad Ahmed is a writer and communications professional

{ HT PICKS } NEW READS

OF NEW YORK AND THE GOLDEN AGE OF HOLLYWOOD

From the best-selling author of *The Lincoln Highway*, *A Gentleman in Moscow*, and *Rules of Civility*, comes a richly detailed collection of six stories based in New York City and a novella set in Golden-Age Hollywood. The New York stories, most of which take place around the year 2000, consider the fateful consequences that can spring from brief encounters, and the delicate mechanics of compromise that operate at the heart of modern marriages. In the novella, *Eve in Hollywood*, Amor

Towles takes us through the movie sets, bungalows and dive bars of Los Angeles. This is a collection written with wit, humour, and sophistication.



Table for Two
Amor Towles
464pp, ₹559, Penguin

A TURNING POINT IN WORLD WAR 2

The clash between the British Fourteenth Army and the Japanese Fifteenth Army at Imphal in Manipur and at Kohima in the then-Naga Hills of Assam in 1944 was the turning point in the Burma Campaign of World War 2.

It was at these twin battles that the Japanese invasion of India was stopped, with the Allies subsequently driving them out of Burma in 1945. The Japanese lost some 30,000 men, with another 23,000 injured, in what is considered one of their greatest defeats on land.

In April 2013, Imphal-Kohima was named “Britain’s Greatest Battle” by the UK’s National Army Museum. Indians fought on both sides — as part of the British Army and alongside the Japanese as soldiers of the Indian National Army (INA). This book is a first-of-its-kind battlefield guide for Imphal and Kohima and makes extensive use of maps and present-day

photographs of the sites to tell the thrilling, tragic story of the historic battle of Imphal-Kohima, 1944.



India's Historic Battles: Imphal-Kohima, 1944
Hemant Singh Katoch
228pp, ₹399, HarperCollins India

THE SIMPLE PLEASURES OF BEING YOUNG

From the master storyteller Ruskin Bond comes a wonderful new tale about friendship, eccentric relatives, ghosts, nature, and the enduring magic of childhood.

Ruskin is 11 years old and visiting his grandmother’s home in Dehra during a winter holiday. Follow along as he takes you through the many things he experiences during his time there — a mischievous ghost hiding in an old peepul tree, delicious baked treats enclosed within a magic box, a man with a tin trunk containing odd knick-knacks, uncomfortable yet exciting tonga rides.

There are also surprising run-ins with Quit India protestors, the warm company of old Miss Kellner, pretty weeds that he calls Purple Hearts, and much else.

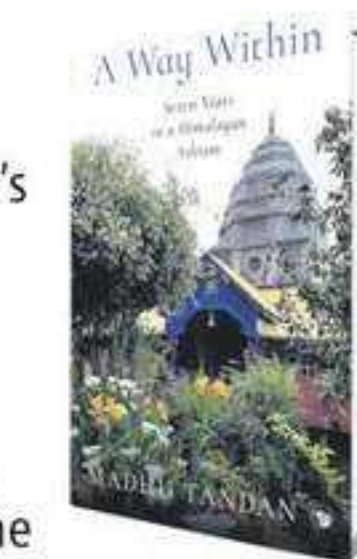
Punctuating all these happenings is the hoopoe, a little bird with an attractive hairdo, that appears in his granny’s garden at 3 pm every day, much to Ruskin’s delight. In *The Hoopoe on the Lawn*, Bond weaves together a story of the joys of unexpected kinships, the beauty of our world, and the simple pleasures of being young.



The Hoopoe on the Lawn
Ruskin Bond
64pp, ₹399, Aleph

ontheweb

READ: Dream interpreter Madhu Tandan’s *A Way Within: Seven Years in a Himalayan Ashram* is a memoir of the intense time she and her husband spent at an ashram in Mirtila, Uttarakhand, in the 1980s and 1990s. The book examines the relevance of the quest for a deeper, more authentic self.



Scan the QR code to read the review by Neha Kirpal

{ MEMOIR } A SWEEPING PORTRAIT OF INDIA AND THE WORLD OVER NINE DECADES

Insightful stories from an earnest raconteur

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K Saradamoni in front of the Planning Commission building in the mid-1950s. COURTESY TULIKA BOOKS

4buzz
Dinesh Kumar Tripathi appointed as Chief of the Naval Staff
 The Government appointed Vice Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi, PVSM, AVSM, NM, presently serving as the Vice Chief of the Naval Staff with effect from the afternoon of April 30. The present Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral R Hari Kumar, PVSM, AVSM, VSM retires from service on April 30. Vice Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi was commissioned into the Executive Branch of the Indian Navy on July 1, 1985.

Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs launches Swachhata Pakhwada
 Umang Narula, Secretary, Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs launched Swachhata Pakhwada, 2024 (from April 16 to 30) with administration of Swachhata Pledge to all the officers/officials of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs. Speaking at the occasion, Dr Satya Prakash, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs outlined the importance of Swachhata in all walks of our personal and social life and gave a brief description of the activities proposed to be undertaken during the Swachhata Pakhwada, 2024.

Indian Railways operates record number of trains in summer 2024
 To ensure the convenience of passengers and manage the surge in travel demand during summer, Indian Railways has been operating a record-breaking 9111 trips during the summer season. This marks a substantial rise compared to the summer of 2023, where a total of 6369 trips were offered. The increase of 2742 trip demonstrates Indian Railways' commitment to meeting passenger demands effectively. The additional trains have been meticulously planned to connect key destinations across the country.

IAA brings spotlight on Ram Lalla's forehead
 Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), an Autonomous body under the Department of Science and Technology played a crucial role in the Surya Tilak Project at Ayodhya. Under the Surya Tilak project, spotlight was brought on the forehead of Sri Ram Lalla at 12 noon on the occasion of Sri Ram Navami in the month of Chaitra. The IIA team carried out the calculation of the sun position, design and optimisation of the optical system, and performed the integration & alignment at the site.

Chairman & CEO of Railway Board visits New Delhi Railway Station for inspection

Jaya Varma Sinha, Chairman & CEO, Railway Board along with Shobhan Chaudhuri, GM, Northern Railway, visited the New Delhi railway station on Apr 17 to inspect the crowd management and summer rush arrangements for passengers during the ongoing summer rush. Sukhwinder Singh, DRM Delhi Division and other senior officers of railways were also present on the occasion. Sinha interacted with the passengers at the station, inspected the CCTV functioning, drinking water facilities and Clone set of



Vaishali Express. She appreciated the arrangements and conveyed that all-out effort should be made to ensure maximum comfort and convenience to the travelling public.

MDNIY signs Memorandum of Understanding with CRPF

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY) and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) on April 16 at CRPF headquarter RK Puram, New Delhi in the gracious presence of senior officers of both institutions. On this occasion Director, MDNIY, Vaidya Dr Kashinath Samagandi and Inspector General (Trg), CRPF Seema Dhundia signed on the MoU for smooth functioning



of Yoga Training to CRPF personnel. The MoU intends to facilitate conducting Yoga course/training to CRPF personnel as per their need in various ways.

CONCOR signs MoU with PSA MESA

CONCOR and PSA MESA signed an MoU on April 18 in New Delhi to collaborate in offering seamless and cost-effective end-to-end logistics service to customers. CONCOR is a leading logistics service provider in the country with pan India presence at more than 60 container terminals. PSA MESA is a wholly owned subsidiary of PSA International, which is a leading global port operator and supply chain partner to cargo stakeholders offering globally integrated and port-centric supply chain, transportation, and logistics solutions.

Korean delegation applauds Cottage collection



Zena Chung, Founder & President, IKBCC and Economic & Trade policy advisor for Gyeongsangbuk-do province of South Korea along with Heikki Ranta, Chairman, Finncham Korea visited "The Cottage" at Janpath and appreciated its efforts in showcasing the diverse Art and Crafts from different parts of India.

Punjab & Sind Bank and WDR sign MoU

To facilitate farmers and traders in providing low-interest rate loans, Punjab & Sind Bank exchanged an MoU with WDR in the presence of Swarup Kumar Saha, MD & CEO Punjab & Sind Bank, TK Manoj Kumar, Chairperson, WDR and other senior officers of Punjab & Sind Bank and WDR. The MoU was signed to promote awareness about finance against e-NWR. Combined with the inherent security and negotiability of the system, the Produce Marketing Loan will ensure rural liquidity and increase farmers' income.

Quaker's ad stands for children's nutrition

Quaker, one of India's leading players in the oats segment, through its 'Bowl of Growth' initiative addressed the cause of child malnutrition through 3 key pillars - providing nutrition to children aged 3 to 5 years, educating parents/caregivers and spreading awareness in the community. This program was launched in pre-identified blocks of rural areas in Pune, to address the issue. To strengthen the pillar on community awareness further, the brand launched its first long-format ad film 'Dohale Jevan Poshanchi Vaati'.

ECI holds video conference with over 250 observers of phase 2

88 Parliamentary Constituencies in 12 states are scheduled for polling on Apr 26 in which 89 General Observers, 53 Police Observers and 109 Expenditure Observers were deployed. All have reported in constituencies before the last date of nomination which is Apr 3. Rajiv Kumar, Chief Election Commissioner accompanied with other senior officials asked all the observers to strictly ensure that polling stations contain all amenities for voters especially to combat heat, no inducements are offered close

to voting of second phase, forces are optimally utilised and law and order is kept under strict watch. While Central observers were directed to ensure the preparedness for polling in all the constituencies well in advance and ensure the level playing field for all the stakeholders. To remain physically available within the Parliamentary Constituency they are allotted during the entire election process. Wide publication of contact details and circulation amongst candidate and political parties for ready availability.

