

COMMANDER

Swachata Badhao, Tandrusti Badhe

Slimhide

◦ Badi Todfod + Deewaar Ko Leakage Se Bachayen

WARRANTY 5 YEARS

Slim Hide Flush Tank Kahan...?

Space Saving

BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY



'DOCTORED' VIDEO OF AMIT SHAH

Delhi Police summons Telangana CM, Cong worker held in Assam



Telangana CM A Revanth Reddy with Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge at a rally in Yadgir district, Monday. PTI

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD, NEW DELHI, GUWAHATI, APRIL 29

COMPLAINTS BY the BJP over the circulation of an allegedly doctored video of Union Home Minister Amit Shah speaking about reservation has led to the Delhi Police on Monday issuing summons to Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, the Assam Police arresting a Congress worker, and an FIR being filed in Rajasthan.

While Shah has previously said the BJP would remove the 4 per cent reservation for Muslims in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, the video being circulated was allegedly doctored using deepfake technology to make it seem like Shah was saying all

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

MP AND 2024 CANDIDATE PRAJWAL REVANNA LINKED TO '2,976 SEX CLIPS'

Sex abuse case snowballs, JD(S) set to suspend Deve Gowda's grandson

Congress says Centre let JD(S) MP escape from India; his father claims he hasn't fled, ready to join questioning

KIRAN PARASHAR & VIKAS PATHAK
BENGALURU, NEW DELHI, APRIL 29



Prajwal Revanna

FORCED ON the backfoot after allegations of sexual abuse emerged against JD(S) MP and its Lok Sabha candidate from Hassan, Prajwal Revanna, the party Monday said he would be suspended, while his father and JD(S) MLA H D Revanna insisted Prajwal had not fled the country and was ready to face the law.

This, even as a BJP leader from Karnataka claimed he had alerted the state BJP president as well as

the central leadership about the allegations on December 8 last year — before the JD(S) and BJP entered into an alliance.

Speaking to reporters in Shivamogga, JD(S) state president H D Kumaraswamy said

Prajwal, the grandson of former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda, would be suspended following the party's core committee meeting on Tuesday. Earlier in the day, he had said, "We are not shielding anyone and an SIT has been formed to probe the matter. Let the truth come out."

The party has been at the receiving end of criticism, both from the Opposition and its own members.

Congress general secretary

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Gag order to warning letter to pen drives — how the case unfolded

JOHNSON TA
BENGALURU, APRIL 29

THE STORY of how hundreds of sex videos allegedly shot by JD(S) MP Prajwal Revanna (33) on his cellphone came to light is steeped in intrigue, alleged blackmail and conspiracy.

Finding the technical origin of the videos — the phone from which these were shot and sources of copies — is crucial to the Karnataka Police Special

Investigation Team's probe against the MP, who is also the party's Lok Sabha candidate from Hassan and the grandson of former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda.

There are several key persons from Hassan, including friends-turned-foes and political rivals of Prajwal, who are likely to be investigated as part of the process to establish that the videos are genuine and not morphed, as is being claimed by the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



BJP leader Kailash Vijayvargiya with Congress candidate from Indore Akshay Kanti Bam (seated behind him). PTI

After Surat, another jolt to Cong: Indore candidate opts out of race, to join BJP

Cong says he was being pressured by ruling party; BJP says inspired by PM

ANAND MOHAN J
BHOPAL, APRIL 29

THE CONGRESS in Madhya Pradesh suffered a setback on Monday with its Lok Sabha candidate from Indore, Akshay Kanti Bam, withdrawing his nomination. He was expected to join the BJP.

State Cabinet minister and BJP leader Kailash Vijayvargiya in a post on X said: "Congress Lok Sabha candidate from Indore, Akshay Kanti Bam ji, is welcomed into the BJP under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, national president Shri J P Nadda, Chief Minister Mohan Yadav and state president VD Sharma." However, the party was yet to make an official announcement.

EXPLAINED
Relief for Cong unlikely

WITH THE last day for withdrawal of nomination having passed, Congress will go unrepresented in the election in Indore. Since the candidate's withdrawal was in line with EC rules, the party is unlikely to get any relief. The sole option for the party is to back another Opposition candidate.

The Congress alleged that Bam withdrew his nomination under pressure and that he had

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Manipur chargesheet: Women made it to police Gypsy but told no key, left to the mob

MAHENDER SINGH MANRAL
NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

JUST BEFORE a mob paraded naked two women from the Kuki-Zomi community and assaulted them sexually in Manipur's Churachandpur district, the two had "managed to sit inside the police Gypsy" parked on the roadside, but the police driver told them "there is no key" as they requested the police to start the vehicle, according to a chargesheet filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

Two other male victims were also seated in the police Gypsy. All the policemen pres-

ent then left the spot as a large mob pulled out the victims from inside the vehicle, the chargesheet said.

The CBI investigation revealed that the violent incident happened in Churachandpur on May 3. The chargesheet was filed against six people and a juvenile before a special court in Guwahati in October.

When contacted, DGP (Manipur) Rajiv Singh told *The Indian Express*, "Departmental action has been already taken against the police personnel." When asked about any criminal action against them, he said, "We are not probing the case, the CBI is probing."

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At Mandal Ground Zero, plea for jobs, education, 'real social justice'

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY
MURHO (MADHEPURA), APRIL 29



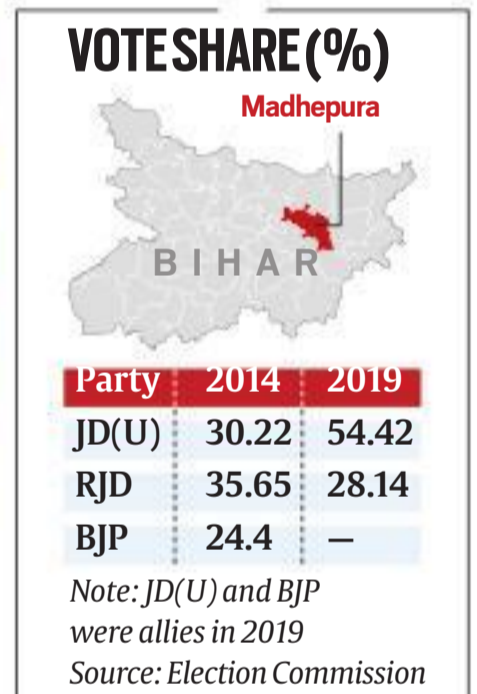
Umesh Rishidev, grandson of Bhagalpur region's first MP Kirai Musahar.

ABOUT 10 km from Madhepura town, as one turns right from the Purnia-Saharsa highway and crosses the railway line, a row of kutcha houses with tin roofs greet you. At the end of the village, Murho, stands a memorial of former Bihar Chief Minister Bindeshwari Prasad Mandal renowned for the Mandal Commission report.

Barely 100 m off the Mandal memorial, in a corner of the Musahar tola, lies a mud hut, where the grandsons of the first Member of Parliament from the region, Kirai Musahar, live.

As Bihar CM and Janata Dal (United) supremo Nitish Kumar rides on the state's

caste survey released last year and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi pledges a nationwide caste census as part of the Congress plank in the Lok Sabha elections, their words find hardly an echo



here — it appears development has clearly bypassed Mandal's village.

A key torchbearer of the country's social justice politics, Mandal's vision spawned a slew

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

DECISION 2024

THE EXPRESS INTERVIEW

JYOTIRADITYA SCINDIA, BJP GUNA CANDIDATE & UNION MINISTER

- Modi popularity props up BJP in Telangana, Cong rides high on Assembly win
- Constitution, quota will not be touched, come what may, says PM
- PM not even saying '150 paar' now, says Rahul

PAGES 7 & 8

My mother's daughter: In her first poll battle, Bansuri Swaraj underlines this message

SAMAN HUSAIN
NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

"I AM the embodiment of Sushma Swaraj's *sanskaars*, I will never let you down."

As Bansuri Swaraj, 40, campaigns for her first electoral battle as the BJP's candidate from New Delhi Lok Sabha constituency, she makes it a point to invoke her late mother in every speech.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Bansuri acknowledged



The BJP has fielded Bansuri Swaraj from New Delhi Lok Sabha constituency. Tashi Tobgyal

her mother's influence in shaping her values and work ethics. But, she said, she never discussed her entry into politics with her. "My mother and I had never discussed my entry into politics, but we discussed a lot about my entry into law, because politics was never on the horizon at that point of time," she said.

"I am very grateful to see the affection that people have towards Ma. It is their love for her that they keep showering on me in the form of blessings," she

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Students of MCD schools yet to get benefits, court says their rights cannot be 'trampled upon'



Kejriwal was arrested on March 21

MALAVIKA PRASAD
NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

WHILE AAP leader Arvind Kejriwal's move to continue as the Delhi Chief Minister was his "personal decision", the fundamental rights of students at Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) schools should not be "trampled upon" due to his unavailability, the Delhi High Court said on Monday. Citing national

THE CITY

IN SC, KEJRIWAL QUESTIONS TIMING OF HIS ARREST PAGE 4

and public interest, it also said that no chief minister should remain absent for long or for "an uncertain period" of time. This comes days after the court, while hearing a PIL related

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PAGE 1 ANCHOR

Inside a small Taiwan city, a blueprint for India's chip dreams

SOUMYARENDRA BARIK
TAIPEI (TAIWAN), APRIL 29

JUST ABOUT four decades ago, it was a town renowned for its tea farms and infamous for its snakes. Today, it is home to global chip-making excellence. A key driver of Taiwan's economic turnaround, about 80 kilometres from its capital, is the city of Hsinchu — and its famed Science Park.

Hsinchu's story holds key lessons for India's promised chip city of Dholera in Gujarat, a region roughly the size of Singapore on which New Delhi has pinned its hopes of creating

its own Silicon Valley. At first glance, the scenery belies the notion that Hsinchu is part of what is called Taiwan's "silicon shield", a strategic city at the heart of keeping the island safe from Chinese aggression. A row of two-wheelers are neatly lined up on the roads, there are round-the-clock convenience stores, multi-cuisine restaurants, parks, schools, universities, massive residential boroughs, and a lot of trees.

But beyond the tree cover, the signages on the big buildings dotting the city give a sense of what makes Hsinchu one of the most important places for global

economy. Not all the names may be popular, but they are important. And despite not being Taiwan's diplomatic or financial centre, Hsinchu is perhaps its most global city.

Taiwan produces over 90 per cent of the world's most advanced semiconductor chips, and Hsinchu is home to the world's most valuable chip firm, Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC), which accounts for a substantial part of the total production. Mediatek, another Taiwanese firm which designs chips, is also based there. So are the likes of Wistron (which briefly made iPhones in India be-



TSMC, the world's most valuable chip firm, has six fabs within Hsinchu and a research centre. Soumyarendra Barik

fore selling its plant to the Tatas) and Taiwan's first chip company United Microelectronics (UMC).

Companies registered in the Hsinchu Science Park account for about 6-8 per cent of Taiwan's total gross domestic product and about 12 per cent of the trade-reliant island's exports. A little over 150,000 people — close to 1 per cent of Taiwan's population — work in Hsinchu, which has the island's youngest average age of residents.

In the 1980s, when Taiwan was looking to turn around its fledgling economy after losing its seat at the United Nations a decade ago and a major fuel cri-

sis a few years later, the special high-tech zone in Hsinchu was established by government officials to woo the world's best technological talent to what was then a poor tropical island. At the time, many engineers with Taiwanese connections lived in places like the United States, Japan and Europe. But when the government called on them to return and make Taiwan a tech manufacturing hub, many of them took the plunge.

One of them was Morris Chang, who, after a long career in the US chip industry, moved to Taiwan in 1985. Two years later, when Chang was 55, he

founded TSMC. The company pioneered the contract manufacturing route to make chips, where it would not have to design any of the chips. This proved to be a revolutionary business model, paving the way for fabless companies including Apple and Nvidia, which are TSMC's biggest customers today. The Taiwanese government played a crucial role before TSMC was set up. Aside from the subsidies to set up factories, it set up the Industrial Technology Research Institute (ITRI) about a decade before, which secured a technology transfer for chipmaking from the

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Delhi Police summons Telangana CM

reservation, including of SCs and STs, would be scrapped. The BJP has filed a complaint with the Election Commission, accusing the Congress of circulating the "deepfake and morphed" video.

Jharkhand to issue notice to members of the Jharkhand Congress who had also shared the video on various social media platforms.

The Assam Police also filed an FIR at Panbazar police station in Guwahati in connection with the "circulation of a distorted and motivated tweet on the Union Home Minister".

Telangana Congress leader T Jayaprakash Reddy said Delhi Police officers visited the Congress headquarters in Hyderabad and "interacted with the legal team of our social media cell".

CM Revanth Reddy, who is also president of the Congress's Telangana unit, was campaigning in Karnataka on Monday. At a rally in Gulbarga, he alleged that the BJP was now "using the Delhi Police to win elections".

A Delhi Police officer said the notice was issued after the BJP filed a complaint with the Intelligence Fusion and Strategic Operations (IFSO) unit.

Delhi HC on Kejriwal

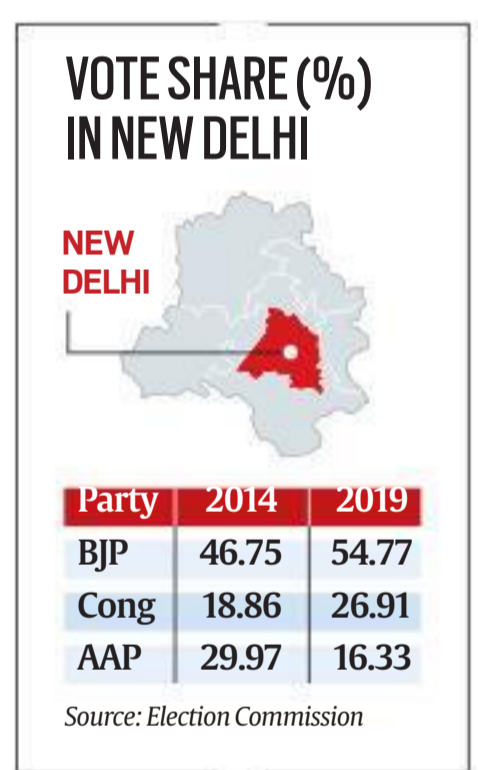
to denial of "statutory benefits" like uniforms, writing material, text-books, stationary items, school bags and scholarships to over 2 lakh students of MCD schools, told the Delhi government counsel Friday.

would require the CM's approval, adding that this amounted to an admission that the government was at a "standstill" due to the CM's absence.

"A chief minister's post in any state, leave alone a buzzing capital city like Delhi, is not a ceremonial post. It is a post where the office holder (when in office) has to be virtually available 24x7 to deal with any crisis or natural disaster like flooding, fire, disease etc.

My mother's daughter: Bansuri Swaraj underlines this

said. "She was compassion personified, she helped many Indians abroad... even in 2019, when she was not in the government, she did not let go of the compassion. I am really proud of this."



posited IIT-Delhi, for a roadshow. Among those in the crowd was 23-year-old Abhishek Tyagi, a student at IIT-Delhi.

Reflecting on her entry into politics, and her journey from an ABVP karyakarta, Bansuri told The Indian Express: "Although I have been a BJP karyakarta, I decided to join politics all of a sudden. I had been serving the party for over a decade as a lawyer, then I got a call from the party's Delhi unit informing me that they were extending the legal cell and asking if I would like to take up a leadership

FROM PAGE ONE Sex abuse case snowballs

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra questioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi's silence and said he should not dare talk about the "mangal-sutra" of women till Prajwal is brought back to India.

Addressing a rally in Gulbarga in Karnataka, she said, "A major issue has surfaced in Karnataka... the person who shared the stage with him... for whom Modiji sought votes... he has sexually assaulted thousands of women. I want to ask Modiji what he has to say about this?"

"Some time ago, I went to meet my daughter for three days. The PM and the Home Minister started saying Priyanka Gandhi has gone abroad. They get to know where I go, but when the opposition leaders go, when such criminals, demons leave the country, they don't get to know. How can we believe such a claim...," she said, referring to claims that Prajwal has left the country.

An online post, Congress national spokesperson Dr Shama Mohamed said, "The BJP government at the Centre helped sexual predator Prajwal Revanna escape from India. Deva Gowda knew exactly what his grandson was doing but kept his eyes closed and gave him the ticket once again. And of course, Narendra Modi is

silent."

The chorus also grew within the JD(S) to take action against Prajwal and his father. The party's MLA from Gurmitkal constituency, Sharana Gowda Kandakur, said in a letter to the leadership: "The issue is causing embarrassment to the party and it may affect it during elections."

Asked about the probe against his son, H D Revanna said he would not react to "issues" that are "four-five" years old. "Will not run away fearing such issues. They (the Congress) are in the government and they can do whatever they want," he said.

He said Prajwal was not aware an FIR would be filed against him before he went abroad. "When they call him for questioning, he will come," he said. The state government has set up a Special Investigation Team to look into the allegations against Prajwal.

Meanwhile, G Devaraje Gowda, a BJP leader who had contested from Holenarasipura in the 2023 Karnataka Assembly elections and lost to H D Revanna, told The Indian Express that on December 8 last year, he wrote an email and a letter to BJP state unit president B Y Vijayendra, which he marked to the party's top leadership.

In the past, Devaraje Gowda, an advocate at the Karnataka High Court, had also filed a petition to

disqualify Prajwal for not declaring assets before the Election Commission.

"It has come to my notice that BJP and JD(S) are forming an alliance for the Lok Sabha elections. BJP is one of the world's largest parties under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, with the culture of respecting truth, culture and women. But... there is a pen drive in which Prajwal has blackmailed and sexually exploited many women. The pen drive contains 2,976 obscene videos in which he is involved... The pen drive has already reached Congress national leaders. If a JD(S) candidate is allowed to contest from Hassan Lok Sabha constituency after the alliance, the party will have to face the embarrassment of joining hands with such a family. This will also affect the prospects of the BJP and show the party in a bad light. I request you to bring the issue to the notice of the party high command and prevent the alliance in Karnataka. If the national leaders are willing to go through the videos and documents, I am ready to show it to them," Devaraje Gowda said in his letter.

Congress's Pawan Kherra posted this letter on social media, and asked, "Why did the BJP still go ahead with the alliance? Why did the PM campaign for and share the stage with Prajwal

Revanna despite knowing that he is the kingpin of the world's biggest and murkiest sex abuse?"

The BJP, meanwhile, attempted to steer clear of the controversy, with Vijayendra, the Karnataka BJP president, saying, "The state government has initiated the formation of an SIT to probe the matter, and investigations are underway. The truth will be revealed in due course. Attempts to drag the BJP or Prime Minister Narendra Modi into this issue are unwarranted and inappropriate. I urge the Congress not to politicise the issue."

On the potential fallout, a BJP leader said on condition of anonymity, "Even JD(S) leader H D Kumaraswamy has distanced himself... Where are we in the picture?" The BJP's Karnataka in-charge, Radha Mohan Das Agarwal, could not be reached for a comment.

The clips had surfaced on social media three days before Hassan voted on April 26. Former Chief Minister and BJP's Haveri Lok Sabha candidate, Basavaraj Bommai, questioned the timing of the videos coming to light, saying, "Given the timing of the incident, it seems like someone has planned it. I heard that some of the videos are fake and many similar videos are doing the rounds."

exhibited its "indifference towards the plight of the students" and was a "wilful violation" of the students' fundamental rights.

It took note of a resolution adopted by the MCD on January 15, stating that the standing committee's functions would be carried out by the House until the committee was constituted.

"If the party in power in GNCTD believed in the solution suggested in the minutes of the meeting dated January 15, 2024, nothing prevented it from moving a suo motu resolution in the MCD House authorising the Commissioner to make payment for textbooks, writing material and uniform. Consequently, the submission of learned counsel for

the GNCTD blaming other institutions amounts to nothing but 'shedding of crocodile tears,' the bench said.

On April 23, the HC had directed the Delhi government to delegate the committee's financial power to an appropriate authority within two working days.

The court said suggestions by Delhi government and MCD Mayor or that the MCD Commissioner should send proposals over Rs 5 crore to the House for approval was "prima facie" impractical. The bench observed that the real issue was of "power," "turf dominance" and "who takes the credit", adding that the Delhi government's response was "wilful non-compliance" of its April 23 order.

projects worth over Rs 5 crore.

The bench said the non-availability of the chief minister, non-formation of a standing committee or other factors "cannot come in the way of the school-going children receiving their free textbooks, writing material and uniform forthwith". It directed the MCD Commissioner to undertake the expenditure without being constrained by the Rs 5 crore expenditure limit. The bench, however, said the expenditure shall be "subject to statutory audit". Asking the Commissioner to file a fresh status report, the bench listed the matter for May 15.

In its order, the bench said the Delhi government's inability to respond to the urgency of the issue

At Mandal Ground Zero, plea for jobs, education

of socialist leaders, including SP founder late Mulayam Singh Yadav, RJD chief Lalu Prasad Yadav, and Nitish Kumar. Mandal's ancestral house and the memorial in his name are among the few concrete structures in Murho village.

Sitting under the shade of bamboo trees adjoining his hut, Musahar's grandson Jivachh Rishidev says: "The social justice movement was frittered away by Lalu and Nitish as both began catering to their respective castes. Dalits have got nothing from either. They continue to remain the poorest of the lot." His brother Umesh, who is also active in local politics and works with former Madhepura MP Pappu Yadav, adds, "Look at our own house. Have you seen a former MP's house like this? For all the talk of Mahadalits, what is the condition of Mahadalits here? Look at the condition of the village."

Belonging to the Mahadalit community, Kirai Musahar had won the Bhagalpur Lok Sabha constituency (Madhepura was then its part), in 1952, representing the Socialist Party. After the Madhepura parliamentary constituency was carved out of Bhagalpur, Mandal won the 1967 polls on the Samyukt Socialist Party (SSP) ticket. He became the Bihar CM in 1968 for a brief period.

Mandal, who was from the Yadav community, would later go on to chair the Second Backward Classes Commission and author the seminal Mandal Commission report during 1978-80, which rec-

ommended quotas in government jobs for the OBCs.

The Mandal panel report was implemented by the V P Singh government in 1990 leading to the emergence of formidable regional parties in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

As Madhepura, a constituency dominated by Yadavs, goes to polls in the third phase on May 7, for many residents of Murho, the illustrious history of social justice originating from their village, among other places, seems to have lost much of its meaning. The village is predominantly inhabited by Yadavs, with its other communities including some other OBC groups like Kurmi and Pachpania as well as Mahadalits. "My entire life has been spent under a thatched roof," says Dinesh Yadav, 70. "What can I expect now. I am now just counting my days."

Chandan Yadav, 25, is chopping cattle feed under a tin shed. In a corner there, lies a white board with math equations scribbled on it while open books are strewn on a bed. Despite a B.Ed degree and an ITI certificate, Chandan has been, unsuccessfully, looking for a job for the past few years. In his free time, he teaches school children in the village for a fee. He is angry with all parties.

"No one is talking about real issues. The real issue is unemployment. Elders told me to do BA, B.Ed to get into teaching line. I did, but did not get a job. Then they said, go for ITI to get into railways. I did, still no luck. Now I have filled the form for a peon's

post, but no exams have been conducted for over a year," says Chandan. "All parties talk about social justice, but real social justice would be economic empowerment. One guy gets a job in the family and the entire family is lifted. Why do I have to give tuitions? It is because the government school is not teaching properly. What social justice can be achieved without education?" he asks.

There are some staunch RJD supporters though, who assert that roads have been built in the village in the past few years and that farmers have been getting good price for their maize crops.

Anand Mandal, BP Mandal's grandnephew and an RJD leader, seeks to put things into perspective. "Social justice is not merely an ideology. It is also a movement. Unfortunately, those who rose from this movement got engaged in either promoting their family or grabbing power. But as long as there is socio-economic inequity, socialism will survive," he says.

In 2019, the JD(U)'s Dinesh Chandra Yadav had defeated Sharda Yadav, who contested on the RJD ticket, by over 3 lakh votes.

This time, the incumbent MP Dinesh Pitted against the RJD's Chandradeep Yadav, the son of educationist and ex-MP Ramendra Kumar Ravi, in what may reflect a keen contest between the ruling NDA and the Opposition INDIA alliance.

Inside a small Taiwan city, a blueprint for India's chip dreams

Radio Corporation of America. After perfecting the technology, it realised that the government should move out of chip-making, and transferred the tech along with the tools to a private company, thus giving rise to the UMC, which was set up in 1980. TSMC was also incubated and spun off from the ITRI a few years later. India, which has a big talent pool of chip design engineers, currently lacks an adequate workforce which can be employed on cutting-edge fabrication factory floors. The government hopes that its big non-resident engineering talent pool will return home when India goes into the chip sector business. But, India will then have to ensure a high quality of life too. The impact of Hsinchu's importance, for Taiwan's economy and its people, has changed the geography of wealth in the island territory.

According to the latest data available, residents of Hsinchu city had the highest average annual household income in Taiwan for the fifth year running in 2021. Their average annual income was approximately \$49,000, or close to Rs 41 lakh, in 2021. Most of the people living in Hsinchu and nearby areas such as Baoshan work at one of the several semiconductor facilities in the Science Park or allied industries that supply materials for chip production.

The town and its industrial operations are largely self-sufficient. Water needed for chipmaking comes from the Baoshan reservoir, about 20 kilometres from Hsinchu, and all major gas suppliers are housed in the vicinity of the city. It has two major universities - the National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University and the National Tsing Hua University - which are considered among the top schools

for semiconductor education, ensuring that a steady stream of talented semiconductor engineers graduate every year.

Hsinchu can serve as a blueprint for India.

Dholera today faces many of the same problems that Hsinchu did four decades ago. Many engineers who had moved to Hsinchu when it was being set up were disappointed at the state of the infrastructure, and the overall wilderness that surrounded the area. Of course, the rise of Taiwan's semiconductor industry, primarily led by TSMC, changed the fate of Hsinchu, Taiwan and its people.

Dholera, and India, would need a similar champion. While the government has ensured that core infrastructure is in place - a substantial network of roads and power stations - Dholera is mostly a barren piece of land with some factories coming up sporad-

ically. There's little sign of human activity for vast stretches, no residential societies, parks, schools or restaurants. The Tata-PSMC foundry and the packaging plant being built by CG Power could bring big changes and potentially spur a chip industry that has long eluded India - although it will take some time before the projects come into their own.

An international airport is under construction near Dholera, for foreign visitors and future employees of factories that set up shop, as well as for moving materials and components needed to service the industries in the region. For instance, gases, crucial in the chipmaking process, will come from Dahej, about four hours away from Dholera.

(The reporter was in Taiwan at the invitation of the East-West Center, an educational institution founded by the US Congress.)

Gag order to warning letter

MP and his close associates.

Earliest public reference

One of the earliest public references to the videos was made by Prajwal himself in an original suit that he moved in a Bengaluru civil court on June 1, 2023 against 86 media outlets and three private persons.

The suit against the media sought a gag order (which was granted on June 2, 2023) on the grounds that "there is a threat of broadcasting, publishing and circulating such fake news, morphed photographs/video against the plaintiff by the defendants".

One of the three private persons named among the 89 defendants in the suit was Prajwal's former driver, who had quit the service of the Revanna family in March 2023 after working for nearly seven years.

There is speculation that the driver, who was considered a member of the family and had access to Prajwal's phones and electronic devices, fell out with the MP in 2023 and began threatening him over the videos.

In December 2023, the driver filed a police complaint in Hassan alleging that he and his wife had been kidnapped by Prajwal and his mother after he failed to agree to hand over 13 acres of land.

Second major public reference

The second instance where the videos were raised in public was in January 2024, in Hassan, by an advocate and local BJP leader G Devaraje Gowda, whose plea in the Karnataka High Court had led to the disqualification of Prajwal as an MP in 2023 (this was stayed by the Supreme Court).

Devaraje had also contested from Holenarasipura in the 2023 Karnataka Assembly elections and lost to Prajwal's father, H D Revanna. "Revanna is calling me a dirty fellow. It is his son who is a dirty fellow. His obscene pictures are part of a case he has filed in court (for the media gag order in June 2023). He has obtained a stay. Let him produce any videos of me sleeping with women. I go back to my family every day," he said at a press conference in Hassan in January.

Devaraje claimed he got access to the videos after he began representing Prajwal's former driver in a case filed against the Revannas in December 2023.

"It was from (the driver) who I was representing that I came to know about the videos and pictures of Revanna's son. I do not know how he got the videos," he told The Indian Express.

The driver, however, denied all knowledge of the videos at a press conference in Hassan in January.

Devaraje also claimed that he considered bringing some of the women victims before the media but later backtracked as it involved their dignity and self-respect in a

small town. "Out of respect for the women, I did not release the videos. It would have caused a calamity in their homes. Who would be held responsible if the women committed suicide?" he said.

He also claimed he had written to the state BJP chief, B Y Vijayendra, not to give the Hassan Lok Sabha ticket to Prajwal under the JDS-BJP alliance. "A very serious issue is another pen drive. All these videos and documents are already in the hands of the national leaders of the Congress," he had written.

Devaraje has also claimed on several occasions that the release of the videos will lead to the eventual merger of JDS with BJP without the presence of the Revanna family. Within the family, there are said to be differences between Deva Gowda's sons - former Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy and H D Revanna.

The pen drive

The videos were distributed through hundreds of pen drives in Hassan a day ahead of the April 26 Lok Sabha polls. These reportedly contain more than 2,900 videos, allegedly recorded by the MP himself. The videos also made their way to social media and sharing applications.

The state government took cognizance of the pen drives after the chairperson of the state women's commission, Nagalakshmi Chaudhury, wrote to the state police chief and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

"In Hassan, pen drives are being distributed containing obscene videos of women. It is now circulating on social media. This is most distressing and there are hundreds of women in the videos. The women's commission has also received a pen drive and there is a complaint as well," the chairperson said last week.

"Based on the complaint, we have written to the state police chief and the Hassan Superintendent of Police, saying that... the videos seem to have been recorded under duress, and the persons who have recorded the video and distributed the videos must be given strict punishment. I have written to the Chief Minister to constitute a Special Investigation Team to bring the accused to book at the earliest. This is a very shameful incident for the country," she said.

The Karnataka government ordered the formation of an SIT on April 27 to probe the videos. Prajwal, meanwhile, left the country for a tour of Europe soon after the April 26 polls for 14 South Karnataka Lok Sabha seats, including Hassan.

"He has not run away; he has gone on a pre-planned tour. He will face the probe. He did not know an FIR was going to be filed and an SIT would be constituted by the government," his father said Monday.

After Surat, another jolt to Cong

been "intimidated, threatened and tortured in various ways".

District Collector Ashish Singh said Monday was the last date for withdrawing nominations for the May 13 polls in Indore and "three candidates, including Congress's Bam, withdrew their nominations today as per due procedure". Earlier in the day, Bam, along with BJP MLA Ramesh Mendola, visited the District Collector's office to withdraw his nomination.

This comes days after the Election Commission rejected the nomination of Congress's Surat candidate, leading to BJP's Mukesh Dalal winning the Lok Sabha seat unopposed. Congress candidate Nilesh Kumbhani's nomination was rejected on April 21 after three of his proposers submitted affidavits to the Surat district election officer claiming that the signatures on the document were not theirs. The nomination form of the Congress's substitute candidate had also been invalidated on the same grounds.

In Indore, Congress had pitted poll debutant Bam against incumbent BJP MP Shankar Lalwani. After Bam's withdrawal, Congress leaders went into a huddle as the party looked for a suitable opposition candidate to back.

Responding to Bam's withdrawal, state Congress president Jitu Patwari said that he had been charged under IPC section 307 (attempt to murder) just a few days ago. "He was intimidated, threatened, and tortured in various ways throughout last night and when his form was returned this morning, the message being given is that you, the public, should not use your right to vote. I ask that if you believe in democracy, then everyone should stand against this dictatorship," Patwari said.

Bam had been campaigning in Indore until Sunday night and had even spoken to some Congress workers at 7 am Monday. When photographs of him with

Vijayargya started circulating on social media later in the day, Congress leaders rushed to Bam's residence, where they found a police contingent outside and missing Congress flags.

"He has been unreachable since morning. Bam was recently charged under a section 307 case. His family owns several private law and management colleges in the city and they were under investigation recently...," a senior Congress leader from Indore said.

In his election affidavit, Bam disclosed that there were three cases against him. Two of those were related to land disputes, and the third was a rash and negligent driving case registered in 2018. On April 24, the day Bam filed his nomination, a district court framed charges against him and his father, Kantilal, under IPC section 307 (attempt to murder), which carries a 10-year prison sentence if convicted, in one of the land dispute cases. Bam and his father were summoned to appear in court on May 10. During scrutiny of nomination papers, the BJP's legal cell had raised an objection regarding Bam's nomination not mentioning the addition of the attempt to murder charge, but poll officials overruled it as the charge was added on the day he filed his papers.

BJP leaders said Bam switched over after being inspired by PM Narendra Modi's guarantees. BJP spokesperson Pankaj Chaturvedi said, "This is a failure of the Congress leadership... Their vote bank politics, inheritance politics... has backfired. Congress workers were already leaving, and now the leaders have joined." Chaturvedi said allegations that the BJP had put pressure on Bam were "cheap excuses". He said: "10 lakh leaders have left the party across India, and around 5 lakh in MP alone. Can you pressure them all? Their leaders are joining the BJP as they believe in Modi's guarantees."

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JNU student sexually harassed by her teacher, forced to leave campus, claims students' union

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

A STUDENT at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) was allegedly sexually harassed by a teacher and forced to leave the campus due to "inaction" by the administration over her complaint, claimed the students' union Monday.

In a statement, the JNU students' union alleged, "The professor in question harassed the survivor through constant messages and calls including lewd poems, requests for 'personal' meetings, etc. Upon her refusal to submit in front of the professor, she was threatened with failing his paper. The said professor then went on to harass other female students so as to know about the survivor's whereabouts. The survivor was forced to leave campus."

The union claimed the woman filed a sexual harassment complaint with the varsity's Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) on April 10 against the accused teacher. Another complaint was filed with the ICC by a few of

The union claimed that two complaints — one by the woman and another by a few of her batchmates — were filed earlier this month but no action was taken

her batchmates on April 15, accusing the teacher of sexually and mentally harassing them to know the whereabouts of the victim. Both did not elicit any action, it alleged.

It further alleged that the ICC did not issue a restraining order against the teacher by barring him from taking classes to ensure that the accused did not contact the complainant in any form.

The *Indian Express* reached out to the professor in question but received no comment.

The *Indian Express* also reached out to the Presiding officer of the ICC, Vandana Mishra, but received no comment on the matter.

JNUSU demanded to expedite

the proceedings of the complaints filed by the students and action against the accused teacher including his suspension.

"The ICC has been known to shield those in positions of power. A couple of weeks ago, in (another) case of sexual harassment against a student... the ICC had shown similar attitude," the statement alleged.

Last month, a female student had complained that she was allegedly sexually harassed by four individuals, including two former students, and had staged an indefinite strike at the varsity's main gate for over 10 days over "inaction" by the administration. The students' union had alleged the accused were members of JNU's ABVP unit; the latter had denied the claims.

In this case, the varsity had initiated an inquiry. However, it also issued notices to several students, including two office bearers of the JNUSU, for allegedly obstructing the North Gate (entrance) as part of the protest.

V-C Santishree Dhulipudi Pandit said the matter is with the ICC and is sub-judice.

Who helped Kana gain monopoly in scrap trade, and 50 other questions

DHEERAJ MISHRA
NOIDA, APRIL 29

HOW DID Ravi Kana and his aide Kajal Jha leave the country? How did he amass such vast wealth? Who helped him get funds and manpower? Who else is associated with them? How did the two meet and become accomplices?

These were among 50 questions the Greater Noida police have asked Kana, 42, and Jha, 30, following their arrest from Delhi Airport Friday last after they were deported from Bangkok, Thailand.

Sources said police are keenly interested in knowing the role Jha played in Kana's life, helping him build a rebar-scrap empire.

The Greater Noida police on Monday filed an application before the District Court seeking police custody remand of Kana alias Ravindra Nagar, a scrap dealer booked under Gangster Act, for seven days.

Officials said a hearing in the matter is scheduled Tuesday and police have sought custody keeping in mind that there are many questions which are yet to be answered. The police have not sought Jha's custody, added the official. Kana and Jha were sent to 14-day judicial custody on Saturday by a local court.

The arrests came three months after Kana was booked under charges of gangrape by



Ravi Kana and his aide Kajal Jha were nabbed on Friday.

the Noida police. Soon after, charges under Gangster Act were also invoked against him and 15 others, for allegedly being involved in illegal activities in Noida, Greater Noida and Ghaziabad for over two decades.

Besides Kana and Jha, his wife Madhu had also left the country on December 31, a day after he was booked in the gangrape case. Madhu was arrested last month after landing at the Delhi airport.

Officials said a nexus of officials, politicians and media is also being investigated to unravel the kind of support Kana got all these years.

In the last few months, apart from Kana, Jha, and Madhu, more than 15 associates of his team have been arrested by Greater Noida police, and properties worth over Rs 250 crore have been attached.

Kana is accused of creating a monopoly in the scrap business in different parts of Western UP. With the help of Anil Dujana, a gangster who was killed in a po-

lice encounter, he allegedly used to threaten industrialists into giving tenders on scrap-related works to his team. Officials said the members of the gang used to stop rebar trucks going to various construction sites and, in collusion with the drivers, get the material unloaded at their place.

"They got undue financial benefits by selling these rebar at market price to the traders. They also obtained the contract for the scrap coming out of various business establishments for their gang members at the desired rate by threatening the owners," said a senior police official.

Officials said that Kana used to get tender at the cheapest rate for his gang and Benami companies, and used to stop others from filing tenders.

"His company Prime Pressing Tools Pvt. Ltd. has grown illegally at the rate of 97% in the last three years," added the official.

A total of 11 cases have been registered against Kana since 2013 in Gautam Buddha Nagar and Ghaziabad.

Dwarka luxury flat project will be finished by June end: DDA

UPASIKA SINGHAL
NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

AMID CONCERNS over a delay in the handover of its super luxury flats project in Dwarka, the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) has sought to allay the fears of homeowners and said it has increased the workforce by nearly 50% to meet the deadline.

