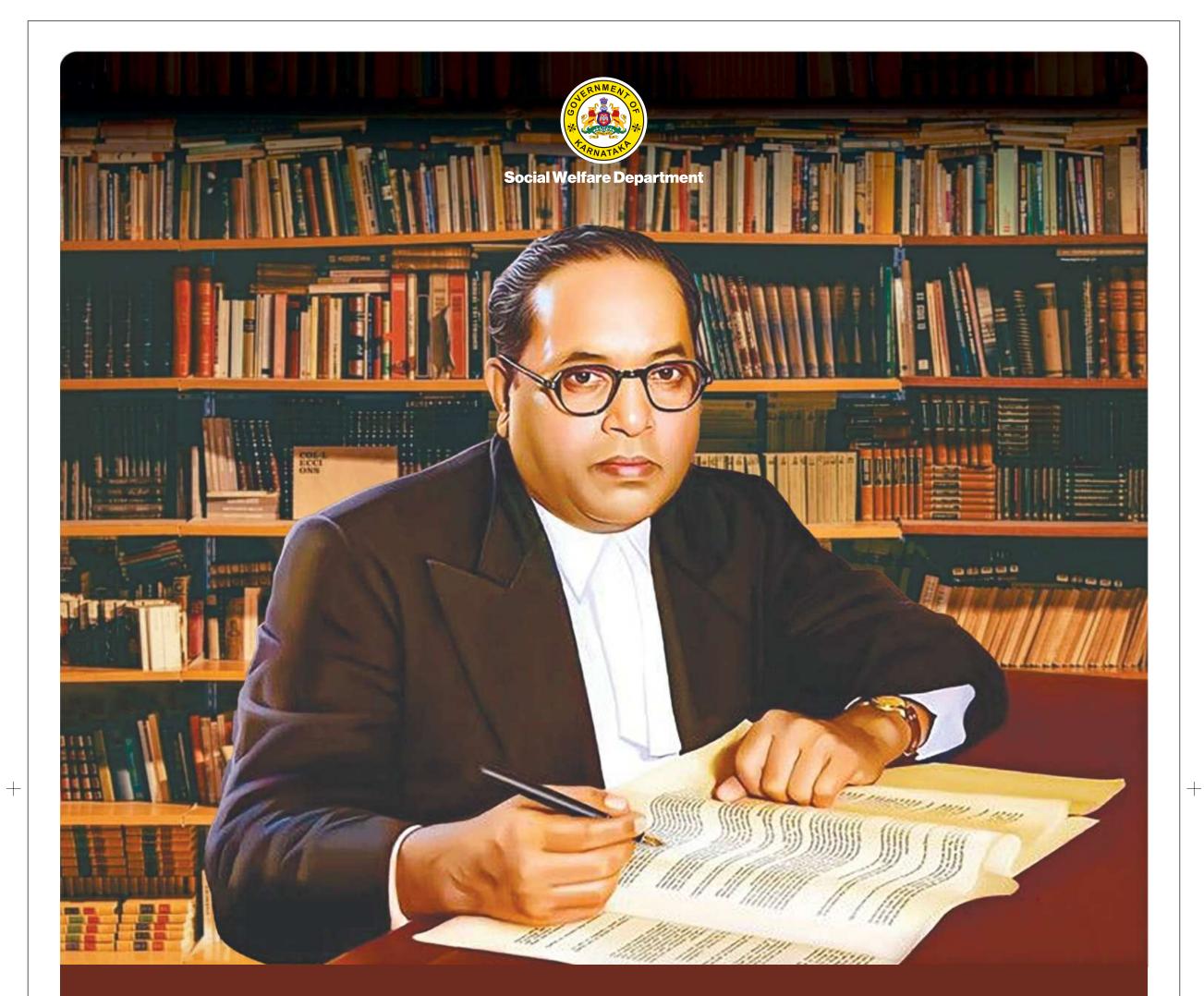


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-Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

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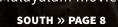
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THE HILLS ARE (BARELY) ALIVE Kodaikanal, a microcosm of a national problem

Our mountains need better scrutiny to ensure their ecosystems do not buckle under rampant development and tourism

MAGAZINE» PAGE 1

Crisis ends, PVR to resume screening Malayalam movies





Why has the WHO issued an alert on viral hepatitis? FAQ » PAGE 14

It's KKR vs LSG and MI vs CSK in today's double-header

SPORT » PAGE 17

17 Indians aboard Israeli cargo vessel seized by Iran

India in touch with Iranian authorities through diplomatic channels in Tehran and Delhi, seeking security and early release of Indian crew, say sources; Israel terms seizure a 'pirate operation'

Dinakar Peri Kallol Bhattacherjee NEW DELHI

ndian officials said they were in touch with Iranian authorities after an Israel-affiliated container vessel MSC Aries was seized by Iran's Revolutionary Guard in the Gulf of Hormuz on Saturday. There were 17 Indians among the 25 crew members on board the Portuguese-flagged vessel, including the Master of the ship, as well as four Filipinos, two Pakistanis, one Russian, and one Estonian, official sources said.

"We are aware that a cargo ship MSC Aries has been taken control by Iran. We have learnt that there are 17 Indian nationals on board. We are in touch with the Iranian authorities through diplomatic channels, both in Tehran and in Delhi, to ensure the security, welfare, and early release of Indian nation-



Screengrab from a video shows commandos rappelling from a helicopter onto the vessel near the Strait of Hormuz on Saturday. AP

drones.

The vessel was sailing from the United Arab Emirates to India.

A video that went viral on X showed Iranian Revolutionary Guard commandos rappelling from a helicopter onto the vessel. This is the latest escalation of tensions in the region, which has been on edge for the last few months, and also marks an escalation of the ongoing Red Sea crisis. Since the Israeli offensive

Israel warns Iran of 'consequences' of escalation

GAZA STRIP

Israel warned that Iran would suffer the "consequences for choosing to escalate the situation any further" as fears grew of wider conflict more than six months into Israel's war against Hamas militants in the Gaza Strip. The warning came after Iran seized a cargo ship linked to Israel. » PAGE 16

In a post on X, Iranian state-run news agency IR-NA quoted an informed source to confirm the seizure of the "foreign vessel" in the Persian Gulf, near the Strait of Hormuz. Other Iranian media reported that the vessel was the MSC Aries. The United Kingdom's Maritime Trade Operations agency also confirmed the incident.

Iran-Israel tensions cloud future of Indians hired for Israeli construction sites

Suhasini Haidar <u>Mayank Kumar</u> NEW DELHI/LUCKNOW

War clouds between Iran and Israel have cast a shadow over the future of more than 5,000 Indians who have been recruited for construction work in Israel, even as experts questioned the government for allowing the recruitment at this time.

In an advisory issued on Friday evening, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) asked all Indians "not to travel" to Iran or Israel until further notice, in view of escalating tensions between the two countries after Iran threatened reprisal for bombing of its consulate in Damascus, which was blamed on Israel.

At least 500 Indians, who were hired after a process facilitated by the National Skill Development Council (NSDC) along with Israel's Population, Immigration and Border Authority (PIBA), have already flown to Israel since April



A batch of over 60 workers who were flagged off to Israel on April 2 after a ceremony in Delhi. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

64 workers were flagged off in a ceremony hosted by the Israeli Embassy in Delhi. When asked, NSDC officials who facilitated the recruitment drive said that the advisory is for all citizens, and hence the process had witnessed a "temporary disruption".

Plans on hold

Unnao-based Satish Kumar, who was among a group of 325 Indians who were packed and ready to leave India on April 16, says he is anxiously following news about developments in the region through so-



Water projects: **Congress seeks** Modi's assurance

BENGALURU

Ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the State on Sunday for election campaign, the Congress has posed a bunch of questions to him related to the denial of permissions and funds to irrigation projects, including Mekedatu, and sought answers from him. » Page 7

CLASSIFIEDS » PAGES 4 & 6 **MAGAZINE** » 8 PAGES

THE MAR HINDU wishes its readers a Happy **Tamil New Year** & Vishu

mascus that killed senior als," an official source said. in Gaza, Houthi rebels in Iranian personnel.

Yemen have been targeting

Israeli-linked commercial

shipping on the high seas

with ballistic missiles and

In the last 48 hours, Is-

rael and the United States

have been gearing up for

possible missile and drone

attacks by Iran, directly or

through its proxies in the

region, as a retaliation

against the recent air strike

on Iran's consulate in Da-

» PAGE 9

2, when the first group of cial media chat groups.

» PAGE 9

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Dalkhola, a Bengal



Amarnath Tewary DALKHOLA

In dry Bihar, the town of Dalkhola, nestled between National Highway 31 and 27 on the Purnea-Kishanganj highway, is an oasis for tipplers. They stop here for a peg or two of alcohol and enjoy an overnight stay at the comfortable motels that have sprung up on a 30-km stretch of the highway before journeying on.

Since April 2016, Bihar has been a dry State, with strict penalties of jail time or fines for those violating the ban on liquor. Dalkhola is a municipality town of West Bengal's Uttar Dinajpur district; just a small portion of the town juts into Bihar. It lies about 37 km north of Bihar's Purnea, with Kishanganj lying almost the same distance further to the north. As one travels between

suddenly enters little Bengal, hearing Bangla voices, seeing the Bangla script on everything from shop sign-

the gates of the Dalkhola "Som Ras Bar". They are all abuzz with truckers, drivers, and people travelling between Purnea and Kishanganj, all lined up to enjoy a drink.

"The place has become a major transit point for tipplers," said Mohd. Bilal, a waiter at a local motel. He has been working at the motel for nearly three years and has seen an influx of customers seeking alcohol and bringing a tidy cash inflow for the motel's owner, who is said to come from Bihar but has now settled in Siliguri.

CONTINUED ON the two Bihari towns, one » PAGE 9



"On Friday, we were in-

formed that all plans had

been put on hold until

further notice, in view of

the rising tensions," he told

The Hindu over the tele-

phone from Unnao. "We have been assured that the

₹66,800 paid by us for

flight tickets and other

charges will not be lost,

that the delay is tempor-

ary, but I am very wor-

ried," he added, explaining

that he had taken a loan

from a relative to pay for all

the expenses ahead of the

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trip.

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boards to number plates. The display boards at motels openly advertise "Beer" and "Bar", and

THE HINDU Bengaluru

As the mercury rises, pets and street animals find the going tough

BEATING THE HEAT

Preeti Zachariah BENGALURU

The summer blaze has been hard on Sridevi Nayak's dog, Coco, all of four months. "He is hyperactive and irritated," says the Bengaluru-based communication professional, who adopted the puppy this March.

Though she has been trying to keep him cool by ensuring that her home is well-ventilated, sprinkling water on him to cool him down after his morning and evening walk, feeding him hydrating meals, and leaving ice cubes out for him, she constantly worries about her pet. "He doesn't drink water, and I can see how concentrated his urine is," she says. "This summer has been very hard on him."

Like Coco, pets across Bengaluru are struggling with the intense heat. "Dogs and cats do not have sweat glands all over the body like us," says Shrikanth B.V., a city-based veterinary physician and surgeon. Their relatively few sweat glands are located in their paw pads, making them vulnerable to extreme heat, he adds.

"Pets can succumb to a heat stroke," he says, adding that dogs in particular regulate their body temperature by open-mouth breathing. "This makes the tongue very dry," says Dr. Shrikanth, who advises



Sitting pretty: A pet riding pillion on its master's scooter near National College in Bengaluru on Saturday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

dog parents to avoid long walks in this season, as far as possible.

"Let them just go for their ablutions and bring them back," he cautions, suggesting that exercise, if absolutely essential. should be restricted to the early morning or late evenings. "Avoid shaving dogs completely, especially breeds like golden retrievers, newfoundlands, and huskies, since they often struggle with post-clipping alopecia. They can do maintenance cuts but not zero trimming as the

hair does not grow back," he says. In the case of cats, it is best that they are kept

indoors and fed a diet of primarily wet food. "At least 70% should be wet," says Dr. Shrikanth, pointing out that felines have notoriously weak kidneys and do not drink enough water. He

Despite norm, there ⁺ is only a bump in aerator sales





even for a short period. Far worse is the vulnerability of community animals and urban wildlife to intense heat. "I think putting out a bowl of water for them should be the common practice. But that should not be only for the summers," believes Sanjeev Pednekar, the founder

of Prani-The Pet Sanctuary, home to over 700 rescued animals and birds across 40 species. It takes some time before birds and animals are aware of this water source and start drinking from it so "it needs to be a permanent thing."

"If you are a community feeder who usually feeds kibble, it is best to avoid this, opting for more hydrating food, if possible. If not, at least soak kibble in water before giving," says Mr. Pednekar. According to him, this is also the season when many birds, especially kites, tend to get dehydrated and fall from the sky

"If you see any dehydrated or sick animal, please don't try to feed directly into its mouth," he says, pointing out that this could end up choking and killing the animal. Instead, move it to a shaded place, offer it some water on a plate and allow it to sip on it and call the local animal rescue helpline.

For citizens, the wait for rain goes on for another week

Clear skies are expected in Bengaluru on Sunday, with the maximum temperature likely to be around 36 degrees Celsius and minimum to be around 22 degrees Celsius

The Hindu Bureau BENGALURU

esidents of Bengaluru who are waiting for some respite from the heat in the form of rain will have to wait almost another week, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD) Bengaluru. While it has rained

across various parts of coastal Karnataka, northinterior Karnataka, and south-interior Karnataka in the last few days, rain remains elusive for Bengalur11.

Bhalki in Bidar district received the most rainfall of 4 cm, followed by 2 cm rainfall in parts of Uttara Kannada, Bidar, Belagavi, Gadag, and Vijayapura districts. "The rain in many parts

of the State is owing to



Pedestrians try to cross a puddle after rains in Belagavi on Friday. While there have been showers across various parts of coastal, north-interior, and south-interior Karnataka in the last few days, rain is playing truant in Bengaluru. P.K. BADIGER

any rainfall in north-inte-

strong convection and movement across the State. From Sunday, there rior Karnataka for the next will be a decline in rainfall, three days. The entire State will be dry after two days. Then subsequently the rain will again pick up," said a scientific officer from IMD Bengaluru.

"However, these convective cells are not reaching Bengaluru and that is why no rainfall is expected here at least in the next four days. By the sixth or seventh day, there might be some rainfall," the official added.

She also said that there are no chances of rainfall for extreme south-east districts like Kolar, Chickballapur, Ramanagara, Bengaluru Rural, and Tumakuru (to some extent), in the future.

Meanwhile, clear skies are expected in Bengaluru on Sunday with the maximum temperature likely to and we are not expecting be around 36 degrees Celsius and minimum to be around 22 degrees Celsius.



Tenzin Yangkey and K. Sowmya BENGALURU

In the wake of the water crisis, the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) has made it mandatory to install aerators or flow restrictors to all public taps in the city and has even appealed to households to install them voluntarily.

However, wholesalers and retailers dealing with aerators in the market said there has only been a slight bump in the sales.

"There are definitely more inquiries. But at the same time, there is a lot of confusion, and people end up installing the wrong product," said Gautam Surana, founder and director of Eco365, a private firm that helps clients conserve water and reduce plastic waste, among other services.

Bhaskar K., a sanitary store owner on SJP Road, said: "Before, nobody really asked for the aerators. Now, the sales have gone up a bit".

Aerators are said to restrict the flow of water and help save up to 65-80%. "Aerators have an auto-adjusting flow rate mechanism; it restricts and gives you a defined flow rate," said Mr. Gautam.

Despite the various uses and the BWSSB's attempts to spread awareness, the rise in its usage has not been significant.

Ganesh, an employee at Mari Swamy and Co. in K.R. Market, said that many people were inquiring about aerators, but sales had not gone up significantly. The price of aerators

YK (

The BWSSB has made it mandatory to install aerators to all public taps in the city and has even appealed to households to install them voluntarily. FILE PHOTO

starts at ₹20 in wholesale retailers and ₹70 in local stores. Ruman, a store owner in Shivajinagar, says that sales have been bulk orders for "commercial buildings". "Most of them are for office and apartment buildings."

A "green star rating" has been promised to restaurants and apartments that install aerators and take other water conservation measures by the BWSSB.

Given that there has been no enthusiastic response to the adoption of aerators in the city, the BWSSB extended the deadline for the same twice.

Initially announced on March 21 with a March 31 deadline, the BWSSB extended it to April 7. However, as April 7 neared and there was no effective implementation of the norm, the board again extended the deadline till April 30.

Meanwhile, the BWSSB has recently said that as per their survey aerators have been installed for 2.86 lakh public taps. However, there is a long way to go before all public taps have aerators, sources said. The BWSSB has said that a failure to install the aerators will lead to a fine of ₹5,000 for the first offence, with an additional 50% water supply cut to

such establishments.

Woman who confessed to killing her two children found dead in prison

<u>The Hindu Bureau</u> BENGALURU

A woman who had surrendered to the police and confessed that she had killed her two children on Ugadi, was found dead in the Parappana Agrahara Central Prison complex on Friday.

According to the police, Gangadevi, 28, was found in the toilet at around 11.45 a.m. She was rushed to the prison hospital, where she was declared "brought dead".

Gangadevi hailed from Andhra Pradesh and was married to Naresh, who worked as a contract pourakarmika. The police said that in March, Gangadevi discovered that Naresh had been sexually abusing their seven-year-old daughter. She lodged a complaint and the Jalahalli police arrested Naresh under the POCSO Act, 2012 on March 21.

An investigation and the statement of the child had confirmed sexual abuse, a senior police official said.

On Ugadi night on April 9, she allegedly smothered her children, Gowtham, 9, and the seven-year-old daughter, while they were asleep and called the police control room and gave

herself up. She was sent to the Parappana Agrahara Central Prison complex on April 10, where Naresh has also been lodged.

(Those in distress or those having suicidal tendencies can call Arogya Sahayavani Ph.: 104 for help)

Students, parents upset over exam centre allocation for CET

For many students, the centres are 15 to 30 km away from their dwellings; KEA says centres and candidates in Bengaluru Urban are all randomised and then the allotment happens

The Hindu Bureau BENGALURU

tudents who are appearing for the Common Entrance Test (CET) 2024 on April 18 and 19, and their parents have expressed their disappointment with the Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA) about the allotment of examination centres

For many students, CET examination centres are 15 to 30 kilometres away from their houses.

"My family resides in RPC Layout near Vijayanagar. But the examination centre for my daughter is allotted in a school in Bismillah Nagar, near Bannerghatta Road, which is 25 kilometres away. It will take at least one-and-a-half hours to reach there by a private vehicle and double the time if she chooses to go by bus," said Mahalakshmi D.R., mother of a

houses. CET candidate. S. RAMYA, She added: "Students Executive Director, KEA are already under so much stress because of the examinations and this long commute just adds to the annister and senior BJP leadxiety."

er S. Suresh Kumar also Another candidate stayslammed the KEA for alloting in Jayanagar reportedly ting such centres. He said got their centre in Yelahanthat he had received many ka while someone staying complaints about candiin Banashankari was allotdates not being able to ted a centre in Peenya. download their CET admis-



KEA authorities said that the whole of Bengaluru Urban district is treated as a single unit and thus, candidates are allotted a centre anywhere within the district. FILE PHOTO

sion tickets. "Students are already tense. Why are they playing with their lives?" he asked.

'Allotment random'

KEA authorities said that the whole of Bengaluru Urban district is treated as a single unit and thus, candidates are allotted a centre anywhere within the Former Education Midistrict.

"The centres and the candidates in Bengaluru Urban district are all randomised and allotment happens. We do not have any criteria to determine the exam centres which are near the candidates'

houses," said S. Ramya, Executive Director, KEA.

can indicate priority 1 and priority 2 and we usually give them centres near their first priority unless there are too many students there, then we give them their second priority." Further, she said that

their choices.

She added: "Candidates

only for candidates, who

have chosen the clause C and clause D in their applications and will be writing their exams in Kannada, Mangaluru, Bengaluru, and Belagavi are given as centres irrespective of

Namma Yatri to launch cab services on April 16

The Hindu Bureau BENGALURU

Autorickshaw aggregator Namma Yatri will begin offering cab services in Bengaluru starting April 16, according to officials.

The Namma Yatri app is a product of Bengaluru's Autorickshaw Drivers' Union (ARDU). Built by Juspay Technologies and backed by the Beckn Foundation (by Infosys co-founder Nandan Nilekani), it was launched in November 2022 in partnership with the city's auto drivers. However, the company recently separated its mobility business into a new entity called 'Moving Tech Innovations Limited.

According to Namma Yatri, Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy will launch the 'Driver First Cabs in Bengaluru'.

Namma Yatri is currently open source and does not take any commission from drivers and is also available in Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC). ONDC is a technology platform backed by the Union government to facilitate direct seller-tocustomer transactions,

cutting out middlemen. Sources indicate that cab fares will adhere to the 'zero-commission' model used for pricing autorickshaw rides on Namma Yatri, which distinguished the app from other ride aggregators.

The app in Bengaluru will offer two types of taxis: 'eco', which are non-airconditioned, and 'comfy', which are air-conditioned. While Namma Yatri in-



The Namma Yatri app is a product of Bengaluru's Autorickshaw Drivers' Union FILE PHOTO

Adding cabs to the Namma Yatri app will benefit thousands of cab drivers who have been facing various issues with the existing cab aggregator apps in the city. This will also be advantageous for commuters.