NHRC chairperson supports Ambedkar's principles

Justice Arun Mishra, Chairperson, NHRC, India said that Dr BR Ambedkar's economic policy recommendations, free-market principles, globalisation, liberalisation, and privatisation are good for today. He was delivering the 16th Dr Ambedkar Memorial Lecture on "Dr BR Ambedkar's Vision and Legacy for Shaping Viksit Bharat @2047" at Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi. He said that Dr Ambedkar's legacy inspires future generations to work towards a more just and equitable society necessary for a prosperous nation.

Mamaearth stands for goodness in people

Embracing the spirit of kindness, Mamaearth celebrated the good deeds of individuals at the 3rd edition of Mamaearth Presents Beautiful Indians 2024. The event was hosted on Mar 19, where individuals from diverse walks of life were honoured, reiterating the fact that there is beauty in every act of kindness. Hosted by Aparshakti Khurana, the event celebrated individuals whose charisma and expertise have inspired and contributed to bringing about positive change. Taking the celebrations higher pop singer Akasa Singh dazzled the audience.



In the presence of Pradeep Gaur, CMD RVNL and other key dignitaries, Rajesh Prasad, Director (Operations) RVNL and Deniz Heperler, Board Member TUMAS India signed an MoU on behalf of RVNL and Turkish Engineering Consulting & Contracting - TUMAS India Private Limited respectively.



In an event held at Hotel Burj Al Arab in Dubai on Mar 18, GEV and SVIET formalised an agreement to redefine educational paradigms across North India while signing an agreement to establish King's College UK in Gurugram. The ceremony marked the commencement of a profound partnership.



IIMHR University recorded phenomenal placements this season with the highest package of 35.62 LPA, beating its previous high of 17.22 LPA in 2022. The ongoing placements at the institute have witnessed 75 per cent of the students being placed till now in multiple roles across diverse organisations.



ICG demonstrated its commitment to maritime safety by responding to a distress call from IFB Rosary, which encountered engine failure approximately 215 nautical miles from Karwar on Apr 13. Responding to the call, ICGS Savitribai Phule on surveillance was diverted to render assistance.



NIFTEM K and the University of Melbourne signed MoU to boost research and cooperation in food processing technology. It was signed on Apr 12 in the presence of Dr Surinder Singh Chauhan, Melbourne India Postgraduate Academy and Dr Harinder Singh Oberoi, Director of NIFTEM-K.



ICG Regional Headquarters (West) launched an operation based on a tip-off from Customs and apprehended an Indian fishing boat, northwest of Mumbai on Apr 15. The boat was allegedly involved in the smuggling of diesel and carrying unauthorised amounts of Foreign/Indian currency.



IREDA inaugurated an office in GIFT City, specialising in the provision of Foreign Currency-denominated debt options to reduce the financing costs for Green Hydrogen and Renewable Energy Manufacturing projects. The initiative was highlighted by Pradipt Kumar Das, CMD IREDA, at the WFES 2024.



A state-of-the-art SPACE was inaugurated by Secretary, Department of Defence (R&D) and Chairman DRDO Dr Samir V Kamat at Underwater Acoustic Research Facility, on April 17. The SPACE was designed as a premier testing and evaluation hub for sonar systems.

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CHANGE OF NAME
I. KAMLA Srinivasan W/o Kuppanna Srinivasan R/o B-14, Oriental Enclave Apartment, Plot No. 32, Patparganj, I.P. Extn. Delhi-110092 have changed my name to kamala srinivasan for all purposes.
I. MAMTESH Kumar, W/o Krishan Kumar, R/o H-127B, Raj Nagar-2, Palam Colony, Delhi-77, declare that my correct name is Mamtesh Kumar not Mamtesh Mittal as mentioned wrongly in my son's passport.
I. AJFAAL Ahmad S/o Abdul salam R/o House No 389 Street 1 Karampur Extension, Gokulpur North East Delhi 110094 have changed my name from Ajfaal Ahmad S/o Abdul salam to Ajfaal Hussain S/o Abdul salaam for all future purposes.
I. AJAY Kumar Sharma S/o Ashok Kumar Sharma R/o 1704, Tower 20, Shri Radha Sky Gardens, Sector 16B, Greater Noida West, UP affirm that Ajay Kumar Sharma and Ajay Kumar both names are mine.
I. MANOJ Kumar S/o Prabhu Dayal R/o 186 First Floor Harsh Vihar Pitam Pura Delhi-110034, I have changed my name to Manoj Kumar Gupta all purposes.
I. HARIOM S/O Sh. Chhaki Lal Verma R/O E-15, Ground floor Uttam Nagar New Delhi-110059 have changed my name to Hariom Verma for all future Purposes
I. SUPRATIKA Deb S/o Late Shri K. C. Deb, 21-05, Tower 2, M3M Sky Walk, SPR, Golf Course Road Extension, Opp. BKM Training Center, Sector 74, Begampur Khatola, P.O. Khandsa, Dist. Gurgaon, Haryana, 120004, have changed my minor son's name from Yashashvi S/o Yashashvi SM Deb for all future purposes.
CHANGE OF NAME
I. IMANJAY Choudhary F/o Ira Choudhary R/o 07151, AFS Advantage, Indrapuram, Ghaziabad, UP has changed the name of my daughter from Ira Choudhary to Ira M Choudhary for all future purposes.
I. ROMIT Mishra S/o Mr. Surya Kumar Mishra R/o 515/A-4, Multi-story House, L.N.U. New Delhi -110067 have changed my name to Lakshit Mishra for all future purposes.
I. KHURSHED Ahmed S/o Mr. Riazuddin R/o E-63, Jeevan Vihar Shastri Nagar Ghaziabad (U.P.), has changed my daughter's name from Liza to Anika for all future purposes.
I. KOUSHALYA Bhatti, w/o C.B. Bhatti have changed my name to Kaushalya Devi wide Afft. DTD 4/3/24 before notary by kishan pal Singh bhatti, Faridabad for all future Purposes.
I. PALLAVI Sharma W/o Ajay Kumar Sharma R/o 11A/1-51, Metro Apartment, Sector 71, Noida, UP affirm that Pallavi Sharma and Pallvi Sharma both names are mine.
I. NO. JC-333166A SUB JE E/M Rakesh Kumar Dixit, R/o H.No.-58, Vili-Garda, PO- Raj Champaur, Dist- Palamau, Jharkhand-822110, have changed my minor daughter's name from Divyanshi to Divyanshi Dixit, vide affidavit dated 19/04/2024 before Notary Public Delhi
I. ARCHANA W/o- No. JC-332482M SUB W/O E/M Vinod Prasad Chmola, w/o of Aljal Hussain to Archana begum w/o of Aljal Hussain for all future purposes.
I. MUKESH O/o Vachan Singh, R/o H.No. 04, Gali No. 14, Block-D, BSF Camp Sohna Road, Defence Colony, Sec-47, Gurugram, Haryana-12102, declare that my father's name is wrongly mentioned in my 10th Certificate as Bachan Singh. My father's actual & correct name is Vachan Singh as per my all other documents.
CHANGE OF NAME
I. LANAS S/O Ziaul Haque born on 19-12-2002 residing at E-84, near Gokul Masjid, Welcome Seclampur, North East Delhi-110053 have changed my name to Anas Anzari vide affidavit dated 15-04-2024 at Delhi
I. BHRI Bhushan Madhra S/o Shri B.K. Madhra R/o H.No. 123, Sector -1, R.K Puram, New Delhi-110022, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from Bri Bhushan to Bri Bhushan Madhra for all future purposes.
I. PUNAM Kumari D/o Babuji Singh R/o H.No. 701, Sector-10, Housing Board Colony, Faridabad, Haryana, declare that my name has been wrongly written as Punam in my minor daughter's Minal Singh Passport No. K4989791. My actual name is Punam Kumari, which may be amended accordingly.
I. CHANDER Bhan Bhatia S/O Sh. Jhansi Ram Bhatia R/O HNO 615 Sect19 Faridabad 121002 hereby declare that Chandar Bhan Bhatia & C B Bhatia both represent the same person.
I. MAHESH Kumar S/o Tara Chand R/O H.No. 701, Sector-10, Housing Board Colony, Faridabad, Haryana, declare that my name has been wrongly written as Mahesh in my minor daughter's Minal Singh Passport No. K4989791. My actual name is Mahesh Kumar, which may be amended accordingly.
I. KRISHAN Kumar, S/o Om Prakash, R/O H-127B, Raj Nagar-2, Palam Colony, Delhi-77, hereby affirm that my correct name is Krishan Kumar, not Krishan Mittal as erroneously stated in my son's passport.
I. ARMY No. IC83149X, Rank-Major, Name-Mohit Prakash Singh, R/O S-26/42-R-22, Plot No.94, Ashok puram Colony, Meerapur Basahin, Bhiroliwiler, Varanasi UP declare that my mother's name has been wrongly written as Madhuri Singh in my Passport but her correct name is Madhuri Devi. Both names Madhuri Singh & Madhuri Devi pertain to one and the same person.
I. SANGEETA Misra W/o- No. JC-333166A SUB JE E/M Rakesh Kumar Dixit, R/o- H.No.-58, Vili- Garda, PO- Raj Champaur, Dist- Palamau, Jharkhand-822110, have changed my name from Sangeeta Misra to Sangeeta Dixit, vide affidavit dated 19/04/2024 before Notary Public Delhi.
I. ARTI Rawat, W/o Pravendra Singh, R/O 173, B-1, FF, Flat No. 4, Ward No. 3, Himalaya Apartment, Mehrauli, Noida, have changed my name to Arti for all future purposes
LOST & FOUND
I. J.K. Tripathi S/o Ram Narain Tripathi R/o 134, IFS Vilas Builder area, Plot No. 1, Pocket No. 1, Omega 1, Greater Noida UP. Have lost my Original Property Documents, Original Share Certificate of Value Rs.100/- issued by IIPA CGHS Ltd. in the name of Sh. J.K. Tripathi, finder may please contact at above address or Mobile No. 965061602
I. GOPAL Sathu, S/o Shri Jay Anand Sathu, would like to inform that I have misplaced the Original Allotment and Possession Letter of F-8, Press Apartments, Plot No. 23, Indragraha Extension, Patparganj, Delhi-110092.
Log on to htclassifieds.com or Scan QR code