"The DDA is working on war footing to meet the deadline of finishing the project by the end of June 2024," said a spokesperson for the land-owning agency.

Earlier in April, the land authority was pulled up by the Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA) for not registering the Dwarka 19B Golf View Condos project before advertisement and sales. It was also notified that it had three weeks to respond to RERA on why action should not be taken against them. While the DDA's brochure had mentioned that the flats would be handed over to the allottees by June, it notified RERA that the project would, at most, be completed by October.

The condos were the DDA's first segue into luxury real estate, launched just after Diwali last year in November. The project offered 14 penthouses, 170 Super HIG flats, and 946 HIG flats via e-auction and saw an enthusiastic response from buyers. According to officials, the DDA sold out all penthouses and Super HIG flats.

'Protector becomes predator': Court sentences man to life for raping daughter

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

"WHAT WOULD a child do if the protector becomes a predator," observed a Delhi court while sentencing a man — a father of three — to life in prison for the rape of his daughter, which continued from 2017 to 2019.

Additional Sessions Judge Anu Aggarwal also awarded the victim, who is residing in a shelter home, compensation of Rs 12 lakh. The girl's mother passed away in 2018.

Sentencing the accused on Saturday, the judge noted: "... Such an offence leaves a long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on the child. It leaves a permanent scar on the psychological health of the child and these scars are invisible and cannot be measured by any yardstick. These invisible scars haunt the child throughout life and the child loses trust in family and friends in particular and in society, in general."

"However, the question arises as to what the child would do if the protector becomes a predator," observed the judge, adding that when the safe space of a child's home is turned into a place of sexual abuse, then they

have nowhere to go. Earlier, in February, the accused was convicted under sections of the POCSO Act. Among the prosecution witnesses were teachers and the principal of the victim's school. Among the defence witnesses were her two siblings — her sister and brother.

The sister said her father and brother slept together, along with the victim, and that she never saw the incident take place. The brother added that he would have come to know of the incident due to the small size of the room.

The father claimed that a teacher had made false allegations as she wanted to adopt his daughter.

The court in February had rejected the argument, among others, and noted that the victim's statements corroborated with the testimony of other prosecution witnesses and with medical evidence available.

Denying the statements of the defence witnesses, the court also observed that the victim had specifically stated that she did not raise any alarm when her father committed the offence.

Additional Public Prosecutor Arun KV sought the maximum punishment for the accused.

ALL FOR SOCIAL MEDIA LIKES

Patrol to online checks: Cops crack down on 'reelmakers'

ARNABJIT SUR
NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

WHAT IS common between a first-year collegestudent, a factory employee, a dairy worker and a YouTuber couple? They are among the several people booked or fined by the Delhi Police for hampering traffic, among other offences, over the last few weeks. Their motivation: Making that one Instagram reel that, they believe, can catapult them to instant fame on social media.

However, in their desire to gain popularity, the "reelmakers" often forget that they are breaking some rules in the process, according to Delhi Police.

A major cause of concern among police officials is youngsters performing risky stunts on their bikes and capturing them on video. According to police records, in April alone, at least half-a-dozen instances of officials cracking down on people creating "law and order situations" and violating traffic laws by performing stunts on their vehicle to capture them on video have taken place.

Who are the offenders

On April 17, 28 bikers were arrested for allegedly endangering public safety by "driving recklessly" without helmets near India Gate with the intention to record reels for social media.

DCP (New Delhi) Devesh Mahla said as soon as the group was spotted, a little after midnight, teams of Parliament Street Police



(Above) A YouTuber blocks traffic in Paschim Vihar in March; (Left) A couple on a bike in spider costumes.



Station and Kartavya Path Police Station intercepted and arrested them. Their bikes were seized and they were booked for rash driving. One of them is a 23-year-old, who works at a factory in Noida. "We did not intend to violate any law and drive rashly...I post videos on my bike on my Instagram account. On that day too, we just wanted to have some fun..." he told *The Indian Express*.

Another accused, a first-year student of an IT course at a private

college, claimed the group was not planning on performing stunts. "We were shooting the video as a few of us had bought new bikes and wanted to flaunt them on social media," he said.

While the 28 bikers were let go of shortly after arrest, their bikes are yet to be released.

On Friday, the Delhi Police penalised two persons under the Motor Vehicles Act for posing as Spider Man and Spider Woman. Donning their "spider costumes", The 20-year-old man and the 19-year-old woman were seen recording a video on a bike without helmets, a licence plate or rear-view mirrors on the Dwarka Expressway. Both were fined Rs 21,000 for violation of various traffic laws. Both of them are full-time YouTubers with a combined following of nearly 11,000.

17-year-old girl dies as DTC bus hits cycle, drags her for a few metres in Dwarka

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

OUT CYCLING in her locality, a 17-year-old girl was killed after a DTC bus hit her bicycle in Dwarka on Monday, officers said.

Police said the girl's bicycle got stuck under the tyres of the bus and she was dragged for a few metres as the vehicle moved along.

DCP (Dwarka) Ankit Singh said that they received a PCR call regarding a fatal accident by a DTC bus near Dabri powerhouse at Dwarka South Police Station.

The girl was identified as Isha, a resident of Mahavir Enclave in Dabri.

The DCP said that the body of the girl has been shifted to the DDU Hospital Mortuary, and that a post-mortem is awaited. The driver and the conductor of the bus have been arrested, added the DCP.

The DCP said that the teenager was cycling on the road near the Dabri powerhouse when the bus hit her cycle from behind. The cycle got entangled in the front right wheel of the bus, following which she was dragged for a few metres.

The driver, during questioning, has claimed that he lost control of the vehicle and that the girl came suddenly in front of the bus, said police.

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SKY WATCH
April 30
Mainly clear sky. Strong surface winds (speed 25-35 kmph) during the day.

MAX: 37
2°C below normal

MIN: 22
1.8°C below normal

At AAP's rally in New Delhi seat, local issues take back seat

HIMANSHU HARSH
NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

AS AAP Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh, accompanied by the party's Lok Sabha candidate from New Delhi, Somnath Bharti, reached a barren ground in Punjabi Basti through the narrow and dingy lanes of Patel Nagar's Baljeet Nagar, all residents looked at them for one thing — better living conditions.

Located in the heart of the city, the unauthorised colonies and JJ clusters in Baljeet Nagar are a far cry from areas like Karol Bagh and Patel Nagar that surround it. But local issues barely found any mention in the speeches of the two leaders, with their focus being on jailed CM Arvind Kejriwal. "Kejriwal is not a person, he's an ideology. You can capture a body, how will you capture an ideology... *Iss baar, BJP 400 paar nahi, tadipaar hai*," said Bharti.

Addressing a predominantly Poorvanchali population, Bharti, who is originally from Nawada in Bihar and has been an MLA from Malviya Nagar since 2013, also spoke about over 1,000 Chhath ghats built by the AAP government and "respect" given to the residents from the region. Singh, meanwhile, said that

with the incidents of Opposition candidates joining the BJP before the polls, it had become clear that the BJP wanted to snatch people's right to vote. "In Surat, the BJP candidate was declared victorious without holding polls, while in Indore, the Congress candidate had to withdraw his nomination. BJP formed the government by toppling governments in Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, and Maharashtra...," Singh said.

Residents, meanwhile, said that they want a representative who will solve their local issues. "Somnath Bharti is well-educated... for the development of the country, the government should be of well-educated people," said Sanjay Maurya, who added that crime has been "rampant" in the area and he expects his next MP to improve that.

Accusing BJP of overlooking the area, Sarbjeet Kumar Gautam, who works in a printing press, said, "They (BJP) haven't done a single thing here... They even had to change their candidate this time... *kaam nahi karenge to badalna he padega na*." Surrender, an e-rickshaw driver, who drove AAP supporters to the venue, however, said he still supports BJP.

(The writer is an intern with The Indian Express)

'WHAT IS THE IMMINENCE?' In SC, Kejriwal questions need, timing of his arrest

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

CM ARVIND Kejriwal Monday questioned the need and timing of his arrest in the excise policy case by the ED after the Model Code of Conduct for the Lok Sabha polls came into force. "Prior to the date of arrest, CBI lodged FIR and ED lodged ECIR... All those documents and pleadings prior to the date of arrest did not connect me remotely. Number of criminal law documents did not connect me for 18 months prior to this," Senior Advocate A M Singhvi, appearing for Kejriwal, told a bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta.

"You are arresting someone in March 2024 after the MCC, after not arresting him... for 18 months. My question to myself is either you have to have imminently new material, or you have to have something which suddenly connects me... or you have to have some basis which at least we don't know," the senior counsel said.

He added, "You are not arresting a hardened criminal, a terrorist who has done something yesterday, last week, two



CM Kejriwal was arrested last month

weeks before, someone who will even catch a flight and run away. What is the imminence..."

Singhvi pointed out that in the 2022 Vijay Madanlal Choudhary case, the SC had, while upholding high threshold for bail, said it was doing so due to the enhanced threshold for arrest as well. He argued that the arrest has to be on the basis of material in its possession, adding that there should be reason to believe, which should be recorded in writing, that any person has been guilty of an offence. These factors were absent in Kejriwal's case, he said, adding "not mere suspicion is enough".

Pointing to the facts of the case, he said there is no mention of Kejriwal in 10 documents and 15 statements. Singhvi added, "...a person who is behind bars, who himself has given 10 other state-

ments, his 11th statement makes an equivocal thing about me. He gets bail next week... approver status and pardon two weeks later. And that one statement becomes the basis for arresting me..."

As Singhvi accused the ED of adopting a pick-and-choose approach to statements, Justice Khanna said, "What happens is, let's forget about this case, let's take a normal criminal case. A person is arrested, produced before court, application is moved by prosecution seeking police custody. They produce case files and some grounds are given as to why they require police custody. The court then decides if custody should be given... Documents etc which the court examines at that stage... is basically police diary and documents which they have been able to collect and court forms a prima facie view because investigation is still on".

The judge added, "When you record reasons to believe, there should be objective consideration by the authority concerned of both favourable and unfavourable material". Singhvi, however, said it will be a cat-and-mouse game.

Arguments remained inconclusive and will continue Tuesday.

CM in jail, what happens to Rs 1,000 scheme for women?

GAYATHRI MANI
NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

CHIEF MINISTER Arvind Kejriwal has said that he will come out of jail soon and fulfill his promise of giving women Rs 1,000 every month under the Mahila Samman Rashi scheme, said AAP leader Atishi after meeting the CM in Tihar Jail Monday.

Since Kejriwal's arrest on March 21 in the excise policy case, this statement has been reiterated by several AAP leaders — Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh — and even Kejriwal's wife Sunita during the party's Lok Sabha poll campaign. During her first roadshow at East Delhi's Kalyanpuri on Saturday, Sunita had said, "CM Kejriwal has given you free electricity, pink tickets... he will also provide Rs 1,000 to women every month..."

However, senior officials in the Delhi government hinted that the AAP government's poll promise is likely to hit a roadblock with the CM in jail. "This was one of the top promises of this year's budget... For any such big beneficiary scheme, the department concerned will make a draft proposal which will pass through the finance department; it will then have to be approved by the Cabinet... After this, the file is forwarded to the LG office and is then implemented," explained a senior-ranking government official.

The official added, "The Cabinet is headed by the chief minister. But with the CM in jail, and facing several restrictions in signing documents and holding meetings, the Cabinet is headless now... Several daily file move-



Under the scheme, all women aged above 18 years excluding taxpayers, beneficiaries of government pension schemes and government employees are eligible for the scheme once it is implemented. Tashi Tobgyal

ments have been disrupted due to his arrest..."

Another official said, "Since the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) is in place, nothing new is happening at present... Things will start after the poll code is lifted... but even then, any new big-budget project will be implemented after Cabinet approval. If the CM is still in jail then, the Mahila Samman Rashi scheme is likely to remain stuck..."

A senior AAP leader said that the timeline for the implementation of the scheme was October. "AAP has fulfilled all promises it made, despite hurdles created by the officers. We will fulfil this promise as well," he said.

The scheme was among the top announcements made by the AAP government in its 2024-25 'Ram Rajya' budget, ahead of the polls, to woo the women vot-

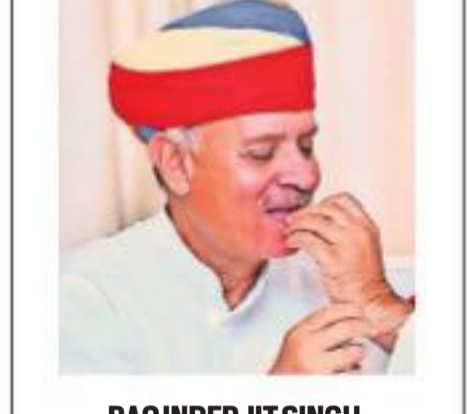
ers who account for around 45% of total voters. Under it, all women aged above 18 years, excluding taxpayers, beneficiaries of government pension schemes and government employees, are eligible for the scheme once it is implemented.

A budget of Rs 2,000 crore was allocated for the purpose.

Rajesh, a Kalyanpuri resident who works as a domestic help, said, "Kejriwal is giving free electricity, water... I'm happy that we women are also going to get Rs 1,000... *Hum jaise gareeb ko hazar rupay bhi bahut badhi rakam hai garh chlane ko*."

Meanwhile, Atishi said the CM took stock of the functioning of the government, sought updates on schools and mohalla clinics and also instructed the minister to ensure that there is no water shortage in Delhi in the summer and the public does not face any problem.

I HEREBY DECLARE



RAOINDERJITSINGH, BJP's Gurgaon candidate, sitting MP

ASSETS
₹121.54 CR (2024)
₹42.09 CR (2019)

Movable assets	₹39.31 cr
Immovable assets	₹82.23 cr
Liabilities	₹13.36 cr
Pending criminal cases	None
Education	BA, Hindu College, Delhi University
LLB from Faculty of Law, Delhi University	



YOGENDER CHANDOLIYA, BJP's Northwest Delhi candidate

Movable assets (including wife's)	₹61 lakh
Immovable assets	₹2.15 cr
Liabilities	₹9.39 lakh
Pending criminal cases	2
Education	BA

Despite being DPCC president, was not informed of candidates: Lovely

NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

ON SUNDAY, Congress's Arvinder Singh Lovely resigned from the post of the Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee President citing unease with the alliance between his party and the AAP. **SAMAN HUSAIN** speaks to him about the reasons behind his departure, the alliance with AAP, and his next steps

AAP's Sanjay Singh said you played a major role in ensuring the two parties form an alliance in Delhi...

If he thinks that the alliance was formed due to my initiatives, then he must consider me to be a really big leader, so much so that they didn't listen to Sonia ji or Rahul ji but ended up being part of the alliance because of me. Do you think that I will be the one to take the alliance forward and then not keep a Lok Sabha seat for myself? The INDIA bloc was formed in April, back when the first meeting took place in Patna. I was not president of DPCC at that point of time. The second meeting took place in Bengaluru, and I was still not the president at that point of time. The third meeting took place in Mumbai and I was still not president of DPCC. I became the president on September 1, and right after that Sanjay Singh was imprisoned. Then how does he know that the alliance was formed because of me?

How has the alliance affected morale of Congress workers?
This feeling against the al-



Arvinder Singh Lovely had resigned from the post of the DPCC President on Sunday. Abhinav Saha

liance is rooted in the fact that Ajay Maken did a press conference on Kejriwal's 'Sheesh Mahal'... the DPCC president before me, Anil Chaudhary, had registered an FIR against (Kejriwal), Sandeep Dikshit had openly opposed the alliance — even though I never openly criticised it, these facts are not hidden from anyone... Nonetheless, the high command made a decision to go forward with the alliance so I tried my best to ensure the whole party fell in line. On the night when Kejriwal was arrested, I visited his house, and I also took Sandeep Dikshit and Subhash Chopra along with me due to the high command's directions. Do you think Sandeep Dikshit, against whose mother the AAP had been putting allegations,

would visit Kejriwal's house had there not been any pressure from the high command? There, I said that I am against the timing of the arrest; we never gave them a clean chit.

Which old party leaders would have been a better fit for the Lok

Sabha candidature as opposed to Udit Raj and Kanhaiya Kumar?

I do not want to comment on this because right now this is not the issue. I will also go into the merits of candidates someday but currently the issue is, and my only grudge, is that when you're announcing candidates, you should at least informally inform the DPCC about your final decision. Just as everybody else got to know about the final candi-

dates through the media, so did I. Despite being DPCC president, I was not informed; there is a basic dignity that should be maintained.

Has anyone from the high command approached you after your resignation? How do you feel about the fact that the high command accepted your resignation without taking much time?

You all allege that the Congress takes a lot of time in making decisions. They accused me of leaking my resignation letter; you can ask any media person if I gave them the letter and they'll say no. I am writing a letter to my president, and right after I write it, it gets leaked. Within 4 hours, a decision is also made regarding my resignation when it could have easily taken them 4 hours to read and understand my letter. Do you understand what the conspiracy is? I have been pleading with them to let me stay as a Congress worker, to leave me alone, to not annoy me and to not force me into taking any further steps.

An ex-MLA of your party alleged you have a pact with the BJP...

These are childish allegations. There are many small-time politicians who have by chance become one-time MLAs. All parties have already declared their candidacies, how can any party change their candidacies once they have been announced? And that too a ruling party which has the most chances of forming the government?

Cong mulling over possible successor to party's Delhi chief

JATIN ANAND
NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

HOURS AFTER Arvinder Singh Lovely's resignation from the post of Delhi Congress president Sunday, his nameplate was removed and the office allotted to him at the party's state headquarters locked even as the senior leadership began deliberations on the next step forward, sources said.

Party sources said the Congress senior leadership was understood to be mulling various possibilities, ranging from appointing an interim in-charge for a few months to the formation of a committee that could oversee the party's Lok Sabha election campaign in the Capital. The announcement in this regard, sources added, was "expected very soon."

"In addition to the possibility of choosing Lovely's successor, the party could appoint an interim president till the Lok Sabha polls conclude, a working president till a full-time president is appointed between the Lok Sabha and next year's Delhi Assembly elections, or put in place a committee to oversee the party's affairs for the elections," a senior Delhi Congress leader said. "This committee, which too

would be an interim arrangement, could include four to seven senior leaders from prominent castes and communities who have not been adequately represented as far as the Congress's picks for the three Lok Sabha seats in Delhi are concerned," the leader added.

In the meantime, according to party sources, several names were being assessed as far as choosing any successor was concerned. These, party insiders said, included Dr Narendra Nath, Subhash Chopra, Abhishek Dutt and Devender Yadav among others.

According to party sources, All India Congress Committee in-charge for Delhi and Haryana, Deepak Babaria, was understood to have made suggestions with regard to probable replacements for Lovely to the high command Sunday.

Sources said probable candidates were being assessed on the basis of whether they had already served as full-time presidents in the past, rendering them ineligible as working presidents. At the same time, the party is considering if those who had served as working presidents in the past were fit to be handed full-time charge. "Time is of essence as

Lovely's announcement has the potential of severely denting the image around the relationship between the Congress's national and local leadership in light of the allegations that he made," a party insider said.

"While there is a possibility that more leaders from the Delhi unit, who sympathise with Lovely, walk out over the coming days, the high command may also take action against many of his aides on disciplinary grounds even before choosing his successor," the insider added.

Meanwhile, AAP's Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh said Lovely played a crucial role in the formation of the alliance between the AAP and the Congress in the capital. "With full responsibility, I will say that Lovely ji played an important role in reaching a compromise and the formation of an alliance between the AAP and Congress in Delhi," said Singh, adding that he did not know why Lovely was citing the alliance for stepping down.

Delhi BJP Spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor, meanwhile, said, "It is good that he (Lovely) heard his inner voice and quit as Congress President instead of supporting the anarchy being spread by the Aam Aadmi Party any further."

BJP's Gurgaon and Northwest Delhi picks file nominations

Dwarka e-way, AIIMS Rewari: Haryana CM lists Singh's works

Party worker first and foremost: Yogender Chandoliya

AISWARYA RAJ
GURGAON, APRIL 29

THE ASSETS of BJP candidate for Lok Sabha in Gurgaon, Rao Inderjit Singh, who has been the MP in the seat for three terms, have seen an almost 189% increase over the past five years.

Singh filed his nomination Monday and according to his affidavit, the assets, movable and immovable, have seen a growth of 188.7% while his income saw a spike of 19%.

As per his 2019 affidavit, the MP had movable assets, which include cash, jewellery, bonds and debentures and vehicles, worth Rs 20.56 crore. These have now grown to Rs 39.31 crore in 2024. The sizable increase was seen in his immovable assets too which grew from 20.56 crore in 2019 to Rs 82.23 crore in 2024.

The 74-year-old is the minister of state for the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation; Ministry of Planning; and Ministry of Corporate Affairs.

His income has grown from Rs 2.12 crore in 2019 to 2.54 crore in 2024 while his liability stands at Rs 13.36 crore.

The assets are a sum of those belonging to the MP, his spouse, and the Hindu Undivided Family. His immovable assets include residential and commercial buildings along with agricultural and non-agricultural property, which are inherited and self-acquired. He owns residential buildings in Delhi's Satbari and Defence Colony, along with Shimla, Dehradun, and Nainital. He also owns a Toyota Innova and a Toyota Camry and has commercial buildings in Delhi and Gurgaon.

Singh belongs to Bawal Assembly constituency and is the son of former CM Rao Birender Singh. His affidavit states that no FIR has been registered against him.

Accompanying Singh for nomination filing, Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini spoke about Singh's major projects over the past five years, including Dwarka Expressway, Delhi-Mumbai expressway and the AIIMS being built in Rewari.

The Gurgaon portion of Dwarka expressway was inaugurated in March this year. In 2019, while spelling out works of his term from 2014 to 2019, Singh had said that he had given the people AIIMS in Rewari, the foundation stone of which was laid in 2023.

Meanwhile, the Congress has not announced its candidate yet, drawing flak from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

THE NOMINATION process for the seven Lok Sabha constituencies in the national capital began Monday, with 13 candidates, including BJP's pick from Northwest Delhi Yogender Chandoliya, filing their nomination papers.

Before filing the nomination, Chandoliya addressed party workers and supporters in Mangolpuri. "I began my journey in the party as a minister in the mandal. After a social and political journey of nearly 40 years, today I am going to file my nomination for the Lok Sabha. I am a party worker first and foremost and will respect all workers. I will expedite development work in my constituency and will always be accessible to the people," he said. He was accompanied by



A gathering before Yogender Chandoliya filed his nomination. Express

Rajasthan Deputy Chief Minister Dr Premchand Bairwa, Delhi Lok Sabha Election In-Charge Omprakash Dhanakhar, Co-In-Charge Alka Gurjar, and Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva.

According to his affidavit, the 61-year-old graduated with a BA (Political Science and History) degree from Swami Vivekanand Subharti University in Meerut in 2022.

5 GOVT & POLITICS

PM shouldn't dare mention 'mangalsutra' till Prajwal is brought back, says Priyanka

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

SEIZING ON the allegations of sexual abuse that has surfaced against Prajwal Revanna, JD(S) MP and the BJP-JD(S) Lok Sabha candidate from Hassan in Karnataka, the Congress and the opposition INDIA bloc Monday opened a new front against the BJP. Senior Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra questioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi's silence on the issue and said he should not dare talk about the "mangalsutra" of women till he [Prajwal] is brought back to India.

The Congress alleged that the BJP government at the Centre was protecting Revanna, the grandson of former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda, and let him escape from India. The Congress made it a point to allege that Modi knew about the charges against Prajwal but still shared the stage with him and sought votes for him earlier this month.

Smarting under the Prime Minister's charge that the



Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and Telangana CM Revanth Reddy at a public meeting in Yadgir, Karnataka, Monday. ANI

Congress, if voted to power, would snatch the 'mangalsutra' and other ornaments of women and distribute among "infiltrators" and "those who have more children", the Congress used the Prajwal scandal to hit back, perhaps in the same coin. Addressing a rally in Gulbarga in Karnataka with Congress presi-

dent Mallikarjun Kharge, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said Modi wants every election to "be fought on Hindu-Muslim."

"They have been in power for 10 years. Ek kaam karke nahin dikhaya. So they don't have the courage to talk about their work...how many jobs have they given, how many were given edu-

cation, how many institutions have they opened...nowadays he talks about my sisters, your 'mangalsutra', your ornaments...I want to know where was he when atrocities were committed on our Olympic medallists... when women were raped in Hathras and Unnao... and they were burnt... In whose favour did Modi speak... did he speak in favour of the women...or Modi's government protected those criminals," she said.

She then spoke about the Prajwal row. "A major issue has surfaced in Karnataka...the person who shared the stage with him...for whom Modiji sought votes... he has sexually assaulted thousands of women. I want to ask Modiji what he has to say about this? *Kya kehete hain hamare PM isse baare mein...* what does our Home Minister say about this?"

"...Jahan vipaksh ke नेता जाते हैं inko pata chalta hai. Lekin is tarah ka apradhi, is tarah karakshas... is desh ko chodke chala jata hai aur inko pata nahi chalta. How can we believe such a claim..." she said.

India summons Canada diplomat over pro-Khalistan slogans in Toronto

MEA: Separatist slogans raised at event addressed by PM Trudeau 'disturbing'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

INDIA ON Monday summoned the Canadian Deputy High Commissioner and lodged a strong protest over the pro-Khalistan slogans raised during a public event in Toronto in the presence of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. The event was also attended by Opposition leader Pierre Poilievre and Trudeau's ruling coalition partner, New Democratic Party leader Jagmeet Singh.

The Ministry of External Affairs said on Monday, "The Canadian Deputy High Commissioner was today summoned to the Ministry of External Affairs with regard to the raising of separatist slogans on 'Khalistan' at an event which was being personally addressed by the Prime Minister of Canada."

It said, "The government of India's deep concern and strong protest was conveyed at such disturbing actions being allowed to continue unchecked at the event. This illustrates once again the political space that has been given in Canada to separatism, extremism and violence. Their continued expressions not only impact India-Canada relations but also encourage a climate of violence and criminality in Canada to the detriment of its own citizens."

At the event on Sunday, as the Canadian PM walked up to the stage for his address to mark Khalsa Day, the chants of "Khalistan Zindabad" kept getting louder, showed a video released by Canadian TV channels.

It happened again when Opposition leader Pierre Poilievre



Canada PM Justin Trudeau at Khalsa Day celebrations in Toronto, Sunday. AP

walked up to the stage to begin his address. New Democratic Party leader Jagmeet Singh and Toronto Mayor Olivia Chow were also present at the event.

In his address during the Khalsa Day celebration in Toronto, Trudeau said, "We gather here today to remember that one of Canada's greatest strengths is its diversity. We are strong, not in spite of our differences, but because of our differences. But even as we look at these differences, we have to remember and get reminded on days such as this and every day, that Sikh values are Canadian values."

Trudeau, who has upset India with allegations that Delhi was involved in the killing of Sikh separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar last year, also vowed to always protect the rights and freedoms of Sikhs in Canada and defend the community against hatred and discrimination. India has called the allegations of Nijjar's killing "absurd" and "politically motivated".

Ties between India and Canada have been adversely impacted since Trudeau made those allegations public in September last year.

OBJECTION SUSTAINED

IN A boost to inclusivity and accessibility, the Election Commission introduced home voting facility for the elderly and differently abled for the ongoing Lok Sabha polls. However, 92-year-old veteran lawyer K K Venugopal would have none of it. When election agents approached the former Attorney General of India, a South Delhi voter, to opt for home voting (the scheme is for those over 85 years), the nonagenarian is learnt to have said that he will go to the polling booth and cast his vote. Polling in Delhi is scheduled for May 25.

INDIRA FACTOR

The Telangana Congress is leaving no stone unturned to win back Medak constituency, once represented by former PM Indira Gandhi, which has become a BRS fortress in the last two decades. It has sought the help of Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, who, the leaders in Telangana believe, could bring back the memories of her grandmother and influence the voters. State minister Konda Surekha, who has been given the charge of the constituency, is confident that the party candidate, Neelam Madhu, will win the seat the Congress lost to BRS (then TRS) in 2001. Besides Priyanka, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge will also campaign in Medak, which goes to polls on May 13. Indira had won the seat with a margin over three lakh votes in 1980 and represented it till her assassination in 1984.

NOVEL INITIATIVE

Unlike regular employees, those working on contract in government departments lack facilities such as access to CGHS. To address this challenge, the Indian Audit & Accounts Officers' Wives Association (IAOWA) came up with a unique idea. It organised a three-day (April 27 to 29) health camp called Swasthya 2024 for contractual employees currently working in the office of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India in New Delhi. Around 475 employees underwent health screening during the first phase of the camp. About 800 workers will be covered during the second phase. It is learnt that IAOWA patron Dr Smita Murmu, wife of CAG Girish Chandra Murmu, has been instrumental in designing the health scheme for the employees. At the concluding function on Monday, she interacted with the doctors and appreciated their dedication towards social work.

POCSO case against MP Cong chief, MLA for 'revealing' rape victim's identity

Bhopal: Congress's Madhya Pradesh unit president Jitu Patwari and Jhabua MLA Vikrant Bhuria have been booked under POCSO Act for allegedly revealing the identity of a rape victim in Alirajpur district, police said.

Alirajpur SP Rajesh Vyas said, "A case under sections of POCSO and JJ Act has been registered against Jitu Patwari and Vikrant Bhuria on the complaint of a woman, who alleged that the two leaders revealed the identity of a rape victim and her family in a video. We have not yet called the accused for questioning as the probe is at a preliminary stage." The minor girl was raped by two minor boys on Friday. **ENS**

EC notice on star campaigners' speeches: BJP, Cong seek more time

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

Both BJP and Congress have asked for additional time, seven and 14 days respectively, to reply to the Election Commission's notices to them regarding speeches by their star campaigners Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi respectively, sources said Monday.

The EC had issued notices to BJP president J P Nadda and Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on April 25 with reference to the Model Code of Conduct complaints against the Prime Minister and the Congress MP respectively. Both party presidents had been asked to respond by 11 am on Monday.

As per EC sources, BJP replied to the EC before the deadline, seeking one week's time to respond. The Congress on Monday morning first asked the EC till 5 pm to respond, and later sought 14 days time, sources said. The EC is yet to take a decision on the requests by parties for additional time and could do so on Tuesday, sources said.

In a departure from its own practice so far, the EC decided to issue notices to the party presidents instead of the leaders concerned, Modi and Rahul, for alleged MCC violations.

The EC's notices to Nadda and Kharge had not mentioned Modi or Rahul, but did include copies of complaints against them.

In the case of the PM, the Congress, CPI and CPI(M-L) had

complained about his speech in Banswara, Rajasthan on April 21, where he referred to Muslims as "infiltrators". In the case of Kharge, the EC forwarded the BJP's complaint against Gandhi and Kharge himself for violating the MCC.

The BJP had alleged that Rahul tried to create divisions among linguistic groups, while it also objected to Kharge alleging that BJP had not invited President Droupadi Murmu to the Ram Temple consecration because she was from a Scheduled Tribe.

"...the Commission has taken a view that while the star campaigner will continue to remain responsible for speeches made, the Commission will address party president/head on case-to-case basis," the EC notices said.

HC junks plea seeking Modi's disqualification from elections

MALAVIKA PRASAD
NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

THE DELHI High Court on Monday dismissed a plea seeking the disqualification of Prime Minister Narendra Modi from contesting elections for six years, citing a speech wherein he allegedly sought votes in the "name of God and place of worship".

The petitioner, Advocate Anand S Jondhale, claimed he came across a speech by PM Modi on April 9 at Pilibhit, UP, "seeking votes for his party... in the name of Hindu deities and Hindu places of worship as well as Sikh deities and Sikh places of worship".

It sought a direction to the Election Commission to disqualify PM Modi from elections for six years under the Representation of People Act. Jondhale claimed he had lodged a complaint with the EC, but no action had been taken to date. The HC said it is "not permissible" for the court to "direct the EC to take a particular view" on the petitioner's complaint.

BJP complains to EC about deepfakes during campaign

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

THE BJP Monday complained to the Election Commission about deepfake videos circulating on the internet at a time when Lok Sabha elections are in progress, and requested the EC to ask social media giants to promptly delete such content when it comes to their notice, block accounts of habitual purveyors of disinformation and also place ads in newspapers to caution people against deepfakes.

A delegation comprising Union IT minister Ashwini

Vaishnav, BJP chief spokesperson Anil Baluni and party leader Om Pathak brought to the notice of the EC deepfake videos of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, and actors Aamir Khan and Ranveer Singh, to peddle fake narratives.

The BJP complained that a video of Shah saying BJP would end reservation for Muslims on religious grounds was falsely shown as him saying the party would end quota for SCs, STs and OBCs.

The party also pointed out that a fake video of Aamir Khan urging people to vote for the Congress was circulated, following which an FIR was registered.

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NOTICE

ASRB invites online applications for filling up 01 Research Management Position (RMP) to be filled up on tenure basis for a period of five years at ICAR Headquarters, New Delhi. Candidates are required to apply online using the application form link available on the website: <http://www.asrb.org.in> only. No other mode of filling of application is allowed. The closing date and time for submission of online application form for the position shall be 31.05.2024 (05.00PM). Detailed Advertisement for the position regarding the post/pay scale/pay level and eligibility conditions may be accessed and downloaded from the website of the Board www.asrb.org.in

CBC-01307/12/0001/2425 **SECRETARY, ASRB**

Walk-in-Interview for engagement of Contract Medical Practitioner (CMP) in Kharagpur Division

Employment Notice No.: 02/24 (Med.) CMP-2024/KGP Date: 26.04.2024

Sr. Divisional Personnel Officer, South Eastern Railway, Kharagpur, Govt. of India shall conduct a "Walk-in-Interview" for engagement of 09 (Nine) [SC=01, ST=01, OBC=02 and UR=05] Contract Medical Practitioners on contractual basis [05 GDMOs (04 at Divisional Railway Hospital, Kharagpur & 01 at Santragachi Health Unit) and 04 Specialists (01 Anaesthetist, 01 Obstetrics & Gynaecologist, 01 General Surgeon & 01 Dermatologist)] with consolidated remuneration of (i) Rs. 75,000/- for GDMO, (ii) Rs. 95,000/- p.m. (for 1st year) & Rs. 1,05,000/- p.m. (for 2nd year onwards) for the Specialist Doctors in the requisite field but for Retired Govt. Doctors (Rly./Central/State/PSU) subject to the condition that Contractual Remuneration + Pension drawn by retired doctor should not exceed the Last Pay Drawn at the time of retirement. However this condition is not applicable for Retired Doctors of PSUs. The "Walk-in-Interview" shall be held as per the following schedule. **Date & Time of Walk-in-Interview: 15.05.2024 (Wednesday) from 11.00 AM onwards.** Venue: Office of the Chief Medical Superintendent, South Eastern Railway, Kharagpur. For detailed terms and conditions related to the Notification, Applications Forms and other details, candidates may visit our website www.ser.indianrailways.gov.in (go to Division > Kharagpur > Department > Personnel > Notification & Updates). Moreover, Corrigendum or Addendum or Cancellation if any, shall be published on the website only. Please follow our website periodically.

(PR-92) **Sr. Divisional Personnel Officer, Kharagpur**

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TEMPORARY CANCELLATION/PARTIALLY CANCELLATION/ RESCHEDULING/DIVERSION OF TRAINS DUE TO TRAFFIC BLOCK

In order to upgrade the existing infrastructure and enhanced the safety standards, Railways will undertake the work of extension of loop lines at Nilokheri station on Delhi-Ambala Cantt. section over Delhi Division. To execute this work, Railways will take power and traffic blocks from 30.04.24 to 07.05.24. During this period the following trains will temporarily be affected as under:-

CANCELLATION OF TRAINS			
Train No. & Train Name	Date of Cancellation (from originating station)		
14053 Delhi Jn.-Daulatpur Chowk (Himachal Exp.)	30.04.2024, 01.05.2024, 02.05.2024 & 03.05.2024		
14054 Daulatpur Chowk-Delhi Jn. (Himachal Exp.)	01.05.2024, 02.05.2024, 03.05.2024 & 04.05.2024		
04176 Panipat Jn.-Ambala Cantt. Exp.	01.05.2024 & 02.05.2024		
04140 Ambala Cantt.-Kurukshetra Jn. Exp.	02.05.2024 & 03.05.2024		

DIVERSION OF TRAINS			
Train No. & Train Name	Diverted Via	Date (from the Originating Station)	
15707 Katihar Jn.-Amritsar Jn. Spl.	Jakhal-Dhuri Jn.-Ludhiana Jn.	30.04.2024	
11905 Agra Cantt.-Hoshiarpur Exp.	H.Nizamuddin-Ghaziabad-Meerut city-Saharanpur-Ambala Cantt.	02.05.2024	
11077 Pune Jn.-Jammu Tawi (Jhelam Exp.)	Jakhal-Dhuri Jn.-Ludhiana Jn.	01.05.2024	
12266 Jammu Tawi - Delhi Sarai Rohilla (Duranto Exp.)	Ludhiana Jn.-Dhuri Jn.-Jakhal-Delhi Sarai Rohilla	02.05.2024	
12312 Kalka-Howrah (Kalka Mail)	Ambala Cantt.-Saharanpur-Meerut city-Khurja Jn.	02.05.2024 & 03.05.2024	

SHORT TERMINATION/ORIGINATION OF TRAINS			
Train No. & Train Name	Train to Short Terminate/ Originate at/from station	Train to Partially cancelled between Stations	Date of Cancellation (From Originating Station)
04178 Kurukshetra Jn. - Delhi Jn. Express	From Panipat	Kurukshetra-Panipat	02.05.24, 03.05.24
04405 H.Nizamuddin-Kurukshetra Jn. Spl.	at Panipat	Panipat-Kurukshetra-Panipat	01.05.24 to 02.05.24
04406 Kurukshetra Jn.-H.Nizamuddin Spl.	From Panipat	Panipat-Kurukshetra-Panipat	02.05.24 to 03.05.24
11841 Khajuraho - Kurukshetra Jn. Exp.	at Panipat	Panipat-Kurukshetra-Panipat	06.05.24
11842 Kurukshetra Jn.-Khajuraho Exp.	From Panipat	Panipat-Kurukshetra-Panipat	07.05.24

RESCHEDULING OF TRAINS

Train no. 12983 Ajmer Jn.-Chandigarh Jn. Garib Rath will be rescheduled at Ajmer Jn. 20.00 hrs instead of 18.00 hrs. on 30.04.2024

Train no. 14034 Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra -Delhi Jn. Jammu Mail will be rescheduled at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Station 17.50 hrs instead of 15.20 hrs. on 02.05.2024 & 03.05.2024

Train no. 12414 Jammu Tawi-Ajmer Jn. Express will be rescheduled at Jammu Tawi 20.15 hrs. instead of 18.15 hrs. on 02.05.2024 & 03.05.2024

For any kind of information, passengers are advised to contact RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or may visit Indian Railways website <https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in> or NTES App.