T.M. RUDRAMURTHY. General secretary of ARDU in Bengaluru

itially launched auto services in collaboration with the union, the company is now individually reaching out to register drivers for its cab services, according to sources.

Its entry into cab services, which are dominated by Ola and Uber, is likely to be a relief for drivers, who are upset over declining incentives and earnings.

T.M. Rudramurthy, general secretary of ARDU in

Bengaluru, said: "Adding cabs to the Namma Yatri app will benefit thousands of cab drivers who have been facing various issues with the existing cab aggregator apps in the city. This will also be advantageous for commuters."

In December 2023, the auto union split from Namma Yatri owing to disagreements with the Juspay-operated app over pricing and promotions. However, a few months later, the auto union and Namma Yatri resolved their issues and are now working together again.

Namma Yatri initially launched as the Yatri app in Bengaluru, Mysuru, Tumakuru, and Kochi.

This year, it launched in Kolkata as Yatri Saathi, and the firm has recently expanded to Chennai. In Hyderabad, the service launched as Mana Yatri, has been offering both autorickshaw and cab services.



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TAMIL HINDU SC AD 32year Doctor MBBS, DCH, DNB (Pediatrics) working in Pondicherry seeking suitable groom Contact: 9443634719

9840715492

PARENTS OF Obs & Gynaecologist MBBS MS FMAS (OBG) 32/ 156 Gavara Naidu invite alliance from suitable groom doctors/ business/ EX service CNB 9159150101 / doctorrgm@ Gmail.com

MUDALIAR DR. Subashree Balakrishnan MBBS / Doctor Age 32 Ayilyam/ Kadagam sks Doctor Groom only 9176514141

31Y, Fair, 5ft. M.S.(IT), working in MNC (UK), seeking groom in the UK. Ct – 9884024668/ 9080512589 MCH FY 29, Rohini, 5ft 8inch saiva pillai seek DM/ MD/ MTECH/ CA veg SC ARUNTHATHIYAR Thiruvathirai groom from Chennai 6383189302 9-9-1985 MSc employed 1st Marriage seeks groom. CNB. Ct:9150331377

AGE 48, PhD, Central Government AGE 40, FID, Certital Government, never married, good looking, wheatish bride seeks never mar-ried, employed groom below 50 years from decent family back-ground. Serious inquiries only; Contact: 9443553063

TAMIL

tal college Chennai seeks PG Drs/ Engr/ IT Caste no bar Cont B.TECH(NIT) MBA(IIM) Product Cnstt-

B.TECH(NIT) MBA(IIM) Product Crisite nt DKV girl 30/161 Sks suitbledu groom Caste/Relign/L Nobar 9445687535 HINDU SC MBBS Doctor Age 27 Uthi-

ram-I/Simmam seeks suitable em-ployed & qualified bridegroom Ph 9500182723

MAY 94/167 fair SC/PL BE , TCS Chennai, Parents Hindu/CSI. Seeks GroomDr/Er, Govt Employee. 8056143638 RC NADAR unmarried Bride, 34/5.7

> ELITE MUDALIYAR 25vrs B.Tech Busi ness family Chennai. Business Family 9710091999 9710093999

CHRISTIAN 28/165 Born again good looking MS employed IT Canada seeks Godfearing Christian well ed-HASTHAM, FAIR 36, MCA Well Settled in Chennai Seeks Mudaliar/Pillai. Profly Qualf working Groom ucated employed groom in Canada/ US/ Australia/ Gulf. Caste no bar. working 8220757159

TAMIL MUSLIM Girl B.E 37 fair slim SC AD, 37/153cm, M.SC Working in Trichy. First Marriage seeks suit-able groom. Contact Number: 9600433867, 8438667107 seeks qualified, employed, Never married Muslim. 9444235779

VANIYA CHETTIYAR, 32, BE., IT JOB, Second Marriage, No Children. Pref. Any Chettiyar Community.Govt or Private Job Ct: 9677079708 Pursuing PG in Canada seeks Abroad/ Bangalore, Financially Well settled Groom. Ct: 9894230003 / 9994400003

RC 39/PHD /Scientist in USA seeks Christian groom working in USA. contact gladia@gmail.com, SAIVA PILLAI/TELUGU Chetty Gir (27 yrs) Working in Canada, Candi-an PR. Tall well placed groom from Pillai, mudaliar and Chettiar. Contact: 9840613929. 9940172363

CSI NADAR 26/173 Fair B.com working in Hyderabad reputed firm seeks qualified city based groom working in Bangalore/Hyderabad/CNB 9841439800 MUDALIAR 25/165 Fair, Beautiful, MBBS, MS,OG-Doing, Reputed Elite Family,50Cr. CNB. 9363986547, 9363767415 MBBS, MS,OG-Doing, Reputed Elite Family,50Cr. CNB. 9363986547, 9363767415

IYER- VADAMA, Bharadwaja Gothram, 31Y, Fair, 5ft. M.S.(IT), working in MNC (UK), seeking groom in the Groom Contact: 9380791999/ 9047192999

> ELITE MUDALIYAR, 32vrs MBA Divorce, Well Educated Family.,Seek suitable Groom 9710093999/ 9710091999

BRIDES WANTED

9444830584

ADVOCATE

SIKH 32/5ft 5inch/ LLB LLM PhD (Law), own Office and House in Del-hi seeks Hindu/ Punjabi/ Sikh Beau-

BUSINESS

AGE 37 Handsome, Comfortable Groom mumbaiperson@gmail.com needs VIP Girl and first Marriage Remarriage, Divorce. Ct: 7401489892

COSMOPOLITAN **BRIDE WANTED** Kerala Christian 40 B.Tech. Now own business in hospitality Sector in

kerala and agriculture Settled in Mysore is Looking for a suitable match girl Should be between 28 to 33, and graduate with a positive mind set (Religion Caste and language No bar) interest ir agriculture will be an added advantage parents who value family

relation may please contact Mobile: 9844181640

EliteMatrimony

Exclusive matchmaking service for elites from matrimony.com group

ELITE BRIDES WANTED

BRAHMIN, 29, 188 cms, Working Professional, MS. Lives in USA. Father is a Businessman. Family is financially well off. Looking for a like minded match. Contact: 6366448344

NAIDU, 25, 180 cms, Businessman, LLM. Lives in Kallakurichi, Father is a Businessman, Family is financially well off. Looking for a like minded match. Contact: 6366448343

an Australian Citizen, CHENNAI BASED GSB boy 33/ 5ft 11inch. IT professional. Seeks edu-cated/working brahmin girl. Studying Software Engineering and Finance Technology at Monash University (Melbourne, MUMBAI single M 59 well settled financially highly educated active lifestyle seeks single F over 40 in Australia,55th best in the World); Physically challenged, cannot walk, and good health fit active, without children preferable not essential, for long term relationship. Contact

is Super intelligent, has Good hearing and Good vision. Ancestral Native Coimbatore Tamilnadu.

We are looking for a girl of Non-Consummation. Caste no bar, religion no bar, education no bar. money no bar, must speak Tamil or English and must be interested in taking care of her

PHYSICALLY

CHALLENGED

BRIDE WANTED

My son is a 20-year-old boy,

physically challenged husband. +61 492 279 067

HINDU, 38 years, 5' 10, divorcee, B.E, M.S (London) working as gener-al manager for a Japanese company with yearly salary of Rs. 20 lakhs looking for a lovely girl. Caste no bar. Contact : 9444333140

ELITE GROOMS WANTED

BRAHMIN, 27, 155 cms, Working Professional Masters. Lives in Australia. Father is an Auditor. Family is financially well off. Looking for a like minded match. Contact: 6366448344

MUDALIYAR, 27, 157 cms, Gynecologist, MS ir Obstetrics. Lives in Chennai. Father is a Businessman. Family is financially well off. Looking for a like minded match. Contact: 6366448343

MUSLIM BOY 29/176 BE(ECE) MBA (IIM) Proj Manager MNC 34L P/A well todo Family in Chennai 9445556810 MUDALIYAR BOY age 35, Star: Rohi-

TAMIL

MUDALIYAR BOY age 35, Star: Rohi-ni, fair complexion, Scale II offi-cer in Nationalised bank seeks good looking girl from same caste or equal. Telugu kannada. matching star preferred. No other demands contact no: 9494003635 BRIDE WANTED Hindu Nadar 39yrs/ 170 c.m / M.Sc., B.Ed / PGT /Govt / 9445311859

RC MUDALIAR 28 MBA 170 V. Fair Mul-timillionaire Seeks RC Own Factory Business V.VIP Family Caste No Bar Contact: 7550113468 MUdaliyar/ Pillai, 29/165cms, B.com, MSW, LLB Advocate, Chennai, well settled seeks educated working bride. Contact: 94450 77918 / 94444 95948. Contact: 7550113468

HINDU NADAR BE, MS Texas, 27/175cm 5,00,000 p/m, Seeks Suitable Bride. Contact:K.A Raman Nadar 9380791999 BE IIT 6'2 Height Mudaliar 32yrs Tech Lead Top MNC in Hyderabad Sal 75 lacs seeks Bride 5 '4 Same or Allied Castes Tamil,Telugu. Ct: 7382620365

ALLIANCE INVITED from parents of KARKATHAR PILLAI, VEG, Chithirai-4, ALLIANCE INVITED from parents or any Tamil Hindu girl aged 29 to 33yrs. for 36yrs self propelled in MNC, Banglore, 20 lakhs per an-Teetotaller –9043631278. jk100gps@ gmail.com

CSI NADAR, 39, 180cm, Divorced, DHMCT, PGDHRM, Entrepreneur, Par-ents Entrepreneurs, Family is Fi-nancially Well off, Looking for a amicable Match. Ph: 7305316655

RC CHRISTIAN, 41yrs/170, B.E. Software Engineer, never married, work-ing for mnc, Chennai, CT-9500188067

 Family background. Cont 9441088542.

 WE ARE seeking a bride for our only son, aged 30, who holds B.Tech degree and a PG from IIM. He man- ages our family business in the Logistics industry with a turn over of around 15 Cr. We are primarily based in Hosur & Chennai. He has ayounger sister who is yet to be

 WUBLAY SOZHIYA Vellalar 37yrs / 173cm, BE, IT / Chennai, Sal: 0000/Pm, Ayilyam Star, Kadagam Rasi, Seeks Unmarried / Widow / Divorce Bride, Relocation Possible, 244664627

 MUDALIAR 28/172, Handsome.MBBS. MS.

younger sister who is yet to be married, parents intercaste mar-riage and managing the family busi-ness. Earlier marriage ended in a

CA/Engg & employed Cell: 9444753417 NAIDU 37/164CMS, 70kgs, BBA MBA working Chennai 7Lakhs PA, own house in native. Caste No Bar. 9894428574.

> CSI CHRISTIAN NADAR 30/ 175/ B F M.S./Smart, Work in Europe. Seeks Suitable Bride. Contact: 8610774283

BRIDE WANTED Rich Naidu 28vrs MBBS Govt Hospital,1000000.PA Elite Fam-ily 50.Cr.CNB. 9363986547, MS Own Hospitals Chennai, Elite Business Family 9710093999 9363986547, 9710091999

Maharam,B.E., M.S(Engg), Chief Engr. MNC Chennai, 15L PA, First marriage NAIDU 29/180CM, Pooratathi, BTech MS, Working as Research Engr, PR of Sweden, Contact Parent seeks Naidu Bride, Ct: 9487272897 NAYAKKAR, SR.ELECTRITION, 32/ ISAI VELLALAR aged 30 Punarpusam working in Bank of Maharashtra as Deputy Manager, earning 10LPA. Seeks employed or unemployed bride from BC/MBC with good family values Ct .0475 11402 167cm, 4.5Lacks PA, cast no bar. Ct.9025230151 Tamil Mudaliar, 33 years/183 cms Hastha Star Data Scientist MNC fair Ct: 94875 11802 seeks good looking Bride with good Family background. Cont 9441088542.

ily 50.Ci 9363767415 divorce. We are open to any commu-

9710093999/

TAMIL BOY 31/182cm, Handsome, Ph.D, Working in Germany Rs.50L per Annum. Seeks suitable Bride. Caste no bar. CT: 98422-36300.

GAVARA NAIDU, 39/180, Uthiradam,

TAMIL

Issueless Divorce seeks first marria-ge bride below 35yrs Any degree, cas-te no bar CONTACT : 9445205446. Tamil / Hindu / CNB / 180cm / 41

9841071359

BE, MS US / Divorced /No issues / American Citizen / teetotaller / seeks suitable bride from US / Ind 37 or less old. Contact: 9444608449.

9962999136.

MUDALIAR PARENTS invite Alliance for their Smart Looking Son 29 / 172 / B.E.(Aero) / Sharjah / 2.00L pm seeks Well Educated & Gud Look-ing Brides Subset No Bar

TELUGU

NAIDU 32 B.Tech IT PGDM HR Chennai Seeks Naidu(Any) Bride educated Dr/

TAMIL

WANTED BRIDE

Brahmin, Iyer, Ashtasahasram, Kaushika

Age 31/174 cm/ Engineer with MBA ir

Corporate Finance(Canada), CFA candidate Fair, Investor, Rich /Affluent Business

amily seeks a Beautiful, Well Educate

uitable Iyer Girl of 28 - 29 years fro

a good Family Background

Phone: 9884043225/Whatsapp.

BRAHMIN IYER VADULAM Uthiram Nov 1977 BSc (MCA) MNC, IT 24 Lacs PA

BE,MS/ PhD - IITM, Hindu/30/Fair, MNC-BLR, BCs, Contact: 9840161742

DOCTOR. M.D., D.M. 44/165, SC/AD

unmarried Brahmin

Gir



Bengaluru

🖲 Timings

BENGALURU	
SUNDAY, APR. 14	

SUNDAY, APR. 14											
🔴 <u>RISE</u>	06:08	SET	18:32								
📞 RISE	10:48	SET	00:00								
MONDAY, APR. 15											
🔴 <u>RISE</u>	06:07	SET	18:32								
📞 RISE	11:46	SET	00:14								
TUESDAY,	APR. 16										
🔴 RISE	06:06	SET	18:32								
📞 RISE	12:40	SET	01:05								

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	35	26
Mysuru	37	24
Bengaluru	35	23

Bengaluru Today 35°C A dry weather will

prevail. Morning will be comfortable.The day will be warm and humid afternoon Night will be pleasant.

Bengaluru Tomorrow 36°C Rise in temperature. The weather will be dry. Day will be very warm and humid with uneasy afternoon. Night will comfortable

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THEMOMINDU

DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verifi and make appropriate enquiries to satisf themselves about the veracity of an advertise ment before responding to any published in this newspaper. HoP UBLISHING PVT LID, the Publisher & Owner of this newspaper, does no vouch for the authenticity of any advertisemen or advertiser or for any of the advertiser's products and/or services. In no event can the Owner, Publisher, Printer, Editor, Director/s Employees of this newspaper. Color advertise for advertise and no advertise en-tersponsible/Liable in any manner whatsoeve for any claims and/or damages for advertise ments in this newspaper.

Senior citizens and PwDs begin to vote from home

The exercise that began on Saturday will go on till April 18, and 36,691 citizens aged above 85 and 12,957 Persons with Disabilities have opted for this facility in the 14 segments that will go to the polls on April 26; in Bengaluru's three constituencies, 3,710 senior citizens and PwDs voted on the first day

The Hindu Bureau BENGALURU

s many as 36,691 citizens aged above 85 and 12,957 Perwith Disabilities sons (PwDs) have opted to vote from home in the 14 Lok Sabha constituencies that will go to the polls on April 26 in Karnataka.

Manoj Kumar Meena, Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) for

Karnataka, Lok Sabha said that the elections vote from 2024 home that began on Saturday will go on till April 18.

According to data from the Election Commission, Dakshina Kannada has the highest number of senior



Home is where the vote is: Election officers helping a person vote from home in Bengaluru on Saturday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

6,053 citizens from this home in the Form 12 D. constituency have given Udupi-Chikkamagaluru, where 4,665 senior cititheir consent to vote from

zens have opted for this facility, follows Dakshina Kannada. Chamarajanagar has the least at 982, data showed.

In the PwD category, Chitradurga constituency tops the list with 2,059 persons opting for the facility. This is followed by Dakshina Kannada where 1,975 PwDs have opted for it. Bengaluru South constituency has the least where only 54 PwDs have opted for the facility.

In Bengaluru's three constituencies, of 6,407 voters, 3,710 senior citizens and PwDs cast their votes on the first day.

With 70.14%, Bengaluru Central Lok Sabha constituency has registered the highest voting percentage. In the Bengaluru Central constituency, of the 1,822 voters, about 1,278 people

Officials seize ₹1.34 crore in Bengaluru South;

pass away before have voted. In Bengaluru exercising North constituency, out of 2,062 voters, 945 have exfranchise ercised their franchise. In Bengaluru South constituency, of the 2,523 voters,

1,487 people exercised

The Congress candidate

in Bengaluru Central Lok

Sabha constituency Man-

soor Ali Khan has regis-

tered a complaint with the

Election Commission of In-

dia alleging that some

agents of the BJP accompa-

homes of elderly persons.

homes were mute specta-

one of the cars to seize the

bag. The officials also

seized the cars and a scoo-

ter and registered a case.

Five persons involved in

transporting the money

The incident led to a war of

words between the Con-

The Congress leader and Transport Minister Ra-

malinga Reddy said the

party had no links to the

lected crores of money

through electoral bonds is

now pumping the same in

every constituency. This is

the same money which

"The BJP which has col-

are absconding.

War of words

gress and the BJP.

cash.

poll officials.

their franchise.

The Hindu Bureau BENGALURU

Several voters

According to the data in Bengaluru Urban district in three constituencies, 18 people, mostly senior citizens, who enrolled for voting died and 16 were absent.

About two persons renied poll officials to a few fused to cast their votes when the polling officials The complaint said that poll officials in four or five turned up at their door.

Meanwhile nine elderly persons and two persons tors to the violation of the with disabilities who had model code of conduct. The agents were present in opted for vote from home facility for the Lok Sabha the homes when the elderly persons voted. He urged elections, died before casting their votes in Mysuru the ECI to suspend these district.

Cafe blast: NIA gets custody of the two accused for 10 days

The Hindu Bureau BENGALURU

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has secured a 10-day custody of the two terror accused arrested from near Kolkata in The Rameshwaram Cafe blast case.

The arrested Abdul Matheen Ahmed Taahaa, 30, the alleged key conspirator, and Mussavir Hussain Shazib, 30, the alleged bomber at the restaurant, both hailing from Tirthahalli, Shivamogga district, were brought to the city on Saturday from Kolkata on a transit remand.

They were produced before the special NIA court, Bengaluru, which remanded them in 10 days police custody.

The duo were on the in since 2020 giving agen-



citizens (aged above 85)

who have opted to vote

from home. As many as

Chief Minister Siddara-

maiah commended the ef-

forts of the Karnataka pol-

The accused were brought to the city on Saturday from Kolkata on a transit remand. FILE PHOTO

lodge near Kolkata where they were staying under false identities.

Security agencies have ice and the NIA for their recovered the alleged cap efforts in nabbing the duo. However, Leader of Oppothe bomber was wearing while placing the improsition in the Legislative Asvised explosive device at sembly and BJP leader R. the restaurant on March 1. Ashok said the Congressled government had tried Agencies have recovered DNA samples of the bomto mislead the probe into ber from the cap and it the case hours after the would now be matched blast and were trying to with the alleged bomber



Election officials seized ₹1.34 crore unaccounted for cash from three cars at Jayanagar in the Bengaluru South Lok Sabha constituency on Saturday. They were acting on a tip-off about large sums of money being transported in cars in the constituency. The seizure led to a slugfest between the Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), with both pointing fingers at each other, in the hotly contested seat.

Munish Moudgil, Model Code of Conduct Nodal Officer, Bengaluru Urban district, said while he was at Javanagar, he received information about the movement of unaccounted for cash and he sent election officials along with the pol-



Congress and BJP blame each other

Election officials seizing a bag of cash from a vehicle at Jayanagar in Bengaluru on Saturday. PTI

ice to the spot before reaching there. At the spot, a man was seen transferring a bag full of cash into a car and when he realised he was being watched, he

kitha, took a photo of the vehicle and chased the car. The election official and the police later seized the car and cash. Two other cars were parked at the

three bags in the three Sowmya Reddy is the parhigh-end cars. The official ty's candidate in the had to break a window of constituency.

The BJP candidate Tejasvi Surya said around 10.45 a.m. his office received calls from three persons informing about transportation of cash in two SUVs.

"The informants are those who were forced to give money to the Congress," he alleged. "Immediately, we notified the police, election officials and election squad. Within 10 minutes the officials rushed to the spot and did the seizure," he said.

Mr. Surya thanked the Election Commission for taking swift action and seizing cash and vehicles. He alleged that the Congress, fearing a loss, was now spending huge sums of money in an attempt to change their for-

> Form No.14 [See Regulation 33(2)]

cies the slip and were nabbed by the NIA from a

Mussavir Hussain Shazib, sources said.

cover up the case to serve their "appeasement politics".

sped away. An election official, Ni-

spot at Jayanagar. In all, the election officials found

28th convocation of

XIME Bangalore held

was seized by the officials."

he said. His daughter and former Jayanagar MLA tunes.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, MINISTRY OF FINANCE

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL SERVICES DEBT RECOVERY TRIBUNAL - I KARNATAKA

4th Floor, Telephone House, Raj Bhavan Road, Bengaluru

By Regd. A/D, Dasti failing which by Publicatio

Man held on charge of killing wife after domestic dispute

<u>The Hindu Bureau</u> BENGALURU

A domestic dispute between a newly married couple over having children ended in tragedy, when the man allegedly killed his wife in the HAL police station limits in Bengaluru.