SEARCH FOR MISSING GIRL
 General public is hereby informed that one girl namely **Anima Das, D/o Narapata Das, R/o H.No. 793, Gali No. 17B, Bangali Colony, Chhurya Mohalla, Tughlaqabad Village, New Delhi. Age 26 years, Height 4', Complexion Shallow, Round Face, Medium Built, Wearing Black colour suit, red colour jacked and chappal in feet** has been missing/kidnapped since 01.12.2023 from her house. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out this girl but no clue has come to light so far. In this regard a case FIR No. 193/2024, U/S 365 IPC, dated 29.03.2024 has been registered at PS Govindpuri, New Delhi. Any person having any information or clue about this missing/kidnapped girl may kindly inform to the following.
Website: http://cbi.nic.in
SHO Email: cbc@cbi.gov.in PS: Govindpuri, New Delhi
Fax: 011-23011334 Ph: 011-23013334
Ph: 011-23014046, 23015218 Ph.: 011-77039688, 77039688
DP/14526/SE/2024 8750870932

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON
See Section 82 Cr.P.C.
 Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused **Amit, S/o Elam Singh, R/o: C1/149, Gali No. 6, Khasra No. 38, Jai Road, Harsh Vihar, New Delhi** has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **FIR No. 69/2024, dated 18.01.2024, U/s 8/20/25 NDPS Act, P.S. Dabri, New Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused Amit cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Amit has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).
 Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Amit of FIR No. 69/2024, dated 18.01.2024, U/s 8/20/25 NDPS Act, P.S. Dabri, New Delhi** is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **24.05.2024**.
By Order Ms. Bhavna Kalita Special Judge (NDPS)-01 Room No. 610, 6th Floor Dwarka Court, New Delhi
DP/4493/DW/2024

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION
 General public is hereby informed that an unidentified person, **Named: Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown, Age: about 58 years, Height: 5'6", Complexion: Shallow, Face: Oval, Built: Thin, Hair: White and white beard, Wearing: Purple colour jacket and Black colour jeans** was found in injured condition after accident at Near Geeta Colony Flyover, outer ring road, ITO to ISBT Side Road, Daryaganj, Delhi on 13.04.2024. He was admitted in LNJP Hospital, Delhi, where during treatment doctor declared him dead on 18.04.2024. In this regard a case vide **FIR No. 151/24 dated 13.04.2024 U/s 279/337 IPC and GD No. 56A dated 18.04.2024** has been lodged at P.S. Daryaganj, Delhi. The dead body has been preserved for 72 hours in MAMC Mortuary, Delhi. Any person having any information or clue about this dead person may kindly inform to the following:-
SHO: P.S. Daryaganj, Delhi Central Distt., Delhi Tel. No. 011-23274683, 23279331, 8750870421, 8285906093
DP/4609/CD/2024

NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE
Invitation of Tenders through E-Tendering (E-procurement system)
 Sr.DMM, Northern Railway, New Delhi-110001, for and on behalf of the president of India invites e-tenders through e-procurement system for supply of the following items.

S. No.	Tender No.	Brief Description	Qty.	Closing Date
1.	93245706	NON CONTACT LASER SCANNING BASED WHEEL PROFILE MEASUREMENT SYSTEM AS PER TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION ATTACHED IN Annexure-A	01 Nos.	14.05.2024
		NON CONTACT LASER SCANNING BASED WHEEL PROFILE MEASUREMENT SYSTEM AS PER TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION ATTACHED MAKE: NEXT SENSE CALIPER PRIME OR EQUIVALENT, ATTACHED ANNEXURE 'A'	02 Nos.	14.05.2024

NOTE-1. Vendors may visit the IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in for details 2. No manual offer will be entertained.
Sr. DMM/NS/LP/93245708/2024 Date: 16.04.2024
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APPOINTMENT FOR THE POST OF ONE JUNIOR PHYSIOTHERAPIST, ONE JUNIOR SPEECH THERAPIST AND ONE JUNIOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST
 Walk-in-Interview for appointment of one Junior Physio Therapist, one Junior Speech Therapist and one Junior Occupational Therapist on honorarium basis for Smita-Therapy Centre, PTS Malviya Nagar, New Delhi.
ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATION :-
 Graduate/Diploma in Physio Therapy, Speech Therapy and Occupational Therapy with 2 years experience:-
 (1) Candidates having working experience with Children of Special Needs will be given preference.
 (2) Qualification prescribed are the desirable minimum with reference to qualifications recognized by Rehabilitation Council of India.
 (3) Candidate should register with Rehabilitation Council of India.
Note: The candidate should submit their application alongwith the relevant self attested educational documents to this office on e-mail id **inspr.welfare@gmail.com** by 30.04.2024 till 4 PM. The date of interview will be communicated to the shortlisted candidate in due course.
DP/9654/Welfare/2024

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION
 General public is hereby informed that an unidentified male **Age: Approx 48 Years, Complexion: Shallow, Height: 5'5", Face: Long, Built: Normal, Injury Mark: Old wound mark on left hand wrist, forearm and injury mark on face, was wearing White check Shirt and cream colour Pant, has been found near Telco Point, Ghaziपुर Village, Delhi on 18.04.2024 at about 10:50 A.M.** Examination of the body was conducted in L.B.S. Hospital, Khichripur, Delhi, where doctor declared him brought dead vide MLC No. 002846/2024. In this regard a **DD No. 58A, dated 18.04.2024, has been lodged at P.S. Patparganj industrial Area, Delhi.** His dead body has been preserved in LBS Hospital Mortuary, Delhi for 72 Hrs. Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone nos.
SHO P.S. Patparganj Industrial Area, Delhi Ph. No.: 8750870626, 8851489966
DP/4603/ED/2024

Food inflation behind rate pause in Apr Wipro outlines weak Q1 after a dismal year

In Mar, food inflation remained sticky at 7.68%, driven by eggs, vegetables, meat, fish

Shayan Ghosh
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MUMBAI: Concerns that volatile food prices could hurt the battle against inflation dominated the latest meeting of the central bank's rate-setting committee, minutes released on Friday showed, compelling the panel to hold the policy rate.

While headline inflation measured by the consumer price index (CPI) cooled a bit from 5.1% in January to 5.09% in February, food inflation rose from 7.58% in January to 7.76%. The rise in food inflation was primarily driven by vegetables, eggs, meat and fish, the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) monetary policy committee (MPC) said.

March inflation numbers, released a week after the MPC



MPC projected retail inflation to decline to 3.8% in Q2FY25, before breaching the 4% mark again in the next two quarters. REUTERS

meeting, showed that headline inflation further cooled to 4.85%, while food inflation remained sticky at 7.68%.

"Overlapping food price shocks, apart from imparting volatility to headline inflation, may also result in spillovers to core inflation," RBI governor Shaktikanta Das said, according to the minutes of the six-member committee's meeting on 3-5

April. Retail inflation has stayed within RBI's flexible inflation target of 2-6% for the seventh consecutive month. The RBI has, however, reiterated the inflation target is 4% and the central bank would look for durable signs of deceleration in inflation.

"This success in the disinflation process should not distract

us from the vulnerability of the inflation trajectory to the frequent incidences of supply side shocks, especially to food inflation due to adverse weather events and other factors," said Das.

According to Das, lingering geopolitical tensions and their impact on commodity prices and supply chains also add to uncertainties in the inflation trajectory. These, he said, call for monetary policy actions to tread the last mile of disinflation with extreme care.

Deputy governor Michael Patra said recent inflation data and high-frequency data on food prices show that food inflation risks remain elevated. He said the leeway from steady softening of core inflation and fuel price deflation would not necessarily lead to a faster alignment of the headline with the target.

Patra expects headline inflation to remain nearer to 6% until favourable base effects come into play in the second

quarter of FY25. The MPC projected retail inflation to decline to 3.8% in Q2FY25, before breaching the 4% mark again in the next two quarters.

"Hence, conditions are not yet in place for any let-up in the restrictive stance of monetary policy. Downward pressure on inflation must be maintained until a better balance of risks becomes evident and the layers of uncertainty clouding the near-term clear away," said Patra.

For FY25, RBI has estimated inflation at 4.5%. Going by the second advance estimates of FY24 GDP growth at 7.6%, the average growth over the last three years would come to 8%. Growth in FY25, estimated by the Reserve Bank at 7%, would thus be affected by some base effect, *Mint* reported earlier in April.

According to RBI executive director and MPC member Rajiv Ranjan, although low core inflation would further the disinflation process, concerns remain

on food inflation outlook.

"We need to remain watchful on upside risks to inflation outlook from adverse climatic factors, supply side shocks and geopolitical events. Going ahead, while monetary policy seems to be on the right track, it is too early to ease guard against inflation," said Ranjan.

He believes that the MPC needs to gain more confidence on the macroeconomic numbers for FY25 and their nuances. "We are just at the beginning of the financial year," he said. "Return of inflation to the 4% target is our objective and having come this far, it is not far from sight. Instead of haste for policy action, patience is the need of the hour."