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NOMINATION FILING ENDS ON MAY 3

BJP, Shinde Sena yet to declare candidates on 6 seats in Maharashtra

SHUBHANGIKHAPRE
MUMBAI, APRIL 29

THE FILING of nominations for fifth and final phase of Lok Sabha in Maharashtra ends in less than 100 hours on May 3, however, the ruling alliance of BJP and Chief Minister Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena is yet to declare candidates on six seats, indicating a power tussle between the two parties.

The seats where the alliance is yet to declare candidates are: Nashik, Parbhani, Kalyan, Thane, Mumbai North-West and Mumbai South constituencies. The Opposition alliance Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) of Shiv Sena (UBT), Congress and NCP (SP) have announced candidates for 47 out of 48 seats in the state, leaving only Mumbai North constituency undecided.

So far, the BJP is contesting on 27 seats, Sena on 10 and NCP-Ajit Pawar from four seats. Two phases of elections for 10 seats of Vidarbha and three seats of Marathwada concluded on April 19 and 26. Highly placed sources in the BJP said, "Each of these seats where candidature has been withheld has its own peculiar problems. Thane, the home turf of CM Shinde, has become the bone of contention as both the sides have asserted their rights. After the intervention of BJP's central leadership, the party has finally conceded Thane constituency to Shinde's party with the condition that the candidate "has to be approved by BJP".

The BJP was keen on fielding Sanjeev Naik from Thane but Sena

argued that CM cannot reconcile to parting the home turf to its alliance partner. Insiders in BJP said, "The battle for Thane turned so bitter that the CM had to put his foot down with state leadership."

In 2019, Thane was won by Rajan Vichare of undivided Sena who has since then remained loyal to Sena UBT and filed nomination on Monday. Another constituency embroiled in a bitter tussle is Nashik where Shinde-led Sena is insisting on the constituency as it has a sitting (MP) Hemant Godse.

Earlier, NCP (Ajit Pawar) faction claimed the seat and decided to field its senior minister Chhagan Bhujbal. The BJP had no objection to Bhujbal's candidature as it believed it would help consolidate OBC vote bank. After getting nod from his party, Bhujbal had started work in the constituency. But Shinde Sena made it clear that it was not going to part with Nashik seat. With no signs of official announcement in the seat, Bhujbal has declared his withdrawal from the race. Bhujbal said, "I am deepy hurt... I was made to believe that I would contest. But the inordinate delay in announcement and intra-party bickering have disappointed me. So, I have withdrawn from the contest. Let them do what they want."

Last month, Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis announced that sitting Shiv Sena (MP) Shrikant Shinde would remain the candidate from Kalyan seat. However, announcement is not yet in.

FULL STORY ON www.indianexpress.com

SP, BSP to file complaint with EC over Rajbhar 'threatening public'

MANISH SAHU
LUCKNOW, APRIL 29



Om Prakash Rajbhar

THE SAMAJWADI Party and the Bahujan Samaj Party said they will file a complaint with the Election Commission over Uttar Pradesh Panchayati Raj Minister and Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party (SBSP) president Om Prakash Rajbhar allegedly issuing threats to the public at an election rally.

The minister made the statement on Sunday when canvassing for his son Arvind Rajbhar, who is contesting the Lok Sabha election on his party ticket from the Ghosi Lok Sabha constituency. The SBSP, whose party symbol is stick, is part of the BJP-led NDA alliance.

Samajwadi Party's Mau district president Doodh Nath Yadav said, "Om Prakash Rajbhar was trying to intimidate the public. This is in violation of the Model Code of Conduct. We are going to

file a complaint against him with the Election Commission."

Bal Krishna Chauhan, the BSP's Mau district chief, said OP Rajbhar is acting irresponsibly and not speaking sensibly. "We will file a complaint against him with the Election Commission," he said.

The SBSP, however, alleged that by raking up this issue the Opposition was making "a malicious attempt to distort the meaning of Rajbhar's statement" in the video by citing it out of context.

In a purported video doing rounds on social media, Rajbhar is seen saying, "Aap jaan lo Om Prakash Rajbhar Panchayati Raj mantri hai. Akalmand ki ye ishara hi kaafi hai. Aur nahi

kahunga. Aur dusra alpsankyak kalyan (Minority Welfare), Waqf Board aur Haj vibhag hai. Woh bahut tagda hai, bees percent abadi hai... Apney sey karyaly jakar keh rahey hain ki chhari par vote dengey. (You should know that Om Prakash Rajbhar is the Panchayati Raj Minister. Even a small hint is enough for the wise. I will not say more. And the second department is the Minority Welfare, Waqf Board and Haj. That's quite powerful catering to the 20 per cent population. They are coming to our office saying they will vote on the stick.)"

In a statement, SBSP general secretary Arun Rajbhar sought to clarify, saying, "The Opposition parties are making a malicious attempt to distort the meaning of OP Rajbhar's statement by selectively showing parts of the video. Since the SBSP allied with the BJP, there have been continuous efforts by the Opposition to target Mr Rajbhar."

Kerala: CPM state secretariat backs Jayarajan

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, APRIL 29

CPI(M) STATE secretariat on Monday put its weight behind beleaguered party central committee member EP Jayarajan, who is in the thick of allegations that he had held discussions with BJP leaders to join that party.

After the state secretariat meeting, party state secretary M V Govindan told the media that the meeting discussed the revelations against Jayarajan, who is the convenor of Left Democratic Front in Kerala.

He had explained his meeting with the BJP leader a year back. There is a massive campaign using that statement. The ideological strength of Left leaders does not erode when they meet political rivals. There is a concerted move behind this allegation. The party has allowed Jayarajan to resort to legal remedies.

The party has asked Jayarajan to snap ties with middleman TG Nandakumar, Jayarajan told the meeting he had ended the affair a year back, Govindan said.

The controversy, which snowballed last Friday – the day Kerala went to LS polls – stems from senior BJP leader Sobha Surendran's charge that Jayarajan had completed 90% of his discussions regarding his switch to BJP, but backtracked at the last moment fearing the CPI(M).

FULL STORY ON www.indianexpress.com

Rajasthan BJP mum as ex-leader of minority cell still behind bars

HAMZAKHAN
JAIPUR, APRIL 29

NO ONE in the BJP minority cell wants to talk about their now-expelled Bikaner unit president, Usman Gani. Days after Gani was expelled from BJP over remarks against PM Narendra Modi's speech referring to Muslims, and two days after he was arrested for alleged "breach of peace", party leaders are quiet, as are Gani's family members.

One of the few BJP leaders in the Bikaner minority cell who will talk, on condition of anonymity, says he joined the party due to Gani, attracted by his "hard work" and for "always calling a spade a spade". "I was already influenced by the BJP. There are many leaders in the minority cell but there is no one here who worked as hard as Gani," the party leader says, talking about his work during the Assembly elections last year as well as the recently concluded LS polls.

"Everyone knows him. He was the face of the party's minority cell and attended meetings outside Bikaner too," says the leader, adding that they had jointly campaigned for "Siddhi Baisa (Siddhi Kumari, Bikaner East MLA)" in Assembly elections.

The BJP minority cell's state vice-president, Ramzan Ali, who also hails from Bikaner, acknowledges that Gani had been in the



Usman Gani was held for 'breach of peace'

party for some time but asserts that it was nowhere close to the 15-20 years he claimed to have been in the Sangh Parivar, first in the ABVP and then BJP.

"Gani was in the party only for seven-eight years. He was the district vice-president of the minority cell earlier and the district president for the last three years," says Ali. He adds that BJP was right in taking action against Gani. "Since he wasn't loyal to the party, he was expelled. How can you speak against the party while being part of it? I have been in the party for the last 40 years and these people who joined yesterday are speaking ill of it," he says, adding that Gani "was misled by Congress".

"BJP gave him respect, honour and fame, and his brother a (councillor) ticket. People know him because of the party," Ali says. He refused to comment on Gani's detention, Gani's brother Mohin Khan, who contested the councillor polls in 2014 from Ward No. 55 in Bikaner but lost, declined to speak. The Bikaner police announced on Saturday that it had "detained" Gani.

This was days after he criticised PM Modi for saying at a rally in Rajasthan's Banswara.

SC stays CBI probe into role of Bengal officials in teacher jobs scam

High Court order cancelling illegal hiring of 25,753 teachers, staff remains in force

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

THE SUPREME Court on Monday refused to stay the April 22 Calcutta High Court order cancelling the illegal recruitment of 25,753 teachers and non-teaching staff by the School Service Commission (SSC) but put on hold the direction for a CBI probe against government officials in connection with the matter.

Turning down the request for an interim stay on the cancellation of appointments at this stage, Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud exclaimed "look at how it's done... OMR sheet completely destroyed, mirror images not there, people not in the panel are recruited... this is a complete fraud".

The CJJ sought to know if the tainted appointments could be segregated from the untainted ones. "Please demonstrate whether on the basis of material available it is possible to segregate valid and invalid appointments and who are the beneficiaries of the fraud. 25,000 is a big number. We see that 25,000 jobs taken away is a serious thing. Unless we see that the entire thing is fraught with fraud..." he said.

The bench also comprising Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra posted the matter for hearing again on May 6.

Questioning the HC order, Senior Advocate Rajesh Dwivedi wondered how it could have cancelled all the appointments when even the CBI which probed the case had found discrepancies only in 8,000. He pointed out that the instant case was one of supernumerary posts. The CJ, however, said "but why create these posts when the whole appointment was illegal".

Senior Advocate Dushyant Dave said that the first writ was in 2021 and was taken up by Justice Abhijit Bandopadhyay, and said "that is the foundation of the case". Justice Gangopadhyay later quit his job and joined the BJP.

Senior Advocate Jaideep Gupta, who appeared for the School Service Commission, said the tainted and untainted appointments could have been segregated and there was no need to cancel the entire recruitment.

Senior Advocate Mukul Rohtagi asked how the court can act like the appointing authority. He contended that there are at least four people dependent on every job and the effect of cancelling about 24,000 jobs would be huge. He added that a blanket order for termination was against the rules of natural justice and added that the matter should be heard in detail.

The counsel also argued that the matter would have ramifications for even ministers who

could be sent to jail if the direction for CBI probe is not stayed. Following this, the bench stayed the direction.

The state in its appeal said that the HC instead of segregating the valid appointments, which could not have formed part of the adjudication as opposed to the alleged illegal ones, "has erroneously set aside the selection process in its entirety".

The plea said that no case for cancellation of the entire selection process was made out, and there was no occasion for the HC to set aside/cancel the entire recruitment, when the allegedly wrongful and illegal appointments identified by the SSC based on the CBI report, could have as per law been set aside, after hearing the aggrieved parties.

"However, the Hon'ble Court instead of separating the grains from the chaff, has proceeded to paint the entire selection process with the same colour of irregularity, leaving the state government as an appointing authority, and as the authority responsible to maintain the teacher-pupil ratio in schools, in a precarious position," it said.

The state said that the HC based on only oral submissions, "without any affidavit on record, has proceeded to in a cursory manner" directed the cancellation "in utter disregard to the fact that the same will lead to a huge vacuum in the state schools, unless new selection process is completed by the SSC, especially when the new academic session is on its brim, leading to the students being adversely impacted".

CBI PROBE INTO SANDESHKHALI ALLEGATIONS Why is state protecting interest of pvt individuals: SC to Bengal

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

WHILE HEARING the West Bengal government's special leave petition challenging the Calcutta High Court order directing a CBI probe into allegations of land grabbing and sexual assaults in Sandeshkhali, the Supreme Court Monday asked why the state should "come as a petitioner for protecting the interests of some private individual".

Shahjahan Sheikh, who has been suspended from TMC, was arrested on February 29, in connection with the attack on an ED team on January 5. Several women in Sandeshkhali have also accused Sheikh and his associates of sexual assault.

Justice BR Gavai, presiding over a two-judge bench, posed the question to Senior Advocate Jaideep Gupta, who was appearing for the West Bengal govern-

ment. Gupta said, "There are comments about the state government. And that's unfair because the state government has taken full action."

On April 1, HC ordered a court-monitored CBI probe into alleged incidents of sexual assault and land grabbing in Sandeshkhali, saying that "an impartial inquiry" was necessary "in the interest of justice and fair play".

Appearing for the state government Monday, Senior Advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi urged the bench, also comprising Justice Sandeep Mehta, to take it up after a few weeks as there was "some very important information which could not be collected to be filed with" the plea.

The bench initially said he should go to the HC and file a contempt petition if he was aggrieved by the order.

Singhvi, however, said it was an appeal against the findings given by the HC that needed to be

challenged.

Appearing for the CBI, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said, "the only request we make is to let the pendency be not used anywhere".

"How can I use the pendency," countered Singhvi, adding that "there is much to be said".

Intervening, Gupta urged the bench to give the state one more week as "we need to put some materials on record".

Mehta said he could if the accused had approached in appeal but wondered how the state was aggrieved.

Finally, the bench agreed to adjourn the hearing "up to vacation". The court will be on summer recess from May 18. Later, it agreed to accept the request for adjournment and said in its order that the "pendency of the petition would not be used as a ground for any other purposes".

Justice Gavai also said, "Let's have it in July. The atmosphere will also be conducive after July"

SC seeks ED's reply on Soren's interim bail plea by May 6

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, APR 29

THE SUPREME Court on Monday sought a response from the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on an interim bail plea of former Jharkhand chief minister Hemant Soren in a money laundering case. A bench of justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta issued notice to the ED and sought its response by May 6. The bench said Jharkhand High Court may pronounce its verdict on Soren's plea challenging his arrest in the case. The order was reserved on February 28.

Senior advocates Kapil Sibal and Arunabh Chowdhury, appearing for Soren, said they want interim bail in the matter. Sibal referred to sections under which Soren was booked and said there was nothing against him. The bench said the allegation relates to a 8.5 acre plot.

When the bench was dictating the order, Sibal tried to suggest a date for the next hearing. To this, Justice Khanna said, "What is this? Give us some discretion." Sibal replied, "I understand your lordships are also pressurised." Justice Khanna said, "No, we are not pressurised."

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CORRIGENDUM
(Advt. No. 2514/HRD/MPMRCCL-048/2024, Dated 13.03.2024)
(Advt. No. 2515/HRD/MPMRCCL-049/2024, Dated 13.03.2024)
(Advt. No. 2516/HRD/MPMRCCL-050/2024, Dated 13.03.2024)

OPERATION & MAINTENANCE/E&M AND TRACTION/TRACK/O&M AND STORE/SIGNALING & TELECOM & ROLLING STOCK

The closing date of advertisement No. 2514/HRD/MPMRCCL-048/2024, Dated 13.03.2024, Advt. No. 2515/HRD/MPMRCCL-049/2024, Dated 13.03.2024 & Advt. No. 2516/HRD/MPMRCCL-050/2024, Dated 13.03.2024 has been extended from 30.04.2024 to midnight of 15.05.2024. For more details, please visit Career sections of MPMRCL website www.mpmetrorail.com for Corrigendum No. 2623/HRD/MPMRCCL/2024, Dated 29.04.2024.

M.P. Madhyam/114579/2024

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-TENDERING NOTICE

Sr. DEET/TRD/Agra for & on behalf of President of India invites "Open Tender" through on-line only (e-Tendering) for the following work:

S/N	Tender No.	Name of work	Approximate Cost	Earnest Money
1	AGCTRD/202401	Shifting of 66 kV Transmission Line due to construction of two-lane ROB at LC 568 & 571 on New Delhi - Palwal section.	Rs. 27627634.60	Rs. 2881100/-

Period of completion:- Twelve months. 1. For full details & submission of the bid please see the Indian Railway website www.ireps.gov.in. 2. Tender can only be submitted through web portal "www.ireps.gov.in" up to 1530 Hrs. on date 17.05.2024 753/24 (D)

North central railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @northcentralrailway @CPRONCR

NORTHERN RAILWAY

TENDER NOTICE (THROUGH E-TENDERING)

Provision of Telecom Facilities for Upgradation of maintenance facilities including provision of covered shed on Washing Cum PHLines to facilitate high-speed train's maintenance at DLT-W/L Nos. 3, 4 & 5 Rajdhani W/L Nos. 9 & 10 and balance portion of DLT-W/L Nos. 1 & 2 at New Delhi Railway Stations.

App. Cost of the work(₹)	₹2,65,82,059.01 only
Earnest Money Deposit(₹)	₹2,82,900/- only

Date & Time for upload the tender/closing of tender: 22.05.2024 upto 15:00 hrs.

Website particulars & notice board location where complete details of the tender can be seen etc. See the Northern Railway website www.ireps.gov.in & Notice board at S&T branch, 3rd Floor, DRM Office, State Entry Road, New Delhi-110055

Tender No. 558-Sig-16-Tele-OT-996 Dated: 29.04.2024 1280/2024

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General Public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of a female Namely Shila W/o Unknown, R/o Apna Ghar Ashram Budhpur, Delhi Age: 60 years, Height: 5'1", Complexion: Shallow, ID: Shila, Saseela/Saseela Mai Tattoo on right hand, Wearing: Blue coloured lining Suit-Salwar, was brought in illness condition on 28.03.2024 from Sec-27 Sonipat Haryana to Apna Ghar Ashram Budhpur, Delhi & admitted in BSA Hospital on 14.04.2024, during the treatment Doctors declared her dead on 21.04.2024 at 7:50 PM. In this regard a DD No. 73A dated 21.04.2024 has been lodged at P.S. Alipur, Delhi.

If any one having any clue about deceased female may kindly inform the undersigned and contact on following numbers.

SHO P.S. Alipur, Delhi Ph. No.: 011-27202265 Mob.: 7065036325, 9868910715

DP/5013/ON/2024

NORTHERN RAILWAY

CORRIGENDUM

Ref: (i) Tender Notice. No. 81/2023-2024 dated 05.01.2024 S.No 13 (ii) Tender No. 07235090 due on 07.05.2024.

In reference to above tender, the following corrigendum has been issued. "Reply of Queries raised by the Prospective bidders (Received from 12 to 18th Apr-24)". All terms and conditions remain unchanged. The corrigendum has been published on website www.ireps.gov.in.

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 1272/24

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified person (depicted in the photo), Namely : Unknown S/o Unknown R/o Unknown Age : about 65 years, Height : 5'6", Complexion: Shallow, Face : Oval, Built : Normal, Wearing : Red colour T-Shirt and Blue colour lungi was found in unconscious condition at One Kilometer away from Hazrat Nizamuddin, Police Station, Towards Tilak Bridge, Delhi on 22.04.2024. He was shifted to AIIMS, Delhi, Where during treatment doctor declared him dead on 22.04.2024. In this regard a case vide DD No. 42A dated 22.04.2024 has been lodged at P.S. Hazrat Nizamuddin, Delhi. The dead body has been preserved in AIIMS Mortuary, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about this dead person may kindly inform to the following:-

SHO P.S. Hazrat Nizamuddin, Delhi, South East Distt., Delhi Ph. No. 011-24359989, 24355758, 8750870929

DP/5110/SE/2024

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of an unknown Beggar type male Age: Approx 50-55 years, Complexion: Wheatish, Height: 5'3", Face: Long, Built: Thin, was wearing Light Pink Stripped Full Sleeve Shirt and Cream colour Pajama, was found near Kamra Bangash, Samta School, Chandni Mahal, Daryaganj, Delhi in unconscious condition and taken to LNJP Hospital by CAT Ambulance.

During the treatment doctor declared him brought dead vide MLC No. 116210816/2024 dated 20.04.2024. In this regard a DD No. 16A, dated 20.04.2024 has been lodged at P.S. Chandni Mahal, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about the deceased and his family may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone nos.

SHO P.S. Chandni Mahal, Delhi Ph.: 011-23279338, 23263967

DP/5078/CD/2024

NORTHERN RAILWAY

CORRIGENDUM

Ref.: i) Tender Notice No. 83/2023-2024 Dated : 10.01.2024 ii) Tender No. 15235200A due on 20.05.2024 01. In reference to above tender, the due date has been extended from 30.04.2024 to 20.05.2024. All other terms & conditions remain unchanged. The Corrigendum has been published on website www.ireps.gov.in 1274/2024

Serving Customers With A Smile

WESTERN RAILWAY - VADODARA DIVISION

BODY REPAIR & DOOR REPAIR WORK

For and behalf of The President of India, Chief Workshop Manager, Carriage & Wagon Repair Workshop, Western Railway, Pratnagar, invites e-tender as per the details given below. 1. E-Tender Notice No. 11/37. MECH. PRTN. TEND. 24. 94. 2. Name of Work: Body repair & door repair work on wagons at PRTN workshop. 3. Estimated Cost of Work: ₹1,39,99,213/- (Rupees One Crore Thirty Nine Lakh Ninety Nine Thousand Two Hundred Thirteen Only). 4. Earnest Money Deposit: ₹2,20,000/- (Rupees Two Lakh Twenty Thousand Only). 5. Tender Document Cost: Nil. 6. Period of Contract: 24 Months (Twenty Four Months) 7. Validity of Offer: 90 days. 8. Date & Time for submission of tender & Opening of tender: Bidding will be closed on 21-05-2024 at 15:30 hrs. and will be opened on same day at 15:30 hrs. BRC014

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WESTERN RAILWAY - BHAVNAGAR DIVISION

VARIOUS ENGINEERING WORKS

1.E-Tender No. 09/2024-25 Name of Work: Sabarmati-Botad-construction of RCC Boundary wall to prevent encroachment and tress passing in stretches in remaining portion(4.70 KM) against sanctioned work Sabarmati-Botad and Rajkot Somnath section Construction of RCC Boundary wall to prevent encroachment and tress passing in stretches (12.70 Km) Tender Value: ₹2,84,54,191.84. EMD Value: ₹2,82,300.00. 2.E-Tender No. 10/2024-25 Name of Work: Gradient verification of stations yards and sections using Lidar Survey technology, Tender Value: ₹1,22,50,312.61. EMD Value: ₹2,21,300.00. 3.E-Tender No.11/2024-25 Name of Work: Improvement of Road Surface at 100 Nos. LC (Non PRCL section), Tender Value: ₹1,32,89,993.38. EMD Value: ₹2,16,500.00. 4.E-Tender No. 12/2024-25 Name of Work: ADEN-Portbandar Jurisdiction: Repairs to the FOB and cover shed at Portbandar railway station. Tender Value: ₹6,36,523.49. EMD Value: ₹1,72,700.00. For all above E-tender Bidding Start Date: 01/05/2024. Date of Bidding Closing 15/05/2024. NIT is uploaded on Railway website www.ireps.gov.in on 23.02.2024. BVP04

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NORTHERN RAILWAY

TENDER NOTICE (Through e-tendering)

Name of work with its location	Provision of Telecom Facilities for Provision of Telecom Facilities for Upgradation of maintenance facilities including provision of covered shed on Washing Cum PHLines to facilitate high-speed train's maintenance at Coaching Maintenance Complex at Anand Vihar, Delhi Division.
App. cost of the work (₹)	₹ 2,17,62,158.51/- only
Earnest Money Deposit (₹)	₹ 2,58,800/- only
Address of the office	Senior Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer-C, Northern Railway, 3rd Floor, Annex-1, DRM office, New Delhi -110055.
Date & Time for upload the tender / closing of tender	Tender uploading / Closing date & time 22/05/2024 up to 15.00 hrs.
Website particular & notice board location where complete details of the tender can be seen	See the Northern Railway website www.ireps.gov.in & Notice board at S&T branch, 3rd Floor, DRM office, State Entry Road, New Delhi-110055.

Tender No. 558-Sig-16-Tele-OT-998 Dated: 29/04/2024 1281/2024

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

ABSCONDED / WANTED

General public is hereby informed that one male, Namely: Thierno Mamadou Diallo R/o Lambayi Conackry, Republic of Guinea. Aged: around 43 years, has been missing. Place of absconding Emergency ward, Dr. RML Hospital New Delhi on 10.10.2022. at 08:22 Hrs in this regard FIR No. 88/22, Dated 10.10.2022, has been lodged at P.S. North Avenue, New Delhi. Enquiry has been carried out but despite best efforts, the male could not be traced the description of the absconded/wanted male is as under. Description is as under.

Complexion: Shadowish, Height: 6'4" Feet, Built: Strong, Wearing: Black Silk Payjam & Kurta.

Any person is having any information/clue about absconded/wanted male, may inform to the following at E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.nic.in or website : <http://cbi.nic.in> Tele No. : 11-24368638 or 24368641

SH.O P.S. North Avenue, New Delhi. Ph. : 011-23093040, 23093294

DP/4719/NDD/2023

7 DECISION 2024



BRS LOSES MOMENTUM

Modi popularity props up BJP in Telangana, Cong rides high on Assembly win, schemes

'Absence' of BRS means BJP's emergence as primary opposition, but it has also rallied the minority, backward vote behind the Congress

LIZ MATHEW & SREENIVAS JANYALA KARIMNAGAR, SECUNDERABAD, APRIL 29

"PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi is popular... he is revered as a strong leader, but how can the Ram Temple in Ayodhya or a tunnel in Kashmir or an expressway in Mumbai help me? *Hum ko kya fayda hai* (How do we benefit)?" Sreenivas, a cab driver in Hyderabad, asks.

Few kilometres away in Sanathnagar, Ashok, a marketing professional and a self-proclaimed Modi supporter, complains about the wave of new entrants into the party. "The BJP does not have a solid leadership in Telangana. There is no selfless leader in the party like Modiji in the state... The party is now full of outsiders, not many who rose up the ranks," Ashok says.

Sreenivas and Ashok sum up the BJP's position in Telangana, one of the states in the South that the party is hopeful about to meet its 370-seat target. There is no escaping PM Modi's popularity in the state - unprecedented for a BJP leader in the region - especially among the youth.

But there is also no denying that the party's ranks are now filled with defectors from Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) and Congress. If over 60% of its candidates in last year's Assembly elections were "newcomers", nine of the 17 in the coming parliamentary polls do not have a BJP or RSS background. Telangana Lok Sabha elections will be held in one go on May 13.

At the same time, grumblings within the ranks apart, this is also expected to pay off for the BJP in the long run. As the BRS virtually disintegrates amidst the exodus of its leaders, it has opened up the Opposition space for the BJP. Unlike in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh, the party does not have a partnership with a regional party in Telangana.

Sreethika and Varshita, both degree students at Begumpet, which falls under the Sanathnagar Assembly constituency, say: "Modi is good for the nation". While Varshita also believes the BJP leader is good because he "protects Hindus", Sreethika does not agree with that. However, Sreethika says: "The Congress government is fine for Telangana, but Modi is better at the Centre because the decisions he takes are good for the future of the country. I liked the way he responded to the Pulwama attack (with 'surgical strikes') too."

Even in rural areas, this distinction between the state and Lok Sabha preferences comes up. M Bhagya, who sells wooden poles in Nagunur village in Karimnagar, says she voted for the Congress in the 2023 Assembly elections, but will support Modi now. "People have trust in him... They feel everything is safe under his leadership."

Shankaraiah, Komareli and Laxmaiah, who work at a paddy procurement centre nearby, agree. Shankaraiah, who admits he does not have a special liking for the BJP or any party, says: "All are the same. But we voted for Revanth Anna (A Revanth Reddy, now Telangana Chief Minister) as KCR (previous CM K Chandrashekar Rao) was getting arrogant. For the national elections, let's vote for Modi because he does not have a family which would be an incentive to make off with the country's wealth."

However, not all of Modi's schemes have that much resonance. Sreenivas, who questions how a Ram Temple in Ayodhya benefits him, says: "Of every Rs 800 I get from a ride, I spend Rs 200 for parking near the airport, Rs 100 as toll, Rs 76 as GST, at least Rs 200 for fuel and give Rs 200 to the company (app-based cab service company)... Besides this is the EMI I pay for this car. What am I learning?" Under pressure to emulate



PM Narendra Modi, Union minister G Kishan Reddy (left) and BJP Malkajgiri candidate E Rajender at a road show. Facebook

the impressive win he led the Congress to five months ago, CM Revanth Reddy is eyeing women, minority and backward community voters to compensate for the possible drop in youth support, sources in the party said. A large section of those voters were earlier a BRS vote bank, but are now consolidating behind the Congress.

They include the state's almost 13% Muslim population. "There is no opposition to the BJP at the Centre... Minorities like us feel threatened with the party polarising communities," says Abdul Rahim, a medical representative who works in Secunderabad, from where Union minister and Telangana BJP chief G Kishan Reddy is in the fray.

Kishan had defeated the BRS's Talasani Sai Kiran Yadav by over 60,000 votes in 2019. At the time, while the urban voters and a big chunk of the Hindus were already with the BJP, the minority votes had split between the Congress and BRS.

VOTING ON MAY 13

Mujahuddin, a manager at a shop in General Bazaar, indicates things won't be as easy for the BJP this time. "Modi had 10 years... so we should have another party. The Congress's Nyay programmes are interesting. The schemes the party has put forward for Telangana are also good," he said.

Mohammad Wazir, a small businessman, feels the Congress has a wide range of leaders, while others in the community say there are new concerns following statements by BJP leaders asserting that reservation for Muslims would be ended.

The Congress also expects overwhelming support from the Reddy community, comprising about 10% of the population and seen as highly influential.

However, this can also backfire, as pointed out by Prof K Nageshwar Rao, an MLC and a political analyst. Some of the

backward community vote - considered to be 54% of the total - may be antagonised due to the Reddys overwhelmingly backing the Congress.

"Also, the Congress is still in anti-BRS mode and is not doing much to stop the BJP," Rao says.

Konda Surekha, a minister in Revanth Reddy's Cabinet, says they are counting on retaining the OBC support on account of the government's guarantees. "With the schemes the Congress has started rolling out, the OBC communities will stand by their Revanth Anna," Surekha says.

Support for the BJP in Secunderabad comes from the sizeable middle and upper-middle class voters besides settlers from North Indian states. Kuldeep Singh, who runs a sweet shop at Bagh Amberpet on the Amberpet Main Road and hails from Punjab, sees "outside forces" as behind every criticism of Modi.

Justifying any such "wrongs" as needed "for doing the right

things", Singh adds that the South has not realised "Modi's worth" yet because "they are crazy and vote for even Bollywood stars".

The BJP, which won four seats in Telangana in 2019, is most hopeful about eight this time - Karimnagar, Malkajgiri, Nizamabad, Mahabubnagar, Chevella, Nizamabad, Adilabad and Medak.

The Congress, which won three seats in 2019, including Malkajgiri (won by Revanth Reddy), is seen as comfortably placed in nine seats and in a fierce battle in three more. "Most of the seats we get would be from the BRS kitty," a party leader says.

Of the rest, the BRS had nine seats, while its ally AIMIM had won Hyderabad, a bastion of the AIMIM's Asaduddin Owaisi. Hyderabad is expected to remain with the party despite the BJP's Madhavi Latha putting up a spirited campaign that has grabbed headlines.

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DECODE POLITICS
JAILED KHALISTANI LEADER AMRITPAL SINGH WANTS TO CONTEST. CAN HE?

'Cong is bankrupt on ideology... It neither respects nor retains human resource'

ANAND MOHAN J ASHOK NAGAR (MADHYA PRADESH), APRIL 29

UNION MINISTER Jyotiraditya Scindia, 53, is again contesting from the Guna Lok Sabha seat in Madhya Pradesh which has been held by three generations of his family over the last 37 years. Scindia has himself represented the seat four times, from 2002 to 2019, as a Congress leader. In the 2019 polls, however, Scindia suffered a defeat at the hands of the BJP's K P Yadav. He switched to the BJP in March 2020. In an interview, he speaks about his return to the seat. Excerpts:

You have returned to Guna to reclaim your family seat. What are some learnings from the previous election?

There is no concept of reclaiming the seat. I am a public servant and my mission in life is public service... People have blessed me four times. There must be some of my failings that I did not get their blessings last time. Even though I was not officially their representative, I have maintained contact with them over the five years. People of Gwalior-Chambal are my family.

Senior Congress leader Digvijaya Singh is contesting from the Rajgarh seat. He is considered your principal rival in the Gwalior-Chambal region. Do you think so?

I am concerned with my own election. Everyone has the right to throw their hat in the ring.

The Congress plank in this Lok Sabha election also involves a national caste census. What are your views?



THE EXPRESS INTERVIEW WITH JYOTIRADITYA SCINDIA BJP GUNA CANDIDATE, UNION MINISTER

The Congress has opposed the caste census all through its existence. It opposed the Mandal Commission. A non-Congress government brought in the Mandal Commission. Today, the Congress is talking about the caste census. The Congress needs to stop speaking in a forked tongue. You can fool some of the people sometimes, but not all the time.

Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra passed through some of your strongholds. What do you make of him?

I am not commenting on other people. I am concerned about myself. The Congress is bankrupt on ideology, leadership, and human resource. It neither respects nor retains human resource. The Congress has nothing to offer to India.

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I HEREBY DECLARE

RAJNATH SINGH, 72 Union Defence Minister and BJP's Lucknow MP	TOTAL ASSETS ₹7.37 cr (2024)	₹5.15 cr (2019)
	Movable assets: ₹4.02 cr	
	Immovable assets: ₹3.35 cr	
	Liabilities: None	
	Education MSc, DDU Gorakhpur University	
	Pending criminal cases: None	
SMRITI IRANI, 48 Union Women and Child Development Minister and BJP's Amethi MP	TOTAL ASSETS ₹17.57 CR (2024)	₹11.11 cr (2019)
	Movable assets: ₹6.39 cr	
	Immovable assets: ₹11.18 cr	
	Liabilities: ₹16.56 lakh	
	Education 12th pass	
	Pending criminal cases: None	

Behind leader's anger, fading Muslim politicians in Maharashtra

ZEESHAN SHAIKH MUMBAI, APRIL 29

LAST WEEK, Arif Naseem Khan, a former Maharashtra minister and prominent Muslim face in the Congress, withdrew from the Lok Sabha campaign. He asked: "Congress ko Muslim vote chahiye. Candidate kyun nahin (The Congress wants Muslim votes. Why not Muslim candidates)?" Khan was an aspirant for the Mumbai North Central ticket, which eventually went to Mumbai Congress chief Varsha Gaikwad. Consequently, no major party in the state has fielded a Muslim.

At 1.3 crore, Muslims make up 11.56% of Maharashtra's population, concentrated in Northern

Konkan, Khandesh, Marathwada and Western Vidarbha.

The number of Muslim MPs from Maharashtra has never been proportional to their population since the state came into existence in 1960 - only 15 of the 614 total MPs have been Muslim.

In the past four Lok Sabha polls, just five Muslim candidates have contested for prominent parties. In 2004, the Congress's A R Antulay won in Kolaba. The NCP and Congress nominated one candidate each in 2009, followed by one Congress candidate each in 2014 and 2019. All of them lost.

The only sitting Muslim MP is the AIMIM's Imtiaz Jaleel, who won Aurangabad in 2019. It was the only seat contested by the AIMIM that year; it has said it will

IN NUMBERS	
Population:	11.56%
Number of Muslim MPs since 1960:	15
14 Congress, 1 AIMIM	
Seats with high Muslim population:	
Dhule:	24%
Aurangabad:	20%
6 Mumbai seats:	18%
Bhiwandi:	17%
Nanded:	17%
Parbhani:	16%
Latur:	15%
Akola:	19%
Thane:	15%

contest four-five seats this time.

Asked about not fielding a Muslim candidate, Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge said it was wrong to put it like this. "It is a three-party alliance there and mutual decisions were taken." He also suggested that Naseem Khan might be "compensated" in some way.

The Sena (UBT) said the Congress not fielding a Muslim had nothing to do with it. "Whom to give a ticket is the prerogative of the Congress. If someone says the Sena opposed Naseem Khan because he is a Muslim, that is wrong," Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut said.

The number of Muslim MLAs in Maharashtra is also low - there are 10 in the 288-member House, currently. The highest number of

Muslim MLAs was 13, in the 1972, 1980 and 1999 polls.

Till 1984, Muslims would get elected from rural and mixed-population Lok Sabha constituencies. However, as the politics in Maharashtra got polarised in the early 1990s, with the BJP rising alongside the Shiv Sena, parties started refraining from fielding Muslims.

The number of Muslim candidates remains negligible despite the community playing a substantial role in 14 of the state's 48 Lok Sabha seats - including Dhule, Nanded, Parbhani, Latur, Aurangabad, Bhiwandi, Akola, Thane and the six Mumbai seats.

With the Congress now aligned with the Sena (UBT), the Muslim community has been open to supporting the Bal

Thackeray-founded outfit, which was once a taboo.

Ubaid Bahusain, a social activist from Nanded, said, "While politics is all about winning elections, it also provides parties an opportunity to send a signal. They could have put up one at least in a seat they knew they were going to lose. It would signal to the community that they were being given some representation."

A Muslim MLA from the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi said he had been requesting a Lok Sabha nominee to hold a gathering in a Muslim locality in his constituency - without a response. "They are so sure about bagging the Muslim vote that they are not interested in even campaigning in Muslim areas," the MLA said.