The accused, Naveen Kumar, a native of Ramanagara, allegedly strangled his wife, Girija, 30, a native of Bhatkal.

Married recently

According to the police, the couple had been married for eight months and lived in Annasandrapalya.

Recently, Girija had an abortion and was not ready for another child, according to the police.

However, Naveen wanted a child soon, leading to an argument between them.

Fight aftermath

Recently, after a fight Naveen strangled his wife and fled the scene, but he was arrested within hours, said police officials.

The police have registered a case and an investigation is under way.

Ombudspersons yet to be appointed by 23 varsities

The UGC has released a list

of the defaulting 20 State

of the notification. This

was followed by several

According to the regula-

tions, each university shall

appoint an ombudsperson

for redressal of grievances

of students of the universi-

ty and colleges or institu-

tions affiliated with the un-

shall be a retired vice-chan-

cellor or a retired professor

(who has worked as Dean

or HOD), and has 10 years'

experience as a professor

in State or Central universi-

ties or institutions of na-

deemed-to-be-university,

or a former district judge.

ombudsperson

importance,

universities. FILE PHOTO

reminders.

iversity.

tional

The

<u>Jayanth R.</u> BENGALURU



universities and three private universities that have not appointed ombudsperson, as prescribed in the University Grants Commission (Redressal of Grie-

vances of Students) Regulations, 2023. It has also written to

Chief Secretaries of the States informing them about the defaulter universities.

To ensure equitable access to quality mental health services at the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), the UGC introduced the University Grants Commission (Redressal of Grievances of Students) Regulations,

2023. The UGC notified the regulations on April 11, 2023. Universities were requested to appoint an ombudsperson within 30 days

ombudsperson The shall be appointed for a period of three years, or until he attains the age of 70.

The ombudsperson will hear appeals from an aggrieved student only after the student has availed all other remedies provided under these regulations, and shall make all efforts to resolve the grievances within a period of 30 days of receiving the appeal from the aggrieved student, according to the rules.

21

There are 41 State universities and 27 private universities in Karnataka. In the previous communication of UGC on December 5, 2023, the universities were requested to appoint an ombudsperson by December 31, 2023. However. in Karnataka, only 20 State universities and 24 private universities have appointed an Ombudsperson.

S. Niranjana, Vice-Chairperson of Karnataka State Higher Education Council, told The Hindu, "Most of the universities have completed the process of appointing the ombudsperson. We have already given instructions to all the universities to appoint ombudsperson compulsorily, and we will send a reminder again."

The Hindu Bureau BENGALURU

The 28th convocation of XIME Bangalore was held on Saturday.

Chief guest at the convocation Vijaykrishnan Venkatesan, Managing Director, Kennametal India Ltd., in his convocation address urged the graduating students to dream big and



be fearless to become successful.

He also called upon them to maintain integrity and added that ethics and integrity leave a lasting impression and enrich oneself.

Dean Roshni James presented the graduates with the award diploma, awarded by Chairman J. Philip.

•••



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YK

Bengaluru

M BG-BGE

Man misbehaves with student on metro skywalk

The Hindu Bureau BENGALURU

A 32-year-old man was apprehended by the Namma Metro security staff recently for misbehaving with a college student on the skywalk connecting the Benniganahalli station on the Purple Line.

The incident occurred when the student used the foot overbridge to cross the Old Madras Road. According to police, the man, who was allegedly inebriated, deliberately brushed against her near the escalator and then began following her. Upon reaching the
entrance, the studentThe Hindu Bureau
BENGALURUreported the matter
to the station's securi-
ty officer, who appre-
hended the man and
handed him over to
the Ramamurthy Na-
gar police. "AlthoughA 23-year-old bike rider
died on the spot after
hitting a road divider at
kengeri. The police sus-
pect he was speeding
and lost control of the
bike.

ice station to register

a complaint, she later

hesitated to proceed

with a formal First In-

formation Report,"

according to a police

The police regis-

was

re-

tered a non-cogniza-

ble report and the ac-

leased with a stern

official.

cused

warning.

subsequently

the student initially The victim has been approached the pol-



tered a case.

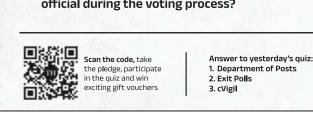
traffic police have regis-

Youth dies in bike crash



FRONTLINE SPORTSTAR

<image><image><image><image><image><image><image><image>









We, the 216 million* young voters of India, solemnly swear to wear pants outside, breathe through our nostrils, chew before we swallow and look before we cross the road.

Since everyone is stating the obvious this election season, we thought we should too.

Yes, we will be voting. See you at the polls.

THEMANHINDU

The next time you see an ad that states the obvious and reminds you of your civic responsibility, just comment **#SeeYouAtThePolls**.

•••

ELECTIONS 2024

Ouiet election campaign amidst much noise

While all the noise in the electoral arena is by the big parties and all the focus is on them, there are some players working quietly. The Socialist Unity Centre of India (Communist), which has fielded 151 candidates in 19 States in the Lok Sabha elections, has fielded

candidates in 19 constituencies across Karnataka.

H.P. Shivaprakash. candidate for Bengaluru Central seat. was seen speaking to people on a range of issues from price rise to women's safety. In Bengaluru North, party candidate Nirmala H.L. was campaigning in T. Dasarahalli, Nandini Layout, and Mahalakshmi Layout. The party's auto campaign

was inaugurated on Saturday at Gandhinagar Assembly constituency by Mr. Shivaprakash.



Nirmala H.L., SUCI (Communist) candidate, campaigning on Saturday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

HDD should restrict his prophecies to **JD(S): DKS**

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Saturday asked former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda to reserve his prophecies for the future of JD(S) rather than talk about the survival of the Congress government.Speaking to reporters at his residence in

Bengaluru, he said: "The Congress has 136-plus seats. Mr. Gowda will be better off predicting the future of the JD(S) than that of the Congress government." Mr. Shivakumar was responding to Mr. Gowda's statement that there was "no guarantee on Congress

government continuing after the Lok Sabha polls." Mr. Shivakumar said: "Mr. Gowda has spent 60 years in political life while I have spent 40. We have 136+ seats. Let him not worry about our survival."



The country requires a powerful leadership and Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the power star in politics.

BASAVARAJ BOMMAI Former Chief Minister and BJP candidate for Haveri LS seat

Moily criticises Centre for not conducting caste survey

Veteran Congress leader M.

Veerappa Moily on Saturday

criticised the Centre for not

conducting a caste census in

the country. The Congress has

been demanding caste census

people belonging to backward

to identify backwardness of

castes, SCs, and STs.

7

We welcome 🍯 Mr. Modi, who is coming to Karnataka. But, let him tell us why no drought relief has been given to us till now. SIDDARAMAIAH



The manifesto stated that a deterrent Central law incorporating the amendments of Epidemic Diseases Act 1897, including all forms of violence against doctors and hospitals, should be brought in. FILE PHOTO

State unit of IMA brings out health manifesto' on gaps in system

sserting that health ought to be treated as an important election issue, the State unit of Indian Medical Association (IMA) has come out with a "health manifesto" pointing out the gaps in the healthcare sector and the measures to be taken to bridge them to ensure equal healthcare for all.

IMA State president Srinivas S. told The Hindu that health of the nation deserves to be an important election issue and IMA is striving to streamline its concerns into a Health Manifesto. "IMA wants to work with the government to achieve affordable universal healthcare for everyone," he said.

Emphasis on 'purity', safety

Topping the list of priorities in the manifesto is a demand that the "purity" of modern medicine should be maintained. "Every system of medicine has its profile and his Integrative medicine is a threat to patient care and safety. It is a health catastrophe waiting to happen. A cafeteria approach with the patients having the right to choose is the only acceptable solution," the manifesto maintained. Pointing out that 23 State hospital protection laws have not brought solace to doctors against violence, the manifesto stated that a deterrent central law incorporating the amendments of Epidemic Diseases Act 1897, including all forms of violence against doctors and hospitals, should be brought in. While demanding exemption for small and medium hospitals up to 50 beds and clinics from The Clinical Establishments (Registration and Regulation) Act, 2010, the manifesto has appealed to the parties to do away with GST on health as it is a taxation on illness. Also, criminal prosecution of doctors should be abolished as there is no criminal intent in any treatment procedure. The onus of protection of the girl child in the womb lies with the governments. The harassment meted out in the name of PC-PNDT Act should stop," the manifesto stated.

Congress demands assurance from Modi on granting clearances for water projects

Minister asks if the Prime Minister will promise voters on getting the nod for Mekedatu project during his rally in Mysuru and Mangaluru today

WATER ISSUE

The Hindu Bureau BENGALURU

head of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Karnataka on Sunday to campaign for the BJP-JD(S) candidates, the Congress has posed a bunch of questions to him related to denial of permissions and funds to irrigation projects, including Mekedatu, and sought answers from him. Addressing reporters on

Saturday, Minister for Revenue Krishna Byre Gowda said Karnataka has released an additional 1,000 tmcft of water to Tamil Nadu since 2018-19 owing to surplus rainfall in the State, but the Centre has denied permission to the State for construction of balancing reservoir Mekedatu across the river Cauvery for storage of 65 tmcft. The dam was proposed for construction of a hydel power project and cater to the drinking water needs of Bengaluru. The con-

struction of the dam would enable it to store surplus water and help both States during the distress years, he said



The Cauvery flows through a gorge at Mekedatu, near Kanakapura, in Ramanagara district. K. MURALI KUMAR

tions seeking clearances from the Centre for the last five years. But the Modi-led government has denied permission and developed "an attitude of hate" towards Karnataka, he said.

The Supreme Court has observed that Karnataka can build any number of projects on the Cauvery basin as long as it adheres to the Cauvery Water Dispute Tribunal. The State has re-

23 against the tribunal's order of 177.25 tmcft, Mr. Byre Gowda pointed out. He asked: "Will the Prime Minister assure voters on providing clearances to the Mekedatu project during his rally in Mysuru and Mangaluru on Sunday?"

Upper Bhadra project He said the Centre had not released ₹5,300 crore to

ri nala project, he claimed. Mr. Byre Gowda asked: "Will Mr Modi assure voters of Karnataka granting funds and necessary per-

Centre has not released a

single rupee till now, he

The Centre issued a ga-

zette notification on draw-

ing 13.42 tmcft of water by

Karnataka from the inter-

State Mahadayi river. But

the Centre had not provid-

ed clearances for imple-

menting the Kalasa-Bandu-

said.

Will discuss Cauvery 'injustice' with PM after polls: Deve Gowda

The Hindu Bureau HASSAN

Former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda said that he will discuss and find a solution to the "injustice" caused to Karnataka in the Cauvery dispute with Prime Minister Narendra Modi after the Lok Sabha

election results are out. Addressing a gathering at Udayapura in Channarayapatna taluk on Saturday, Mr. Deve Gowda said that for over 200 years, people in Karnataka had been denied justice on the Cauvery issue. "The tribunal did not recognise the

mission to implement irrigation and drinking water projects?"

Issues of delimitation

Under the proposed delimitation of constituencies, the Centre has planned to reduce the number of Lok Sabha seats from five

against this injustice. There is no doubt Mr. Modi will be again elected to the Prime Minister's post on June 4. I will meet him and discuss the issue then," he He further said: "We can raise a voice for justice on-

need for drinking water for

ly if all 10 Lok Sabha constituencies in the Cauvery basin elect the JD(S) and BJP candidates. I will campaign in Mysuru, Chamarajanagar, Mandya, Bengaluru, Kolar, and other places to ensure our candidates win."

ready passed a resolution in the Legislature opposing the Centre's move, Mr. Byre Gowda said, and demanded clarification on the subject from the Prime Minister. Karnataka has also alleged that "injustice" has been meted out to the State by the Centre in the share of Central pool of taxes and drought relief.

the people of Bengaluru. I will continue to fight said.

Universal healthcare

Demanding that universal healthcare should be an entitled provision in the basic health package of every citizen, the manifesto stated that the government should not only provide appropriate medical care but also address all the health determinants, including drinking water and sanitation.

"Despite numerous policy announcements prioritising health, the governments at the Centre and State levels have historically underfunded the public health sector, resulting in rising inequity in access to healthcare. The IMA demands that the minimum allocation for health, which at present varies from 1.1 to 1.6% of GDP, one of the lowest in the world, should be increased to 2.5%," the manifesto added.

Warning against AMR

CM YK

Highlighting that Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR) is an emerging threat in the fight against communicable diseases, the manifesto said it has to be tackled with urgency. "Responsible use of antibiotics is a fundamental and effective strategy in containing AMR," it stated. IMA demanded that one drug-one price norm be introduced. "GST of 5%-18% for drugs contribute to substantial portion of out-of-pocket expenditure," the manifesto said.

leased 490 tmcft more wa-The State government has submitted several petiter to Tamil Nadu in 2022-

the Upper Bhadra project promised in the Union Budget in 2023-24. The

southern States from 129 to 103 and Tamil Nadu has al-

HDK girds up his loins in the Cauvery heartland

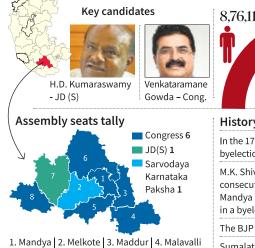
R. Krishnakumar MYSURU

Battle ground Mandya is poised for a fierce contest between the Congress and the ID(S) where caste arithmetic and the redrawn political equations following the pre-poll alliance of the JD(S) with the BJP will play out in the electoral arena.

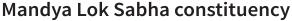
Prime Minister Narendra Modi is visiting the Old Mysore region on Sunday and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi soon after on April 17, underlining the importance of the region where the constituency lies.

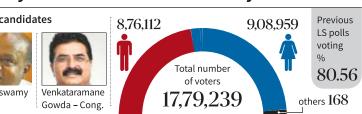
The stage is set for a direct contest between the arch rivals as the incumbent MP Sumalatha Ambareesh, who won as an Independent in 2019 with the indirect support of the BJP, has decided to stay away from polls after initial reluctance and formally joined the BJP. This has queered the election pitch in the Cauvery heartland whose outcome will have a bearing on the future of the JD(S).

For long, both the Congress and the JD(S) considered Mandya as their turf with the BJP rarely in picture. But in the 2023 Assembly polls, the Congress held sway by winning six of the eight seats under Mandya Parliamentary constituency which saw the consolidation of the votes of not only the dominant Vokkaliga community but also



5. Srirangapatna 6. Nagamangala 7. Krishnarajpet 8. * Krishnarajanagar (*Mysuru district)





History of the seat

In the 17 parliamentary polls and four parliamentary byelections in Mandya, Congress has won on 13 occasions M.K. Shivalingappa of the Congress was elected for four consecutive terms from 1952. The Congress grip on Mandya was first broken by S.M. Krishna who was elected in a byelection from the Praja Socialist Party

The BJP has never won from Mandya

Sumalatha is the only woman and the only Independent to have been elected from the constituency so far wrested the seat from the Congress for the first time in 1991

Past results

	Winner	Votes Vote share	Runner-up	Votes Vote share	Third place	Votes Vote share	BJP+JD(S) Votes-vote share
2019	Sumalatha (Independent)	7,03,660 51%	Nikhil K. JD (S)	5,77,784 41.88%	M.I. Shashi Kumar (Independent)	,	12,81,444 92.88
2014	C.S. Puttaraju (JD-S)	5,24,370 43.95 %	Ramya (Congress)	5,18,852 43.49%	B. Shivalingaiah (BJP)		6,11,363 51.24%

that of the Dalits and other backward classes, in its favour.

with JD(S), BJP has yielded Mandya, Kolar, and Hassan to its alliance partner, and JD(S) president H.D. Kumaraswamy has entered the fray from Mandya. The Congress has fielded Venkataramane Gowda or "Star Chandru", who is making his maiden foray into electoral politics.

The outcome of the polls will be significant because the stakes are high for the JD(S) that is still struggling to recover lost ground after the rout of the 2023 Assembly elections. The party suffered its worst electoral debacle ever by winning only 19 seats across the State and only one out of eight seats from Parliamentary constituency, considered

as its fortress. The electoral verdict means more for the political future of the JD(S) as its marker as the first preferred party of the Vokkaligas and the farmers of

Mandya is being questioned, whereas the BJP has nothing to lose.

In a district where BJP was struggling to find a foothold, the Keregodu flag incident - where a flag with the image of Hanuman was replaced by the national tricolour - led to communal tension in January.

Though the JD(S) had ostensibly opposed the communal nature of the BJP's electoral politics for years, it closed ranks with its alliance partner on this issue, resulting in the conso-

•••

lidation of the minority votes in favour of Congress which feels vindicated of its view that JD(S) lacks in secular commitment.

But in a district where agriculture is the primary occupation of nearly 90% of voters and the river Cauvery the lifeline, the dispute with the lower riparian State on water sharing presents a common cause cutting across caste and political spectrum.

And in an year of an unprecedented drought, Mr. Kumaraswamy is pitching himself and the JD(S) as someone to be trusted to uphold the interest of the farmers who have suffered massive crop loss in an election year.

The Congress, on its part, has set the narrative of the Centre's failure to devolve State's share of taxes and delaying the release of funds for drought relief apart from highlighting the successful implementation of the guarantee schemes to offset drought impact.

The pre-poll pact of the BJP-JD(S) is an alliance of convenience with both the parties trying to draw mutual benefit through consolidation of their respective vote banks - ie. Lingayats and Vokkaligas - to defeat the Congress. Whether the Congress can hold on to its own and repeat the success of last year's Assembly polls or if the JD(S) retrieves lost ground is the moot question.

CM, Dy. CM question PM on remark on Constitution

The Hindu Bureau BENGALURU

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's statement that the Constitution would not be changed "even if Dr. B.R. Ambedkar sought it" sparked a reaction from Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Saturday.

The Chief Minister questioned as to why then no action had been taken against his own party MP Anantkumar Hegde, who had recently remarked that the party needs 400 seats in the next Lok Sabha to "change the Constitution." Speaking at Mysuru, he said, "BJP is never in favour of Constitution. Ideologues like V.D. Savarkar and M.S. Golwalkar had opposed the implementation of the Constitution."

Mr. Shivakumar said in Bengaluru: "I am not sure why the Prime Minister is talking about this issue now. Why did he not expel party leaders who raised the issue of changing the Constitution if the BJP got 400 seats? He is talking about this now as the SC, ST, and the downtrodden sections of society have expressed their concern over BJP's plan to change the Constitution."

M BG-BGE

In the seat-sharing pact

Mandya

Crisis ends, PVR to screen Malayalam films

Director Blessy said that Lulu Mall MD Yusuf Ali intervened to resolve the issue; it had stopped screening movies after the Kerala Film Producers' Association stuck to its position that films should be released at a low virtual print fee using content mastered at PDC, a facility under the association

G. Krishnakumar <u>Smriti S.</u> KOCHI/CHENNAI

VR INOX multiplex player has dropped its decision not to screen Malayalam movies across its screens following a tiff between the Kerala Film Producers' Association (KFPA) over the issue of content sharing.

The rift had widened after the Film Employees Federation of Kerala (FEF-KA) announced on Saturday that it would stage protests in front of the multiplexes affiliated to the company until the man-

agement compensated for the loss suffered for not screening new releases, including Fahadh Faasil's Aavesham, Vineeth Sreeniva-

san directorial Varshangalkku Shesham and Unni Mukundan's Jai Ganesh. The multiplex chain had also stopped screening the previously released Malayalam films, including director Blessy's Aadujeevitham, A.D. Girish's Premalu, and Chidam-

baram's Manjummel Boys. B. Rakesh, secretary of the KFPA, said that the company representatives informed their decision to resume screening of Ma-



Filmmaker Blessy, right, FEFKA general secretary B. Unnikrishnan, president Sibi Malayil during a press conference in Kochi. H. VIBHU

layalam movies. They are stopped screening Malayaalso ready to hold talks lam movies after the KFPA within a week to resolve stuck to its position that Malayalam films should be the pending issues, he released at the screens in the Forum Mall in Kochi at company had

The

ducers' Digital Cinema), a facility under the association. The producers and distributors found the VPF being charged by existing content providers like Qube, UFO, PXD, TSR to screen the movies in the theatres too high. Mr. Blessy said that the intervention by FEFKA re-

mained crucial in resolving the issue. We had suffered considerable loss after the movie was pulled out from the screens of the company, he said. Though he had plans to stage a protest in

a low virtual print fee (VPF) using the content

mastered at the PDC (Pro-

front of the PVR Cinemas in Lulu Mall here, it was called off following the truce.

He told *The Hindu* that Lulu Group managing director M.A. Yusuf Ali intervened just before planned protests were set to begin. The multiplex player has several screens in malls under the group in Kochi and Thiruvananthapuram.