External member Ashima Goyal said India did not have a tight labour market but recurrent food price shocks created persistent inflation. Goyal said that a rapid rise in repo rates, as well as government supply-side action, helped anchor inflation expectations.

Wipro outlines weak Q1 after a dismal year

Shouvik Das
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NEW DELHI: Wipro Ltd on Friday outlined bleak revenue growth for the June quarter, as India's third largest IT services company exited one of its worst years with declining revenue, profit and headcount. The Bengaluru-based company posted a 3.8% decline in revenue and 9.5% drop in net employee count in FY24, the highest among its peers. After a flat March quarter, Wipro now expects revenue for the June quarter fall by 1.5%, or grow 0.5% at best.

Net revenue for FY24 came in at \$10.8 billion, against \$11.2 billion a year ago. For the March quarter, revenue rose a mere 0.1% sequentially, at \$2.66 billion. Profit in Q4 increased 5.2% sequentially to \$341 million, but fell 2.7% to \$1.33 billion for the full year.

More than a fifth of Wipro's net revenue is driven by its top 10 clients, including the likes of Microsoft Corp. and Amazon.com, Inc.

Srinivas Pallia, who took over as CEO after Thierry Delaporte resigned on 6 April, offered revenue guidance of -1.5% to 0.5% in constant currency for the June quarter, retaining its guidance for the March quarter. Constant currency does not take periodic currency fluctuations into account.

Performance slightly exceeded analyst expectations for both the quarter and the fiscal year. A *Bloomberg* poll of 42 analysts had expected Wipro to report net revenue of \$10.74 billion and net profit of \$1.32 billion. A second poll of 28 analysts had expected March quarter revenue of \$2.66 billion and net profit of \$332 million.

However, the quarterly performance follows a weak overall year for Wipro. Since October 2020, Wipro has won only one mega deal, valued at \$700 million. Lack of such large deals is a cause for concern, since they



The IT services company has slipped in revenue, profit and headcount. MINT

typically represent a higher level of confidence in a service provider among clients. In February, reports claimed that Wipro's deal with chipmaker Intel Foundry was likely valued at nearly \$1 billion, but neither Wipro nor Intel Foundry has confirmed this.

Both of Wipro's larger rivals have posted better earnings. Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), India's top IT services firm, posted a 4.1% revenue growth and 7.7% rise in net profit for FY24. Infosys fared weaker, but managed to post 1.9% revenue growth and a 6.2% rise in net profit for the year.

Headcount has fallen at all three. In FY24, Wipro's headcount fell by 9.5% to 234,054 employees. With this, TCS, Infosys and Wipro have cumulatively reported a decline of nearly 64,000 employees through FY24, the biggest annual decline in 25 years for India's IT services sector.

On Friday, Pallia expressed a cautious approach. "The next few months will be crucial as we steer the company for growth. As a passionate hiker, I deeply connect with these words of Junko Tabei (the first woman to scale Mount Everest). Even if it is hard, you can reach the peak if you climb step by step," the top executive said.

With inputs from Jas Bardia

Exports to Europe and US short of big gains amid flare-ups

Rhik Kundu
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NEW DELHI: India's exports to its largest markets, Europe and the US, remained flat as its global shipments declined in FY24 on account of falling demand and geopolitical flare-ups.

While India's overall exports dropped by about 2.4% annually in value terms during FY24, its exports to the US declined by 1%, and those to Europe rose by only 1.47%, according to official data from the commerce ministry. The staples of Indian exports—gems and jewellery, ready-made garments, chemicals, cotton yarn and handloom products—declined to Europe (including the UK). But engineering goods, petroleum products, drugs and pharmaceuticals and electronic goods exports saw a rise.

India's exports to Europe have been steadily rising since FY21, in tandem with the global economy emerging from the pandemic. India's exports to Europe, in value terms, stood at \$55.32 billion in FY21. It rose to \$85.20 billion in FY22, \$97.45 billion in FY23, and \$98.88 billion in FY24.

While geopolitical tensions have led to higher energy prices and transportation costs, resulting in cost pressures for exporters, tighter monetary conditions in advanced economies have led to a decline in demand, further hurting exports. Military confrontations in the Red Sea region, a major trade route to Europe, have also hurt exports.

Meanwhile, India's exports to the US, its second-largest export market after Europe, fell to \$77.52 billion in FY24 from \$78.31 billion in FY23. India's exports to the US stood at \$75.60 billion in FY22 and \$51.63 billion in FY21.

In the US exports of gems and jewellery, engineering goods, ready-made garments, organic and inorganic chemicals, and marine products, among others, saw a decline, while drugs & pharmaceuticals and petroleum products saw a slight rise.

India's trade performance in 2024 was influenced by global events like the Red Sea impasse leading to higher freight and



Geopolitical tensions have led to higher energy prices and transportation costs. AFP

disruption of supply chains, expensive crude oil on account of the continuing Russia-Ukraine war, the US-China trade tensions leading to more expensive value chains and the EU's proposed Carbon Tax and Forest regulations, economy think tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said in a recent report on India's trade.

"India should deal with each of these with a transactional approach. But as India's share in world trade is just 2%, focus on enhancing sectoral competitiveness in labour-intensive sectors, diversification of services sectors and honest ease of doing business initiatives can surprise us with some good export performance," it added.

During FY24, India's merchandise exports stood at \$437.06 billion, down from \$451.07 billion during the previous fiscal. Goods imports fell to \$677.24 billion from \$715.97 billion recorded during the same period.

India's service exports stood at \$339.62 billion in FY24, up from \$325.33 billion in the previous fiscal while imports fell to \$177.56 billion from \$182.05 billion in the same period. The overall trade deficit, including merchandise and services, shrank to \$78.12 billion in FY24 from \$121.62 billion in FY23.

The silver lining is that the World Trade Organization expects global goods trade to recover gradually during 2024, following a downturn in 2023 due to high energy prices and inflation.

'Special courts have jurisdiction over IBC cases'

Shruti Kakkar
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NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Friday observed that a special court presided by a sessions judge (SJ) or an additional sessions judge (ASJ) would have the jurisdiction to try the complaint filed under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), 2016.

The top court was considering a plea filed by the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) challenging Bombay high court's February 14, 2022 passed by a bench of justice SK Shinde. In the said ruling, justice Shinde had held that a special court consisting of SJ or ASJ could only try the offences committed under the Companies Act, and offences under the IBC were to be tried by a metropolitan magistrate (MM) or a judicial magistrate (JM) of the first class.

The bench headed by justice



The top court was considering a plea filed by IBBI challenging Bombay HC's order. HT

BR Gavai held that any amendment to section 435 (establishment of special court) of the Companies Act, 2013 would not have any effect on section 236 of the IBC which empowers special courts under the Companies Act to try offences under the IBC.

"Since the reference is specific and not general, it will

have to be held that the present case is a case of 'legislation by incorporation' and not a case of 'legislation by reference'. If that be so, any amendment to section 435 of the Companies Act, 2013, after the date on which the Code came into effect would not have any effect on the provisions of Section 236(l) of the Code.

"The special court at that point of time only consists of a person who was qualified to be a Sessions Judge or an Additional Sessions Judge. It is held that the Special Court presided by a Sessions Judge or an Additional Sessions Judge will have jurisdiction to try the complaint under the Code," said the bench, also comprising justice Sandeep Mehta.

The high court had quashed the summoning orders issued by the SJ against two individuals in a complaint filed by IBBI under the Code saying that the special court consisting of SJ or

ASJ did not have the jurisdiction to entertain such a complaint in view of the Companies (Amendment) Act, 2017.

The said amendment constituted two classes of special courts under section 435 of the Companies Act—firstly a court presided by single judge holding office as SJ or ASJ, in cases of offences punishable with imprisonment of two years or more under the Companies Act and the second presided by a MM or judicial magistrate of the first class in case of other offences.

Setting aside the high court's verdict, the top court in the 57-page verdict said that the single judge had grossly erred in quashing the complaint only on the ground that it was filed before a special court presided by SJ.

The apex court also sent the matter back to the special court as the HC had not considered the matter on merits.

Mobility, carbon tax hamper talks on India-UK trade deal

Dhirendra Kumar & Rhik Kundu
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NEW DELHI: The UK is unlikely to accept an Indian request to be exempted from a proposed carbon tax, a British daily reported, even as a four-member team of senior commerce ministry officials from New Delhi continued talks in London to try and iron out unresolved issues holding back a free trade agreement.

The team, which left for the UK on Tuesday, has been discussing the carbon tax, India's demand for more visas and the right to mobility for its skilled professionals, and duty-free access for certain goods, as well as the UK's demand for market access for British-made electric vehicles, said a person aware of the discussions, requesting anonymity.

On the carbon tax, New Delhi's proposal ranges from a longer transition period to exemption from the tax. Although the FTA talks are described as being at an advanced stage, the issues mentioned above have dragged



Last month, Modi and Sunak discussed an early conclusion to deal talks. REUTERS

on, delaying the signing.

The *Guardian* newspaper on Friday quoted a UK government official, who has been briefed on progress in the talks, as saying India was asking to be exempted from the planned Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism on the grounds that it is a developing country.

Any decision to exempt India from a carbon tax would be "controversial", the paper said, as the plans are designed to reduce emissions and support UK steel producers by levelling

the playing field with countries that have a lower or no carbon levy.

A British delegation visited New Delhi in March hoping to push through with the unresolved issues. Following this, the Indian delegation left for London for further talks.

Both sides have also been holding virtual discussions on the FTA. A commerce ministry spokesperson did not respond to emailed queries.