FOLLOW THE LEADER

Unfazed Mahua cranks up campaign: 'Look around, case no issue'

RAVIK BHATTACHARYA, ATRI MITRA & PREMAKUR BISWAS NADIA, APRIL 29

"O DIDI, bhalo achho? Lakshmi Bhandar peyechho? Ashirbad koro (How are you, sister? Did you get Lakshmi Bhandar (a monthly financial assistance scheme for women). I need your blessings)." Perched on an open jeep, hands folded, Mahua Moitra urges a group of women standing in a huddle near their homes. "Haan, peyechhi. Tumi bhalo achho? (Yes, got it. How are you doing?)" comes the reply.

fielded Moitra again despite being disqualified from the Lok Sabha last December over the alleged cash-for-query case.

She seems to be in a hurry to get back her seat, mounting a vigorous, high-voltage campaign.

It's not even 9 am, but the blazing sun is already beating down. Moitra, wearing a blue cotton sari with her trademark full-sleeved blouse, seems under-terred by the heat.

In short, precise sentences, she briefs her team on the day's agenda. "Just say on the mic that your candidate Mahua Moitra has come to meet you. Nothing else, not even slogans against the BJP. Keep it simple," she instructs. Recently, the CBI raided her premises and the ED filed a fresh FIR against her in the alleged cash-

for-query case. Yet, while canvassing on village roads or discussing campaign strategies with her team at night, none of that makes any ripples.

Does she think her expulsion will affect her campaign? "Rubbish! You've seen my area. Does anyone even realise I've been expelled or suspended? Nobody cares," she claims.

In 2019, Moitra had defeated the BJP's Kalyan Chaubey by 63,208 votes. This time, she is pitted against the BJP's Amrita Roy, who belongs to the erstwhile ruling family of Krishnanagar.

Krishnanagar has been a TMC stronghold, where the party won all seven Assembly segments in the 2021 state polls. Moitra is looking to get significant leads from the three Muslim-domi-

VOTE SHARE (%) IN KRISHNANAGAR		
Party	2014	2019
TMC	35.16	45
BJP	26.4	40.37
CPI(M)	29.45	8.8
Congress	5.99	2.8

Source: Election Commission

nated segments, although a keen contest is expected in the other four. She is also banking on the formidable TMC organisation in Krishnanagar, which she leads as the district president.

Moitra has plans to visit each of the over 1,800 booths in the



Mahua Moitra has plans to visit each of the over 1,800 booths in the Krishnanagar constituency. Partha Paul

constituency, which is going to polls in the fourth phase on May 13. "I know each of the booths. Personal connect is key. I have

been doing this for years now," says Moitra, who has been an MLA from Karimpur and MP from Krishnanagar for a decade.

As her convoy is about to enter another village, her voters know this is the time to approach Didi with their problems. An elderly couple beckons her from their doorstep and requests a wheelchair for their physically-challenged son, another appeals for an e-rickshaw. Moitra hears them out, asks local leaders to take notes and asks them to get in touch after the polls. Then there are the selfie requests, which are obliged with the alacrity of a veteran.

As the first leg of the roadshow ends at around 1 pm, she heads back to her Karimpur home. After lunch and a short nap, by 4 pm, Moitra is out again, this time for Chupra. The evening outreach is larger in scale. Over 200 youths on motorcycles welcome her in an open field. The roadshow heads

from one village to another, swelling on the way.

Ayesha Bibi, a homemaker from Alpha, appears to be charmed by Moitra. "See the way she talks to us," says Ayesha.

At about 8 pm, Moitra's Krishnanagar office is buzzing with activity. It is an old, two-storied, Bengali-style building. In the courtyard, rolled up and ready for delivery, lay a pile of posters, placards and hoardings. The "war room" is run by a group of youths who are busy on their laptops. The photos from today's campaign have to be shared on her social media handles.

Moitra huddles with her "young warriors", members of her team, signing documents, discussing the campaigning and passing instructions.

8 DECISION 2024



Rahul: People have understood BJP's plan... PM not even saying '150 paar' now



Rahul Gandhi in Gujarat's Patan, Monday. Express

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE RAIPUR, AHMEDABAD, APRIL 29

CONGRESS LEADER Rahul Gandhi on Monday said PM Narendra Modi has "stopped saying 400 paar because people are now aware that the BJP wants to end the Constitution and take away poor people's rights".

In Bilaspur, Rahul said this Lok Sabha election is about saving the Constitution. "Prime Minister-ji, BJP leaders and RSS people want to change it (Constitution). On the other side, the Congress is trying to protect it."

Attacking the BJP over privatisation, the Congress leader said, "I challenge BJP leaders to announce that they will not privatise any public sector unit and will end the practice of contractual (outsourcing government) work and will waive farmers' loans. They will never do this because their ideology is not that of Ambedkar, Nehru or Gandhi-ji, their ideology is to help select people. Their ideology is to give Adani and Ambani all the country's jai, jungle and zamien (water, forest and land). But now Hindustan's public has understood that Modi and BJP want to end the Constitution. First people did not believe us but in this election everyone is aware that the attack is on democracy, Constitution, reservation and public sector and the election is to save all this and poor people's rights."

Taking a jibe at the PM's "400 paar" claim, Rahul said, "You must have earlier heard Narendra Modi saying 400 paar (400+). Is he saying that now? Now he is not even saying 150 paar. Instead (his) statements now are that they are not against the Constitution, reservation and democracy. This is because now they know people have understood the real thing that they (BJP) want to uproot and throw away the Constitution and the rights of the poor. But you and me, tribals, Dalits, backward, poor general caste and minorities will protect the Constitution. No one, not even Narendra Modi or any power in India or the world can change or throw away this Constitution."

Talking about "Rs 16 lakh crore loan waiver", Rahul said the BJP has waived loans of only "22 people". "The amount 16 lakh crore

given (loans waived) to 22 people is equal to 25 years of MGNREGA amount. If every year for 24 years we waive loans of all farmers it comes up to 16 lakh crore. The situation is 22 people have wealth as much as 70 crore people in India," said the Congress leader.

He said the Modi government has created a huge wealth gap in India. "One per cent of people in India control 40% of (nation's) wealth. This is what Narendra Modi has given us. He is privatising public sector units and even tried to privatise the Railways. Imagine how many people would lose jobs and reservation. How many Dalits, Adivasis and backward people's lives will be destroyed?"

About the Congress manifesto, he said it aims to make people happy. "We will give you the money which was being given to Adani. They made 22 billionaires, we will make crores of lakhpatis."

Earlier, at Patan in Gujarat, Rahul said caste and economic survey will be a priority if the Congress forms a government at the Centre.

Rahul, addressing his first rally in Gujarat in the ongoing elections, said, "First, we have to find out how much of the population is backward, Dalit, poor, and poor from the general caste, and what is their share."

Rahul claimed that the Central government is run by 90 bureaucrats. "Every rupee of the budget is distributed by them...all decisions are taken by the 90 IAS officers. Among them, only three are from backward classes, three are Dalits and one is of tribal origin who are made to sit back and have small unimportant departments. Of the budget of Rs 100, Rs 6.10 is spent on OBCs, tribals and Dalits. While your presence is 90%, participation is only 6%," Rahul said.

He also said that two Indias are being created in the country. "Did you see a poor farmer, worker or even the President, who is a tribal, at the inauguration of Parliament or Ram Mandir? She is the head of State, highest in protocol, but she was not allowed to go inside. Why? Because she is a tribal," he said.

Rahul elaborated on the party manifesto and explained the Congress's Mahatma Scheme and apprenticeship scheme.

'NEED 400 SEATS TO DESTROY CONG CONSPIRACIES'

Constitution, quota cannot be touched come what may: Modi

PM attacks Sharad Pawar for 'spoiling others' good work', says Cong will loot wealth

AJAY JADHAV PUNE, APRIL 29

ATTACKING THE Congress and INDIA bloc for "playing vote-bank" politics for decades and trying to spread "lies", PM Narendra Modi Monday said even if Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar himself turned up and told him to change the Constitution and end reservations, it will not happen. He said he was seeking more than 400 seats "to destroy the conspiracies of the Congress and INDIA bloc".

"Congress has betrayed the SCs, STs and OBCs. As a result, these communities have distanced themselves from the Congress and the INDIA bloc. This has forced leaders of the Congress and INDIA bloc to spread lies. They are telling the people BJP will change the Constitution and end reservations. I want to tell them even if Babasaheb himself came and called for ending reservations and change the Constitution, it will not happen," Modi said in Solapur.

The PM said his government never had any intention to change the Constitution and in the same breath he also clarified the need to attain over 400 seats. "If our government had such an intention, we had the numbers...but we never had such an intention. I am demanding more seats from the country so that I have more power to destroy the conspiracies of Congress," he said.

Pointing out that his government has laid more emphasis on providing social justice to the people, Modi said, "My Government has given constitutional status to the OBC Commission. It is the BJP which has extended reservation for SCs and STs for 10 years. The quota for OBCs is now



Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Pune, Monday. Arul Horizon

available in medical colleges. We have also provided 10% reservation to the poor," he said.

In Satara, the PM who held a rally for BJP candidate Chhatrapati Udayanraje Bhosale said that till he was at the helm, he would not allow the Congress to replicate its formula of religion-based reservation. "What did the Congress do all these years? The Constitution is against reservation based on religion. But in Karnataka, the Congress has included Muslims in OBC reservation. Congress wants to change the Constitution and implement its Karnataka formula across the country. But I want to tell INDIA bloc leaders, that till I am there... I will not allow Congress's plan to succeed," he said.

The PM accused the opposition of circulating fake videos of political leaders of the NDA. "The opposition is spreading lies about me and Union Home Minister Amit Shah. They are circulating video, quoting us on something which we never said," he said.

PM Modi said that during the NDA regime, the colonial Saint George's Cross on the flag of the Indian Navy was replaced by an ensign inspired by the royal seal of Chhatrapati Shivaji.

Meanwhile, on the hometurf of NCP (SP) chief Sharad Pawar, Modi took a dig at the veteran leader in the presence of members of the Pawar family, that included Ajit Pawar and his wife Sunetra, who is contesting the Baramati Lok Sabha seat against sitting MP Supriya Sule.

"There is a 'bhakti atma' (wandering soul) in Maharashtra. If it does not manage success it spoils others' good work. Maharashtra has been a victim of it," said Modi, hitting out at Sharad Pawar without taking his name. "It was just for his own ambition that Maharashtra has always been an unstable state," he said.

He said that the leader tried to unsettle the saffron alliance government in 1995 and insulted voters in 2019. He said the same leader also wants to unset-

tle the country, so it is time that Maharashtra has a settled government under the Mahayuti alliance led by Eknath Shinde, Devendra Fadnavis and Ajit Pawar.

Modi also hit out at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for his impractical ideas for the progress of the country. "Youth leaders are leaving Congress and saying Maoists have taken control of Congress," he said. "Congress is planning to impose inheritance tax on wealth, which means your hard earned wealth will be looted by them."

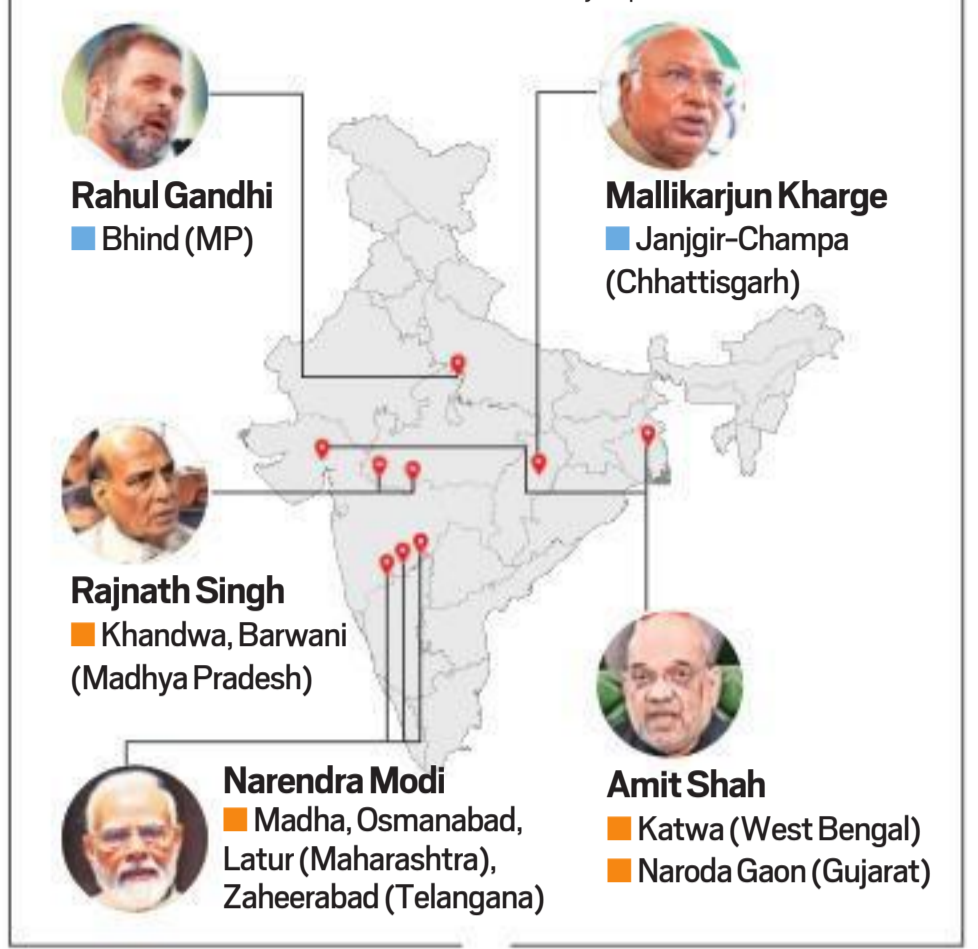
"Congress has always insulted Ambedkar. For Modi, the Constitution and Ambedkar are no less than God. It is the BJP who started celebrating Constitution Day, but the Congress opposed it," Modi said.

He said that the Congress rule's speciality was that "terrorism flourished as terrorists moved about freely, but all of that has stopped in the last 10 years".

WITH ENDS IN PUTS

THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

Who will be where Tuesday, April 30



Mamata says UCC won't benefit Hindus

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE KOLKATA, APRIL 29

CM MAMATA Banerjee Monday targeted the BJP, saying that the party was using the UCC as a "poll plank" amid the Lok Sabha elections and added that it (UCC) would not benefit the Hindu community.

Addressing a public meeting at Jangipur in Murshidabad district, Mamata said, "Whenever there are elections, they use one issue or the other to create communal tension. This time they are talking about the UCC and are propagating that it is against a particular community. But this UCC is nothing but political rhetoric and Hindus will not benefit from it in any way."

Union Home Minister Amit Shah recently said the BJP-led government at the Centre would implement UCC in the country as it is a guarantee of PM Narendra Modi.

Mamata said, "If people don't want the Constitution to break down or the country to be sold,



CM Mamata Banerjee in Murshidabad, Monday. PTI

people must decide now. The BJP has brought in the UCC as part of their divisive political strategy. This won't benefit any community." She added, "We will not allow CAA, NRC and UCC in Bengal as we believe in unity in diversity. We will stand together. For 12 years now, we have been proving this true in Bengal."

"In the two phases, polling percentage has also gone down. In 2004, during (former PM) Atal Bihari Vajpayee's tenure, they came up with the 'India Shining' slogan. But people gave a completely opposite verdict," she said.

Rajnath files nomination from Lucknow amid show of strength

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE LUCKNOW, APRIL 29

DEFENCE MINISTER Rajnath Singh on Monday filed his nomination from the Lucknow Lok Sabha constituency seeking third consecutive term from the seat amid a show of strength in the state's capital city.

With UP and Uttarakhand CMs Yogi Adityanath and Pushkar Singh Dhami by his side, Singh held a 2-km-long roadshow in a specially prepared rath (chariot) starting from BJP headquarters.

The rath showcasing "development projects" undertaken in the parliamentary constituency such as the new airport terminal, flyovers and road projects was welcomed by different organisations and communities.



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh with Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath and Uttarakhand CM Pushkar Singh Dhami in Lucknow, Monday. PTI

As the procession moved, the party supporters chanted the slogans of "abki baar 5 lakh paar" and "abki baar 400 paar", referring to the targets of Singh winning by a

margin of 5 lakh and the BJP-led NDA crossing the 400-seat mark. Rajnath filed his nomination papers at the Lucknow collectorate office around 12 noon.

GROUND REPORT

In Agra reserved seat, a desire for BSP as BJP hopes to win seat fourth time

LALMANI VERMA AGRA, APRIL 29

LESS THAN 10 days to go for polling on May 10, the usual election buzz and animated discussions at street corners and tea stalls is missing in the Agra Lok Sabha constituency.

In this SC-reserved seat, Dalits make up around 30% of the 20.57 lakh voters, with nearly three-fourth of them Jatav Dalits, who appear to be still with the BSP, despite despair over its declining performance.

Despite this overwhelming base for it, the Agra seat has been won the past three times by the BJP, with Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare SP Singh Baghel reelected by the party. Both the SP-Congress and the BSP have fielded Jatav Dalits from the seat - Suresh Chand Kardam and Pooja Amrohi, respectively.

Senior BJP leader Om Prakash points out that the support of Vaishyas, Brahmmins, Punjabis,

non-Yadav OBCs and a section of the Dalits has been helping the BJP win in Agra. "We have been winning mayoral polls since 1989, and won all the five Assembly segments under the LS seat in 2022. Agra is our bastion," he says.

In Basai Khurd, under the Agra Cantonment Assembly segments, Akash Kumar, a Jatav, holds on to hope BSP chief Mayawati will pull a trick and lead the party to victory in Agra. Akash, who talks of celebrating the recent Babasaheb Ambedkar Jayanti by cutting a cake, says Mayawati can be CM again one day if upper castes and Muslims back her - as they did in 2007. "Only Mayawati raises our concerns while the BJP, Congress and SP are restricted to social media," he says.

Like many others, Akash regrets Mayawati did not tie up with Bhim Army chief Chandra Shekhar Azad, who also has a following among Dalits in these parts. "Maybe she fears she will lose her control over the party," he quips.

Shripad, who works as a carpenter and is also a BSP voter,



Jatav Dalit Ramesh Chand in Agra's Etmadpur area; Work stalled at Mughal Museum which was renamed Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Museum in 2022 by the Yogi Adityanath government. Lalmani Verma

said, "Mayawati's tenure as CM was very good. The BJP may have improved the law and order situation, but as a Dalit, I felt the safest in Behenji's rule," he says.

Lalit Valmiki, 35, whose Dalit group generally votes for the BJP, talks about how he got a job during Mayawati's tenure and believes only her government ensured proper reservation. So,

unlike the rest of his community, he says, he too backs the BSP.

Talking about "the BJP's politics", he says: "The BSP was the biggest loser when the BJP made elections Hindu versus Muslims. The minority communities now back the BSP only when they feel it has a strong chance to beat BJP.

In Etmadpur Assembly segment, Ramesh Chand, also a Jatav,

terms the BJP government a "super sarkar". While he admits availing benefits of many central schemes, Chand backs BSP, and wonders why the party keeps losing despite their support. "We all vote for BSP but BJP wins. There is something wrong with the EVMs. Thappa walla (ballot paper) election must be held," he says.

Mayawati too has been calling

for a return to the ballot paper to ensure "fair" elections, though the recent Supreme Court order seems to have settled that debate.

With both the SP-Congress and BSP fielding Jatavs, the Muslim vote at around 2 lakh might prove crucial. The Muslims are seen to largely be with the SP-Congress combine, but the BSP is trying to woo them.

"In 2022, Yogi Aityanath changed the name of the Mughal museum to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Museum. That hurt our sentiments. Why can no new structure with a Muslim name come up?" Mohd Saleem said. The Rs 142-crore project, started in 2016 by the SP government, was halted during the pandemic and has been stalled since.

"Technically, the current government only changed the name of the project" says an official of UP Rajkiya Nirman Nigam, the construction agency for the project. The official added there were some technical issues in the structure and a study by IIT-Roorkee was being done.

However, within the Muslims too, there is some appreciation for the measures of the Modi government such as banning triple talaq. While Nadira, a resident of Agra Cantonment, says BJP has divided people on communal lines, her daughter-in-law, who did not wish to be named, hails the Centre for this. But even the latter blames BJP for the rising "hatred"

towards the Muslim community. Amrohi, 51, the daughter of former Congress RS MP Satya Behan, says the real issues for her are jobs, education, "safety" and "clean drinking water". "I am also advocating setting up of a Bench of Allahabad HC in Agra." The SP is banking on influence of Kardam, a shoe businessman, among the shoe trading community, one of the most significant chunks of the seat's electorate. "The people are disappointed with the BJP government as it did not fulfill promises it made to the common man and are firmly behind the SP-Congress combine. Though Jatavs publicly say they will back the BSP, they will vote for us," says Kardam.

The SP's focus on Agra was evident when its chief Akhilesh Yadav joined Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra in the city in February. Baghel, on the other hand, is confident about winning the seat again on the basis of "the work he has done in Agra over the past few years" and the welfare schemes of the state and central governments.

9 EXPRESS NETWORK

BRIEFLY

RAJASTHAN
NEET aspirant found hanging at Kota room

Kota: A 20-year-old NEET aspirant was found hanging from the ceiling fan of his hostel room in Kunhari area here, with his parents suspecting he was murdered, police said on Monday. Sumit Panchal, who hailed from Haryana's Rohtak, had been preparing for NEET at a coaching institute here for over a year, the police said. His parents have demanded the registration of a murder case against unidentified persons and an impartial investigation into the matter. On demand of the student's parents, a medical board was constituted to perform the autopsy, said Assistant Sub-Inspector Kaptan, who is investigating the case. **PTI**

GUJARAT
173 kg narcotics seized, 5 held, off Porbandar coast

Ahmedabad: In a joint operation with the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) and the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), the Gujarat Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) seized 173 kg of narcotics off the coast of Porbandar. The operation was carried out after receiving information about three people trying to smuggle in narcotics through the sea. Five people have been detained in the connection, officials said Monday. According to a press note issued by the ATS on Monday, an FIR under relevant sections of the Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act was being registered at the ATS Police Station, Ahmedabad, even as the operation is ongoing. **ENS**

Cambodia cyber fraud: Home Secretary Bhalla holds meeting to identify and plug loopholes

MAHENDER SINGH MANRAL
NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

WITH FRAUDSTERS in Cambodia accessing thousands of activated Indian SIM cards and Indian bank accounts to defraud people here, Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla held a meeting earlier this month with the Telecom Ministry, Reserve Bank of India and CBI, asking them to identify and close loopholes in banking and telecom sectors that enable such scams.

As first reported by *The Indian Express* on March 28, over 5,000 Indians are suspected of being stuck in Cambodia and forced to carry out the cyber frauds. According to government estimates, people in India have been duped of at least Rs 500 crore in the past six months.

Even as the Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry

of Home Affairs plan ways to rescue the trapped Indians in Cambodia, the latter is learned to have also initiated action to plug loopholes in the banking and telecom sectors that are being exploited to perpetrate the scams.

The meeting chaired by Bhalla was attended by officials from the Telecom Ministry, MeITY, RBI, NIA, CBI and security experts.

"How thousands of activated SIM cards are being sent and used in Cambodia, how they are utilising Indian bank accounts to receive money, and whether Indian agencies should consider the individuals involved as accused or victims - these were the key points of the meeting. Bhalla asked all agencies to resolve the issue by identifying specific loopholes," a source said.

Initially, the Union Home Secretary discussed how these people were procuring thousands of activated SIM cards in

bulk from different parts of India and using them in Cambodia.

"Bhalla is learned to have asked the DoT to find and fix the loopholes and, after discussing with telecom companies, to issue some directions. Similarly, he asked the immigration department to be more vigilant and coordinate with central agencies after catching individuals involved. It was observed that whenever people were arrested with activated SIM cards, they simply informed local police, who completed their investigation in a routine manner, without probing the larger conspiracy," a source said.

Bhalla also discussed the issue raised by all the probe agencies about how to consider these individuals: as accused or victims. "As of now, it has been decided to take action against the agents who are sending these people to Cambodia. All state police forces

should coordinate and share their information with each other. They should be aware of people in their area and start organising awareness programmes," a source said.

Central agencies have observed that these individuals are using Indian bank accounts to receive money. "Bhalla has also asked the RBI to meet with all the banks and raise this issue with them. If necessary, they should also implement new guidelines," the source added.

Recently, an FIR was registered by Delhi Police in connection with the Cambodia fraud and during probe, they traced the house of a woman in Madurai. But when a Delhi Police team visited her house, they found that her father had passed away and the woman was likely to visit her hometown. The police immediately opened a look-out circular against her and arrested her a few days ago when she came from Cambodia.

"She went to Cambodia last year on the pretext of a job, but was forced to do cyber-slavery. She was earning \$700-800 every month," the source said. MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal last month had said that the Indian embassy in Cambodia has been promptly responding to complaints from nationals who were lured with job opportunities, but were forced to undertake illegal cyber work.

"We have seen media reports on Indian nationals stuck in Cambodia. Our embassy in Cambodia has been promptly responding to complaints from Indian nationals who were lured with employment opportunities to that country but were forced to undertake illegal cyber work. Collaborating closely with Cambodian authorities, it has rescued and repatriated about 250 Indians, of which 75 have been rescued in the last three months," Jaiswal had said.

Top court recalls order allowing abortion of minor rape survivor

Parents express concern over health if 14-year-old undergoes process

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

THE SUPREME COURT on Monday recalled its April 22 order that allowed a 14-year-old rape survivor to terminate her almost 30-week pregnancy, after her parents expressed concern over her health if she were to undergo the process at such an advanced stage of pregnancy.

A bench of Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud and J B Pardiwala decided to alter its decision noting that the interest of the child is paramount after interacting with her in the chamber.

The parents of the girl are learnt to have expressed their willingness to get a natural delivery done in the normal course.

The court had earlier allowed the request of the girl's mother for medical termination of pregnancy (MTP), terming it a "very, very exceptional case where we have to protect her". The bench, which perused a report submitted by the dean of the Lokmanya Tilak Municipal General Hospital, Sion, Mumbai, said the report "has clearly opined that continu-

ation of the pregnancy against the will of the minor may impact negatively on the physical and mental well-being of a minor who is barely 14 years old".

Exercising its powers under Article 142 of the Constitution, which empowers it to pass any order necessary for doing complete justice in a case, the bench allowed the relief to the petitioner, and asked the dean of the Lokmanya Tilak Municipal General Hospital to constitute a team to undertake the medical procedure.

However, the procedure did not take place and the matter came up before the court again on Monday.

The bench then decided to interact with the parents in the chamber (virtually) after which it recalled the earlier order.

The Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act allows termination of pregnancy up to 20 weeks on the advice of a doctor. The right to seek abortion is determined by two registered medical practitioners as an exception if a pregnancy is 20-24 weeks under certain categories such as rape survivors.

NINE YEARS AFTER 106 KILLED

Malvani hooch tragedy: Court finds four guilty of dealing in spurious liquor

SADAF MODAK
MUMBAI, APRIL 29

NINE YEARS after 106 persons died and 75 suffered injuries, with some losing eyesight permanently, in the worst-ever spurious liquor tragedy in the city, a sessions court on Monday found four men guilty of procuring and selling the liquor in Malvani area.

The court also cleared 10 others of all charges. It said the prosecution had established that there was a criminal conspiracy among the four accused but not others.

The court found Raju Tapkar, Donald Patel, Francid D'Mello and Mansoor Khan guilty of charges, including culpable homicide not amounting to murder, criminal conspiracy, voluntarily causing grievous hurt and relevant sections of the Bombay Prohibition

Act for sale of liquor illegally. They face a maximum sentence of life imprisonment. Additional sessions judge SD Tawshikar will hear on the sentence to be given to them on May 6.

On the intervening night of June 17 and 18, 2015, people became falling ill after having hooch, a spurious liquor, available at a cheaper rate than other alcohol.

Initially, the police arrested Tapkar, stating that the hooch was sold from an illegal den he operated. In the following days, police arrested 13 others, claiming that some had purchased methanol from Gujarat.

During the trial, special public prosecutor Pradip Gharat had examined over 240 witnesses, including kin of the deceased, and victims, who submitted the whereabouts of the den from where the hooch was brought.



SNOW, RAIN HIT J&K ROUTES

Vehicles stuck in a traffic jam during snowfall in Anantnag district Monday. J&K also witnessed heavy rainfall causing multiple landslides, blocking the Jammu-Srinagar national highway at several places. Mughal road, an alternate route linking Poonch and Rajouri districts in Jammu with Kashmir's Shopian district, remained closed for the third day due to snowfall. **PTI**

Will Muslim personal law apply on ex-Muslims? SC to Centre, Kerala

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

WILL AN ex-Muslim continue to be governed by the Muslim personal law - the Shariat Act of 1937 - or by the secular laws of the country in matters of succession? The Supreme Court on Monday agreed to consider the "important point" and issued notice to the Centre and Kerala on a writ petition filed by a woman.

The petitioner, Safiya M, general secretary of an organisation of ex-Muslims in Kerala, has sought a "declaration that persons who do not want to be governed by the Muslim Personal Law must be allowed to be governed by the secular law of the country... both in the case of intestate and testa-

mentary succession". The Supreme Court bench also asked the Attorney General "to nominate a law officer to assist the court".

Initially, the three-judge bench presided by Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud, was reluctant to entertain the plea and said as long as person making the will doesn't make a declaration under Section 3 of The Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act, 1937, they won't be governed by the Act.

Subsequently, the bench, also comprising Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, agreed with Safiya's counsel Prashant Padmanabhan. "There is a problem. Because if you don't have a declaration, there is still a void because the secular law doesn't apply. When we started reading it, we said what kind of a petition is

this... it's an important point. We will issue a notice," said the CJ.

The plea said according to the SC's Sabarimala judgment, the fundamental Right to Religion under Article 25 of the Constitution must include the right to believe or not to believe. "To have meaning for that right, the person who leaves her faith should not incur any disability or a disqualification in matters of inheritance or other important civil rights," it said.

"As of now, the petitioner will not be governed by the secular laws of the country... even if she officially gets a no-religion, no-caste certificate from any authority. Thus the petitioner's precious fundamental rights under Article 25 are made meaningless by the absence of such a protection from the State," it said.

ISRO to test Gaganyaan parachutes by dropping module from chopper

ANONNA DUTT
NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

THE INDIAN Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is likely to undertake an important test under the Gaganyaan mission to check the parachute system of the crew module in the next few days, according to officials in know of the matter. The Integrated Air Drop Test (IADT) will see a Chinook helicopter dropping the crew module from a height of around 4-5 km.

"The test is likely to be conducted in the next two or three days. The first IADT will test the parachute system under nominal conditions, meaning it will mimic the process of splashdown of the crew module when

both parachutes open in a timely manner," the official said.

This will be the first in a series of IADT to test the parachute system under off-nominal conditions such as one parachute not opening, both parachutes not opening, or delayed deployment of the parachutes.

After the splashdown of the crew module - the module that will seat the three Indian astronauts - another helicopter will locate the crew module. The Navy will then recover the crew module and bring it to the Chennai coast, according to officials.

The splashdown and recovery of the crew module is also an important step, especially since the crew module turned upside down during the first test vehi-

cle mission last October. The space agency will also undertake test vehicle missions - where a single stage rocket carries the modules several kilometres in space to test all systems - before the first uncrewed mission. "This is uncharted territory. We do not know how many such tests will be needed. It will depend on findings from these tests," said the official.

The crew module will be the pressurised cabin which will carry the three astronauts to space and back.

While the current tests are only with the crew module, for the actual flight, the crew module will be attached with a service module that will house all support systems such as the propulsion system.

Dalit leader, Vajpayee Cabinet minister Srinivas Prasad dies at 76

NIKHIL GHANEKAR
APRIL 29, NEW DELHI

PEOPLE IN Bihar's Sheohar, Banka, Kaimur and Kishanganj districts are most vulnerable to lightning, recording the highest casualty rate of per million populations per year, revealed a study by the IMD.

Examining data from 2017-22, the study found 1,624 died from lightning strikes and 286 were injured. Most of the casualties and injuries, about 76.8%, were caused by lightning strikes between 12.30 pm and 6.30 pm, it showed.

Of the 1,577 deaths, 1,131 (71%) were men. IMD scientists said men in the age groups 11 to 15 and 41 to 45 and residing in rural areas were particularly vulnerable to lightning strikes.

On average, 271 people died from lightning strikes each year in Bihar during the six-year study period. The state's annual casualty rate per million of 2.65 was higher than the national av-

Bihar saw highest lightning-related deaths in June, July, says IMD study

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erage of 2.55, the study said, June and July accounted for 58.8% of lightning-related deaths.

Lightning strikes claim thousands of lives each year and Bihar is among the top three most affected states in terms of lightning-linked casualties along with MP and UP, data shared by the Earth Sciences Ministry in Parliament in 2023, showed.

Much of Bihar lies in the Indo-Gangetic plains and the government pays Rs 12-15 crore annually as compensation to families of those killed in lightning strikes, as per the study, adding that the state's disaster management budget is around Rs 300 crore.

One of the more nuanced aspects of vulnerabilities found during the study was the higher impact of lightning strikes in districts with higher population density, said lead author Anand Shankar, an IMD scientist from Patna Meteorological Centre.

"In North West Bihar, the lightning strikes are lower but casualties are higher. These parts of Bihar

are not urbanised and may be having poor shelter density around farm areas. Socio-economic factors play an important role in mitigating the impact of such natural hazards," he said. Shankar added that timing of the lightning strikes and corresponding casualties are in line with global findings. This is because most thunderstorm activity occurs in the afternoon, he said.

The study's co-author Vivek Sinha, a senior scientist from IMD Delhi, said that the threat potential of lightning strikes is not uniform. Topography, elevation, and local meteorological factors determine the spatial distribution of lightning strikes. A higher lightning frequency is seen in the eastern region owing to higher moisture incursion, the study said.

Sinha said that assessing vulnerability and hotspots is important for policymakers and to design mitigation measures. "This kind of vulnerability mapping can provide a template to change the operational side of disaster management," Sinha said.

FROM PAGE ONE

FULL REPORTS ON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

• Manipur chargesheet: Women made it to police Gypsy but told no key

A video, which had become viral in July 2023, and triggered nationwide outrage, showed the two women - one in her 20s and the other in her 40s - being made to walk naked towards a field by a mob of men. Some men could be seen dragging the two women and sexually assaulting them.

"A spate of incidents took place at other places thereafter. Mob belonging to the Meitei community initiated an attack on one village by setting houses on fire and also targeted a few residences in neighbouring villages. The mob deliberately set the church on fire. Investigation also revealed that on May 4, there was a meeting of the pradhans of surrounding Meitei villages and chiefs of other community villages. However, despite the decision taken in the meeting, the mob burnt down the church, some houses and nearby villages," the CBI said in the chargesheet.

"Probe has revealed that out of fear, the complainant, three victims and two men, another man with his daughter, and a grand-

daughter, ran into the forest. The mob noticed the hiding place of members of a family and upon seeing them started shouting 'people are hiding here'. The members of the mob with a big axe in hand rushed towards them and threatened them saying, 'the way you people in Churachandpur treated us (Meitei people), we would do the same thing to you'. The mob forcefully brought all the family members to the main road and separated them, taking one of the victims and her granddaughter in one direction. Two women and their father and their village chief in one direction, while two women and two men in another direction," the CBI said.

The CBI chargesheet noted that some people in the mob told the victims to approach a police Gypsy parked nearby on the roadside of a village. "While approaching the police Gypsy, the mob again separated the victims... Two (women) victims managed to get inside the police Gypsy. Two policemen along with a driver

dressed in plain khaki uniform, were with them inside the police Gypsy, and three to four policemen were outside. One male victim requested the policemen to start the vehicle, however the driver of the police Gypsy replied, 'there is no key'. They kept on begging the policemen repeatedly to help them and save a man being assaulted by the mob, but the 'police did not help them'," the CBI said in the chargesheet.

"... The driver of the Gypsy suddenly drove and stopped the vehicle near the violent mob of around 1,000 people, and the male victim again requested the police to start the vehicle, but he was asked to keep silent. After some time, one police personnel came and told his colleagues that the man had stopped breathing. On hearing this, the male victim told the woman victim that his father was beaten to death," the CBI said in the chargesheet.

The CBI investigation revealed that a large mob returned towards the police Gypsy and shook the

vehicle. "They pulled out a male victim and two women victims from inside the Gypsy. The policemen, meanwhile, left from the spot leaving the victims alone with the mob. They tore off the clothes of both the women victims and started thrashing a male victim... One of the woman victims was present at the nearby spot and witnessed the entire incident," the CBI said.

The CBI had registered a case on the request of the Manipur government and a notification from the Centre. The accused have been charged under various sections of the IPC, including those pertaining to gangrape, murder, outraging the modesty of a woman, and criminal conspiracy.

The chargesheet has been filed against: Huiem Herodash Meitei (32); Arun Khundongbam alias Nanao (31); Ningombam Tomba Singh alias Tomthin (18); Pukhrihngbam Suranjoy Meitei (24); Nameirakpam Kiram Meitei (30); and a juvenile, apprehended by Manipur police on July 20.



WORDLY WISE
 WE ARE STUCK WITH TECHNOLOGY WHEN WHAT WE REALLY WANT IS JUST STUFF THAT WORKS.
 — DOUGLAS ADAMS

The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY
RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

HOLD TO ACCOUNT

Allegations of sexual abuse against MP Prajwal Revanna must be probed. BJP should lean on ally JD(S) to take exemplary action

THE ALLEGATIONS OF sexual abuse against Prajwal Revanna, the JD(S) candidate from the Lok Sabha constituency of Hassan, Karnataka, which went to polls on April 26, bring fresh urgency to a question that has long haunted politics: What makes it possible for political leaders to wield their clout like a weapon over the very people who have propelled them to power? Any attempt to answer this question in Revanna's case — who has been accused of abusing several women, with videos of the assaults being widely circulated for at least a week — must also respond to the problem of the deeply masculinised nature of power in India, as it must in other cases that have come to light over the last few years, such as that of the former chief of Indian wrestling and BJP MP, Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh. In a society that, despite the progress of the last seven decades, remains deeply patriarchal, where women — even as they carve out spaces to assert their autonomy and pursue their ambitions — continue to have their wings clipped by centuries-old strictures, is it possible to make the political "boys' club" take this skewed power equation seriously?

