



**DRISHTI JUDICIARY**  
दृष्टि आईएस की एक पहल

8010 208 000 | 707, मुखर्जी नगर, नई दिल्ली - 110009

**ज्यूडिशियरी फाउंडेशन कोर्स**

हिंदी व अंग्रेजी माध्यम • ऑफलाइन (हाइब्रिड मोड) • लाइव ऑनलाइन (दृष्टि लनिंग ऐप द्वारा)

नया बैच आरंभ

हिंदी माध्यम  
29 अप्रैल, शाम 6 बजे

English Medium  
Admissions Open

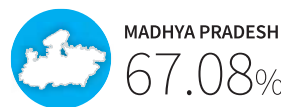
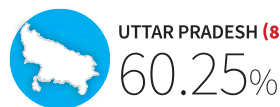
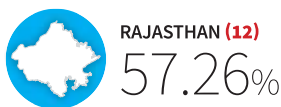
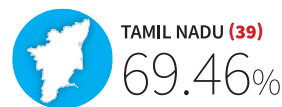
सीमित सीटें • निशुल्क टेस्ट सीरीज़ • व्यक्तिगत गाइडेंस



सीट बुक करने के लिये स्कैन करें

**Race BEGINS**

Over 62.3% polling was reported till 9 p.m. in the first phase of the Lok Sabha election. Graphic shows turnout in select States. Numbers in brackets are seats



Source: EC (provisional)

**IN BRIEF**



**Kejriwal files plea seeking access to insulin**

**NEW DELHI**  
Aam Aadmi Party national convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Friday filed a fresh plea in a Delhi court seeking 15-minute daily consultations with his physician and access to insulin. He told the court that the ED was being "petty" and accused the agency of "politicising" what he ate in prison. » Page 4

**AAP councillor turns rebel ahead of MCD elections**

**NEW DELHI**  
A day after AAP announced its candidates for the posts of Mayor and Deputy Mayor in the upcoming Municipal Corporation of Delhi elections, party councillor Vijay Kumar from Trilokpuri said he will contest the poll for the Deputy Mayor's post. » Page 3

**PLUTUS IAS**  
UPSC/PCS  
Don't miss our Faculty Panel!  
**PSIR OPTIONAL**  
23rd April 2024  
Both Online & Offline  
Karol Bagh | Mahatma Nagar | Chandigarh | Shimla | Bhopal  
+91 8448440231

# Voters brave heatwave; first phase has over 62% turnout

Lakshadweep saw the highest turnout at 83.88% and Bihar the lowest of 48.88%, says EC; violence was reported in Manipur, West Bengal and Chhattisgarh; polling has been completed for 10 States and Union Territories in the opening phase

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

A voter turnout of 62.37% was recorded in the first phase of the Lok Sabha election on Friday, which sealed the fate of candidates in 102 constituencies across 21 States and Union Territories.

The voting percentage is likely to go up when reports from all polling stations are obtained, the Election Commission (EC) said in a statement. The poll body also commended the "high" voter turnout "despite the heatwave".

The poll percentage was 69.4 in the first phase of the 2019 election.

Polling has been completed for 10 States and Union Territories in this phase, including Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, Andaman and Nicobar, Lakshadweep and most north-eastern States. Prominent leaders such as Nitin Gadkari, Kanimozhi, Gaurav Gogoi and Bhupendra Yadav were among the contestants in this phase.

The seven-phase polls would end on June 1 and counting would take place on June 4.

Among the States where



**Making it count:** Voters waiting to cast their votes during the first phase of Lok Sabha election in Jorhat district of Assam. RITU RAJ KONWAR

the polling took place, incidents of violence were reported from Manipur, West Bengal and Chhattisgarh. Lakshadweep saw the highest voter turnout at 83.88% and Bihar the lowest of 48.88%, as per provisional EC data at 11.30 p.m.

**69.46% polling in T.N.**  
Tamil Nadu, where voting took place for all 39 Lok Sabha seats, saw a turnout of 69.46%. Voters in Ekanapuram in Kancheepuram district boycotted the

polls to protest against the acquisition of farmland for a greenfield airport for Chennai.

In ethnic violence-hit Manipur, the voter turnout was 72.17%. Violence was reported in areas under the Inner Manipur seat straddling the Meitei-majority Imphal Valley.

Unidentified armed men fired several rounds outside a polling station at Thamnopkpi in Bishnupur district, reportedly injuring three persons.

No violence was reported from the Outer Manipur seat reserved for the Scheduled Tribes.

Very few people from the Kuki community came out to vote. Kuki politicians had decided not to contest the polls.

Elections were also held for 50 of the 60 Assembly seats in Arunachal Pradesh and 32 in Sikkim. The BJP had won the remaining Arunachal Pradesh seats unopposed on March 30. The crucial eight seats of

western Uttar Pradesh saw a voting percentage of 60.25. The Samajwadi Party and the ruling BJP traded barbs over bogus voting. Polling in five constituencies in Maharashtra's Vidarbha region concluded peacefully without any major untoward incident. The voter turnout averaged 61.87%.

**CONTINUED ON**  
» PAGE 10  
**MORE REPORTS ON**  
» PAGE 11

**DISCOVERY IN KUTCH**  
**Fossils of massive prehistoric snake found**  
NEWS » PAGE 10

**ATTACK MODE**  
**Left safer bet than Congress, no turncoats here: Yechury**  
STATES » PAGE 6

**BATTLING MISREPRESENTATIONS**  
**The battle over Adivasi identity**  
*The BJP's attempt to 'reclaim' stories of yore meets with resistance*  
GROUND ZERO » PAGE 9

**EXPERTS WEIGH IN**  
**Africa's ballooning debt crisis needs a political fix**  
WORLD » PAGE 14

# Manipur sees 72% turnout as violence mars polling

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Amid complaints of voter intimidation, booth-capturing, and violence across several polling booths, the first phase of the Lok Sabha election in Manipur concluded on Friday evening, with officials pegging the average turnout of the State's two constituencies at 72.17%. Three persons were arrested in connection with the violence.

While the Inner Manipur constituency reported a turnout of 76.05%, parts of Outer Manipur saw 65.22% polling, as per provisional data from the Election Commission at 11.30 p.m. The turnout for Inner Manipur in the 2019 election was around 81%.

Voting will take place in the remaining places of Outer Manipur in the second phase on April 26.

Multiple poll officers in the State confirmed to *The Hindu* that there were several instances of electronic voting machines (EVMs) being damaged during disturbances at booths where re-polling may be called for. These instances were spread across three or four polling booths in a couple of districts, CEO Pradeep



**Violent start:** A damaged booth at Khurai in Imphal East, Manipur, during the first phase of polling on Friday. REUTERS

Kumar Jha said. He added that candidates of the Congress, BJP and an Independent in the Inner Manipur seat had filed complaints of booth-capturing at multiple locations. He said the complaints would be examined and action taken.

**Three arrested**  
On Friday night, the Manipur police said that it had arrested three persons in connection with a firing incident at a school in Imphal in which one person had been injured.

In complaints sent to the poll panel, the Manipur Pradesh Congress Committee has alleged booth-capturing, rigging of votes, and coercion of voters by armed miscreants in as many as 47

booths across 12 Assembly segments. Eleven of these segments were in the Inner Manipur seat such as Thongju, Khurai, Andro, Sekmai, Moirang, Oinam, Keirao and others.

The party has sought a repoll in most of these polling booths. In Outer Manipur, the Congress complained of booth-capturing in voting centres of the Sugnu area.

Several incidents of booth-capturing were caught on videos. Some of them showed armed men roaming around polling stations despite the presence of security forces while others showed miscreants firing multiple rounds near polling stations, following which prospective voters can be seen fleeing.

# SC assails poll-time prohibitory orders

**Krishnadas Rajagopal**  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday questioned the basis of Executive Magistrates issuing blanket orders prohibiting yatras to uphold democratic and electoral values, dharnas and public meetings during the entire duration of the Lok Sabha election, till the declaration of poll results.

"How can such orders be passed?" Justice B.R. Gavai exclaimed in open court. The indignant query from the Bench, also comprising Justice Sandeep Mehta, came when advocates Prashant Bhushan, Prasanna S. and Cheryl D'Souza, for petitioner-activists Aruna Roy and Nikhil Dey, said the prohibitory orders under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code had been issued in the past six months on the ground of elections.

Authorities deal with applications seeking permission for public meetings and yatras with a deafening silence, keeping them pending without responses indefinitely, Mr. Bhushan said. The petitioners said the

**Decide applications seeking permission for yatras, meetings in three days. Bench tells Magistrates**

phenomenon had been seen in many States, including Rajasthan, Gujarat and Delhi. The Bench directed Magistrates to decide the applications within three days.

"These blanket prohibitory orders directly affect the civil society and general public from freely discussing, participating, organising or mobilising on issues affecting them ahead of elections," Mr. Bhushan submitted in the court.

"The conduct of elections – being the ostensible reason for invoking Section 144 – is neither a valid ground recognised under Section 144, nor an emergent situation to justify imposition of sweeping prohibitory orders," Mr. Bhushan submitted.

The court issued notice to the Union government and the Election Commission of India.

**CONTINUED ON**  
» PAGE 10

# Explosions rock Iran; U.S. media reports Israeli hits

**Agence France-Presse**  
TEHRAN

Iran's state media reported explosions in the central province of Isfahan on Friday, as U.S. media quoted officials as saying Israel had carried out retaliatory strikes against its arch-rival.

Israel had warned it would hit back after Iran fired hundreds of missiles and drones at Israel almost a week ago, in retaliation for a deadly strike – which Tehran blamed on its foe – that levelled Iran's consular annex at its embassy in Syria.

Air defence systems over several Iranian cities were activated, state media reported, after the country's official broadcaster said explosions were heard near Isfahan city. There had been no reaction from Israeli or Iranian officials, and the extent of the damage remained unclear.

An anonymous Israeli official told *The Washington Post* the strike was retaliation for Iran's barrage and intended to signal that Israel had the ability to strike inside Iran.

Iran's Tasnim news agency, citing "informed sources", denied that Iran



Iranians wave the flags of Palestine and Iran they as lead an anti-Israeli demonstration after the Friday noon prayer in Tehran. AFP

had been attacked from outside. "Contrary to the rumours and claims" in foreign media, "there are no reports of an attack from abroad on Iran's central city of Isfahan or any other part of the country", it said. Three Iranian officials told *The New York Times* that small drones carried out the attack, possibly launched from inside Iran, and that its radar systems had not detected unidentified aircraft entering Iranian airspace.

Fars news agency reported "three explosions" close to Qahjvarestan, near Isfahan airport and the 8th Shekari army airbase, while Iran's space agency spokesman Hossein Dalirian said "several" drones had been "successfully shot down".

Mr. Dalirian said on X there were "no reports of a missile attack".

"Reports indicate there was no major damage or large explosions caused by the impact of any air threat," the official IRNA news agency said.

The senior military officer in Isfahan, Brigadier General Siavash Mihan-dost, told state TV that people had heard defence systems shooting at a target in the air, not an explosion on the ground.

Nuclear facilities in Isfahan were reported to be "completely secure", Tasnim said, and the UN's atomic watchdog confirmed "no damage" to Iran's nuclear sites.

**RAISI STAYS MUM**  
» PAGE 14







# AAP councillor turns rebel days before MCD elections

Trilokpuri councillor Vijay Kumar decries 'lack of democracy' in AAP, says he will contest the poll for the Deputy Mayor's post; BJP is trying all sorts of tactics imaginable to unsettle us, says AAP

**Satvika Mahajan**  
NEW DELHI



AAP councillor Vijay Kumar.  
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

After the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) announced its candidates for the posts of Mayor and Deputy Mayor in the upcoming Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) elections, AAP councillor Vijay Kumar from Trilokpuri said he will contest the poll for the Deputy Mayor's post.

Mr. Kumar, along with two other AAP councillors, Ravinder Bharadwaj and Narendra Kumar, had filed his nomination for the Deputy Mayor's post on Thursday.

AAP, which has publicly backed Ravinder Bharadwaj as its Deputy Mayor candidate, had on Thursday clarified that the party had fielded two extra candidates as "backups". Hours

later, Mr. Kumar, in a post on X, clarified that he would not be contesting the elections, which are scheduled for April 26.

"I am a soldier of [AAP chief and Delhi Chief Minister] Arvind Kejriwal. I am with AAP and I will remain with AAP. I am not contesting the mayoral elections," he had said in the now-deleted post.

However, Mr. Kumar released a video statement on

Friday, retracting his former claim. "I have filed my nomination for the Deputy Mayor's post. I will contest this election and win. I request everyone not to put any pressure on me or my family," he said.

"You [AAP] talk about democracy. But there is no democracy within the party," he added.

In another post, Mr. Kumar termed the change of heart a "personal decision", adding that it was "his job" to serve the public. In the post, he tagged senior party functionaries, including Finance Minister Atishi, Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Singh, and the party's MCD in-charge Durgesh Pathak.

**'Deceitful trick'**  
AAP termed the development a "deceitful trick of the BJP".

"We are fighting a demonic power called the BJP. They will try all sorts of tactics imaginable to unsettle us," the party said in a statement.

"A true soldier of Arvind Kejriwal always believes in party discipline unwaveringly and will refuse to become a puppet of the BJP, regardless of all temptations," it added.

The development comes days ahead of the crucial polls, which will prove to be the first electoral test of unity for AAP after the arrest of its chief in a money laundering case related to the now-scrapped Delhi excise policy.

AAP's nominees for Mayor and Deputy Mayor posts - Mahesh Khichi and Ravinder Bharadwaj, respectively - will fight against BJP candidates Kishan Lal and Neena Bisht.

## Police chiefs of Delhi, Haryana, and U.P. chalk out poll details

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

An inter-State meeting of police chiefs was held to discuss security arrangements and border surveillance for the Lok Sabha poll in the National Capital Region, the police said on Friday.

While Noida and Ghaziabad will vote in the second phase of the general election on April 26, Delhi, Gurugram, and Faridabad will vote in the sixth phase on May 25.

The meeting, which took place on Thursday night, was led by Special Commissioner of Delhi Police (Law and Order) Madhup Tiwari and attended by officers of the Delhi police, as well as the police chiefs from the neighbouring districts in Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.

Mr. Tiwari said that issues such as deployment of paramilitary forces on the States' borders, joint patrolling at checkpoints, maintaining a vigil on the flow of illicit liquor and cash, seamless exchange of intelligence, and a lookout for criminals were discussed in the meeting.

## Street plays, flash mobs to feature in BJP's Delhi Lok Sabha campaign

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

The BJP's Delhi unit will launch a host of cultural programmes, such as flash mobs, *nukkad natak* (street plays), poetry recitals, music, magic and puppet shows, as part of its Lok Sabha campaign in the national capital on May 1.

A party leader said 163 *nukkad natak* teams

trained by the students of the National School of Drama will present over 8,000 shows in the city between May 1 and 23.

Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva said cultural programmes such as street plays will be used to promote the party's achievements as well as to publicise the "corruption and misrule" of the Delhi government.

Mr. Sachdeva said the party will organise street plays in Hindi, English, and various regional languages.

Meanwhile, party leaders said the BJP will host a "mega conclave" of Hindu priests, saints, and seers to celebrate the Hindu new year and construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya, at the IGI stadium on Sunday.

## Six of 25 UPSC toppers are DU alumni, says V-C

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Six of the top 25 rankers in the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) exams were graduates of Delhi University (DU), Vice-Chancellor Yogesh Singh said on Friday.

A former student from Miranda House secured the third rank, while a St. Stephens alumnus ranked fifth across India, the V-C added, highlighting that almost all the top rankers from the university were women. At least six other former students were

among the 1,016 candidates who cleared the exam, university officials said.

The V-C also said that DU is "continuously improving its rankings" as a top university of India. Dean (Rankings) Mukesh Mahlawat added that among the 56 universities listed in the QS World University Rankings (Sustainability) report, which evaluates the social and environmental impact of educational institutions, DU had claimed the first spot. The university was ranked 220th worldwide.

### Timings DELHI

SATURDAY, APR. 20		
RISE	05:51	SET 18:50
RISE	15:48	SET 03:57
SUNDAY, APR. 21		
RISE	05:50	SET 18:51
RISE	16:39	SET 04:23
MONDAY, APR. 22		
RISE	05:49	SET 18:51
RISE	17:32	SET 04:49

Delhi Weather		
	max	min
Delhi City	39	24
Safdarjang	39	24
Palam	39	25

**Delhi Palam Today**  
39°C A dry weather to prevail. Morning will be pleasant. Day will be hot and uneasy. Night also will be pleasant.

**Delhi Palam Tomorrow**  
40°C The weather will be dry. Morning will be pleasant. Day will be hot and humid with uneasy afternoon. Night will be comfortable.

© Copyright SkyMet Weather 2024  
All rights reserved.

At ForumIAS, we are committed to your success.



## Why choose ForumIAS?

When Aditya did not at first clear the examination, he went onto join the Mains Guidance Program, beginning his association with ForumIAS Academy, and securing a rank 253 that year. Aditya has secured Rank I this year.

Ask Ananya from Telangana and Rohit from Delhi, who cleared the Civil Services Examination in the very first attempt, and chose to join ForumIAS Current Affairs Classes and Year Long Mains Guidance Program respectively. They have secured Ranks 3 and 74 in CSE 2023.

Or ask Medha from Uttar Pradesh and Chandana from Hyderabad, who chose ForumIAS Academy for their Mains 2023 preparation for their rank improvement. Medha and Chandana will be joining the prestigious Indian Administrative Service with Ranks 13 and 50 respectively.

In CSE 2023, 6 out of top 10 rankers, 19 out of top 30 rankers and 57 out of Top 100 rankers going to the academy will be ForumIAS academy students.

But why take our word, take a look at our students who have secured Ranks in Top 50 below

Name & IAS Rank	ForumIAS Roll No.	Courses Enrolled
Aditya Srivastava IAS Rank -1	1910098104	MGP
Donuru Ananya Reddy IAS Rank -3	1910085265	CA Mains
Ruhani IAS Rank -5	1910059018	MGP+
Srishti Dabas IAS Rank -6	1910123489	MGP+
Anmol Rathore IAS Rank -7	1910105694	MGP+
Ashish Kumar IAS Rank -8	1910102485	Sociology ATS, CA Mains, MGP+
Kush Motwani IAS Rank -11	1910078235	MGP+
Medha Anand IAS Rank -13	1910046856	MGP++, Sociology ATS
Shaurya Arora IAS Rank -14	1910085914	MGP+, MGP
Kunal Rastogi IAS Rank -15	1910096599	MGP+, PTS, CA Classes for Mains
Ayan Jain IAS Rank -16	1910074977	SFG, EGR,AWFG, MGP
Swati Sharma IAS Rank -17	1910099200	PTS, MGP
Anshul Bhatt IAS Rank -22	1910092272	MGP, Political Science ATS,AWFG
Saurabh Sharma IAS Rank -23	1910124130	MGP+
Prajnanandan Giri IAS Rank -24	1910062322	MGP, MGP+
Rupal Rana IAS Rank -26	1910104377	CA Classes for Mains, MGP+
Nandala Saikiran IAS Rank -27	1910100015	MGP+
Pawan Kumar Goel IAS Rank -28	1910026966	CA Mains, MGP+
Saloni Chhabra IAS Rank -29	1910087700	MGP+, MGP
Vishnu Sasikumar IAS Rank -31	1910115488	MGP+
Arjun Gupta IAS Rank -32	1910099366	MGP
Zufishan Haque IAS Rank -34	1910129394	MGP+
Ayushi Pradhan IAS Rank -36	1910070813	AWFG, Ethics+ for Mains, Anthropology ATS, MGP+, MGP
Tejas Agnihotri IAS Rank -37	1910103435	MGP
Anmesh Verma IAS Rank -38	1910115442	MGP+
Deepthi Rohilla IAS Rank -39	1910103458	MGP+, CA Mains, MGP
T Bhuvaneshram IAS Rank -41	1910075716	MGP
Akanchha Singh IAS Rank -44	1910067188	SFG, MGP+
Anshul Hindal IAS Rank -48	1910102832	MGP+

Students from Pre Cum Mains Foundation program at ForumIAS who went ahead and secured the rank in the very same year

Vedika Bansal IAS Rank -96	1910103173	Eklavya_Integrated Pre cum Mains Mentorship Program FOR CSE ,SFG,CA Mains ,EGP
Kshetrimayum Deepi Chanu IAS Rank -543	1910110416	GS Foundation Program
Nidhi Chaudhary IAS Rank -650	1910058060	GS Foundation Program
Abhimanyu Singh IAS Rank -673	1910091313	Eklavya_Integrated Pre cum Mains Mentorship Program for CSE
Vinoth A R IAS Rank -683	1910069330	GS Foundation Program
Rashmi Paikra IAS Rank -881	1910092056	GS Foundation Program

### Upcoming Courses @ForumIAS

#### MGP 2024

Mentor Supported, Test Series based Self Study Program for CSE.

#### Admission Open

20 APRIL 2024  
Cohort - 03

#### Current Affairs Classes for Mains 2024

Batch - 1 22 Start Date JUNE 2024

#### Ethics+ Classes CSE Mains 2023

Batch - 1 25 Start Date JUNE 2024

#### FORUM RESIDENTIAL COACHING (FRC)

25 Start Date JUNE 2024

#### OPTIONAL FOUNDATION

Batch - 1 25 Start Date APRIL 2024

**ForumIAS**  
WE BUILD OFFICERS

NEW DELHI: 2nd Floor, IAPL House, 19, Pusa Road, Opp. Metro Pillar 95-96, Karol Bagh - 110005  
PATNA: 2nd Floor, AG Palace, East Boring Canal Road Patna - 800001 | 9311740914  
HYDERABAD: 1st Floor, SM Plaza, Indira Park Road, Jawahar Nagar, Telangana - 500020 | 9311740410  
9311740400, 9311740900 | admissions@forumias.academy | https://academy.forumias.com



**विकास प्रबंधन संस्थान**  
Development Management Institute

**Post Graduate Diploma in Management Development Management SCHOLARSHIPS**

- CAT/XAT/MAT/CMAT:
  - a.50% tuition fee as a scholarship for 70 percentile and above.
  - b.25% tuition fee as a scholarship for 60 percentile and above.
- University Toppers: 50% tuition fee waiver
- 100% tuition fee waiver for students qualifying under under PM Cares
- Merit - based Scholarship: Up to 100% tuition fee waiver based on academic performance

**EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING**

- 30% of the academic programme is on-site hands-on experiential learning

**PLACEMENTS**

- Excellent placement track record since inception

**ELIGIBILITY**

- Graduation (any discipline) with a minimum of 50% Marks (45% for SC/ST/Differently Abled Students)
- Valid Scores: CAT/ XAT/CMAT/MAT/GMAT

\* Degree final year students may also apply

9523096030 | admissions@dmil.ac.in

**ADMISSIONS OPEN**

**PGDM 2024-26**  
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

Apply to PGDM 2024-26  
APPLICATION DEADLINE  
**MAY 15, 2024**  
HTTPS://ADMISSIONS.DMLAC.IN

SUPPORTED BY



APPLY NOW



**Empowering Grassroots**



## IN BRIEF



## Highlight work done by H.P. govt., CM tells Cong. workers

Himachal Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu on Friday directed all Congress workers and office bearers to effectively highlight the State government's achievements among the people in order to secure victory in the upcoming Lok Sabha election. Mr. Sukhu said this during a meeting with Congress leaders from the Mandi constituency that was organised in Shimla to formulate a strategy for the upcoming poll. During the meeting, the Chief Minister said the party has fielded a capable and experienced leader Vikramaditya Singh from Mandi, who will win the seat with a huge margin. PTI

## Setback for JJP as senior party leader Harpal Kamboj resigns

In a setback to the Jannayak Janta Party (JJP) ahead of the Lok Sabha poll, its State general secretary Harpal Kamboj on Friday resigned from the party. Mr. Kamboj sent his resignation to party chief Ajay Singh Chautala. Mr. Kamboj said he quit the party due to "personal reasons". He was earlier the urban district president of JJP's Ambala unit and had unsuccessfully contested the 2019 Assembly elections from Ambala City. JJP's Haryana unit president Nishan Singh and the party's general secretary Kamlesh Saini had also quit the party earlier this month. Polling for the 10 Lok Sabha seats in Haryana will be held in the sixth phase on May 25. PTI

## Shunned BJP, Cong. as both cheated people: Mayawati

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) chief Mayawati on Friday said her party stayed away from alliances led by the ruling BJP and the Opposition Congress since both had cheated people. Addressing a poll rally in Madhya Pradesh's Rewa, the former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister also claimed that the BJP would struggle to win the Lok Sabha poll "if EVMs are not tampered". "The BSP did not ally with the BJP or the Congress as both these parties have cheated people. Both their manifestos are weak. We are fighting the Lok Sabha poll relying on the strength of the Dalits, the tribals, the Other Backward Classes, and the Muslims," she said. PTI

## Cab booked in Bishnoi's name, sent to Salman's residence

A Ghaziabad resident has been arrested for allegedly booking a cab in the name of jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi and sending it to actor Salman Khan's residence in Mumbai, police said on Friday. Accused Rohit Tyagi, who was picked up from his home town, intended it to be a prank, an officer said. On Wednesday, Mr. Tyagi allegedly booked a cab online for a journey from Galaxy Apartments, Mr. Khan's residence, to the Bandra police station. When the cab driver reached the address, he realised that it was a prank, and lodged a complaint. Bishnoi was in news earlier this week after a motorbike-borne man fired at Mr. Khan's residence last Sunday. PTI

## Bhujbal opts out of poll fray in Nashik

Shoumojit Banerjee  
PUNE

After weeks of discord among the *Mahayuti* allies over the Nashik Lok Sabha seat, Cabinet Minister and senior NCP leader Chhagan Bhujbal on Friday announced his withdrawal from the electoral fray. He said the delay in announcing a candidate for the seat was affecting the prospects of the ruling coalition.

Mr. Bhujbal's move paves the way for the Chief Minister Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena to claim the seat, with two-time party MP Hemant Godse seeking a third consecutive win. Nashik goes to polls in the fifth and final phase in Maharashtra on May 20.

## 'Breaking deadlock'

Speaking in Mumbai, Mr. Bhujbal, an OBC leader and three-term MLA from Yeola in Nashik, said the BJP top brass, particularly Union Home Minister Amit Shah, had been insistent on him contesting the seat, but "it was essential that the deadlock be broken and hence I am stepping back from the poll fray".

Thanking Mr. Bhujbal for withdrawing from the race, Mr. Godse said, "We now expect the rift within the *Mahayuti* over this seat to be resolved soon."

## Kejriwal seeks insulin access; ED says he can have jail meals

'Am I going to risk paralysis to get bail?' AAP chief says in response to ED's claim that he is having sugar-rich food to create grounds for medical bail; Kejriwal doesn't need insulin, Tihar Jail tells court; ED-BJP conspiring to harm Delhi CM, says AAP

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

Am Aadmi Party national convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Friday told a Delhi court that the Enforcement Directorate (ED) was being "petty" and accused the agency of "politicising" what he ate in prison.