India and the UK launched talks for an FTA in January 2022, with 14 rounds having been held so far. Last month, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his British counterpart Rishi Sunak discussed an early conclusion, giving the negotiators a final push.

Trade between the two countries grew from \$17.5 billion in financial year 2022 (FY22) to \$20.36 billion in financial year 2023 (FY23).

The FTA's journey has been fraught with delays—now exceeding a year past its initial deadline—largely due to issues like professional visas, duties on various goods, and migration concerns.

Apple pulls Threads, WhatsApp from app store on Beijing's order

Bloomberg
feedback@livemint.com

Apple Inc. removed social media services including Meta Platforms Inc.'s WhatsApp and Threads from its Chinese app store, responding to orders from Beijing to close more loopholes in the country's long-standing internet firewall.

The iPhone maker also removed the messaging services Telegram and Signal, according to consultants tracking the space.

Apple, which has consistently complied with one of the world's most rigid internet censorship regimes, said the Cyber-space Administration of China ordered the apps removed over national security concerns.

The orders come on the heels of a cleanup program Chinese regulators initiated in 2023 that was expected to remove many defunct or unregistered apps



Through the order China is trying to close loopholes in the country's internet firewall. AFP

from domestic iOS and Android stores, including local ones. In August, China asked all mobile app developers to register with the government by the end of March, or cease operating.

Beijing has barred the use of foreign messaging and social media platforms like WhatsApp for years, using what the indus-

try calls the Great Firewall. That's helped apps like Tencent Holdings Ltd's WeChat dominate domestic usage, though Chinese users can still employ virtual private networks to view foreign media.

Less sensitive apps with more substantial Chinese businesses such as Duolingo are expected to comply with the latest regulatory licensing regime to remain operational, said Rich Bishop, co-founder and chief executive officer of AppInChina.

"It will mean that Chinese consumers are pretty much limited to just Chinese apps, with a small number of international ones," said Bishop, whose consultancy has received dozens of inquiries from companies about how to stay compliant and publish software in China. "That's quite a big change—so it will further cut off Chinese citizens from the rest of the world in a sense."

Platform fees hint online customers are coming of age

Samiksha Goel
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BENGALURU: E-commerce platform Myntra recently increased its platform fee for shoppers by one-third—to ₹20 on each order—and no one objected. A few years ago, that would have been an invitation for a social media storm.

It's not just Myntra that charges a platform fee, or what IRCTC and Bookmyshow call a convenience fee for allowing customers to book tickets online. Nykaa Fashion charges ₹29 per order, while Swiggy and Zomato levy a ₹3-4 platform fee in addition to their delivery charges for food. Quick-delivery platform Zepto introduced a ₹2 platform fee in March.

Most of these fees were rolled out over the past year. Amazon, Flipkart, and Reliance's Ajo do not charge platform fees at the



Amazon, Flipkart and Reliance's Ajo do not charge platform or convenience fees at the moment. MINT

moment. The quiet acceptance of something like a platform fee reveals a significant maturing of the Indian online consumer, emblematic of a shift from discount hunter to discerning shopper. For the e-commerce sector that has had to rely on freebies and offers to lure peo-

ple to shop online, this transformation marks an ability to now focus on metrics such as unit economics—the expense incurred in selling a unit of product or service—and profitability.

Those two metrics gained prominence over business growth and rapid customer

acquisition as funding dried up for Indian e-commerce companies, forcing them to focus on making their business sustainable on their own.

For online food-delivery platforms, a ₹1 platform fee, for instance, could potentially improve Ebitda by about 5% in absolute terms, said Karan Taurani, senior vice-president at investment bank Elara Capital. Ebitda, or earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization, is a key measure of operational performance.

"This is a really significant boost because currently, the food business platform fee is around ₹2-4, which can potentially even go to ₹10," said Taurani. "This can boost Ebitda and profitability in a very big manner and help recoup the negative impact of zero-delivery charges because of the loyalty programmes that (food-delivery platforms) have."

Myntra, Zomato, and Swiggy were all loss-making in FY23, the latest period for which full-year financials are available.

Myntra's revenue, in turn, improved from ₹3,501 crore in FY22 to ₹4,375 crore in FY23, while loss widened from ₹598 crore to ₹782 crore. Swiggy's revenue jumped 45% but its loss widened from ₹3,629 crore to ₹4,179 crore. Zomato, though, managed to narrow its losses, from ₹1,222 crore in FY22 to ₹971 crore in FY23, on a nearly 70% surge in revenue.

Zomato in its earnings report for the latest October-December period said the introduction of a platform fee for all customers last July helped improve its margin.

Swiggy had started with a ₹2 platform fee in April last year, followed by Zomato a few months later.

Myntra, Zomato and Swiggy did not reply to emailed queries.

{ SUDOKU }

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DIFFICULTY LEVEL
★★

{ WEATHER }
TEMPERATURE = HIGH # LOW

<p>SATURDAY Strong surface winds during day time</p> <p>39°C 21°C</p>	<p>SUNDAY Mainly Clear sky</p> <p>38°C 22°C</p>	<p>MONDAY Strong surface winds during day time</p> <p>37°C 23°C</p>
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ALMANAC
Today is 20th April 2024
• 10 Showers, 1445
• 27 Chitra, Shukla
• Paksha 12
• Samvat 2081
• Sunset: Saturday at 06:50 pm
• Sunrise: Sunday at 05:49 am
• Moonrise: Saturday at 03:46 pm
• Moonset: Sunday at 04:22 am

TEMPERATURE IN FOUR METROS

Delhi	39°C 21°C
Mumbai	35°C 25°C
Kolkata	41°C 29°C
Chennai	39°C 27°C

Even in IPL, the junior to senior transition is difficult for many

By Rajdeep Saha

Virat Kohli and Ravindra Jadeja are household names in Indian men's cricket today. But Ajitesh Argal, Napoleon Einstein, Perry Goyal and Duvvarapu Siva K are long forgotten. There was a time when these four names would have been placed in the same sentence as Kohli and Jadeja, as members of the U-19 Indian team that won the World Cup for its age category in 2008. But while Kohli and Jadeja went on to build successful careers for India, these four could not even find a spot in the Indian Premier League (IPL), which expanded the opportunity pool for Indian cricketers manifold and began the same year as their U-19 title win. Those contrasting fortunes underscore how in men's cricket, the journey for even the best of junior cricketers to senior levels remains arduous.



IPL transition

When it came to giving cricketers opportunities along with a good salary, the IPL was a gamechanger. Now in its 17th season, it has usually had eight teams and occasionally 10, as is also the case since 2022. Each team is allowed a squad of 25 players. The restriction of the eleven having a maximum of four overseas players has meant teams have had to look beyond established Indian cricketers and foreign players to add muscle to their 25-member roster. One pool of players that had high visibility for IPL teams was the Indian U-19 team. A set of selectors had already scouted them and declared them as among the best in their age group that India had to offer. Yet, out of a possible 119 players that made up the eight under-19 World Cup squads, as many as 56 players, or 47%, haven't played a single match in the IPL. At the top end, only 26 from this pool of 119 junior players have played more than 50 IPL matches.

56 of 119 Indian juniors have not played a single match in IPL

Break-up of 119 U-19 Indian players since 2008 by number of IPL matches played

Matches Played	Number of Players
0 matches	56
1 to 10 matches	19
11 to 30 matches	10
31 to 50 matches	8
Above 50 matches	26

Note: 1. Data as of April 13. 2. Includes players who were withdrawn from the squad before the commencement of the World Cup or who later went on to represent other countries. Source: ESPNcricinfo.com; Indian Premier League

Tale of extremes

This set of 26 players is dispersed across the various under-19 teams. There are five apiece from the 2008, 2010 and 2018 junior teams, and four apiece from the 2014 and 2016 teams. Many of them are mainstays for their IPL teams today. Five of them are captains in this year's IPL: KL Rahul (2014), Rishabh Pant (2016) and Shubman Gill (2018). In the past, Virat Kohli (2008) and Mayank Agarwal (2010) have also led franchises.

While these players broke out, many of their junior teammates could not even make it to the IPL. Take, for example, the 2014 squad that threw up Sanju Samson and Shreyas Iyer. That squad was captained by Vijay Zol, who has played three IPL matches. Then, there were six players who have not played a single IPL match: Aamir Gani, Akhil Herwadkar, Ankush Bains, Atit Sheth, Chama Millind and Karan Kaila.

The 2008, 2010 and 2018 junior squads made the best transition to the IPL

Number of players from under-19 squad to play more than 50 IPL matches

Year	Number of Players	Players
2008	5	Virat Kohli, Ravindra Jadeja, Manish Pandey, Saurabh Tiwary, Siddharth Kaul
2010	5	Mayank Agarwal, KL Rahul, Mandeep Singh, Jaydev Unadkat, Harshal Patel
2012	2	Sandeep Sharma, Manan Vohra
2014	4	Sanju Samson, Deepak Hooda, Shreyas Iyer, Kuldeep Yadav
2016	4	Rishabh Pant, Ishan Kishan, Washington Sundar, Avesh Khan
2018	5	Shubman Gill, Prithvi Shaw, Riyan Parag, Arshdeep Singh, Abhishek Sharma
2020	1	Ravi Bishnoi
2022	0	

Note: 1. Data as of April 13. Source: ESPNcricinfo.com; Indian Premier League

Country competition

For leading cricketing nations that have a robust domestic setup and an established T20 league, the levels of junior-to-senior transition between 2008 and 2023 is of a similar level as India, sometimes even lower, as is the case with South Africa. For India, of the 119 junior players, only 33 have gone on to play for the Indian senior team in any of the three formats — namely Tests, one-day internationals or T20s. In other words, roughly one in four junior players made a debut in the senior ranks as well.