However, Mr. Blessy expressed deep disappointment over the substantial losses incurred due to the temporary ban on his movie Aadujeevitham, which released in theatres on March 28.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



Forecast for Sunday: Heavy rainfall/snowfall likely at isolated places over Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh. Thunderstorm with lightning/gusty winds likely at isolated places over Assam. Meghalava, Sikkim and Chhattisgarh. Hot and humid weather likely to prevail over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Kerala and Mahe

<i>,</i> ,				·					н
CITY			MIN		CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	
Agartala					Kozhikode	—	37.3	28.2	
Ahmedabad		37.5	24.8		Kurnool	—	39.9	27.2	
Aizawl		35.0	16.6		Lucknow		37.6	20.4	
Allahabad		38.8	22.5		Madurai	10	34.9	25.5	
Bengaluru		34.5	22.5		Mangaluru	—	34.4	25.7	
Bhopal	8	33.9	20.2		Mumbai	—	32.5	23.5	
Bhubaneswar.	—	38.4	21.4		Mysuru	8	37.0	21.0	
Chandigarh	—	36.6	23.3		New Delhi	—	39.3	23.0	
Chennai	—	35.5	28.3		Patna	—	37.5	24.4	
Coimbatore		36.4	26.0		Port Blair	—	33.0	26.9	
Dehradun	—	35.0	18.6		Puducherry	—	35.8	27.0	
Gangtok	—	21.8	13.3		Pune	—	39.5	20.4	
Goa	—	33.6	24.5		Raipur	—	30.0	20.6	
Guwahati	—	35.8	21.2		Ranchi	—	35.4	20.0	
Hubballi	—	34.0	23.0		Shillong	0.6	25.6	14.0	
Hyderabad	—	33.8	26.2		Shimla	—	27.8	15.0	
Imphal	—	32.9	15.1		Srinagar	—	20.5	10.2	
Jaipur	—	36.5	23.6		Thiruvananthapuram		34.5	24.2	
Kochi	25	33.0	26.0		Tiruchi	—		27.0	
Kohima	—	25.6	14.7		Vijayawada	—	37.2	27.2	
Kolkata	—	37.7	26.0		Visakhapatnam				
(Desinfall data in			- in Cala						L

(Rainfall data in mm: temperature in Celsius)

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CITIES	SO 2	NO 2	со	PM2.5	PM10	CODE	In observation made at
CITIES Ahmedabad Bengaluru Chennai Delhi Hyderabad Kolkata	.38 .11 .13 .26 4	103 17 8 99 29	2 .41 102 .58 .46	143 90 58 347 53	117 93 59 237 118	·····	In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Sri Ganganagar, Rajasthan recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 311 indicating an unhealthy level of
Lucknow Mumbai Pune Visakhapatnam	4 — .87	66 144 104	.24 .24 115	56 35 59	127 56 63		pollution. In contrast, Chikkamagaluru, Karnataka recorded a healthy AQI score of 27

Air Quality Code: 📕 Poor 🛛 📕 Moderate 🛛 📕 Good (Readings indicate average AQI SO:: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. I can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO:: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

Co: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the h and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coug chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

BRIDE



Jagan injured after stone thrown at him in Vijayawada

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy sustained a minor injury above his left eyebrow when a miscreant threw a stone at him during his Memantha Siddham bus yatra in Vijayawada on Saturday evening. Mr. Jagan was greeting the people at a brief stopover, when a stone hit him causing an injury, which the doctors attended to immediately. Vijayawada West MLA Vellampalli Srinivas was also hit by a stone. The Chief Minister resumed his campaign after being given first-aid in his bus.

Phone tapping case: KTR ready for a lie-detector test

BRS leader K.T. Rama Rao, who is under attack over phone tapping of politicians, has offered to undergo a polygraph test and challenged the same to Telangana CM A. Revanth Reddy and Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy. Mr. Rao said, "Phone tapping of unsocial elements and extremists by police is normal. However, if it is misused by officials, they should be punished."

Siddaramaiah and Srinivas Prasad meeting in Mysuru sparks speculation

The Hindu Bureau MYSURU

said.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah called on former Minister and incumbent BJP MP Srinivas Prasad at the latter's residence in Mysuru on Saturday, sparking political speculations ahead of the coming Lok Sabha elections.

The two leaders were daggers drawn at each other since 2016 when Mr. Prasad was dropped from the then Cabinet of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah forcing the veteran Dalit leader to join the BJP.

The two leaders were meeting each other not only after a gap of almost eight

Heralding New Year

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah at the residence of BJP MP Srinivas Prasad in Mysuru on Saturday.

years, but also after Mr. Prasad announced his retirement from active politics.

Speaking to reporters, later, Mr. Siddaramaiah said he and Mr. Prasad were long-time political friends, but he had joined the BJP. He said he came to speak to him after his retirement from politics and inquire about his health.

Responding to questions, Mr. Siddaramaiah said politics was not discussed during the meeting as Mr. Prasad had already declared that he would not join any party or attend any political campaign or meeting. Though there was no point in discussing politics after his announcement, Mr. Siddaramaiah said he had appealed to the Dalit

leader to have sympathy for the Congress as he had

spent a long time of political career in the party. Meanwhile, Mr. Prasad, while interacting with re-

porters after meeting Mr. Siddaramaiah, expressed happiness over the his courtesy call to inquire his

CM, Mr. Prasad said the question of him opposing or supporting does not arise as he had quit active politics. With regard to his past statements against Mr. Siddaramaiah, Mr. Prasad attributed them to his and Mr. Siddaramaiah's pre-

well-being. When asked if

the meeting marks the end

of his acrimony with the

sence in rival political parties. "Is it possible to praise one another when we are in rival parties?," he said before adding that there was no enmity between them.

Mr. Prasad ruled out the possibility of attending PrM Modi's public meeting in Mysuru on Sunday.

'I have not started revenge politics yet'

R. Ravikanth Reddy HYDERABAD

he was in the Telugu Desam Party (TDP). Mr. Reddy, who p pated in a talk show on Saturday, answered a range of questions, including calling PM Narendra Modi as 'Bade Bhai' (big brother), the impact of BRS MLC K. Kavitha's arrest in the Delhi liquor policy case, Ram Mandir politics, arrest of Arvind Kejriwal and investments of Gautam Adani in Telangana. The Chief Minister's Office (CMO) released a note on how Mr. Reddy promoted his State and the positive politics that Congress pursues, based on his participation in the talk show.



Sudden showers bring respite from searing Vijayawada heat

In a much-needed relief, the sky opened up in Vijayawada on Saturday, April 13, after a week of searing temperatures and heatwaves in the past few days. According to the IMD bulletin released earlier this week, thunderstorms, accompanied by lightning and light rain, are likely at isolated places in North Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Yanam from April 11 to 14 due to lower tropospheric South-Easterly/Southerly winds prevailing over the State and Yanam.

Festive cheer: On the eve of Vishu, people purchase Krishna idol kept for sale on a roadside shop in Kerala's Thrissur, K.K. NAJEEE

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy said that he has not yet started 'revenge politics' and indicated that if the ongoing investigations into the Kaleshwaram fiasco and 'phone-tapping' case were considered as taking revenge against former CM Chandrasekhar Rao, K. that is their problem.

"In fact, I have not yet started taking revenge," he said with a grin on his face in response to a question that he was in a 'revengeful mood' against Mr. Rao for sending him to jail when

Visitors will benefit if a part

of the fort's remains is re-

built using laterite bricks,

similar to the ones that were used 500 years ago. A

lam, Kozhikode and Ko-

dungalloor, historian and

The 'cradle bond' of the Muria tribe

The tribe, which has settled in the reserve forests of A.P., still practises the custom of a newborn's father weaving a bamboo basket for the baby to sleep in for some months, and then keep for life

T. Appala Naidu CHUKKALAPADU (ASR DISTRICT)

ovvasi Chukkayya, 40, a Muria tribal farmer, in the Chukkalapadu settlement, Alluri Sitarama Raju district, Andhra Pradesh, holds two baskets in his hands: one each for his two children. The first was woven some years ago for his first son; the second, a few months ago, for his second. "It is portable and can be taken into the forest when we go to work," Mr. Chukkayya said.

The Muria tribe custom mandates that a man weaves a bamboo cradle for his newborn as a lifetime memory for both the father and the child.

YK



Gentle lullaby: A baby sleeps in a bamboo cradle woven by his father at Chukkalapadu settlement of the Muria tribe. G.N. RAO

The father must go into in the cradle during the the forest, collect the entire lactating period. bamboo, dry it, and weave Children develop a bond the cradle with his own with their cradle as they grow older. We also tell hands, with no help from anyone. them the cradle is a gift "In our Gond language,

from their father," said the cradle is called Ravva Masamma, a vookada. We put the baby mother of two children.

The child is allowed to use it for as many years as he wishes. It can also be hung on a tree branch, as it has long ropes attached to it. Within the hut it is most often tied to the roof struts built with precious wood, mostly teak. Once a child has outgrown it, the cradle is preserved and will not be used for any other purpose.

"Irrespective of gender, the vookada is gifted to every child in the family. The number of cradles in the house indicates the total number of children born to a family," said Ravva Pojayya. His eight-year-old son Suresh still plays with the cradle his father made for him. As many as 54 Muria settlements exist in Andhra's reserve forests.

John L. Paul KOCHI

With more people wanting to see the 'fort' on the Fort Kochi beachfront that saw the footfall of three colonial powers - the Portuguese, the Dutch and the English – history buffs are seeking steps to conserve the laterite-brick remnants of Fort Emmanuel that was built along the beachfront

by the Portuguese in 1503. The fort, which was a bastion of the Portuguese, is said to have begun from Bastion Bungalow, which is now a heritage museum, up to the southern end of the beach from where INS Dronacharya, Navy's gunnery school, begins.

History has it that Fort Emmanuel was built as a symbol of the strategic alliance between the maharaja of Kochi and the monarch of Portugal, after whom it was named. By 1806, the Dutch and later



'Fort' in Fort Kochi cries for conservation

Preserve heritage: A cannon kept near the coast what is believed to be a part of Fort Emmanuel in Fort Kochi. JOHN L. PAUL

the British destroyed most walls and bastions of the fort. "Most remnants of the fort remain submerged along the coast, while visitors will be lucky if they get to see it when the waves subside," says K.J. Sohan, convener of the Kerala Chapter of INTACH and former Mayor of Kochi.

Pointing to the area on the western side of the Dutch Cemetery, Mr. Sohan hopes tourism and allied agencies of the government will excavate the area in order to unearth remnants of Fort Emmanuel.

•••

former Chairman of the Kerala Council for Historical Research (KCHR) P.K. Michael Tharakan says it was part of their strategy, since their colonies were largely in coastal regions protected by forts.

"They also had a formidable navy, with cannons fitted atop the deck of ships. This gave them a decisive advantage in battles with the forces of, among others, the Zamorin of Kozhikode, Chhatrapati Shivaji, and the Sulthan of Bijapur. While personnel of the other navies had to return to the land every night after battle, the Portuguese could fight even at night."

From Kerala, they wanted to carry back to their homeland the best of pepper and other spices, and this type of fortification of colonies helped repel attacks. It is thus imperative to conserve the remnants of Fort Emmanuel on the Fort Kochi beachfront.

few pillar-like structures can be erected atop them using these bricks, that can then be used as gateways to the beach, helping recreate memories of the fort in Fort Kochi, he says. Portuguese strategy Referring to forts that the Portuguese built in Fort Kochi and also in Goa, Kol-

News

From Page One

17 Indians aboard Israeli vessel seized by Iran

The vessel is owned by London-headquartered Zodiac Maritime, which is owned by Israeli billionaire Eyal Ofer, and has been chartered to the Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC), which is headquartered in Switzerland.

Israel Katz, Israel's Minister of Foreign Affairs, said on X that the Iranian Revolutionary Guard corps had seized a Portuguese civilian cargo ship, belonging to a member of the European Union, and claiming Israeli ownership. Calling it a "pirate operation" in violation of international law, he added, "I call on the European Union and the free world to immediately declare the Iranian Revolutionary Guards corps as a terrorist organization and to sanction Iran now."

U.S. Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin held a telephonic conversation with Israeli Minister of Defence Yoav Gallant to discuss "urgent regional threats" and "reiterated unwavering U.S. support for Israel's defence".

Adrienne Watson, Spokesperson of the U.S. White House National Security Council, condemned the seizure by Iran, terming it a blatant violation of international law.

Indian Navy operation

Against the backdrop of the Houthi attacks, Somali pirates have also become increasingly active, with a string of piracy attempts in the Gulf of Aden and the Horn of Africa.

In response, the Indian Navy has deployed in strength and thwarted several piracy attempts. From December 2023 till late March 2024, this has involved the deployment of over 5,000 Naval personnel at sea, over 450 ship days, in more than 21 ships, and 900 hours of flying by maritime surveillance aircraft to address threats in the maritime domain, Navy Chief Adm. R. Hari Kumar had said on March 23, as Operation Sankalp completed 100 days

Iran-Israel crisis clouds plans for Indian workers

According to the terms offered by the Israeli agency, the workers are expected to travel at their own expense and will only receive contracts once they land in Tel Aviv. A sample contract available on the PIBA website seen by The Hindu details that insurance, accommodation, and food will be arranged by employers but their costs will be deducted from workers' salaries.

"Now, with uncertainty looming, we feel we are at a crossroads," Mr. Kumar added.

K.C. Singh, a former Ambassador to Iran and the United Arab Emirates, said the Union government's actions "reflected poorly" on its planning for this eventuality. "The government has known for several months about tensions in the region. If an advisory was in the works, how morally justified was it to send workers there at this time?" he asked, in comments to The Hindu

Kwatra meets U.S. officials, reviews progress of strategic partnership

In a series of meetings, the Foreign Secretary met senior officials of the U.S. government and interacted with industry leaders to advance bilateral cooperation in areas such as defence and technology, and discussed regional security concerns

Press Trust of India WASHINGTON

oreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra has met U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defence Kathleen Hicks and discussed the importance of expanding the scope of bilateral military engagements, the Pentagon said on Saturday.

Mr. Kwatra is in the U.S. for a series of meetings with senior officials of the U.S. government and interaction with industry leaders to advance bilateral cooperation in areas such as defence and technology. Ms. Hicks and Mr. Kwa-

tra discussed priorities for strengthening the U.S.-India defence partnership, including the implementation of the road map for the U.S.-India Defence Industrial Cooperation, Pentagon spokesperson Eric Pahon said.

The two officials underscored the historic momentum in the Major Defence Partnership in support of a free and open



Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra with U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defence Kathleen Hicks on Friday. X/@DEPSECDEF X/@DEPSECDEF

Indo-Pacific, an official statement said.

Military engagements They applauded the efforts by both countries to advance the co-production of fighter jet engines and armoured vehicles, as well as the continued success of

the India-U.S. Defence Acceleration Ecosystem (IN-DUS-X) in promoting innovation and partnerships between U.S. and Indian researchers, entrepreneurs, and investors, it said.

They also spoke about the importance of expanding the scope of U.S.-India military engagements to strengthen cooperation across all domains while highlighting the shared efforts to promote stability and security in the Indo-Pacific, Mr. Pahon said.

They also discussed a range of regional security issues and committed to collaborating closely in support of a shared vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific, the statement said.

Bilateral cooperation

Mr. Kwatra met senior officials of the U.S. government and interacted with industry leaders to advance bilateral cooperation in areas such as defence and technology in his trip.

He held meetings with Richard Verma, Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources, Kurt Campbell, Deputy Secretary of State, as well as other senior officials.

He also held discussions with key officials at the National Security Council, the

Department of Defence, the Department of Commerce and the Department of Energy. He met representatives of leading thinktanks and chambers of commerce. "The visit is in keeping

with the tradition of regular high-level exchanges between the two countries and provided an opportunity to further advance our growing and future-oriented partnership," the state-ment issued by the Indian Embassy said.

Mr. Kwatra reviewed the progress made towards further consolidating the India-U.S. Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership, it said. "These discussions

spanned the entire gamut of India-U.S. ties, growing defence and commercial ties, supply chain resilience and contemporary regional developments," it said.

The Foreign Secretary was on a three-day official visit to Washington and left for New York on Friday.

gunfight between two groups on Friday in Tengnoupal, where one person was said to be injured. The Lok Sabha election

The incident follows a

is to be held in Manipur on April 19 and 26.

Congress admonishes Modi govt. for its 'meek' Chinese border policy

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

Reacting to External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar's remarks that "China has not occupied any of our land", the Congress has said that in the past four years, the Narendra Modi government has tried to cover up the worst territorial setback for India with a "deny, distract, lie and justify" approach.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge has also castigated the government for its "meek" policy towards China. Referring to Mr. Jaishankar's statement as a "dou-PMCARE funds from 3,000 ble clean chit" to China, companies having Chinese Mr. Kharge, in a post on X, directors? Why has the status quo ante, pre 2020, not questioned why status quo returned? Why is India still ante has not been achieved to that of pre-2020 posidenied access to areas in tion. Mr. Jaishankar's re-Depsang Plains, Demchok marks made during a press Nalla and several patrolling briefing in Pune, which folpoints in Hot Springs and lows Prime Minister Naren-Gogra Post?' dra Modi's recent inter-'M for Meek' view to foreign press, is the second instance of absolv-He branded the Prime Miing China of the crimes that it committed by a series of incursions, including the June 2020 incident at Galwan where 20 Indian

Why has the status quo ante, pre 2020, not returned? Why is India still denied access to Depsang Plains, and several patrolling points in Hot Springs and Gogra Post? MALLIKARJUN KHARGE Congress preside

Mr. Kharge shot off Jaishankar insulted the naquestions to the governtion's fallen soldiers at Galwan and also legitimised ment on the issue, asking: "What were the 19 rounds the Chinese claims over of bilateral talks with your thousands of square kilometres of land to which In-Chinese counterpart for? Was it to increase Chinese dian troops had access until May 2020. imports of India? Or take

Modi government has accepted buffer zones that lie predominantly in areas that Indian troops once freely accessed," he added.

'Bland statement'

Mr. Ramesh pointed out that the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) reacting blandly to a video showing People's Liberation Army (PLA) troops harassing and blocking shepherds' access to grazing areas near Patrolling Points 35 and 36 in the Chushul sector, by say-

CBI books officials of **MEIL**, Steel Ministry on corruption charge

<u>The Hindu Bureau</u> NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has registered an alleged corruption case against Hyderabad-based Megha Engineering & Infrastructure Limited (MEIL), eight officials of the Steel Ministry's NMDC Limited and NMDC Iron and Steel Plant (NISP) Limited, and two of MECON Limited, in connection with a work con-

take well and pump house, drinking water treatment plant, and cross-country pipeline, including fiveyear operation and maintenance, at Chhattisgarh's Jagdalpur had been awarded to MEIL. **Payments for favours**

tract for the works of in-

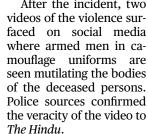
The CBI came across email communications which revealed that payments were made to the accused for various favours including clearance of bills and invoices. The company allegedly prepared fake vouchers to show that payments were made to labourers. The agency also found details of the amounts which, as decided, were to be given to different officials.

Two killed in Manipur ahead of Amit Shah's visit

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI



After a lull of about two





About 18,000 Indians live in Israel at present, working or pursuing their studies there. In addition, more than a thousand workers are believed to have travelled there in the past few months on private individual contracts before the government-to-government recruitment process began.

Labour activists who asked not to be named said that the "temporary pause" in sending workers to Israel should be used by the government to ensure more protections for them. At present, neither Israel nor Iran are on the government's Emigration Clearance Required (ECR) list of countries where workers are mandated to register on the "E-migrate" portal that offers more facilities for those travelling to conflict zones. They also said that New Delhi should press Israeli authorities to provide more clarity on the locations where Indians will work.

A Bengal watering hole for tipplers from Bihar

Local residents told The Hindu that the price of land has gone up manifold in Dalkhola ever since Bihar was declared a dry State in 2016. "People from Kishanganj, Purnea and other parts of Bengal too come here daily looking for a plot of land on the highway to open a hotel, a motel, a dhaba (eatery), a bar, or a liquor shop or vend," said a middle-aged owner of a small provisional shop at Dalkhola.

From time to time, the Purnea and Kishanganj administrations hold meetings with West Bengal police officials at Dalkhola to urge them to cooperate in the implementation of Bihar's liquor laws. The Bihar police, excise, and prohibition department officials have put up checkpoints and barriers as one enters the stretch of the highway, wielding breath analysers and searching for illicit liquor but they rarely catch anyone.

"Most of those who take liquor at Dalkhola stay there for a night and continue their journey next day to avoid being caught," said an Excise Department official who did not want to be named. However, he also admitted that the influx of people staying at hotels or motels in Dalkhola has grown rapidly in the last five or six years.

Politicians in liquor trade

YK

Even MPs and MLAs of Seemanchal, or border areas of Bihar, are involved in some way or other in the illegal liquor trade, according to a senior journalist in Purnea, who did not wish to be named.

nister's policy towards China as "M for Meek"! In a detailed statement, Congress general secretary (communication) Jairam soldiers were killed, the Ramesh said these state-

Blocked access

In particular, the External Affairs Minister's comments represent an acceptance of Chinese control over Demchok and the strategic Depsang Plains where Chinese troops continue to block access to soldiers at the critical Y-Junction, preventing them from accessing Patrol Points 10, 11, 11A, 12 and 13, Mr. Ramesh said.