Mr. Kejriwal's statements came a day after the Central agency claimed that the Delhi CM, who is currently lodged in Tihar Jail, is eating foods high in sugar despite having type 2 diabetes to raise his blood sugar level and create grounds for medical bail.

The Delhi CM on Thursday withdrew a plea seeking consultation with his doctor thrice a week regarding his fluctuating sugar levels and moved a fresh plea on Friday seeking 15-minute daily consultations with his physician and access to insulin.

The court will pronounce its order on April 22. Mr. Kejriwal was arrested by the ED on March 21 in connection with the Delhi excise policy-linked money laundering case.



ED cannot share information about prisoners publicly, senior AAP leader Sanjay Singh said on Friday. DEVANSH SHARMA

"ED claimed that I want to increase my blood sugar levels to get bail. Am I going to risk paralysis to get bail? Whatever food I have is as per the diet chart prepared by my doctor prior to arrest," senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, representing the AAP chief, told the court.

Mr. Singhvi told the court that there were only a few occasions when his client had deviated from his prescribed diet. "The allegation is that I have been consuming mangoes... Out of 48 meals sent from home, only three

times mangoes were there," Mr. Singhvi said. Regarding claims that his client was consuming sugar and aloo-puri, Mr. Singhvi said the AAP chief mixed an artificial sweetener in his tea.

## 'Petty, ridiculous'

"How petty, political and ridiculous can the ED be? Their statements are completely false and malicious. Just because you have a lot of influence in the media, you are able to publish that I am having aloo-puri even though this meal was sent only once during puja." The ED's counsel, Zo-

heb Hossain, opposed Mr. Singhvi's submissions, claiming that the food Mr. Kejriwal was consuming was not in accordance with the diet chart prescribed by his doctor and that Tihar Jail was well-equipped to deal with his dietary requirements. Tihar Jail authorities also submitted a report before the court indicating that the home-cooked meals consumed by the Delhi CM were not in compliance with the prescribed diet.

"There was no stipulation in his diet that he should have fruit or anything. In fact, he is not following the diet. We have also got an opinion from AIIMS. According to this, he should avoid mangoes. He should follow this diet. There is no need for insulin. In fact, if he takes insulin, his sugar level will go down drastically," the counsel for Tihar Jail, Yoginder Handoo, told the court.

Justice Kaveri Baweja, who was hearing the arguments, expressed displeasure that Mr. Kejriwal's home-cooked meals were not in compliance with his

prescribed diet. She had earlier permitted the Delhi CM to have home-cooked meals due to his diabetes.

## 'Blood sugar spiking'

Meanwhile, AAP continued to allege that Mr. Kejriwal was deliberately being denied insulin and that, as a result, his blood sugar was spiking. The party also lashed out at the ED, asking how information about any prisoner related to his health or food habits could be made public. It also alleged that the BJP and ED were conspiring to harm Mr. Kejriwal's life in prison by spreading lies.

"You cannot make any kind of information about any prisoner, related to his health or food habits, public. I want to ask the ED with what authority did it get Mr. Kejriwal's false diet chart publicised in the media yesterday?" AAP's Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Singh said.

Senior AAP leader Atishi said the ED, a money laundering probe agency, should not interfere with what Mr. Kejriwal is consuming in jail.

## Annamalai says one lakh names removed from voters' list in Coimbatore

The Hindu Bureau  
COIMBATORE

The names of around one lakh voters were missing from the electoral roll in Coimbatore, alleged K. Annamalai, BJP State president and candidate for the Coimbatore constituency.

Addressing the media, Mr. Annamalai said that nearly 850 names were missing at the polling station in Angappa School, and about 200 names were missing at a polling station in Theppakulam.

"We do not know by what logic the names were removed. This also raises questions about the pre-poll preparedness of the Election Commission. This is a planned and mass-scale deletion of names," he said.

A husband and wife's names were on the list in different polling stations. The name of a dead per-

son was on the list, while his wife's name was missing. There were several such cases. In a polling station in Palladam, basic amenities were not available, he said.

The BJP had documented and given the details to the Returning Officer and the Observer. It had also sought a re-poll in such places, he said.

"We also suspect political interference (in the deletion of names)," he said.

According to Kranthi Kumar Pati, the Returning Officer for the Coimbatore Parliamentary constituency, changes take place in the electoral rolls in the summary and continuous revisions. "At every step the rolls are shared with political parties. The parties did not make any such representation during those meetings. If there is any specific instance, we will look into it," he said.

## Mehbooba releases party manifesto, pledges to raise her voice in Parliament

The Hindu Bureau  
SRINAGAR

Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti on Friday released the party manifesto in Srinagar and pledged to raise her voice in Parliament against the "onslaught on J&K's identity and resources".

"Since 2019, after the illegal abrogation of Article 370, J&K has been converted into an open-air prison. There has been an unending onslaught on our collective identity, land, jobs, resources and infringement upon the very freedom to speak," said Ms. Mufti, who is contesting from south Kashmir's Anantnag-Rajouri seat. "Not stone or gun, vote is our only weapon to fight these nefarious designs. Our voice will be heard."

The PDP chief said deci-



PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti releasing the party manifesto in Srinagar on Friday. PTI

the government, reviving the civil society and rallying the youth. The party sought the participation of people in the elections to strengthen the democratic process so that "the institutions of democracy create conditions that will facilitate resolution of the J&K issue and bring about self-sustaining development across all the three regions of the State".

The party promised to improve road connectivity by pushing for construction of the Mughal Road Tunnel, Sadhna Tunnel, and Razdan Tunnel; empower women; agitate for the return of power projects and advocate for power supply to be sourced from electricity generated in J&K; and provide laptops and digital devices for government and government-aided educational institutions.

## Five key agendas

The manifesto listed five key agendas of the party of remodelling the political structure, reconstructing the economy, reforming

## Admissions in MBBS in Pak.: ED complaint against nine

The Hindu Bureau  
SRINAGAR

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Friday filed a prosecution complaint against nine in a case related to the MBBS admissions of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) students in Pakistan. The complaint has been filed under the provisions of the Prevention of Money-laundering Act (PMLA), before the Special PMLA Court in Srinagar.

## 'Hefty amount charged'

An ED spokesperson said investigations had revealed that the accused persons were hand in glove with some educational consultancies in order to arrange MBBS admissions to J&K students in Pakistan's colleges.

They charged hefty sums of money - ₹10-15 lakh - from each student, the probe agency claimed.

## 'Rajput women to begin relay hunger strike from today'

Press Trust of India  
AHMEDABAD

A Rajput leader on Friday said that the community would launch fresh protests against the BJP for not cancelling the candidature of Parshotam Rupala from the Rajkot Lok Sabha seat.

"Since the BJP refused to replace him, a meeting of top Rajput leaders took place to ensure the party's defeat on all 26 seats in Gujarat," Rajput Coordination Committee spokesperson Karansinh Chavda said.

"From Saturday, Rajput women will sit on relay hunger strike across Gujarat and will continue the stir till the voting day on May 7," he added.

## Corruption, financial crisis, triple anti-incumbency set the tone for Kerala poll

## IN FOCUS

A.S. Javanth  
KOZHIKODE

Anti-incumbency, the feeling among voters against a political party and its elected representatives in power, plays a key role in elections, and the 2024 Lok Sabha polls are not an exception. Different versions of this could be at play this time in Kerala.

Both the Union and the State governments may incur the wrath of the voters for various reasons. The National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government at the Centre has been in power for the past 10 years. Apart from the stiff opposition against its Hindutva brand of politics, the Union government has also been accused of financially

strangling the State by capping its borrowing limits and reducing the tax share from the Central divisible pool. The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, construction of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, scrapping of Article 370 that gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir, and the possibility of bringing in a Uniform Civil Code are also being widely discussed.

In the 2019 general elections, the United Democratic Front (UDF) was the major beneficiary of the anti-incumbency sentiments against the Centre. Riding also on a wave of support resulting from Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's candidature in Wayanad, the UDF bagged 19 out of 20 seats in the State. A similar situation, however, is unlikely this time, as both the UDF and the Left Democratic Front



(LDF) are looking forward to gaining political mileage from the perceived anti-BJP sentiments.

## Corruption charges

As far as the LDF government is concerned, a political front that got a second term in power is facing a general election for the first time in the State's

2021. Three years down the line, Opposition parties have levelled a series of corruption charges against the government. Financial scams in a few cooperative banks and the Enforcement Directorate questioning senior CPI (M) leaders have raised several question marks. Adding to this, there is a severe financial crisis in the State. Several social security schemes are facing a roadblock. Payment of salaries and pensions of government staff and retirees got delayed for a few days recently. Government-owned fair price shops, which are a solace for the common people, are frequently facing shortage of essential commodities. The Opposition feels that all these are enough to invoke an anti-incumbency

feeling against the State government.

The LDF has fielded some of its popular leaders and former Ministers, such as K.K. Shailaja, C. Raveendranath, T.M. Thomas Isaac, and V.S. Sunil Kumar, and MLAs K. Radhakrishnan, M. Mukesh, and V. Joy, to blunt this sentiment. It is also blaming the delay in release of Central funds for the crisis. However, both the UDF and the NDA are actively trying to cash in on the situation.

Another form of the anti-incumbency feeling could be directed against Shashi Tharoor, Kodikunil Suresh, Anto Antony, and M.K. Raghavan, UDF MPs from Thiruvananthapuram, Mavelikara, Pathanamthitta, and Kozhikode respectively, who are all seeking a fourth term in office. All of them had been MPs since 2009 though Mr.

Suresh has had multiple terms even before.

## Incumbent MPs

Mr. Tharoor is facing a triangular contest as he is pitted against the LDF's Pannian Raveendran and the NDA's Union Minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar. Mr. Suresh's main rival is the LDF's C.A. Arun Kumar. Mr. Antony is contesting against Dr. Isaac and the NDA's Anil K. Antony, the son of the former Defence Minister A.K. Antony. Mr. Raghavan's fight is against the LDF's Elamaram Kareem, a former Industries Minister and current member of the Rajya Sabha, and the NDA's M.T. Ramesh. Just as voters judge the performance of the legislators in their Assembly segments, the actions undertaken by incumbent MPs in their own constituencies could also be evaluated.



**TO ADVERTISE  
PLEASE CONTACT**  
Mr. N SELVA KUMAR  
PH: 9820350726  
selvakumar.n@thehindu.co.in  
THE HINDU  
India's National Newspaper

**Your feedback will keep us  
Cleaner, Sharper and Bolder**  
Call our toll-free number  
**1800 102 1878**  
Or write to us at  
customercare@thehindu.co.in  
Scan the QR code to register your feedback  
THE HINDU businessline  
FRONTLINE SPORTSTAR Young World THE HINDU

**THE HINDU**  
DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verify and make appropriate enquiries to satisfy themselves about the veracity of an advertisement before responding to any published in this newspaper. THE PUBLISHING PVT. LTD., the Publisher & Owner of this newspaper, does not vouch for the authenticity of any advertisement or advertiser or for any of the advertiser's products and/or services. In no event can the Owner, Publisher, Printer, Editor, Director/s, Employees of this newspaper company be held responsible/liable in any manner whatsoever for any claims and/or damages for advertisements in this newspaper.

**SHIRT** upto **60% off**  
**TROUSER & JEANS SALE**  
Formal & Party Wear  
MEN & WOMEN  
By Economy Sales: 9212758425  
ARROW PARK AVENUE ColorPlus LOUIS PHILIPPE Levi's  
• GURUGRAM 306, City Center, Sector 29 (Near Hotel Pilazio)  
• PUNCHKUIAN ROAD, Garwal Bhawan, (Near Jhandewalan, Gole Chkr.)  
• WAZIRPUR A-5, Near Richi Rich Banquet (Opp. Shalimar Bagh)  
• JANAKPURI B-1/2, Main Najafgarh Road, Opp. Metro Pillar 543  
• NOIDA, Nirula's Sec-2, Near Metro Station, Sec-15, Noida, UP  
• LAJPAT NAGAR, 49, Main Ring Road, Adj. Haldi Ram, Near Moolchand Crossing

**Office of The Chief Electoral Officer, Delhi**  
Old St. Stephen's College Building, Kashmere Gate, Delhi-110006  
सुनात का पर्व  
DESH KA GARV

**Attention Voters of Delhi**  
**Mere Holding of  
Voter Card is not enough**  
**You can Vote only  
if your Name is present  
in the Voter List**  
Check your Name in  
the Voter List today

**Ways to Check**

- Online Visit : <https://electoralsearch.eci.gov.in>
- Mobile App : "Voter Helpline" for both searching the name & other electoral services.
- "Saksham" App for Persons with Disabilities (a fully accessible mobile app of ECI)
- Helpline : Call 1950

**For inclusion of name in Voters' List, apply in Form-6 today**

- Online : (i) <https://voters.eci.gov.in>
- (ii) Voter Helpline Mobile App
- (iii) Saksham App (for Divyangjan)
- Offline: At Voter Centre of the Assembly Constituency whose list is available on [www.ceodelhi.gov.in](http://www.ceodelhi.gov.in).

**Don't miss last opportunity to  
ascertain your Right to Vote in Lok Sabha Election-2024  
and apply in Form-6 before 26.04.2024**

DIP/Shabdarth/Display/0004/23-24

**CLASSIFIEDS MART**  
TO ADVERTISE VISIT  
[www.thehinduads.com](http://www.thehinduads.com)  
CALL: 011-43579738 • 011-43579797  
or Contact your nearest Authorised space sellers

**EDUCATIONAL**  
**GENERAL**  
**NIRVANA IAS ACADEMY**  
CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE HAS  
NO ALTERNATIVE  
SMALL BATCHES FOR PERSONALISED  
ATTENTION  
Weekend Batches Available  
Classroom Coaching & Mentorship starts from 22nd April  
Subjects Offered:  
General Studies, Law, History,  
Political Science  
Ph: 011-47032447, 40391726,  
9990471004, 9990471005  
Email: info@nirvanaias.com  
Website: www.nirvanaias.com

**READ**  
**FRONTLINE**  
LEADING THE DEBATE SINCE 1984  
**EVERY FORTNIGHT.**  
TO SUBSCRIBE, VISIT  
[www.thehindugroup.in/subscribe](http://www.thehindugroup.in/subscribe)

**TENDERS**  
**DELHI AREA PRIMARY SCHOOL II**  
SADAR BAZAR, DELHI CANTT, NEW DELHI-110010  
TENDER NOTICE  
Sealed tenders are invited from interested parties for Special Repair of Bldg no. T.4, RFPs with specification can be downloaded from school website [www.daps2.com](http://www.daps2.com) tender form duly completed to be submitted to Delhi Area Primary School II by 29/04/2024 at 1300 hours along with DD (tender form fee & 500) as per RFP. For any queries contact Delhi Area Primary School II on 9586857961 or 723066555.  
Presiding Officer

**LEGAL NOTICE**  
IN THE COURT OF THE VI ADDL PRINCIPAL JUDGE, FAMILY COURT, AT BENGALURU  
M.C. No. 1008/2023  
BETWEEN: Deepanita Bhowmik ...Petitioner AND: Hemant Chakravorty ...Respondent  
SUMMONS TO RESPONDENT  
To Respondent: Hemant Chakravorty, S/o Arun Chakravorty, Age 36 Years, R/At No.434, Pocket Q, Dilehad Garden, Delhi - 110095.  
Whereas, the petitioner above named filed the above petition against the Respondent under Section 13(1)(a) of Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 for dissolving the Marriage of Petitioner with Respondent solemnised on 11th March 2020, at NPG Banquet, Rajarhat, Kolkata. The Respondent above name is hereby directed to appear before the Hon'ble Court on 04-07-2024 at 11.00 AM to defend the above case, failing which the matter will be heard placing you ex-Parte.  
Given under my hand and seal of the court, this 6th day of April 2024.  
By order of the Court, Sheristadar Family Court, Bangalore  
SJI MALAYAL ASSOCIATES,  
No-510, 5th Block, South Block, Manipal Centre, Dickenson Road, MG Road, Bengaluru - 560042.

IN THE COURT OF THE HON'BLE II ADDITIONAL DISTRICT JUDGE, MEDCHAL-MALKAJGIRI DISTRICT, AT: MEDCHAL  
O.S.NO. 828 OF 2022  
BETWEEN:  
Bharat Biotech International Limited ... Plaintiff  
AND  
Foundation For Independent Journalism and Others ...Defendants  
To,  
1. Shobhan Saxena, Age: Major, Occ: Journalist,  
2. Florencia Costa, Age: Major, Occ: Journalist,  
3. Prem Anand Murugan, Age: Major, Occ: PhD Student, IIT Kanpur  
4. Jammī Nagaraj Rao, Age: Major, Occ: Researcher and Epidemiologist, All are R/o, F-44, Shaheed Bhagat Singh Marg, Lane opposite Jain Bhawan, Gole Market, New Delhi - 110 001. ... Defendants 7,8,9 & 13  
The plaintiff filed the above Suit against you for Recovery of Damages and seeking a Mandatory and Permanent Injunction, and the said matter is posted to 22-04-2024 for your appearance. You are, therefore, hereby directed to appear before this Hon'ble Court on the above-said date at 10.30 A.M. either in person or through your counsel, failing which the matter will be decided in your absence as per law.  
// BY ORDER OF THE HONOURABLE COURT //  
Sd/- K. MANOJ REDDY, ADVOCATE, #202, Lotus Esplendito, Road No.1, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad-500034.

IN THE COURT OF THE HON'BLE II ADDITIONAL DISTRICT JUDGE, MEDCHAL-MALKAJGIRI DISTRICT, AT: MEDCHAL  
I.A.NO.696 OF 2022 IN O.S.NO. 828 OF 2022  
BETWEEN:  
Bharat Biotech International Limited ... Petitioner  
AND  
Foundation For Independent Journalism and Others ...Respondents  
To,  
1. Shobhan Saxena, Age: Major, Occ: Journalist,  
2. Florencia Costa, Age: Major, Occ: Journalist,  
3. Prem Anand Murugan, Age: Major, Occ: PhD Student, IIT Kanpur  
4. Jammī Nagaraj Rao, Age: Major, Occ: Researcher and Epidemiologist, All are R/o, F-44, Shaheed Bhagat Singh Marg, Lane opposite Jain Bhawan, Gole Market, New Delhi - 110 001. ... Respondents 7,8,9 & 13  
The Petitioner filed the Said Interlocutory application under order XXXIX, Rule 1 & 2, R/W Section 151 of CPC against you and other Respondents and the said matter is posted to 22-04-2024 for your appearance. You are therefore hereby directed to appear before this Hon'ble Court on the above said date at 10.30 A.M. either in person or through your counsel, failing which the matter will be decided in your absence as per law.  
// BY ORDER OF THE HONOURABLE COURT //  
Sd/- K. MANOJ REDDY, ADVOCATE, #202, Lotus Esplendito, Road No.1, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad-500034.

IN THE COURT OF THE HON'BLE II ADDITIONAL DISTRICT JUDGE, MEDCHAL-MALKAJGIRI DISTRICT, AT: MEDCHAL  
I.A.NO.697 OF 2022 IN O.S.NO. 828 OF 2022  
BETWEEN:  
Bharat Biotech International Limited ... Petitioner  
AND  
Foundation For Independent Journalism and Others ...Respondents  
To,  
1. Shobhan Saxena, Age: Major, Occ: Journalist,  
2. Florencia Costa, Age: Major, Occ: Journalist,  
3. Prem Anand Murugan, Age: Major, Occ: PhD Student, IIT Kanpur  
4. Jammī Nagaraj Rao, Age: Major, Occ: Researcher and Epidemiologist, All are R/o, F-44, Shaheed Bhagat Singh Marg, Lane opposite Jain Bhawan, Gole Market, New Delhi - 110 001. ... Respondents 7,8,9 & 13  
The Petitioner filed the Said Interlocutory application under order XXXIX, Rule 1 & 2, R/W Section 151 of CPC against you and other Respondents and the said matter is posted to 22-04-2024 for your appearance. You are therefore hereby directed to appear before this Hon'ble Court on the above said date at 10.30 A.M. either in person or through your counsel, failing which the matter will be decided in your absence as per law.  
// BY ORDER OF THE HONOURABLE COURT //  
Sd/- K. MANOJ REDDY, ADVOCATE, #202, Lotus Esplendito, Road No.1, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad-500034.

**PRELIMS 2024 CURRENT AFFAIRS**  
BOOKLET ₹499  
PDF ₹399  
1 YEAR ENGLISH HINDI  
FOR SAMPLE NOTES WHATSAPP @ 99101-33084  
TO THE POINT PRELIMS 2024 CURRENT AFFAIRS  
MALUKA IAS  
16-B, OLD RAJINDER NAGAR, DELHI - 60

**TRAFFIC ADVISORY**  
IPL T20 CRICKET MATCH  
DELHI CAPITALS VS SUNRISES HYDERABAD  
on 20-04-2024  
7:00 PM TO 11:30 PM  
ARUN JAITLEY STADIUM, FIROZESHAH KOTLA GROUND, NEW DELHI

**LEGENDS**  
→ THOSE NOT HAVING PARKING LABEL TO FOLLOW RED  
← THOSE HAVING PARKING LABEL MAY FOLLOW BLUE ARROWS.  
FREE PARK & RIDE (MATA SUNDRI RD, RAJ GHAT POWER HOUSE ROAD, & UNDER VELODROME FLYOVER)  
P PICK UP POINT SHUTTLE SERVICE  
D DROP OFF POINT SHUTTLE SERVICE  
T TAXI (DROP OFF / PICK UP LANE)  
\* USE METRO OR PUBLIC TRANSPORT TO REACH THE STADIUM  
Nearest Metro Station:  
Delhi Gate, (Gate No. 4 & 5) ITO (Gate No. 3,4 & 5)

**DIVERSION / RESTRICTION (AS AND WHEN REQUIRED)**  
Raj Ghat to JLN Marg.  
Asaf Ali Road from Turkman Gate to Delhi Gate.  
Bahadurshah Zafar Marg from ITO Chowk to Delhi Gate.  
**ENTRY TO THE STADIUM**  
(i) Gate Nos. 1 to 8 are located on the southern side of the Stadium & entry to these enclosures are from Bahadurshah Zafar Marg  
(ii) Gate No. 10 to 15 are located on the Eastern side of the Stadium on the road and entry is from J.L.N. Marg Next to Amberkher Stadium Bus Terminal.  
(iii) Gate Nos. 16, 17 & 18 are located on the Western side of the Stadium & entry is from Bahadurshah Zafar Marg near Petrol Pump.

**PARKING**  
Labeled Vehicles  
free parking for vehicle is available on Mata Sundri Road, Rajghat Power House Road and Velodrome Road and free park & ride and shuttle bus service also available.  
Limited parking is available for labeled vehicles in the proximity of the Stadium. Display of car parking label on windscreen is mandatory. Vehicle number must be written on the parking label. Those who do not display parking label with vehicle number will not be allowed in the proximity of the stadium.  
Car parking label holders are advised to take Ring Road, J.L.N. Marg, Asaf Ali Road or Bahadurshah Zafar Marg. 'U' turn at Delhi Gate is allowed. Entry to parking lots P1, P2, & P3 shall be from Bahadurshah Zafar Marg only from near the Vikram Nagar Cut, Shaheed Park.  
General Vehicles  
No vehicle shall be allowed to be parked on Bahadurshah Zafar Marg, Jawaharlal Nehru Marg & Ring Road from Rajghat to I.P. Flyover (both the carriageways) on the match day. Vehicles parked on these roads shall be towed away and prosecuted as per law.  
**PARK & RIDE**  
For spectators, unlabeled vehicles 'park and ride' facility has been created at the following places:-  
• Mata Sundri Parking • Rajghat Power House Road • Under Velodrome Road  
All the spectators coming in their vehicles shall reach these Park & Ride sites, and avail "Park & Ride" facility or walk down to reach stadium.  
**BUS**  
All buses will start their service 2 hours before the match and will continue till one hour after the start of match. The bus service from the stadium to their respected destinations will start as soon as the game ends and will continue for one hour after the match ends.  
**TAXI**  
Spectators using app based taxi and other taxis should use the service lane on Ring Road between I.P. flyover & Rajghat crossing for drop & pickup.

**RIDE METRO/FREE SHUTTLE BUS FOR HASSLE FREE JOURNEY**  
Free shuttle service provide by DELHI CAPITALS  
Parking : Mata Sundari Parking, Rajghat Power House Road, Under Velodrome Road  
SECURITY INSTRUCTIONS: Spectators visiting the stadium are requested not to bring the following prohibited items:  
Laptop Camera Helmet Backpack Eatables Water Bottles Power Bank Lighter & Match Box Knives & Arms  
24 Hours Traffic Helpline: 011-2584444 / 1095



## Left a safer bet than Cong., its leaders not turncoats: Yechury

S. Anandan  
KANNUR

Before hurling allegations at the CPI(M) in Kerala, the Congress will do well to ask itself why a large number of people joining the BJP are Congress leaders, said CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury in an interaction with *The Hindu* at Parakkandy.

"In Kerala too, people think it's a safer bet to have the Left which is unlikely to defect to the BJP. In West Bengal and Tripura, we are getting killed. But our leaders don't become turncoats. That sort of character you require in the party, which the Congress doesn't have," he said.

Responding to a question on the charges levelled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi against the CPI(M) and the Kerala government, Mr. Yechury said Mr. Modi was deliberately spreading false information as the agencies under him could not come up with anything incriminating in the diplomatic baggage gold smuggling case even after years of investigation. "The point is the boot is always on the other foot for Mr. Modi. He makes these reckless allegations while he is singularly responsible as the head of the Union government for having conducted these investigations," Mr. Yechury said.



Sitaram Yechury, General Secretary of the CPI(M), during an interaction with *The Hindu* in Kannur. THULASI KAKKAT

On the Income Tax Department freezing the bank account of his party in Thrissur, he said details of all accounts across the country using the CPI(M) PAN card were consolidated every year and submitted by the party and "there were times when the Elec-

tion Commission of India and other authorities went on record saying that we were the ones that actually fulfilled that obligation in time. Even the ruling party does not do that, but no questions are asked". The action of the I-T Department in the midst of

election, a year after receiving the data, smacked of *mala fide* intentions, especially when it is read with the arrests of Delhi and Jharkhand Chief Ministers, the attacks on Opposition leaders, and engineering a split in Opposition parties, etc, he said.

Mr. Yechury slammed a major section of the media for parroting a BJP-sponsored narrative. The INDIA bloc was never meant to be a pan-Indian grand narrative, but an understanding and seat adjustments at the State level to keep the BJP out which was achieved in most States. It was not tried in States like Kerala where the BJP was a non-entity and in places like

West Bengal where the idea was to ensure anti-incumbency against the Trinamool Congress government should not favour the BJP. So, the INDIA bloc offered a very viable, stable alternative, he said.

While targeting over 400 seats, the BJP and Mr. Modi knew fully well that they had hit the ceiling in terms of the number of seats in 2019 in States where the sharpening of communal polarisation worked for them. If free and fair elections were held, the CPI(M) would improve its electoral performance in West Bengal and Tripura, he said.

(Full interview: <https://newsthehindu.com/yechury>)

## Yes Bank co-founder Rana Kapoor secures bail, walks out of jail

Purnima Sah  
MUMBAI

Yes Bank co-founder Rana Kapoor walked out of jail on Friday evening after a special court in Mumbai granted him bail in all cases filed against him in connection with the ₹466.51-crore bank fraud case.