The one country for which this number is significantly higher is Bangladesh, where nearly one in two junior players have also represented their country at the senior level. It's noteworthy that Bangladesh acquired Test status only in 2000. As cricket commercializes and expands further, it's likely to challenge the junior-to-senior structuring even more.

IPL auditions

Players take different routes to break into the bigger league, and they do so at different times of their life. There are domestic tournaments like the Ranji Trophy. Indian fast bowler Mohammed Shami, for example, caught the eyes of the national selectors after he put up great numbers for Bengal during the 2012-13 Ranji Trophy. Swinging the ball, Shami picked up 10-wicket hauls against Madhya Pradesh and Hyderabad. Then, there's the IPL. While Suryakumar Yadav was piling the runs for Mumbai in the Ranji Trophy, it was his explosive and creative exploits with the city's IPL team that earned him an India debut in 2021 at the relatively old age of 30.

Between 2008 and 2023, there have been 85 and 91 players who have debuted for the Indian men's senior team in ODIs and T20s, respectively. Nearly three-fourths of them do not come from the under-19 lineage. Conversely, their performances in the IPL have gone a long way in earning them an Indian cap.

About three-fourths of Indian debutants have not come through the junior ranks

Number of players that debuted for India between 2008 and 2023

Format	Part of under-19 team	Not part of under-19 team
50-over format	22	63
20-over format	25	66

Source: ESPNcricinfo.com; Indian Premier League

Leading cricketing nations show a slim transition from junior to senior ranks

Share of under-19 players from 2008 to 2022 who debuted for the senior team (%)



Source: ESPNcricinfo.com

The writer is a student at the Asian College of Journalism, Chennai.

Rahul, Quinton guide LSG to comfortable win vs CSK

Openers put together partnership of 134 as hosts chase down 177 against Chennai with an over remaining

Sharad Deep

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LUCKNOW: Heading into this year's IPL, there were a few questions surrounding KL Rahul. Will he open the batting or play in the middle order? Is he fit enough to keep wickets after missing four of the five Tests against England due to a quadriceps injury? Can he pip some of the other contenders in making the cut for the T20 World Cup?

We don't know about the last bit yet, but Friday was certainly evidence of Rahul being at his free-flowing best with the bat. Chasing 177, the Lucknow Super Giants captain, who turned 32 on Thursday, led from the front with a knock of 82 off 53 balls and took the hosts to a convincing eight-wicket victory against Chennai Super Kings with an over to spare.

Rahul has been subjected to criticism for his approach with the bat in the past, particularly because he has all the shots to play with the freedom that he did on Friday.

Even with Quinton de Kock at the other end, it was Rahul who was the more dominant partner, helping Lucknow reach 54/0 in the first six overs. The contest was as good as over once Rahul and de Kock laid a solid foundation for the run chase by stitching together 134 runs for the first wicket. Having been dismissed after getting starts in the last five games, Rahul must have been pleased to make it count with his highest score this season. De Kock, meanwhile, justified his standing in the side with his third fifty of the season.

De Kock's innings came to an end when he was caught by MS Dhoni off Bangladesh left-arm pacer Mustafizur Rahman. Rahul was brilliantly caught by a flying Ravindra Jadeja at backward off Matheesha Pathirana.

By the time the two departed in quick succession, LSG were



Skipper KL Rahul guided Lucknow Super Giants to an eight-wicket win against Chennai Super Kings in Lucknow on Friday.

BCCL

Team	P	Won	Lost	NRR	Pts
1 Rajasthan Royals	7	6	1	0.677	12
2 Kolkata Knight Riders	6	4	2	1.399	8
3 Chennai Super Kings	7	4	3	0.529	8
4 Sunrisers Hyderabad	6	4	2	0.502	8
5 Lucknow Super Giants	7	4	3	0.123	8
6 Delhi Capitals	7	3	4	-0.074	6
7 Mumbai Indians	7	3	4	-0.133	6
8 Gujarat Titans	7	3	4	-1.303	6
9 Punjab Kings	7	2	5	-0.251	4
10 Royal Challengers	7	1	6	-1.185	2

almost at the doorstep of victory with Nicholas Pooran (23*, 12b, 3x4, 1x6) and Marcus Stoinis (8*, 7b, 1x4) completing the chase.

CSK's total of 176/6 was thanks to Ravindra Jadeja's first half-century of this season. Dhoni, coming in to bat in the 18th over, too played a part with a 9-ball 28 not out that included three fours and two sixes. Jadeja (57*, 40b) was in sublime touch, smashing five boundaries and a six to anchor

the innings. With Shivam Dube enduring a rare failure — he was out for 3 off 8 balls — Moeen Ali's 20-ball 30 was also crucial in providing the impetus for CSK's innings towards the end. CSK scored 71 runs in the final five overs.

The pacers kept a check on the CSK batters early on and experienced spinner Krunal Pandya ensured that he maintained pressure in the middle overs. LSG pacers Matt Henry and Mohsin Khan were on tar-

get from the very start, sharing a wicket each to see CSK struggling at 33/2 within the power-play even though opener Ajinkya Rahane (36, 24b, 5x4, 1x6) was hitting the ball well. Mohsin dismissed Rachin Ravindra off his very first delivery while skipper Rituraj Gaikwad (17, 13b, 1x4) was done in by Yash Thakur's outswinger.

Dube (3) and Sameer Rizvi (1) departed in quick succession, but a 51-run sixth wicket partnership between Dhoni

and Jadeja gave CSK's bowlers a total to bowl at. "Feels good at the end of the day. When you win, looks like you make all the decisions right. Impossible to get all right. Depends on the kind of wicket we are playing on and the kind of batters there are," said Rahul.

Brief scores: Chennai Super Kings 176/6 in 20 overs (R Jadeja 57*, K Pandya 2/16) lost to Lucknow Super Giants 180/2 in 19 overs (KL Rahul 82, Q de Kock 54) by 8 wickets.

Sreejesh vs Krishan: The battle to become India's custodian at Paris

Sandip Sikdar

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NEW DELHI: PR Sreejesh had his arm wrapped around Krishan Bahadur Pathak's shoulders as they walked off the pitch after a match against Australia last week. They discussed the game but there were also smiles and laughter as they disappeared into the change room of the Perth Hockey Stadium.

The camaraderie between the two custodians has been witnessed by fans for the last six years. They spend most of their time together, not just during tours but also in camp where they train with the same goal of guarding the two posts.

But the two friends are also rivals at present, in a race against each other. "I can't say much as they are in a big battle right now. Both are doing great. That's the only thing I'm going to say about them at the moment," says India's intermittent goalkeeping coach Dennis van de Pol.

Unlike most bilateral tours or international hockey federation (FIH) tournaments where the squads are at least 18 strong, federations can only send 16 players to the Olympics, meaning that only one goalkeeper will make the cut for Paris while the other will be a standby.

Three years ago, it was Sreejesh who helped India claim that elusive bronze and Pathak returned as the only member of the squad to not medal in Tokyo. While saying that the team's win was his win too, not having India's first Olympic hockey medal in 41 years around his neck must have hurt.

But a lot has changed in the last three years. Pathak is no longer a newbie as his 121 India caps show and he has played a crucial role in helping India win many matches and tournaments, including the Asian Games gold last year. "Pathak's patience and



could prove to be inexperience in shootouts. In his six-year career, Pathak has only taken part in six penalty shootouts, winning and losing three each.

In the same time frame, Sreejesh has participated in 14 shootouts, clearly showing that the Kerala custodian was the preferred choice of coaches Fulton, Reid and Harendra Singh when it came to the final test. "For Sreejesh, his intelligent game-play and shootouts make him stand out," admits van de Pol.

Shootouts are an inevitability in the knockouts of all major competitions. Belgium beat Australia via penalties to win their maiden Olympic gold three years back. Germany outwitted Belgium in the shootouts to claim the World Cup crown last year in Bhubaneswar.

One could argue that after 321 matches, Sreejesh's body, which will turn 36 next month, will be tired in its 18th year of international hockey. "I don't think it is a tough task for any goalkeeper to play 60 minutes. We train every day for four hours. We train to not just be fit for 60 minutes but also play back-to-back matches. Physically we are fit, mentally we are ready. Before Paris, we will play full matches. It is not going to be a problem," says Sreejesh, adding that he never takes his place in the team for granted.

"You should never be in a comfort zone. If you are, you will never do your best and never work hard. I always tell myself before every match that I need to focus, work hard and need to do my best to be there for the Olympics. You need to be sharp enough. It's not only a physical but also a mental game. You need to handle the pressure and be there."

Indeed, it won't be an easy decision and the final call will be down to Fulton who has the best view in the house in this photo finish.

Though he has enough experience in penalty corners (PC), perhaps Pathak's biggest weak link

the second goalkeeper will only go as standby. The coach hasn't said anything yet. It is up to him and the selectors. My job is to give my best and do whatever the team requires," says Pathak, who will turn 27 next week.

Knowing he can't substitute Sreejesh's experience, Pathak has been spending extra hours off the pitch to read opponents more deeply, analyse their attacking trends, positions from where they attack, their penalty corner (PC) set ups. "If you do all this, you don't have to worry during the match because you'll know from where they'll attack. It's implanted in your mind. These factors have improved my game," says Pathak.

Though he has enough experience in penalty corners (PC), perhaps Pathak's biggest weak link

Liverpool lose in semis of Europa

LONDON: Liverpool crashed out of the Europa League after a 1-0 win against Atalanta that wasn't enough to overturn their quarter-final deficit while Bayer Leverkusen's 1-1 draw at West Ham took the German champions into the last four on Thursday. Atalanta will face Marseille in their first European semi-final since the 1988 Cup Winners' Cup.