"Chinese troops remain in place despite 21 rounds of military talks over four years. Where withdrawals have been negotiated, the

ing "both countries are well aware of their respective traditional grazing zone. Any spat, controversy, or dispute is dealt with by the established mechanism"

Instead of asserting the Indian position, the government asked the shepherds not to return to the area.

"For four years, the Modi government has tried to cover up the worst territorial setback in six decades for India with its DDLJ approach: Deny, Distract, Lie and Justify. Mr. Jaishankar's latest statement only highlights the extent of the Modi government's submission to Chinese aggression," Mr. Ramesh said.

tract worth over ₹314.57 crore.

Through electoral bonds, MEIL had donated ₹584 crore to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), ₹195 crore to the Bharat Rashtra Samithi, and ₹85 crore to the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), besides ₹37 crore to the Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress Party (YSRCP), ₹28 crore to the Telugu Desam Party, and ₹18 crore to the Congress. Its subsidiary, Western UP Power Transmission Company Limited, donated ₹110 crore to the Congress and ₹80 crore to the BJP, as reported earlier. The CBI registered the

FIR on March 31.

It was alleged that a con-

Based on the findings. the CBI alleged that the eight officials of NISP and NMDC Limited had received ₹73,85,517 and two officials of MECON Limited got ₹5,01,735 as against the payment of more than ₹174.41 crore by NMDC Limited to MEIL with respect to 73 invoices raised by MEIL and its general manager Subhash Chandra Sangras till December 2018.

SC to hear Kejriwal's petition against ED arrest tomorrow

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

Congress said.

A two-judge Bench of the Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on Monday a petition filed by Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to quash his arrest in a Delhi excise policy-linked money laundering case.

The case is listed before the Bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta. The petition is listed at the very end of the board

at item number 57. The hearing would be significant as Mr. Kejriwal's judicial remand also ends on Monday. A trial court had or-

dered 14 days of judicial custody on April 1. Mr. Kejriwal's lawyers,

ments by Mr. Modi and Mr.

senior advocate A.M. Singhvi and advocate Shadan Farasat, had on April 10 sought an urgent hearing of his petition.

Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud had renon-committal mained while assuring the lawyers that he would look into their request for an early hearing.

In an oral mentioning on April 10, Mr. Singhvi had said Mr. Kejriwal's arrest was based on unreliable documents which were suppressed from the defence side.

Modi interacts with gaming influencers, says there is no need for regulation

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday released a video of his interaction with some online video gaming influencers, recorded at his residence in March. Mr. Modi met Tirth Mehta, Animesh Agarwal, Anshu Bisht, Naman Mathur, Mithilesh Patankar, Ganesh Gangadhar, and Payal Dhare, all of whom go by different stage names online.

The outreach to gamers comes as a record number of 1.85 crore 18-19 year olds are registering to vote in the general elections in the coming weeks. Gaming is among the most popular



discussing issues relating to the gaming industry, in New Delhi. ANI

video categories on You-India. He also played Stum-Tube in India.

Mr. Modi played Raji, a multi-platform adventure game available on PC and rhythm game. gaming consoles, made in

The Prime Minister had a discussion with the influencers on their career choice. "We spend 6-7 hours on practice," an esports gamer told him.

Gaming vs gambling

Mr. Modi discussed the distinction between gaming and gambling, something that video game developers have been keen on disambiguating over the last year. "We need to separate [real money] gaming and skill based [video] gaming," Mr. Agarwal, also known as 8bitthug, told the Prime Minister.

ble Guys, a multiplayer survival royale game. On a vir-"There's no need for tual reality headset, he regulation," Mr. Modi said played Beat Saber, a of the video gaming industry.

M BG-BGE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi with some of the top Indian gamers,

• • •

Sunday, April 14, 2024



RJD manifesto promises 5 new airports in Bihar

The Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) has promised five new airports in Bihar and ₹1 lakh every year to "sisters from poor families on Raksha Bandhan day", in its Lok Sabha election manifesto released on Saturday. Titled 'Parivartan Patra

(letter of change), the

manifesto, released by party leader Tejashwi Yadav and other senior party leaders, makes a total of 24 promises. They include providing one crore jobs; getting special status to Bihar; a ₹1.6 lakh crore special package to the State; ending the Agniveer recruitment policy; providing recruitment in the Railways to end unemployment and ceasing privatisation of railways; and providing cooking gas cylinders at ₹500 each and free electricity up to

200 units.



RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav releases 'Parivartan Patra' in Patna on Saturday. PTI

Have bigger fish to fry, says **RJD** leader

A viral video showing Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Yadav eating fish fry on the eve of Chaitra Navratri has created political turmoil and triggered a national debate, with BJP leaders accusing him of hurting Hindu sentiments. After Prime Minister Narendra Modi stepped into the fray this week, Mr. Yadav hit back on Saturday, asking Mr. Modi to focus on jobs, inflation, and poverty rather than diverting attention from such "real issues".

"I have been talking about jobs, inflation, poverty and unemployment for a long time but the Prime Minister does not take notice of public issues. They [the BJP] talk about other things to divert attention from the real issues," Mr. Yadav said on Saturday.



In our party, ticket is not cut, ticket is given. It was a coincidence that I got this ticket. It is a responsibility, not a reward **BANSURI SWARAJ**

Phase 1

Phase 2

BJP's New Delhi candidate

SAD's first list of 7 candidates for Punjab is out

Sahib.



The Shiromani Akali Dal on The elections Saturday announced its first 🏅 are not just list of seven candidates in about addressing the Punjab. While the party has roti-kapda-makaan fielded senior leader Daljit issues. It's also about Singh Cheema from changing national Gurdaspur, Prem Singh Chandumajra would be policies contesting from Anandpur DIPSITA DHAR CPI(M) candidate from Serampore



Poll frenzy: Bharatiya Janata Party supporters attend Prime Minister Narendra Modi's public meeting in Rishikesh on Thursday. PTI

BJP pushes for a hat-trick of fifers in hilly Uttarakhand

<u>Ishita Mishra</u> DEHRADUN

he Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is aiming to win all five seats in Uttarakhand in the third consecutive Lok Sabha election, yet what may prove to be crucial is how such a historic victory will come about. The 24-year-old Himalayan State has been the first to bring a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in what the party sees as its success, as it does the rescue of 41 trapped workers from the collapsed tunnel in Silkvara

Uttarakhand gave the saffron party back-to-back victories in the previous two Lok Sabha elections as well as in the previous two Assembly elections (2017 and 2022), which saw 'Kamandal and Mandal' politi

Turncoats, new allies, changing caste equations pep up the Rajasthan battle

While the Congress has given six seats to allies and turncoats in the State, the BJP has inducted a large number of Congress leaders in the run-up to the election; the focus on OBC votes has forced both the major parties to give new assurances and make specific promises for different regions

OVERVIEW

Mohammed Iqbal JAIPUR

olitical leaders switching sides after deserting their original parties, turncoats being fielded as candidates, new alliances being formed and caste groups shifting their traditional loyalties present an unpredictable scenario ahead of the Lok Sabha election in Rajasthan. The desert State is set to witness a tough contest in six of the total 25 constituencies.

In a surprise move, the Opposition Congress has given as many as six seats to allies and turncoats. The party seems to have adopted the strategy of utilising the influence of certain leaders in their respective regions to its advantage by strengthening itself or broadening the platform of the INDIA bloc.

Twelve of the seats will go to the polls in the first phase of election on April 19, while the remaining 13

Past results

The map shows the seats that will go to the polls in phase 1 (12) and phase 2 (13) in Rajasthan. The table shows the past election results for Lok Sabha in the State. The BJP won 24 seats in 2019 and 25 seats in 2014 elections

	Year	INC	BJP	Others
	1984	25	-	0
	1989	-	13	12
	1991	13	12	0
	1996	12	12	1
	1998	18	5	2
	1999	9	16	0
	2004	4	21	0
	2009	20	4	1
	2014	-	25	0
	2019	-	24	1
_				

first phase.

The Congress has given ticket to former Bharatiya Janata Party MP from Churu Rahul Kaswan and twotime former BJP MLA Prahlad Gunjal, after they switched over to the party. Rashtriya Loktantrik Party (RLP) leader Ummedaram Beniwal, a close aide of party supremo Hanuman Beniwal, has been fielded as Congress candidate - mostly in central and from Barmer. southern Rajasthan – will Mr. Gunjal, a loyalist of have the polling in the seformer Chief Minister Vacond phase on April 26. sundhara Raje, is giving a The State capital, compristough fight to Lok Sabha ing Jaipur City and Rural Speaker Om Birla in Kota segments, will vote in the with the claim that the

Sabha seat twice since 2014, shifted to the Congress fold after he was denied ticket by the BJP.

Alliance deals

The Congress has entered into alliances with the regional parties after a gap of 53 years in Rajasthan RLP

been fielded as the INDIA bloc candidate from Sikar, which has been the bastion of Leftist forces for several vears

However, the Opposition party is facing an embarrassment in Banswara-Dungarpur, where it has extended support to Bharat Adivasi Party (BAP) candidate Rajkumar Roat. Youth Congress general secretary Arvind Damor. who filed his nomination as a Congress candidate, has refused to withdraw his papers and decided to stay put in the fray despite his expulsion from the party. This has made the contest triangular in the Churu, Kota, Banswara, constituency. and Barmer. The fight has become in-

The BJP has given ticket in Banswara to Congress turncoat and an influential tribal leader and former Minister, Mahendrajeet Singh Malviya. The veteran leader's defection to the BJP in February was a major loss for the Congress, though the party expects that Mr. Roat will get a good chunk of votes of tribal communities in the region.

Defections galore

The BJP has inducted a

large number of Congress

leaders and party workers,

mainly belonging to the Jat

community and Other Backward Classes, at

much-publicised events in

the run-up to the election.

The leaders included form-

er Ministers Lalchand Ka-

taria and Rajendra Singh

Yadav as well as those from

the influential Mirdha clan.

Besides, former External

Affairs Minister Jaswant

Singh's son Manvendra

Singh returned to the BJP's

fold after five years in

ti, 26, the youngest legislator elected in 2023, joining the battle. The focus on OBC votes has forced both the major

teresting in Barmer with

Independent MLA from

Sheo, Ravindra Singh Bha-

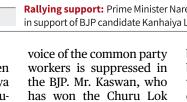
parties to give new assurances and make specific promises for different regions.

Unlike during the 2023 Assembly election, Gujjars are not unhappy with the Congress and are likely to vote for the party.

Other OBCs, including Jats, Malis, and Kumhars, are also inclined towards the Congress along with Muslims, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, while the higher castes seem to be supporting the BJP.

Rajputs, who had overwhelmingly supported the BJP in the Assembly election, are angry with the party following some controversial remarks made by Union Minister Parshottam Rupala in Guiarat recently The issue is set to make an impact in Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh, as the BJP has not acceded to the demand for dropping Mr. Rupala as its candidate from Rajkot. Rahul says BJP and RSS are attacking tribal ideology

Rallying support: Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a roadshow in support of BJP candidate Kanhaiya Lal Meena in Dausa district. PTI



combined astutely.

The Nainital-Udham Singh Nagar, and Almora seats are in the Kumaon region. Haridwar, Tehri Garhwal, and Garhwal (Pauri) are in the Garhwal region.

In the 2022 Assembly election, the Congress witnessed a comeback, but failed to pose a credible challenge to the BJP.

Senior Congress leaders, including Harish Rawat, are giving this pivotal election a miss. Mr. Rawat is only campaigning for his son, Virendra (48), who is making his debut as a candidate in Haridwar. Pitted against Mr. Virendra Rawat is the BJP's Trivendra Rawat, a former Chief Minister.

The BJP's "backroom boy", Anil Baluni, is in the fray at Garhwal. After spending years in Delhi, he is back home in Pauri, hoping to cash in on what he calls the "third wave of Narendra Modi" to secure a clean sweep in the constituency. Voters here are angry over the Union government's Agnipath defence services recruitment scheme, and the mishandling of land subsidence in Joshimath. Uttarakhand is home to over 1.9 lakh former defence personnel, including 50,000 Army and war widows. The 'fauji (soldier) vote' plays an important role in any election in Uttarakhand.

Standing against Mr. Baluni is the Congress's former State chief, Ganesh Godial. The Congress has promised to quash the Agnipath scheme if voted to power.

In Tehri, the BJP's Mala Rajya Lakshmi Shah, the first woman MP from the hill State and known as the Rani of Tehri, is campaigning to win for the fourth time since 2012. Ms. Shah's challenger is not the Congress's Jot Singh Gunsola, but rather Bobby Panwar, president of the Uttarakhand Berozgaar Sangh, an association of unemployed persons. Mr. Panwar is contesting as an Independent candidate.

The SC reserved seat, Almora, is seeing a fight between arch rivals Ajay Tamta of the BJP and Pradeep Tamta of the Congress. The two leaders are pitted against each other for the fifth time. Minister of State for Defence Ajay Bhatt is once again contesting from Nainital-Udham Singh Nagar, which has a significant presence of Muslim and Sikh farmers. They are unhappy with the BJP over its handling of the farmers' protest, and government action leading to violence in Haldwani.

In 2014, the NDA secured a vote share of 55.9% in Uttarakhand, and this rose to 61.7% in 2019.

YK (

supremo Mr. Beniwal, who won in 2019 in an alliance with the BJP, is the INDIA bloc candidate from Nagaur, which is his stronghold. Similarly, former CPI (M) MLA Amra Ram has

Barmer on Friday. The BJP had won all the 25 seats in the State in the 2014 and 2019 elections. This time, the Congress's strategy has made the contest tough in constituencies such as Sikar, Nagaur,

'Muslims are coming to BJP because we don't discriminate against them'

The development agenda of the PM with special focus on the Northeast will help the NDA win most of the 25 LS seats in the region, says the former Assam Chief Minister, while criticising the Congress for misinterpreting CAA for political reasons

INTERVIEW

Sarbananda Sonowal

Rahul Karmakar DIBRUGARH

nion Minister and BJP candidate in Dibrugarh Sarbananda Sonowal is confident about the BJP and its allies in the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) bagging most of the 25 Lok Sabha seats in the Northeast to achieve its 400-plus target. He says Muslims have seen through the accusation of polarisation and are joining others to give a third consecutive term to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He faces the Assam Jatiya Parishad's Lurinjyoti Gogoi, the only non-Congress candidate of the Opposition alliance in the State. Excerpts.

What makes you



confident that the people will vote for the NDA?

In 2014, the people voted for stability and development within a time frame and they reposed their faith in Prime Minister Narendra Modi because the BJP-led NDA under him delivered to create an ecosystem of transformation and empowerment. They have seen this transformation in their day-to-day life - from toilets to better quality houses, electricity, drinking water, cooking gas replacing firewood, financial assistance to people with-

out any source of income, good roads, infrastructure and connectivity to the last border villages. People have got a taste of quality development and they will vote for the NDA to make India a major global economy.

Is the target of 400-plus seats achievable without Muslims, whom the BJP is accused of polarising against?

Muslims have seen through the branding of the BJP as a polarising party. They are coming to the BJP because they know our credo of

'sabka saath, sabka vikas' (development for all, with all) has been genuine. If you ask any Muslim, you will find they are getting ration cards, housing, better road connectivity, etc. There has been no discrimination and all developmental projects and beneficiary schemes have been executed irrespective of caste, creed, and religion. The only condition for us is that the people should be bona fide Indian citizens.

What about the long-term demand for **Scheduled Tribe status** by the Adivasis and six other communities with a sizeable population in **Dibrugarh?**

Their status is under active consideration. It is not an election issue because the communities understand that the government is positive about giving it shape.

Is the Citizenship (Amendment) Act an issue then?

•••

It is not much of a factor because the people know Congress misinterpreted the CAA to reap political benefits. I am aware that my rivals refer to my crusade against the Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunal) Act which the Supreme Court scrapped in 2005. One has to understand that the IMDT was dangerous, discriminatory, unconstitutional, and undemocratic - imposed on-

ly on Assam without the consent of its people although there was the Foreigners' Act of 1946 to detect illegal migrants. No suspected foreigner could have been identified through the IMDT under which the onus of proof lay with the complainant. The CAA, on the other hand, is a national law that allows religiously persecuted people (from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan) to live in the country. It is not Assam-specific and does not say only Assam will take the burden of refugees granted citizenship.

<u>The Hindu Bureau</u> JAGDALPUR

Addressing an election rally in Bastar of Chhattisgarh, senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday said the BJP and the RSS were attacking the markers of tribal identity and giving away forests to billionaires.

"People of the BJP and the RSS attack your religion, your ideology, your languages and your history. Forests are decreasing in India and who is doing that? People of the BJP are handing over forest land to billionaires like Adani ji. A day will come when there will be no forest in India and then the BJP and RSS will tell you that you are a vanvasi (forest dweller) and now there are no forests, you do not belong anywhere," the Congress leader said.

"Those who call you adivasis, they believe that you have a right on India's land, water and forest and you have the first right... On the other hand, those who call you vanvasi feel you have no stake in India," he said.

News

INBRIEF



NHRC flags 'violation' of human rights in Sandeshkhali

In a spot inquiry into the Sandeshkhali case in West Bengal, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has flagged "several instances of atrocities", saying it indicates that there was a "violation of human rights" due to "negligence" in the prevention of such incidents. The NHRC, in its report, also observed that the "pervasive fear of reprisal, coupled with the power dynamics at play, acted as a formidable barrier", preventing individuals from voicing their grievances. The panel has sought an action taken report within eight weeks from the government of West Bengal, the NHRC said. PTI

Air India, Vistara flights to avoid Iranian airspace

Amid rising tensions in West Asia, Air India and Vistara decided on Saturday to avoid the use of Iranian airspace, which is expected to affect flight schedules to Frankfurt, New York and Newark and result in higher fares. Air India and Vistara flights to Frankfurt on Saturday bypassed Iran and flew over Tajikistan resulting in a flight duration of eight hours. "Contingency routes, which are kept available to ensure operational continuity during such eventualities, are being used," said a Vistara spokesperson. It remains to be seen what route Air India's ultra long-haul flights to the U.S. will take. In a statement, Air India said: "Our aircraft will operate on alternate flight paths to and from India."

President asks people to adopt Ambedkar's ideals

President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday greeted citizens on the eve of the birth anniversary of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, the architect of India's Constitution, and asked all to adopt his ideals to work collectively for the inclusive development of the country. Babasaheb Ambedkar, a pioneer of social change and a versatile personality, made exceptional contributions to our country and society as a jurist, educationist, economist, social reformer and political leader, she said. Even today, his strong belief in the constitutional system is the foundation of our democracy and good governance, the President said. PTI

Congress clears candidates for 16 LS constituencies in four States

The party's Central Election Committee names Manish Tewari for Chandigarh, Deepender Hooda for Rohtak, Srikant Kumar Jena for Balasore; Vikramaditya Singh will face BJP candidate and actor Kangana Ranaut in Mandi

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

he Congress on Saturday announced names of its candidates for 16 Lok Sabha constituencies across four States. The notable names include former Union Minister Manish Tewari for the Chandigarh seat, shifting him from Anandpur Sahib which he won in the 2019 election. He will face the BJP's Sanjay Tandon, who is the son of former Governor Balramji Das Tandon.

The party also cleared the name of Himachal Pradesh Minister Vikramaditya Singh, son of former Chief Minister Virbhadhra Singh and State party chief Pratibha Singh, from Mandi. He will be facing BJP candidate Kangana Ra-

naut. Former Union Minister Srikant Kumar Jena who had recently returned to the Congress will be con-



the party's Central Election Committee (CEC). According to sources, candidates for Haryana and Delhi were also discussed. In Haryana, the party,

according to sources, has finalised the names of Rajya Sabha member Deepender Hooda from Rohtak and Kumari Shelja from Sirsa. However, Ms. Shelja has yet to decide whether she will contest or not. Sources also said that in Puniab, former AAP leader Dharamvir Gandhi's name was cleared for Patiala.

The party, which is racked with in-fighting in Himachal Pradesh, is hoping that Mr. Singh's candidature will bring stability. Differences that were simmering between CM Suk-

AAP Minister in a soup over casteist remark

11

The Hindu Bureau CHANDIGARH

The Aam Aadmi Party winder Singh Sukhu and (AAP) Minister in Punjab the party's State unit shar-Laljit Singh Bhullar landed pened during the recent Rajya Sabha election when Congress candidate Abhishek Singhvi was defeated due to cross-voting by six MLAs of the ruling party. The fault lines within the party were visible, with Mr. Vikramaditya and his mother Ms. Singh, blaming the CM for the Rajya Sabha fiasco.

Names for candidates for five Assembly seats in Gujarat coming up for bypolls were also cleared. There is still no word on the party's candidate from Amethi and Rae Bareli, where several sections in the party are hoping that former Congress president Rahul Gandhi and party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra will contest. The meeting was attended by Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, former Congress chief Sonia Gandhi, and AICC general

secretary K.C. Venugopal.

himself in a controversy after his alleged casteist remark against a community, inviting sharp criticism and a demand for stern action against him by the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) and the Congress on Saturday. Mr. Bhullar, AAP candidate from the Khadoor Sahib constituency, spoke against former Congress MLA Harminder Singh Gill and allegedly made casteist remarks. He later apologised and stated that his remarks were solely against Mr. Gill and he never intended to hurt the sentiments of any community. Demanding that the Election Commission take

action, senior SAD leader Daljit Singh Cheema said, "... This action of the Minister is criminal, highly condemnable and has exposed the real face of AAP leaders. It has gravely hurt the feelings of the people of the State."