Even as women voters are being more aggressively wooed by parties — women's rising turnout, in fact, is seen as decisive factor in poll results — they remain poorly represented not only among elected representatives, but also in leadership roles at the party level. While women have had one-third reservation in panchayats and local urban bodies since the early 1990s, representation in Parliament has been woefully poor — less than 15 per cent in the current one — as well as state assemblies. This has been sought to be corrected by the passing of the women's reservation bill in a special session of Parliament last year. However, the fact is that long-lasting change requires not just the top-down implementation of a law. If democracy is to be deepened, if women are to be ensured not only of power but also of justice and equity, there needs to be transformation at every level. This would require a commitment from all parties to involve more women in decision-making, greater parity in ticket distribution and allowing more women leaders to emerge. It would also require stronger action against all forms of gendered abuse.

That's why the allegations against Revanna must be probed with uncompromising rigour. It's time that women's dignity and autonomy — not just welfare schemes that view women primarily as beneficiaries of state largesse — get the attention they need. Campaign politics isn't a natural ally of due process but in this case, the state government needs to probe all aspects of the allegations: the alleged victims, the accused, the network of the accused, the apparent immunity and impunity. As the irreversible force of women's empowerment pushes against the wall of male privilege, ensuring that more women are in the public sphere, where they have as much at stake as their male counterparts, they need to be assured that the law shall follow their course.

SHORT ON SAFETY

Frequent controversies over food products in India show the country's regulator in poor light. FSSAI must step up

IN THE PAST few weeks, questions have been raised about India's food safety regime in the wake of allegations against products as varied as infant food, "health drinks" and spices. The country's food business regulator, FSSAI, is probing charges of unhealthy sugar content in Nestle's baby food products. The agency has also begun collecting samples of powdered spices of several brands, including market leaders MDH and Everest, after regulatory authorities in Singapore and Hong Kong raised concerns over carcinogenic additives. The authorities in the Southeast Asian countries are not the first to raise red flags. A report in this newspaper has revealed that over the past six months, US customs declined entry to 31 per cent spice-related shipments of MDH over salmonella contamination. Data obtained by this newspaper from the US FDA shows that the refusal rate has doubled in the past one year. The EU too has, reportedly, placed food items originating from India under the scanner. The contaminants in question are different. But the brands in question are amongst the most well-known. The controversies have raised fears that a large section of the Indian market could be bypassing the regulatory radar.

The FSSAI came into being in 2008, two years after the enactment of the Food Safety and Standards Act. Its remit extends to multinationals like Nestle and Cadbury, established Indian companies like MDH and Everest and thousands of small and medium-sized food businesses who have razor-thin profit margins. The agency has had a chequered record. It has consistently been hamstrung by staff and infrastructure shortage. This has meant that a large section of the market views regulation as paperwork rather than regular inspections followed by expert guidance. The FSSAI is mandated to educate businesses and consumers on food safety. It is also tasked to "collect and collate data regarding food consumption, incidence and prevalence of biological risk, contaminants in food, residues of various contaminants in foods products, and identify risks". The frequent controversies around food items indicate that the agency has done scarce justice to its remit. In instances such as the Vital Nutraceuticals case in 2015, the food authority's actions have been struck down by courts for procedural shortcomings.

Regulations must contend with scientific uncertainty and the variance in rules amongst nations. That's why the food authority must regularly update standards, and handhold exporters. The FSSAI has fallen short on both counts. The failure of MDH's plants to meet the USFDA sanitary standards shows the Indian regulator in poor light. A country with a growing food market and an aspiration to increase its footprint in the global market needs a more proactive regulator.

BORING AND FINE

A new device in the market seems to be responding to Gen Z's call for a simpler time

GEN Z, IT seems, wants to turn back the clock. Half a century after the first handheld phone — the "zero generation" phones — was launched by Motorola in 1973, the Milan Design Design Week paid an ode to the retro for the unveiling of the Boring Phone. Created by Heineken Beer in collaboration with fashion retailer Bodega, the Boring Phone is not "smart". It doesn't have apps or maps. No calorie trackers or cameras with enough megapixels to pick out the smallest pimple. The tagline at the launch read, "There's more to social life when there's less on your phone".

The Boring Phone is a response to the yearning for a simpler time. Many GenZers want to revert to a romantic idea (the reality notwithstanding) of the 1990s-2000s. In 2017, HMD Global brought back the Nokia 3310, popularly referred to in India as the "dabba" phone. In 2018, the "newtro" trend — "new" and "retro" — kicked off in South Korea: Old tech, snacks, TV shows, etc, were modernised and brought back. In India, Campa Cola — the cold drink of the pre-liberalisation era — was rebooted in 2023. Around the world, fashion from eras gone by has made a comeback with companies reporting massive hikes in sales of Y2K cargo pants, intermittently trendy bell-bottom denims and the self-consciously kitschy butterfly clips.

The appeal of the "boring" phone makes sense in the tech-first world of today. It taps into the allure of an ever-evasive nostalgia by co-opting the aesthetics of an era gone by. One doesn't need the latest, most updated phone every year, or even the newest model of the car or the playstation, whatever might be one's poison. For a generation which has grown up with shouts of "the future is AI" and the "next big thing in tech", going backwards instead of forward may be the language of rebellion.



ASHOK LAVASA

Mind the gap

Election Commission's Model Code needs reform, model leadership will also help

"I DID NOT take kindly to the usual methods and devices that accompany electioneering. Elections were an essential and inseparable part of the democratic process and there was no way of doing away with them. Yet, often enough, elections brought out the evil side of man, and it was obvious that they did not always lead to the success of the better man. Sensitive persons, and those who were not prepared to adopt rough-and-ready methods to push themselves forward, were at a disadvantage and preferred to avoid these contests. Was democracy then to be a close preserve of those possessing thick skins and loud voices and accommodating consciences?"

This passage occurs in *The Discovery of India*, written by the first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, when the Election Commission of India (EC) did not exist, nor did the Model Code of Conduct (MCC).

The MCC, a unique consensual arrangement that evolved over many years, comes under stress as soon as it comes into force with the announcement of elections. It tests political parties, their leaders, the candidates, and the EC itself. All this is under the piercing gaze of the media and the critical oversight of the judiciary.

The MCC started as a small set of dos and don'ts for the Assembly election in Kerala. It covered the conduct of election meetings/processions, speeches, slogans, posters and placards in 1960 when K V K Sundaram was the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC).

In 1968, under CEC S P Sen Verma, the EC consulted with political parties and circulated the Code to observe minimum standards of behaviour to ensure free and fair elections. Whereas it became a practice for the EC to circulate the Code before every General Election in 1979 with S L Shakhdar at the helm, the EC in consultation with the political parties further amplified the code, adding a new section that placed restrictions on the "party in power" to prevent abuse of position to get undue advantage over other parties and candidates. In 1991, the MCC was consolidated and re-issued and the redoubtable T N Seshan used it as a weapon of mass destruction.

The political environment in the country has since sharpened, blunting the efficacy of the MCC. Instances of violations are becom-

ing rampant and rabid. Political leaders are deploying their prestige, firepower and demagoguery like never before and finding ingenious ways to remain in the shadow zone between the letter and the spirit of MCC. Money has replaced muscle; technology has provided a shining armour. Chicanery in dodging the MCC has a higher premium than the inclination to adhere.

While the MCC draws its strength and sanctity from the strict, prompt and non-discriminatory enforcement by EC, there is a need to remodel it by imposing more reasonable restrictions in a non-discriminatory manner. This is essential to restore a certain degree of decorum and discipline in public discourse.

A significant gap in the present framework is that the MCC has not clearly spelt out the consequences of defaults, thus diluting its deterrent effect. It is necessary to specify punitive measures in a fair, transparent and predictable manner, especially with respect to serious violations such as hate speech invoking communal and caste feelings to secure votes, offering inducements for garnering votes, using foul, filthy and abusive language against political opponents, indulging in political propaganda by invoking, praising, questioning or criticising the Indian armed forces, etc.

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Such violations should attract severe consequences that could be graded and made known publicly. For example, the first case of any such violations could attract a ban on campaigning for a specified period; the second could entail a ban for a longer period and the third would debar the concerned candidate or political functionary for the entire period while the MCC is in force. Such a ban would mean a complete prohibition on all public appearances and interactions on all forms of media; those found in repeated violation would not be eligible to be categorised as star campaigners in subsequent elections for a certain length of time.

In a rather deft (some felt it was "droll") move, the EC has taken the unprecedented step of serving political parties notice for violations alleged to be committed by individuals. Whereas a traffic violation is the responsibility of the driver, issuing a notice to the party introduces the principle of vicarious liability as notices are served only after *prima*

facie satisfaction by the EC. Perhaps the time has come for the MCC to initiate punitive action against political parties if its functionaries or star campaigners are involved in proven cases of MCC violation. This action could be a fine and/or action under The Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, if warranted. The mechanics of this should also be suitably incorporated into the revamped MCC without absolving individual offenders.

The procedure for dealing with such cases should be streamlined such that punitive action is taken within 72 hours of the violation. A standard procedure must be laid down. Delayed responses dilute the impact of penalties and diminish public confidence in the credibility of the EC.

A list of all cases of reported violations should be compiled, a statement of their disposal/pendency should be displayed on the EC website and a database needs to be created for public information.

In MCC violations directly connected with specific provisions of extant law under various Acts, it ought to be the responsibility of the law enforcement machinery to initiate legal action. If that has not been done and a complaint is received and action is taken by the EC, it should be mandatory that legal action by the law enforcement machinery should automatically follow even if there is no specific direction by the EC.

Whether all this will deter potential violators and instil an element of self-regulation in the conduct of political parties depends on the character of the political leaders. However, it would certainly limit the referee's discretion in decision-making, thereby sparing him allegations of bias or discrimination. The EC would also bind itself publicly to proceed against cases of transgression in a time-bound and credible manner, which will inspire greater public confidence in its commitment to conducting free and fair elections.

But more than anything, what can inspire popular trust is model leadership, not model codes. Demosthenes said, "You cannot have a proud and chivalrous spirit if your conduct is mean and paltry; for whatever a man's actions are, such must be his spirit."

The writer is a former Election Commissioner



SHASHI SHEKHAR VEMPATI

IN THE NAME OF EQUALITY

Rahul Gandhi's call for a social 'X-ray' is divisive and based on outdated ideas

AS INDIA STANDS at the cusp of significant socio-economic transformations, Rahul Gandhi's recent speeches and the Congress's manifesto suggest a turn towards an era many thought had passed. They echo the grand socialist experiments of the 20th century that promised much but delivered little. Rahul Gandhi's approach, which envisages extensive socio-economic surveys and caste censuses, seems less about fostering unity and more about seeking fault lines and sowing division.

During the Congress manifesto launch rally in Hyderabad, he advocated for an intrusive socio-economic and caste census to dissect society for resource redistribution. This approach dangerously aligns with Maoist doctrines of "struggle and transformation", which historically led to catastrophic outcomes such as China's Great Leap Forward and the economic disarray in Venezuela under socialist policies. The manifesto pledges to implement nationwide socio-economic re-engineering based on caste data — similarly social engineering experiments have repeatedly failed across the globe. Such measures threaten to push India into economic and social chaos, driven by an ideological zeal that ignores the complex array of factors at play within a modern economy. By relying on bureaucratic diktats to realise social outcomes, such measures end up exacerbating the problem. Rahul Gandhi's emphasis on redistributing institutional power during his appearances in Biaoara and

Bhandara risk embedding economic policy within a narrow communal context.

At the heart of Rahul Gandhi's agenda is the call for an "X-ray" of Indian society — to expose and redistribute wealth. This seemingly progressive rhetoric mirrors dangerous historical precedents. These strategies are not just about wealth distribution; they are about reallocating power along caste lines, a move that could trench divisions rather than erase them. To repeatedly tout a societal X-ray reflects the scorched earth politics of the Congress that seeks to expose Indian voters to political radioactivity. The purported targets of this "X-ray" are India's myriad wealth creators. In their eagerness to demonise wealth creators and to weaponise wealth redistribution, the Congress and Rahul Gandhi seem to have forgotten the basic tenets of economics.

With irresponsible talk of a societal X-ray, Congress and Rahul Gandhi are willing to fritter away India's demographic dividend by sacrificing and jeopardising the economic prospects of an entire generation. This radioactive politics of redistribution goes beyond merely scorching the political ground, for its fallout will scar an entire generation, breeding lingering discontent. Early indicators are already visible with irresponsible promises being made by Rahul Gandhi and the Congress on cash transfers to the youth who spend their time "watching reels on Instagram and YouTube". Rather than motivate India's youth towards acquiring skills, building ca-

capacity and aspiring to create value through their industry and entrepreneurial spirit, the redistributive mindset of the Congress and its scion seems set on scarring this generation with entitlements.

One must not be surprised if the radioactive logic of India's principal opposition party one day seeks to even "X-ray" the social media activities of India's youth in its toxic pursuit of vulnerable entitlement seekers. The wisest course for India would be to shield the society from this kind of radioactivity before societal "X-rays" are weaponised and competitive politics indulges in a nuclear arms race of sorts.

India needs policies that foster inclusive growth, not those that gamble with its future by stirring up societal divisions. It is crucial for voters to critically examine these regressive proposals, which flirt dangerously with outdated and failed economic doctrines. This scrutiny is essential to prevent the scorching of our society along economic and caste lines — a scenario detrimental to our national ethos of unity in diversity. As we debate the path forward, let us choose strategies that build, not those that break. India's strength lies in its diversity, and its future should be built on policies that recognise and harness this, rather than those that attempt to redistribute it through the lens of outdated ideologies rooted in politics of "X-ray" surveys and a radioactive census.

The writer is former CEO of Prasar Bharati

APRIL 30, 1984, FORTY YEARS AGO

A CONGRESS WIN

THE CONGRESS-I ENDED the five-year rule of the Peoples Conference in the Union territory of Mizoram when it achieved absolute majority in the 30-member Assembly. The Congress-I trounced the Peoples Conference by capturing 18 of the 28 seats. The election from North Vanlaphai constituency has been countermanded because of the assassination of a candidate.

TAIWAN STALEMATE

CHINA TOLD THE US that arms sales to Taiwan remained an urgent problem, despite

the results achieved by President Ronald Reagan's visit to Beijing. He said this was emphasised during talks between the US Secretary of State George Shultz and the Chinese Foreign Minister Wu Xueqiang. They met after President Reagan's discussions with China's top leader Deng Xiaoping when the Taiwan issue was discussed. No breakthrough was achieved.

A THIRSTY SUMMER

DESPITE THE MARGINAL improvement in water supply as compared to last year, Delhiites will continue to crave for water this summer because the extra supply has been

nullified by an increase in demand. If power breakdowns and low voltage conditions continue to prevail, distorting water supply, then a thirsty summer is in store for the citizens.

EMERGENCY IN SUDAN

THE PRESIDENT OF Sudan, Gaafar Nimeiry, proclaimed an indefinite state of emergency in Sudan, banning all meetings and demonstrations and mobilising public services. In a nation-wide speech on radio and television, he said he had taken the action "to enable authorities to achieve maximum stability and security".



THE IDEAS PAGE

Mom, baby and us

Constitutional rights of working mothers will only be realised by investing in care economy and emphasising that childcare is a social need, not an individual burden



ASHWINI DESHPANDE

WHICH PARENT IS primarily responsible for the hands-on work that goes into raising children until they are adults? In India, like elsewhere in the world, it is typically the mother. The central government has a childcare leave (CCL) policy which allows for 730 days of paid leave to female employees during their entire service period, for taking care of a maximum of two children under 18 years. This is over and above maternity leave.

The explicit mention of female employees as beneficiaries could be viewed as a valid recognition of the fact that it is primarily mothers who do the heavy lifting of raising children that extends beyond the first six months after birth (the period considered under maternity leave). Men are eligible for CCL only if they are single fathers.

While one can justify this gendered policy targeted towards mothers on pragmatic grounds — mothers are direct caregivers much more so than fathers are — we can legitimately ask if the law should be putting a seal of legitimacy on inequitable norms. This is a genuine conundrum because if the inequitable gendered norms are firmly entrenched, offering CCL to fathers might result in a situation where they avail of paid leave, but don't actually contribute to the multitude of daily tasks that constitute childcare, including providing the emotional and logistical anchoring during stressful periods, like the board exams.

If women are the ones bearing this responsibility, over and above their multiple other contributions to the household, their workplace needs to recognise this and provide some accommodation for this extra work, which presumably is the intention behind the CCL. This is a central government provision that is not binding on the states. Recently, a government employee in Himachal Pradesh was denied the CCL. The Supreme Court declared this denial as a violation of working women's "constitutional right".

There are several questions that this episode raises which highlight the complications inherent in this policy. If this is a constitutional right, should this central provision not be binding on the states? And why is this provision applicable only to government employment, unlike maternity leave? Would making this mandatory in the private corporate sector worsen employer bias against women, i.e., would they be less likely to hire women? Finally, how many establishments have the bandwidth to implement this?

Let's look at the last question first. Provisions of the Maternity Benefit Act, or the POSH (Prevention of Sexual Harassment) Act are applicable to establishments with 10 or more employees. We need to note that the overwhelming majority of firms in India are not covered by any of these benefits because they are too small. The Economic Census reveals that 98 per cent firms are "micro", i.e., they have less than 10 employees.

Official data from the Unincorporated Enterprises Survey for 2015-16 reveals that the average number of people working in an



CR Sasikumar

enterprise is 1.78, i.e., less than two. 61.8 per cent of these enterprises have one worker; 35.6 per cent have 2-5 workers; 1.9 have 6-10 workers. Only 0.8 per cent of all unincorporated enterprises have more than 10 workers.

Even in the registered manufacturing sector covered by the Annual Survey of Industries (ASI), where one would expect individual firms to be large, data reveals that 30 per cent of such establishments have less than 10 employees.

The ground reality is that the pro-women laws, which are meant to ensure constitutional rights, are applicable to a small minority of employed women. In the larger establishments (i.e., private establishments with more than 10 workers) where POSH and maternity laws are applicable, research hints at perverse consequences, such that in the short run, these have the potential to worsen employer bias against women.

This doesn't mean that there should not be pro-women laws, even if applicable to a tiny proportion of workers. Wherever possible, legal structure needs to guarantee women's rights.

However, we also need to think more broadly about how to effectively ameliorate the burden of childcare that is seen as essentially the mothers' responsibility. This would require several elements, of which the CCL could be one part, with the recognition that it is genuinely difficult for smaller establishments to implement.

The 3Rs framework shows the way for-

The 3Rs framework shows the way forward: recognise, reduce, and redistribute the responsibility of childcare. Today's children are tomorrow's workforce and therefore childcare is a social responsibility. We need to recognise that childcare consists of a set of multiple, complex, daily, repetitive, physical and emotional tasks that mothers perform, over and above all their myriad other daily tasks. Recognition will make the issue visible.

ward: Recognise, reduce, and redistribute the responsibility of childcare. Today's children are tomorrow's workforce and therefore childcare is a social responsibility. We need to recognise that childcare consists of a set of multiple, complex, daily, repetitive, physical and emotional tasks that mothers perform, over and above all their myriad other daily tasks. Recognition will make the issue visible.

How can this load be reduced? Through redistribution, both within the household and outside. Within the household, the redistribution will occur through sharing among household members, most importantly by fathers pitching in, not as occasional babysitters, but by being a part of the daily journey. At the moment, sharing outside the household happens mainly through expensive private childcare, which very few can afford. Both in urban and rural areas, we need good quality, affordable, reliable and safe childcare in our neighbourhoods. This can be provided both by government and private players.

To sum up, we need to invest in the care economy. That is the only way the constitutional rights of mothers will be realised, which not only entitles them to respite from the individualised burden of childcare and enshrines the principle that childcare is a social need.

The writer is professor of economics and founder director, CEDA, Ashoka University. Views are personal

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"For Pakistan, and Asia at large, building resilience is no longer a matter of choice but a necessity for survival in an era marked by unprecedented climatic upheaval. As we advance through 2024, let this be the year when we all proactively ensure that our communities are safeguarded." — DAWN, PAKISTAN

Why the bull runs

Across segments, stocks have been trading at multiples that seem difficult to justify. Domestic investors, though, are confident and growing



ISHAN BAKSHI

IT'S INDICATIVE OF the changes in the Indian economy: The number of stock market investors is now inching closer to the number of land-owning farmers in the country. And with greed trumping fear, investors — who now flock to the markets from most of the pin codes in the country — have thrown caution to the wind, shrugging off concerns over valuation. In certain pockets, stocks have been trading at multiples that seem difficult to justify. It took a conflict between Iran and Israel, the threat of it escalating, to take some of the sheen off the markets.

In April, the BSE Sensex traded at a price-to-earnings (PE) ratio of 25. In comparison, the PE ratio averaged 18.61 between 2003-04 and 2007-08 and 23.81 between 2014-15 and 2023-24. In the case of the small- and mid-cap segments, the exuberance has been even more euphoric. While both small- and mid-cap indices did witness a steep fall following concerns over "froth" in certain segments, and the possibility of price manipulation, they have recovered since. This despite the fact that several small- and mid-cap funds had restricted fresh inflows, indicating their inability to allocate funds efficiently, which suggests that stock prices may not be anchored in fundamentals.

This exuberance, rational or irrational, is backed by an appealing narrative with several cross-cutting themes. At its core is a belief in India's growth trajectory — the view that the political, policy and economic environment are perfectly aligned to deliver relatively high growth over a sustained period is now widely held. There are, after all, strong reasons to be optimistic about the economy's prospects. A growth rate of 7-8 per cent — notwithstanding uncomfortable questions over its estimation, the distribution of growth or job creation — is nothing to scoff at. Nor are the medium-term growth projections by institutions such as the IMF, which only underline the robustness of the country's growth trajectory. Strong corporate and bank balance sheets have only raised expectations that the economy is on the cusp of a private investment cycle. And then there are favourable demographics. At a time when there is uncertainty over China's growth prospects, the Indian economy stands out. There aren't many countries that have the ingredients for sustaining relatively high growth over a long period, and can offer opportunities at this scale.

And it's not just the foreign investors who have been pouring in money, enthused about the economy's prospects. Indian households, too, have been increasingly turning towards the stock markets in their search for yield. As per reports, the total number of demat accounts in the

country has recently crossed 150 million. As per NSE, the number of unique investors (based on PAN) now exceeds 90 million, which translates to upwards of 50 million families, or more than 17 per cent of all households in the country. And then there are those who invest indirectly via mutual funds. As per the Association of Mutual Funds in India's estimates, there are now more than 40 million unique mutual fund investors (there will obviously be some overlap).

To put these numbers in perspective, consider the following statistics. In 2019, the total number of agricultural households in the country was pegged at 93.09 million by a survey carried out by the National Statistical Office. In 2022-23, the number of farmer beneficiaries under PM-Kisan stood at 107.3 million, while in 2023-24, it was 92.1 million (as of January 2024). In 2022-23, 74 million persons filed income tax returns (this includes individuals, firms, etc). And, as per the National Family Health Survey, 7.5 per cent of households in the country have cars.

Investors now are not just limited to the larger cities. In 2023, an SBI dividend yield fund drew applications from 70 per cent of the pin codes in the country. As per other estimates, investors now come from every nine out of 10 pin codes in the country. One can quibble over the amounts invested by the smaller retail investors, but all this only points towards the culture of equity spreading rapidly across the country, while also indicating the growing financialisation of household savings. And the heft of these investors is growing. In 2016-17, contributions through systematic investment plans (SIPs) stood at Rs 43,921 crore. By 2023-24, they had risen more than four-and-a-half times to touch Rs 1.99 lakh crore. In comparison, net investments by foreign portfolio investors last year stood at Rs 2.08 lakh crore.

Some are now expecting a period of digesting the extraordinary gains that the markets have witnessed. But, a continuing surge in domestic flows could help maintain current valuations. Investors, though, are not showing any signs of nervousness — the India VIX, a fear gauge, witnessed a steep fall last Tuesday, and remains well below recent highs. However, if at all they are worried, perhaps words from the stock market regulator, who has been commenting quite often on valuations, could assuage their concerns. "Yes, at 22.2 (PE multiple), some people say we have an expensive market, but still why is the investment coming (in)? This is a reflection of the optimism and the trust and faith that the world has in India today that we are commanding these kinds of multiples in our markets," said the SEBI chairperson at a corporate governance summit.

Investors, though, especially the foreign ones, can be a fickle lot. As per a recent report, some funds are undoing their "buy India, sell China" strategy as Beijing's support for the economy and depressed valuations prompt a rethink. On balance, however, India remains the preferred investment destination. After all, it does seem to offer a more compelling story.

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Manifesto and the world

Congress's Nyay Patra has a clear vision to restore India's voice on the global stage



SALMAN KHURSHID

INDIA'S ENGAGEMENT WITH the world needs a reset. Our neighbours are drifting away from us, and our proud reputation as a robust democracy is under question, even as our sovereignty is threatened by an increasingly aggressive China. Unfortunately, over the last decade, India's foreign policy has been defined by more chest-thumping and myopia, and a reduced focus on sharp and effective diplomacy. Our government is more preoccupied with image management and projecting the Prime Minister as a self-styled Vishwaguru than with improving relations with allies and containing our rivals.

The Congress party's recently unveiled Nyay Patra or manifesto has a clear vision to restore India's voice on the global stage. It crafts a strategy that carefully blends soft power with hard power to enhance India's role as a trusted, respected, powerful voice on the world stage. The Nyay Patra aims to strengthen four critical pieces that build India's soft power.

The first is India's status as perhaps the only strong, sustained democracy across the postcolonial world. In the polarised decades of the Cold War, India carved out a middle path for itself, characterised by our unique combination of social welfare and democratic freedoms. When Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru spoke, he summoned the moral authority of India's unique democratic fabric, and his own legitimacy as a committed democrat. And the world listened in awe. This proud tradition continued to Manmohan Singh. As memorably stated by

then-US President Barack Obama, when Dr Singh spoke, "the whole world listened."

Unfortunately, over the last decade, PM Modi's intolerance of dissent and attack on democratic rights has tarnished India's image abroad. The Congress manifesto promises a full restoration, as well as an enhancement, of our democratic rights and freedoms. We will protect artistic freedom and independent journalism, stop arbitrary internet shutdowns, and not interfere in the Indian people's personal choices in food, dress, love and marriage.

Second, the Congress promises to restore India's global reputation as a voice for peace, moderation, and co-existence in world affairs, in line with our historical conception of the world as one family (Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam). India used to have the courage to take a principled stance on international issues, even when this required confrontation with the West. Under Congress, India will once again be a clear, unflinching voice for global peace. The Mahatma's India must be reborn.

Third, we will revive the Neighbourhood First policy pioneered by Manmohan Singh's government in 2008. Bhutan, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Nepal have drifted towards China. To succeed, our neighbours must be accorded respect, a sentiment which has been markedly missing under the Modi government. Only then can we restore and repair our special relationships with our neighbours. An India that its neighbours don't trust is an India that will find itself isolated on the global stage.

The defining challenge for Indian foreign policy in the 21st century is to maintain our sovereignty amidst periodic incursions by China. Unfortunately, the PM and Home Minister have denied China's occupation of Indian territory. This has deeply compromised India's national interest. The first step is to acknowledge the status quo, as Congress has consistently and unfailingly done.

Our commitment is to restore the pre-Modi status quo at the border with China. To achieve this and other objectives, we will develop an integrated national defence strategy — one vision that will underpin all our actions, across national defence, external affairs, and infrastructure development. The major points of this vision are clear: We will reverse the decline in defence expenditure as a proportion of total expenditure, will restore the integrity of our armed forces by scrapping Agnipath, and work with our neighbours and our allies abroad to strengthen our position vis-a-vis China. The Congress will provide direction to our policymaking.

Our manifesto repeats our enduring and unwavering opposition to terrorism, and our commitment to work with allied nations to eliminate terrorism everywhere. We also repeat our long-standing position that any engagement with Pakistan depends fundamentally on its willingness and ability to end cross-border terrorism. Without clear evidence of progress on this front, we cannot engage with Pakistan constructively.

Finally, we will restore alignment between our economic and foreign policy. After

a wave of trade deals signed under Manmohan Singh, our economic engagement with the world has faltered under the Modi government, limited to deals of insignificant value. Meanwhile, China and ASEAN have signed RCEP and our industrial competitors like Vietnam are securing access to European markets. Partly as a result of the Modi government's failed trade policy, our net inbound FDI has collapsed, as foreign investors do not see India as an attractive destination for industrial investment without reliable access to export markets.

The Congress will re-engage, make every effort to conclude long-pending trade negotiations with other countries in the interests of Indian producers and consumers. We reiterate a commitment to rule-based international trade.

The Congress manifesto promises a powerful reset in our engagement with the world. We promise to restore India's moral legitimacy as a country that stands for sovereignty and peace and to regain the country's leadership in our neighbourhood. We will simultaneously ensure the integrity of our borders, work against the threat of global terror, and facilitate India's economic growth through foreign trade and investment. The Nyay Patra's vision for India is that of a country with a voice, one that will be heard and respected across the world, and one that 140 crore Indians can be proud of.

The writer is former Union Minister for External Affairs

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A 'SWEETENED' BILL

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'A fragile consensus' (IE, April 29). The Republicans are especially opposed to aid packages, which they consider a threat to their isolationist vision for the US. House Speaker Mike Johnson had to introduce a "sweetener" into the Bill to win their vote. This "sweetener" was a promise to ban TikTok if it did not divest itself of Chinese ownership within a year — thus opening the door to helping Ukraine push back against Russian aggression, providing wartime assistance to Israel and humanitarian aid to Gaza, and countering territorial threats in the Indo-Pacific that are linked to China. That the far-right segment was able to exert its influence on the agenda of Congress to this extent is remarkable. **SS Paul, Nadia**

MOUNTING PRESSURE

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Cries for help' (IE, April 29). It's shocking that in less than a week of the results of the Telangana state Intermediate public examination being announced, at least seven students died by suicide. The series of suicides has led to questions regarding the mental well-being and the pressure that students go through during and after examinations. Failure to meet expectations is one of the major causes of youngsters taking the extreme step of ending their lives. This spate of preventable deaths calls for

AN UNHOLY NEXUS

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Robin hood economics' (IE, April 28). In her article, Tavleen Singh vehemently criticises Rahul Gandhi's agenda of taking money from the rich and distributing it to the poor. She wants us to believe that the wealth that is owned and created by Adani and Ambani is not given to them by the government or any politician. She wants us to believe that it is Modi's economic policies that have paved the way for the creation of wealth in our country. But the allotments of various ports and airports to the Adani group are a testimony of the conspicuous favours done to this group. And is she not aware of the inequality in India, which has skyrocketed in 2023, with the income and wealth share of the top one per cent of the population holding 40 per cent of the country's wealth? **Arun Francis, New Delhi**

URGENT CORRECTIVE MEASURES AND SUGGESTS DEEPER STRUCTURAL IMPEDIMENTS:

The relentless pressure exerted by families and institutions to excel, shrinking employment opportunities and fierce competition. The recent string of suicides must serve as a wake-up call. Ensuring the mental well-being of students through counselling must be a short-term goal. But can society rid itself of the habit of demanding excellence from young minds? **Sanjay Chopra, Mohali**

12 THE WORLD

TOP OF THE WORLD



Houses destroyed in the flood in Nakuru, Kenya, Monday. Reuters

KENYA

Dam collapses after heavy rain, killing over 45

Nairobi: A dam collapsed in western Kenya early Monday, killing at least 45 people and leaving dozens missing after a wall of water swept through houses and cut off a major road, the Interior Ministry said. The Old Kijabe Dam, located in the Mai Mahiu area of the Great Rift Valley region that is prone to flash floods, collapsed and water spilled downstream, carrying with it mud, rocks and uprooted trees, police official Stephen Kirui told The Associated Press. Vehicles were entangled in the debris on one of Kenya's busiest highways and paramedics treated the injured as waters submerged large areas. The Kenya Red Cross said 109 people were hospitalized while 49 others were reported missing. **AP**

PAKISTAN

Suicide attack on Chinese engineers: 4 held

Islamabad: Pakistan authorities claimed on Monday that they have arrested four suspects involved in the killing of Chinese engineers in a deadly terrorist attack last month. Five Chinese nationals and a Pakistani driver were killed in the attack on March 26 when a vehicle-borne suicide bomber targeted a convoy escorting Chinese engineers in the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province. No group has yet claimed responsibility for the attack. **PTI**

SPAIN

Sanchez stays on as PM after weighing exit

Madrid: Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said on Monday he had decided to stay in office after days of publicly weighing his future, generating relief amongst leftist allies, exasperation among the public and ridicule from his opponents. "I have decided to go on, if possible even stronger as prime minister. This is not business as usual, things are going to be different," he said. Sanchez, 52, had announced last Wednesday that he might quit in response to a corruption investigation into his wife, which he said was baseless. **REUTERS**

GERMANY

Trial opens over far-right coup plot allegations

Berlin: Nine people charged in connection with an alleged far-right plot to topple the German government are going on trial on Monday in one of three cases linked to the purported conspiracy, which came to light in late 2022. The trial opening in Stuttgart is the first one and is focused on those defendants of the so-called Reich Citizens group who allegedly were part of the so-called military arm, German news agency dpa reported. **REUTERS**

MOVE WILL SET DANGEROUS PRECEDENT, SAYS NETANYAHU

Potential ICC arrest warrants elicit concern among Israel's top officials

Bolster security to face 'antisemitism wave': Tel Aviv tells embassies

REUTERS
JERUSALEM, APRIL 29

ISRAEL IS voicing concern that the International Criminal Court could be preparing to issue arrest warrants for government officials on charges related to its war against Hamas.

The ICC is investigating Hamas' October 7 attack and Israel's military assault on Gaza.

After Israeli media reports that the ICC might soon issue arrest warrants for senior Israeli government and military officials, Foreign Minister Israel Katz Sunday warned its embassies to bolster security because of the risk of a "wave of severe antisemitism".

"We expect the court (ICC) to refrain from issuing arrest warrants against senior Israeli political and security officials," Katz said. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Friday that any ICC decisions would set a dangerous precedent. Israeli officials are worried that the court could issue arrest warrants against Netanyahu and other top officials for alleged violations of international humanitarian law in Gaza, Israeli media have reported.

They said the ICC is also considering warrants for leaders from Hamas. Israel is not a member of the court and doesn't recognise its jurisdiction, but Palestinian territories were admitted with member-state status in 2015.



Houses destroyed in Israeli strikes in Rafah in southern Gaza on Monday. Reuters

Blinken to Hamas: Accept Israel's 'extraordinarily generous' truce plan

REUTERS
RIYADH, APRIL 29

US SECRETARY of State Antony Blinken urged Hamas on Monday to swiftly accept Israel's latest and "extraordinarily generous" proposal for a Gaza truce to secure a release of hostages, amid a diplomatic drive to end the war between Israel and Hamas.

Hamas negotiators were expected to meet Qatari and Egyptian mediators in Cairo on Monday to deliver a response to the phased truce proposal Israel presented at the weekend, ahead



Antony Blinken with top GCC diplomats in Riyadh. Reuters

of a vowed Israeli assault on the southern border city of Rafah. Blinken, at a special meeting of the World Economic Forum held in Riyadh said: "Hamas has before it

a proposal that is extraordinarily generous on the part of Israel. And at the moment, the only thing standing between the people of Gaza and a cease-fire is Hamas."

An official source said Israel's plan had accepted the release of fewer than 40 hostages in exchange for Palestinians jailed in Israel, and a second phase of truce with a "period of sustained calm".

Blinken also met with top Gulf Cooperation Council diplomats to discuss war in Gaza and issues including aid and civilian casualties.

Meanwhile, Israeli airstrikes killed at least 25 Palestinians in Rafah, medics said on Monday.

Disperse or face suspension: Columbia to pro-Palestine protesters



Pro-Palestine protest encampment at Columbia University. Reuters

New York: Columbia University's president said on Monday that talks with pro-Palestinian protesters over the dismantling of an encampment on the Ivy League campus had failed and urged them to voluntarily disperse or face suspension from school.

President Nemat Minouche Shafik said days of talks between student organizers and academic leaders had failed to break a stalemate over the encampment set up to protest Israel's war in Gaza. Shafik said Columbia would not divest assets that support Israel's military, a key demand of the protesters, but offered to invest in health and education in Gaza, and make Columbia's direct investment holdings more transparent.

Meanwhile, pro-Israeli and pro-Palestinian demonstrators clashed at UCLA, Los Angeles, where the tent encampment expanded over the week. **REUTERS**

DAYS AHEAD OF NO-CONFIDENCE VOTE

Scotland First Minister Humza Yousaf resigns

Boost for Labour before UK polls, adds to challenges faced by Conservatives

REUTERS
LONDON, APRIL 29

SCOTLAND'S LEADER Humza Yousaf resigned on Monday, further opening the door to the UK opposition Labour Party regaining ground in its former Scottish heartlands in a national election expected to be held later this year.

Yousaf said he was quitting as head of the pro-independence Scottish National Party (SNP) and First Minister of Scotland's devolved government after a week of chaos triggered by his scrapping of a coalition agreement with Scotland's Greens.

He then failed to secure enough support to survive a vote of no confidence which had been expected later this week.

"I've concluded that repairing our relationship across the political divide can only be done with someone else at the helm," Yousaf said as he resigned little over a year after he replaced Nicola Sturgeon. The party is losing popular support after 17 years of heading the Scottish government, following a funding scandal and resignation of Sturgeon last year.

Polling firm YouGov said Labour overtook the SNP in voting intentions for a Westminster election for the first time in a decade. This adds to the challenge-facing British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's Conservative Party.



Scotland's First Minister Humza Yousaf declares his resignation in Edinburgh, on Monday. AP

EXPLAINED **New leader or fresh elections?**

THE SCOTTISH parliament now has 28 days to choose a new First Minister before an election is forced. Scottish Labour said the SNP should call an election rather than appoint a new First Minister without public mandate. The Greens said they would oppose an early election.

Yousaf abruptly ended a coalition agreement between the SNP and the Green Party after a row over climate change targets. Former SNP leader John Swinney said he was considering standing for SNP leader, with Yousaf's former leadership rival Kate Forbes also seen as a possible successor.