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) had arrested Mr. Kapoor on March 7, 2020 in a money laundering case. The ED and the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) have registered a total of eight cases against him related to alleged fraud at the bank. On completing all formalities, Mr. Kapoor stepped out of Taloja Central Jail at 7 p.m.

The court granted bail to Mr. Kapoor in the CBI case against him and Avantha Group promoter Gautam Thapar for allegedly indulging in criminal conspiracy, criminal breach of trust, cheating, and forgery for diversion of public money worth ₹466.51 crore. Mr. Thapar had been released on bail in the case without arrest.

The CBI had alleged that Mr. Kapoor obtained "illegal gratification" in the form of a prime property in Delhi at a price much lesser than its market value for sanctioning a loan.

"The case in brief is that Yes Bank Ltd. was accused of misappropriation of the impugned loan amount and through Bliss Abode Private Limited (BAPL) had the sole intention of taking over the property at Amrita Shergill Marg in New



Rana Kapoor

Delhi," Rahul Agarwal, Mr. Kapoor's lawyer, said.

Mr. Kapoor's wife was a director at BAPL. He had filed for bail on the ground that the allegations in the chargesheet did not prima facie reveal his role in the case and no offence was made out against him. He was sent to police custody on August 14, 2021 and later to judicial custody.

"The chargesheet makes out a vague case that three loans were granted by Yes Bank to Avantha Group entities prior to and after the sale of the property, which were not used for the specified purposes. No connection was drawn by the CBI between such loans and the sale of the property, and none exists. Considering all this evidence, the court released him on bail," Mr. Agarwal said.

'Baseless allegation' The CBI's main allegation in the chargesheet that the property was purchased at an undervalued consideration is baseless and reliance was placed on various valuation reports that belonged either to the pre-demonetisation period or the valuation itself was defective, the lawyer said.

### INBRIEF



### Rahul in fray in Wayanad fearing defeat in Amethi: BJP

BJP president J.P. Nadda on Friday said Congress leader Rahul Gandhi was contesting from the Wayanad constituency in Kerala as he was aware that he did not stand a chance in Amethi. Addressing an NDA roadshow at Sulthan Bathery in Wayanad district as part of election campaign of BJP State president K. Surendran, Mr. Nadda said Mr. Gandhi, who is facing probe in the National Herald case, had no other option but to protect corrupt people. "Mr. Gandhi is driven by family politics but his motto is politics of appeasement," he said. "Lotus is all set to bloom in Wayanad," Mr. Nadda said.

## Exchanges between Kerala CM and Rahul turn caustic

Rahul's argument that Central agencies had spared Vijayan from arrest prompts a response from the latter on communists' arrest during the Emergency; barbs arguably assume a personal tone

G. Anand  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The general tenor of the political exchanges between Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan - INDIA bloc collaborators at the national level and electoral rivals in Kerala - has been decidedly civil and often seemed to verge on the courteous.

With the Lok Sabha campaign in Kerala entering its final phase, both Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Vijayan seem done tiptoeing

around each other.

Mr. Gandhi arguably fired the first salvo by pointing out that BJP-controlled Central agencies had spared Mr. Vijayan from arrest. At the same time, he said, two non-BJP Chief Ministers were in prison.

An apparently fired-up Mr. Vijayan struck back in Kozhikode on Friday. He said Mr. Gandhi's close aide Ashok Chauhan had defected to the BJP, fearing ED arrest. "Your (Mr. Gandhi's) grandmother had jailed communists for a year and a half during the



Pinarayi Vijayan

Emergency. Mr. Gandhi should know that we do not blanch at the prospect of arrest or forsake our politics," he said.

Mr. Vijayan alleged that a real estate firm owned by

Mr. Gandhi's brother-in-law had paid the BJP ₹175 crore to evade a CBI case.

The crossfire marked one of the most direct and intense exchanges between the leaders in the election campaign and assumed a personal tone.

The remarks also triggered a political storm. Senior Congress leader Ramesh Chennithala said Mr. Vijayan had "insulted" Mr. Gandhi to cosy up to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Leader of the Opposition V.D. Satheesan said Mr. Vijayan was Mr. Modi's mouthpiece in Kerala.

### Tirumala temple gets ₹1,161 cr. and 1,031 kg gold in one year

The temple of Lord Venkateswara at Tirumala has deposited ₹1,161 crore during the 2023-24 financial year, taking the total fixed deposits of the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) in various nationalised banks to over ₹18,000 crore. The temple also scripted history by depositing over 1,031 kg of gold in the banks during this period. Over 4,000 kg of gold was deposited in various banks during the last three years, taking the total gold deposits to 11,329 kg. According to sources, the TTD derives an income of over ₹1,200 crore in the form of interest every year.

### Kerala Congress splits again; new faction to support NDA

Nearly a week after resigning from the party over allegations of discrimination, rebel leaders of the Kerala Congress, led by Saji Manjakadambil, launched a new political entity on Friday - the Kerala Congress Democratic. The new party has declared its allegiance to the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA). The new party's alignment with the NDA in Kerala is seen as advantageous for the BJP State unit, particularly in its efforts to engage the Christian community. According to the Kerala Congress leadership, the party has split roughly over 20 times.

### Beating the heat



Keeping cool: People collecting buttermilk packets from volunteers in Visakhapatnam on Friday. V. RAJU

## Group attacks police to save suspected drug dealer in Bengaluru

The Hindu Bureau  
BENGALURU

A group of six African nationals allegedly assaulted sleuths from the Central Crime Branch (CCB), Bengaluru city police, who were in the process of arresting one of them for drug peddling in Mavallipura, near Rajanakunte on the outskirts of the city on Thursday. Local police personnel, who came to the rescue of the CCB, were also attacked.

A total of four police personnel sustained minor injuries and are undergoing treatment. The African nationals, who assaulted them, are still at large.

Sleuths from the Anti-Narcotics Wing of the CCB, Bengaluru, had arrested an

African national from Bagalagunte on April 6 and recovered 4 kg of MDMA crystals from his house worth ₹4 crore. The accused was allegedly buying MDMA crystals from his contacts in his home country, getting it delivered here concealed in couriers. Probing the case, a team of four CCB officials went to Mavallipura to apprehend an associate of the person.

The police said when they tried to arrest the suspect, he and five of his associates started attacking them with stones, sticks, and a dagger. They also attacked Hoysala personnel who were called by the police for backup. As the police teams withdrew from the scene, the gang fled the village.

## Will leave BRS in a bad shape if KCR touches Cong. MLAs: Revanth

The Hindu Bureau  
HYDERABAD

Injecting political heat into the poll campaign in his native Mahabubnagar district on Friday, Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy warned Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) chief K. Chandrashekar Rao not to try to poach the Congress MLAs or else he would be burnt like a crow coming into contact with a high tension wire.

Charging the BRS chief with continuing his habit of poaching Congress MLAs, the Chief Minister said any such attempt would leave the BRS in bad shape. "Forget the old habit or else you have to bear



A. Revanth Reddy

the consequences. I am Revanth Reddy," he said. These comments came in the backdrop of KCR claiming that 20 Congress MLAs were in touch with him. The Chief Minister, who was in Mahabubnagar on Friday, accused KCR of ignoring the irrigation pro-

jects in Mahabubnagar district in the last 10 years. Mr. Reddy said the BRS failed to complete the lifelines of the backward Mahabubnagar district - Palamuru Rangareddy Lift Irrigation, Kalwakurthy Lift irrigation and other pending projects. He challenged the BRS to name one project or industry that came into being in Mahabubnagar in the last 10 years.

Responding to BRS working president K.T. Rama Rao's claims that the car (BRS party symbol) was getting serviced in the garage and would come back soon, Mr. Reddy ridiculed saying that the car's engine had become obsolete and was worth selling in scrap.

## Heat or polls, Thrissur Pooram still a major draw

Mini Muringatheri  
THRISSUR

Dripping with sweat, people huffed and puffed. It was a sultry Friday. Neither the balmy weather nor the election fervour could deter the spirit of pooram lovers. A sea of humanity converged at the Thekkinkadu Maidan to savour the glory of Thrissur Pooram.

The Thrissur Pooram signifies a symbolic meeting of the deities of 10 famous temples in the region. The Thiruvambadi and Paramekkavu temples are the main participants of the 30-hour-long event.

Processions taken out The meticulously planned festivities began with the arrival of Kanimangalam



Festival highlight: People watching Kudamattam, the most spectacular event of Thrissur Pooram, on Friday. K.K. NAJEEB

Sastha early in the morning. It was followed by processions (Cherupoorams) from Bhagavathy temples of Ayyanthole, Karamukku, Lalur, Neythilakkavu, Choorakkattukara, Chembukavu, and Sastha temple of Panamukkumpally. Accompanied by percus-

sion ensembles, these deities were brought on caparisoned tuskers to the Sree Vadakkunnathan temple.

Festival-carnival Thrissur Pooram is a mixture of ceremonies, traditional ensembles, pyrotechnic shows, and

elephant parades. It is a socio-religious festival and carnival put together.

Percussion ensemble One gets to hear the State's best percussion ensembles at Thrissur Pooram. The Ilanjithara Melam of the Paramekkavu Devaswom and the Thiruvambadi Devaswom's Melam at Sree-moolasthanam are the best platforms for Pandimelam. The Madathil Varavu ceremony of Thiruvambadi will have the best Panchavadyam played in the State.

The Kudamattam, in which colourful parasols are displayed atop caparisoned elephants, is the most spectacular event of pooram. Each team competes with the other to display the most attractive pa-

rasols. Rama Lalla and Ayodhya temple were included in the themes of special umbrellas this year.

Early morning fireworks are another essential part of Thrissur Pooram.

Tight security There was tight security for the pooram, with the deployment of more than 3,500 police personnel.

Though strictly conservative in nature, the pooram is fun with roaring crowds, loud music, and plenty of food and drinks. Wayside hawkers were busy catering to revellers with peanuts, chilli bajji, and ice creams. Fortune-tellers were also present.

The festival will end after Pakal Pooram on Saturday.



## Peaceful polling in Maoist-hit areas in Maharashtra seats

**The Hindu Bureau**  
MUMBAI

The first phase of the Lok Sabha election in five constituencies in Maharashtra's Vidarbha region concluded peacefully on Friday without any major untoward incident. The voter turnout was put at 61.06%, with the final figures to be updated on Saturday, according to an election official.

The total number of voters in these five constituencies - Nagpur, Chandrapur, Ramtek (SC), Gadchiroli-Chimur (ST) and Bhandara-Gondia - is 95,54,667, comprising 48,28,142 male voters, 47,26,178 female and 347 transgender voters.

Polling commenced at 7 a.m. but the voter participation gradually increased, reaching its peak between 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. Officials said voting took place at 10,652 polling centres.

In five Assembly segments, spread across two Lok Sabha seats, including Maoist-hit Gadchiroli-Chimur and Bhandara-Gondia, voting concluded at 3 p.m. "The polling concluded peacefully without any incident. Although the official cut-off time was 3 p.m., people were seen standing till 5 p.m.," Gadchiroli Superintendent of Police



The world's shortest woman Jyoti Amge casts her vote at a polling booth in Nagpur on Friday. ANI

Neelotpal told *The Hindu*. Maharashtra sends 48 MPs to the Lower House, the largest number after Uttar Pradesh's 80. Polling in the remaining 43 seats will be held in four more phases later this month and in May.

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari, Deputy CM Devendra Fadnis, RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat and Punjab Governor Banwarilal Purohit were among those who cast their votes in Nagpur.

Nagpur recorded the lowest voter turnout among all five seats with an average of 49%, while Gadchiroli-Chimur topped with 66.27%, followed by 55.87% in Bhandara-Gondia and 55.11% in Chandrapur. Ramtek, the only LS seat in Maharashtra from which a former MP, P.V. Narasimha Rao, ascended to become the country's Prime Minister, recorded 52.38% turnout.

## Police use mild force as BJP, RLP workers clash during polling

In first phase, voting held for 12 Lok Sabha seats in Rajasthan; Governor Kalraj Mishra and CM Bhajan Lal Sharma among leaders who voted

**The Hindu Bureau**  
JAIPUR

Over 56% of voters cast their vote in the first phase of Lok Sabha election in 12 of the 25 constituencies in Rajasthan on Friday. As many as 114 candidates are in the fray in the first phase in the State. The highest voter turnout of 63.67% was recorded in Sriganganagar seat, while the average turnout was registered at 56.09%.

Workers of the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Rashtriya Loktantrik Party clashed at Kuchera in Nagaur district over an open call allegedly made to the voters outside a polling booth for supporting a particular candidate. Kuchera Municipal Council chairperson Tejpal Miridha, who was expelled from Congress recently, sustained injuries in his head during the clash.

The police used mild force to disperse the party workers and bring the situation under control. RLP candidate in Nagaur and party chief Hanuman Beniwal has been supported by the Opposition Congress



Call of duty: Women display their mark of indelible ink after casting their votes in Sikar on Friday. ANI

as a nominee of INDIA bloc. BJP candidate Jyoti Miridha had quit the Congress and joined the ruling party in September 2023 ahead of the Assembly election.

Congress polling agent, Vijendra Jakhar, was allegedly attacked at Rampura Renu village in Churu district over the charge of bogus voting.

Mr. Jakhar, who was rushed to the hospital, has lodged a complaint at Bhaleri police station. Congress candidate and sitting MP Rahul Kaswan in Churu had recently switched to the party after resigning from the BJP.

Voting was held in Chu-

ru, Nagaur, Sriganganagar, Jhunjhunu, Bikaner, Sikar, Jaipur City, Jaipur Rural, Alwar, Bharatpur, Karauli-Dholpur and Dausa Lok Sabha constituencies. Chief Electoral Officer Praveen Gupta said a total of 2.54 crore people were eligible to vote in the first phase.

Governor Kalraj Mishra, Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma, former Deputy CM Sachin Pilot and other leaders cast their votes in the initial hours.

PCC president Govind Singh Dotsra said no wave in favour of BJP or Prime Minister Narendra Modi was visible anywhere in the State.

## SP alleges 'fake' voting at several booths; BJP says 'false propaganda'

**The Hindu Bureau**  
LUCKNOW

Voting concluded for eight Lok Sabha seats in Uttar Pradesh in the first phase of the Lok Sabha election on Friday. The Election Commission recorded 57.54% voter turnout till 5 p.m.

The eight seats are in Western U.P. - Saharanpur, Kairana, Muzaffarnagar, Bijnor, Nagina (SC), Moradabad, Rampur, and Pilibhit. Rampur recorded 52.42% voter turnout while in Moradabad it was 58.06%. Pilibhit marked a 58.95% turnout at the time of going to press.

The Samajwadi Party alleged that the BJP engaged in fraudulent voting in many constituencies. "The BJP leaders and agents are casting fake votes at booth number 237 in Moradabad's Kanth; attempts are being made to capture the booth in the presence of the administration. The EC should ensure fair voting," the SP said in a statement.

The party made similar claims about booths in Rampur, Kairana, and Muzaffarnagar as well.

In response, the BJP said, "Seeing its imminent defeat, the SP is engaging in false propaganda."

In the first phase, seats

like Moradabad, Rampur, Saharanpur, and Muzaffarnagar with a substantial number of Muslim voters went to the polls.

Here, 80 candidates - 73 men and seven women - were in the fray.

Roughly 1.43 crore voters - 76.23 lakh men and 67.14 lakh women - cast their votes.

Prominent candidates are Union Minister Sanjeev Balyan from Muzaffarnagar; U.P. Minister Jitin Prasad from Pilibhit; Congress leader Imran Masood from Saharanpur; and Azad Samaj Party chief Chandrashekhar Azad from Nagina.

## 138 booked for skipping poll duty training

**Press Trust of India**  
GHAZIABAD

As many as 138 government employees have been booked for absence from the election duty training held here from April 16 to 21, District Information Officer Yogendra Pal Singh said on Friday. The FIR was lodged following instructions of District Election Officer and District Magistrate Inder Vikram Singh, the DIO said.

**भारतीय सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान कोट्टयम**  
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY KOTTAYAM  
(An Institution under Ministry of Education, Govt. of India, governed by an Act of Parliament)  
Regd Office: Karoor, Valavoor P.O., Pala, Kottayam (Dist. Kerala) - 686635

**Admissions for the Ph.D. Programme**  
(Self-Financing/ Sponsored/Scholarship Holder/ External Registrants) commencing from August 2024

Indian Institute of Information Technology Kottayam invites applications for admission for Ph.D. Programmes commencing from August 2024.

**Subjects: Computer Science and Engineering/Electronics and Communication Engineering / Computational Mathematics.**

**Eligibility for Ph.D. Admission:**

(a) Master's degree in Computer Science and Engineering/Information Technology/Computer Science/Computer Applications/Electronics & Communication Engineering/Electrical and Electronics Engineering/ Mathematics or equivalent area with a minimum Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of either 6.5 on a 10-point scale or 60% of marks in appropriate branches.

(b) Four-year Bachelor's degree in Computer Science and Engineering/Information Technology/ Electronics and Communication Engineering/Electrical and Electronics Engineering or equivalent in a relevant area from any IIT/NIT/IIIT/ Other Institutions of National Importance with a minimum CGPA of either 8.0 in a 10 point scale or 75% of marks. Such students will be awarded both MS and Ph.D. degrees on completion of Ph.D. Programme without any exit option during the programme.

**Only online applications will be accepted. Online application forms and detailed instructions are available at <https://phd.iitkottayam.ac.in/>**

The last date for receipt of application (Ph.D.): **31st May 2024 [17:00 IST]**

Advt. No. IIITK/01/12/2024/1065 dated 19.04.2024

sg/-  
Registrar

**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

**Q4'2023-24 Vs Q4'2022-23**

**PROFIT AFTER TAX**  
₹ 337 crore  
Up By **33%**

**REVENUE FROM OPERATIONS**  
₹ 1,392 crore  
Up By **34%**

**NET WORTH**  
₹ 8,559 crore  
Up By **44%**

**LOAN BOOK**  
₹ 59,698 crore  
Up By **27%**

**NET NPA**  
0.99%  
Reduction By **41%**  
(in % terms)

**GROSS NPA**  
2.36%  
Reduction By **26%**  
(in % terms)

**Notes:**

a) 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.

b) 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](http://www.ireda.in) and on the websites of Stock Exchanges [www.bseindia.com](http://www.bseindia.com) & [www.nseindia.com](http://www.nseindia.com).

c) 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](http://www.bseindia.com) and [www.nseindia.com](http://www.nseindia.com) respectively.

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

Date: 19.04.2024  
Place: New Delhi

## INDIAN RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY LIMITED

(A Government of India Enterprise)

Registered Office: 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Core-4A, East Court, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003, Tel: 011-24682206-19, Fax: 011-24682202  
Corporate Office: 3<sup>rd</sup> 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, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, East Kidwai Nagar, New Delhi- 110023, Tel: 011-24347729-99  
Website: [www.ireda.in](http://www.ireda.in), CIN: L65100DL1987GOI027265

Follow us: @IREDALtd @IREDALimited @iredaofficial

**जल संसाधन विभाग**  
शोध एवं प्रशिक्षण प्रमण्डल-2, शोध भवन, खगौल, पटना  
अल्पकालीन पुनर्निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना सं-01/2024-25  
(आईएम रेट टेण्डर)  
राज्य/राष्ट्रीय स्पर्धा हेतु

क्र. सं.	कार्य का नाम	अग्रधन की राशि (₹ में) (ऑनलाईन अथवा ऑफलाईन मोड में चुनें)	बीड कागजात का मूल्य (अप्रत्यक्ष) (₹ में) (केवल ऑनलाईन मोड में चुनें)	BELTRON को Online रेट बीड प्रोसेसिंग फिस (₹ में) (केवल ऑन लाईन मोड में चुनें)	कार्य समाप्ति की तिथि
1	केंद्रीय रूपकण, शोध एवं गुण नियंत्रण, पटना परिसर/राष्ट्रीय विभिन्न कार्यालयों हेतु उपकरण /सॉफ्टवेयर (हेस्कटॉप, लैपटॉप, टैबलेट, यूएपीएस, A3/A4 प्रिंटर, ऑटोकैब, प्लॉटर आदि) का क्रय/अधिस्वापन (विस्तृत विवरण Annexure-1 संलग्न)	1,08,000/-	10000/-	590/-	

विशेष जानकारी के लिए [www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) एवं [state.bihar.gov.in/prd/bihar](http://state.bihar.gov.in/prd/bihar) पर देखा जा सकता है।  
PR- 000205 (WRD) 2024-25  
लोकसभा आम निर्वाचन 2024- मतदान महात्योहार, बिहार है तैयार

**National Entrance Screening Test (NEST) 2024**  
Admission to 5-year Integrated MSc Programmes in Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, and Physics at NISER (Bhubaneswar) and UM-DAE CEBS (Mumbai) (Autonomous institutions under the Department of Atomic Energy, Government of India)

The National Entrance Screening Test (NEST) is a compulsory test for admission to the 5-year Integrated MSc programme in basic sciences - Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics and Physics - at National Institute of Science Education and Research (NISER), Bhubaneswar and University of Mumbai - Department of Atomic Energy Centre for Excellence in Basic Sciences (UM-DAE CEBS), Mumbai. NEST 2024 will be conducted in over 120 towns and cities all over India on **June 30, 2024 (Sunday)**.

The candidates admitted to the programme are eligible to receive an annual scholarship of Rs 60,000 through DISHA program of Department of Atomic Energy, Government of India. In addition, the scholarship recipients receive a grant of Rs.20,000 per annum for summer internship. Candidates selected by DST for the INSPIRE-SHE program are endorsed for INSPIRE scholarship by NISER and CEBS.

For detailed information on NEST 2024 application procedure and previous years' question papers please visit NEST 2024 website: [www.nestexam.in](http://www.nestexam.in)

**Application:**  
Through ONLINE portal ONLY.  
Visit [www.nestexam.in](http://www.nestexam.in) to apply.  
Online portal is open and accepting registration & closes on May 31, 2024

**Examination:**  
ONLINE/computer based ONLY.  
Date of examination: June 30, 2024 (Sunday)  
Time: 9:00 AM - 12:30 PM (1<sup>st</sup> session)  
2:30 PM - 6:00 PM (2<sup>nd</sup> session)  
Results announcement : July 10, 2024

**Address for correspondence :**  
The Chief Coordinator, NEST 2024  
NISER Bhubaneswar,  
P.O.: Jatni, Dist: Khurda,  
Odisha - 752050, India  
E-mail: [nest-exam@niser.ac.in](mailto:nest-exam@niser.ac.in)  
Website: [www.nestexam.in](http://www.nestexam.in)

**Fees structure and mode of payment :**  
Male (General and OBC categories): **Rs.1400/-**  
Male (SC and ST categories) : **Rs.700/-**  
Female (all categories): **Rs.700/-**  
Divyangjan candidates: **Rs.700/-**  
Pay ONLY via Net banking/ Credit card/ Debit card/ UPI





## First step

The BJP's southern push was evident in run-up to first phase

**A**round 62.3% (preliminary) of 16.63 crore voters turned up at polling booths across 21 States and Union Territories on Friday in the first phase of the election to form the 18th Lok Sabha. Across 102 Lok Sabha seats, 1,625 candidates were in the fray. People of Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim also voted to elect new Assemblies. Reports of isolated incidents of violence and disruption apart, polling was largely peaceful. In one of the two seats in strife-torn Manipur, at least a 72.32% turnout was recorded amid reports of violence. All 39 Lok Sabha seats in Tamil Nadu went to the polls in the first phase of the general election, preceded by the most ambitious push by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to make a political entry. The BJP hopes to find a foothold in Tamil Nadu, where the Dravidian parties are faced with challenges of various types. The charismatic leaders of the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam and the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, J. Jayalalitha and M. Karunanidhi, respectively, passed away in the last decade and the BJP has found a strident leader in K. Annamalai, a former police officer. The DMK continues to maintain its hold over the levers of state and social power in Tamil Nadu, but the BJP is invested in redefining the political character of the State.

The BJP's State focus has both ideological and tactical strands. The party rightly sees that the strongest resistance to its politics, outside of the spheres of influence of the Left parties, is from Tamil Nadu, where the regional parties have the social, material and intellectual resources that make them formidable. Tactically, the BJP needs to pick some seats in newer regions considering that it has peaked in its strongholds in the Hindi belt, and can grow no further. Reports from parts of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh that went to the polls on Friday suggest the ruling BJP faced headwinds. In the event of losses here, the party hopes that any gains in peninsular India could at least partially compensate for these. Meanwhile, regional parties across the country are trying to hold their ground in the face of the BJP's stridency but without offering any new imagination as the campaign has shown so far. The BJP works on the plausible premise that popular resistance to nationally dominant parties may have weakened over time in Tamil Nadu. The extent of the BJP's advances will be known only when the votes are counted, but campaigning in the first phase has given out enough signals about the seriousness of its southern project.

## Permanent status

Palestine should be granted full-member status of the UN for a start

**A**s concerns about a conflict, by design or miscalculation, between Israel and Iran grow stronger, news of the United Nations Security Council resolution on granting Palestine full-member status at the UN, that was vetoed by the United States, has not received the attention it should have. The resolution, proposed by Algeria, was one more step at the world body to attempt to make good on the promise made in 1947, when the UN General Assembly originally adopted its resolution partitioning the then-mandated Palestine into two states, one Jewish and one Arab. Only Israel became a full member of the UN in 1949. The "Question of Palestine" has been tossed around for decades, and even though the state of Palestine received permanent observer status in 2012, and temporary powers of a full member during its tenure as Chair of the G-77 and China grouping, in 2019, it has not been recognised as a full member so far. In vetoing Thursday's UNSC resolution, that was supported by 12 of 15 UNSC members, the U.S. said that it believed Palestine should not be granted the membership through the UN process, but through "direct negotiations between the parties". The Israeli Ambassador added that to give Palestine full member status at this time, six months after the October 7 terror attacks by Hamas, would be "the vilest reward for the vilest crimes". It could also be argued that this is precisely the time to recognise Palestine's long-denied right – in the aftermath of October 7, Israel has bombed Palestinians both in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank indiscriminately. That it has continued its operations despite a UNSC ceasefire resolution that even the U.S. signed on, and now threatens yet another offensive on Rafah, shows the dire need for the Palestinian state to have a much stronger voice on the multilateral stage.

The U.S. must seriously reconsider such blanket protection for the Israeli position on all issues. The contention that Palestine could only be a state through "dialogue between the parties" has a flaw: it is Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu who declared in January that he would never accept a Palestinian state, and intended to retain "full Israeli security control over all the territory west of Jordan". A Palestine in the UN fold would also ensure that the new state would be bound by the obligations of all UN members. It is a gross injustice to all Palestinians to conflate them with terrorist acts perpetrated by Hamas – refusing to make a distinction between combatants and non-combatants only further marginalises the pain of all victims of violence. At a time when the international order is fracturing, the U.S., as a global leader, must endeavour to build, not break consensus in order to favour one country. To do so is to run counter to the UN's basic principle: sovereign equality of all, following instead the more primitive dictum that "might is right".