BJP's Rajput trouble comes to the fore in western Uttar Pradesh

<u>Anuj Kumar</u> GHAZIABAD

With less than a week left for the first round of Lok Sabha polls in eight seats of western Uttar Pradesh, caste is casting its shadow on the BJP's Hindutva juggernaut.

Miffed at being sidelined in ticket distribution at the expense of Gurjars and Jats, and their self-esteem being crushed by certain remarks by BJP MPs and MLAs, Thakur leaders are holding panchayats across the region. Going by the The BJP and its ally have focused their attention on Jats and Gurjars in the **Brij region**

la. Mr. Rupala is at the

centre of a controversy

with his remarks against

Rajputs and is facing prot-

ests from many within the

la and Mr. Dhanani are

After 22 years, Mr. Rupa-

Gujarat BJP.

stitute 10-13% of the Uttar Pradesh population and their vote could affect the prospects of a party in Ghaziabad, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Meerut, Saharanpur, Muzaffarnagar, Kairana, and Bijnor. But this time the BJP has not fielded any Thakur candidate for these seats. The only exception is Thakur Sarvesh Singh from Moradabad whom the party has repeated despite losing in 2019. The party and its ally Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) have focused their attention on Jats and Gurjars in the Brij region.

and Union Minister Sanjeev Balyan was attacked in a Thakur-dominated village. It was seen as the work of the supporters of Sangeet Som, a firebrand Thakur leader who surprisingly lost the 2022 Assembly polls from Sardhana. His supporters hold Mr. Balyan responsible for his electoral loss two years ago.

the leaders Both emerged out of the Muzaffarnagar riots of 2013 but Mr. Balyan made bigger political strides than Mr. Som. The latter was seeking Lok Sabha ticket from Meerut but his ambition was cut short by the entry of celebrity candidate Arun Govil. Adding salt to the wounds, members of the community feel that General V.K. Singh (retd), the two-time MP from Ghaziabad, was forced to sit out of the election. They see Mr. Modi's roadshow in Ghaziabad as a move to mollify the disgruntled

door Sangathan, has taken up the cause of the caste. Speaking to The Hindu, Mr. Singh, whom the locals describe as close to the Samajwadi Party, said: "It has become a matter of our self-esteem. The Thakur youth were nursing anger against the BJP since the party has allowed Gurjar control over the Kshatriya identity of Raja Mihir Bhoj." Kshatriya kings, he said, belong to all but the way a community was allowed to put its identity before the king's name was

BJP, Sena yet to seal the deal on Thane, **Mumbai South seats**

Ateeq Shaikh MUMBAI

With just 20 days to go for filing of nominations, two of the Mahayuti allies - the BJP and Shiv Sena (Eknath Shinde) – are yet to reach a consensus on the crucial seats of Mumbai South and Thane.

For the Mumbai South constituency, earlier the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena wanted to field Bala Nandgaonkar but backed out and announced unconditional support for the unacceptable. "Also, the NDA. With both the BJP and Shiv Sena unrelenting, the wait continues. The contenders from Shinde's Sena for this prestigious constituency are former Union Minister Milind Deora, who earlier this year joined the party after quitting the Congress, and former Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation Standing Committee's chairman and House Leader Yashwant Jadhav. Mr.

Jadhav is a three-time

councillor and had shifted his loyalties from the Shiv Sena (UBT) after he came under the Enforcement Directorate (ED) scanner.

Party insiders said if the Sena bagged the seat, Mr. Deora would be the frontrunner, despite him being elected as Rajya Sabha member. However, his Rajya Sabha position may become a point for the BJP to eventually keep the seat. In Mr. Jadhav's case, the ED tag may make him a less popular choice. The contenders from the BIP are Maharashtra Legislative Assembly Speaker Rahul Narwekar and five-time MLA Mangal Prabhat Lodha. In the 2014 Lok Sabha election, on being denied ticket, Mr. Narwekar joined the Nationalist Congress Party. In 2019, he was elected MLA from Colaba. a constituency in South Mumbai.

Remove beverages from 'health drinks' category: govt.

The government has asked all e-commerce companies to remove drinks and beverages, including Bournvita, from the health drinks category from their portals. "National Commission for Protection of Child Rights, a statutory body constituted under section (3) of the Commission of Protection of Child Rights Act 2005 after its inquiry under Section 14 of CRPC Act 2005 concluded that there is no 'health drink' defined under Food Safety and Standards Act 2006, rules and regulations submitted by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India and Mondelez India Food Pvt Ltd," the Commerce and Industry Ministry said in an advisory to all e-commerce companies. PTI

SUDOKU



Solution	to y	ester	day's	Sudoku

8	7	4	6	5	3	2	9	1
2	6	5	9	8	1	7	3	4
9	1	3	7	4	2	8	6	5
5	3	6	2	7	8	4	1	9
4	2	7	1	9	6	3	5	8
								7
6	9	2	4	1	7	5	8	3
7	5	8	3	6	9	1	4	2
3	4	1	8	2	5	9	7	6

CM YK

footfall, it appears that the discontent is taking electoral shape.

After conducting panchayats in Saharanpur, Meerut, and Ghaziabad, a Kshatriya Swabhiman Sammelan has been scheduled in Sardhana in the Muzaffarnagar constituency. This has come after BJP leader and Union Minister Parshottam Rupala's statement created a widespread ruckus in Gujarat.

Thakurs or Rajputs con-

Discontent surfaces

The discontent surfaced when a night before Prime Minister Narendra Modi's rally in Meerut, the cavalcade of Muzaffarnagar MP

community. Thakur Puran Singh, president of the Kisan Mazway BJP MPs and MLAs of Haryana and U.P. participated in the Gurjar panchayats where Rajputs are targeted, hurt us. Now, Parshottam Rupala has added fuel to the fire by his statements."

However, M.S. Tanwar, president of Rashtriva Mahasabha, Kshatriya said: "There are local issues and personal egos and we hope the party will provide proper representation to all the communities."

The BJP seems inclined to field Sanjeev Naik, who was elected MP in 2019 on NCP ticket.

against two accused in car blast case

Press Trust of India NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has filed a chargesheet against two accused, including the key conspirator, in last year's Manipur car bomb blast case in which three people were injured, an official statement issued on Saturday said.

The agency filed the chargesheet before a special NIA court in Manipur's Bishnupur on Friday, it said.

They have been charged under various sections of the Indian Penal Code, the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, the Explosive Substances Act, 1908 and the Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act, 1984. Further investigation is under way to trace other accused in the case, the NIA said.

Entrepreneur and pilot, Gopichand Thotakura Chargesheet is aiming for a place in Indian space history

Jacob Koshy NEW DELHI

Earlier this month, Jeff Bezos-owned Blue Origin announced six crew members who would be part of a forthcoming commercial flight to space. Of interest to India is one participant, Gopichand Thotakura, an Indian businessman and pilot, who is based in the United States.

While an actual launch date has not been specified, a successful trip to space could make Mr. Thotakura the first Indian in space since Rakesh Sharma, who in April 1984 became - and remains - the only Indian to have the honour, when he went aboard the Russian Soyuz T-11 spacecraft.

In a media statement, Mr. Thotakura describes himself as the "first civilian Indian astronaut". In response to questions from



New frontiers: Gopichand Thotakura. PTI

The Hindu, he reasoned that he would be an astronaut because anyone who crosses the Karman Line the boundary that separates Earth's atmosphere and outer space, and is at about 80 km above sea level – is considered one. Given that the New She-

pard rocket (NS-25), the Blue Origin vehicle, climbs to a 100 km from earth's surface, stays in space long enough for the crew aboard to experience weightlessness and allows one to observe earth's curvature, it ticks all the boxes for a space trip. Rakesh Sharma, who spent a week in the Russian space station, fits the classical definition of an astronaut, however it is unclear if Mr. Thotakura would be described as one.

Until 2021, these distinctions did not matter because all human spaceflight

•••

until then involved military personnel and astronauts who were trained as such and part of missions that involved either living in space or being part of test flights.

The United States' Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), which issues commercial space licences and verifies launch or reentry vehicles that carry humans, has since 2021 stopped designating spacefarers as "astronauts".

Russian astronauts are called 'cosmonauts', and Chinese ones 'taikonauts', and prospective Indians, are colloquially 'vyomanauts' or 'gaganauts', suggesting that countries are free to define space travellers in their own terms. S. Somnath, Chairman, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), told The Hindu that were Mr. Thotukura's flight to be successful and prior to the Ga-

ganyaan missions, he would be the "... second Indian in space and technically, an astronaut."

Mr. Thotakura, born in Vijayawada and schooled in Visakhapatnam, studied aeronautical engineering and trained to be a pilot in the United States. "I've always aspired to go to space. When I came to the U.S. in 2010, this meant either going via NASA or being a U.S. citizen and these were barriers for me. Blue Origin opened up opportunities," he said.

Mr. Thotakura, who is the co-founder of Preserve Life Corp, an Atlanta-based health and wellness company, did not disclose how he bagged a seat on NS-25. "There was no real selection process or criteria. I was hell bent on getting aboard a manned mission. It is a desire to carry Indian blood (ethnicity) to space," he added.

THE HINDU **Business**

NBRIEF



Granules facility in Vizag completes U.S. FDA inspection

Drugmaker Granules India's Unit V manufacturing facility in Visakhapatnam has completed an U.S. Food and Drug Administration inspection. It was a pre-approval inspection (PAI) and cGMP audit for APIs and formulations for oncology and non-oncology products. "Proud to reiterate that our focus on high-quality standards is comparable to the best global benchmarks as we receive zero observations from U.S. FDA audit," CMD Krishna Prasad Chigurupati said.

FIIs investments in real estate fell 55% in Jan.-March: Vestian

Institutional investments in real estate declined 55% annually in January-March this year to \$552 million as foreign investors stayed away, pumping in only \$11 mn, said global property consultant Vestian. The realty sector had attracted \$1,238.3 million (\$1.23 billion) in the January-March period of CY2023. The data showed that the institutional inflow from foreign funds plunged 99% to just \$11 million in Q1 of 2024 from \$791.4 million in the year earlier. PTI

All 224 Gurugram luxury flats sold out in 15 minutes: Ashiana

Realty firm Ashiana Housing on Saturday said it sold 224 luxury flats in Gurugram for ₹440 crore within 15 minutes of its launch. The project is located at Sector 93 in Gurugram, Haryana. The company said it has "sold out the entire phase 3 of its prestigious project, Ashiana Amarah within 15 minutes of launch". "We started registration at 11 am and we had received 800 cheques for 224 units by 11.15. In 15 minutes it was oversubscribed four times," Joint MD Ankur Gupta said.

Firms told to run gas units as power ask rises

Centre directs companies to operate underutilised gas-based power plants in May and June, and extend operations of imported coal-based plants until October 15 to meet the anticipated surge in electricity demand during summer months when IMD expects above-normal high temperatures

Reuters NEW DELHI

he government has directed compa-nies to operate underutilised gas-based power plants in May and June, and extend operations of coal-based imported plants until October 15 to meet anticipated high demand for electricity, as per two government orders.

India registered an 8% rise in electricity consumption in the 12 months ended March 31, and demand is expected to rise in the hot summer months. In an order dated Fri-

advance about the requirements so they could import gas, the government said in its order.

the fuel.

Idle capacity

day, the government for

the first time invoked an

emergency clause mandat-

ing companies to operate

underutilised gas-based

power plants by importing

India has about 24 giga-

watts (GWs) of gas-based

power plants that have

been idling or underused

for decades due to lack of

fuel. Power stations would

be informed two weeks in

"Gas-based





plants are required to meet the anticipated surge in power consumption in summer months," it said. The Power Ministry has projected 260 GW peak

They also have lowered the

number of anticipated rate

But inflation is not spi-

ralling out of control, with

cuts to two from three.

power

Power Ministry has projected 260 GW peak power demand this summer (April-June) Torrent, NTPC are among the big gas-based power station operating companies

> power demand this summer (April to June). Peak power demand touched an all-time high of 243 GW in September last year.

idling or underused for decades

Torrent and NTPC are

among the big gas-based power station companies. In another order, seen by Reuters on Saturday, the Centre invoked an emergency clause directing firms such as Tata Power and Adani Power which operate imported coal-fired plants with a capacity of almost 16 GW - to continue operations.

As per the arrangement, GRID-INDIA will inform gas-based units in advance, of the number of days for which gas-based power is required. Gas-based units holding Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) with distribution licensees shall

first offer their power to PPA holders.

If the power offered is not utilised by any PPA holder, then it shall be offered in the power market.

Units not tied to PPAs must offer their output in the power market. A highlevel committee headed by Chairperson, Central Electricity Authority will facilitate the implementation of this direction.

The India Meteorological Department has predicted above-normal maximum temperatures over most parts of the country during summer.

(With inputs from PTI)

U.S. consumer sentiment slips; inflation expectations increase

Reuters WASHINGTON

U.S. consumer sentiment receded in April and households expected inflation to increase over the next 12 months and beyond, likely providing more ammunition for the Federal Reserve to delay cutting interest rates until September.

The survey from the University of Michigan on Friday followed data that showed consumer prices rose more than expected for a third straight month in March.

Stubbornly high inflation and a strong labour market prompted markets



Under control: inflation is not spiralling out of control, with producer prices increasing moderately last month. AFP

and most economists to sharply dial back expectations for the first rate cut from the U.S. central bank to September from June.

Govt. to e-com firms: remove

Bournvita as a

'health drink'

producer prices increasing moderately last month.

"This increase in inflation expectations is not what the Fed wants to see, but despite the increase, they remain in line with the recent trend and are well-anchored," said Eugenio Aleman, chief economist at Raymond James.

The University of Michigan's preliminary reading on the overall index of consumer sentiment came in at 77.9 this month, compared to a final reading of 79.4 in March.

The survey's reading of one-year inflation expectations increased to 3.1% in April, from 2.9% in March.

Will inform staff of new role between May and June: Vistara CEO

<u>The Hindu Bureau</u> NEW DELHI

As Vistara moves closer to its merger with Air India, its CEO informed employees that the non-flying staff would be informed of their new role in the combined airline entity between May and June.

'Working on concerns' "We have transitioned to a new contract for pilots and working on feedback and concerns that have been received around this," CEO Vinod Kannan said in an internal mail to employees

on Saturday.

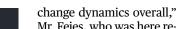
"Cabin crew have also reached out to me to get clarity on their contracts and whether there will be any changes implemented for them ahead of the merger," he added.

Mr. Kannan acknowledged that there was widespread "anxiety, stress and apprehension" among employees over their place in the merged airline, and assured that it remained committed to ensuring that all the staff had a relevant and suitable role in the merged organisation.

Vistara's merger with Air India is expected to conclude by mid-2025.

EPAM bets big on India as more clients set up GCCs





interaction, said "our

headcount in India is 7.300

engineers with half of

them based out of Hydera-

bad" and the rest in Pune,

Bengaluru, Gurgaon, and

Meenakshi Verma

INDIAN INSTITUTES OF SCIENCE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH (Autonomous Institutions established by the Ministry of Education, Government of India) IISER **WIISER**

12

Digital transformation services and product engineering solutions provider EPAM Systems is upbeat on its India operations and its contributions as an increasing number of clients as well as leading firms choose to set up global capability centres (GCCs) and move their business functions to the country.

"India is becoming more and more of a focused area for us to do business development too," President of EU and APAC Markets at EPAM Balazs Fejes said. "If business stakeholders no longer [are] in the U.S. or Western Europe, but in India [including] budget holders then



Balazs Feies

ward," he added.

company that reported \$4.69 billion in revenue for 2023, India is already its second-largest delivery centre globally.

Describing the trend of

cently, said India has already been important for EPAM from a talent availability perspective. EPAM employs more than 53,000 people globally. EPAM India MD Srinivas Reddy, present during the

you need to focus and try to sell to them going for-For the NYSE-listed

> Chennai. The plan was to increase the headcount in India to more than 10,000 by 2025, Mr. Fejes said, seeking to

highlight how the compa-GCCs and business funcny takes clients through tions being moved to India their digital transformation as a "very interesting process, from design to the actual creation of software. change and [poised to]

Ambwani NEW DELHI

> The Centre has directed ecommerce players to ensure that certain beverages such as Bournvita are not categorised as health drinks on their platforms.

The advisory from the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) follows the Food Safety and Standards Authority clarifying that there are no standards for a "health drink". "All ecommerce companies/portals are... advised to remove" beverages including Bournvita from 'health drinks', DPIIT said.

(The writer is with The Hindu businessline)

Luxury home market is 'very hot' now, says Trump Org.'s India partner

Lalatendu Mishra MUMBAI

The demand for luxury homes in India, which has seen substantial growth in the last three years, is expected to continue with prices in the segment set to rise further, said Kalpesh Mehta, founder, Tribeca Developers which is the largest developer of Trump-branded homes outside the U.S.

"Before COVID, everyone was moving into compact homes, not much of luxury products were launched. So, there was a supply-demand imbalance of luxury, which is why we are seeing luxury prices

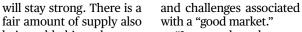
CM YK



Kalpesh Mehta

going up. And obviously, with the economy improving, the demand has increased," he said in an interview.

"As long as the equity markets continue to do well and the economy continues to do well, the demand for luxury homes



being added into the market. So, I think the imbalance that we see should flatten out eventually," he

The growth factor

He said luxury always goes along with economic growth, more importantly stock market growth and wage growth. And there

added.

don't seem to be any major economic headwinds for the economy right now, he said adding in next two to four years, "we're not see-

ing any issues barring any global unforeseen events." He said prices are going up because of the demand

"In a good market eve-

rything is expensive. Land, contractors, the building and hiring people is expensive," he added.

"The [luxury home] market is very hot right now. And we can see, not just in sales prices and velocity, but in the demand for all of the resources that go into creating this product whether it is men or material," he said.

While Tribeca-branded homes will be in the ticket size of ₹3.5 crore to ₹5 crore per apartment, the Trump bucket would be in the range of ₹5 crore to ₹15 crore, he added.

BERHAMPUR	BHOPAL	KOLKATA	MOHALI	PUNE	THIRUVANANTHAPURAM	TIRUPATI

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M BG-BGE

April 1, 2024

June 9, 2024

THE HINDU

Concurrent heatwaves, sea level rises pose a threat to coastlines

Zhou from the Hong Kong

The Hindu Bureau

Concurrent occurrences of heatwaves and extreme short-term sea level rise at the same coastal locations significantly increased between 1998 and 2017 when compared to the preceding twenty years, as per a study published in the journal Communications Earth & Environment.

The study also suggests that these events may be five times more likely to occur between 2025 and

2049 under a modelled high emissions scenario.

A so-called 'concurrent heatwave and extreme sea level' (CHWESL) event is when a heatwave and an extreme short-term sea level rise occur at the same coastal location over the same time period.

This can pose a serious threat to coastal communities. Yet, there has so far been little research into the characteristics and occurrences of these events. Shuo Wang and Mo

Polytechnic University, Hong Kong, investigated CHWESL events worldwide between 1979 and 2017 and projected future events between 2025 and 2049 under a high emissions climate scenario (the IPCC's SSP5-8.5 scenario).

The authors only included events occurring in the extended summer season, spanning May to September in the Northern Hemisphere, and November to March in the Southern Hemisphere. The authors found that approximately 88% of the world's coastlines experienced a CHWESL event during the period 1979-2017. Approximately 39% of coastlines recorded a significant increase in the total duration of CHWESL conditions experienced over a vear during the period 1998-2017 compared to during 1979-1998, with tropical regions more likely to experience a greater increase.

The authors also found

infected after blood donation

Among those who were infected with

symptoms, while the symptoms had

had cardiac or respiratory symptoms

discovered

resolved in the remaining 15.5%

SARS-CoV-2, 84.5% were still experiencing

Neurological symptoms were reported by

23.6%, while 23.1% experienced problems

such as changes in taste or smell, and 15.8%

dual long-term symptoms

was different.

a significant association between heatwave intensity and the probability of a CHWESL event occurring, with a 1% increase in heatwave intensity associated with an approximately 2% increase in the probability of a CHWESL event occurring. From their projections, the authors suggest that global coastal areas could experience on average 38 days of CHWESL conditions each year between 2025 and 2049, an in-

crease of 31 days compared

to the historical period of 1989-2013.

The authors conclude that CHWESL events could pose a significant threat to coastal communities, particularly from the risks of excess heat to human health.

They note that countries in tropical areas are likely to be the most severely affected, and that many of these countries are low or middle-income countries which may struggle to cope with the effects.

SNAPSHOTS



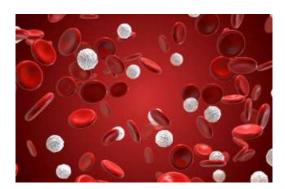
Thin oil films enable water mixtures sans surfactant

Thin oil films adsorbed onto the surface of water droplets lead to anomalously stable, surfactant-free oil and water mixtures, according to a new study. The findings demonstrate a mechanism for stabilizing water droplets in a water-oil emulsification without the need for a surfactant. It could have important technological applications, including the creation of very pure and controlled materials. Oil and water cannot form homogenous mixtures. Instead, when combined, an emulsion is formed.