Leverkusen, who survived a scare from West Ham before advancing 3-1 on aggregate, will play Roma in the semis who saw off Italian rivals AC Milan 3-1 on aggregate.

Norris takes pole for China sprint

SHANGHAI: McLaren's Lando Norris pipped the Mercedes of Lewis Hamilton to pole position on Friday for the Chinese Grand Prix sprint race as rain played havoc with qualifying in Shanghai. Fernando Alonso in an Aston Martin was third with championship leader Max Verstappen fourth.

ISL: Odisha defeat Kerala, in semis

NEW DELHI: Odisha beat Kerala Blasters 2-1 in Bhubaneswar on Friday to enter the semi-finals of the Indian Super League. They will play Mohun Bagan in the last four. Diego Mauricio (87th) and Valmirruatela (98th) scored for the winners while Cernych (67th) scored for the visitors.

Gukesh in with a shot at history

Indian teenager is in a three-way tie for first position with Nepomniachtchi and Nakamura after 12 rounds of Candidates

Susan Ninan

BENGALURU: Only four players remain standing and a 17-year-old Indian is in with a chance to beat the odds, overturn pre-tournament favourites and make history.

D Gukesh is in a three-way tie for first place with Ian Nepomniachtchi and Hikaru Nakamura after 12 rounds in the Candidates tournament in Toronto. Fabiano Caruana is half a point off the leaders. It's India vs USA vs Russia, if you will. Two more rounds remain (not accounting for possible tie-breaks) and only the winner will make it to the pinnacle of chess competition — the World Championship. Viswanathan Anand is the only Indian so far to have played and won the World Chess Championship.

The final rounds promise to be frenzied. Those in contention not only have to fight their own battles but also keep an eye on how rivals are faring and adjust their plans accordingly.

In recent memory, the 2013 Candidates tournament was among the most dramatic. Magnus Carlsen and Vladimir Kramnik were in the shared lead. If Carlsen drew and Kramnik won their respective games in the final round, the latter would qualify for the World Championship. As it turned out, both lost their final-round games. Carlsen was declared the tournament winner on account of a higher number of wins.

"You felt like you were part of a theatre performance," said Peter Svidler, who defeated Carlsen in the 2013 final round and is in Toronto as Pragnanandhaa's trainer. "There was this whole storyline of Magnus playing against me but also against Vlad (Kramnik) who

The final stretch

Just the final two rounds of the Candidates remain. D Gukesh, Ian Nepomniachtchi and Hikaru Nakamura are tied in first place while the experienced Fabiano Caruana could still strike. Here's a look at how things might pan out

After Round 12, there is now a...

- 62.4%** chance of a sole winner
- 17.1%** chance of a 2-way tie
- 20.5%** chance of 3 or more players tying for first

ROUND 13

- Ian Nepomniachtchi - Hikaru Nakamura
- R Praggnanandhaa - Fabiano Caruana
- D Gukesh - Alireza Firouzja

ROUND 14

- Hikaru Nakamura - D Gukesh
- Fabiano Caruana - Ian Nepomniachtchi

STATS COURTESY: CHESS BY THE NUMBERS
PICS COURTESY: FIDE

was playing his Black game against Vassily Ivanchuk. They constantly had to watch how each other was doing. You did get the feeling that you were part of something incredibly dramatic."

The image of an exhausted 22-year-old Carlsen, shirt unbuttoned, hunched over a staircase handrail after the 2013 Candidates final round, is now perhaps etched in chess folklore.

Firouzja next up
For Gukesh, the Round 13 pairings position him well for a full point. He faces an underperforming Alireza Firouzja with

White while his co-leaders square off against each other. If Gukesh wins and the other game ends in a draw, the Indian goes into the final round with a significant edge. Should two players be tied on scores after 14 rounds, they'll play a tie-break of two rapid games. If more than two players are on the same score, a single round-robin will be played.

There's the tiny detail of nerves and fatigue in a long, winner-takes-all tournament like this one. Caruana, Nepomniachtchi and Nakamura — aged 31, 33 and 36 respectively — must be thankful for the rest day ahead of the final two

rounds. Nakamura mentioned he felt tired after the recent rounds. He's now won three games in a row and has become only the third player to do so at the Candidates since 2013. Aside from playing the Candidates, the world No. 3 has also been recording YouTube recaps after every round and winning Titled Tuesdays (online blitz).

No fatigue
The Indian teen shrugged off any suggestion of fatigue. "I think it will come down to whoever plays good chess and manages to stay focused in the last two rounds," said Gukesh. "I feel pretty good physically

and mentally. From the start, I've been in good shape. I don't feel any kind of exhaustion."

Barring Gukesh, the other three players have featured in multiple Candidates and two of them — Caruana and Nepomniachtchi — have played in the World Championship as well. Nakamura believes their experience will play a decisive role in the home stretch. "Between Fabiano, myself and Ian we have so much experience. All three of us are used to this situation to some degree...Not to sound nationalistic or anything but Fabiano and I both have a shot against Ian and hopefully one of us can find a way to

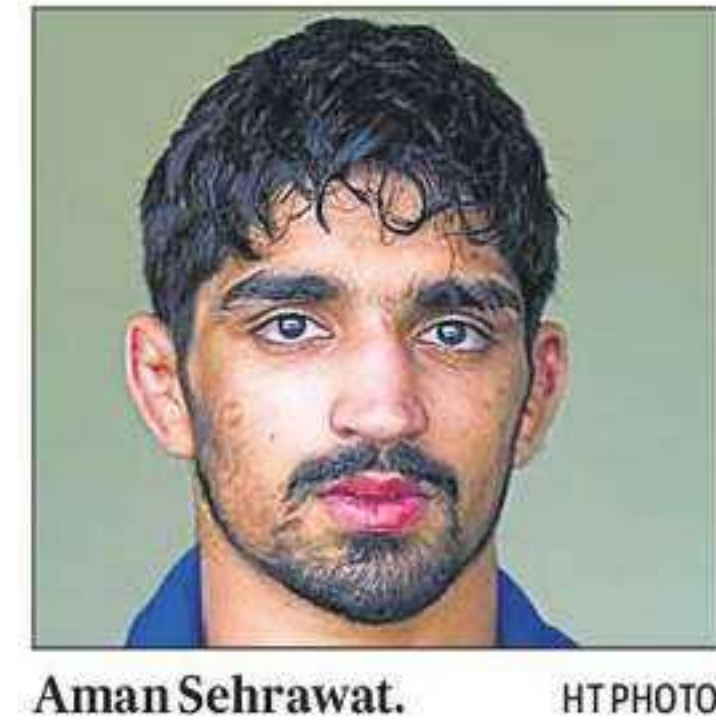
bring it home."

Caruana, who's had a lacklustre run for most of the tournament has unearthed form over the last couple of rounds. "My results have kept me alive," he said, "I started to play better and win some games finally after a long time...every other tournament doesn't compare to this in pressure and stakes."

Round 12 results (Open)
Hikaru Nakamura (7.5) beat Alireza Firouzja (4.5); Nijat Abasov (3) lost to Gukesh D (7.5); Fabiano Caruana (7) beat Vidit Santosh Gujrathi (5); Ian Nepomniachtchi (7.5) drew Praggnanandhaa R (6).

Sehrawat's loss extends India's quota drought

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Aman Sehrawat. HT PHOTO

NEW DELHI: Two minutes and 17 seconds is all it took for Gulomjon Abdullaev to pin India's brightest quota hope Aman Sehrawat in the 57kg freestyle semi-final of the ongoing Asian Olympic Qualifiers in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan to ensure the six-member men's team returns empty handed from the penultimate Paris qualifier.

Aman, the 2023 Asian champion, was the only Indian to go past the quarter-final stage. The 20-year-old began well, beating Kazakh Yerassyl Mukhtaruly 10-0 in his first bout and followed it with an 11-1 rout of South Korean Sunggwon Kim.

Aman, however, met his match in Abdullaev. The 25-year-old Uzbek was always going to be a tricky opponent. The semi-final was also a battle of styles with Abdullaev's ultra-aggressive methods against Aman who likes to mount his attacks in the second period. It is an area that Aman has been diligently working on but on Friday, Abdullaev gave him no chance.

The Uzbek attacked Aman's right leg and effected a single-leg takedown in the first minute and soon threatened to run away with the bout after grabbing both his legs. Aman barely warded off the attack before the relentless Abdullaev came roaring back with a four-point duck-under. A shocked Aman tried some feeble attacks but Abdullaev's defence was up to the task. He ended the contest by pinning Aman and pocketing the quota. "Abdullaev was the only real challenger that Aman had. It was a great chance to win the quota. Unfortunately, nothing worked for him. He couldn't apply any technique nor fight the way he usually does," Aman's coach Lalit Kumar said.

Abdullaev had beaten Tokyo silver medalist Ravi Dahiya in the 2021 Poland Open final after going down to him earlier in the competition.

Aman's plan, going into the semi-final, was to take the bout to the second period. Abdullaev's attacking game means he usually expends too much energy in the first three minutes which makes him vulnerable in the back end of the bouts. "The idea was to fight the full bout, but Aman just couldn't recover from early attacks," Lalit said.

Aman, who was also carrying a niggle in his groin and hamstring, didn't look properly warmed-up to the coach. "His body looked quite stiff. He needs a warm-up bout before stepping on the mat. His warm-up routines are quite intense. But since none of the Indians reached the semis, he could not spar before his bout," the coach added.