PROMISES IMMEDIATE ARMS SUPPLIES

NATO didn't deliver what it promised in last months, says its chief on Kyiv visit

REUTERS
KYIV, APRIL 29

NATO CHIEF Jens Stoltenberg told Ukrainians on Monday that his alliance's members had failed to live up to their promises of military aid in recent months, but said the flow of arms and ammunition would now increase.

In an unannounced visit to Ukraine, the secretary general of the transatlantic military alliance held talks with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy addressed Ukraine's parliament.

His visit comes at a difficult time on the battlefield for Ukraine. After a failed Ukrainian counter-offensive last year, Russian forces have gained the initiative—at least in part due to a dearth of arms and ammunition from Kyiv's Western partners.

"I will also be very honest with President Zelenskyy and also with the Rada that NATO allies have not delivered what we have promised over the last months," Stoltenberg said on the train tak-



Volodymyr Zelenskyy (right) with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg in Kyiv on Monday. AP

ing him into Kyiv on Monday.

"The United States spent six months to agree a package and European allies have not delivered the ammunition we promised. But now I'm confident that things will change," he said.

He pointed to the US's Ukraine aid package worth more than \$60 billion and an announcement last week by British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak of a "record high" commitment to Kyiv.

SYDNEY STABBING INCIDENT

Teens held over Bishop attack had plans to shoot Jewish people: Police

ASSOCIATED PRESS
MELBOURNE, APRIL 29

FOUR TEENAGERS plotted to buy guns and attack Jewish people days after a bishop was stabbed in a Sydney church, according to police documents cited in news reports on Monday.

Five teens, aged 14 to 17, were charged in a Sydney court on Thursday last week with a range of offences including conspiring to engage in or planning a terrorist act.

Police alleged they all "adhered to a religiously motivated, violent extremist ideology" and

were part of a network that included a 16-year-old boy charged with stabbing Assyrian Orthodox Bishop Mar Mari Emmanuel on April 15 as a church service was being streamed online.

According to a police fact sheet tendered to the Sydney Children's Court, two of the defendants charged last week discussed buying guns on April 19, the same day the bishop's alleged attacker was charged, News Corp Australia newspapers reported.

Gun ownership is heavily restricted in Australia under tough national laws, but there is a black

market for firearms in Sydney.

Four of the boys charged last week—a 15-year-old, a 16-year-old and two 17-year-olds—allegedly used after a crushing election defeat for the president's ruling party led to widespread calls for a change in his style of leadership and policy direction.

Lawyer Ahmed Dib, who represents two of the boys charged last week, said he had not read the newspaper report and could not comment on its accuracy.

The boy accused of stabbing Emmanuel and a priest was charged with committing a terrorist act.

HK activist gets ID with new gender after years-long fight

ASSOCIATED PRESS
HONG KONG, APRIL 29

A HONG Kong transgender activist on Monday received a new ID card reflecting his gender change, after a years-long legal battle to change the document, and he vowed to continue working for equality for the LGBTQ+ community.

Henry Tse won his appeal



Henry Tse with a mock ID in Hong Kong on Monday. AP

over the government's refusal to change the gender on his ID card in February 2023. Previously, Tse was not able to make the change because he did not undergo full gender-affirmation surgery.

Last year, the city's top court said the government's policy was unconstitutional in a landmark ruling, arguing it imposed an unacceptably harsh burden. The judgment prompted an easing of rules earlier this month.

Tse's victory is seen as an important step forward for the city's LGBTQ+ community, many of whose transgender members consider the operation unnecessary and risky.

After obtaining his new ID card, Tse told reporters that life has not been easy since he lodged a judicial review in 2017. In addition to the legal challenges, he has also faced obstacles from the government and attacks from

others. "What is normal for many people has finally become normal for us," Tse said. Public sentiment in Hong Kong has become increasingly welcoming to the LGBTQ+ community, but many still face challenges in daily life.

In April, Hong Kong revised its policy to allow people who have not completed full gender-affirmation surgery to change genders on ID cards as long as they fulfil certain conditions.

£220-MILLION PROJECT SET TO OPEN IN 2027; WILL HOST TEMPORARY ART EXHIBITIONS, FASHION SHOWS

Deep beneath London, former bomb shelters set to become tourist spots

CLAIRE MOSES
LONDON, APRIL 29

THERE'S A locked door on the eastbound platform of the Chancery Lane station of the London Underground. The door is unassuming, sturdy and white.

Behind it is a wide set of stairs leading to a roughly mile-long maze of tunnels built in the 1940s that were first intended to serve as a World War II shelter and later used for espionage, the storage of 400 tons of government documents and telecom services.

Welcome to the Kingsway Exchange tunnels, set roughly 100 feet below street level in the center of London, sprawling beneath the Underground's Central

Line. Soon they could enter a new chapter: Angus Murray, the owner of the complex, who bought the tunnels last summer, has applied for planning permission to local authorities together with architecture firm WilkinsonEyre to turn the tunnels into a tourist destination that could handle millions of people a year.

Murray's London Tunnels is planning to invest a total of 220 million pounds (about \$275 million) on restoring and preserving the tunnels, as well as adding technology for art installations and other attractions. Murray hopes to open the complex in 2027, and said that it would be able to host temporary art exhibitions, fashion shows and more. At the moment, entering the



An illustration that shows how the tunnels will be renovated with art installations and other attractions. NYT

tunnels requires riding a small elevator tucked behind a side door in an alleyway off a wide street in central London. (Visitors to the attraction would use a different, bigger entrance, Murray said.)

When the elevator doors open, you step into a World War II-era tunnel—one of 10 civilian shelters proposed by the British government after the beginning of the Blitz, the eight-month bombing of London by the Germans that started in September 1940. The tunnels were never used as shelters. By the time they were completed in 1942, the Blitz was over.

During the Cold War, the British government instructed its telephone department, which later became British Telecom, to

set up a secret communications system in the tunnels that could survive a nuclear attack. The famous hotline between the Kremlin and the White House ran through the complex, according to the project's website. Some of the phone exchange's equipment in the tunnels still survives today.

"The idea was that it would provide a degree of protection," said Martin Dixon, a trustee for Subterranea Britannica, a charity that documents and tries to preserve underground spaces.

"If the Cold War had turned into something more serious, it would have allowed communications on some level to continue," said Dixon, who joined Subterranea Britannica about 40 years ago.

The tunnels under the Chancery Lane station of the tube are more than 1 mile long and in some places have a diameter of almost 25 feet. Those dimensions make them among the largest sets of tunnels built for people in a metropolitan city, Murray said.

"They have a fascinating history," he said. For a group of post office and telecoms workers in the decades after World War II, the tunnel complex became a workplace, some aspects of which have survived. In one room, the stuffy smell of an old carpet is inescapable. Another still holds the remnants of a canteen. Yet another has fake windows framing images of nature as decorations. There are still offices, as well as rooms where workers could spend the night. **NYT**

THIS WORD MEANS

HANGOR CLASS SUBMARINE

China has built a variant of its Yuan class diesel-electric submarine for use by the Pakistan Navy

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
 NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

THE FIRST Hangor class submarine, built by China for Pakistan, was launched on April 26 at a Wuhan shipyard. This was the first of eight submarines of this class that the Pakistan Navy is set to induct by 2028.



A Chinese Yuan class submarine, of which the Pak Hangor class submarine is a variant. US Naval Institute

Basic characteristics

The Hangor class, an export variant of the Chinese Type 039A Yuan class, is a diesel-electric attack submarine, named after the now decommissioned PNS Hangor, which famously sank the Indian frigate INS Khukri during the 1971 war.

'Diesel-electric' refers to the mode of propulsion — diesel engines power the submarine when surfaced or snorkelling (as they need air to operate), while a battery, charged by the diesel engine, allows the vessel to operate while submerged. The Hangor class has four diesel engines. It is also equipped with an air independent propulsion (AIP) system, which significantly increases the submarines' endurance underwater.

Attack submarines are specifically designed for sinking other submarines or surface vessels using torpedoes, or in modern times, cruise missiles. The Hangor class has six 21-inch torpedo tubes and capabilities to launch anti-ship missiles, as well as Babur-3 subsonic cruise missiles, which have a range of 450 km.

Compared with Kalvari class

Pakistan's Hangor class is the direct counterpart of India's Kalvari class of submarines, based on the French Scorpene class. India currently operates six Kalvari class submarines, and three more will be inducted into service by the early 2030s.

In terms of size, the Hangor class is significantly bigger than the Kalvari class, which displaces 1,775 tonnes and is 67.5

m long. The Hangor class has a displacement of 2,800 tonnes, is 76 m in length, 8.4 m in width (at its widest point), and has a draught (depth of the vessel below the waterline) of 6.2 m when on the surface.

The bigger size could be a disadvantage in shallow, littoral waters. The Pakistani submarine has a reported top speed of 20 knots (37 kmph). The Kalvari class, like the Hangor class, runs on diesel-electric propulsion. However, the models India currently operates do not come with built-in AIP. This means that in terms of underwater endurance, the Hangor class potentially has an edge over the Kalvari class.

This matters because submarines' USP is their ability to be stealthy — much of which comes from their capability to remain underwater for extended periods of time. Conventional diesel-electric submarines need to surface to recharge their batteries after a few days (2-5, depending on the battery used), making them detectable to enemy radar and exhaust fumes sensors. An AIP system can increase submarines' underwater endurance manifold (upwards of 15-20 days).

In terms of armament, the Kalvari class carries six 21 inch, German-made torpedoes, and missile systems such as French Exocet anti-ship missiles, and MICA anti-air missiles.

Of India's 969 million electors, more than 18.4 million are between the ages of 18 and 19. This is the story of elections to India's House of the People, for the younger readers of *The Indian Express*.

Cong split and Garibi Hatao: last poll before Emergency

1971: Political chaos after 1967 disrupted election schedules; Lok Sabha, Assembly polls were never held simultaneously again

SHYAMLAL YADAV
 NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

THE FOURTH Lok Sabha was dissolved late at night on December 27, 1970, almost 15 months before the expiration of its term. In an address to the people of India, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi said "there comes a time in the life of a nation when the government...has to take an unusual step to cut through difficulties in order to solve...pressing problems".

She wanted to turn the election into a referendum on her social and economic reforms, including the nationalisation of banks, and abolition of the privy purses of former princes. Polls were held between March 1 and 10, 1971.

Split in the Congress party

Even when Jawaharlal Nehru was alive, several Congress leaders had been unhappy with the Kamaraj Plan, which required them to give up government positions and commit themselves to rebuilding the party. Their grievances deepened after Indira manoeuvred her way to the prime ministership after the death of Lal Bahadur Shastri in January 1966, and remained in the post after the 1967 election. The demise of President Zakir Husain on May 3, 1969, provided the circumstances for a faceoff between the rival factions.

The Congress old guard proposed the name of former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Neelam Sanjiva Reddy to succeed Husain, while Indira pushed for Scheduled Caste stalwart Babu Jagjivan Ram. Vice President VV Giri too threw his hat into the ring. With the Congress 'Syndicate' led by Kamaraj, party president S Nijalingappa, and Atulya Ghosh backing him, Reddy approached Opposition parties like Swatantra Party and Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) for support.

Indira decided to throw her weight behind Giri. In July 1969, she divested Deputy Prime Minister Morarji Desai of his Finance portfolio "without any consultation", prompting a "humiliated" Desai to resign. Soliciting support from the Communist Party of India (CPI), Indira made a sharp left turn — announcing, on July 19, the nationalisation of banks.

In the presidential election held on August 16 that year, Giri, who contested as an independent with Indira's backing, defeated the official Congress nominee Reddy. The old guard responded by expelling the Prime Minister from the party and, on November 12, 1969, the Congress formally split into the Congress (Organisation) led by the Syndicate, and Indira's Congress (Requisitionists) faction. Nijalingappa joined the Congress (O), and this faction continued until 1977, when it merged with the Janata Party. Jagjivan Ram was appointed president of Congress (R).

Political turmoil, a new symbol

On March 25, 1966, Pravir Chandra Bhanj Deo, the Maharaja of Bastar, was shot dead by police. The opposition accused the Congress Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, Dwarka Prasad Mishra, of the king's murder.

While the assassination helped the opposition, especially the BJS, consolidate in MP, the Samyukta Vidhayak Dal (SVD) governments in Haryana, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and



DECISION
 1952-2019
 A HISTORY OF LOK SABHA ELECTIONS
 PART 5

(Top) Watching election results in Old Delhi PIB; Indira is administered the oath of office by President VV Giri Archive

West Bengal, ran into a series of crises, which led to mid-term elections in 1968-69. Also in 1968, the opposition lost two of its tallest leaders, Deendayal Upadhyay of the BJS in February, and socialist Ram Manohar Lohia in October.

As Indira Gandhi struggled to establish her faction as the 'real' Congress after the split, her minority government faced a no-confidence motion on July 28, 1970. She, however, managed to survive in the House with support from the CPI and some other groups.

Having successfully turned the tide of public opinion in her favour with the nationalisation of banks, and with the CPI and almost 225 Congress MPs with her, Indira decided to seize the moment in an early election. She gave the simple, catchy slogan of "Garibi Hatao" (Let's get rid of poverty), which resonated widely.

Even as the two factions of the Congress fought to retain the party's original symbol, 'two bullocks with a yoke', President Giri dissolved Lok Sabha. On January 11, 1971, the

Election Commission of India (ECI) decided that the Jagjivan Ram-led Congress, supported by Indira, was the 'real' Congress. However, the Supreme Court stayed the order, and ruled that neither group would get the symbol of the undivided party. On January 25, 1971, the ECI allotted 'Charkha being plied by woman' to Congress (O); 'Calf and cow' to Congress (R).

Massive violence, Indira's return

The fifth Lok Sabha election was conducted by Chief Election Commissioner SP Sen Verma, who had replaced KV K Sundaram in October 1967. According to the ECI, 27.31 crore people voted for 518 seats at 3.42 lakh polling stations across the country. The political turmoil after 1967 had disrupted election schedules, and Assembly polls were held in only three states — Orissa, West Bengal, and Tamil Nadu.

There was unprecedented violence and murders of several candidates in West Bengal, where four Assembly elections were held in

five years — 1967, 1969, 1971, and 1972. In Bihar, there was "booth-capturing by mobs of hooligans and goondas armed with lathis, rifles and other lethal weapons", the ECI said in its report on the election.

Counting started everywhere except West Bengal on March 10, 1971, and results were declared by March 15. Indira rode her 'Garibi Hatao' promise to a two-thirds majority of 352 seats. The CPI(M) won 25, CPI and DMK won 23 each, and the BJS won 22 seats.

There were several prominent losers: Chaudhary Charan Singh, who had left the Congress in 1967 to form the Bharatiya Kranti Dal, lost in Muzaffarnagar; Mahant Avaidyanath, guru of UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, lost in Gorakhpur; and Sucheta Kripalani, wife of J B Kripalani, lost as the Congress (O) candidate from Faizabad (now Ayodhya).

Among the prominent winners were BJS candidates Vijaya Raje Scindia (Bhind) and her son Madhavrao Scindia (Guna), and Atal Bihari Vajpayee (Gwalior). Swaran Singh won from Jullundur (now Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar), Karan Singh from Udhampur, A K Gopalan of the CPI(M) from Palghat, Madhu Dandavate of the PSP from Rajapur, V P Singh, who would become Prime Minister later, from Phulpur, and H N Bahuguna, who would become UP Chief Minister, from Allahabad. Indira herself defeated Raj Narain by a large margin of more than 1 lakh votes.

Indira took oath as Prime Minister once again on March 18, 1971. In December that year, the Indian Army handed Pakistan a crushing defeat in war, which led to the birth of Bangladesh. Indira's popularity was at its peak.

The first big blow to the Prime Minister came on June 12, 1975, when the Allahabad High Court found her guilty of electoral malpractice and misuse of state machinery, and declared her election from Rae Bareilly invalid. Less than two weeks later, on June 25, 1975, Indira announced the Emergency — an action that would change politics in India forever.

ARGENTINE SCIENTISTS FIND SPEEDY 90-MN-YEAR-OLD HERBIVORE DINO

PALEONTOLOGISTS FROM Argentina announced the discovery of a new medium-sized herbivorous dinosaur, which was a fast runner and lived about 90 million years ago in the Late Cretaceous period in present day Patagonia.

Rodrigo Álvarez, author of the study, said. "It is something super new for these animals. In addition, it is known that it was a good runner, which was something it needed because it lived with a large number of predators," he said.

The dinosaur's name is a derivative of Chaki, from the Aonikenk language of the indigenous Tehuelche people, meaning "old guanaco" — guanaco is a medium-sized herbivore mammal found in the region. Nekul means "fast" in the Mapudungún language, of the local Mapuche people.

"He had very strong hind limbs and a tail with an anatomy that allowed him to maneuver it to the sides and so be able to balance during races," Sebastián Rozadilla, co-author of the publication, said.

A team of Argentine paleontologists made the discovery in 2018, but recently unveiled their finding in the respected journal *Cretaceous Research*. **REUTERS**

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Repolls and adjournments: ECI's options when polling process is disrupted

EXPERT EXPLAINS
 RAVI MITTAL

THE ELECTION Commission of India (ECI) declared April 19's voting void in 11 polling stations of Manipur, and eight polling stations of Arunachal Pradesh. Repolls were conducted on April 22 and April 24, respectively. After the death of a candidate on April 9, polls were adjourned in Madhya Pradesh's Betul Lok Sabha constituency. Voting will now take place on May 7, instead of April 26, as originally planned.

India's election laws provide a framework for handling situations in which the normal polling process is disrupted.

Destruction, hijacking of EVMs

Under Section 58 ('Fresh poll in the case

of destruction, etc., of ballot boxes') of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 (RPA Act), the ECI can declare the vote at a polling station void if:

- an unauthorised person has unlawfully taken away any EVM;
 - any EVM has been accidentally or intentionally destroyed, or lost, or damaged, or tampered with; or
 - a mechanical failure develops in any EVM during the recording of votes.
- In such cases, the Returning Officer (RO) immediately informs the ECI and the Chief Electoral Officer of the state about the relevant facts, after considering which, the ECI can declare the poll void, and formally fix the date for a new poll.
- Contesting candidates are informed in writing, and a notice is posted in public places along with an announcement by the beat of a drum to inform the voters.
- All voters are allowed to vote in the fresh poll, and their left middle finger is inked to distinguish between the mark made during the original poll (on their left forefinger).

Booth capturing

Booth capturing is defined under Section 135A of the RPA, and includes all or any of the following activities:

- seizure of a polling station, affecting the conduct of elections;
 - taking possession of a polling station, allowing only his or their supporters to vote;
 - intimidating or threatening any elector and preventing them from going to the polling station;
 - seizure of a counting place affecting the counting of votes;
 - involvement of any person in government service in any of the above activities.
- Booth capturing is punishable for a term of one to three years for lay people, and three to five years for public servants.
- Under Section 58A ('Adjournment of poll or countermanning of election on the ground of booth capturing') of the RPA, if booth capturing has taken place at a polling station, the Presiding Officer (PO) immediately closes the Control Unit of EVM, and detaches the Ballot Unit(s) from the Control

Unit under Rule 49X of the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961.

He then informs the RO, who reports the full facts to the ECI through the fastest means of communication. The ECI may:

- declare the poll at that polling station to be void and direct a fresh poll on a new date; or
- countermand the election in the constituency in case booth capturing has taken place in a large number of polling stations, or if it has affected the counting of votes.

Other unforeseen disruptions

The PO of a polling station can adjourn the poll at a polling station under section 57(1) of the RPA in case of:

- a natural calamity like a flood, severe storm, etc.;
- non-receipt, loss or damage to essential polling materials like EVM, electoral roll etc.;
- interruption or obstruction due to any riot or, open violence;
- non-arrival of the polling party due to obstruction or any other serious difficulty; or

■ non-commencement of the poll within two hours from the scheduled time due to malfunctioning of EVM, or any other reason.

After seeking the ECI's approval, the adjourned poll will recommence from the stage at which it was left immediately before the adjournment. Only electors who have not already voted prior to the poll's adjournment are permitted to vote.

Death of candidate

As per Section 52 of RPA, amended in 1996, the poll shall be adjourned only in case of the death of a recognised political party's candidate.

A "recognised political party" refers to either a recognised national party, or party recognised as a state party in the state concerned, for which the ECI reserves a symbol under the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order.

The above provision applies if the candidate with a valid nomination dies at any time after 11.00 a.m. on the last date for making nominations, until the commence-

ment of the poll.

The RO reports the fact to the ECI and orders the adjournment of the poll to a date to be notified later by the Commission.

The ECI then calls upon the concerned political party to nominate another candidate for the said election in place of the deceased candidate. The political party must make the nomination within seven days.

If the list of contesting candidates has already been published before the adjournment of the poll, a fresh list of contesting candidates is prepared and published, including the name of the candidate nominated in place of the deceased candidate.

In Betul, the candidate's death occurred one day after the last day for withdrawing candidature. Therefore, the polls were adjourned. However, in the Moradabad Lok Sabha constituency, the candidate suffered death after voting, in which case a by-election will be held if he wins the election.

The author is the District Collector of Jashpur, Chhattisgarh.

14 CLASSIFIEDS & TENDERS

Classifieds

PERSONAL

I, Manish Kumar S/o Chandar Pal R/o-7/223, DDA-Flats, East-of-Kailash, New Delhi-110065, have changed my minor son's name Siddharth to Siddharth Sharma. Aged-12-years. 0040726162-6

I, MOHAMMAD ZUBAIR S/O MOHAMMAD SAIED R/O 1533, GALI QASIM JAIN, ZAKIR SUBHAN CHOWK, LAL KUAN DELHI-110006, HAVE CHANGED THE NAME OF MY MINOR DAUGHTER AGED 9 YRS FROM NASRAH TO NASHRAD PERMANENTLY. 0070900807-1

I, Have changed my name from Naveen Kumar to Naveen Kumar Sharma S/o Pyare Lal R/o H.No C-47, street no-1/3, Near Thana Road, Bhajanpura North East, Delhi Forever. 0070900878-1

I, Gagandeep S/o Rajinder Singh R/o B-148, Karampura, New Delhi-110015, have changed my name to Gagandeep Singh. 0040726162-3

AI, G. Shivani D/O M S. Gangadhara, R/o B-2/38 B, DDA Flats Keshav Puram, Ankar Nagar S/O, North West Delhi, Delhi-110035, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Shivani Gangadhara 0070900917-1

I, G. Nandini D/O M. S. Gangadhara, R/o B-2/38/B, Lawrence Road, Near Kanhaiya Nagar, Metro Station, North West Delhi, Delhi-110035, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Nandini Gangadhara 0070900901-1

I, BHATERI W/O No.14470412H RANK HAV (OPR) DEEP CHAND R/O, H.NO.34, MULEY JAT WALI GALI, KHORE DELHI-110039 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO BHATERI DEVI VIDE AFFIDAVIT DATE 29.4.24 BEFORE DELHI. 0070900903-1

I, Anju Agrawal W/o Kamta Prasad Gar R/o Flat No.101, Tower L19, Paras Tiera, Sector-137, Noida, UP-201301 have changed my name after marriage to Anju Garg. Both names Anju Garg and Anju Agrawal pertains to same and one person. 0070900883-1

I, Anita Malik W/o Arun R/o-D-126, Jaat choupal Village-Agrada Sector-15-A, faridabad, have changed my name to Anita 0040726064-1

I, Amit, S/O Upender pandit R/O H.No. R220, Gali No.-2, ShriGanga-Vihar Deenpur, Najafgarh, South West-DELHI, Dwarka-110043, New Delhi, have changed my name to Amit Kumar, for all Purposes. 0040726134-1

I, Aman Kumar S/O Styana Narain, R/O A-1301, A-Block, Jahagir Puri, Near Bara Park, Adarsh Nagar, Model Town, North West Delhi, Delhi-110033, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Kundan Kumar. 0070900906-1

I, ARVIND MITTAL S/O ROHTASH MITTAL R/O A-197/A Majlis Park, Adarsh Nagar, Delhi-110033, have changed my minor daughter's name from CHHAVI aged 14 years to CHHAVI MITTAL forever 0070900812-1

I Vinod Kumar S/O B.M. Jangir, residing at H.No.L-278, 3rd Floor, Vijay Rattan Vihar, Sector-15 Part-2, Gurgaon, P.O.: Gurgaon, Dist: Gurgaon, Haryana, PIN-122001. I have changed my minors Daughter name from Lakshyaa to Lakshyaa Sharma in all future purposes. 0040726058-1

I Umesh Kumari R/O H.NO.369, sector 31, Amar Nagar, Faridabad Haryana-121003 have changed my name to Umesh Kumari Singh for all future Purposes 0070900836-1

I Tarunveer Singh S/O Harpreet Singh R/O N-54, Ground-Floor, Kirti Nagar, Delhi 110015, have changed my name to Tarunveer Singh Osan. 0040726162-8

I Shoorveer Singh S/O Harpreet Singh R/O N-54, Ground-Floor, Kirti Nagar, Delhi-110015, have changed my name to Shoorveer Singh Osan. 0040726162-7

I SUNIL NAIR F/O DELISHA R/O I-2/35, ROYALE GARDEN ESTATE, SECTOR-61, NOIDA, G.B.NAGAR U.P. HAVE CHANGED MY DAUGHTER'S NAME TO DELISHA NAIR FOR ALL THE FUTURE PURPOSES. 0070900868-1

I Sushma D/O, Ram Kumar R/O House No. 15, Ganpati Colony, Agwanpur-Faridabad Sector 91, Haryana-121013 have changed my name to Sushma Mithina vide Affidavit dtd 25/04/2024 before Notary by Uday Bir, Faridabad 0040726124-1

I Hammad S/o Abdul Malik R/O 8950, Naya Mohalla, Pul Bangash, Azad Market, Delhi-110006 declares that my correct and exact date of birth is 22.11.1997 instead of 22.11.1998. 004072604-5

I DEEPTI W/O SUNIL NAIR R/O I-2/35, ROYALE GARDEN ESTATE, SECTOR-61, NOIDA, G.B.NAGAR U.P. HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO DEEPTI NAIR FOR ALL THE FUTURE PURPOSES. 0070900899-1

I Bhatkrishan S/O, Matapher R/O 1193, Gandhi Colony, I.t.I Road, Faridabad, Haryana 121001 have changed my name to Bal Krishan. 0040726131-4

I Anmol S/O Sh. Ramesh Lal R/O D-403, Plot No.9, Chitrakoot Apartments, Sector-2, Dwarka, Amberhaji, South West Delhi, Delhi-110075 have changed my name to Anmol Singh for all purposes. 004072604-2

I Ankit Singhal S/O Sh. Mukesh Singhal R/O H.No.668, Sector-28, Faridabad, Haryana-121008 have changed my name to Ankit Kumar Singhal for all purposes. 004072604-1

I Ajay Mahrol alias Ajay Mehrol S/O Sh. Hari Krishan R/O WZ-243, 80 Yards, Tilak Nagar, Rajouri Garden, West Delhi, Delhi-110018 have changed my name to Ajay Mehrol for all purposes. 004072604-3

I S is for general information that I, Mohd Aftab Alam, Son of, Mohd Kadir, residing at, A-106, Block-A, 2nd-Floor JJ Colony, Bunder, Indrapuri, Central-Delhi, Delhi-110012, declare that name of my father has been wrongly-written as Kadir Alam in my 10th and 12th-educational documents. The actual name of my father is Mohd Kadir, which may be amended accordingly. 0040726140-9

I, hitherto known as Suman Verma, S/O Sh. Satya Prakash Verma, R/O HNO.F-118, Power House, Gandhi-Vihar, Delhi-110009, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Siddharth Verma. 0040726140-10

I, hitherto known as CHEERUTHI, D/O SH. OM PRAKASH, W/O SH. AAYUSH SHARMA, R/O 1772, KUCHA LATTU SHAH, DARIBA, CHANDNI-CHOWK, NORTH DELHI, DELHI-110006, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as CHEERUTHI SHARMA. 0040726104-7

I, Virender S/O Om Parkash R/O Flat No.100C, NU-Block, Pitampura Delhi-110034, have changed my minor son name Gaurav aged-13, years to Aryan Ganglani 0040726128-4

I, Vinod Kumar S/O Jaisingh, R/O E-902, Officer-City-1, Rajnagar-Extension, Ghaziabad, Uttar-Pradesh-201017, inform that Vinod Kumar and Vinod Kumar Souran both are same and one person. 0040726076-2

I, Vijay S/o-Ganesh Prasad, House, no-911 Third-floor Right-Side Street, no-8, Govind Puri, New Delhi-110019, have changed my name to VIJAY KUMAR, Permanently. 0040726104-8

I, VIJAY KUMAR MEHTA, S/O JANKI DASS MEHTA, ADD-BB-13F, JANAK PURI, WEST DELHI-110058, changed my name to VIJAY SILVA, for all, future purposes. 0040726143-8

I, VENUS SAWHNEY D/O SATISH KUMAR R/O A-7/236, GROUND-FLOOR, SECTOR-17, ROHINI, DELHI-110089, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO VENUS VERMA. 0040726104-5

I, Sushil Kumar, S/O-Ram Swaroop Jain, R/O-BQ-164, Shalimar Bagh, Delhi-110088, Has changed my name from SUSHIL KUMAR TO SUSHIL KUMAR JAIN for all future Purposes. 0040726104-2

I, Sudhir Kumar Popli, S/O Mr. Kanwal Nain Popli, R/O House, No.20/269, Dakshinpur DDA Janta Flat, Dr. Ambedkar Nagar, South Delhi, New Delhi-110062, I have changed my minor son's name, from Angel Sudhir Popli aged 14 years to Aditya Popli, for all future purposes. 0040726174-1

I, Savita W/o Vikas Bhat, R/O Tilpata Karanwas, Gautam Bhand Nagar, Uttar Pradesh-201306, have changed my name, from Savita to Savita Bhati, for all future purpose. 0040726136-9

I, Satya Prakash Sharma S/O Devi Sharan Sharma R/O RZ-B-76, New Janki Puri, Uttam, Nagar, D.K Mohan, Garden, New Delhi-110059, inform that my name Satya Prakash and Satya Prakash Sharma is same person. 0040726128-3

I, Pratima Devi, W/O Anil Kumar Pandey R/O Village Semra, Post Sonhan, Semra, Kaimur (Bhabua), Bihar-821101, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Pratima Kumari 0070900802-1

I, PRIYA JAIN W/O SH. PARVEEN KUMAR JAIN R/O H.NO. A3990 A.G.NO. 15 SHANTI MOHALLA, GANDHI NAGAR, DELHI-31, THAT I HEREBY DECLARE THE BOTH NAME OF PRIYA JAIN AND GEETA JAIN ARE THE SAME. AFTER MARRIGE MY NAME HAS CHANGE GEETA JAIN TO PRIYA JAIN. THAT MY ACTUAL AND CORRECT NAME IS "PRIYA JAIN" FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSE. 0040726136-9

I, Rakesh Kumar S/O Brahm Singh R/O Flat no-1001, Ganga Apartment Kaushambi Vtc: I.e Sahibabad P.O I.e Sahibabad District Ghaziabad U.P-201010 Have changed my name to Rakesh Singh for all future purposes. 0070900890-1

I, Rajni Manik W/O Sh. Sunil Manik R/O C-5/120, Yamuna Vihar, Delhi-110053 hereby declare that I have changed my name from Rajni to Rajni Manik for all future purposes. 0040726096-1

I, Sanjay Gupta, S/o Suresnder Gupta Add-U-13A, Bindapur Matiyala-road Subhash park uttam nagar, Delhi-110059, changed my name to Sanjay Aggarwal 0040726136-2

I, SURESH JAIN, S/O M C JAIN, residing at 288, 1ST-FLOOR MAIN GAGAN VIHAR KRISHNA-NAGAR, DELHI-110051, have changed my name to SURESH CHAND JAIN, for all, future purposes. 0040726143-2

I, No-9114527H, Hav (CLK SD) Ved Prakash, R/O -Khudana, Tehsil/District-Mahender Garh, Haryana-123029, In my service records name of my son has been wrongly mentioned as Mohit Kumar instead of Mohit. It needs correction. Objections be filled to concerned authorities. 0020475370-1

I, SHOBHA, W/O SAURAV BHATT, R/O 6/296, TOP FLOOR, LALITA PARK, LAXMI NAGAR, EAST DELHI, DELHI-110092, have changed my name to SHOBHA RAI. 0040726104-4

I, SHIKHA KHASA, W/O RAVINDER SINGH RESIDENT F-903, PARKER VRC, WHITE LILY, SECTOR-8, SONIPAT, HARYANA HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SHIKHA TOMAR. 0040726136-4

I, SAKSHI, W/O HARVANDAR LAL, H.NO.D-1108, SAINIK COLONY, SECTOR 49, FARIDABAD, HARYANA-121001, changed my name to SAKSHI SACHDEVA. 0040726140-5

I, Roopa/Roopati, W/o Sandeep Kumar Behera, Flat no-13A, 96 A/9, Shalom Apartment, Bhujan Chowk Road, Kishangarh, VasantKunj, South West Delhi-110070, have changed my name to Mrs. Namrata Behera for all purpose. 0040726162-1

I, Reena W/o Vinod Kumar, R/o E-902, Officer-City-1, Rajnagar-Extension, Ghaziabad, Uttar-Pradesh-201017, inform that Reena and Reena Souran both are same and one person. 0040726076-1

I, Rani Kumari Singh, D/o Mathura Prasad Singh, R/O H.No.-03, Gali No-7, West Rajiv Nagar, Gurgaon (Haryana), have changed my name to Rani Singh. 0040726140-1

I, Ram Singh, S/o Bachan Singh, R/O E-325, Delta-1, Greater-Noida, Gautam-Budh Nagar, Uttar Pradesh-201306, have changed my name, from Ram Singh to Ram Singh Rawat, for all, future purpose. 0040726136-10

I, Rajeev Singh, R/o Flat.No.3001, Tower -5, M3M Sector -68, Gurgaon (Haryana), have changed my Minor Daughter name, from Annannya to Annannya Singh. 0040726140-4

I, Parmod Kaur, w/o Ramkumar Singh, r/o Gurudwara Singh Sabha Malviya-Nagar Delhi, have changed my name to Pramod Devi. 0040726162-4

I, RAVINDER KHASA, S/O ISHWAR SINGH RESIDENT F-903, PARKER VRC, WHITE LILY, SECTOR-8, SONIPAT, HARYANA, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO RAVINDER SINGH. 0040726136-5

I, RAJIB KUMAR SINGH, S/O JAGAT NARAYAN SINGH, R/O H.NO.98, BLOCK-E, NEAR POST OFFICE, BAWANA, DELHI-1110039, have changed the name of my minor son from RAJBIR SINGH to SUJIT KUMAR SINGH. 0040726104-3

I, Preena Awana, W/o Amar Awana, H no-43, 1st floor Sohana market Village Naya bans sec-15, Noida uttar pradesh-201301. Changed my name to Reena. 0040726104-6

I, Piyush Dewa, W/O Piyush Dewar, R/O H.No.1/96, Subhash Nagar, New Delhi-110027, I have changed my minor daughter's name Pavani to Pavani Dewan. 0040726143-6

I, Piyush, S/o Arvind Rai, R/o Plot.no.6, Kali Pyau, Jhardoda Kalan, Najafgarh, Delhi-110043, have changed my name, from Piyush to Piyush Rai, for all, future purpose. 0040726136-8

I, Sushil Kumar, S/O-Ram Swaroop Jain, R/O-BQ-164, Shalimar Bagh, Delhi-110088, Has changed my name from SUSHIL KUMAR TO SUSHIL KUMAR JAIN for all future Purposes. 0040726104-2

I, Sudhir Kumar Popli, S/O Mr. Kanwal Nain Popli, R/O House, No.20/269, Dakshinpur DDA Janta Flat, Dr. Ambedkar Nagar, South Delhi, New Delhi-110062, I have changed my minor son's name, from Angel Sudhir Popli aged 14 years to Aditya Popli, for all future purposes. 0040726174-1

I, Savita W/o Vikas Bhat, R/O Tilpata Karanwas, Gautam Bhand Nagar, Uttar Pradesh-201306, have changed my name, from Savita to Savita Bhati, for all future purpose. 0040726136-9

I, Satya Prakash Sharma S/O Devi Sharan Sharma R/O RZ-B-76, New Janki Puri, Uttam, Nagar, D.K Mohan, Garden, New Delhi-110059, inform that my name Satya Prakash and Satya Prakash Sharma is same person. 0040726128-3

I, Pratima Devi, W/O Anil Kumar Pandey R/O Village Semra, Post Sonhan, Semra, Kaimur (Bhabua), Bihar-821101, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Pratima Kumari 0070900802-1

I, PRIYA JAIN W/O SH. PARVEEN KUMAR JAIN R/O H.NO. A3990 A.G.NO. 15 SHANTI MOHALLA, GANDHI NAGAR, DELHI-31, THAT I HEREBY DECLARE THE BOTH NAME OF PRIYA JAIN AND GEETA JAIN ARE THE SAME. AFTER MARRIGE MY NAME HAS CHANGE GEETA JAIN TO PRIYA JAIN. THAT MY ACTUAL AND CORRECT NAME IS "PRIYA JAIN" FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSE. 0040726136-9

I, PAWANISH KUMAR, S/O ASHOK KUMAR, R/O GALIN.O.5, GULATI ROAD, PARAV-MOHALLA, SAMALKHA, PANIPA T, HARYANA-132101, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO PAWANISH GUPTA. 0040726143-2

I, No-9114527H, Hav (CLK SD) Ved Prakash, R/O -Khudana, Tehsil/District-Mahender Garh, Haryana-123029, In my service records name of my son has been wrongly mentioned as Mohit Kumar instead of Mohit. It needs correction. Objections be filled to concerned authorities. 0020475370-1

I, NARESH KUMAR JAIN, S/O-RAM SWAROOP JAIN, R/O-Flat No-106, Abhilasha Apartment, Pocket-3, Sector-23, Rohini, Delhi-110085, have changed my name to NARESH JAIN. 0040726104-1