Patient's skin microbiome may cause surgical infections

Many surgical infections may originate from the patient's own skin microbiome rather than from environmental contamination, as per a new analysis of 204 recipients of spinal surgeries. A genomic comparison revealed that 86% of surgical infections, involving a range of bacterial species, originated from bacterial strains that were already in the microbiome before surgery. Also, 59% of the isolates studied resisted the preventative antibiotics given before surgery, hinting that such bacteria were already present.



Blood bank study reveals true incidence of Long COVID

The study looked for the presence of anti-nucleocapsid (anti-N) antibodies, which indicates past natural infection. COVID-19 vaccines do not elicit the antibody, thus distinguishing natural infection from COVID-19 vaccination

LONG COVID:

Among COVID-19

survivors, a

significant number

develop long-term

health problems

researchers

Rajeev Jayadevan

he pandemic has claimed over seven million lives officially, but the actual death toll is believed to be much higher. Among COVID-19 survivors, a significant number develop long-term health problems. The World Health Organization uses the term Long COVID for individuals experiencing such symptoms for over three months without another explanation.

Unfortunately, measuring chronic illness and disability resulting from CO-VID-19 has been challenging due to various factors. While binary outcomes like deaths and ICU admissions are easily counted, tracking slow-onset health issues is more difficult. This is further complicated by the fact that new health problems can arise even without SARS-CoV-2 infection. Consequently, studies utilising different methodologies have reported a wide range of Long COVID incidence

21.2% incidence of Long COVID Blood donor data of 2,38,828 people in the U.S. prior to the first Omicron wave were studied

Anti-nucleocapsid (anti-N) antibodies are present in people who have been naturally infected with SARS-CoV-2 virus

Participants who tested positive for the anti-N antibody were categorised as naturally infected, while those who did not formed the control group

A diagnosis of COVID-19 by a healthcare professional or a positive COVID-19 test were also

accepted as evidence of infection ■ 43.3% of individuals with confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection experienced Long COVID, compared with 22.1% without a history of

SARS-CoV-2 infection The study, however, did not measure antibodies at subsequent time points, potentially missing individuals who were

tage is that it also identifies people who had asymptomatic infection and those who were infected but did not get tested. The two CO-VID-19 vaccines used in the U.S. do not elicit the anti-N antibody, thus distinguishing natural infection from COVID-19 vaccination.

Participants were cateporised into those who tested positive for the anti-N antibody and those who did not. A diagnosis of COVID-19 by a healthcare professional or a positive COVID-19 test was also accepted as evidence of infection. Essentially, the researchers were able to distinguish individuals who genuinely had CO-VID-19 from those who did not, using robust parameters. This differs from other studies that may have relied on self-reported COVID-19 diagnoses, which tend to be less reliable. The

that 43.3% of individuals were difficulty thinking or concentrating (12.7%) and with confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infections expefatigue (11.1%). Surprisingrienced new symptoms ly, the picture of mental lasting four weeks or lonhealth ger, after recovering from Among those without in-COVID. Among those withfection, as many as 9.8% out infection, 22.1% reportdeveloped mental health ed new-onset symptoms, problems such as anxiety as might be expected in the and depression. The incigeneral population. This indicated that 21.2%, or the difference between 43.3% and 22.1%, had long-term health problems genuinely resulting from SARS-CoV-2 infection. Among them, 84.5% were still experiencing symptoms, while 15.5% said that their symptoms had resolved. Neurological symptoms were reported by 23.6%, while 23.1% experienced other problems such as changes in taste or smell, and 15.8% had cardiac or respiratory symptoms. The two most common individy, one out of six people (16.5%) said that their current physical health was worse than before the pandemic. For those without prior infection, the corresponding percentage was 10.9%. Although symptoms lasting over a year are common, the study also reveals that Long COVID resolves in a significant number of cases. Accordingly, household pulse surveys in the U.S. indicate that the percentage of people currently experiencing Long COVID has remained steady, with 10% of adults with prior COVID-19 (equivalent to 7% of all adults) still affected by it. Studies from India show

prior infection in the stu-

that Long COVID is less common following Omicron infection compared to previous variants. A study from AIIMS Bhubaneswar found that 8.2% of individuals developed long-term symptoms following Omicron infection, compared to 29.2% with the Delta variant. They found that the risk of Long COVID is heightened wit

rates. A recent study in JA-MA Network Open has aimed to address this issue by comparing people who had COVID-19 with those who did not.

The researchers utilised the U.S. blood donor data from 2,38,828 individuals, leveraging antibody test results from the pre-Omicron era to identify individuals who had COVID-19. Specifically, they looked for the presence of anti-nucleocapsid (anti-N) antibodies, which indicates past natural infection. The advan-

dence was only slightly higher at 11.9% among those with prior infection. This is attributed to loneliness, fear of infection or death of oneself or loved ones, bereavement and financial worries that affect people regardless of their infection status. The WHO noted a 25% increase in anxiety and depression in 2022 due to these factors. Therefore, a key takeaway is that a pandemic impacts the mental well-being of the entire population - not just those who got COVID.

Among those who had a

repeated infections. A limitation of the current study is that it did not measure antibodies at subsequent time points, potentially missing individuals who were infected afterward. They could have incorrectly classified people as uninfected controls. The study also excluded people who were not healthy enough to donate blood, focusing on those with relatively mild outcomes.

(Rajeev Jayadevan is cochairman of the National IMA COVID task Force)

Particles that mimic platelets staunch traumatic bleeding

Scientists have designed artificial, ultra-soft particles that can mimic the blood-clotting properties of platelets to staunch heavy bleeding from trauma in rodents and pigs. Their platelet-like particles offer advantages over traditional platelet infusions that could make them more viable outside of the hospital, such as a longer shelf life and lower risk of contamination. The new platelet-like particles are based on a highly deformable microgel.

Geroscience: the science related to aging



Dr. Daniel Belsky, an epidemiologist at Columbia University, New York (my Alma Mater), has coined the term 'geroscience', meaning geriatric, or related to age. Here, he has devised a novel blood test which determines the pace at which a person is aging. His group has devised a method which studies the formation of methyl groups through an enzyme in the DNA of senior citizens and finds that this methylation is sensitive to aging. This is often referred to as 'gerozyme'.

Tool to target aging

Several groups are working on drugs and other related methods to modulate the

CM YK

gerozyme, and how these efforts affect his/her aging. One group has suggested the drug called metformin is a tool to target aging (Cell Metabolism, vol.23, June 14, 2016). Another group has shown that if we inhibit

the enzyme TORC1, it will enhance immunity and reduce infection in the elderly. More recently, Mannick et al, in a paper in Nature Aging (2023) have reviewed the effects of the drug rapamycin on the longevity and survival of animal models of human diseases, and how we may make the drug's inhibitors a part of the standard of care for diseases of aging.

Dr. Belsky's group had also studied the levels of DNA methylation in people across the socio-economical backgrounds (poorrich, rural-urban) and

found that the socio-economic disadvantage has a role to play. The Columbia Aging



Various benefits: Senior citizens will benefit from exercise and thus inhibit the aging-associated enzyme (gerozyme). GETTY IMAGES

Centre has found that a balanced diet supports brain health by reducing inflammation, and promotes proper blood flow by supplying essential nutrients which aid cognitive function. The website healthline-

.com elaborates on this and states that healthy

sources of proteins, healthy fats, and foods rich in antioxidants, such as healthy fats, vegetables, foods rich in oils, and plenty of fruits help in supporting healthy aging. This is of particular value to us in India, since the number of people above the age of 60 years is about 10 crores (out of a total population of 143 crores). Healthline-.com suggests that proteins (animal and vegetable), nutritive grains (wheat, rice, ragi, bajra), oils, fruits and soft drinks help in healthy aging. These are easily available, both for meat ea-

ters and vegetarians. Researchers at Stanford University have found that a drug which can boost strength in injured or aging mice restores connections between nerves and muscle fibres. This drug blocks the activity of an aging-associated gerozyme called 15-PGDH which naturally increases in muscles with age and in neuromuscular disease. But with this drug, aging mice become physically active again.

Mayo Clinic in Minnesota offers seven benefits of regular physical activity. These are: controls weight; combats health conditions and diseases like stroke, high blood pressure, type 2, diabetes, and cancer; improves your mood; boosts energy; enables better sleep; better sex life; and finally, it can be fun and social such as meeting, walking, or playing with others.

All of us, particularly senior citizens, will greatly benefit by exercise, and thus inhibit the gerozyme.

Music may even modulate gerozyme and be a cure for dementia!

In 2020, a group from Toledo, Spain published a paper which concluded that music can be a powerful treatment strategy for dementia. And more recently, another group, again from Spain, has a paper titled: Music compensates for altered gene expression in age-related cognitive disorders. In effect, the paper suggests that music can modulate our gerozyme. So, friends! Sing a song or turn the music on!

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ultraviolet light. This may indicate that the purpose that eyes have evolved of its eyes is to see bioluminescent signals in the otherwise pitch-black nighttime sea. Vanadis' eyes are built simply, but equipped with advanced functionality. They have evolved in a relatively mammals and octopuses. short evolutionary time The Vanadis bristle worm, span of just a few million also known as polychaetes years. This means that which are nocturnal, has they must have developed eyes as big as millstones, independently of, for relatively speaking. As a

example, human eyes and that the development of vision, even with a high level of function, is possible in a relatively short time.

Readers may send their questions / answers to questioncorner@thehindu.co.in

independently of one Scientists have discovered a bristle worm with such sharp-seeing eyes that they can measure up to those of

Evolution of eyes

Question Corner

Is there any evidence

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How did the law on disclosure of assets evolve?

What is the Supreme Court ruling? What principle emerges from it? What is the penalty for omission of assets?

<u>K. Venkataramanan</u>

The story so far:

wo recent developments have brought under focus the disclosure norms that candidates are expected to comply with in election law. One relates to reports that the BJP candidate in the Thiruvananthapuram Lok Sabha constituency, Rajeev Chandrasekhar, had allegedly failed to report all the assets he owns in the mandatory affidavit accompanying his nomination papers. Another report was about the Supreme Court noting that not every little detail needs to be disclosed, as candidates also have their right to privacy.

What is the law related to disclosure?

The requirement that prospective candidates will have to disclose their criminal antecedents, if any, their educational qualifications and their assets and liabilities, including those of their spouses and dependants, arose from a landmark Supreme Court judgment on May 2, 2002. The court ruled that the voters' right to information in a democracy is part of the citizens' right to express their opinion through their vote.

In June 2022, the ECI issued the rules to give effect to the judgment. However, the Central government of the day sought to curtail the scope of these disclosures by an ordinance amending the Representation of the People Act, 1951, in August 2002. Later, it was replaced by an

Rejecting the contention that the voter's right to know all particulars is absolute, the Supreme Court said there was no need for a candidate to lay bare his entire life for the electorate to examine Act. The amendments introduced Sections 33A (concerning disclosure of pending criminal cases), Section 33B (which effectively nullified the ECI's notification by saying no

disclosure other than those prescribed in the Act is required) and Section 125A (penalty for failure to disclose or false disclosure). The Ordinance and, thereafter, the amending Act were challenged in court. The Supreme Court on March 13, 2003, struck down Section 33B and restored the disclosure requirements regarding assets and liabilities and educational qualifications. The ECI issued revised instructions and the format for disclosure based on the judgment.

What are the consequences of any omission?

Section 125A of the RPA, 1951, prescribes a six-month prison term, or a fine, or both, fo candidate's failure to disclose the required information, or giving false information or concealing such information. Besides this provision for prosecution, any omission or false information could be a ground to challenge a candidate's election in the High Court. Among the grounds available to a court to invalidate an election, two are relevant here. Under Section 100, an election can be declared void if there is "improper acceptance of any nomination" or "any non-compliance with the provisions of the Constitution or of this Act or of any rules or orders made under this Act." It is possible for an unsuccessful candidate to question the acceptance of the nomination of the ultimate winner on the ground of concealment or furnishing of false information, as well as raise the possible violation of any of the statutory disclosure requirements.

Why is there a WHO alert on viral hepatitis?

What are the findings in the Global Hepatitis Report 2024? Why does India have such a high disease load of hepatitis B and C? Is the increasing prevalence of non-viral forms of the disease, like alcoholic liver disease and non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, adding to the burden?

Hepatitis B

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<u>Bindu Shajan Perappadan</u>

The story so far:

ndia accounted for 11.6% of the total viral hepatitis disease burden globally in 2022, making it the country with the second highest disease load after China, according to the World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Hepatitis Report 2024 released recently. Bangladesh, China, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, the Russian Federation and Vietnam, collectively shoulder nearly two-thirds of the global burden of hepatitis B and C.

What does the report highlight?

As per the report, the disease is the second leading infectious cause of death globally – with 1.3 million deaths per year, the same as tuberculosis, a top infectious killer. New data from 187 countries show that the estimated number of deaths from viral hepatitis increased from 1.1 million in 2019 to 1.3 million in 2022. Of these, 83% were caused by hepatitis B, and 17% by hepatitis C. Every day, there are 3,500 people dying globally due to hepatitis B and C infections. Half the burden of chronic hepatitis B and C infections is among people aged 30-54 years old, with 12% among children under 18 years of age. Men account for 58% of all cases.

What is hepatitis?

"Hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver that is caused by a variety of infectious viruses and non-infectious agents leading to a range of health problems, some of which can be fatal," says Sharad Malhotra, HOD, Gastroenterology Hepatology and Therapeutic Endoscopy, Aakash Healthcare, Delhi. There are five main strains of



Need for awareness: Pregnant women waiting for the Hepatitis B surface antigen screening test in Chennai in 2021. FILE PHOTO

the hepatitis virus, referred to as types A, B, C, D and E. While they all cause liver disease, they differ in important ways including modes of transmission, severity of the illness and geographical distribution. In particular, types B and C lead to chronic disease and together are the most common cause of liver cirrhosis, liver cancer and viral hepatitis-related deaths. An estimated 354 million people worldwide live with hepatitis B or C, and for most, treatment remains beyond reach, according to the WHO.

Why is India vulnerable?

Doctors attribute the large number of cases to several reasons including high population density, lack of awareness to symptoms, screening and treatment and not adhering to or having access to good hygiene practices. Dr. Sudeep Khanna, senior consultant, gastroenterologist, Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals, explained that one of the major reasons for the increasing burden of hepatitis in India is the high prevalence of chronic viral hepatitis B and C infections. "These chronic infections often remain asymptomatic for decades; furthermore, the lack of widespread screening programmes and limited awareness about the importance of hepatitis testing contribute to a significant proportion of cases going undiagnosed. Undiagnosed cases continue to transmit the infection, perpetuating the cycle of transmission and leading to a rise in the overall burden of the disease," he said. The physician added that another important factor contributing to the rising number of hepatitis cases is the increasing prevalence of non-viral forms of the disease, such as alcoholic liver disease (ALD) and non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD). Doctors note that the high consumption of alcohol, particularly in urban areas, has led to a significant increase in ALD cases. Additionally, the rapid rise in obesity and metabolic disorders, coupled with sedentary lifestyles and dietary changes, has fuelled an epidemic of NAFLD in both urban and rural populations. These conditions can progress to more severe forms of liver disease further compounding the burden of hepatitis in India.

Men report larger number of cases. Manoj Gupta, HOD, Liver Transplant and GI Surgery, PSRI Hospital, Delhi, states that this is due to high-risk behaviour like use of IV drugs, sharing injections while using IV drugs and sexual behaviour. "Multiple sex partners, or male to male sex is a very high-risk factor for these hepatitis B and C infections," he said.

How can it be prevented? Hepatitis B can be prevented through

vaccination and the report highlights the need to ensure coverage, while hepatitis C is curable with medicines. In India, the numbers of deaths due to viral hepatitis aren't comparable to tuberculosis, say experts, adding that cost of treatment is also among the lowest as India makes the generic version of the drugs. Also, the government's viral hepatitis control programme offers the vaccine to high-risk adults such as healthcare workers. Treatment for both hepatitis B and C is available under the programme. With an initial rollout of the hepatitis B vaccine in certain cities and districts of India in 2002-2003, the Indian Government included Chronic Hepatitis B infection (HBV) vaccine in the childhood immunisation programme in 2011-12.

Why is the report significant?

This is the first consolidated WHO report on the viral hepatitis epidemiology, service coverage and product access, with data for action. This report presents the latest estimates on the disease burden and the coverage of essential viral hepatitis services from 187 countries across the world. It also found that across all regions, only 13% of people living with chronic hepatitis B infection had been diagnosed, and approximately 3% (7 million) had received antiviral therapy at the end of 2022. Regarding hepatitis C, 36% of people had been diagnosed and 20% (12.5 million) had received curative treatment. These results fall well below the global targets to treat 80% of people living with chronic hepatitis B and hepatitis C by 2030. However, it does indicate slight but consistent improvement in diagnosis and treatment coverage since the reported estimates in 2019.

What is the way forward?

Mother to child transmission is responsible for most new infections, and in India, elimination of hepatitis B requires extensive treatment coverage, immunising and protecting every newborn and ending any discrimination against patients, said Dr. S.K. Sarin, Vice-Chancellor, Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences, Delhi. The report cautions that despite the availability of affordable generic viral hepatitis medicines, many countries fail to procure them at lower prices. Pricing disparities persist both across and within WHO regions, with many countries paying above global benchmarks.

The report adds that service delivery remains centralised and vertical, and many affected populations still face out-of-pocket expenses for viral hepatitis services. It has outlined a series of actions to advance a public health approach to viral hepatitis, designed to accelerate progress towards ending the epidemic by 2030. This must look at expanding access to testing and diagnostics, shifting to policies for equitable treatment, strengthening prevention efforts and improved funding both at a global level or within countrys' health budgets, said WHO.

The trend in climate change jurisprudence

What is the latest court ruling?

This case concerned the election of Karikho Kri, an independent candidate who won a seat in the Arunachal Pradesh Assembly in 2019. His election was challenged by the Congress candidate Nuney Tayang on the ground that Mr. Kri had not disclosed some moveable assets in the names of his wife and children. The Itanagar Bench of the High Court of Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh accepted the allegations and declared Mr. Kri's election void. It found that his nomination had been improperly accepted as he had failed to disclose three vehicles (sold some years before, but not yet registered in the name of the buyers) and had not submitted a 'No Dues' certificate for government accommodation he had enjoyed during an earlier stint as MLA (2009-14).

The Supreme Court set aside the High Court's judgment on the ground that the non-disclosure was not of a substantial nature warranting rejection of his nomination; nor did it amount to non-compliance with the law as it did not materially affect the outcome of the election.

What is the takeaway from the verdict?

Rejecting the contention that the voter's right to know all particulars is absolute, the Supreme Court said there was no need for a candidate to lay bare his entire life to the electorate. It is not necessary to declare every item of moveable property, unless it is of such value as to be sizeable in itself, or will reflect upon his lifestyle and thus be of interest to the voter. However, the court cautioned that there cannot be a straitjacket rule on this, and what omission is of a substantial character or will affect the outcome will depend on the facts of each case.

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What is the backdrop to the Supreme Court ruling that citizens have a right against the adverse effects of climate change? Why has a link been drawn between climate change and human rights? Is this happening in litigation in other countries too?

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Jacob Koshy

The story so far:

n a recent judgment, the Supreme Court ruled that citizens have a "right against the adverse effects of climate change." The Court was giving its verdict in a case that raised concerns over multiple deaths of the Great Indian Bustard due to solar power transmission lines against India's obligation to meet its emission reduction and increase its energy capacity through non-fossil fuel sources.

What is the context?

In recent years, one of the factors linked to the decline in the population of the Great Indian Bustard, an endangered species, are power lines in Rajasthan and Gujarat, which host several, large solar parks. The concern was that the birds collided against the overhead transmission lines. Environmentalists petitioned the Supreme Court in 2019, pleading that all overhead lines, existing and prospective, be shifted underground. Private and public power companies, supported by the Centre's Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), contended that shifting all overhead lines underground would be expensive and impractical, and would significantly hike the cost of solar power, undermining India's



For the future: Greta Thunberg with a sign that reads, "School Strike for climate", outside the Swedish Parliament in Sweden on June 9, 2023. REUTERS

commitment to green growth. The Court had constituted a committee of experts in April 2021 to determine which transmission lines ought to go underground and which ones could remain overground. In its latest judgment, the Court has continued to task an expert committee with overseeing the electrification but quite emphatically stressed that underground electrification – as the government and power-developers have argued – would hinder India's road to solar electrification.

What does the judgment say on human rights and climate change?

The Court notes that the Indian government has taken multiple steps through legislation as well mission-led programmes to address climate change. The Wild Life (Protection) Act 1972, the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act 1974, the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act 1981, the Environment (Protection) Act 1986, the National Green Tribunal Act 2010, were among those referenced in the judgment; the National Solar Mission, the National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency and, the National Mission for a Green India were also mentioned. "Despite governmental policy and rules and regulations recognising the adverse effects of climate change and seeking to combat it, there is no single or umbrella legislation in India which relates to climate change and the attendant concerns. However, this does not mean that the people of India do not have a right against the adverse effects of climate change," the Court noted.