# Israel, a two-state solution, some recent perceptions

**H**ow, and where, did the idea of a Jewish national home arise and take shape since recorded history on the matter is somewhat hazy?

Rarely has social media summed up a situation so succinctly. According to the *Urban Dictionary*, the noun Israel 'got israelied' as a verb to mean when someone is asked to share something of yours, then claims it as their own, and takes it for themselves.

### Origin and questions

The 40th anniversary (in 1988) of the establishment of the Israeli state, however, and the release of official documents, coincided with the effort by Israeli scholars to challenge it. The historian Ilan Pappé contested 'the Ten Myths' about the origin and identity of the contemporary state of Israel. Five of these related to the origins: that Palestine was an empty land; that the Jews were a people without land; that Zionism is Judaism; that Zionism is not Colonialism; and that the Palestinians left their land in 1948.

Bilateral and multilateral efforts to seek a solution to the resulting problems brought forth no compromise. On the contrary, and early in 2018, Israel's ruling Likud Party unanimously endorsed a resolution calling for the annexation of West Bank settlements. The Public Security Minister Gilad Erdan declared, "We are telling the world that it doesn't matter what the nations of the world say. The time has come to express our biblical right to the land."

Subsequent writings, and official Israeli assertions, have confirmed the validity of these questions. The war of June 1967 changed the landscape to Israel's benefit. It was followed by United Nations Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). In 1974, the Palestine Liberation Organization was officially recognised by the Arab League and the United Nations General Assembly as being the "sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people", and was invited to participate in all UN activities under observer status. The Arab states, after much meandering, developed a common position in the Arab League Declaration/Initiative of March 2002. This was followed a few months later by the Palestinian Non-Paper (June 12, 2002) outlining a vision for Permanent Status Negotiations based on it and stating that 'the border between the state of Palestine and the state of Israel will be the June 4, 1967 Armistice Line'.

Light on this was shed by Benjamin



Hamid Ansari

was the Vice-President of India (2007-2017)

Beit-Hallahmi of Haifa University in *Original Sins: Reflections on the History of Zionism and Israel*: 'Out of the original sins of the world against the Jews grew the original sins of Zionism against the Palestinian'. Looking at the future he argued that 'the main obstacles to a solution have to do with exorcising the past, admitting past and present injustice for one side; forgiving the past, and the present for the other. The Israelis' problem is asking for forgiveness; the Palestinians' the readiness to forgive...Israelis seem to be trapped in a peculiar and impossible situation. Any concession to the Palestinians may lead to the unravelling of the whole Zionist enterprise'.

### Balance of forces

A realistic assessment of the balance of forces was made by former negotiator and Ambassador to Washington, Prof. Itamar Rabinovich of Hebrew University, in *Waging Peace: Israel and the Arabs 1948-2003*: 'The military might that Israel displayed in June 1967 convinced the Arabs that they could not reasonably hope to end the conflict through a military victory... The effect of the 1967 defeat was qualitatively different from that of the defeats of 1948 and 1956... In the Arab's ensuring soul-searching, several alternatives were fiercely debated... but a recommendation to seek a political settlement based on a historic compromise was not made.'

Further turmoil, regional and global, including the arrival in Israel of nearly a million immigrants from the former Soviet Union, and the long and profound effect on the Israeli public of the Intifada, eventually led to the Madrid Conference of 1991. The letter of invitation to invitees did not include the phrase "territories for peace" but was mentioned in the letters of assurance addressed to the Arab invitees.

Writing in 2004, Rabinovich concluded that 'Israel is far more powerful than its Palestinian adversary, but it cannot translate its military superiority into a total, definitive victory... The military might that Israel displayed in June 1967 convinced the Arabs that they could not reasonably hope to end the conflict through a military victory... The effect of the 1967 defeat was qualitatively different from that of the defeats of 1948 and 1956... In the Arab's ensuring soul-searching, several alternatives were fiercely debated... but a recommendation to seek a political settlement based on a historic compromise was not made.'

In a study published recently by the Tel Aviv University think-tank, two experts assessed that the American support for Israel in the present

war 'has been unprecedented' in terms of diplomatic support, ongoing military assistance and strategic support but also in growing criticism of Israel's conduct and increasing efforts to shape the post-war situation. It adds that the predominantly Jewish community (in the U.S.) and particularly its younger members 'are distancing themselves from Israel' and the same can be said of in assessing domestic attitudes in Israel.

The Israeli argument, and the substance of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's reasoning, is guarantee of a continued Israeli control over the majority of West Bank land, water, internal and external movement and transportation, and overriding security. This, in effect, is a recipe for preventing the creation of a normal Palestinian state. The American way out of it is a two-state solution whose small print shall be a de-militarised Palestine guaranteed by a de-facto U.S.-Israeli alliance.

### The players

The respective requirements of the affected or interested parties to this long-standing dispute, in the light of the experience of October 7, can thus be summed up:

Palestinians: recognition of their existence as a state along with rights as a state under international law and in terms of the Palestinian Non-Paper of June 12, 2002;

Israel: retention of the acquired territory. 'The Palestinians would be given all the powers to govern themselves but none of the powers that could threaten Israel. Put simply, the solution is self-government for the Palestinians with vital security powers retained by Israel.'

The United States: A two-state solution with a de-militarised Gaza, a Saudi normalisation with Israel, a role for the moderate Arab countries in rebuilding Gaza, and in keeping Iran isolated.

In the last week of February, Thomas Friedman wrote about 'the increasingly rapid erosion of Israel's standing among friendly nations' and if [U.S. President Joe] Biden is not careful, America's global standing will plummet right along with Israel's.'

Arab states: A revitalised Palestinian state, devoid of radical elements after the experience of the Arab Spring, and a benefiting from the experience of Egypt and Jordan and of the governments party to the Abraham Accords. Some of may not be averse to American suggestions of an Arab Mandate.

One needs to be an optimist, even a 'panglossian', to consider these to be realisable.

Writings and official Israeli assertions offer an idea of what 'a Jewish national home' and a long-standing dispute constitute

# Scientists and a wish list for the incoming government

**W**ith 970 million Indians in the process of exercising their franchise in the ongoing general election, what do scientists look for in the polls? Who do they want to vote for, and what are the fundamental issues they want to see their elected representatives resolve and implement?

There are five fundamental issues that scientists want the new government to solve and their elected representatives to pay urgent attention to.

### Increase spending

First, an increase in the nation's gross domestic expenditure on research and development (currently below 0.7% of GDP), both from the government exchequer and private players (who contribute less than 40% of the current spending). Government spending on research and development should increase by at least 50% year-over-year in the next five years, accounting for nearly 4% of GDP at the end of the incoming government's term. How can the private sector spending on research and development go up? One such avenue is contributing to the recently established Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF), where the private sector is expected to contribute ₹36,000 crore over five years.

Although a legislative route to facilitate this is envisioned, the incoming government needs to implement a more detailed plan and establish mechanisms akin to escrow accounts guaranteeing this funding. Increased funding will require raising the skilled scientific workforce to spend the money judiciously, and in time, including bringing new and nurturing existing human resources.

Second, public sector institutions' physical and intellectual infrastructure, such as universities and research institutions, must be improved. Modernising science laboratories in undergraduate colleges, State and central universities, and specialised research institutions is badly required. Providing a better



Binay Panda

is a Professor at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

infrastructure for students and scientists to stay and practise their trade is also needed. Upgrading infrastructure will not only require hiring more quality teachers and researchers to fill the sanctioned positions but also doubling that number effectively over the next five years. However, hiring more people to practise competitive science will only help if we have a robust and unbiased system to bring the best.

### Focus on merit

Third, making hiring in educational and research institutions to a globally accepted standard that is transparent, fast and free from any influence. The criteria for selection should be strictly based on merit, with a competent committee capable of choosing the right person for the right job free from any outside influence. It should be at the most six months from the time of application to the time of providing the appointment letters. There are established global norms for hiring quality teachers and scientists, and we must follow the same process.

Fourth, a robust science grant management system to facilitate research will be required, one with less red tape in grant submission, one that makes faster and timely grant and student fellowship disbursement, one that demands no hard copy submission, and one that gives autonomy to individual scientists on how and what they want to spend on for their research. A robust system and an increased workforce are needed to allow various departments within science ministries to spend their allocated budget before the end of each financial year and streamline fund disbursement to scientists in time.

Effective spending at the level of scientists also means providing flexibility to purchase from places other than the government's e-marketplace (which is mandated now and forces scientists to buy, at times, lower quality, sub-par "Made in India" products due to low overall price) and providing flexibility to scientists to deviate from the general financial rules, if required. The money is well spent when scientists

purchase what they need for their research over the cheapest available products. This can be done while making scientists accountable for the spending.

### Ensure freedom

Finally, the last but the most critical implementation that scientists look forward to is the freedom to speak and write on their subjects based on evidence and which is free from interference. Academia without a flourishing start-up ecosystem will not produce innovation for the masses. Although successive governments have done a great deal to promote innovation and entrepreneurship on Indian campuses, the true spirit of innovation will come when the incoming government provides full autonomy to individual scientists to take leave to form companies, have flexibility in hiring the right scientific staff in their laboratories without excessive paperwork and administrative processes, and the freedom to spend money on where they deem fit and to travel to national and international conferences. While doing so, scientists need to be accountable for the quality of their science rather than merely following the processes, for the quality of the products/solutions that come out of their laboratories (those who work on applied science subjects) and for the quality of knowledge that they create and impart to younger minds.

For India to aspire to be the second largest economy by 2050, the incoming government must improve the ease of doing science and provide scientists the complete freedom to think and implement, away from excessive bureaucratic and administrative processes and paperwork. While supporting our researchers in creating wealth and jobs for society through innovation and entrepreneurship, it is vitally important that the incoming government also invests in fundamental science and knowledge creation. One cannot exist without the other. Scientists, although small in number, form an essential electoral block that can influence decision-making for the larger public good.

Supporting science and scientists is essential in India's quest to become a major economic powerhouse

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Voting experience

The excited faces of first-timers, the curious faces of old-timers, the flashing of cameras in selfie booths after voting, the posse of policemen standing guard, volunteers guiding voters, the beep of the EVM after voting and a voter's pride after leaving the booth with an inked finger was the scene in 21 States and Union Territories after the first phase of the general election. Despite a strong support system in

the form of ambulances and wheelchairs, shamianas to protect voters from the heat, some of the elderly experienced discomfort. There were also cases of EVMs malfunctioning, the absence of free last-mile connectivity to polling booths and political tussles outside polling wards. As the Election Commission of India tries to achieve the goal of 100% turnout by raising awareness using a variety of platforms, it is important to create a more

conducive and convenient atmosphere at polling booths.

**R. Srivatsan,**  
Chennai

It is disappointing that the voter turnout in Tamil Nadu has not been very high despite a strong campaign that a better future lies in one's exercising his voting right. It was upsetting that a number of names were missing from the voter list which could have been avoided had the voters

concerned checked the list earlier. That there were EVMs that malfunctioned in certain booths, thus causing unnecessary delay in casting votes, was equally upsetting. The celebrities who came to vote ended up creating unnecessary commotion.

**D. Sethuraman,**  
Chennai

While there were a number of complaints that the regular names of the voters were missing in the voter

list, on the whole it appears to have been a 'dry voting pattern' in Tamil Nadu. It is disappointing though that there was not much enthusiasm to vote. Perhaps it may have been due to an overdose of promises in manifestos. A poor voter turnout is not healthy for a State.

**A.P. Thiruvadi,**  
Chennai

### Election issue

An issue emerging in the general election is

employment. Key sectors such as IT, e-commerce and health care are at the forefront of contributing to job opportunities in India by virtue of their growth and startup creation. Job creation, therefore, must be the topmost priority of the next government.

**R. Sivakumar,**  
Chennai

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.



# GROUND ZERO



A statue of the 16th century tribal icon, Rana Punja Bhil, in Udaipur, Rajasthan. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

## The battle over Adivasi identity

The BJP-led Union government is making several efforts to “reclaim” the lost stories of Adivasi resistance movements in order to build a nationalistic tribal identity. Believing that the Adivasi identity is being appropriated by the Sangh Parivar, the indigenous communities of Rajasthan and Jharkhand are attempting to counter these narratives, reports **Abhinav Lakshman**

In the tribal belt of Udaipur, Banswara, and Dungarpur in the southernmost tip of Rajasthan, small signboards dot the dusty highways which lead into settlements of the Bhil Adivasi people. The signboards, mostly painted by hand and often featuring a drawing of the 16th century tribal icon, Rana Punja Bhil, mark the people in the settlements as belonging to the “Adivasi Parivar”.

“The Adivasi Parivar is what we call the larger ideology under which we are trying to awaken the conscience of our people here,” says Amit Kharadi, 27, a worker of the Bharat Adivasi Party (BAP), which was formed by MLA Rajkumar Roat in September 2023. As he drives his white SUV across rural Udaipur, Kharadi points to home after home with the signboard. “We are not putting these up and neither do we tell them to. The people here have started doing it themselves in the last few years,” he says.

### Many narratives

The BAP, which rose out of the demand for a separate Bhil State for the Bhil Adivasi people, is on a mission to “take control” of the narrative around Adivasi identity, explains senior party leader Bhanwarlal Parmar. Its emergence, Parmar says, was partly a response to the histories of Adivasi communities coming under attack from the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)-affiliated Akhil Bharatiya Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram and its federated outfits for decades.

Now, narratives on Adivasi identity created by the Sangh Parivar are increasingly merging with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led Union government’s efforts to reclaim the lost stories of Adivasi resistance movements in order to build a nationalistic Adivasi identity, explain political workers and party leaders. The Union government has let the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) take the lead in directing this project. The aim is to replace current literature on Adivasi histories, communities, and resistance movements that originated from sources within colonial establishments with literature that is created by the indigenous people about their own communities. The BAP has termed this act an appropriation of their identity.

Kharadi, 27, who had unsuccessfully fought the Assembly elections in Rajasthan in November 2023, credited the “Adivasi Parivar” thinking for the 40,000 votes he secured. It was his first contest for public office and he barely had resources.



No matter how much our community tries to progress, our footsteps are being wiped away behind our backs.

AMIT KHARADI  
Worker, Bharat Adivasi Party

“It will take time. But people are realising what is happening with the histories of their community. No matter how much our community tries to progress, our footsteps are being wiped away behind our backs. The moment we look back, we see the very existence of our history being denied,” he says.

But these signboards that declare “Adivasi Parivars” across the Bhil belt of southern Rajasthan are coming up against the messaging of the BJP’s campaign for tribal voters. The BJP is using the iconography of leaders such as warrior-social reformers Punja Bhil and Govind Guru to play up its government’s efforts to recognise and honour “deliberately forgotten” heroes from Adivasi communities who fought “outside” forces.

“What the BJP and the RSS are doing is nothing short of offering us lollipops,” says Kharadi. “Why else are they still calling us *Vanvasi* (forest dwellers) and *Janjati* (tribal people)? What is this resistance to calling us Adivasi? Our identity is not just linked to *jal* (water), jungle, *zameen* (land); it is also linked to time. We have been on these lands from time immemorial, predating the Hinduism they claim we have been a part of. Have you seen what they have done with the story of Mangarh’s Govind Guru?”



Prime Minister Narendra Modi pays tribute to Birsu Munda on the tribal leader’s birth anniversary in Khunti, Jharkhand, in 2023. ANI

### A tool for the BJP

Last year, on November 15, which marked tribal icon Birsu Munda’s birth anniversary, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, and Madhya Pradesh were in the thick of Assembly election campaigning. These States are home to over 30% of India’s Scheduled Tribe population. During campaigning, Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended an event to commemorate Birsu Munda’s birth anniversary at Ulihatu, the tribal leader’s birthplace in Jharkhand. After inaugurating several government projects, the Prime Minister rose to address the crowd. “It is this nation’s misfortune that ever since Independence, our tribal heroes who have fought in this country’s freedom struggle have not been given their due. I am happy that on the occasion of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (an initiative of the Government of India to commemorate 75 years of Independence), we have got the opportunity to bring the stories of their courage and valour to all of you,” he said.

Modi spoke of the contributions of “Adivasi warriors” to saving “this land” and proceeded to list out the names of leaders including Birsu Munda, Tilka Manjhi, Rani Durgavati, and Alluri Sitarama Raju. He also made it a point to mention the sacrifice of Govind Guru at the Mangarh massacre, which occurred in 1913 in the Mangarh hills of Rajasthan. Just days before Modi’s remarks, the BJP’s Scheduled Tribe Morcha had posted a photo of Govind Guru on X (formerly Twitter) along with a short description of his struggle. The illustration and text were identical to the one published by the NCST a year ago in a book. Titled *Contributions of Tribal Leaders in the Freedom Struggle*, this book, compiled by the Akhil Bharatiya Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram, contained information on 50 leaders who led Adivasi movements.

The book and its contents have already become an indispensable tool for the BJP in its project to situate Adivasis as people who were “equal partners” in India’s polity until British rule, after which they started getting left behind, much like other communities in the country, in terms of social and economic progress.

The BJP Scheduled Tribe Morcha’s post described Govind Guru as the leader of “one of the most efficient movements against British rule in India”. It showed him wearing a white kurta with a *rudraksh mala* (beads considered holy) around his neck. For 20 years, he had fought against British rule and wanted to establish self-rule, it said. British forces had massacred thousands of his Bhil followers at Mangarh when they had gathered for a “Sump Sabha,” it added.

In addition to the date of the massacre contradicting scholarly work on the Bhil Revolt in the early 20th Century and the Mangarh massacre, the reason why Govind Guru ended up at the Mangarh fort was left out in this description. According to Vijay Kumar Vashishth’s work on the movement published in the *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, the Ruler of the Idar kingdom had, a month before the massacre, tried to arrest Govind Guru in a bid to subdue his rising influence among the Bheels of Banswara, Dungarpur, and Sunth States because of his preaching.

His teachings, Vashishth’s work asserts, was based on an appreciation of rationality, a tendency to shun superstition, and monotheism, among other principles. Govind Guru preached a religion that involved praying at Dhunis (firepits). Followers of this religion wore a rudraksh around their neck and carried iron tongs. Special wor-



The struggle of the tribal heroes was against Hindu landlords, moneylenders, and the British rule at the same time.

JACINTA KERKETTA  
Jharkhand-based writer and journalist

ship took place on Sundays. He also “taught them to consider themselves as equal to the higher Hindu castes of Rajputs and Brahmins who were even declared to be inferior in such respect as keeping their women in degrading position,” Vashishth’s work concludes.

“This is what I am talking about,” exclaims Jitendra Meena, national spokesperson for BAP and Assistant Professor of History, Delhi University. “Just because Govindgiri borrowed from whatever was around and wore a Rudraksh, it is not correct to use an image portraying him in that manner while also erasing the fact that a large battle he was fighting was one against the social structure of caste they were being subjected to under the then upper caste rulers. It is crucial to highlight that he was fighting to break out of everything that was restricting the community and create a new social order.”

Meena, an Adivasi researcher and a member of the Indian History Congress and the Rajasthan History Congress, has turned the BAP’s ideology of reclaiming their identities into a personal project to counter the narratives being set by the government. He has started work on picking apart stories being promoted by the government on at least a dozen Adivasi leaders.

“There are so many tribal reformers who were resisting attacks from all quarters economically, socially, culturally – from increased contact with landlords and rulers as a result of colonising administrations expanding their reach, to the expansion of Christian missionaries and ideas of different forms of Hinduism and Islam invading their discourse,” he says. Some might have picked up elements from each other, but the effort everywhere was to establish something new,” he says.

### Fighting against misrepresentations

About 1,400 kilometres from Udaipur, in Jharkhand’s Murma, Sarna thinker and spiritual leader Bandhan Tigga has been fighting the Akhil Bharatiya Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram for at least a decade. “Just like Sarna is the distinct religion of Adivasis existing outside of and predating any other religion, the reform movements like that of Birsu Munda’s must be seen in the same lens. They were attempts to create a social order that was exclusive to the Adivasi communities. That is what the Birsaita agitation attempted,” he says.

Every time delegates of the Vanvasi Kalyan Ashrams build networks in the remote tribal villages of Jharkhand, their campaigns to build Hindu temples is almost always accompanied with indoctrination, Tigga says.

Handu Bhagat, a worker of the Kendriya Sarna Samiti in Jharkhand’s Gumla district, has been observing the Sangh Parivar’s work in his district for at least a decade now. “They will first try to convince us that Hindu rituals and Adivasi rituals are similar just because some aspects might correlate. Then they will try to distort the stories of leaders like Birsu Munda to drive home their point. In the process, they alienate our people from their roots,” Bhagat says, pointing to villages like Sugakatta, where the Vanvasi Kalyan Kendra, another federated outfit of the Sangh Parivar, has built a Hanuman temple and where people no longer see any difference between the traditional Adivasi religion of Sarna and Hinduism.

Jharkhand-based writer and journalist Jacinta Kerketta echoes the argument that every time leaders from the tribal community are honoured, they are shown fighting the British and the Mughals. However, their dissatisfaction with the Hindu landlords and moneylenders working for the British is not depicted.

“The army of landlords that the British had created in the tribal areas to increase revenue used to collect taxes forcibly. To pay the taxes, the tribal people had to take loans from moneylenders. Moneylenders used to exploit them. In this way, the struggle of the tribal heroes was against Hindu landlords, moneylenders, and the British rule at the same time,” Kerketta says, citing the representation of the Hul movement of the Santhal people. “Sido, Kanhu, Chand, and Bhairav (all brothers) converted the dissatisfaction arising from landlords and moneylenders into a widespread movement. The Hul started with the killing of a police inspector who was taking the village head as hostage. Later, the British sent their army and thousands of tribal people were killed in this movement,” she adds.

Ranendra Kumar, an author in Jharkhand, dismisses the use of the NCST’s book for studying any actual history of Adivasi rebellions. “It is introductory information at best. Most Adivasi resistance movements began as a direct response to the everyday oppression they faced at the hands of upper caste landlords and local rulers, who had incentives to collaborate with colonial administrations in order to maintain their hegemony in the social structure,” explains Kumar, who is also the Director of the Ram Dayal Munda Tribal Welfare Research Institute in Ranchi.

“Erasing their resistance to caste structures would definitely be misleading,” he continues. He adds that even though the resistance was a direct response to this, it had, on many occasions, taken on the British administration directly. “There is evidence of leaders like Birsu Munda recognising the political role of the British Empire in the sociocultural battles he was fighting in Jharkhand and framing his fight as such,” he says. “Erasing either part of this history would be dishonest and untrue.”

Kerketta says, “The tribal people are victims of an oppressive system, irrespective of the government. Even after independence, they have been the victims of internal colonisation.”



## From Page One

## First phase has over 62% turnout

Of the 102 seats going to the polls on Friday, the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance won 43 seats and parties in the INDIA bloc 48 seats in the 2019 election.

At least 60,000 State and paramilitary personnel were deployed across Naxal-infested Bastar where a CRPF jawan was killed when a shell of an under-barrel grenade launcher accidentally exploded in Galgam village in Bijapur district while his team was on an area domination exercise. Another CRPF personnel was injured when he came in contact with an IED laid by Naxals in the same district.

## SC assails poll-time prohibitory orders

Mr. Bhushan said the prohibitory orders verge on the "fantastic" and assailed well-rounded Constitution Bench judgments of the court that Section 144 could be invoked by Magistrates only if there was a reasonable apprehension of breach of peace.

"The prohibitory orders are being passed mechanically, without any material or exigency to justify prohibition on the general public, and amounts to an illegal interference with the right to vote," Mr. Bhushan argued.

He said both petitioners were part of a civil society group called the Rajasthan Election Watch, which has been monitoring elections in Rajasthan since 2003-04. They hold 'democracy yatras', create awareness among voters and monitor communal and hate-motivated messages to alert the police administration. He said the blanket prohibitory orders thwart and obstruct public participation in the democratic process. They were a challenge to the very principle of free and fair elections.

## BJP helping other parties behind the scenes in J&amp;K: Omar

The Hindu Bureau  
SRINAGAR

Former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister and National Conference (NC) vice-president Omar Abdullah said on Friday that the BJP has decided to not field a candidate in Kashmir "but has not left the field open and is helping others in the Valley".

"The BJP has not left the field open. Some parties are being helped behind the scenes by the BJP. People need to know who is playing this game here. It will be known who is conspiring with whom and who is involved in conspiracies against J&K, weakening the voice here and helping BJP to succeed," he said in Srinagar.

Referring to Union Home Minister Amit Shah's recent statement that the BJP wants to win hearts first in the Valley, Mr. Abdullah said, "In the 2019 polls, the BJP had fielded its candidates from all the seats (in Kashmir). The Home Minister talks about 'winning the hearts first...'. This means that he could not win the hearts of the people," Mr. Abdullah said.

He also targeted Sajad Lone of the J&K Peoples' Conference who is contesting against him in Baramulla. "There is no secret that my fight is against Delhi. [BJP's] Tarun Chugh comes to Srinagar and calls Lone. And he runs to meet him. This is how you come to know who is the power behind them."

## Forests a national asset and major contributor to financial wealth: SC

The judgment comes at a pivotal time when the controversial Forest Conservation (Amendment) Act of 2023 has attracted widespread criticism; court says concepts of carbon credit and green accounting to evaluate national wealth now a reality

Krishnadas Rajagopal  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has asserted in a judgment that forests in India are a national asset and a major contributor to the nation's financial wealth.

"It is the spirit of the forest that moves the earth," a Bench headed by Justice M.M. Sundresh observed in a judgment based on an appeal filed by the State of Telangana against a High Court decision "graciously gifting" forest land to a private person. The State's forest officials had made matters worse by filing conflicting affidavits in court. The apex court ordered ₹5 lakh in costs from both the State government and the private persons. The State was asked to open an enquiry against its own forest officials.

The judgment has come at a pivotal time when the



Green assets: The FCAA is accused of giving a free hand to States to regularise encroachments in protected forests.

controversial Forest (Conservation) Amendment Act (FCAA) 2023, has attracted widespread criticism. The FCAA is accused of giving a free hand to States to regularise encroachments in protected forests and determine diversions of forestlands. The Act has been criticised for paving the way for the commercial exploitation of forests.

"Depletion and disappearance of forests would

ultimately lead to a massive extinction of organisms," Justice Sundresh observed.

The court said concepts of carbon credit and green accounting to evaluate a nation's wealth had become a reality. "A country with excess forest cover would be in a position to sell its excess carbon credit to the one in deficit. This in turn underlines the significance of forests in contri-

bute to the financial wealth of a country," the court noted.

## A major sink

The judgment said India's forests serve as a major sink of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). The value of mitigation has put a conservative \$5 per tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> locked in forests, this huge sink of about 24,000 mt of CO<sub>2</sub> is worth \$120 billion, or ₹6 lakh crores.

The court quoted from a 2009 report of the Ministry of Environment and Forests titled 'India's Forest and Tree Cover: Contribution as a Carbon Sink', which said that from "1995 to 2005, the carbon stocks stored in our forests and trees have increased from 6,245 million tonnes (mt) to 6,662 mt, registering an annual increment of 38 mt of carbon or 138 mt of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent".