The day began on a disappointing note for India with Deepak Punia (86kg) and Sujet Kalkal (65kg) missing the qualifiers. The duo had spent two nights at the Dubai airport following flight cancellations due to inclement rain. They eventually reached the competition venue half-an-hour after the weigh-ins ended, and despite earnest requests from the coaches, were not granted any relief. Members of the travelling contingent believe WFI could have reached out to UWW and sought an exemption.

Indian wrestlers now have the World Qualifiers in May to aim for, the last quota event for Paris. Saturday will witness the women's events with Vinesh Phogat (50kg), Anshu Malik (57kg) and Radhika (76kg) carrying India's hopes.

Hindustan Times

HT City

SALMAN KHAN IS BACK AT WORK

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रेल मंत्रालय MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
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No. 2018/Track-4(P)/RSP-EUR/Vol.1 Date:18.04.2024

Sub: E-Tender No. TKP-1-2024 for Supply of Long rail exchange (unloading and loading) System and its Annual Maintenance Contract for 05 (Five) years (Existing EURs to be provided by Indian Railways).

1. Electronic bids are invited for E-Tender Notice No. TKP-1-2024, on behalf of the President of India, for Supply of "Long rail exchange (unloading and loading) System and its Annual Maintenance Contract for 05 (Five) years (Existing EURs to be provided by Indian Railways)".

2. The interested bidders are advised to visit the website <http://ireps.gov.in> for further details, downloading of the tender documents and submission of their e-bids.

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 1162/24

NORTHERN RAILWAY

TENDER NOTICE

Invitation of Tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement System)

1 Name of work with its location : Painting of Br. No. 249 (12x61.0m) of North & South line on DLI-GZB section.

2 Approx. Cost of work : Rs. 2,88,89,654.66

3 Earnest Money : Rs. 2,94,500/-

4 Completion period of the work : (06) Six Months.

5 Date & time for submission of tender & opening of tender : Upto 15.00 hrs. on 10.05.2024 Opening of tender after 15.00 hrs. on same day

6 Website particulars where complete details of Tender can be seen & downloaded : Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in

No.: 32-W-BR-NO-249-DLI-GZB Date: 16.04.2024 1173/2024

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NORTHERN RAILWAY

Cancellation of Tender

Due to administrative reason NIT No. 1-W-Dy.CETMCL-UTV-01-24-25 dated 12.04.2024 for the under noted work to be opened on 07.05.2024 is hereby cancelled. The name of work and other details are as under:-

1. "POH of Track Machines UTV, 2001, 2002, 2004, 3061 and 10072 at TMMD KKDE, LKO and TKD working under Dy.CE/TMC/Line/NR".

Tender Cost : Rs. 2,38,90,909.88

No.: 1-W/Dy.CE/TMC/L/NDS/Tender Corresp. Dated: 19.04.2024 1177/2024

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. 0920242025 Dated: 17.04.2024

E-Tender Notice

Divisional Railway Manager (Engineering)/North Central Railway, Prayagraj, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites online open tenders (E-Tender) as detailed below:-

E-Tender Notice No.	Approx Cost (In Rs.)	Earnest Money (In Rs.)
0920242025-14	Rs. 1,32,72,983.42	Rs. 2,16,400.00

Name of work: Rehabilitation of GM Banglow at Leader Road, Prayagraj.

Date & Time of closing of Tender: 09.05.2024 at 15:00 PM, Completion Period: 04 Months, Nature of work: *Building work. NOTE-(1) For full details and submission of tenders, please see the Indian Railway website www.ireps.gov.in. *Special condition must be read along with this. 704/24(K)

@CPRONCR @northcentralrailway North central railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

T. Notice No: 230-Elect/TRD/PRYJE-E-Tender Notice/2024/524 Dated: 16.04.2024

E-Tender Notice

Sr. Divl. Electrical Engineer/TRD/N. C. Rly/Prayagraj, for and on behalf of the President of India, invite the following E- Tender, the details of the tenders is as under:

T. No. :230-TRD-WC-914-2024 Completion Period :09 Months

Description of work:Modification in 24kV OHE due to Provision of New FOB at Jalesar Road and Hathras station of Prayagraj Division.

Advertised value :₹86,57,012.21 Bid Security: ₹1,73,200.00

Bidding system : Single Packet, Tender Closing date & Time :10.05.2024 & 14.00 Hrs, Tender Opening date & Time :10.05.2024 & 15.00 Hrs, Allocation :Capital, UVID: 060253221017, 060253221018. Note:- 1. The complete information along with tender document of above E-Tenders shall be available on Website www.ireps.gov.in 21 days prior to the date of opening of the tender. 2. Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with Digital Signature Certificate. 3. In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. 701/24(DG)

North central railways @CPRONCR @northcentralrailway www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

दक्षिणांचल विद्युत वितरण निगम लि०
कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता
विद्युत वितरण मण्डल, इटावा

ई-निविदा विस्तारीकरण सूचना

विद्युत वितरण मण्डल, इटावा के अर्नागत तत्कालीन अधीक्षण अभियन्ता द्वारा बिजनेस प्लान 2024-25 में निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु आमंत्रित निम्न ई-निविदाओं के खुलने की तिथि तब तक सम्बन्धित खण्ड कार्यालयों द्वारा कार्य करायें जाने हेतु प्रावधान एवं कार्य का बीडिंग उपलब्ध न करायें जाने के फलस्वरूप निविदा अपलोड करने एवं निविदा खुलने की तिथि को निम्न विवरणानुसार विस्तृत किया जाता है:-

1. ई-निविदा सं०:- 164/EDCE/2023-24 निविदा खुलने की तिथि 15.04.2024 2. ई-निविदा सं०:- 178/EDCE/2023-24 निविदा खुलने की तिथि 15.04.2024 3. ई-निविदा सं०:- 179/EDCE/2023-24 निविदा खुलने की तिथि 15.04.2024 4. ई-निविदा सं०:- 205/EDCE/2023-24 निविदा खुलने की तिथि 15.04.2024 5. ई-निविदा सं०:- 206/EDCE/2023-24 निविदा खुलने की तिथि 15.04.2024 6. ई-निविदा सं०:- 207/EDCE/2023-24 निविदा खुलने की तिथि 15.04.2024 7. ई-निविदा सं०:- 208/EDCE/2023-24 निविदा खुलने की तिथि 15.04.2024 8. ई-निविदा सं०:-209/EDCE/2023-24 निविदा खुलने की तिथि 15.04.2024 उक्त ई-निविदा दिनांक 28.04.2024 को 01:00 बजे तक ऑनलाइन अपलोड की जा सकेंगी एवं आगे कार्यदिनांक दिनांक 29.04.2024 को 03:00 बजे खोली जायेगी। ई-निविदा प्रपत्र, निविदा शूलक / ईएमपीडीओ धनराशि एवं अन्य नियम व शर्तों से सम्बन्धित समस्त विवरण उक्त शासन के ई-प्रोक्योरमेंट पोर्टल <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर उपलब्ध किया जायेगा।

पत्र संख्या- 1293/वि(वि०)मंड०/ई-निविदा विभाग अधीक्षण अभियन्ता दिनांक- 18.04.2024 विद्युत वितरण मण्डल, इटावा

"सुनहरा भविष्य बनायें, राष्ट्रहित में बिजली बचायें"

Cabinet Secretariat Department
(Directorate of Aviation)
Patna Airport, Patna - 800014.
TEL. No.- 0612-2225659, 2224423, Fax 0612 2224614
e-mail-cadbihar@bihar.gov.in

Letter No: CBN/Res./02-01/2020-322

CORRIGENDUM

(PR.NO.020245 (Cabinet) 2023-24 & PR.NO.000066 (CSD) 2024-25)

CHANGE IN LAST DATE OF SUBMISSION OF TENDER & DESIRED SPECIFICATIONS OF HELICOPTER

With reference to our short tender notice Ref. No.- PR.NO.020245 (Cabinet) 2023-24 published on date 28.03.2024 for **Hiring of One Twin Engine Helicopter (8+2/5+2 Seater) on Wet-Lease** for operation under Directorate of Aviation at our Patna base location for a period of 70 days from the date of announcement of election for Department of Election, Govt. of Bihar.

Due to unavoidable Circumstances:-

We hereby revise last date of submission of tender to **24.04.2024 at 03:00 PM** & the desired specification of helicopter should be read as **a) The helicopter should have valid ARC from DGCA.**

Participants are requested to contact Director, Directorate of Aviation, Cabinet Secretariat Department, Govt. of Bihar (8757894141).

Alternatively, interested and qualified agencies may send their queries through mail.cadbihar@bihar.gov.in.

For detailed notification or further updates, kindly visit the following website; www.state.bihar.gov.in/csd

Other terms and conditions of the tender published in PR.NO.020245 (Cabinet) 2023-24 will remain unchanged.

This bears approval of the Add. Chief Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat Department.

For further details please visit : www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar (Devendra Kumar Dard)
PR- 000209 (CSD) 2024-25 Administrative Officer

लोकसभा आम निर्वाचन 2024- मतदान महात्योहार, बिहार है तैयार

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18th April Kamlesh Manchanda

19th APRIL ANSWER
Which player had the highest individual score in IPL 2020?
A. KL Rahul

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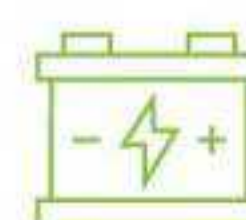
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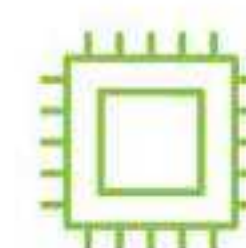
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