I, NAOMAN, S/O MOHD SALMAN KHAN, ADD-U-301, TAJ ENCLAVE GEETA-COLONY, EAST DELHI-110031, changed my name to NAOMAN KHAN, for all, future purposes. 0040726104-10

I, Mohd Adil, S/O Mohd Sadeek, r/o 102, Nagarjadhara, Sugar gaon, kakhwari, Tehri garhwal, UttarKhand-249145, have changed my name to Mohammad Adil, for all purpose. 0040726133-1

I, Meenu Bathla alias Meenu D/o Ram Lal Paruthi W/o, Ashok Bathla R/O, H.No.2794, Gali-No.6, Raghubarpu No.2, Gandhi-Nagar, Delhi-110031, have changed my name to Meenu. 0040726162-9

I, DEV DUTT S/O SANT RAM R/O-110A, GALI NO-2, VILLAGE GAMRI GARHI MENDU DELHI/110053, HAVE CHAGED MY NAME TO DEV. 0040726128-1

I, MANISH KUMAR, S/O LAKHPATI SINGH PRAJAPATI, R/O, H.??-7207/2, MAIN-ROAD SHIVAJI PARK, SHAHDARA, NORTH EAST DELHI, DELHI-110032, have changed my son name from NAMAN TO DAKSH PRAJAPATI. 0040726143-4

I, Kavita Gupta, W/o Sanjay Aggarwal Add-U13-A Bindapur Matiyala-road Subhash park, uttam-nagar, Delhi-110059, changed my name to Kavita Aggarwal. 0040726136-3

I, Kanchan Gupta W/o Ankit Aggarwal, R/O H.No.108, First Floor, Pocket-5, Sector-22 Rohini, Delhi-110085, have changed my name to Kanchan Aggarwal. 0040726136-1

I, Kamlesh Sharma W/o Satya Prakash Sharma, R/o RZ-B-76, New Janki Puri, Uttam, Nagar, D.K Mohan, Garden, New Delhi-110059, inform that my name Kamlesh and Kamlesh Sharma is same person 0040726128-2

I, Harmeet Singh Bakshi S/O-Charanjit Singh R/O 402, New Modern CGHS, Sector-9, Rohini, Delhi-110085, have Changed my name to Harmeet Singh for all Purposes. 0040726162-2

I, Dipankar Narag S/O-Gurdev Singh Narag R/O-Plot.No.24-S.F.Road.No.43, West Punjabi Bagh, Delhi-26, changed my name to Deepanker Narag. 0040726140-8

I, Dhanbir S/O Navab Singh R/O Makaan no 36, Chobla, Meerut, Uttar Pradesh 250501 have changed my name from Dhanbir to Dhanbir Singh, for all future purpose. 0040726136-7

I, Deepika Sethi, R/o B501, Adani Oyster Grande, Sector-102, Gurgaon (Haryana), have changed my Minor Son name from Darsh to Darsh Sethi.. 0040726140-3

I, Deepika Chawla, D/o Sanjay Sethi, R/o B501, Adani Oyster Grande, Sector-102, Gurgaon (Haryana), have changed my name to Deepika Sethi for all Purposes. 0040726140-2

I, Bhavna Rajaram Gupta, W/o Anil Kumar Gupta, R/O-18/17, Shakti Nagar, Delhi 110007, Have changed my name to Bhavana Gupta, for all purposes 0040726143-9

I, Baljeet kaur w/o Jasbir Singh, r/o E-878, 3rd-floor, C.R.Park delhi-110019, have changed my name Baljeet kaur to Baljit kaur for all purpose. 0040726104-9

I, BASEET KUMAR, S/O RAM DIN PRASAD R/O B-204, SECTOR-25, ROHINI, DELHI-110085, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO VASHISTI PRASAD 0040726140-7

I, Arun kumar singh, S/o-Janak Prasad Singh, R/O I G Colony, Bhagwanpur, Muzaffarpur, Dist. Muzaffarpur, Bihar-842001, have changed my name to Arun Kumar. 0040726143-7

I, Tamanna Kathuria W/O Shailender Singh R/O H.No-4533, Near Bhagwati Mandir Main Bazar, Parhar Ganj, Swami Rant Singh Nagar, Delhi-110055, I have changed the name of my minor daughter Angel aged about 11 Years and She shall hereafter be known as Angel Kathuria 0070900905-1

I, Sumitra W/o Tarsem Kumar, R/O A-2/104, Pocket-A-2, Sector-3, Rohini, Delhi-110085, have changed my name from Sumitra to Sumittra Bansal, for all purposes. 0040726042-1

I, ARUN GOYAL S/O PANNA LAL GOYAL, R/O B-84, VINOBA KUNJ, SECTOR-9, ROHINI, DELHI-110085, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO ARUN KUMAR GOYAL. 0040726140-6

I, TALIQ ASGHAR, S/O SHAMSUL HAQUE, R/O K3, ABULFAZAL ENCLAVE PART-1 JAMIANAGAR, NEW DELHI-110025, IN MY PASSPORT MY DETAILS ARE INCORRECT ALI ASGAR SHAMSHUL HAQUE, S/O SHAMSHUL HAQUE MOTHERS NAME AMIN BANI CORRECT-DETAILS ARE ALI ASGHAR, S/O-SHAMSHUL HAQUE MOTHERS NAME SHAMSUN NISA. 0040726136-6

I, TABHISHEK S/O-RAM SAHAJ MALHOTRA R/O, C-8/305, SECTOR-8, ROHINI, Delhi-110085, have Changed my name to ABHISHEK MALHOTRA. 0040726133-2

I, Vishaka Vinod Mishra D/o Vinod Mishra R/O GF-4/133, Gyan Khand-2, Indirapuram, Ghaziabad, U.P-201010 have changed my name to Vishakha Mishra for all future purposes. 0070900894-1

I, Tekendra Singh S/o Late Sh. Devendra Singh Sikarwar R/O S-1/18-A, Swarn Park, Nangloi, Near Mundka, Delhi-110041, have changed my name from Tekendra Singh to Tekendra Singh Sikarwar for all purposes. 0040726047-1

I, hitherto known as Sakshi Gutgutia, D/o Arvind Gutgutia, W/o Pranay Singhania, R/O B-333, The People Conservative CGHS Ltd, Plot No.10, Hare Krishna Velley Apartment, Dwarka, Sector-18, South West Delhi, Delhi-110078, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Sakshi G Singhania. 0040724964-3

NAME CHANGE AFTER DIVORCE
It is for general information that I, SONIA VERMA D/O SH. VIJAY KAPOOR EX. WIFE OF SH. VINAY VERMA R/O FLAT NO. 6C, TOWER-A, CENTRAL PARK RESORTS, SECTOR-48, SOHNA ROAD, SOUTH CITY-II, GURGAON, HARYANA-122018 declare that I got divorced from my husband SH. VINAY VERMA vide Court Decree HMA No. 22192013 dated 11.03.2014. Further I have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SONIA KAPOOR. 0040726143-10

LOST & FOUND
Original Share Certificate and allotment letter of FLAT NO.50, NAVEENTAM APARTMENT, SECTOR-9, ROHINI, DELHI-110085, in the name of Madhu Jain has been lost. Finder contact NARENDER KUMAR JAIN at above mentioned address/9899259920 0040726143-10

I, Satish Aggarwal S/o Shri Yoginder Pal Aggarwal has to inform that I have misplaced the Original Allotment Letter of 55, Vidhi Apartment, Plot No.116, I.P. Extension, Patparganj, Delhi-110092 and is not traceable by my best efforts. 0040726057-1

I, Deepika chauhan D/o Ramgopal Singh R/O H-2304 Amaatra homes, sector-10, Greater Noida west (U.P), Flat no.45, first floor, Block C4, Pocket-3, Sector-G-8, Narela Delhi-110040, located in Delhi. Demand letter (allotment letter) is lost which was issued by DDA 0070900886-1

Lost/Misplaced Original Perpetual Lease, Conveyance Deed, Allotment Letter and Possession Letter of House No. A/C 26, Tagore Garden, New Delhi-110027 Serial No.3473 in Book No.1 Volume No.336 at page No.181 to 186 dated 9th March, 1995. If found or Reported found by someone please contact on given address or Mb. 9873285000 0040726044-1

I Rafik Mohammed resident of Dulania Tehsil Pilani District Jhunjhuni my passport Y6048904 got lost somewhere while going on bike from Dulania to Pilani on 20/03/2024 whoever finds it please inform- 7665367880

PUBLIC NOTICE
"It is to inform to the public at large that Mr. Raema Wahi has acquired Ground Floor, 3rd Floor, 4th Floor, 5th Floor, 6th Floor, 7th Floor, 8th Floor, 9th Floor, 10th Floor, 11th Floor, 12th Floor, 13th Floor, 14th Floor, 15th Floor, 16th Floor, 17th Floor, 18th Floor, 19th Floor, 20th Floor, 21st Floor, 22nd Floor, 23rd Floor, 24th Floor, 25th Floor, 26th Floor, 27th Floor, 28th Floor, 29th Floor, 30th Floor, 31st Floor, 32nd Floor, 33rd Floor, 34th Floor, 35th Floor, 36th Floor, 37th Floor, 38th Floor, 39th Floor, 40th Floor, 41st Floor, 42nd Floor, 43rd Floor, 44th Floor, 45th Floor, 46th Floor, 47th Floor, 48th Floor, 49th Floor, 50th Floor, 51st Floor, 52nd Floor, 53rd Floor, 54th Floor, 55th Floor, 56th Floor, 57th Floor, 58th Floor, 59th Floor,

15 ECONOMY

GOLD	USD RATE	OIL	SILVER
₹72,750	₹83.45	\$89.20	₹84,500

Note: Gold, silver rates at Delhi spot market, gold per 10g, silver per 1 kg; Crude oil (Indian basket) as of April 26

SENSEX: 74,671.28 ▲ 941.12 (1.28%) NIFTY: 22,643.40 ▲ 223.45 (1%) NIKKEI: 37,934.76 ▲ 306.28 HANG SENG: 17,746.91 ▲ 95.76 FTSE: 8,163.96 ▲ 24.13 DAX: 18,127.51 ▼ 33.50

International market data till 1900 IST

BRIEFLY

Electronic trading platforms: RBI issues draft

New Delhi: The Reserve Bank of India on Monday proposed a revised regulatory framework for Electronic Trading Platforms (ETPs) in the wake of increased integration of the onshore forex market with offshore markets. Market makers too have been re-requesting the Reserve Bank to allow access to offshore ETPs offering Indian Rupee (INR) products. ETP refers to any electronic system, other than a recognised stock exchange, on which transactions in eligible instruments are contracted. Eligible instruments mean securities, money market instruments, foreign exchange instruments, derivatives, or other instruments of like nature. **PTI**

Follow fair practices: RBI to lenders

Mumbai: Concerned over some banks and lenders resorting to unfair practices in charging of interest, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Monday directed them to take corrective action and refund excess charges to customers. The guidelines on Fair Practices Code issued to various regulated entities (REs) since 2003, inter-alia, advocate fairness and transparency in charging of interest by the lenders, while providing adequate freedom to them as regards loan pricing policy. "During the course of the on-site examination of REs for the period ended March 31, 2023, the Reserve Bank came across instances of lenders resorting to certain unfair practices in charging of interest," the RBI said in a circular. **PTI**

UltraTech Cement Q4 profit up 35%

New Delhi: UltraTech Cement Ltd on Monday reported a 35.24 per cent increase in consolidated net profit at Rs 2,258.58 crore for the fourth quarter ended March 31, 2024, helped by lower fuel and raw material costs along with operational efficiencies and sales increase. The leading cement maker has posted a consolidated net profit of Rs 1,670.10 crore in the January-March quarter of the last fiscal year, according to a regulatory filing from UltraTech. Its revenue from operations was up 9.41 per cent at Rs 20,418.94 crore during the period. It was at Rs 18,662.38 crore in the same period a year ago. **PTI**

Economy did well in past two months: NCAER

New Delhi: The Indian economy has continued to do well in the last two months and forecast of an above-normal monsoon augurs well for the immediate future, economic think tank NCAER said on Monday. In its April 2024 issue of Monthly Economic Review (MER), NCAER said a range of high-frequency indicators reveal the resilience of the domestic economy. **PTI**

FOCUS NOW ON US FED'S POLICY DECISION ON WEDNESDAY

Bank stocks, global cues power mkts; Sensex rallies by 941 pts

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU MUMBAI, APRIL 29

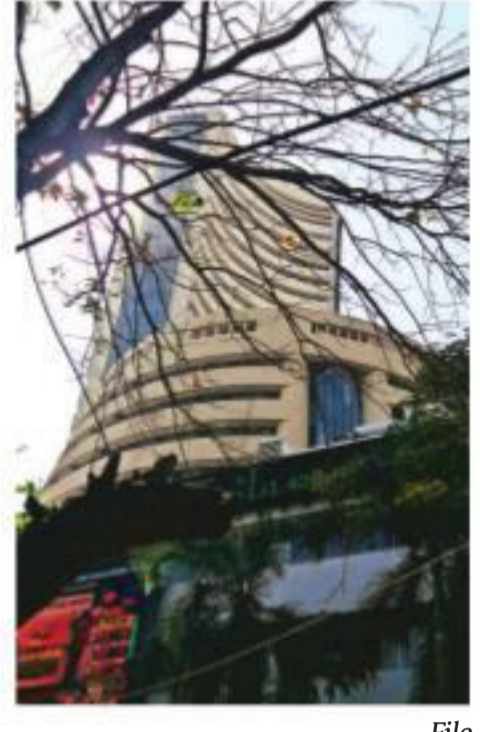
LED BY banking stocks, markets rallied on Monday on strong earnings numbers, easing of Middle East tension and fall in crude prices. The benchmark BSE Sensex jumped by 941.12 points or 1.28 per cent to 74,671.28 and the NSE Nifty Index gained 223.45 points or 1 per cent to close at 22,643.40 on strong buying support.

The rally was led by banking stocks with ICICI Bank gaining 4.67 per cent and SBI 3.09 per cent. The BSE Bankex rose 2.7 per cent. Positive global cues boosted the sentiment as major European markets and the US stock futures rose with investors shifting their focus to the Federal Reserve's policy decision on Wednesday and US jobs data on Friday.

The rupee declined by 7 paise to close at 83.45 against the US dollar on Monday as investors remained cautious ahead of the US Federal Reserve's monetary policy decision.

While the market seems to have factored in the possibility of no rate cut in the near future, the drop in the US GDP data for the first quarter has raised hopes that the US Fed may go for at least two rate cuts this year.

Domestic markets witnessed



File

phenomenal buying support as Sensex quickly moved towards the crucial 75,000 mark after investors cheered strong corporate earnings from select frontline banking and cement companies, indicating their smooth sailing despite the global vagaries.

"Indian benchmark indexes rebounded, aided by an upbeat in US tech quarter earnings and a drop in US 10-year yield. Domestically, the Bank Nifty outperformed, driven by its strong performance in the fourth quarter," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services. "The easing Middle East tension, coupled with stable earnings, is expected to maintain

EXPLAINED Strong corporate earnings

MARKETS IN India witnessed phenomenal buying support, led by banking stocks. Closing at 74,671.28 points, Sensex is quickly moving towards the crucial 75,000 mark as investors cheered strong corporate earnings from select frontline banking and cement companies.

positive market sentiment. Moving forward, the Fed policy and US non-farm payroll data will dictate the overall market dynamics," he said.

Ajit Mishra, SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said favourable global cues combined with noticeable traction in banking majors aided a positive start, which further strengthened as the day progressed. However, a mixed trend on the sectoral front kept the momentum in check wherein realty, IT and auto traded subdued. The broader indices maintained their positive tone and ended with modest gains.

The fresh buoyancy in the banking index has paved the way

for a new high in the Nifty index while others may continue to offer support on a rotational basis.

According to Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities, optimism prevailed from the start of the trading session as cooling of US bond yields and letdown in middle-east conflict coupled with a drop in crude oil prices generated a lot of enthusiasm amongst the investors.

BSE shares fall 13.67%

Meanwhile, shares of BSE Ltd plunged by 13.67 per cent to Rs 2,771.25 on the NSE on Monday following the Sebi's directive to the exchange to cough up option turnover fee as per the 'notional value'. BSE stock tumbled as much as 18.6 per cent to a low of Rs 2,612 in intra-day trades on Monday on the NSE after the market regulator Sebi directed the stock exchange to pay regulatory fees on option turnover, including arrears and interest cost within a month.

Total regulatory fees along with 15 per cent interest, is to be remitted to Sebi based on annual turnover considering "notional value" in the case of option contract. The differential Sebi regulatory fees for the year, if liable, could be around Rs 96.30 crore plus GST, BSE said in an exchange filing. BSE shares are listed only on the NSE.

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU MUMBAI, APRIL 29

INDIA INC'S revenue growth likely slackened to 5.4 per cent in January-March of 2023-24, marking the third slowest quarterly growth since recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic began in September 2021, says a Crisil study.

Revenue growth was 7.9 per cent in the December quarter of FY24 and 10.6 per cent in March 2023.

The moderation, though, follows stronger growth in previous years and is, hence, on a higher base. Among the 47 sectors monitored by Crisil, only 12 are expected to have clocked an improvement in revenue growth both sequentially and on-year for the quarter. The analysis of its based on 350 companies (excluding financial services and oil and gas sectors), it said.

Crisil said consumer discretionary products and services likely led the show in the quarter. Among discretionary products, the automobiles sector was steered by healthy growth in passenger vehicles on the back of higher volumes and price hikes in the past year. The organised retail sector grew for the thirteenth quarter in a row, on healthy urban demand.

WAS 7.9% IN THE DEC QTR OF FY24

Revenue growth was 7.9 per cent in the December quarter of FY24 and 10.6 per cent in March 2023

The moderation, though, follows stronger growth in previous years and is, hence, on a higher base

Discretionary services, such as airlines and hotels benefited from MICE1, weddings and corporate travel segments rebounding, it said.

"At the other end, revenue from construction-linked sectors likely grew at a tepid pace, essentially on account of a high base of the fourth quarter of fiscal 2023 that saw construction companies achieving their highest quarterly revenue," Crisil said. In the cement sector, despite steady demand momentum during the quarter, revenue growth remained moderate as prices were under pressure amid higher supply and intense competition, the rating firm said.

"Even with slower revenue growth in March Quarter, corpo-

rate revenue is estimated to have grown 8 per cent in fiscal 2024. In fiscal 2025, revenue growth should improve to 9-10 per cent, driven by sectors less dependent on commodities and largely catering to the domestic market," said Miren Lodha, Senior Director, CRISIL M&A Research. Consumer discretionary segments, comprising both goods and services, will grow despite easing of the post-pandemic release of pent-up demand. Growth in the consumer staples segment will pick up pace owing to resumption of rural demand, Crisil said.

Despite single-digit revenue growth, margin has increased on-year consistently for four quarters, indicating a shift in corporate focus towards profitability. An improvement of 150 bps on-year is estimated for fiscal 2024. As supply pressures ease, commodity prices are likely to be less volatile in fiscal 2025, helping India Inc log a 50-150 bps improvement in Ebitda (earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation) margin. Sectors such as consumer staples, discretionary products and industrial sectors, which make up 52 per cent of corporate India's Ebitda, are expected clock the highest margin expansion, Aniket Dani, Director, CRISIL M&A Research, said.

In China, Musk scores wins on the path to self-driving cars



Robin Zeng, chairman of Chinese battery giant CATL, walks at a hotel where Tesla CEO Elon Musk is staying, in Beijing, China, on Monday. Reuters

REUTERS BEIJING, APRIL 29

ELON MUSK made progress towards rolling out Tesla's advanced driver-assistance package in China on a whirlwind weekend trip to Beijing, sending the company's shares up by almost 18 per cent on Monday.

Key questions remain, however, on whether Tesla can secure government approvals to transfer data overseas that could prove pivotal in its development of autonomous vehicles. Musk arrived in the Chinese capital on an unannounced visit on Sunday, intending to discuss the rollout of its Full Self-Driving (FSD) software and the data-transfer permissions, according to a person with knowledge of the matter.

During the trip Tesla won a key endorsement from a top

Chinese auto association that said Tesla's Model 3 and Y cars were compliant with data-security regulations. That would enable Tesla cars into parts of China they were previously barred from, Chinese media reported, citing a statement from Tesla.

Tesla has also reached an agreement with Baidu to use the Chinese giant's mapping license for data collection on China's public roads, according to two people, who described that as a step toward FSD rollout in China.

Musk's meetings included one with Chinese Premier Li Qiang, who praised Tesla's development in China. The question of whether Tesla can win Beijing's approvals for overseas data transfer remains critical to its plans for FSD in China and for autonomous vehicles globally. Reuters could not determine what progress, if

any, Musk made in securing such approvals during his Beijing trip.

Just a week before the Beijing trip, Musk abandoned a planned trip to India and a meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, where he had been expected to discuss an investment including a new factory to build affordable Teslas. Equity analysts at Wedbush called the surprise visit "a major moment for Tesla" if Musk is able to obtain approval to transfer the China data overseas. Chinese regulators has required Tesla to store all data collected by its Chinese fleet in Shanghai since 2021.

The chairman of Chinese battery giant CATL Robin Zeng, a key Tesla battery supplier, also visited Musk's hotel on Monday, according to a Reuters witness. Reuters could not immediately confirm with CATL if Zeng met with Musk.

Ola Cabs to lay off around 10% staff; CEO Hemant Bakshi quits

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU BENGALURU, APRIL 29

HEMANT BAKSHI, CEO of Ola Cabs, has quit just four months after joining the company. The development comes at a time when the firm is planning a restructuring exercise that will see around 10 per cent reduction in its workforce, impacting around 200 employees.

Sources said that Bakshi's resignation comes into effect immediately and the day-to-day operations of the firm will now be overseen by co-founder Bhavish Aggarwal.

In a letter to employees, chairman and managing director Aggarwal said that Bakshi will pursue opportunities out-



Sources said that Bakshi's resignation comes into effect immediately and the day-to-day operations of the firm will now be overseen by co-founder Bhavish Aggarwal. File

side the company. Ola Cabs is also preparing to file a draft red herring prospectus with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) for an IPO. Group firm Ola Electric has al-

ready filed its DRHP in December and plans to raise around Rs 7,250 crore through an IPO. This will be the first attempt at public listing by a domestic electric vehicle firm. Valued at \$7.3 billion in 2021,

Ola Cabs counts marquee investors such as Temasek, Tiger Global and Warburg Pincus among its backers.

Recently, it shut down its international operations in markets like the UK, Australia and New Zealand.

Ola's Mobility business in FY23 reported a revenue of Rs 2,135 crore, up nearly 58 per cent, and for the first time, the firm reported a positive Ebitda of Rs 250 crore after reporting Rs 66 crore of Ebitda loss in FY22.

ANI Technologies, the parent entity of Ola Fleet, Ola Financial Services and Ola Stores, reported a consolidated revenue of Rs 2,799 crore, up nearly 42 per cent year-on-year despite a reduction in revenues from Ola Fleet and Ola Financial Service. **FE**

Hard work needed for India to be 3rd largest economy: FM

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU NEW DELHI, APRIL 29

INDIA'S AIM to become the third-largest economy in the next few years is not an 'arithmetic inevitability' as claimed by Congress leader P Chidambaram, but requires a lot of efforts and visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Monday.

Addressing Viksit Bharat Ambassador Campus Dialogue at Gitam University in Visakhapatnam, Sitharaman said that "the previous Congress-led

government could increase the Indian economy's ranking just by two places from 12th to 10th in 2004-2014, but it improved to 5th place under Modi's tenure between 2014-2024."

Recently, former Finance Minister Chidambaram said no matter who the prime minister is, India's GDP will become the third largest in the world. "There is no magic in it. It is an arithmetic inevitability given the size of India's population," he had said.

Sitharaman said, "PM Modi has given a guarantee and with clean and transparent administration, we will make sure India reaches the third rank soon".

"It's not a mathematical inevitability. You need effort, you need a visionary leader, you need to stop corruption, you need to make sure that skills are available for our students, you need to make sure functions in delivering welfare schemes for common people, you need to make sure that poor get their due and you also need to make sure businesses have an environment to grow," she said. **FE**

20 critical mineral blocks to be on sale

NEW DELHI: The government will put on sale around 20 critical mineral blocks in the fourth round of auction by the end of June, mines secretary V L Kantha Rao said on Monday.

Critical minerals such as copper, lithium, nickel, cobalt and rare earth elements are essential components in many of today's rapidly growing clean energy technologies — from wind turbines and electricity networks to electric vehicles. **PTI**

iPadOS subject to bloc's tech rules: EU

REUTERS BRUSSELS, APRIL 29

APPLE'S OPERATING system for iPads has been designated as a gatekeeper under the bloc's landmark tech rules by EU antitrust regulators because of its importance to business users, the European Commission said on Monday.

Under the Digital Markets Act which came into force this year, 22 services owned by Apple, Alphabet's Google, Microsoft, Amazon, Meta Platforms and TikTok owner ByteDance have already been labelled gatekeepers which control access to their platforms. The European executive's

'Brussels to probe FB, Instagram'

Bengaluru: Brussels is set to open a probe into Meta Platforms' Facebook and Instagram as soon as Monday over concerns the company is failing to do enough to counter 'disinformation' from Russia and other countries, the *Financial Times* reported.

Regulators suspect that Meta's moderation does not go far enough to stop the wide-

spread dissemination of political advertising that risks undermining the electoral process, the European Commission is expected to say on Monday, according to the report, which cited two people with knowledge of the matter.

The commission, however, is not expected to single out Russia in its statement. **REUTERS**

antitrust chief Margrethe Vestager said in a statement.

The Commission said Apple's business user numbers exceeded the quantitative threshold by eleven times, while its end user numbers were close to the threshold and were predicted to rise in the near future. It said both business users and end users are locked into iPadOS because of its large ecosystem.

Apple, which has six months to comply with the DMA, said it would "continue to constructively engage with the European Commission to comply with the DMA across all designated services". DMA breaches can cost companies fines as much as 10 per cent of their global annual turnover.

KMML The Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd
(A Govt. of Kerala Undertaking) Sankaramangalam, Kollam-691 583
Phone: 0476-2651215 to 2651217, e-mail: md@kmmil.com, URL: www.kmmil.com

TENDER NOTICE

For more details, please visit E-Tendering Portal, <https://etenders.kerala.gov.in> or www.kmmil.com

Sl No.	Tender ID	Items
1	2024_KMML_671798_1	For the supply of CS Pipes
2	2024_KMML_671896_1	For the supply of Roaster Discharge Grating Assembly
3	2024_KMML_671843_1	For Transportation of Aluminium Trihydrate-1037 MT
4	2024_KMML_672097_1	For Fabrication & Supply of Crude Tickle Storage Tank F-205
5	2024_KMML_672092_1	For the supply of 2 x 10 KVA Parallel Redundant Industrial Type UPS
6	2024_KMML_672111_1	Fabrication, Erection, Insulation, Testing & Commissioning of Methanol Chiller supply/return pipelines of U-200, 300 & Nano TiO2 Plant.
7	2024_KMML_672093_1	Comprehensive Energy Audit at TP/MS/ & TSP Units of KMML

Chavara 29.04.2024 Sd/- Managing Director for The Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd

MALABAR CEMENTS LIMITED
(A Government of Kerala Undertaking)
An ISO 9001:2015, 14001:2015 Company
Walayar Post, Palakkad-678624-Kerala, Email: ro@malabarcements.com

TENDER NOTICE

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR LIMESTONE

Seeks EOI from the land owners to lease land for the extraction of cement / sweetener grade limestone.

Visit www.malabarcements.com
EOI may also be mailed to: ro@malabarcements.com

MANAGING DIRECTOR

BHARATIYA RESERVE BANK NOTE MUDRAN (P) LIMITED
(Wholly owned subsidiary of Reserve Bank of India)
P.O.: BRNML, Salboni - 721132, Paschim Medinipur Dt., West Bengal.
Phone No.: 03227-280176 / 280317; Fax No.: 03227-280744 / 280222

OPEN TENDER ENQUIRY (OTE)/NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING (NCB)

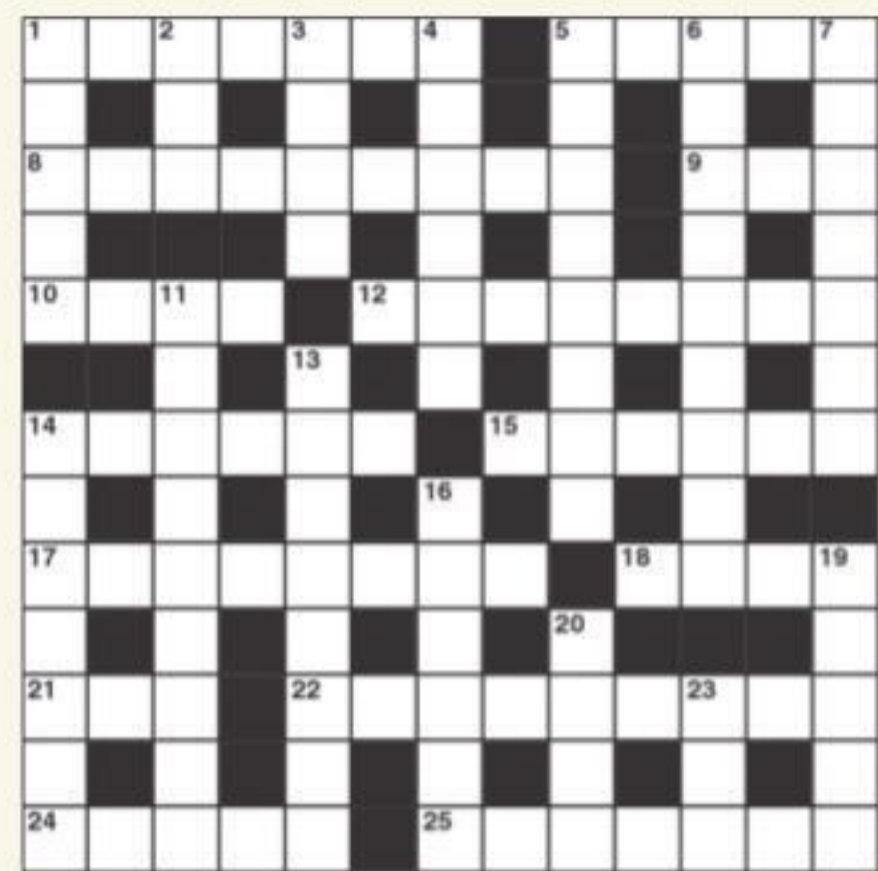
Bids are invited under Two-Part bidding system for the following e-Tenders through MSTC Portal:-

- SUPPLY, INSTALLATION, TESTING AND COMMISSIONING OF POWER DISTRIBUTION TRANSFORMERS AT BRNMP, SALBONI; MSTC EVENT NO. BRNMP/SALBONI/PRESS/IMD/24-25/ET/1 (POWER TRANSFORMERS); BRNMP TENDER NO. 006/SAL/MMD-MAINT/2024-25; (ESTIMATED COST - ₹108.50 LAKH)
- RENOVATION OF FLOORING WORKS AT E-TYPE AND D-TYPE QUARTERS AT BRNMP, SALBONI; MSTC EVENT NO. BRNMP/SALBONI/PRESS/IMD/24-25/ET/13 (RENOVATION OF FLOORING WORKS); BRNMP TENDER NO. 004/SAL/MMD-CIVIL/2024-25; (ESTIMATED COST - ₹266.94 LAKH)
- RENOVATION OF TOILETS IN E-TYPE RESIDENTIAL QUARTERS AT BRNMP, SALBONI; MSTC EVENT NO. BRNMP/SALBONI/PRESS/IMD/24-25/ET/14 (RENOVATION OF TOILETS); BRNMP TENDER NO. 005/SAL/MMD-CIVIL/2024-25; (ESTIMATED COST - ₹46.62 LAKH)

Last date of tender submission - 31.05.2024 by 11:00 Hrs. For downloading tender documents and other details, kindly visit website www.mstccommerce.com. Tender details are also available at our website www.brnmp.co.in. Further extension or amendments, if any, shall be uploaded on the above websites.

Senior General Manager

CROSSWORD 5351



- ACROSS**
- It could be great as a means of riot control (4,3)
 - Plead for one trodden underfoot (5)
 - One with a place for a catalogue of successes (9)
 - Set and match (3)
 - They look round for bears without fear (4)
 - Isn't love the sort of subject he'd write about? (8)
 - Reach a swirling river (6)
 - Throws away useless bits? (6)
 - Not a friendly visit made by a bugler? (4,4)
 - Olympian returns the port (4)
 - She has good reason to renounce the world (3)
 - Annoyed girl having tried awkwardly to embrace her (9)
 - Not a crime to be coolly carried out (5)
 - Revolutionary means of power on board (7)
- DOWN**
- How time is called in some bars (5)
 - Get a religious scholar briefly underfoot (3)
 - A young pig should be a good investment (4)
 - He would like a hand (6)
 - Long-suffering head accepts nice break (8)
 - Not a unique type of bridge (9)
 - Understatement from TS Eliot (7)
 - Vocalists in boaters possibly (9)
 - People will be put out by it (8)
 - Literary supplements? (7)
 - He takes orders and forms a circle (6)
 - Battle fought with troublesome Danes? (5)
 - Halt returning vessels (4)
 - A child of spirit (3)

Solutions Crossword 5350 Across: 1 Complied, 5 Bulb, 9 Throw, 10 Tropics, 11 Joint concern, 13 Stepped, 14 Smeared, 17 Afterthought, 20 Sprites, 21 Iliad, 22 Need, 23 Teetotal Down: 1 Cato, 2 Marlowe, 3 Low in spirits, 4 Entice, 6 Unite, 7 Business, 8 Sonnambulist, 12 Assassin, 15 Atheist, 16 Chaste, 18 Throe, 19 Idol

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip.

The prudence of the best is often defeated by the tenderness of the best. - Henry Fielding (5...6)

CPAAE ANSDST
 CRAYS AERTHH

SOLUTION: PEACE, SCARY, STANDS, HEARTH
 Answer: The prudence of the best heads is often defeated by the tenderness of the best hearts. - Henry Fielding

Difficulty Level 2s

Instructions
To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Difficulty Level
1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius

SOLUTION SUDOKU 5546

4	5	8	6	9	7	2	1	3
9	7	6	2	3	1	4	8	5
2	3	1	8	5	4	7	6	9
3	9	7	4	8	5	1	2	6
6	1	5	3	7	2	8	9	4
8	2	4	9	1	6	3	5	7
1	4	3	5	2	9	6	7	8
5	6	2	7	4	8	9	3	1
7	8	9	1	6	3	5	4	2

NORTHERN RAILWAY CORRIGENDUM

Ref: (i) Tender Notice, 99/2023-24 dated 07.03.2024 (S.No. 04)
 (ii) Tender No. 08235651 due on 30.04.2024
 In reference to above tender, the due date has been changed from 30.04.2024 to 31.05.2024. All terms and conditions remain unchanged.
 The corrigendum has been published on website www.ireps.gov.in. 1276/2024

DEBTS RECOVERY APPELLATE TRIBUNAL, ALLAHABAD

Ministry of Finance, Govt. of India
 147-A-58/1, Jawahar Lal Nehru Road, Tagore Town, Allahabad
 147-A-58, वित्त जवाहर लाल नेहरू रोड, टैगोर टाउन, इलाहाबाद

DEBTS RECOVERY APPELLATE TRIBUNAL, ALLAHABAD

Ref.No.: Dated : 11.03.2024
 (Summons to the Parties through publication under section 20 of the Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 read with rules 26 (8) as amended upto date/under.)
 M.S No 51 of 2022 IN Regular Appeal No. 230 of 2016
 M/s Sai Enterprises & Others Appellant
 Vs.
 Authorized Officer, Indian Bank & Others Respondents
 1. Mr. Pradeep Kumar Jha, s/o Late Bharat Jha R/o Pakhrauni, P.O Saurath, District-Madhubani.
 2. Sri Charanjeet Singh S/o Sri Lal Singh R/o Flat No. 104/A, 1st Floor, Block-A, Lotus Apartment, New Patliputra Colony District-Patna
 3. Sri Partho Sarathi Bandhopadhyaya S/o Sri Chandan Kumar Banerjee R/o Kakalay, Delha Road, Gaya Bihar.

NOTICE

Take Notice that the appellant has filed an appeal against the order Dated 23.05.2016 passed in O.A.No. 177/2014 by the Debts Recovery Tribunal at Allahabad the above mentioned Appeal has been listed for Appearance and further proceedings before the Debts Recovery Appellate Tribunal at Allahabad on 13.05.2024 at 11.00 A.M. You may appear before this Appellate Tribunal on the date either in person or through legal practitioner duly appointed by for this purpose.
 Take Notice that in default of your appearance on the date fixed, the appeal will be heard Ex-Parte.

REGISTRAR
 DEBTS RECOVERY APPELLATE TRIBUNAL, ALLAHABAD

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified female (depicted in the photo) name Unknown, residence and family is Unknown age 45 years approx. was found dead at Footpath, Near Hanuman Vatika, Asaf Ali Road, New Delhi on dated 10.03.2024. In this regard a DD No. 19-A, dated 10.03.2024 has been lodged at PS Kamla Market, New Delhi. The dead body was preserved for 72 Hrs in Maulana Azad Medical College Mortuary. His physical description is as under:-
 Sex: Female, Age: 45 years approx., Height: 5' 2" ft., Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Round, Built: Medium, Hair: Long black colour hair, Identification Mark: Having a tattoo on right hand "विमललाल पत्नी मीना देवी", Wearing: Green colour Salwar & Suit printed red colour.
 If any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone numbers:-
 SHO PS: Kamla Market, Delhi Ph: 011-22230623, 23233743
 E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in Ph: 8750870424
 Tel. No.: 011-23014046, 23015218 Mob.: 8750870424
 Fax No.: 011-23011334 DP/3142/CD/2024

TAMILNADU MEDICAL SERVICES CORPORATION LTD.