Justice Sundresh highlighted the protective role

of forests against climate change. It referred to a 2022-2023 report of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on the macroeconomic impact of climate change and changing patterns of rainfall. These factors could cost the economy 2.8% of its GDP and depress the living standards of nearly half of its population by 2050.

"India could lose anywhere around 3% to 10% of its GDP annually by the year 2100 due to climate change," the judgment noted from the RBI document.

"The report of the RBI presents a very disturbing scenario. The report clearly suggests the enormous potential impact of climate change on society, leading to serious job losses in every sector. Therefore, the adverse effect will be on the future of the nation as a whole, as against an identifiable group," the judgment said.

## Committed to implementing UCC, says Rajnath Singh

The Hindu Bureau  
KHAMMAM

The Congress has done little to eradicate poverty in the country despite forming the government several times at the Centre, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said.

"For the first time in Independent India, the Modi government has succeeded in bringing 25 crore people out of poverty," Mr. Singh said at a roadshow held as part of a Lok Sabha election campaign in Khammam on Friday.

"The Modi government has delivered on its promises, including abrogation of Article 370 and construction of Ram Mandir at Ayodhya. The BJP is committed to implementing Uniform Civil Code," Mr. Singh asserted. Mr. Singh took part in the roadshow which began from Sardar Patel Stadium to ZP Centre to drum up support for Tandra Vinod Rao, the BJP candidate from Khammam.

## India delivers first batch of BrahMos supersonic missiles to Philippines

Dinakar Peri  
NEW DELHI

India delivered the first batch of BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles to the Philippines on Friday. In January 2022, the Philippines concluded a \$375-million deal with India for three batteries of a shore-based, anti-ship variant of the BrahMos becoming the first export customer for the joint venture missile between India and Russia.

The first batch was delivered aboard a transport aircraft of the Indian Air Force which landed in the Philippines on Friday afternoon. Specifics of the delivery made were not immediately available. The Philippines is acquiring the systems under the Horizon 2 of the Revised Armed Forces of the Philippines Modernisation Programme.

The delivery comes amid the showdown between the Philippines and China in the South China Sea and will significantly



The batch was transported on an Indian Air Force aircraft that landed in the Philippines on Friday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

augment the defensive posture of the Philippines armed forces once the systems are operationalised.

During his visit to the Philippines in March, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar in a meeting with the Secretary of National Defence of the Philippines Gilberto C. Teodoro, Jr. reaffirmed India's commitment to upholding a rules-based international order and promoting peace and security in the Indo-Pacific region.

In January 2022, then

Philippines Defence Secretary Delfin N. Lorenzana, who signed the contract said, "As the world's fastest supersonic cruise missiles, the BrahMos missiles will provide deterrence against any attempt to undermine our sovereignty and sovereign rights, especially in the West Philippine Sea."

The contract includes the delivery of three missile batteries, training for operators and maintainers as well as the necessary Integrated Logistics Support package. The coastal de-

fence regiment of the Philippine Marines will be the primary user of the missile systems.

From January 23 to February 11, 2023, 21 Philippine Navy personnel were trained in the operations and maintenance of the systems in Nagpur and were awarded interim missile badges by the Indian Navy chief, Admiral R. Hari Kumar.

As reported earlier, several countries have expressed interest in acquiring BrahMos systems and discussions are in advanced stages with Indonesia and Thailand, among others.

BrahMos is a joint venture between the DRDO and Russia's NPO Mashinostroyeniya and the missile derives its name from Brahmaputra and Moskva rivers. The missile is capable of being launched from land, sea, sub-sea and air against surface and sea-based targets and has been long inducted by the Indian armed forces.

## Centre asks FSSAI to initiate 'appropriate action' against Nestle

Bindu Shajan Perappadan  
NEW DELHI

The Consumer Affairs Ministry on Friday asked the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) to initiate "appropriate action" against the Nestle group for allegedly selling baby products with high sugar content in India.

The Ministry initiated this action following a report that said that Nestle's Cerelac products sold in India contained 2.7 grams of added sugar per serving, while the products sold in countries such as Germany, Switzerland, France, and the United Kingdom did not contain added sugar.

## 'Serious concerns'

"High sugar content in baby products raises serious concerns about the potential implications for the health and safety of children in our country. The health and well-being of our citizens, especially in-

The WHO has for several years warned against the presence of high sugar content in baby food products

fants and young children, is of paramount importance, and any deviation from safety standards could lead to serious health concerns," the letter to FSSAI noted.

Arun Gupta from the Breastfeeding Promotion Network of India said that India needs to review its food safety laws and ensure that they are implemented in a strict manner. "Any laxity in the laws will ensure that the health of the citizens and in this case vulnerable infants gets compromised," he said.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has for several years now warned against the presence of high sugar content in baby food products.

## Fossils of huge prehistoric snake found in Kutch mine

Jacob Koshy  
NEW DELHI

Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Roorkee have reported the discovery of fossils of one of the largest snakes that ever existed and likely lived 47 million years ago during a period called the Middle Eocene. The fossils were found in Kutch, Gujarat, and the reptile, named Vasuki Indicus, could have been anywhere between 10 metres and 15 metres long, or as big as a modern-day school bus.

It belonged to the now-extinct Madtsoidae snake family but represents a unique lineage from India, the authors note.

Professor Sunil Bajpai and post-doctoral researcher Debajit Datta at the IIT-Roorkee stumbled upon 27 pieces of a "partial, well preserved" vertebral column of the snake at the Panandhro Lignite Mine in Kutch.



The Panandhro Lignite Mine where the fossils were found. Red arrow indicates the level at which the remains were discovered.

The discovery, the authors report in the peer-reviewed journal, *Nature Scientific Reports*, could improve understanding of how the Madtsoidae species evolved in different kinds of climate, as well as the factors that contributed to large body sizes. One of the causative factors is held to be high temperatures in the tropical climate of that time.

Vasuki Indicus existed at a time when the earth looked quite different from today, and Africa, India and South America were

one, conjoined landmass. It likely had a cylindrical body, hinting at a robust and powerful build, and was as big as Titanoboa, a massive snake that once roamed the earth and is reportedly the longest ever known, said a press statement from IIT-Roorkee.

"This discovery is significant not only for understanding the ancient ecosystems of India but also for unravelling the evolutionary history of snakes on the Indian subcontinent..." Dr. Bajpai said in a statement.

## Congress, INDIA bloc have been against development: Modi

Shoumojit Banerjee  
PUNE

Alleging that the Congress and the Opposition Indian National Developmental, Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) bloc had always been "anti-development" and "anti-farmer", Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday blamed the Congress 'misrule' for having caused woe to farmers for decades.

Addressing an election rally in Wardha in Maharashtra's Vidarbha region, Mr. Modi said past governments had been responsible for successive irrigation crises that had plagued farmers in Wardha and Amravati districts.

"The Congress has always been anti-farmer and anti-development. A stone [for a project] laid in a family's name remained unfinished for generations, causing suffering in Vidarbha under the Congress rule. Today, our government

prioritises Vidarbha's needs, with CM Eknath Shinde and [Deputy CMs] Devendra Fadnis and Ajit Pawar committed to serving the public," he said.

Stating that voting for the Congress and the INDIA bloc was "futile", Mr. Modi claimed that the Congress had already admitted defeat and hence was resorting to threats of causing chaos after the Lok Sabha election.

"Their inclination towards Constitutional suppression and emergency echoes past tactics. However, the nation desires a resolute and stable government... this election is the one to fulfil the dream of a 'Viksit' Bharat and self-reliant India," Mr. Modi said.

Mr. Modi was campaigning for the BJP's Ramdas Tadas, the incumbent Wardha MP and Mahayuti candidate. Wardha goes to polls in the second phase on April 26.

## Centre releases curriculum framework for anganwadis

Maitri Porecha  
NEW DELHI

For the first time, the Union government has released a curriculum advisable to be taught to children aged three to six years, thus giving an impetus to pre-school learning in 14 lakh anganwadis across the country.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) has released the National Curriculum for Early Childhood Care and Education 2024 titled 'Aadharshila', on the lines of the National Education Policy 2020 and the National Curriculum Framework. Aadharshila (translated as foundation stone) is a detailed 48-week curriculum meant for learning in the age group of three to six years in anganwadis.

There are 14 lakh anganwadis in India which serve as nodal points in villages for the health and nutrition needs of pregnant

The curriculum helps to develop skills which will help a child easily transition into Grade 1

mothers and children.

"Concern in the policy is that children are going up school ladder without learning to read and write [which may lead them to lack in achieving age-appropriate learning levels like math and language skills]," said Professor Venita Kaul, former NCERT official and member of the internal committee that designed the curriculum.

Prof. Kaul said longitudinal research which followed 42,000 Indian children up to primary grades for about five years indicated that children who have received early childhood education are expected to do much better in school and are also psychosocially better adapted than peers

who did not receive any formal education before six years of age.

The curriculum includes a weekly play calendar with four weeks of initiation which includes academic activities. The next 36 weeks are spent on exploring, free play, conversation, creation and appreciation, and reflection that involves various activities, including storytelling, singing rhymes, arts and crafts.

The last eight weeks are spent reinforcing learnings of previous weeks and observation of kids' performance. Activities and timetable are segregated age-wise with detailed requirements of materials needed. The curriculum helps in developing listening skills, vocabulary building, boosting imagination, following instructions, social development, and developing self-esteem, which will help a child easily transition into Grade 1.



# ELECTIONS 2024



## ARUNACHAL PRADESH



**Helping hand:** An elderly woman being assisted as she arrives to cast her vote in Kurung Kumey district on Friday. ANI

## JAMMU & KASHMIR



**Patient wait:** Voters wait in queues at a polling station in Udhampur district. PTI

## TRIPURA



**All set:** Voters show their identification cards as they wait in a queue at a polling station in Agartala. PTI

## ASSAM



**D-day:** Congress candidate Gaurav Gogoi arrives to cast his vote in Jorhat district. RITU RAJ KONWAR



**New bliss:** A newly married couple after voting in Udhampur on Friday. ANI

## Election turns into sparkling celebration in Udhampur

Peerzada Ashiq  
SRINAGAR/JAMMU

The Udhampur Lok Sabha constituency in Jammu and Kashmir witnessed a massive participation of voters from all sections of society on Friday as it recorded a 68.27% voter turnout by 11.30 p.m., election officials said. This is the first Lok Sabha election since the Centre split the erstwhile State into two Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh, and scrapped its special constitutional position in 2019.

The Udhampur constituency consists of five districts and 18 Assembly segments. The highlight of the polling was scores of newly-weds appearing in shimmering clothes at the polling booths and posing for selfies. Equally enthusiastic were first-time voters and persons with disability, whose movements were aided with specially designed polling booths with ramps and wheelchairs.

Rakesh Thakur and Sharda Devi from Bunjwah in Kishtwar district came to cast votes on their wedding day. It's an honour to participate in the polling and elect the one who could become our voice in Parliament, the couple said.

Out of the total 16.23 lakh voters in Udhampur, 7.77 lakh are women. As many as 84,468 people are in the 18-19 age group.

An excited bunch of first-time voters said they preferred governance over ideological issues. "It's the first time I have come to vote. My vote is for good governance, prosperity and progress," Junaid Rathore, a resident of Banihal, said.

### Assembly seat-wise figures

Of the 18 Assembly segments, Kathua recorded the highest 75.44% voter turnout. It is the hometown of Congress candidate Chaudhary Lal Singh. The hometown of BJP candidate Jitendra Singh registered 73.28% in Udhampur West and 73.26% in Udhampur East.

The Muslim-majority Assembly segments of Banihal saw 59.04%, Bhaderwah 63.01%, Doda 68.14%, Doda West 69.36%, Kishtwar 65.44% and Ramban 66.71%. The fate of the Congress candidate, who is also supported by the National Conference (NC) and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), depends on these segments. Voters in these areas came out despite wet weather both in the plains as well as in the upper reaches.

## Women throng 'pink booths' in J-K's Doda

Amid multi-tier security arrangements, *Nari Shakti* (women power) was on display at the all-women staffed booths known as 'pink booths' in Doda district of the Udhampur Lok Sabha constituency.

These 'pink booths' attracted more women voters,

especially from the Muslim community. As polling began in the morning, a large number of women electors thronged the 'pink booth' set up at the Government Girls' Higher Secondary School in the Doda town to exercise their right to franchise despite heavy rains. "We are very happy to vote for the first time at these all-women polling booths. There are very good facilities," said Arifa Begum, who cast her vote at the 'pink booth' in Doda. PTI

Shiv Sahay Singh  
KOLKATA

Sporadic incidents of scuffles between supporters of political parties, recovery of crude bombs and angry protests against MLAs were witnessed during polling for the first phase of the Lok Sabha election in West Bengal on Friday.

Elections were held to the three seats of Jalpaiguri, Alipurduar and Cooch Behar in the State, and the Election Commission (EC) said voting was largely peaceful with over 80.55% people exercising their franchise across the three seats till 6 p.m.

The turnout in Cooch Behar was 81.46%, while that in Jalpaiguri was 82.15% and in Alipurduar 77.84%.

The Cooch Behar constituency, where the EC had deployed 112 companies of Central armed police forces, was rife with allegations from political parties against each other. A voter sustained injuries in his eye in Sitalkuchi when he was coming out after voting. A BJP supporter at Sitalkuchi said that he was attacked with a sickle on the way to vote.

There were reports of crude bombs being placed



**Amid turbulence:** People stand in a queue to cast their votes at a polling station in Kalamati village, Dinhat district of West Bengal on Friday. AFP

outside the house of a BJP booth president. Along with Sitalkuchi, there were reports of violence at Chandmari and Mathabhanga in Cooch Behar, where supporters of the BJP and the Trinamool Congress came face to face.

Videos aired by local television channels showed supporters of the two parties throwing stones at some places and engaging in pushing and shoving. Allegations were levelled

against BJP supporters at Bhetaguri in Dinhat block, by Trinamool Congress supporters. They alleged that the BJP's Cooch Behar candidate, Nisith Pramanik, was behind the attacks. Mr. Pramanik, who won the seat in 2019 with a margin of over 50,000 votes is pitted against the Trinamool candidate, Jagadish Chandra Basunia.

Responding to the allegations of the Trinamool, Mr. Pramanik said that pe-

ople were resisting the ruling party.

### Clashes, protests

A group of BJP supporters raised angry slogans at State Minister Udayan Guha at Dinhat. The crowd, mostly women, tried to gherao Mr. Guha.

Reacting to the incident, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Nisith Pramanik said, "The Trinamool Congress wants to implement Sandeshkhali model across the State. He

[Udayan Guha] got what he deserved."

BJP MLAs Sikha Chattopadhyay from Dabgram Phulbari and Baren Chandra Barman also faced protests and slogans from supporters of the ruling party when they were visiting polling booths in their respective constituencies. When the police tried to arrest the BJP MLA Sikha Chattopadhyay at Siliguri, the BJP supporters clashed with the police.

### 'Political bias'

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, who was campaigning at Hariharpara in Murshidabad district, raised allegations of political bias against the Central forces. "I am not against Central forces but this is the first time that they [BJP] are using Central forces as their cadres," Ms. Banerjee said. She raised questions on why only Central forces were used in Cooch Behar and the State police were not deployed.

In a related development, the EC suspended the officer-in-charge of two police stations - Shaktipur and Beldanga of Murshidabad district - citing that they "failed to contain and prevent repeated communal violence in the jurisdiction".

## Cong. asks EC to take note of 'one issue' raised by BJP

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Friday accused the BJP of using "one particular issue" on social media to attract voters, and urged the Election Commission (EC) to take note of it.

"The BJP is using one particular issue on social media as an appeal to voters. This is a flagrant and blatant violation of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, the Election Commission's Model Code of Conduct, and also of numerous judgments of the Supreme Court," Congress general secretary (communication) Jairam Ramesh said in a post on X.

Mr. Ramesh did not specify which "the issue" was but other informed leaders, who did not want to be quoted, said that the BJP has been using the matter of Ram Temple to seek votes.

The Congress has neither officially identified the issue nor lodged any complaint with the EC.

On Friday, the official X handle of the BJP's Bihar unit put out a post that read, "If you are going to vote, remember this. Who built the temple for Lord Ram?"

"We hope that the @ECISVEEP will take immediate note and put a stop to such appeals," Mr. Ramesh tweeted.

## Bihar records turnout of 48.8% in four seats that voted in first phase

Amit Bhelari  
PATNA

A provisional voter turnout of 48.88% was recorded in the four constituencies of Bihar that went to the polls in the first phase of the Lok Sabha election on Friday.

The four seats are Gaya, Jamui, Nawada, and Aurangabad. Former Chief Minister and Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) leader Jitan Ram Manjhi is in the fray in Gaya against Kumar Sarvajeet of the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD).

In another key contest, Arun Bharti, brother-in-

**Gaya recorded a voter turnout of 49.51%, Aurangabad 51.56%, Jamui 51.02%, and Nawada 43.79%**

law of Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) chief Chirag Paswan, is up against RJD candidate Archana Ravidas in Jamui.

In Nawada, Vivek Thakur of the BJP is locked in a direct contest with the RJD's Shrawan Kushwaha, while Sushil Kumar Singh of the BJP is contesting against RJD's Abhay Kush-

waha in Aurangabad. Gaya recorded a voter turnout of 49.51%, Aurangabad 51.56%, Jamui 51.02%, and Nawada 43.79%, as per provisional data at 11.30 p.m.

Voters boycotted polling at seven booths in protest against lack of civic amenities. Twelve people were taken into preventive detention in Gaya and 20 in Nawada. Voting in 14 Naxalism-affected Assembly segments took place till 4 p.m.

Chief Electoral Officer H.R. Srinivas said, "In comparison to the 2019 Lok

Sabha election, the voter turnout is 5% less. But the figure is provisional." The voter turnout in these four seats in the 2019 Lok Sabha election was 53.47%.

Asked about the first phase of voting in Bihar, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav said, "Based on the feedback we are getting, we are winning all four seats."

Senior BJP leader and Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary said, "NDA is winning all four seats by a huge margin. So their claim of winning all seats is nothing but daydream."

## Shompen cast their vote for the first time

T. Ramakrishnan  
CHENNAI

For the first time, members of the Shompen, one of the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in the country and who reside in the dense tropical rain forests of the Great Nicobar island, on Friday took part in the election process by casting their votes in the Andaman and Nicobar Lok Sabha constituency.

Seven members of the tribe exercised their franchise, said Andaman and Nicobar Islands' Chief Electoral Officer B.S. Jaglan. The estimated population



A voter from the Shompen tribal community poses for a photo after casting his vote. PTI

of Shompen was 229, as per the 2011 Census data.

According to provisional figures, the voter turnout was 63.99%. Manikya Rao Yadhav, president of the Andamans unit of the Telugu Desam Party, said polling was extended beyond the scheduled time to accommodate late-comers.



A voter poses for a photo after casting her vote at a pink polling booth in Udhampur. ANI

## No voter turns up in 6 districts of Nagaland

Polling personnel in six eastern districts of Nagaland waited for nine hours in booths, but not one of the four lakh voters of the region turned up following a shutdown call given by an organisation to press for its demand for 'Frontier Nagaland Territory' (FNT).

Additional Chief Electoral Officer of Nagaland Awa Loring said polling personnel were present between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m. in the 738 polling stations in the region which comprises 20 Assembly constituencies.

Sources in the CEO's office said none came up to cast votes in those nine hours. Those 20 MLAs also did not exercise their franchise.

Of the 13.25 lakh voters in Nagaland, the six districts in Eastern Nagaland have 4,00,632 voters. PTI



It is a settled issue. It is 100% safe. It has been raised in the honourable Court also. We are awaiting judgment, nothing can happen to the machines  
RAJIV KUMAR  
Chief Election Commissioner

## Uttarakhand records low voter turnout

Of the 21 States and Union Territories that went to the polls on Friday, Uttarakhand remained at number 20th in terms of voting percentage. According to Election Commission data, the State's overall average voting percentage (till 11.30 p.m.) remained at 55.89%.



We are not joining either the NDA or INDIA bloc. We want to maintain our identity. We don't want to be controlled from New Delhi  
LALDUHOMA  
Mizoram Chief Minister



INBRIEF



Amit Shah files nomination papers from Gandhinagar

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday submitted his nomination papers for the Gandhinagar Lok Sabha seat as the BJP candidate, and said the general election is all about giving a third term to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Mr. Shah was accompanied by Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel when he submitted the nomination papers to Gandhinagar Collector and District Election Officer M.K. Dave in the State capital at exactly 12.39 p.m., considered "Vijay Muhurat". Mr. Shah said this general election is all about giving a third term to Mr. Modi so that he can make India a developed country by 2047.

Assam MP files nomination after court faults ST certificate

Assam MP Naba Kumar Sarania on Friday filed his nomination from the Kokrajhar Lok Sabha seat, a day after the Gauhati High Court upheld an order dismissing his status as a Scheduled Tribe (Plains). Kokrajhar is one of the two Lok Sabha constituencies in Assam reserved for the Scheduled Tribes. The other is Diphu. "I respect the court's verdict, though it was not in my favour. We have already initiated steps to approach the court again," Mr. Sarania said. A single-judge Bench of Justice S.K. Medhi on Thursday dismissed his petition and declared him ineligible for contesting from any constituency reserved for the STs.

Assam CM vows citizenship to Bengali Hindus, scholarship

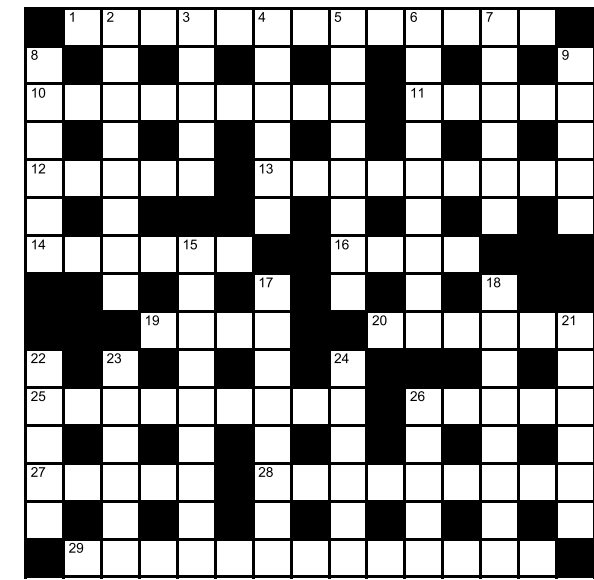
After "Modi ka guarantee", the voters in Assam has been showered with "Mama ka warranty". Mama, meaning maternal uncle, is a moniker for Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma. On Thursday, the Chief Minister added his warranty to the Prime Minister's guarantee for Bengali Hindus to get citizenship and scholarship for women students among other pledges made during an election rally in Udharbond under the Silchar Lok Sabha constituency. The BJP has fielded Transport Minister Parimal Suklabaidya from the constituency. He also promised monthly cash benefits under a State government scheme for 26 lakh families in Assam.

After joining BJP, Chhindwara Mayor seeks votes for Cong.

Less than three weeks after joining the BJP in Madhya Pradesh, Chhindwara Mayor Vikram Ahake asked people to vote for Congress candidate Nakul Nath. In a video message on social media, Mr. Ahake said he was feeling "suffocated" in the BJP. "Today, I am going to say something important without any pressure. I had joined a political party a few days ago, but I had been feeling suffocated ever since. I felt like that I was doing wrong with the person (Kamal Nath) who has done so much for Chhindwara's development and has always helped the people of Chhindwara in their tough times," he said. The Mayor had joined the BJP on April 1 in Bhopal.

THE CROSSWORD+ 14154 (set by Afterdark)

To solve this puzzle online, get access to our crossword site. @ https://qrqo.page.link/jjpTn



- Across
1 Attention; it's party time after criminal Oscar is put in can (13)
10 Returns from international breaks after end of leave (9)
11 Notify the French in drawing (5)
12 Shocks husband with look and sexy top (5)
13 Pleasure in morning exercise? Meant heartlessly (9)
14 Desserts after two smalls, a bite of turkey and salmon (6)

'We have taken a strong stance against Naxals'

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister says that when the Congress was in power, Naxals believed it was their own government; expressing confidence about the BJP winning all Lok Sabha seats in the State, he says his government has rolled out several welfare schemes and is implementing 'Modi's guarantees'

INTERVIEW

Vishnu Deo Sai

Sobhana K. Nair Shubhomoy Sikdar



Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai has dismissed allegations that the shooting of 29 Naxals in Kanker on April 16 was a "fake" encounter. He says that the fact that such a big group of Naxals came together on the eve of election, clearly showed that they were planning to stall the polls. The Chief Minister urges the Naxals to choose a path of development and progress. Excerpts:

Three months ago, the BJP got a historic verdict in the Chhattisgarh Assembly polls. Today, you are facing the Lok Sabha election, which will also, in a way, test your government's

performance in these months. What are your expectations?

We got a historic mandate in the 2023 election, winning 54 seats and an over 46% vote share. This was our highest tally in any Assembly election so far in the State. People put their trust in "Modi's guarantee". And within two days of taking oath, we were active in implementing all "Modi's guarantees". We have been working towards clearing all the backlogs in terms of bonuses for farmers, clearing the decks to deliver 18 lakh houses under the Pradhan Mantri Gramin Awas Yojana,

which the previous government didn't do. And many such welfare schemes that we had promised like Mahatari Vandana Yojana for giving women ₹12,000 per year or Ram Lalla Darshan Yojana for taking pilgrims to Ayodhya have already been rolled out.

All this will impact the electoral choice of the people, the voters have complete trust in BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. We are going to win all 11 seats.

Last week, in an encounter with security forces, 29 Naxals were killed in Kanker. What will be the electoral

implication of this encounter?

Those killed in the encounter include at least two who had a prize money of ₹20 lakh on their heads and another who had a prize money of ₹10 lakh. This is the first time our security forces have had such a big success. The Congress claimed this was a "fake encounter". They had made such claims about surgical strikes too. The fact that such a big group of Naxals came together on the eve of election, clearly shows that they were planning to stall the polls. When Congress was in power, Naxals believed their own government was ruling. We have always taken a strong stance against them.

But is your government prepared for talks with the Naxals?

It is not as if we want violence. We are ready for talks to arrive at a peaceful solution. We have appealed many times, asking them to

choose the path of development and progress instead.

How do you respond to the growing fear that the BJP will scrap the Constitution and with it reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes will also go?

The Opposition is clearly desperate in the face of their certain defeat. This is why they are running this very deliberate campaign claiming that the "Constitution is in danger" and that "reservation" will be scrapped. This is a measure to mislead the electorate. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has clarified repeatedly that reservation will not be revoked.

The BJP has been welcoming everyone with open arms, many of whom have a long list of corruption cases against them. Doesn't this dilute your attack on the Opposition on corruption?

Those who want to preserve their self-respect are leaving the Congress for BJP.

The BJP is a party of workers and it has a democratic structure where office-holders are changed every three months. It is only here that an ordinary worker like me can aspire to become the Chief Minister of the State and a tea-seller's son can go on to become the Prime Minister.

The Hasdeo forests are being cleared on a large scale for Parsa East and Kanta Basan (PEKB) coal mining. When you were in the Opposition, you used this issue to corner the government, but the trees continued to be felled even now. Why hasn't your government done anything?

Most of the trees had already been cut during the five years of the Congress government. From the area that has been cleared, mining can be done for a year.

In jibe at Pak., PM says terror supplier struggles for food

With many nations going bankrupt and several others facing war or a threat of war, India needs a strong BJP-led government for growth and protection, he says at election rally in Madhya Pradesh

The Hindu Bureau BHOPAL/LUCKNOW

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday took a swipe at Pakistan at an election rally in Damoh district of Madhya Pradesh, saying that a neighbouring country that used to "supply terror" is now "struggling even for atta (flour)".



Poll mode: Narendra Modi attends a public meeting for the Lok Sabha election in Damoh district on Friday.

"Today, many nations in the world are in bad condition. Many nations are going bankrupt. A neighbouring nation of ours that was the supplier of atank (terror) is now struggling for the supply of atta (flour). In such conditions, our India is developing at the fastest pace in the world," Mr. Modi said, asking people if they felt proud of India.

Two-phase polling

The Prime Minister told the gathering that India was "being praised" across the world because of "your one vote".

While six seats of Madhya Pradesh voted in the

first phase on Friday, elections in Damoh, Khajuraho, Rewa, Satna, Tikamgarh and Hoshangabad will be held in phase two on April 26. Mr. Modi also said that many countries in the world were facing war or a threat of war, and that India needs a strong BJP-led government to protect it.

Mr. Modi also hit out at the INDIA coalition accusing it of creating "hurdles" in the procurement of the Rafale fighter jets for the Indian Air Force. "I want to

tell you the reality of the INDI Alliance. For decades, the Congress kept the Indian defence sector weak. These people used to see their benefit in buying arms for the armed forces. The entire nation has seen how these people tried to prevent our Air Force from getting the Rafale fighter jets," he said.

From the Damoh seat, the BJP has fielded former MLA Rahul Lodhi, who exited the Congress and joined the BJP in March

2020 soon after Jyotiraditya Scindia, now a Union Minister, led a rebellion against Kamal Nath-led Congress government. He, however, lost the Assembly byelection. The Congress has fielded former MLA Tarwar Singh Lodhi from the seat, dominated by Lodhi voters.

The BJP has nominated its State unit president V.D. Sharma from Khajuraho.

At a rally in Amroha in Uttar Pradesh, without naming Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and SP president Akhilesh Yadav, Mr. Modi alleged that the "duo carry with them a box of appeasement, corruption, and dynasty politics", and accused them of attacking people's faith.

Mr. Modi said Amroha MP Danish Ali had problems in chanting "Bharat Mata ki Jai". "Will a person, who cannot accept 'Bharat Mata ki Jai', look good in Parliament? Should such a person be allowed entry into the Indian Parliament?" he asked.

Keen to experience India's polls first-hand, says Australian envoy

Kallol Bhattacharjee NEW DELHI



Philip Green

India's general election that started on Friday is the "largest electoral process" of the world, Philip Green, Australian High Commissioner to India, has said. In a social media post, Mr. Green announced that he will personally venture out in the coming weeks to experience the political contest that will usher in the next elected government of India. Several other foreign diplomats, including the Consul-General of Israel to South India, have also commented on the beginning of the general election.

"India's national polls is the largest electoral process in the world. Look forward to experiencing it first hand, starting this weekend in Kerala. I'll be dropping in to campaigns of as many sides as possible, and am keen to hear the opinions of as many Indians on the streets as possible," said Mr. Green on Friday. The Australian envoy became the first west-

ern diplomat to announce that he will mix with the public to witness the election process in India.

Like Mr. Green, Israeli diplomat Tammy Ben-Haim has spoken about the election. On social media platform X, Ms. Ben-Haim reposted a notification from the Election Commission and described India as her "favourite largest democracy in the world". Atul Keshap, president of the U.S.-India Business Council, also congratulated India and said, "With 970 million eligible voters and 1.2 million polling places, India's national election is the Maha Kumbh Mela of Democracy." India is one of the several countries going to polls this year.

SUDOKU

Sudoku grid with numbers and difficulty rating: ★★★★★

Solution to previous puzzle and Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

MADGALDEEP Sandal With Sandalwood Oil

FAITH Mahavir's focus on free will

Mahavir strongly emphasised the importance of free will (the freedom from external influences such as fate) as a core principle of his philosophy. While he did state that life is a combination of "niyati" (fate) and "purusharth" (action based on free will), "niyati" is always a result of previous karma, i.e., "purusharth." An atheist, Mahavir preached the supremacy of the "Atma" (the self) in determining one's life. Thus, the Atma was his "Paramatma" (the supreme). Not in the nihilistic sense of denying God, but in a way that transformed existentialism from a deterministic world controlled by Gods, demigods, benevolent, and malevolent entities requiring appeasement.

Mahavir declares that only the one who accepts that it is, in fact, him who is the master of his own destiny, is a true follower of his principles of "Atmavad" (belief in souls characteristic of consciousness and supreme potential). While worshipping Mahavir, devotees declare "Ichhami Khamasamano." Oh Lord! I bow to you out of my own desire to do so. On this Mahavir Jayanti, let us all act with the awareness that within lies infinite potential for superhuman endeavours and relieve ourselves from the vicious cycle of "pramad" (inaction) in our lives.

Rushil Khajanchi



**IN BRIEF**



**Amara Raja unit bags 700 MWp Greenko solar power project**

Amara Raja Infra Pvt. Ltd. (ARIPL) has secured a solar balance of system (BoS) project of 700MWp from Greenko. A part of Greenko's integrated renewable-energy project, the scope encompasses engineering, procurement and construction of the entire BoS for the solar component spanning across a 2,200-acre site in Kurnool district of Andhra Pradesh. It is ARIPL's largest capacity solar project till date. ARIPL reported ₹1,756 crore revenue for FY24.

**DRL unveils digital-care plan for irritable bowel syndrome**

Dr. Reddy's Laboratories Ltd. (DRL) introduced a condition-management programme for irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). DailyBloom IBS is based on research and enabled by a mobile application developed in-house. It focuses on comprehensive care plan, including diet, psychological and physical wellness support for patients, the firm said. IBS is a functional gastrointestinal disorder characterised by abdominal pain, bloating and altered bowel habits.

**Indo Count buys U.S. brand Wamsutta for \$10.25 million**

Indo Count Industries Ltd. has acquired international home-fashion brand Wamsutta from Beyond Inc. for \$10.25 million. Wamsutta is into luxurious bed, bath and other home-fashion products. "This acquisition strengthens Indo Count's brand portfolio, and elevates its position in the premium market segment," the firm said. Known for exceptional quality and brand legacy dating back to 1846, Wamsutta is poised to grow under Indo Count's leadership, the firm added.

**'Conditions not ripe for easing restrictive monetary stance'**

Downward pressure on inflation must be maintained until a better balance of risks becomes evident, MPC minutes cite RBI's Patra as saying

**The Hindu Bureau**  
MUMBAI

Price stability has to be restored in order to ensure that the rising growth trajectory in the economy is sustained and economic conditions are not yet ripe to ease the restrictive monetary stance, RBI Deputy Governor Michael Debabrata Patra emphasised at the April 3-5 meeting of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), the minutes released on Friday show.

Observing that recent inflation prints and high frequency data on salient food prices indicated that food inflation risks remained elevated, Dr. Patra said, "A relatively shallow and short-lived winter trough is giving way to a build-up of price momentum as summer sets in, with forecasts of rising temperatures up to May 2024."

Official retail inflation data for March released last week showed food price inflation remained sticky at 8.52%, barely slower than February's 8.66% as price gains quickened in cereals and meat.

**'Does not assure'**

Stating that the headroom provided by "steady core disinflation and fuel price deflation does not assure a faster alignment of the head-

**No let-up for now**

Price stability has to be restored in order to ensure that the rising growth trajectory is sustained, MPC's Patra says

Recent inflation prints, high frequency data on salient food prices indicate food inflation risks remain elevated\*

Stronger revival in private consumption will depend on greater confidence that inflation is declining



Real interest rate excessively high, imposing costs on growth, says Jayanth R. Varma

dline with the target," he underlined that headline inflation could consequently be expected to remain in the upper reaches of the RBI's 2%-6% tolerance band until favourable base effects came into play in the second quarter of 2024-25.

"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," Dr. Patra emphasised.

Crucially, he underlined that while domestic demand was expanding and the investment outlook was improving, "a stronger revival in private consumption and in corporate sales growth" would be contingent on greater confidence that inflation was declining

on a durable basis.

Governor Shaktikanta Das too stressed the importance of staying unwaveringly focussed on ensuring durable price stability.

**'Spillover risk'**

"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. Overlapping food price shocks... may also result in spillovers to core inflation," Mr. Das underlined.

However, external member Jayanth R. Varma, the sole voice of dissent on the six-member MPC, voted to cut the policy repo rate by 25 basis points, arguing that the real interest rate was currently excessively high and imposed costs on the economy's growth momentum.

**Wipro's Q4 net slides 8%, revenue declines by 4.2%**

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

Wipro on Friday reported a year-on-year decline in fourth-quarter net profit and revenue and termed FY24 "a challenging year for the industry."

India's fourth biggest tech-firm recorded a consolidated Q4 net profit of ₹2,835 crore, an 8% slide against ₹3,074 crore in the corresponding period last year. Revenue from operations slid by 4.2% YoY to ₹22,208 crore, from ₹23,190 crore in the same period a year ago.

Wipro's IT services revenue stood at \$2.65 billion, a rise of 0.1% QoQ and a slide of 6.4% YoY. During FY24, the company witnessed total bookings of \$14.9 billion of which large deals accounted for \$4.6 billion, a YoY increase of 17.4%.

Wipro's new CEO Srinu Pallia said, "FY24 proved to be a challenging year for the industry, and the macroeconomic environment remained uncertain. But I am optimistic about the opportunities that lie ahead."

Speaking to the media, Pallia said Wipro was on the cusp of a major technological shift as artificial intelligence was transforming clients' needs as they sought to harness its power for competitive advantage.

Aparna Iyer, Chief Financial Officer, said the company expanded margins by 40 basis points during the quarter resulting in



Srinu Pallia

earnings per share growth of 5.2% QoQ in Q4 and by 50 basis points for the full year FY24.

"Capco (Wipro's consulting arm) is seeing green shoots, growth is expected to bounce back as we see early signs of stability," Ms. Iyer said. Capco grew 6.6% sequentially. Ms. Iyer added "We expect the market to rebound in the second half of FY25."

**Growth guidance**

Wipro forecast IT services revenue to range between \$2.6 billion to \$2.67 billion in the current quarter signalling a sequential decline of 1.5% to a growth of 0.5% in constant currency terms.

Sanjeev Hota, Head of Research, Sharekhan by BNP Paribas said, "The quarterly numbers are a mixed bag. However, weaker than expected guidance continues to disappoint the market. The sudden change in leadership brings an additional element of uncertainty in the near term before potential turnaround in the medium to longer term."

**MARKETS**

**MARKET WATCH**

	FRIDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	73,088	0.83
US Dollar	83.44	0.09
Gold	74,000	-0.41
Brent oil	87.13	-0.01

**NIFTY 50**

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter	3026.95	-7.65
Adani Ports	1310.00	14.45
Apollo Hosp	6169.55	95.40
Asian Paints	2808.55	-0.85
Axis Bank	1029.10	-5.10
Bajaj Auto	8804.50	-216.80
Bajaj Finserv	1619.00	25.10
Bajaj Finance	7119.50	226.30
Bharti Airtel	1289.00	-23.25
BPCL	585.80	-3.80
Britannia Ind	4668.30	-26.70
Cipla	1345.75	-1.55
Coal India	435.30	-3.30
Divis Lab	3671.70	-37.20
Dr Reddy's Lab	5942.85	-14.30
Eicher Motors	4344.15	-7.05
Grasim Ind	2273.15	47.10
HCL Tech	1447.50	-19.35
HDFC Bank	1531.00	36.60
HDFC Life	601.55	-4.10
Hero MotoCorp	4213.70	-37.60
Hindalco	614.75	1.95
Hind Unilever	2231.60	16.80
ICI Bank	1067.25	11.80
Indusind Bank	1482.05	7.65
Infosys	1411.25	-8.00
ITC	424.75	5.90
JSW Steel	864.80	20.00
Kotak Bank	1792.65	5.90
L&T	3518.35	-32.60
LTIMindtree Ltd.	4660.55	-36.60
M&M	2082.90	57.95
Maruti Suzuki	12710.95	305.95
NTPC	2437.70	-24.85
NestleIndia	350.55	-6.60
ONGC	275.25	-1.10
PowerGrid Corp	281.65	1.15
Reliance Ind	2940.25	11.60
SBI Life	1447.55	-9.40
State Bank	750.45	-5.65
Shriram Finance Ltd.	2366.55	-4.90
Sun Pharma	1522.80	-6.40
TataConsumerProduct	1138.10	-3.55
Tata Motors	963.20	-8.15
Tata Steel	162.10	-2.05
TCS	3826.20	-35.80
Tech Mahindra	1193.65	-14.00
Titan	3563.05	37.95
UltraTech Cement	9363.95	-18.80
Wipro	452.75	-8.40

**EXCHANGE RATES**

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on April 19

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	83.27	83.59
Euro	88.73	89.07
British Pound	103.65	104.06
Japanese Yen (100)	53.88	54.09
Chinese Yuan	11.50	11.54
Swiss Franc	91.63	91.98
Singapore Dollar	61.14	61.38
Canadian Dollar	60.51	60.74
Malaysian Ringgit	17.40	17.49
Australian Dollar	53.43	53.65

Source: Indian Bank

**Happiest Minds to acquire Macmillan Group arm for ₹4.5 cr.**

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

Ashok Soota-promoted Happiest Minds Technologies has executed a share purchase agreement to acquire 100% equity interest in Macmillan Learning India, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Macmillan Group, USA, for cash consideration of ₹4.5 crore.

Happiest Minds Technologies will purchase 1,00,000 equity shares of face value of ₹1 each in Macmillan Learning India from its existing shareholders, according to a media statement.

The acquisition is expected to be completed by April 30 and on closure of

**During fiscal 2022-23, Macmillan Learning India posted a turnover of ₹6.9 crore**

the transaction, Macmillan Learning India will become a wholly owned subsidiary of Happiest Minds Technologies.

Software development Macmillan Learning India offers software development services to the Macmillan Group and has been working as an offshore development centre.

During fiscal 2022-23, the company posted a turnover of ₹6.9 crore.

**Life insurers' FY24 new premium growth lags**

**The Hindu Bureau**  
HYDERABAD

India's life insurance firms reported a rise in new business premiums by 2% YoY for FY24 to ₹3,77,960.34 crore, while growth slowed compared with FY23 when they clocked an almost 18% rise in premiums to ₹3,70,543 crore.

Market leader, Life Insurance Corporation of India's (LIC) new business premiums slid 4% in FY24 to ₹2,22,522.99 crore. But LIC reported a more than 26% rise in new business premium to ₹36,300.62 crore (₹28,716.23 crore) in March 2024.

Private firms combined did better with premiums rising 12% to ₹1,55,437.34 crore (₹1,38,643.85-crore) in FY24.



New business premium of life insurers rose 15.6% YoY to ₹60,213.62 crore in March 2024.

**12% decadal rise**

Releasing the annual industry business figures, the Life Insurance Council on April 18 said new business premium underwritten by Indian life insurers has been growing steadily, achieving a 12% CAGR between 2014 and 2023.

**Archer aims at starting electric air-taxi trials in India next year**

**Reuters**  
NEW DELHI

Archer Aviation, backed by Stellantis and Boeing, aims at starting trials of its electric air taxi in India next year, ahead of a planned commercial launch in 2026, its CEO told Reuters.

U.S.-based Archer last year partnered InterGlobe Enterprises, which backs India's top airline IndiGo, to launch the air taxis to help people avoid ground traffic in congested cities.

"Hopefully for next year, we will be able to bring planes here at the very least from a demonstration perspective and fly them around. The goal is to help prepare the public for



**Flight plan:** Archer is working with India's aviation watchdog to get regulatory approvals before it can begin trials. REUTERS

a new form of transportation," Adam Goldstein, who also founded Archer, said in New Delhi.

Archer is working with India's aviation watchdog to get the "appropriate regulatory approvals" before it can begin trials in the

country, its chief commercial officer Nikhil Goel said, adding it is already conducting trials in California.

Archer and InterGlobe will, in a joint venture, own and operate 200 of the 'Midnight' aircraft, valued at \$1 billion.

**E-bike start-up Raptree mulls \$19-million fundraise**

**N. Anand**  
CHENNAI

EV motorcycle start-up Raptree Energy is planning to raise \$19 million from new and existing investors to fund expansion plans, a top official said.

"Last time, we raised \$4.5 million and this will enable us to launch our maiden e-motorbike and thereafter, we need funds for production ramp-up, dealership expansion and roll out of e-bikes in other States," CEO and Co-Founder Dinesh Arjun said.

The start-up was talking to several private equity investors, he added.

**OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE**

**DEATH ANNIVERSARIES**

**15th ANNIVERSARY**



**K.A. CHANDRASEKARAN**  
Retd. Additional Secretary, Govt. of India.

*In Loving Memory*  
Wife : M. Chellammal  
Daughter : Kalavathi  
Son-in-law : Ganesh  
Granddaughter : Shriya

For enquiries on announcements in this section, please contact our office at the following number between 10a.m. to 8p.m.  
**New Delhi : 011-43579797**

**Rate for New Delhi :**  
(Minimum Rs. 335/- 2 Lines  
Extra Line - Rs. 170/-)  
(B/W Display): Rs. 65/Per Sq.cm  
(Clr Display): Rs. 75/Per Sq.cm

**For Placing Advertisements Online**  
log on to  
**www.thehinduads.com**

**WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY**

Material Management Department ('e-Tender Notice for the supply of Stores No. SR DMM/EP/52/2024)

Sr. DMM/WCR/ on behalf of the President of India invites the following advertised tenders through E-procurement system. No manual/postal offers shall be entertained. Tenders can be accessed under the link <https://ireps.gov.in> for details and for submission of Tender. **Sr. No.: 1, Tender No.:** 94235695, **Short Description:** Overhead 15 Ton EOT Crane, **Tendered Qty.:** 1 Nos., **Opening date:** 13.05.2024, **Sr. No.:** 2, **Tender No.:** 94235675, **Short Description:** Overhead 10 Ton EOT Crane, **Tendered Qty.:** 1 Nos., **Opening date:** 14.05.2024. **Sr. DMM WCR, Jabalpur**

**THE HINDU THE INFORMED VOTER QUIZ**

- In accordance with the Election Commission of India (ECI), what criteria must a political party meet to be recognized as a national party?
- Which two states will host the Lok Sabha elections on May 13, 2024?
- In which state's 2013 by-election was the VVPAT system used alongside the EVM for the first time?

Scan the code, take the pledge, participate in the quiz and win exciting gift vouchers

Answer to yesterday's quiz:  
1. Election Commission of India  
2. 25 Years  
3. 5 years

**JHARKHAND URJA SANCHARAN NIGAM LIMITED**  
(CIN: U40108JH2013SGC001704)  
(GOVERNMENT OF JHARKHAND UNDERTAKING)  
**OFFICE:**  
**General Manager, Contracts & Materials, Multi-Lateral Funding Projects,**  
JUSNL Building, Kusai Colony, Doranda, Ranchi - 834002 (Jharkhand)  
Email: piujusnl@gmail.com Visit us on: www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in

**E-Tender Extension Notice**  
Due to unavoidable circumstances, the following NTIs are hereby extended with the following details:-

NIT No.	Name of work (Request for Bid (RfB))	Last date of submission/ uploading bid by the bidder	Date of Opening of technical part of Bid
708/PR/JUSNL/2023-24	Design, Engineering, Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of 220/132 kV Grid Substations at Jadugoda and additional 132 kV Bays at Dhalbhumgarh GSS along with dismantling Works	13.05.2024 upto 16:00 Hrs	14.05.2024 at 16:30 Hrs
709/PR/JUSNL/2023-24	Design, Engineering, Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of 132 KV Double Circuit Transmission line from Jadugoda (New)-Dhalbhumgarh (63.4 km)	13.05.2024 upto 16:00 Hrs	14.05.2024 at 16:30 Hrs
710/PR/JUSNL/2023-24	Design, Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of 220 KV Double Circuit Transmission Lines (1)Transmission line from Chaibasa (PGCL) -Jadugoda (New) (47.7 km) (2)Transmission line from Chandil (New)-Jadugoda (New) (51.3 km)	13.05.2024 upto 16:00 Hrs	14.05.2024 at 16:30 Hrs

PR No. 323729  
स्वहित एवं राष्ट्र हित में कर्जा बचाव। कृपया अपनी शिकायतों को टेल फी नं० 1800 345 6570 पर दर्ज करावें।  
PR.NO.323914 Jharkhand Urja Sancharan Nigam Ltd(24-25):D

Sd/-  
General Manager  
C&M, MLFP, JUSNL, Ranchi



**TAGULANDANG**

**Remote Indonesia volcano erupts again after thousands evacuated**



Mount Ruang, a remote Indonesian volcano, sent ash spewing into the sky on Friday, after nearly half a dozen eruptions earlier this week forced thousands to evacuate when molten rocks rained down on their villages. The country's volcanology agency said the eruption sent a plume of smoke 400 metres above the peak. AFP

**HONIARA**

**Pro-China PM retains his seat in Solomon Islands election**



Solomon Islands Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare was set on Saturday to retain his seat in elections, local media reported, paving way for the pro-China leader to try to form a government. Mr. Sogavare is one of China's most loyal friends in South Pacific and has vowed to deepen ties with Beijing if he returns to power. AFP

**DAMASCUS**

**Attack blamed on IS militants kills 22 pro-govt. fighters in central Syria**



An attack on pro-government fighters by suspected members of the Islamic State group in central Syria killed 22 pro-government fighters, an opposition war monitor and pro-government media reported on Friday. Gunmen attacked a bus carrying members of the Quds Brigade near Sukhna town late on Thursday night. AP

**KARACHI**

**Five Japanese workers narrowly escape suicide bombing in Pak.**



A suicide bomber detonated his explosive-laden vest near a van carrying Japanese autoworkers, who narrowly escaped the attack on Friday that wounded three bystanders in Pakistan's Karachi. The police escorting the Japanese said it returned fire after coming under attack, killing an accomplice of the suicide bomber. AP

**Raisi makes no mention of explosions heard in Iran**

President says Tehran showed 'our will of steel' when it launched an attack on Israel; Army chief says Friday's explosions were caused by 'the firing of anti-aircraft systems on a suspicious object'

**Agence France-Presse**  
TEHRAN

Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi on Friday hailed Tehran's unprecedented retaliatory attack on Israel almost a week ago but did not mention explosions heard in his country's central region.



Clarifying position: In a post on X, Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi denied Iran had been attacked from abroad. AFP

World leaders called for de-escalation, after United States media quoted officials saying Israel had carried out retaliatory strikes on Iran, after the Islamic republic's missile and drone attack against Israel. That operation "showed our authority, our people's will of steel and our unity," Mr. Raisi told hundreds of people in Semnan province, east of Tehran.

In the speech, he made no reference to the blasts, and there has been no official reaction either from Iranian or Israeli officials. The blasts resounded early on Friday in the central province of Isfahan, state media said.

Iran's space agency spokesperson Hossein Dalirian, referring to a type of drone, said there was "a failed and humiliating attempt to fly quad-copters, which were shot down". In a post on X, he denied Iran had been at-

tacked from abroad. "There have been no air attacks against Isfahan or other parts of the country so far," he said. 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 that investigations were under way to assess the scale of the incident, according to *Tasnim* news agency. Iran carried out its first-ever attack directly targeting Israel last week. The attack was in response to an April 1 air strike which levelled Tehran's consular annex in Damascus.

**Africa's ballooning debt crisis needs a political fix, contend experts**

**Meera Srinivasan**  
ACCRA, GHANA

Ghana's women vendors and hawkers are hard to miss. Attired in bright colours and bold prints, they walk swiftly on capital Accra's streets, bearing baskets with various items on their heads, as infants wrapped in cloth carriers sit clasp their shoulders. As key contributors to the country's informal economy, the women make a fine balancing act look easy.



Senior Nigerian academic Adebayo Olukoshi delivering a lecture during the conference on 'African debt crisis'. X/@DEVECONNETWORK

Their labour, like scores of fellow Ghanians, is crucial not only for finding incomes for their families, but also for helping rebuild the country's fragile national economy. In December 2022, Ghana defaulted on most of its \$30 billion foreign debt, as its economy crashed. The government is currently grappling with creditors to restructure its debt.

They mulled a more active role for the UN in negotiating debt treatment - including crucial haircuts on the principal amount owed - through a comparable system monitored by a transparent, multilateral body. Senior Nigerian academic Adebayo Olukoshi contended that the relationship between creditors and debtor nations reproduces the dynamic of dominance and subordination in the post-colonial era.

Noted Malaysian economist Jomo Kwame Sundaram cited the U.S. Federal Reserve's decision to hike interest rates aggressively since 2022 as one of the chief reasons for the crisis facing the Global South.

"The current [debt] problem cannot be reduced to financial mismanagement. That analysis will only lead to a repetition of the crisis," he said. Zambia has opted for a comprehensive debt treatment plan with its official creditors under the G20 Common Framework. Zambia's approach is a test case, and the government is yet to firm up a debt relief plan even after protracted negotiations. The deal with private creditors, too, drags on. Although the Paris Club endorsed the G20 Common Framework, the initiative has not been very productive, according to José Antonio Ocampo, economist and former Minister of Finance and Public Credit, Colombia. "The push now is for an expanded role of multilateral banks and international cooperation on taxation," he pointed out. Until the architecture is reformed, indebted countries will invariably resort to more loans on similar terms and "structural adjustment programmes" that enable them. Two decades of structural adjustment programmes show they kill growth, rather than reducing countries' external debt stock, contended Senegalese development economist Ndong Samba Sylla. "The lack of monetary sovereignty is linked to the global system. The international financial architecture is telling our countries we won't give you good prices or cheap credit," he said. (The writer was invited by the International Development Economic Associates [IDEAs] network for the conference held in Ghana last month.)

**Hainan Free Trade Port construction has gained momentum, says China**

**Nikhil M. Babu**  
BEIJING

Amid ongoing tensions in the South China sea, Liu Xiaoming, Governor of Hainan province - the southern most and the only tropical island province of China in the South China Sea - said that the construction of the Hainan Free Trade Port (FTP) has taken shape and gained momentum, six years after Chinese President Xi Jinping's announcement of establishing the FTP. Hainan, a lush tropical island, is not very far from the Philippines and there has been tensions between both the countries over the disputed South China Sea.