(A Government of Tamilnadu Undertaking)
 No. 417, Pantheon Road, Egmore, Chennai-600008. Phone: 044-28191890/28190259
 Website: www.tnmsc.in.gov.in, E-Mail: gmdrug.tnmsc@tn.gov.in, mngrdrug.tnmsc@tn.gov.in

Online Tender is invited by the Tender Inviting Authority, Tamilnadu Medical Services Corporation Ltd., Chennai - 600008, from the Licensed Manufacturers or Direct Importers holding a valid Import License and experienced in the field for a minimum period of three years and Loan Licensees having valid Loan License with three years Market Standing or Authorized Stockist / Dealers holding valid manufacturer's authorization letter are also eligible to participate in this tender for the supply of Blood Bags to Tamil Nadu State Blood Transfusion Council under contract system for two years from the date of acceptance.

Sl. No.	Description	e-Tender Reference	Tender Floating Period	e-Tender Submission Duration	Date and time of online opening of Technical Bids
1.	Online Tender for the supply of Blood Bags to Tamil Nadu State Blood Transfusion Council under contract system for two years from the date of acceptance	e-007/M/PY/BLOOD-BAGS/TNMSC/2024. Dated: 30.04.2024	30.04.2024 at 4.00 PM to 30.05.2024 upto 11.00 AM	06.05.2024 at 10.00 AM to 30.05.2024 upto 11.00 AM	31.05.2024 at 11.00 AM

The tender document can be downloaded and the tender shall be submitted at <https://tenders.gov.in/>. The tender document can also be downloaded at www.tnmsc.in.gov.in for reference purpose.
 DIPR/1716/TENDER/2024 Tender Inviting Authority / General Manager (Drugs)

NMDC Ltd.

(A Govt. Of India Enterprise) (ISO 9001 Company)
 Bailadila Iron Ore Mines, Bachel Complex
 Bachel, Distt. - South Bastar (Dantewada), CG - 494553
 Phone No.: 07857-230210, Mob.: 8085559082

BIOM/BC/Contracts/Publication/2024-25/083/

Date: 30.04.2024
 Bailadila Iron Ore Mines, Bachel Complex, NMDC Ltd. invites e-bids for the following works. Intending tenderers may visit and download Tender Documents from CPP Portal or www.nmdc.co.in or <http://www.mstcecommerce.com/eprochome/nmdc/>. Any corrigendum/addendum to be issued, the bidder must visit the online portal from time to time to notice the same. Corrigendum/addendum will not be published in any newspaper. The offer has to be submitted online at the given MSTC portal only till 03:30 PM and will be opened on 04:00 PM on respective last dates.

MSTC Ref. No.	NMDC Tender No.	Short Description of Work	EMD (Rs.)	Last Date of Sub'n
1	19/48	Reconditioning of 2 no Bucket/Dipper assembly Of 182M BEML Bucyrus make Electric Rope Shovel	1,01,500/-	30-05-2024
2	20/49	Mechanising excavation, loading, transportation and unloading of 5.00 (Five) lakhs tones of iron ore fines from Dep-10/11A fine ore stockpile to fine ore dump (FOD) through NMDC weigh bridge at an average lead distance of 3.5-4.0 kms (one way approx) or as directed by Engineer In-Charge	2,30,100/-	30-05-2024
3	21/50	De-silting of Slime from check bunds from Downhill, magazine pump house & Gully nallah pick up weir including mise works for improving water supply at Dep-5	12,000/-	30-05-2024
4	22/51	Hiring of 1 no. Excavator or Poclam EX-210 or equivalent on hourly basis at FOD area	42,200/-	30-05-2024
5	23/52	Dismantling of Old Type II/DS/217-296, 10 blocks quarters (IInd Phase) at BIOM Bachel Complex.	88,200/-	10-05-2024

HOD (M&S and Contracts)
 BIOM, Bachel Complex

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General public is hereby informed that a person (depicted in the photo), Name: Sushil S/o : Gurmeet Pal Bagga R/o : H. No. H-3/29A, Gali No. 1, Kunwar Singh Nagar, Near Amar Convent School, Nangloi, Delhi has been missing since 10.01.2024 from his house. In this regard a case vide DD No. 85A dated 24.02.2024 has been lodged at Police Station Ranholia, Delhi. His physical description is as under:-
SUSHIL
 Age: 48 Years, Height: 5'9", Complexion: Shallow, Build: Thin, Face: Long, Wearing: Unknown.
 Any person having any information/Clue about this Missing person may inform SHO, Ranholia, Delhi at E-mail Id - cic@cbi.gov.in or Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>
 SHO P.S. Ranholia, Delhi Outer Distt., Delhi Ph. No. 011-24368638, 24368641 Fax No. 011-24368639 Ph. No. 011-28363001, 9311736587, 7065036128
 DP/4909/OD/2024

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED

(See Section 82 Cr.P.C.)
 Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Savit Kumar, S/o Raj Singh, R/o H.No. 21, Village & Post Office Kharhar, Tehsil Bahadurgarh, District Jhajjar, Haryana also at H.No. X-1587, Kharhar Rohtak, Haryana has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in Case FIR No. 9463/2017, U/S 138 NI Act, PS Rajinder Nagar, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused Savit Kumar can not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Savit Kumar has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).
 Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Savit Kumar of FIR No. 9463/2017, U/S 138 NI Act, PS Rajinder Nagar, Delhi is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before 18.07.2024.
 By Order
 Nitish Kumar Sharma
 Metropolitan Magistrate-01, NI Act (Central)
 Room No. 201, Court Building Annexe-I
 Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi
 DP/4991/CD/20024

उत्तराखण्ड लोक सेवा आयोग

हस्तिकर
 फोन नं. 249404

संख्या: 52/01/डीआरओ(डिप्टी)/सेवा-2/2021-22 दिनांक: 29 अप्रैल, 2024

विज्ञापित
 अतिरिक्त प्रोफेसर (राजकीय महाविद्यालय) चयन-2021
 एतद्वारा सूचित किया जाता है कि अतिरिक्त प्रोफेसर (राजकीय महाविद्यालय) चयन-2021 के विज्ञापन दिनांक 04 दिसम्बर, 2021, विज्ञापित प्रोफेसर 19 जनवरी, 2022 एवं विद्यार्थीजन के पदों हेतु शुद्धिपत्र दिनांक 23 दिसम्बर, 2022 द्वारा प्राप्त ऑनलाइन आवेदन पत्रों में अंकित एप्रीओआई स्कोर के आधार पर अतिरिक्त प्रोफेसर, भूगोल (Geography) के लिए संशोधित शार्टलिस्टिंग परिणाम दिनांक 04 मार्च, 2024 को घोषित किया गया, जिसमें सफल अभ्यर्थियों से दिनांक 18 मार्च, 2024 तक अभिलेख प्राप्त किये गये थे। प्राप्त अभिलेखों की सन्निरीक्षा के क्रम में अतिरिक्त प्रोफेसर, भूगोल (Geography) विषय के लिए अनर्ह सूची, अग्र्यन्त निरस्त सूची एवं अधिमानी अर्हता विषयक सूचना से संबंधित सूचियों को आयोग की Website: psc.uk.gov.in पर प्रसारित किया गया है। अनर्ह सूची एवं अधिमानी अर्हता सूची के संबंध में अभ्यर्थियों को साक्ष्यों सहित दिनांक 13 मई, 2024 (सोमवार) तक अभिलेख/प्रमाण-पत्र/प्रत्यवेदन आयोग कार्यालय में प्रस्तुत करने का अंतिम अवसर प्रदान किया गया है। अंतिम तिथि 13 मई, 2024 (सोमवार) के पश्चात् अभ्यर्थियों के इस विषय में प्राप्त किसी भी अभिलेख/प्रत्यवेदन/प्रमाण-पत्र पर विचार नहीं किया जायेगा। यह भी सूचित किया जाता है कि अभ्यर्थियों को इस संबंध में डाक के माध्यम से फूक से सूचना नहीं की जायेगी।
 (मिर्चारी सिंह रावत) सचिव।

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr.P.C.
 Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Anil Kumar S/o Phool Kumar R/o 30, R Mahal Camp, Saraswati Vihar, Delhi has committed the offence FIR No. 604/17 u/s 279/427 IPC P.S. Shalimar Bagh, Delhi & a warrant of arrest issued have been returned stating thereupon that the said Anil Kumar cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said Anil Kumar has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said Anil Kumar accused of FIR No. 604/17 u/s 279/427 IPC P.S. Shalimar Bagh, Delhi is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on 31.05.2024.
 By Order: Ms. Ritika Kansal
 Ld. Metropolitan Magistrate-07
 Room No. 208, 2nd Floor,
 Rohini Court, Delhi
 DP/4914/NW/24

DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

- ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)**
 Without a shadow of a doubt, this is an ambitious time for Aries. Yet no two of you share exactly the same goal. Success will only follow if you put your own unique aspirations above duties or obligations to other people.
- TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)**
 Whatever challenges you face, whatever perils you meet, remember one thing. The planets are on your side now and over the rest of the month. Few people are as fortunate as you when it comes to long-term planetary prospects, all the more so if you're ready for a spot of revolution.
- GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)**
 The way out of current financial complications is twofold. First, you can attempt to run your affairs in a traditional manner. Secondly, you may realise that your fortunes are linked to other people's and make teamwork your priority. You can even offer a helping hand.
- CANCER (June 22 - July 23)**
 Events are moving very fast, and will continue to do so for the next month. The problem is that a great deal that happens may seem to be outside your control. Yet if you are honest, you'll see that you laid the seeds of current crises, and triumphs, over the last twelve months.
- LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)**
 The crucial factor today is the planets' desire to stir up mysteries and confusion, a factor which leads you away from everything of worldly significance, towards solitude, charity, imagination and dreams. You may therefore feel a little out of touch with certain daily duties.
- VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)**
 You're not usually interested in small talk, yet I would advise you to do whatever is necessary to mix as widely as possible, no matter how unpromising social contacts seem. Eventually, something of value will emerge from a new relationship, if only you can wait.
- LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)**
 Home entertaining and family engagements are favoured all week. Some may be pleasurable, some may be called to deal with knotty problems and awkward business. If it's agreement you're after, remember that where there's a will there's a way. In other words, it's all up to you.
- SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)**
 Excellent, intuitive and commonsense lunar aspects should put you on the right track today. The beneficial impact will be felt primarily on your instincts, those mysterious Scorpionic feelings which are responsible for guiding you through life's many minor perils.
- SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 23)**
 Money worries resurface today, but those of you who have already decided to do something positive about your situation will take a further step towards greater prosperity. The general drift of events this week is supportive, so don't falter now.
- CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)**
 The Moon takes up a powerful position, raising your confidence but also indicating that your intuitions are on top form. This has two consequences. On the one hand, you will be very sensitive to the fact that partners' interests must be respected.
- AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)**
 This is a lively day and everyone seems to want more than they can have. An unforeseen obstacle brings the greatest risk of a clash but, in some strange way, the consequence of any irrational disagreement could be a deeper insight into your real aims and options.
- PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)**
 Social commitments are crystallised magnificently by the Moon's creative dimensions. If you seek out fresh group and community responsibilities, then you'll find your true role. You are the right person to show the rest of us the best way forward.

17 SPORT

PLAYING TODAY

IPL: LSG vs MI, 7:30pm;
Live on: Star Sports Network & streaming on Jio Cinema

Samson & Gill's spots under scanner ahead of selection meet

DEVENDRA PANDEY & VENKATA KRISHNA B
MUMBAI/CHENNAI, APRIL 29

AS THE senior selection committee led by Ajit Agarkar assembles in Ahmedabad on Tuesday to pick India's squad for the T20 World Cup in June, a majority of the discussion will be centred on the inclusion of Sanju Samson and Shubman Gill.

The *Indian Express* understands that Samson, who should have been a sure-shot candidate for the trip to the US and Caribbean, isn't assured of a spot. This follows the Indian team management's request for a wicketkeeper who could slot in the lower order as they have a top-heavy batting line-up.

It means Dhruv Jurel and Jitesh Sharma have come back into contention with KL Rahul also set to miss out. It remains to be seen if there is a change of heart when the entire selection committee meets with the captain and the coach on Tuesday, and if they find a way to get either Gill or Samson.

Agarkar, who returned to India following

a holiday, met with India captain Rohit Sharma on the sidelines of Mumbai Indians' match against Delhi Capitals on Saturday. And Rohit will join the selection meeting via video conference from Lucknow, where Mumbai Indians are in action.

It is understood that the Indian team management has already appraised the selection committee of their needs at the T20 World Cup and there won't be any surprise inclusions like in the case of the last two editions in the UAE and Australia.

But what is in store are a few tough calls, which the selectors will be forced to take for the balance of the squad. With Rishabh Pant being a sure-shot candidate for one of the wicket-keeping slots, it was supposed to be a toss-up between Samson and Rahul. Though Rahul has managed to score runs at this IPL, with Rohit Sharma, Yashasvi Jaiswal and Virat Kohli making the top three, India are not willing to accommodate another top-order player.

The same seems to be the reason why Samson's place also still remains under debate as the 29-year-old has batted at No 3 for Rajasthan Royals.



Samson has scored 385 runs so far in this IPL at a strike rate of 161.09. *Sportzpics*

Agarkar met with India captain Rohit Sharma on the sidelines of Mumbai Indians' match against Delhi Capitals on Saturday.

Samson has accumulated 385 runs so far in this IPL at a strike rate of 161.09, and has come across as a transformed T20 batsman. Having blown hot and cold in the past, he has been more consistent with his batting and in a side that is devoid of power-hitters, Samson's presence could benefit India in the middle order.

Furthermore, Samson can also provide India with favourable match-ups against spinners - he is among the best hitters of spin in T20s - and can also be floated anywhere in the batting line-up.

Problem of plenty

But with Suryakumar Yadav likely to follow Rohit, Jaiswal and Kohli in the top 4, the team management is understood to be keen on having specialists for the role.

Interestingly, if this indeed happens to be the XI, then Kohli and Suryakumar will bat lower than what they are currently doing in the IPL, where the former has opened the innings for Royal Challengers Bengaluru and the latter coming in at No 3 for Mumbai Indians.

With regards to Gill, there is no guarantee he would make the 15-member squad. With Rohit and Kohli in the mix, India don't need another similar player, which means the opener could end up in the reserves. Rinku Singh is expected to be the extra batsman in the side.

With No 5, 6 & 7 being specialist roles in T20, where emphasis is on the finishers, India's team management believes players who are used to this role will be best suited at the World Cup. Hence, Jitesh, who has been part of India's T20 set-up over the last 12 months, has come into the picture despite not having made heads turn at this IPL.

Similarly, Jurel, who came up with impressive performances with the Test side in the series against England, is part of the discussions. Like Jitesh, Jurel hasn't set the IPL on fire, but in his most recent outing made an unbeaten 52 under pressure.

EMOTIONAL ROLLERCOASTER

Hot heads, calm minds and everything in between



Hope extinguished

Shai Hope must hate Indian seamers. In the 2019 world cup, he was the mute witness of a pearler from Shami, a vicious nip-backer that whistled through the bat-and-pad gap to bowl him, one of the great deliveries of that tournament. Now, on Monday night, Hope was recipient of the other one. This time from Vaibhav Arora, who had almost exclusively dealt in inswingers until that point. But this one, delivered wider of the crease, was a peach of a leg cutter, that seamed away from off and middle line, squaring up Hope, who heard the death rattle on the off stump. Not a bad ball for Arora, someone who had nearly quit cricket as a teenager after a car accident and subsequent selection rejections, and only came back after his coach told him to get a 'quitter' tattoo on his forehead.

Varun 2 - Pant 0

Varun Chakravarthy tied up Pant in some style. Unable to decipher the direction, Pant was taking his chances. First up came a ball from round the stumps that landed on middle and bounced up. Pant tried to do his lap shot on a bent knee but the extra bounce and last-instant straightening meant the ball looped off the top edge to short third man where Harshit Rana made a meal of a dolly. But Varun wasn't done. Soon, he slipped one fuller and it was a googly on the off and middle line. Pant went for an expansive heave to the on side on a bent knee but the ball broke away to go off the leading edge to cover.

Salt to Delhi's wounds

Opting to bat first was an interesting call from Rishabh Pant. At the halfway stage, as his side struggled their way to 153/9, it looked less interesting and more faulty. That they even got there because of a 26-ball 35 from Kuldeep Yadav was (no disrespect to Kuldeep) a damning indictment of Delhi's batting failure at the Eden Gardens. Six overs into Kolkata Knight Riders' innings though, Pant and Delhi's decision to set a target looked downright disastrous. At a venue where the highest ever IPL run-chase was completed in the last match, even if the pitch looked different, it was a big risk. And Phil Salt's powerplay assault took KKR to 79/0 in 6 overs, with more than 50% of the target completed with the fielding restrictions in place. Salt's 60 off 28 balls in the powerplay was another display of aggressive intent that we have become used to now... and that it came against his former employers would've rubbed further salt into DC's wounds.

Pics: PTI

SYNOPSIS

Disciplined bowling and another Phil Salt fifty help KKR defeat DC in a low-scoring encounter

SAYAK DUTTA

KOLKATA, APRIL 29

DC batting implodes

A DAY before the match, Kolkata Knight Riders head coach Chandrakant Pandit had said they don't want to "crib" about their bowling in the middle of the tournament. On Monday, the KKR bowlers, led by spinner Varun Chakravarthy, showed why the coach was not overtly worried as the hosts restricted a dangerous Delhi Capitals line-up to 153/9.

DC captain Rishabh Pant's decision to bat first looked to be a curious one at first glance given that the Eden Gardens has generally favoured the chasing team during night games.

However, the start seemed an auspicious one for the visitors. In the first over, Mitchell Starc, returning to the KKR line-up after sitting out the match against Punjab Kings, was hit for three consecutive fours by Prithvi Shaw, signalling Delhi's intent. But Shaw didn't stay for long as Vaibhav Arora, the man used to providing the first breakthrough for Kolkata this season, sent him back for 13.

Next to go was Jake Fraser-McGurk, who smashed Starc for a six and a four, threatening to replicate his knock against Mumbai Indians. But the veteran Australian pacer would get one up on his compatriot when he sent the youngster back for 12 as Kolkata took an early hold on the game.

Arora would strike again in the 4th over when he cleaned up Shai Hope with a peach of a delivery for just 6 as Delhi were reduced to 37/3. Abishek Porel and Pant steadied a faltering innings somewhat, with the former being the initial aggressor when he took on Harshit Rana and mined 16 from the 5th over with the help of two fours and a six. Pant would do his bit as well, even smashing the economical Sunil Narine with a vintage swat for a six in his very first over. The two would add 30 runs in the last two overs of the Powerplay to help Delhi post a respectable 67/3.

Harshit would strike back though, when Porel, trying to play a scoop, left his stumps



KKR spinner Varun Chakravarthy finished with figures of 3/16. *Sportzpics for BCCI*

exposed and was bowled. Pant would last three more overs after that, surviving a dropped chance at 18, only for Chakravarthy to dismiss him for 27.

The mystery spinner would strike again with the wicket of Tristan Stubbs as Delhi's

hopes of posting a big total were extinguished after losing six wickets even before reaching three figures.

The procession would continue with Capitals losing Axar Patel and Kumar Kushagra in quick succession as

Chakravarthy finished with figures of 3/16. Kuldeep Yadav stayed unbeaten at 35, which was the top score for the team.

Salt sizzles again

Knights were big favourites for an easy victory chasing such a modest total. Delhi didn't do much to help their chances when seamer Lizaad Williams was slapped for a boundary off the very delivery by former DC player Salt. The Englishman would follow that up with a six and a boundary while his partner Narine ended the over with a four of his own as Williams yielded 23 from it.

The night would get more difficult for Williams as in the second over, he dropped a dolly which would have sent back Salt for 15. The opener would make Capitals pay as he smashed two sixes in the 3rd over as Kolkata reached 50 in the fifth over.

There was no let-up as the two openers kept swinging at everything, mining boundaries almost at will. Kolkata had their eyes on a big boost to their net run rate. Salt completed his 50 in 26 balls, his fourth in this edition of the IPL, helping KKR post 79/0 in the Powerplay. Narine wouldn't last long after the first six overs, falling to Axar for 15 runs. Salt, however, wouldn't be deterred. With Rinku Singh, who was promoted to No.3, he continued his assault on the hapless Delhi bowlers but couldn't see his team through, getting cleaned up by Axar for 68 runs off 33 balls.

Iyers see Kolkata through

Rinku couldn't capitalise on the chance as he was surprised by a rising delivery from Williams, which induced a top-edge taken by Kuldeep. However, Delhi's hopes for a turnaround were snuffed out by Shreyas Iyer who struck back-to-back boundaries in the 11th over to relieve any pressure. The skipper, along with Venkatesh Iyer, slowly and steadily sapped the energy out of the Delhi players on a sultry evening with occasional boundaries and plenty of twos and singles.

The grind was fully reflected when a tired Williams let a ball slip through his fingers near the boundary for a four in the dying stage of the match.

Shreyas and Venkatesh both stayed not out with 33 and 26 respectively as Kolkata coasted to 7-wicket win in just 16.3 overs.

Brief scores: Delhi Capitals 153/9 in 20 overs (Kuldeep Yadav 35 not out; Varun Chakravarthy 3/16) lost to Kolkata Knight Riders 157/3 in 16.3 overs (Phil Salt 68; Axar Patel 2/25) by 7 wickets

IPL SNIPPETS

STANDINGS

Team	M	W	L	T	PTS	NRR
RR	9	8	1	0	16	0.694
KKR	9	6	3	0	12	1.096
CSK	9	5	4	0	10	0.810
SRH	9	5	4	0	10	0.075
LSG	9	5	4	0	10	0.059
DC	11	5	6	0	10	-0.442
GT	10	4	6	0	8	-1.113
PK	9	3	6	0	6	-0.187
MI	9	3	6	0	6	-0.261
RCB	10	3	7	0	6	-0.415

Mayank has passed fitness test: Morkel

India's newest pace sensation Mayank Yadav has completely recovered from his lower abdominal strain and is expected to be listed in the playing 12 for Lucknow Super Giants' home IPL match against Mumbai Indians here on Tuesday. The 21-year-old is back to peak fitness after three weeks of complete rehabilitation. "Mayank is fit and he has passed all his fitness tests and (we're) excited (to) have him back playing potential 12 tomorrow," Morkel said at a pre-match press conference. Mayank has so far taken six wickets in three games. *PTI*

'Gaikwad is one step ahead of bowlers'

The ability to remain one step ahead of the bowlers has allowed Rituraj Gaikwad to flourish in this Indian Premier League, reckons CSK batting coach Michael Hussey. "He is a smart batsman as well. He knows when to attack and when to soak up pressure. He plays spin and seam well. He can score all around the ground. He's almost one step ahead of the bowlers a lot of times. He is wonderful to watch. Very thankful that he is in our team." The 27-year-old was announced as the new skipper of the defending champions a day before the IPL opener, replacing MS Dhoni. *PTI*

THOMAS CUP 2024

Prannoy, Satwik-Chirag and Co tick small boxes before big tests

VINAYAK MOHANARANGAN
APRIL 29

INDIA'S INCREDIBLE Thomas Cup triumph in Bangkok in 2022 required a leap of faith. Never before were India seen as potential World Champions in a badminton team event, so to manifest that into reality, they had to will themselves into believing it. But now that they know it could be done, the objective in Chengdu at the start of their title defence was about ticking small boxes before gearing up for tougher challenges.

It was all the more important because the first match against Thailand was a banana skin. "One match here or there, it could have gone bad for us," is how HS Prannoy put it. Indeed, the 4-1 scoreline didn't quite reflect how tricky that match was for India.

Even on Monday, Indonesia had some hairy moments against a young Thai side. But the 2022 finalists have come through as expected, with India blanking England, while Indonesia edged past Thailand, to qualify for the quarterfinals. On Wednesday the much-awaited clash between India and Indonesia will decide who tops Group C.

Against England, HS Prannoy got a confi-

dence-boosting win under his belt. It's been a tough year for the India No 1, battling health issues that have seen him lose 4-4.5kgs in the last couple of months. "I was on a liquid diet before the morning sessions because whatever I was eating was coming up," he told BWF. "I couldn't eat much because I was afraid it would affect the playing schedule. I was ok to not eat and play; the nausea was even worse than not having anything in the stomach."

But having figured out what the issue was, and on the mend, Prannoy has looked better in his April outings. Even in the defeat against Kunlavut Vitidsarn, there were signs of his movement getting back to a good level. He said he felt much better against England as he defeated a spirited Harry Huang 21-15, 21-15 to give India the lead.

The trickiest match of the tie was Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty's clash against Ben Lane and Sean Vandy, the English duo having tasted success in the past against the Indians (3-2 in Head-to-Head). For the second day running, the world No 3 didn't have things go completely their way but had to dig in to win 21-17, 19-21, 21-15. Like in their match against Thai teenagers, the left-right combination on the other side



The trickiest match of the tie was Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty's clash against Ben Lane and Sean Vandy. *BWF/Badminton Photo*

of the net caused problems for SatChi. But with Satwik recovering from a recent injury, it was important for them to just get over the line in these two matches to warm them-

selves up.

"It wasn't pretty pleasant, it was not a smooth match," Satwik told BWF. "We still hung in there. It's always tough to play left-

right, in India we have a lot of right-right pairs, so we are never used to it. The same thing happened against Thailand. We have to find the gaps. The conditions here have been fast, in slower conditions we could have opened up a bit more. But in the third game, we played all out."

'Childhood hero'

With Lakshya Sen rested, Srikanth Kidambi stepped onto the court for the second singles tie against Nadeem Dalvi, who later revealed it was a pleasure to play the Indian veteran who was his childhood hero. The Englishman put up a good fight too while Srikanth too struggled at times to control the shuttle, but the former world No 1 comfortably prevailed 21-16, 21-11 in 31 minutes.

"Happy with the way both the matches have gone for me. In team events, there is a lot of pressure. Comparatively, I feel I have played few easier opponents so far. But from now we will face better opponents and I have to be my best," Srikanth said, adding that it helps to get used to conditions early on.

On his recent form, Srikanth felt he has been playing well but hasn't been able to pull off the wins. "Obviously people will compare to how I was playing from 2013 to 2022. But

I was in my 20s then," he said with a chuckle. But playing with a bit more freedom and joy in a team environment, India will hope Srikanth can provide finishing touches going forward.

For MR Arjun and Dhruv Kapila, the last year has been difficult, mostly due to the persistent injury troubles of the former. On paper, MD2 is a weakness opponents will look to exploit. But Arjun and Dhruv have hit some form recently, and pulled off back-to-back straight-game wins, another box that India can tick. Kiran George might not get another game in Chengdu, but he did his job with a win that clinched the match 5-0.

"The first goal was to qualify for knock-outs, that's what we were thinking about coming in to the tournament," Srikanth said. "When we play Indonesia, it will be about giving our best to top the group." India didn't top the group in Bangkok but managed alright. But it can't be denied that finishing first in the group is an advantage in the quarterfinals.

It has set up the India-Indonesia rematch perfectly, a match that will provide the first real indication of how far the defending champions can go. Two small steps done, now time for giant leaps.

LONG READ

The next big thing on the mat

Reetika Hooda, from the academy where Olympic medallist Sakshi Malik learnt her craft, is going places where no Indian woman has — from winning the U23 world title to bagging a Paris Games quota in 76 kg

NIHAL KOSHIE ROHTAK, APRIL 29

REETIKA HOODA clutches the black and silvery 'Paris Olympics Qualifier' medal she received in Bishkek and keeps polishing it without realising she is. She wears it around her neck, posing for photographs on the morning she returns from the Kyrgyzstan capital to her home in Rohtak city.

A flood of relatives stream in and out of her compact multi-storey home on the narrow road, a buffet-style breakfast of puri-sabzi with laddoo is laid out under a shamiana in an empty plot nearby, a hookah is placed in the middle of a circle of chairs. Everyone who's anyone — Haryana wrestling officials, local politicians, coaches — drop by to congratulate the rising star from Rohtak. This is an auspicious day, too. It's Hanuman Jayanti and the streets are packed with devotees of the favourite god of Indian wrestlers.

Last week, Reetika became the first from India to book a quota in the heaviest Olympic weight class (76kg) for women at the Paris Olympics. In October, Reetika achieved another first for the country. She was crowned the Under-23 World Champion. Since women's wrestling became an Olympic sport in 2004, the upper-most weight has fluctuated between 72 kg and 76 kg and until now India has been unrepresented.

Talk within wrestling circles in Haryana is about Reetika stepping up and following in the footsteps of Sakshi Malik, a Rohtak girl.

Sakshi, a Rio Olympics bronze medalist, is the biggest name to emerge from the district, a nursery for women wrestlers. And Reetika followed in the champion wrestler's foot-

steps by joining the centre at the Sir Chotu Ram Stadium, whose most famous alumni is Sakshi.

"Sakshi had won a quota place a few months after I joined the centre. I was starting off then and remember thinking, when would 'India' be printed on my wrestling singlet? Winning an Olympic quota comes with great expectations," Reetika says.

Reetika's coach Mandeep, also one of Sakshi's coaches, points to a boom in admissions since the red-letter day at the 2016 Rio Olympics. When she started on the mat nine years ago, Reetika was part of the training group comprising Sakshi and other seniors.

Mandeep has been around long enough to plot the rise in numbers and the intensifying competition among Olympic aspirants.

"I joined the centre in 2010. Then there were about 25 women wrestlers. Now there are nearly 100 of them. Sakshi's medal really spurred interest. In and around Sakshi's village Mokhra there are five to six wrestling academies for women. Apart from our centre, there are another seven to eight akhadas only for women in Rohtak. The bar is set very high for women wrestlers from Rohtak. Reetika is the most promising wrestler to emerge from here after Sakshi," Mandeep says.

Reetika's victory margins at the Asian Olympic Qualifiers in Bishkek were impressive — 10-0, 11-0, 9-6, 7-0. Stamina and strength make her a formidable opponent and a lightning-speed double-leg attack is difficult to counter for opponents, coach Mandeep sums up.

"I didn't lack stamina, be it at the Under-23 World Championships or the Olympic

Qualifiers. I haven't fought a wrestler who has more stamina and staying power than me. Of course, technique is something I need to work on," Reetika says.

Mandeep, not wanting Reetika to rest on her laurels, brings up her bout against top-seeded Juan Wang of China. Reetika was leading 8-0 before a concentration lapse allowed the Chinese wrestler to close the gap to 9-6.

"Reetika is young, so it is easier to rectify her mistakes. She lowered her guard against the Chinese wrestler. Fine margins decide who finishes on the podium at the Olympics. She is hard-working, talented and has a strength advantage but should not take anything for granted," Mandeep says.

Grandmother's prediction Reetika's maternal grandmother was the first to predict a next-generation pehlawan in the



Reetika Hooda with her mother Neelam and father Jagbir at her Rohtak home. (Below) With her coach Mandeep. Gajendra Yadav

family. Her great-grandfather was a wrestler of repute yet the family's connection with the sport snapped after his time. Reetika's father Jagbir, a former army man, narrates a family story about homedead 'makkhan' and a naughty toddler.

When Reetika was a month old, Jagbir was posted in Ahmednagar in Maharashtra. His wife Neelam and Reetika's older brother Rohit accompanied him but they left her in the custody of the grandmother back home. "Somehow, she was more attached to her nani more than her mother at that point. She would cry if her grandmother was not around. So, till she turned five she was with her grandmother," Jagbir says.

The ladies in the joint family, Jagbir recalls, had to keep a watchful eye on baby Reetika. Raising the mud pots in which the slow-churned butter was stored was her favourite activity. "Because of her love for butter, her



Apart from our centre, there are another seven to eight akhadas only for women in Rohtak. The bar is set very high for women wrestlers from Rohtak. Reetika is the most promising wrestler to emerge from here after Sakshi."

MANDEEP REETIKA'S COACH

grandmother said we had a pehlawan in the family," Jagbir said.

Reetika's mother Neelam has another tale, this one about her toughness. When Reetika was barely five, she fell from a roof and then tumbled down a bamboo ladder but was uninjured and walked as if nothing happened. "Seeing her fall from a height and recover... I was sure she would become a wrestler," Neelam recalled.

After retiring from the army in 2011, Jagbir didn't settle down in his ancestral village, Kharkara, but shifted his family to Rohtak city in search of better opportunities for his children.

Reetika stepping on the wrestling mat was still a few years away.

When in her teens, she took to handball. She was good enough to be selected for the team for the school nationals. That is when her father made a major intervention. A Havaldar-driver in the army, Jagbir played football and

kabaddi. Yet, he dissuaded his daughter from being a cog-in-the-wheel in a team sport.

Jagbir advised his daughter to take up a combat sport. He had made up his mind after witnessing the one-sided sibling rivalry at home. "Mar-peat zyada hoti thi bhai ke sath (I and my brother used to have physical fights). At times it got out of hand and when that happened I used to lift and throw him. That is why papa asked me to take up judo or wrestling," Reetika says.

On Independence Day 2015, Jagbir took Reetika to the Sir Chotu Ram Stadium Wrestling Centre. She was head and shoulders above the rest of the new trainees during an informal trial. Coach Mandeep knew he had found a diamond in the rough.

Weighty decision It was decision time last April for the 72 kg wrestler. Reetika had two options to wrestle in an Olympic category — move down

to 68 kg or move up to 76.

The latter was picked. But misfortune struck a month before the Asian Games trials, an untimely back injury. She recovered but lost in trials. She suffered a similar fate during the trials for the Senior World Championship.

Shruti Chandrakant Ghara, a Reliance Foundation physio assigned to Reetika, recalls how the young wrestler was inconsolable during the return journey from Delhi to Rohtak after both trials. "There were people who told her that 68 kg was ideal for her. There were a couple of wrestlers she had lost to and she was not comfortable when up against them. But her parents, coach and I convinced her to continue at 76kg," Shruti says. "The Under-23 World Championship gold (in Albania) last year proved that she was on the right track," Shruti said.

Reetika returned home and won gold at the National Games in Goa by beating her nemesis Divya Kakran. A workaholic in training and a coach's delight is how Shruti summarises Reetika's work ethic.

Former women's freestyle national coach Kuldeep Malik calls Reetika 'God's gift' to Indian wrestling.

"Earlier the talent pool was thin in the upper weight division. In above 68 kg, there were only two-three wrestlers of quality. Also, most of the bigger women wrestlers would shift to throwing events in athletics after a point. But now wrestlers believe they can be successful in the heavier categories. Reetika's gold in the Under-23 World Championships proved this. There is also Priya (world junior champion) and Kiran (Asian Games bronze medalist). This could be the start of a good phase in the 76kg," Malik, who runs an academy in Sonapat, said.

On the day she returns to Rohtak from Bishkek, Reetika goes to meet the top brass of the Indian Navy, her employers. Coach Mandeep reminds her about a planned light workout session later in the evening.

Reetika says she will be back on time. Mandeep has no reason to believe otherwise. She is known to exceed the expectations of the taskmaster-coach.

Bayern, Dortmund seek Champions League glory to kick off big summer for Germany

ASSOCIATED PRESS MUNICH, APRIL 29

IT'S SHAPING up to be quite the few weeks for German soccer.

The country is preparing to stage the European Championship over June and July, with Germany's national team taking a nicely timed upturn in form.

Before that, Germany might yet be celebrating having a European champion once again, with Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund making up half of the lineup for the Champions League semifinals beginning this week.

The last time Bayern and

Dortmund both reached the Champions League semifinals in 2013 and they went on to meet in the title match at Wembley Stadium, with Bayern winning 2-1. As fate would have it, Wembley will be hosting the final this year, too.

Setting up a repeat of that 2013 final would mean upsetting the odds.

Bayern is up against another European heavyweight in Real Madrid, the record 14-time champion and king of the competition. Dortmund faces Paris Saint-Germain, whose star striker Kylian Mbappe is looking to lead the French team to its first ever Champions League title in his last season there before a



Thomas Tuchel hopes to leave Bayern after winning the Champions League this summer. Reuters

likely move to Madrid. Germany didn't have a single semifinalist in each of the last

three seasons. In the 2019-20 competition, it had two — Bayern and Leipzig — and Bayern was the eventual champion.

This season, Bayern and Dortmund have mounted impressive European campaigns while underperforming on the domestic front.

Bayern has relinquished its Bundesliga title to Bayer Leverkusen after an 11-year hold on the biggest prize in German soccer, and needs to win the Champions League to avoid a first trophy-less season since 2012.

Dortmund, meanwhile, is in fifth place in the league so its deep run in Europe has come as something of a surprise.

Nadal battles past Cachin to reach last 16 in Madrid

REUTERS APRIL 29

Rafael Nadal survived a second set wobble to defeat Pedro Cachin 6-1 6-7(5) 6-3 in the Madrid Open third round on Monday. Nadal, who beat 10th seed Alex de Minaur in the second round, held his nerve as he was tested by the 91st-ranked Argentine, who won his maiden ATP title at the 2023 Swiss Open.



"Some moments good, some moments not good, but I found a way," the 37-year-old Nadal said.

Cachin struggled against his powerful forehand in the first set as the Spaniard broke twice to take a 5-1 lead before the match was temporarily paused with a spectator feeling unwell. When

play resumed, the five-times Madrid champion broke again to win the set. Cachin started the second on a better note, taking a 4-1 lead helped by some fine cross-court backhands and, though Nadal broke twice to make it 5-5, he claimed the set in the tiebreak.

Both players broke early in the third, which stood at 2-2, but local favourite Nadal then broke twice more to emerge as the winner with the fans giving him a standing ovation.

"Day by day... playing in front of this crowd means everything to me," said the 22-times Grand Slam champion.

Nadal next faces Czech Jiri Lehecka, who beat Brazilian qualifier Thiago Monteiro 6-4 7-6(7) to reach the fourth round.

Obituary for Sardarni Lalit Kaur (Babette), wife of Sardar Brijinder Pal Singh Mann of Mananwala, daughter of Col Sir Buta Singh, passed away peacefully on 24th April 2024. Includes details of the funeral and a list of family members.

UCO Bank advertisement featuring financial results for the quarter/year ended 31st March 2024. Includes a table with columns for Standalone and Consolidated results, and rows for various financial metrics like Total Income, Net Profit, and Earnings Per Share.