**In the first phase, China aims to establish island as its most open economic region by 2025**

The FTP blueprint is ambitious and as per the plan, in the first phase, China aims to establish the about 35,000 sq km island as its most open economic region by 2025. The ultimate goal is to build a tropical Dubai in the middle of the South China Sea by 2035. "The construction of the Hainan FTP has taken shape and gained momentum, serving as both a booster and an accelerator for Hainan's high-quality

development," the Governor said while addressing a press conference last week. "Going forward, we will actively advance emerging marine industries such as deep-sea technology, marine intelligent equipment manufacturing, and deep-sea aquaculture. We have a greater goal of building a stronger Hainan with a thriving marine industry over the next decade," he added. The Governor said the government will also focus on the aerospace industry as Hainan is ideally suited for the development of the aerospace industry due to its geographical latitude. "The No. 1 launchpad of China's first commercial

spacecraft launch site was completed at the end of last year, and the construction of the No. 2 launchpad was finished at the end of March," he said. "With a focus on the rocket chain, we will also expand and promote the establishment of 'space plus' industrial projects, such as the satellite chain and the data chain, striving to develop the Wenchang International Aerospace City into a hub that integrates space launches, R&D, manufacturing, tourism, and international exchanges," he said. (The correspondent is in China at the invitation of the China Public Diplomacy Association.)

**UN warns of violence in Myanmar's Rakhine State**

**Agence France-Presse**  
GENEVA

Intense fighting in Myanmar's Rakhine State poses a grave threat to civilians, the United Nations warned on Friday, as it urged international pressure to prevent more "horrendous persecution" of ethnic Rohingya. UN human rights chief Volker Turk said clashes between the military and the Arakan Army, alongside tensions being fuelled between the Rohingya and ethnic Rakhine communities, meant there was a serious risk of a repeat of previous atrocities. "The alarm bells are ringing," Mr. Turk said.

**KSEB KERALA STATE ELECTRICITY BOARD LIMITED - E-Tender Notice**  
O/o the Chief Engineer, TransGrid, Shoranur, Palakkad  
BID No. CE/TransGrid/08/2023-24 dated 07.03.2024 PAC: Rs.80,56,01,417/-  
Last Date: 08.05.2024, 05:00pm  
BID No. CE/TransGrid/09/2023-24 dated 11.03.2024 PAC: Rs.115,18,29,940/-  
Last Date: 08.05.2024, 05:00pm  
TENDER EXTENSION NOTICE  
O/o the Deputy Chief Engineer, Electrical Circle, Shoranur, Palakkad  
E-tender ID: 2024\_KSEB\_670998\_1 PAC: Rs. 6,12,18,944/-  
Last Date: 02.05.2024, 03:00pm  
Visit [www.tenders.kerala.gov.in](http://www.tenders.kerala.gov.in) and [www.kseb.in](http://www.kseb.in)  
Ref : PR/MC/1E/487/E-tender/2024

**भारत सरकार / Government of India**  
**अंतरिक्ष विभाग / Department of Space**  
**भारतीय अंतरिक्ष अनुसंधान संगठन / Indian Space Research Organisation**  
**विक्रम साराभाई अंतरिक्ष केंद्र / VIKRAM SARABHAI SPACE CENTRE**  
**तिरुवनंतपुरम / Thiruvananthapuram-695 022**

विज्ञापन सं. वीएसएससी-330 दिनांक 20.04.2024  
ADVERTISEMENT NO. VSSC-330 DATED 20.04.2024  
निम्नलिखित पदों के लिए ऑन-लाइन आवेदन आमंत्रित करता है  
INVITES ONLINE APPLICATIONS FOR THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS

पद का नाम Name of Position	अनिवार्य योग्यताएं Essential Qualifications	रिक्तियों की सं. No. of vacancies
1. शोध वैज्ञानिक (3 वर्षों की अवधि के लिए पूर्णतया संबिदागत आधार पर) / Research Scientist (Purely on Contract Basis for a period of 3 years)	मोसमविज्ञान/वायुमंडलीय विज्ञान में एम.एससी को उपाधि / M.Sc. degree in Meteorology / Atmospheric Science.	2
2. परियोजना सहयोगी - I Project Associate-I	भौतिकी/वायुमंडलीय विज्ञान/मोसमविज्ञान में एम.एससी को उपाधि / M.Sc. degree in Physics / Atmospheric Science/Meteorology.	1

नोट: कुल न्यूनतम 65% अंकों (सभी सेमेस्टर्स का औसत) या 10 स्केल पर न्यूनतम 6.84 सीजीपीए/सीपीआइ ग्रेडिंग या समकक्ष के साथ एम.एससी।  
Note: M.Sc. with an aggregate minimum of 65% marks (average of all semesters) or CGPA/CPA grading of a minimum of 6.84 on a 10 scale or equivalent.

विराट विज्ञान वीएसएससी वेबसाइट <https://www.vssc.gov.in> पर दिया जाएगा। आवेदन केवल ऑन-लाइन प्राप्त किए जाएंगे। आवेदन पर्यटन करने के लिए वेबसाइट दिनांक 22.04.24 को 1000 बजे से दिनांक 06.05.24 को 1700 बजे तक खुला रहेगा  
Detailed advertisement will be hosted in VSSC website <http://www.vssc.gov.in>. Applications will be received on-line only. The website will be open for submission of application from 1000 hours on 22.04.24 to 1700 hours on 06.05.24.

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION MANAGEMENT (MANAGE)**  
(An Autonomous Organization under the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Government of India)  
Rajendranagar, Hyderabad - 500 030, Tel. : 040-24594509, Web: [www.manage.gov.in](http://www.manage.gov.in)

**WALK-IN-INTERVIEW**  
MANAGE - Centre for Innovation & Agripreneurship invites eligible candidates for Walk-in-Interview to the position of "Manager" under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana - Remunerative Approaches for Agriculture and Allied Sectors Rejuvenation (Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India) on contractual basis for one year and extended based on performance. For complete details please visit [www.manage.gov.in](http://www.manage.gov.in)  
Date of Walk-in-Interview at MANAGE : April 24, 2024.  
Sd/-  
Director (Agricultural Extension)

**TAMIL NADU CIVIL SUPPLIES CORPORATION**  
Head Office, 12, THAMBASAMY ROAD, KILPAUK, CHENNAI-600 010  
Ph.No. (044) 26426773 Email id : [tncscn@tnic.in](mailto:tncscn@tnic.in)  
CIN:U15137TN19725G0006157

**SHORT E-TENDER NOTICE** Date: 18.04.2024  
BS3/016714/2024  
Short e-tender No.BS3/016714/2024 -TNCSC/24-25  
Online short electronic tender for the "PURCHASE OF 200 LAKH NUMBERS OF FORTIFIED RBD PALM-OLEIN OIL OF 1 LITRE POUCHES (910 gms)"  
Complete short e-tender document can be viewed and downloaded from <https://ntenders.gov.in/nicgp/app>.  
The bidders have to participate online bidding only with Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) of Class-II or Class-III  
Last Date and Time for Online Submission: 30.04.2024 up to 7.00 P.M.  
DIPR/ 1713 /TENDER/2024 MANAGING DIRECTOR

**ARULMIGU MARIAMMAN TEMPLE, SAMAYAPURAM, TIRUCHIRAPPALLI DISTRICT - 621 112.**  
Phone : 0431-2670460, 9488275077 Email : [symmariamman@gmail.com](mailto:symmariamman@gmail.com)  
Temple Website : [www.samayapurammariamman.hrcs.in](http://www.samayapurammariamman.hrcs.in)

R.C.No. 2867 /1433 /C4 Dated: 18.04.2024  
License to Collect Tonsured hair & License to sell Prasadam for fasali 1434 Samayapuram, Arulmigu Mariamman Temple and its sub temples  
By E-Tender Advertisement

S.No.	Period & Name of the license	E-Deposit sum in Rupees
1.	License to Collect tonsured hair from 01.07.2024 to 30.06.2025	Rs. 50,00,000/- (Rupees Fifty Lakhs only)
2.	License to sell Prasadam from 01.07.2024 to 30.06.2025	Rs. 25,00,000/- (Rupees Twenty Five Lakhs only)

Those who want to participate in the e-tender for the above two items, to be conducted in <https://ntenders.gov.in/> bidders can register themselves.  
Uploading of Qualification documents by bidder Last Date: 22.05.2024 Time : 11.00 AM.  
E-Tender Date: 22.05.2024, Time: 03.00 PM.  
Conditions for this license uploaded in <https://samayapurammariamman.hrcs.in> and <https://ntenders.gov.in/>. For details or clarifications - contact tenders by dialing 044-2461505, 044-24908115, 044-24908029 and mail id: [support.tender@nic.in](mailto:support.tender@nic.in)  
Temple contact numbers: 9443771166, 9384135988 and 9942478299  
S.Kalyani, P.Pitchaimani, R.Suganthi Rajasekar, V.S.P.Engavann  
Joint Commissioner/ Executive officer, P.Pitchaimani, R.Suganthi Rajasekar, Chairman Board of Trustees  
DIPR/ 1711 /TENDER/2024 Sethu, Lakshmanan

**कार्यालय अतिरिक्त मुख्य अभियन्ता, जन स्वास्थ्य अभियांत्रिकी विभाग, परियोजना क्षेत्र, उदयपुर**  
ई-मेल: [acepuda@gmail.com](mailto:acepuda@gmail.com), [acepuda.phed@rajasthan.gov.in](mailto:acepuda.phed@rajasthan.gov.in)  
क्रमांक: अ.मु.अ./परि.उदय/अके./2024-25/207-25 दिनांक: 12.04.2024  
ई-निविदा सूचना संख्या 18 वर्ष 2023-24 में संशोधन क्रमांक 01 For NIT No. 18/2023-24.

NIT No.	Brief Description of works	Corrigendum Description
18/ 2023-24	Work of Drinking Water Supply Project for 212 Villages (77 villages of Sabla Block & 135 villages of Sagwara Block) including their 255 other habitations and 1 town Sagwara of District Dungarpur from Beneshwar Anicut under JJM With Operation and Maintenance for Ten (10) Years After Defect Liability Period of One (1) Year.	Corrigendum No. 01 for NIT 18/2023-24

UBN NO.: PHE2324WLOB15416 (DIPR RO No. 2951)  
उपरोक्त कार्य को ई-निविदा सूचना संख्या 18 वर्ष 2023-24 के क्रम में वर्णित शर्तों में अपरोक्ष कार्यों से निविदाओं में दिनांकों में संशोधन किया गया है। बिड से सम्बंधित समस्त जानकारी एवं विस्तृत संशोधन प्रोक्वैरेट पेटेंट <http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> व <http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in> पर देखी जा सकती है।  
अतिरिक्त मुख्य अभियन्ता जन स्वास्थ्य अभियांत्रिकी विभाग परियोजना क्षेत्र उदयपुर  
DIPR/C/3374/2024



# 'I felt like a rookie... I had to rebuild my strength and endurance from scratch'

After injuring her right thigh at last year's Asian Games, Olympic silver medallist Mirabai Chanu returned to competitive weightlifting recently. She talks about the challenges of her recovery process, what her return felt like, and how she is approaching the 2024 Paris Olympics



Each Olympic cycle brings its own set of challenges and opportunities. We have incorporated the lessons from past events in order to improve my technique and perform better in Paris

INTERVIEW

Mirabai Chanu

Y.B. Sarangi

In September 30, 2023, Tokyo Olympics silver medallist Mirabai Chanu suffered a right thigh injury on the competition platform in Hangzhou and left the arena grimacing in pain. Her dream of landing a medal in the Asian Games remained unfulfilled.

Injuries have troubled the 29-year-old in the last few years and the one in Hangzhou agonisingly kept her from lifting weights for several months with less than a year left for the Paris Olympics.

On April 1, Mirabai returned to register a total (184kg) to finish an overall 12th in the Phuket World Cup, the last Olympic qualifying event. The aggregate was way below her capability, but it delighted the champion lifter.

Since she has all but secured a quota spot in the Paris Olympics because of her second place in the rankings, Mirabai is now concentrating on increasing her strength and aggregate in order to corner the rare glory of winning two consecutive Olympic medals.

With North Korea's Ri Song Gum, the world record holder in the women's 49kg with 221kg, not eligible to compete in Paris because her country has not complied with the anti-doping regulations, China's Olympic champion Hou Zhihui leads the pack with her 217kg recorded in Phuket.

The challenge will be stiffer for Mirabai as other competitors – including Thailand's Surudchana Khambao, USA's Jourdan Elizabeth Delacruz and Romania's Mihaela-Valentina Cambai – are capable of aggregating around 200kg.

It's more of a tactical battle for Mirabai and her coach Vijay Sharma, who have to ensure that she adds around 20kg to her total in about 15 weeks



I believe if I lift more than 200kg then the medal is within my reach. [Coach] Vijay sir and I are confident that the medal is achievable if my training progresses as planned

without risking injury.

With some crucial weeks awaiting her, Mirabai shared her recent experience of returning to competition and her aim for Paris. Excerpts:

How tough was it to recover from the injury after the disappointing performance in the Asian Games?

It was one of the toughest phases of my career. Obviously there was a lot on my mind as it was the second Asian Games where I missed out on a medal. But then I kept thinking about preparing and looking for areas to improve. What helped me during this time was my constant communication with Vijay sir and my efforts to keep myself relaxed. My family also played an important role in my rehabilitation process. Thanks to their support, I now feel fit, strong and confident to perform better.

Can you describe the process of telling yourself to forget the past and look forward to the Paris Olympics?

The initial days were difficult, both mentally and physically. But Vijay sir made sure that I did not think about the Paris Olympics and kept me focused on the recovery process. My mother came to visit me. It felt good and kept me happy. All these helped me stay relaxed and recover fast. We are continuing our training without stretching ourselves.

When was the first time you lifted after the Asian Games? How big was the relief when you got a total in Phuket?

The wait was long. I started training only in the last week of January and I felt like a rookie when I started. It was a challenging period as I had to rebuild my strength and endurance from scratch. The World Cup in Phuket was my first competition in six months. I lifted 191kg in the Asian

Games before getting injured. Aggregating 184kg was a huge relief and a confidence booster.

Your lower back injury in 2018 was quite frustrating for you. Has the experience of recovering from it made you more positive now?

Injury is always frustrating no matter how many times you experience it. But yes, the past experience has definitely made me more resilient and positive. With the right medical care, rehabilitation and support system, it is possible to deal with injuries and come back stronger. Thankfully I have had great support from my coach, family and the federation, who have helped me stay positive and channel my energy well.

In the last few years, you have been troubled by different injuries. How do you still wear a smile and return to the punishing training schedule?

As an athlete, to miss your training for treatment is not an ideal situation. But one thing I have learned over the years is that one should never ignore one's injuries or try to compete while nursing them, or else the results will be far more detrimental.

As far as getting back to the training schedule is concerned, a lot of credit goes to the excellent support system I have... Finally, what keeps me going is the love of my fans and the responsibility to represent my country and make it proud.

Do you take care to prevent injuries while training these days or go as per the schedule without thinking too much?

Vijay sir and I are doing things slowly at the moment. We have a few months and I am still not on my full load. With each training session, fitness and strength-wise I am feeling better. I am trying to stay focused on my goal and not think much

about the injury. Instead, I am focusing on the positives. I trust Vijay sir's expertise and follow the training schedule while giving my 100 percent.

What kind of total can get you a medal in the Olympics and how do you plan to reach there? Is a 90kg snatch still a possibility?

There is tough competition in my weight category, but I believe if I lift more than 200kg then the medal is within my reach. I have lifted 203kg and 205kg before. Vijay sir and I are confident that the medal is achievable if my training progresses as planned. The key will be to build my strength steadily for the Olympics. Definitely, a 90kg snatch remains a possibility. It requires consistent effort and focused training.

Was your preparation for the Tokyo Olympics different to how it is now, before Paris?

Each Olympic cycle brings its own set of challenges and opportunities. How I trained for Rio 2016 was completely different from my preparation for Tokyo 2020. We have incorporated the lessons and experiences from past events in order to improve my technique and perform better in Paris. I am taking it one day at a time. The focus is on regaining my 100 percent lifting fitness and working on specific areas. As we get closer to Paris 2024, our training will get modified to suit our needs.

As an Olympic medallist, do you feel the pressure of expectations?

Obviously, there is pressure. But it is a good kind of pressure, which motivates me. The advantage is the experience of [winning] the medal. Expectation and stress come with it. I have learned to deal with it. All I need is the blessings of everyone to perform at my best on the given day.

STACKING UP



ATP Men's Top 15

#	Player	Age	Points	Events
1	Novak Djokovic	36	10,035	18
2	Jannik Sinner	22	8,750	20
3	Carlos Alcaraz	20	8,645	18
4	Daniil Medvedev	28	7,085	19
5	Alexander Zverev	26	5,425	26
6	Casper Ruud	25	4,025	24
7	Stefanos Tsitsipas	25	3,995	25
8	Andrey Rublev	26	3,935	24
9	Hubert Hurkacz	27	3,675	24
10	Grigor Dimitrov	32	3,640	23
11	Alex de Minaur	25	3,510	25
12	Holger Rune	20	3,395	23
13	Ugo Humbert	25	2,535	29
14	Ben Shelton	21	2,490	26
15	Taylor Fritz	26	2,450	25



English Premier League Standings

#	Team	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Man. City	32	22	7	3	76	32	44	73
2	Arsenal	32	22	5	5	75	26	49	71
3	Liverpool	32	21	8	3	72	31	41	71
4	Aston Villa	33	19	6	8	68	49	19	63
5	Tottenham	32	18	6	8	65	49	16	60
6	Newcastle	32	15	5	12	69	52	17	50
7	Man. United	32	15	5	12	47	48	-1	50
8	West Ham	33	13	9	11	52	58	-6	48
9	Chelsea	31	13	8	10	61	52	9	47
10	Brighton	32	11	11	10	52	50	2	44
11	Wolves	32	12	7	13	46	51	-5	43
12	Fulham	33	12	6	15	49	51	-2	42
13	Bournemouth	32	11	9	12	47	57	-10	42
14	Crystal Palace	32	8	9	15	37	54	-17	33
15	Brentford	33	8	8	17	47	58	-11	32
16	Everton*	32	9	8	15	32	48	-16	27
17	N. Forest*	33	7	9	17	42	58	-16	26
18	Luton Town	33	6	7	20	46	70	-24	25
19	Burnley	33	4	8	21	33	68	-35	20
20	Sheffield	32	3	7	22	30	84	-54	16

\* Everton deducted eight points and Forest deducted four points following breaches of the PL's Profitability and Sustainability Rules



Spanish LaLiga Standings

#	Team	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Real Madrid	31	24	6	1	67	20	47	78
2	Barcelona	31	21	7	3	62	34	28	70
3	Girona	31	20	5	6	63	39	24	65
4	Atletico Madrid	31	19	4	8	59	36	23	61
5	Athletic Bilbao	31	16	9	6	51	29	22	57
6	Real Sociedad	31	13	11	7	45	33	12	50
7	Valencia	31	13	8	10	34	32	2	47
8	Real Betis	31	11	12	8	38	37	1	45
9	Villarreal	31	10	9	12	49	54	-5	39
10	Getafe	31	9	12	10	37	43	-6	39
11	Osasuna	31	11	6	14	36	44	-8	39
12	Las Palmas	31	10	7	14	29	35	-6	37
13	Sevilla	31	8	10	13	39	44	-5	34
14	Alaves	31	8	8	15	26	38	-12	32
15	Real Mallorca	31	6	13	12	25	36	-11	31
16	Rayo Vallecano	31	6	13	12	25	38	-13	31
17	Celta Vigo	31	6	10	15	33	46	-13	28
18	Cadiz	31	4	13	14	21	41	-20	25
19	Granada	31	3	8	20	32	60	-28	17
20	Almeria	31	1	11	19	30	62	-32	14

Test Batting

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Kane Williamson	859	919
2	Joe Root	824	923
3	Babar Azam	768	882
4	Daryl Mitchell	768	804
5	Steve Smith	757	947
6	Rohit Sharma	751	813
7	Yashasvi Jaiswal	740	740
8	Dimuth Karunaratne	739	783
9	Virat Kohli	737	937
10	Harry Brook	735	773

Test Bowling

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	R. Ashwin	870	904
2	Josh Hazlewood	847	864
3	Jasprit Bumrah	847	881
4	Kagiso Rabada	834	902
5	Pat Cummins	820	914
6	Nathan Lyon	801	801
7	Ravindra Jadeja	788	899
8	James Anderson	739	903
9	Shaheen Afridi	733	836
10	Kyle Jamieson	729	836

ODI Batting

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Babar Azam	824	898
2	Shubman Gill	801	847
3	Virat Kohli	768	909
4	Harry Tector	746	767
5	Rohit Sharma	746	882
6	Daryl Mitchell	728	750
7	David Warner	723	869
8	Pathum Nissanka	711	728
9	Dawid Malan	707	730
10	Rassie van der Dussen	701	796

ODI Bowling

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Keshav Maharaj	716	741
2	Josh Hazlewood	688	727
3	Adam Zampa	686	695
4	Mohammed Siraj	678	736
5	Jasprit Bumrah	675	838
6	Mohammad Nabi	656	657
7	Shaheen Afridi	650	688
8	Kuldeep Yadav	645	760
9	Trent Boult	643	775
10	Bernard Scholtz	642	642

T20I Batting

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Suryakumar Yadav	861	910
2	Phillip Salt	802	802
3	Mohammad Rizwan	800	875
4	Babar Azam	764	896
5	Aiden Markram	755	796
6	Yashasvi Jaiswal	714	739
7	Rilee Rossouw	689	724
8	Finn Allen	686	723
9	Jos Buttler	680	687
10	Reeza Hendricks	660	674

T20I Bowling

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Adil Rashid	726	746
2	Wanindu Hasaranga	687	797
3	Akeal Hosein	664	683
4	Axar Patel	660	667
5	Maheesh Theekshana	659	684
6	Ravi Bishnoi	659	699
7	Josh Hazlewood	654	806
8	Tabraiz Shamsi	654	821
9	Mitchell Santner	645	724
10	Rashid Khan	645	816



Sumit Nagal Rank 80 ▲ 13 spots



Ramkumar Ramanathan Rank 358 ▼ 9 spots



Ankita Raina Rank 254 ▲ 1 spot



Sahaja Yamalappalli Rank 312 ▼ 1 spot



GETTY IMAGES

# Mykolas Alekna: the history-making son chasing an all-timer dad



Professional discus throwers are way stronger than I am. I don't focus on the weightroom that much because I think that discus technique is way more important than lifting

The 21-year-old Lithuanian broke a world record in the discus throw that had stood since 1986. But he isn't satisfied. After all, he has ambitions of emulating one of discus' greatest — his father Virgilijus, a two-time Olympic and two-time World champion

Associated Press  
Agence France-Presse

**W**hat do you inherit from a parent who has tasted athletic success? The genes, certainly, as well as the opportunity for early immersion in sport and the access to top-level knowhow.

But along with these gifts come curses, perhaps the most challenging of which are the expectations of being the child of an elite athlete. And when your father is a two-time Olympic and two-time World champion, both the gifts and curses are multiplied manifold.

### Awe and certainty

So when 21-year-old Mykolas Alekna broke a world record in the discus throw that had stood since 1986, the initial awe began to slowly share space with the feeling that this was hardly unexpected. After all, Mykolas' father, Virgilijus, is one of discus' all-time greats. He stood on the top step of an Olympic podium in Sydney (2000) and Athens (2004). Alekna senior also won gold at the World Championships in Paris (2003) and Helsinki (2005).



My father is my big idol. He's legendary. I want to be like him one day. Maybe even be better than him? We will see what happens

Mykolas Alekna's mammoth throw of 74.35 metres at the Oklahoma Throws Series competition last weekend shattered the longest standing world record in men's athletics. The previous mark of 74.08 metres was set by German athlete Jurgen Schult on June 6, 1986. Alekna's throw was originally measured at 74.41m but later revised. The record is subject to ratification.

Alekna's record throw was his fifth attempt at the low-key event in the US Midwest dedicated only to throwing field events and formed a part of a series of six 70m-plus throws by the Lithuanian. Competing on a weekend that was blessed with perfect throwing conditions, Alekna launched the discus and pointed at it as it flew through the air, knowing he had uncorked a special one.

In addition to breaking the world record, the throw bumped his father to third on the all-time list. Virgilijus Alekna recorded a best of 73.88m in 2000. "It's really hard to grasp yet," the new

world record holder told Lithuanian public media outlet LRT.lt. "It was a very good competition with all the conditions for a world record — strong winds, warm weather. I managed to make a technical throw. I'm still in a bit of shock, I'm very happy. Of course, the world record is not my goal — the Olympic gold is the goal for the season."

In an interview with Sports Illustrated, Alekna said he texted his father and the response was typical. "He just said good job. A man of few words, just like me."

### Early mastery

Currently a junior at the University of California, Alekna is already a two-time medallist at the World Championships.

He captured silver at the 2022 Worlds in Oregon and a bronze last summer in Budapest. He is also a European champion, winning gold at Munich in 2022, and a World Under-20 champion, claiming the prestigious junior title in Nairobi in 2021.

Discus athletes tend to peak later — for Alekna to be so suc-



## GAME THEORY

### Top shot-stoppers in Ligue 1

We conclude our look at goalkeepers across Europe's top five leagues with the shot-stoppers of Ligue 1. How often have goalkeepers in France's first division made saves and kept clean sheets so far this season? Here is the answer:



Goalkeeper	Club	Games	Saves	Saves per game	Clean sheets	Clean sheet %
Marcin Bulka	Nice	28	58	2.07	15	53.6
Lucas Chevalier	Lille	28	76	2.71	14	50.0
Brice Samba	Lens	29	86	2.97	12	41.4
Marco Bizot	Brest	27	86	3.19	11	40.7
Gianluigi Donnarumma	PSG	23	79	3.43	10	43.5
Benjamin Lecomte	Montpellier	28	95	3.39	10	35.7
Anthony Lopes	Lyon	26	90	3.46	8	30.8
Arthur Desmas	Le Havre	28	98	3.50	7	25.0
Yehvann Diouf	Reims	29	75	2.59	7	24.1
Pau Lopez	Marseille	27	70	2.59	7	25.9
Alban Lafont	Nantes	23	68	2.96	6	26.1
Steve Mandanda	Rennes	29	93	3.21	6	20.7
Guillaume Restes	Toulouse	29	82	2.83	6	20.7
Mory Diaw	Clermont Foot	25	119	4.76	5	20.0
Philipp Kohn	Monaco	22	65	2.95	5	22.7
Alexandre Oukidja	Metz	29	111	3.83	5	17.2
Yvon Mvogo	Lorient	28	120	4.29	3	10.7
Matz Sels	Strasbourg	19	40	2.11	3	15.8
Alaa Bellaouch	Strasbourg	10	27	2.70	2	20.0

## PICTURE THIS



### Grow and glow

This photograph, from the recent Melbourne Bodybuilding Championships, depicts what the sport is about: aesthetics not strength.

This specificity distinguishes bodybuilding from disciplines such as powerlifting, which also

involve weight-training.

In professional meets, competitors appear individually and in line-ups to perform specified poses. A panel of judges ranks them on symmetry, muscularity and stage presentation, among other considerations.

Bodybuilding is thought to

have developed in the late 19th century. German Eugen Sandow, known as the 'Father of Modern Bodybuilding', judged the first reported bodybuilding event in London in 1901. Another judge was writer Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the creator of Sherlock Holmes. Bodybuilding is incredibly hard work. The gains

also taper off over time, which means bodybuilders often have to work even harder the longer they are in the profession.

Professional bodybuilding in recent times, however, has been mired in controversy concerning the use of anabolic steroids and other performance-enhancing drugs.



**ON THE GO**

**Dhoni smashes two sixes and three fours in nine-ball cameo**



SANDEEP SAXENA

M.S. Dhoni lit up the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Stadium with yet another cameo, this time for CSK against LSG. He hit Mohsin Khan for a four and a six in the 19th over before smashing a six and two fours in the final over bowled by Yash Thakur. Dhoni's unbeaten nine-ball 28, with three fours and two sixes, came at a strike-rate of 311.11.

**INCREDIBLE**

**Hardik in awe of Ashutosh's 'unbelievable' knock**



R.V. MOORTHY

Punjab Kings' Ashutosh Sharma's knock drew praise from Mumbai Indians skipper Hardik Pandya. "Unbelievable, playing the way he did and hitting the ball off the middle. (It is) great for his future... we did speak in the timeout about it, not about how we look, we will keep fighting," Hardik said after MI's victory.

**CURIOS**

**Taking Bumrah out of the attack helped PBKS claw back: Moody**



R.V. MOORTHY

Former Australia all-rounder Tom Moody feels MI did not use Jasprit Bumrah optimally, allowing PBKS to fight back from a difficult position and nearly win it. "Bumrah bowled two overs early on and put Punjab Kings on the back foot. But, interestingly, he didn't bowl another over until the 13th," said Moody.

**LAKE REJUVENATION**

**Laudable gesture by RCB to resolve the Bengaluru water crisis**



SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

RCB has contributed its bit to resolve the water crisis that has gripped Bengaluru for the last couple of months, rejuvenating three lakes as part of the IPL franchise's Go Green Initiative. RCB has completed the restoration work of Ittgalpura Lake and Sadenahalli Lake, while adding civic amenities to the Kannur Lake.

**Rahul, de Kock make it a walk in the park for LSG**

The openers hit half-centuries and put on 134 to seal the contest in Lucknow's favour; Jadeja and Dhoni resurrect the Super Kings innings after the top-order is rattled by regular strikes

**IPL-17**

**P.K. Ajith Kumar**  
LUCKNOW

It was one of those perfect games for a local fan. You get to see your hero from the rival side create some magic, but your team wins the contest.

M.S. Dhoni played a stunning cameo (28 not out, 9b, 3x4, 2x6), justifying the rousing reception he received from his followers at the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Stadium on Friday night, and helped Chennai Super Kings post 176 for six. But that total was chased down with ease by Lucknow Super Giants, with eight wickets and an over to spare.

That chase was led fittingly by the captain. K.L. Rahul was magnificent, making (82, 53b, 9x4, 3x6). Giving him company was his opening partner Quinton de Kock (54, 43b, 5x4, 1x6). They complemented each other well, and ensured the innings progressed at just the right pace.

**Less potent**  
They put on 134, virtually batting CSK out of the match. The PowerPlay produced 54. CSK's formidable attack was made to look less potent by two talented, attractive batters.



**Classy:** Rahul and de Kock laced their innings with some delightful strokes as Super Giants chased down the target with ease. SANDEEP SAXENA

Rahul, in particular, was very pleasing to the eye, like when he conjured up a gorgeous six off the back foot over point off Deepak Chahar, the pacer who was returning after a fortnight, from a niggles. CSK had to wait until the

last ball of the 15th over for a breakthrough, which was provided by Mustafizur Rahman, as de Kock tried a ramp shot and was caught behind.

When Rahul's innings was finally ended by an incredible one-handed diving

catch by Ravindra Jadeja at point off Matheesha Pathirana, the host required just 16 from 17 balls. Earlier, Jadeja had done his bit with the bat, too. Promoted to No. 4, after CSK lost Rachin Ravindra and skipper Rituraj Gaik-

wad inside five overs, he scored an unbeaten 57 (40b, 5x4, 1x6).

Some fine bowling, especially by Mohsin Khan and Krunal Pandya, had CSK struggling. When Impact Player Sameer Rizvi, who came in for Ajinkya

Rahane (36, 24b, 5x4, 1x6), was stumped by Rahul off Krunal, CSK slid to 90 for five in 12.2 overs.

The fireworks from Moeen Ali (30, 20b, 3x6) and Dhoni helped, but the total proved not competitive enough.

**SCOREBOARD**

**CHENNAI SUPER KINGS**

Ajinkya Rahane b Krunal 36 (24b, 5x4, 1x6), Rachin Ravindra b Mohsin 0 (1b), Rituraj Gaikwad c Rahul b Yash Thakur 17 (13b, 1x4), Ravindra Jadeja (not out) 57 (40b, 5x4, 1x6), Shivam Dube c Rahul b Stoinis 3 (8b), Sameer Rizvi (Impact Player in place of Rahane) st. Rahul b Krunal 1 (5b), Moeen Ali c Badoni b Bishnoi 30 (20b, 3x6), M.S. Dhoni (not out) 28 (9b, 3x4, 2x6); Extras (lb-1, w-3): 4; Total (for six wkts. in 20 overs): 176.

**FALL OF WICKETS**

1-4 (Ravindra, 1.1 overs), 2-33 (Rituraj, 4.2), 3-68 (Rahane, 8.1), 4-87 (Dube, 11.1), 5-90 (Rizvi, 12.2), 6-141 (Moeen, 17.5).

**SUPER GIANTS BOWLING**

Henry 3-0-26-0, Mohsin 4-0-37-1, Yash Thakur 4-0-45-1, Krunal 3-0-16-2, Bishnoi 4-0-44-1, Stoinis 2-0-7-1.

**LUCKNOW SUPER GIANTS**

Quinton de Kock c Dhoni b Mustafizur 54 (43b, 5x4, 1x6), K.L. Rahul c Jadeja b Pathirana 82

(53b, 9x4, 3x6), Nicholas Pooran (not out) 23 (12b, 3x4, 1x6), Marcus Stoinis (not out) 8 (7b, 1x4); Extras (lb-3, nb-1, w-9): 13; Total (for two wkts. in 19 overs): 180.

**FALL OF WICKETS**

1-134 (de Kock, 14.6), 2-161 (Rahul, 17.1).

**SUPER KINGS BOWLING**

Deepak Chahar 3-0-26-0, Deshpande 4-0-42-0, Mustafizur 4-0-43-1, Jadeja 3-0-32-0, Pathirana 4-0-29-1, Moeen 1-0-5-0.

**Toss:** Super Giants.

**PoM:** Rahul.

Lucknow Super Giants won by eight wickets with one over to spare.

**Next assignment**

**April 23:** CSK vs LSG  
Chennai, 7.30 p.m.

**Points table**

	M	W	L	PTS	NRR
Rajasthan Royals	7	6	1	12	0.677
Kolkata Knight Riders	6	4	2	8	1.399
Chennai Super Kings	7	4	3	8	0.529
Sunrisers Hyderabad	6	4	2	8	0.502
Lucknow Super Giants	7	4	3	8	0.123
Delhi Capitals	7	3	4	6	-0.074
Mumbai Indians	7	3	4	6	-0.133
Gujarat Titans	7	3	4	6	-1.303
Punjab Kings	7	2	5	4	-0.251
Royal Challengers	7	1	6	2	-1.185

After the LSG-CSK match on April 19

**Let spectators decide fate of Impact Player: DC coach Ponting**



**Entertainment package:** Ponting, right, feels that T20s are meant for the fans. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

**Amol Karhadkar**  
NEW DELHI

Agreeing with India captain Rohit Sharma's assessment of the Impact Player being detrimental to all-rounders in the IPL, Australia's World Cup-winning captain Ricky Ponting stressed that the onus was on the spectator feedback to decide the fate of the rule.

"For a coach and for the players, it's probably not ideal, but a lot of what this game tries to do is it tries to entertain people. The T20 game is an entertainment package and it's probably better asking the spectator what they think about the impact player," Ponting, the Delhi Capitals head

coach, said on Friday ahead of the IPL tie against Sunrisers Hyderabad.

Since IPL 2023, the introduction of an Impact Player at any stage of the game has effectively made it a 12-players-a-team game, with eight batters and five bowlers being played in virtually every game. It has also resulted in average team total going up considerably.

"If everyone is loving the fact that teams are making 220 up to 250 in a lot of the games, and the spectators like seeing it, then it should stay. But if the spectators aren't liking it as much, then there's no reason why I couldn't go back to just 11 versus 11," Ponting said.

**Capitals will hope for a special day at home against on-song Sunrisers**

**Amol Karhadkar**  
NEW DELHI

It is done with half of its league-stage commitments in the Indian Premier League. It is sandwiched in the mid-table muddle. It may have played two of its home games at its adopted base. On Saturday, Delhi Capitals will play its first game at its real home: the Arun Jaitley Stadium.

**Concerns**

While the Capitals head coach Ricky Ponting will be concerned about finding solutions against Sunrisers Hyderabad starring fellow Australians Pat Cummins and Travis Head, Ponting would have had more reason to smile after watching David Warner in full flow during the Capitals' training at the Arun Jaitley Stadium.

A swollen left-hand knuckle forced Warner to miss the Capitals' previous outing in Ahmedabad. The veteran opener tonked throwdown specialists flawlessly to shed all the doubts over his availability for Saturday's fixture.

While Warner will bolster the Capitals' batting



**Job on hand:** Pant will hope Capitals' inconsistent bowling unit contains Sunrisers. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

unit, captain Rishabh Pant will hope that its inconsistent bowling unit contains an on-song Sunrisers Hyderabad batting group.

**Red hot**

The likes of Head, Abhishek Sharma at the top and Heinrich Klaasen in the latter half have been in such a marauding mood that they have erased the highest total in IPL history twice so far.

Just like Pant, the SRH

captain Cummins will also hope to find some support from a pace pack that's yet to deliver. Neither Bhuvneshwar Kumar nor T. Natarajan have been close to their best so far and they will be hoping to come good.

Should neither bowling attack get its act together, the batting groups will make merry on a small ground and another run-feast could well be in offing.

Today's match

DELHI CAPITALS vs. SUNRISERS HYDERABAD

Delhi, 7.30 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD PLAYED: 23

DC 11 | SRH 12

PREVIOUS MEETING SRH won by nine runs, 2023

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD) & JIO CINEMA

**Bangar sir told me I am not a slogger, says Ashutosh**

**Dhruva Prasad**  
MULLANPUR

Ashutosh Sharma may have taken the cricketing world by storm with his pyrotechnics and consistent run of high-impact knocks in the Indian Premier League. However, it was Punjab Kings Head of Cricket Development Sanjay Bangar's belief that he was much more than a "slogger" that struck a chord with the 25-year-old.

"Bangar sir told me I am not a slogger. You play cricketing shots and focus on that. That small statement meant a lot to me. I am following that. I am not a hard-hitter, I can play proper cricketing shots," Ashutosh said after his 28-ball 61 against Mumbai Indians that put PBKS on the brink of a scarcely believable win here on Thursday. Ashutosh joined his hands and bowed in the direction of the team dugout after scoring his maiden IPL fifty and said the celebration was dedicated to Bangar and the team management, which had shown faith in him.



**Pop talk:** Ashutosh said Bangar's words instilled belief in him. R.V. MOORTHY

"That celebration was for Bangar sir. I have been working with him extensively. He gave me a chance. It was also for the whole Punjab team because they believed in me. Our head coach Trevor Bayliss, Ashish [Tuli] paaji (General Manager) and Shikhar [Dhawan] paaji - they all believed in me."



## INBRIEF



## Flintoff's son scores fifty for Lancashire second XI

Rocky Flintoff, the 16-year-old son of England cricket icon Andrew Flintoff, scored a half-century during his team, Lancashire's second XI Championship game against Durham. Rocky scored 50 in 78 balls, with two fours and three sixes.

## Akanksha exits in World C'ship Asian qualifiers

Indian squash player Akanksha Salunkhe bowed out in the women's singles quarterfinals of the World Championship Asian Qualifying event in Kuala Lumpur on Friday. Salunkhe, 2023 National Games champion, lost to lower-ranked Selvehettraa Kumar of Malaysia 11-6, 11-5, 11-8. World No. 71 Salunkhe, seeded second here, lost in just 34 minutes.

## LIVE TELECAST

**Formula One:** Chinese GP (Qualifying), F1 TV, F1 TV Pro App & FanCode, 12.30 p.m.  
**LaLiga:** Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema, 5.30, 7.45, 10 p.m. & 12.30 a.m. (Sunday)  
**Premier League:** SS Select 1, 2 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 7.30 p.m. & 12 a.m. (Sunday)  
**Bundesliga:** Sony Sports Ten 2 (SD & HD) & LIV, 7 & 10 p.m.  
**IPL:** Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema, 7.30 p.m.  
**Pakistan vs New Zealand:** 2nd T20I, FanCode, 8 p.m.  
**Serie A:** Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema, 9.30 p.m. & 12.15 a.m. (Sunday)

## Gukesh shares the lead with Nepo and Nakamura

The Indian gets the better of Abasov in 57 moves; Pragganandhaa holds the Russian, while the American puts it past Firouzja; Vaishali registers her third straight victory

## CHESS

## Sports Bureau

**D**. Gukesh scored a much-needed win against Azerbaijan's Nijat Abasov in the 12th round of the Candidates chess tournament at Toronto on Thursday. The win helped him move into the joint lead with just two rounds remaining.

He is sharing the lead with Russia's Ian Nepomniachtchi, the winner of the last two editions of the tournament, and the second-seeded American Hikaru Nakamura. They have 7.5 points each.

## Third win

Like Gukesh, Nakamura also recorded a crucial victory against Alireza Firouzja of France. This was, in fact, his third win in as many games.

Nepomniachtchi, the sole overnight leader, was held to a draw by R. Pragganandhaa. Top seed Fabiano Caruana is also in the race for the title after his win against Vidit Gujrathi. The American has seven points, just half-a-point behind the three leaders.

In the women's event, China's Tan Zhongyi main-



**Winning strategy:** Gukesh employed Nimzo-Indian Defence against Abasov and won on account of a passed pawn. FIDE

tained her sole lead position, after drawing with Bulgaria's Nurgul Salimova. She has eight points.

Her compatriot Lei Tingjie, who drew with Russian Kateryna Lagno, is second with 7.5 points. Three players – Koneru Humpy, Aleksandra Goryachkina and Lagno – are on six points.

The day also saw R. Vaishali beating Ukraine's Anna Muzychuk. It was the third successive win for Pragganandhaa's elder sister, after going through a

terrible run in the tournament's first half.

Gukesh employed Nimzo-Indian Defence against Abasov and won in 57 moves, on account of a passed pawn.

## Good play

"I thought it was a pretty good game," he said after posting what was his second win in the tournament against Abasov.

"I felt like I was outplaying him but he still had some drawing chances in the end-game."

The tournament resumes on Saturday after a day's rest.

## The results (12th round):

**Open:** Ian Nepomniachtchi (FIDE) 7.5 drew R. Pragganandhaa 6; Nijat Abasov (Aze) 3 lost to D. Gukesh 7.5; Hikaru Nakamura (USA) 7.5 bt Alireza Firouzja (Fra) 4.5; Fabiano Caruana (USA) 7 bt Vidit Gujrathi 5.

**Women:** Nurgul Salimova (Bul) 4.5 drew Tan Zhongyi (Chn) 8; Kateryna Lagno (FIDE) 6 drew Lei Tingjie (Chn) 7.5; Aleksandra Goryachkina (FIDE) 6 drew Koneru Humpy 6; Anna Muzychuk (Ukr) 4.5 lost to R. Vaishali 5.5.

## A dramatic comeback sees Odisha knock out Kerala Blasters

## ISL

## Sports Bureau

Odisha FC knocked out Kerala Blasters FC with a 2-1 victory, after extra time, in an Indian Super League play-off match at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar on Friday.

After Fedor Cernych drew the first blood in the 67th minute, substitute Diego Mauricio levelled things up for the Juggernauts in the 87th. In the end, it was Isak Vanlalruatfela's strike in the extra time that sealed the deal for the home side.

Odisha also had a goal disallowed in the first half. The linesman's flag had stayed down after Mourta-da Fall, who was in an off-side position, netted in the 27th minute. Amidst heavy protest from the KBFC players, the referee – after having a chat with the linesman – ruled the goal out. OFC will play League Shield winner Mohun Bagan Super Giant in the semifinals.

**The result:** Odisha FC 2 (Mauricio 87, Isak Vanlalruatfela 98) bt Kerala Blasters FC 1 (Cernych 67).

**Today's match:** FC Goa vs Chennaiyin FC.



**The creator:** It was Roy Krishna's perfectly weighed pass that led to Isak's goal. BISWARANJAN ROUTH

## Leverkusen's run continues; Atalanta baulks Liverpool

## EUROPA LEAGUE

## Associated Press

PARIS

Liverpool failed to overcome a three-goal deficit and was eliminated from the Europa League on Thursday despite beating Atalanta 1-0 in the second leg of their quarterfinal matchup.

The result officially ended Liverpool's hopes of a treble of trophies in manager Jurgen Klopp's final season at Anfield, though the feat had looked unlikely after the Italian team won 3-0 in the first leg.

But days after celebrating its first-ever Bundesliga title, Bayer Leverkusen remained on course to claim a historic treble by holding West Ham to a 1-1 draw at London Stadium to stretch its unbeaten streak to 44. Xabi Alonso's team advanced 3-1 on aggregate.

In the semifinals, Leverkusen will face Roma after the capital club beat AC Milan 2-1 in an all-Italian quarterfinal to advance 3-1 on aggregate.

Michail Antonio put West Ham ahead early, heading in a cross from Vladimir Coufal. Jeremie Frimpong came off the bench and equalised in the

89th minute to clinch the aggregate victory and extend the team's unbeaten run.

**The results (quarterfinals, second legs):** Atalanta 0 lost to Liverpool 1 (Salah 7-pen) (Atalanta wins 3-1 on aggregate); Marseille 1 (Moumbagna 79) bt Benfica 0 (after extra-time 2-2 on aggregate); Marseille wins 4-2 on penalties; Roma 2 (Mancini 12, Dybala 22) bt AC Milan 1 (Gabbia 85) (Roma wins 3-1 on aggregate); West Ham 1 (Antonio 13) drew with Bayer Leverkusen 1 (Frimpong 89) (Leverkusen wins 3-1 on aggregate).

**Semifinal line-up:** Marseille v Atalanta; Roma v Bayer Leverkusen (First leg: May 2, second leg: May 9).

The Chinese Grand Prix could deliver some much-needed drama to Formula One, meaning Red Bull's Max Verstappen can't be pencilled in as the almost-certain winner on Sunday.

The three-time world champion has won 22 of the last 26 GPs and three of the first four this season. Only brake failure in Australia kept him from possibly sweeping the first four races.

Friday's practice kicked up some unusual names at the top.

Lance Stroll of Aston Martin had the quickest time (1 minute, 36.302 seconds), followed by Oscar Piastri of McLaren. Verstappen and teammate Sergio Perez were three and four followed by two Haas drivers – Nico Hulkenberg and Kevin Magnussen.

## Disappointing day for Indian grapplers

## Sports Bureau

Indian freestyle wrestlers failed to get a single quota place in the Asian Olympic Games qualifier in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, on Friday.

Aman Sehrawat (57kg), last year's Asian champion, was the only Indian to get closer to a quota place. Aman beat Kazakhstan's Yerassyl Mukhtaruly 10-0 and South Korea's Sunggwon Kim 11-1 to reach the semifinals.

However, the Indian was outsmarted by Uzbekistan's Gulomjon Abdullaev in the last four bout.

Jaideep (74kg) lost to home favourite Orozobek Toktomambetov 2-2 on criteria in the quarterfinals. Deepak Nehra (97kg) was ousted 10-0 by Japan's Arash Yoshida. Sumit (125kg) was beaten 10-0 by Mongolia's Lkhagvagere Munkhtur.

Sujeet Kalkal (65kg) and Olympian Deepak Punia (86kg), who were stranded in Dubai due to flooding, could not reach Bishkek in time for the weigh-in owing to flight delay.

## SNAPSHOTS

## Esha has a strong start in sports pistol

Esha Singh was in fine form as she topped qualification in women's 25-metre sports pistol (585) in the first Olympic selection trials at the Dr. Karni Singh Range, Tughlakabad, on Friday.

The 19-year-old, who had won four medals in the last Asian Games in Hangzhou, shot 291 in the precision stage and 294 in the rapid-fire section. Simranpreet Kaur Brar shot 295 in the rapid-fire section to be second with a total of 583, ahead of Manu Bhaker, Abhidnya Patil and Rhythm Sangwan.

The final for the event will be held on Saturday, along with the final of the men's rapid-fire pistol. Bhavesh Shekhawat led with 580 in rapid fire pistol, ahead of Olympic quota winners Vijayveer Sidhu (579) and Anish Bhanwala (578).

The rifle and pistol shooters will have a series of four Olympic trials, and the best three scores would be considered for their selection, along with

points for Olympic quota and placings in the finals.

**The results (qualification): 25m rapid fire pistol: Men:** 1. Bhavesh Shekhawat 580; 2. Vijayveer Sidhu 579; 3. Anish Bhanwala 578; 4. Adarsh Singh 572; 5. Ankur Goel 564.

**25m sports pistol: Women:** 1. Esha Singh 585; 2. Simranpreet Kaur Brar 583; 3. Manu Bhaker 582; 4. Abhidnya Patil 577; 5. Rhythm Sangwan 574.

**Yuki-Olivetti duo moves into the Munich final**  
Yuki Bhabhambri and Albano Olivetti of France beat Alexander Erler and Lucas Miedler of Austria 6-1, 6-7(5), [10-7] in the doubles semifinals of the €651,865 tennis tournament in Munich on Friday.

**Other results: €651,865 ATP, Munich: Doubles (quarterfinals):** Yuki & Albano bt Robert Galloway & Evan King (USA) 6-3, 6-3.

**\$164,000 Challenger, Acapulco, Mexico: Doubles (quarterfinals):** Anirudh Chandrasekar & Hans Verdugo (Mex) bt Rinky Hijikata (Aus) & Mac Kiger (USA) 3-6, 6-4, [10-7]; Rithvik Bollipalli & Niki Poonacha bt Piotr Matuszewski (Pol) & Matthew Romios (Aus) 6-4, 6-1.

**\$15,000 ITF men, Shymkent, Kazakhstan: Singles (quarterfinals):** Karan Singh bt Eric Vanshelboim (Ukr) 6-3, 6-4;

Evgenii Tiurnev bt Dev Javia 6-3, 4-6, 6-3.

**\$40,000 ITF women, Shenzhen: Doubles (semifinals):** Arienne Hartono (Ned) & Prarthana Thombare bt Chia Yi Tsao (Tpe) & Zheng Wushuang (Chn) 7-5, 4-6, [10-5]; **Quarterfinals:** Arienne & Prarthana bt Rutuja Bhosale & Ma YeXin 6-3, 6-3.

**\$25,000 ITF women, Hammamet, Tunisia: Doubles (quarterfinals):** Julie Struplova (Cze) & Ksenia Zaytseva bt Vaishnavi Adkar & Ranim Rassil 6-2, 6-7(6), [10-6].

## Ahuja and Aneja win it for Paragon

Jai Ahuja's 121 not out and Harshit Aneja's 79 runs beat Paragon Club beat Ajmal Khan Club by 113 runs in the DDCA League. In another game, Lakshay Sehrawat picked up four wickets and scored a crucial 70 runs as Lala Ram Charan Aggarwal Club beat Bright Club by three wickets.

**The scores:** Paragon Club 335/4 in 40 overs (Jai Ahuja 121 n.o., Harshit Aneja 79) bt Ajmal Khan Club 222 in 35 overs (Aman Tyagi 48, Yashveer Nagar 3/44). Bright Club 316/5 in 40 overs (Ronit Berry 75, Lakshay Sehrawat 70, Vansh Mehra 46, Dhruv Malhotra 3/35) lost to Lala Ram Charan Aggarwal Club 317/7

in 40 overs (Karan Bidhuri 123, Gulzar Singh 93, Pratap Basista 59, Lakshay Sehrawat 4/83). PMG 258/5 in 40 overs (Shivank Vashist 104) lost to LB Shastri Club 259/2 in 27 overs (Tejasvi 143 n.o., Dipesh Balyan 76). Citizen Club 182 in 38 overs (Viren Vaahi 71 n.o., Aayush Chauhan 4/16) lost to SB Youth Club 185/4 in 26 overs (Siddhant Joon 44, Madhav Gupta 36).

Malik Sports 256/9 in 40 overs (Rahul 135 Goraan 61, Madhur Yadav 4/53) bt Roop Nagar Club 227 in 39 overs (Kabir Singh 84, Vipul Maurya 3/22). Sporting Club 253/7 in 35 overs (Kunal Sangwan 118, Gaurav Sharma 3/65) lost to Indian Air Force 254/2 in 26 overs (Vikas 114 n.o., Gaurav Cochar 67).

## Shaurya scores 151

Player-of-the-Match Shaurya Seth scored 151 runs as Telefunken Club beat Ace Cricket Academy by 87 runs in the 1st Summer Cup Under-17 tournament.

**The scores:** Telefunken Club 282 in 39.3 overs (Shaurya Seth 151, Gurjas Singh 4/46, Kabeer Juneja 4/54) bt ACA 195 in 35.1 overs (Reyansh Malhotra 53, Suryaveer Maggo 51, Abhishek Prajapati 4/20).

DAV 142/5 in 30 overs (Shourya 50, Saad 3/27) lost to GRMA 144/3 in 15.3 overs (Shubham Shokeen 70 n.o.).

## Preparing for third Olympics at 34, Ashwini in no mood to slow down

## BADMINTON

## Uthra Ganesan

NEW DELHI

Ashwini Ponnappa has been around for a long while now but the 34-year-old has no plans of slowing down. Preparing for her third Olympics in a sport as demanding as badminton can be gruelling. To do so in doubles, with a partner almost 15 years younger, is unheard of. Ashwini isn't bothered.

"There is no Olympic medal yet, it's a dream to be there and I am grateful that I have an opportunity to give it a shot at this point of my career. (But) there are quite a few (empty) slots that can be filled (in the medal cabinet)," she said in an interaction with *The Hindu* on Friday.

Ashwini missed the Tokyo Olympics but with Tanisha Crasto, is the highest-ranked Indian women's doubles pair in the world and on top of the race to the World Tour Finals.

Having burst into the limelight after winning a historic gold at the 2010 Com-



**Team game:** Ashwini said that the partnership with Tanisha has been exciting. FILE PHOTO: RITU RAJ KONWAR

monwealth Games in front of home crowds (with Jwala Gutta) for her maiden senior international title, it's been an eventful career for Ashwini.

"It's been quite a journey, having started alongside Jwala who was already an established player then. I think I got lucky because partnering with her meant that I got to play in the big league at a very young age," she added.

The longevity has not been without challenges but a bout of dengue in 2016 triggered a complete turnaround in her training ethos and methods. "Even

though I have had physical ups and downs, I've always been motivated. Being physically fit is most essential to be playing at this level but being mentally motivated is equally important."

And while they are equal partners on the court, Ashwini admits it took time to build an understanding with Tanisha. "It's definitely evolved because initially there was a barrier because of the fact that I am super senior and she is up and coming."

"It's nice to play with someone who has got a really long way ahead of her."