Despite constitutional guarantees that give citizens equality before the law and right to life and personal liberty, it was now necessary, in the Court's view, to explicitly link the impact of climate change as something which impedes these rights of liberty, life and equality. "This is perhaps because this right (against climate change) and the right to a clean environment are two sides of the same coin. As the havoc caused by climate change increases year by year, it becomes necessary to articulate this as a distinct right. It is recognised by Articles 14 and 21," the judgment notes. The Court also said that if vulnerable communities were affected, say by

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coastal erosion, land degradation, or if people were made additionally vulnerable to disease, agricultural losses, storms and flooding – all indirectly linked to climate change – then rights under these Articles (14 and 21) would be violated, further necessitating an explicit link between climate change and rights.

Are their international precedents?

The link between climate change and human rights has grown stronger since the Paris Agreement of 2015. The preamble of the Agreement had references to "human rights."

In a 2023 research paper, Doreen Lustig and Ilil Gabison of Tel Aviv University highlighted that there was a growing convergence between the fields of international human rights law (IHRL) and climate change. Several reports of UN human rights bodies and Human Rights Council resolutions are now drawing a link between rights and climate change. In 2005, Sheila Watt-Cloutier, a Canadian-Inuk activist, in her capacity as chair of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (now known as the Inuit Circumpolar Council), petitioned the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) to get relief for human rights violations resulting from the impacts of climate change. This was among the first explicit links translating the impact of the climate crisis into human rights language. Scholars also argue that the framing of climate change as affecting future generations and endangering their right to a liveable planet follows from the link to human rights. That is how the climate activism, for instance, of Greta Thunberg and her 'school strikes for climate', must be understood.

What are the implications of such a ruling?

Supreme Court judgments on environmental matters have often significantly altered public discourse and governmental action. For instance, decisions in the *M.C. Mehta verus Union of Ind*ia, the *Godavarman Thirumulpad* cases have been the foundation of subsequent environmental action. In the current case of the Great Indian Bustard too, the ruling has come with the Court underlining the necessity for expanding electricity production for solar energy sources. While this is state-backed, India has also underlined its right at international fora to continue to rely on coal plants and fossil fuels. Whether this will be seen by Indians as the government failing to protect them against the effects of climate change remains to be seen.

PROFILES

Guardians of the revolution

Iran's elite military wing, which has helped the Islamic Republic spread its influence across West Asia through a network of militias, is under pressure as several of its top commanders were killed by purported Israeli air strikes in Syria in recent months

Stanly Johny

en. Mohammed Reza Zahedi was one of the top commanders of the Quds Force, the overseas arm of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). A veteran of the Iran-Iraq war and a former confidant of Qassem Soleimani, the Quds Force chief who was assassinated by the U.S. in Baghdad in January 2020, Gen. Zahedi was in charge of the IRGC's operations in Lebanon and Syria. On April 1, Gen. Zahedi, his deputy Gen. Mohammad Hadi Haj Rahimi and Gen. Hossein Aminollah, along with a group of IRGC figures, were in a consular annex of Iran's embassy in Damascus. The purpose of their visit was a meeting with members of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad. What the Generals did not know was that their movements were being tracked by the Israelis.

Gen. Zahedi and his comrades were killed in an air strike on the embassy compound, which Iran and Syria immediately blamed on Israel. For Iran, the killing of Gen. Zahedi was a body blow. He was the seniormost military figure who got killed by enemy fire since the assassination of Gen. Soleimani. Since the October 7 Hamas attack on Israel, Iran has lost several IRGC commanders in Israeli strikes in Syria. After the killing of Gen. Sayyed Reza Mousavi in Syria in December, Iran had carried out missile strikes in Iraqi Kurdistan, claiming that it targeted a base operated by Mossad. But that did not stop Israel from targeting IRGC commanders further. After the killing of Gen. Zahedi, the Islamic Republic is now under pressure to respond.

The rise

The IRGC, or Sepah-e-Pasdaran, was one of the earliest revolutionary institutions decreed by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini after the 1979 revolution that brought down the monarchy of Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi. One of the main objectives of the Pasdaran was to preserve the revolution and the theocratic-constitutional system Khomeini and his followers built. The revolutionaries were wary of the



loyalty of Iran's regular Army that was commanded by royalists until the revolution. They wanted a fighting force that was completely loyal to the clergy. So they went on to build one. Khomeni described the Guards as "the soldiers of Islam". "Wherever you be, guard yourselves against the self in you and from all the Satans around you," he told Pasdaran after the group was founded.

The Iran-Iraq war of 1980-88 would transform Pasdaran into a powerful fighting force. The participation of ideologically driven Guards in the war, which ended in a ceasefire after both sides suffered heavy casualties, laid the ground for the IRGC to emerge as the most influential wing of the regime. Today, the IRGC and Iran's regular military (Artesh) operate as two parallel armed wings of the regime. While Artesh and the police force are entrusted with protecting the country's territorial integrity and order at home, Pasdaran's primary responsibility is the protection of the revolutionary regime. With a military wing, an overseas operational unit (Quds Force) and a civilian voluntary organisation (Basij) at home, the IRGC's operations overlap with the

regular service forces. But, under the direct command of the Supreme Leader, the Guards have the resources and capability to influence the direction of the foreign and security policies of the regime more than any of its other wings.

The IRGC has some 1,90,000 trained soldiers under its command, roughly half the size of Iran's regular forces. The Guards have an Army, which is spread across Iran's 31 provinces, an air force and a navy. Of these, the IRGC navy, which patrols Iran's maritime borders, including the strategically critical Strait of Hormuz, which connects the Gulf to the Gulf of Oman that opens into the Arabian Sea and to the Indian Ocean, is considered a very powerful unit.

At home, the Guards have made it clear on a number of occasions that their loyalty is towards the clerical establishment. They have deeply penetrated into different institutions of the regime and have stood against reformist politicians in the past, especially Mohammed Khatami, Iran's President from 1997 to 2005. Abroad, the Guards' responsibility is to neutralise the revolution's enemies and expand the regime's influence. Its

vanth Reddy and other

Congress leaders from the

State supported the arrest

of Ms. Kavitha in the same

case, the BRS said. "How

can a national party have

two stands - one at nation-

al level and the other at lo-

cal level - on the same is-

sue?" BRS senior leader

and former Minister T. Har-

Interestingly, BRS MLA

Kadiyam Srihari, who is

now with the Congress,

had led a protest on March

16 against Ms. Kavitha's ar-

rest, terming it undemo-

cratic and a conspiracy

hatched by the BJP to hit

the morale of the BRS and

target KCR politically

ahead of the Lok Sabha

elections. After joining the

Congress, Mr. Srihari

changed his opinion. He

now says the BRS's graph is

coming down because of

against its leaders, and that

he had no other way left

but to join the Congress

"for the development of

Irrespective of what's in

store for her in courts in

the coming months, it's a

testing time for Ms. Kavitha

as well as the first family of

the BRS. She says she

would come clean as a

pearl as she has done noth-

ing wrong. It's time for her

to prove her critics wrong,

as the BRS is still struggling

to recover from the As-

sembly election defeat.

my constituency".

allegations

corruption

ish Rao said.

most elite wing perhaps is the Quds Force (Jerusalem Force), which has been tasked with this duty.

Though the Quds Force was formally established in 1988, Pasdaran, from its early days, had been operational in other parts of West Asia. During the Iran-Iraq war, the Guards set up a dedicated intelligence wing called 'Department 900' for its overseas operations. The department was later merged into the Special External Operations Department, and after the war, the Quds Force was formed. As its name suggests, "liberation of Muslim holy places from occupation" is one of the mandates of the Quds Force. From its inception, the IRGC has dedicated resources and energy to build Shia networks across West Asia. An Islamic Resistance group was founded in Lebanon after the Israeli invasion of the country in 1982, which later became Hezbollah, Iran's most powerful non-state ally in West Asia today.

Axis of resistance

The Quds Force rose to prominence under Gen. Soleimani, who commanded the force from 1998 until his death in 2020. When the U.S.

invaded Iraq in 2003, the IRGC helped span Shia resistance against the occupying troops, which resulted in the death of hundreds of American soldiers in Iraq. When the Syrian civil war broke out, the Guards immediately dispatched its troops to Syria, first under the pretext of protecting Shia holy sites in the country, and then to fight the regime's enemies. The Guards, along with the Russians and Hezbollah, played a critical role in turning around the civil war in favour of the regime of President Bashar al-Assad. Iran today supports a host of Islamist militia groups in West Asia, which is broadly called the 'axis of resistance - there are Hamas and Islamic Jihad in the Palestinian territories; Houthis in Yemen, Hezbollah in Lebanon and various Shia mobilisation brigades in Iraq and Syria. And if the axis has a command centre, which is the IRGC, that is being commanded by Maj. Gen. Hossein Salami. The U.S. has designated the IRGC as a terrorist entity.

If the civil war helped Iran deepen its influence in Syria, it also escalated the shadow war between Israel and Iran. Israel sees Iran as the source of all security challenges it faces in West Asia, and it seems determined to roll back Iran's influence at least in its immediate neighbourhood. But for the Guards, the support for the militias is an essential part of their military doctrine.

When the Guards look at the region, they see an Iran surrounded by rivals across the Gulf, there are Sunni monarchies that are American allies; on the borders of Syria and Lebanon, there is Israel, the 'Little Satan'; and the U.S., 'the Great Satan', has thousands of troops and advanced weapons in several bases spread across West Asia. Beyond the Gulf waters, American warships and aircraft careers are moving freely.

To overcome the conventional security challenges in the region and protect the revolution, Pasdaran has to fight asymmetrically through the proxies. Yet, the proxy battles of the Guards have brought the Islamic Republic to the brink of an open war with Israel.

THE GIST

Established in 1979, in the immediate aftermath of the revolution, the IRGC's primary responsibility is to preserve the revolution and protect the regime

-

Today, the IRGC has some 1,90,000 trained soldiers under its command, roughly half the size of Iran's regular forces

The Guards have an Army, which is spread across Iran's 31 provinces, an air force and a powerful navy, which patrols Iran's maritime borders, including the Strait of Hormuz

Under the shadow

Kalvakuntla Kavitha

The daughter of former Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao says she is being punished by the BJP for her party's defiant political positions

B. Chandrashekhar

or someone hailing mily who took to part-time politics initially life has come full circle for Kalvakuntla Kavitha within a span of just 10 years. From getting elected to Parliament with a handsome majority on her debut attempt to losing the next election and then getting elected as an MLC and ending up in Tihar jail on the charges of an economic offence, she has seen it all.

Central government agencies that investigate the controversial Delhi liquor policy case accuse her of having links to a 'south lobby' that made unlawful gains from the Delhi government's liquor policy. Ms. Kavitha, the daughter of former Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao (KCR), remains however, unperturbed.

A software engineer by profession, Ms. Kavitha worked for a few years in the U.S. before returning to the country in 2006 with plans to enter politics. She joined the movement of statehood for Telangana, spearheaded by KCR, the founder of the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS, now known as Bharat Rashtra Samithi, or BRS).

She founded the Telangana Jagruthi, a cultural organisation affiliated to the



TRS, to work for the 'cultural awakening' of the region in the same year. The organisation struck a cultural chord with the people of Telangana by organising mass celebrations of 'Bathukamma', a festival of flowers, being celebrated in the region.

Telangana got After statehood in February 2014, Ms. Kavitha took a plunge into electoral politics. She contested to the Lok Sabha from Nizamabad and won. She later became the honorary president of the Telangana Boggu Gani Karmika Sang-

ham, a trade union in Singareni Collieries Company. She tasted defeat in the

2019 Lok Sabha election, but within a year, she entered the legislative council from the Nizamabad local authorities' constituency. While being a member of State Legislature, she continued to maintain her links in Delhi, established during her MP tenure from 2014 to 2019, which apparently helped her play a

role in 'helping the southlobby", as alleged by the Enforcement Directorate and the CBI.

Political vendetta

Both Ms. Kavitha and her party have denied the charges and termed her arrest in the liquor policy case part of the BJP's vendetta politics against the parties which refuse to toe its line. The defeat of the BRS in the 2023 Assembly elections has precipitated the matter in the liquor policy case. She was implicated by some other accused who were arrested.

The ED arrested her on March 15, after including her in the case as a witness. She was arrested by the CBI in the same case on April 11.

The BRS slammed the BJP government for the arrest and the Congress for its 'double standard'. The Congress had slammed the arrest of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in the case and termed it political a witch-hunt, while Telan-

The Orbán challenger

Péter Magyar

The former government insider is organising mass rallies in Hungary challenging Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's 'power factory'

gana Chief Minister A. Re-Saumya Kalia

> n Viktor Orbán's land, dissent wears a new look. It has a winsome voice, a familiar face and a turbulent tread – one that promises to break barriers that have constricted Hungarian politics. "Step by step, brick by brick, we are taking back our homeland and building a new country, a sovereign, modern, European Hungary," the

challenger declares. This is Péter Magyar, a lawyer, and until recently, a relatively unknown government insider. Now, he is an opposition figure, vying to be on the frontlines of Hungarian politics. His challenge: to dismantle the regime of Mr. Orban's Fidesz Party.

In the past month, the 43-year-old has led two rallies - the biggest political demonstrations in years with hundreds of thousands of supporters pouring into Budapest's central Kossuth Square. There, Mr. Magyar announced his candidacy for local elections and upcoming European Union polls in June under the TISZA (Tisztelet es Szabadsag, or Respect and Freedom) party. This political outfit is pitched as a convergence of the left and the right, a 'legitimate' choice between the Fidesz party and the "ineffectual" opposition.

Until recently, Mr. Ma-

ILLUSTRATION: SREEJITH R. KUMAR



opportunity seeker lookgyar's social capital crafted his reputation. The lawyer ing for fame in the afterwas known for his marmath of his divorce. But he seems unperturbed. riage to Mr. Orbán's popular ex-Justice Minister Judit Mr. Magyar's emergence

Varga. The two were marin Hungary's political landried for nearly a decade; scape quells several con-Ms. Varga served as an adcerns for the Hungarian viser at the EU Parliament public. The Fidesz party has since 2010 taken on a while Mr. Magyar held different positions on state right-wing, illiberal characboards. The couple, with ter, transforming Hungary their three children, were into a "hybrid regime of framed in the media as a electoral autocracy," according to the European The former government Parliament.

Centrist promise

modern nuclear family.

insider blew the whistle on

...(

Mr. Orbán's government in February, triggering what In contrast, Mr. Magyar's analysts termed the biggest politics is a challenge to Mr. political crisis during the Orban's "power factory". Prime Minister's 14-year His centrist promise is tarrule. The series of events geted to reach out to peounspooled thus: Mr. Maple across the political spectrum. He also vows to gyar resigned from the board of the state-owned build a more civil foreign MBH Bank, publicly lampolicy that maintains relabasted "the reign of cortions with both the EU and ruption" and published in-NATO. Mr. Magyar's former criminating tapes on status as a government in-Facebook on how the gosider carries some favour vernment 'controlled the among voters, who will Hungarian justice system'. head to national polls in The government has dis-2026. His first interview on missed Mr. Magyar as an February 12 with Partizán has more than 2 million views. By mid-March, almost 68% of Hungary's voters had heard of Mr. Magyar, and 13% said they were likely to support his party (making it the third most popular outfit in the country).

Mr. Magyar has separated himself from the mainstream Opposition landscape. On April 7, he challenged Mr. Orban and Opposition leader Ferenc Gyurcsány to a three-way debate. "Everyone knows that the three sides are in fact two," he wrote, conflating the ruling and opposition sides as 'morally deficient corrupt' polities.

Some, however, are sceptical of the Magyar phenomenon. The government's dominance and a weak Opposition sparked an expectation for a "messiah", but it was unlikely that Mr. Magyar was that chosen one, election analyst Róbert László told The Guardian.

On Instagram, Mr. Magyar's recent post is captioned with the words of A Tisza, a poem by the Hungarian revolutionary figure Sándor Petőfi: "like a maniac just freed from chains, the Tisza rushed in rage across the plains", ready "to swallow up the whole wide world".

A comment addressed to Mr. Magyar reads: "You are the Tisza who breaks the barrier."



THE HINDU World

KYIV

16

Eastern front 'deteriorated', says Ukraine as Russia claims village



Ukraine's commander-in-chief Oleksandr Syrsky said on Saturday the situation on the eastern front had worsened significantly as Russia claimed the capture of a village near the occupied industrial town of Avdiivka. Russia's Defence Ministry said its troops had "liberated" the village of Pervomaiske in the Donetsk region. AFP

ISTANBUL

Passengers rescued from Turkiye cable car accident after 23 hours



Rescue workers finished evacuating dozens of passengers trapped for 23 hours mid-air on Saturday after a cable car accident in southern Turkiye that killed one person. Ten persons were injured in the accident, which happened late on Friday afternoon in the resort city of Antalya when a supporting pylon collapsed. AFP

As Iran seizes container ship, Israel

warns of 'consequences' of escalation

U.S. announces decision to send more troops to the troubled region; Tehran official says Tel Aviv is in complete panic about

the looming response to consulate strike in Syria; tensions flare in West Bank as missing Israeli teenager is found dead

NIAMEY

Thousands protest in Niger capital demanding that U.S. troops leave



Thousands of people in Niger's capital on Saturday protested for the immediate departure of U.S. soldiers from the north, after the military junta in Niamey said it was withdrawing from a military agreement with Washington. Niger says the 2012 cooperation agreement had been "unilaterally imposed" by the U.S. AFP

MIAMI

Former U.S. envoy who spied for Cuba sentenced to 15 years



A former U.S. Ambassador who pleaded guilty to spying for Cuba for over four decades was sentenced in federal court to 15 years in prison, Victor Manuel Rocha, 73, was arrested in December for what U.S. officials called "one of the highest-reaching and longest-lasting infiltrations of the U.S. government by a foreign agent." AFP

Iran police toughen rules on women without hijab

Agence France-Presse TEHRAN

The police in Iran announced a new crackdown on Saturday on women who ignore the country's strict Islamic dress code that makes it compulsory for them to wear headscarves in public.

"From today the police in Tehran, as in other provinces, will implement their measures against this sort of violation of the law regarding hijab," the capital's police chief said.

Iran's morality police had kept a low profile since protests erupted following the 2022 death in custody of Mahsa Amini, a young Kurd who died three days after they arrested her for allegedly violating the dress code in Tehran.

Germany to send

additional Patriot

system to Ukraine

Agence France-Presse GAZA STRIP

> srael warned on Saturday that Iran would suffer the "consequences for choosing to escalate the situation any further" as fears grew of wider conflict more than six months into Israel's war against Hamas militants in the Gaza Strip.

The strong warning came after Iran seized a container ship linked to Israel in the Gulf, and the U.S. announced it was sending more troops to the troubled region.

The White House has repeatedly warned Tehran against carrying out a potentially imminent attack



Immediate solution: People protest for a deal and the release of Israeli hostages outside U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv on Friday. REUTERS

on Israel in response to an air strike on an Iranian diplomatic building in Damascus earlier this month. Tehran has vowed to avenge the April 1 strike -

Belgium blues

Guards seized a container ship "related" to Israel in the Strait of Hormuz on Saturday, which was now heading towards Iranian state waters, media Not long after the sei-

zure was announced, Israeli military spokesman Daniel Hagari said that "Iran will bear the consequences for choosing to escalate the situation any further".

ic" over Tehran's looming response.

Iran wants to do, so they

and their supporters are terrified," senior adviser Yahva Rahim said.

The Gaza war began with Hamas's unprecedented October 7 attack against Israel which resulted in the deaths of 1,170 people, mostly civilians, according to Israeli figures.

Israel teen found dead Israel's retaliatory offensive has killed at least 33,686 people in Gaza, mostly women and children, according to the territory's health ministry.

Tensions have also flared in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, where a missing Israeli teenager was found dead on Saturday.

Five women among six killed in knife attack in Sydney mall

A nine-month-old

attacker who was

shot dead

baby was injured by the knife-wielding

person we believe it is.

then... it's not a terrorism

A New South Wales Am-

bulance spokesperson said

eight patients were taken

to various hospitals across

Sydney, including the baby

who was taken to the city's

"They all have traumatic

Security camera footage

Injured people lay life-

Eyewitnesses described

frightened

showed a man wearing an

injuries," the official said.

incident," she said.

Children's Hospital.

Traumatic injuries

Agence France-Presse SYDNEY

Six persons were killed and several others injured - including a nine-month-old baby - when a knife-wielding attacker rampaged through a busy Sydney shopping centre on

Saturday. The Australian police said multiple people were stabbed by the unidentified assailant, who was tracked down and shot dead by a policewoman who is being hailed as a national hero.

The incident occurred at the sprawling Westfield Bondi Junction mall complex, which was packed with thousands of Saturday afternoon shoppers.

Australian rugby league New South Wales police jersey running around the shopping centre with a commissioner Karen Webb said five women and one large knife. man had died. A baby was less on the floor, or surundergoing emergency rounded by pools of blood. surgery.

Identity not revealed

a scene of panic. The police said the attack-Many people took sheler is believed to be a 40ter in shops, trying to proyear-old man who was tect themselves, their famiknown to law enforcelies and ment, but he has not vet strangers. been formally identified.

Australian Prime Miniser Anthony Albanese praised the bravery of strangers who helped each other and the woman police inspector who rushed headlong toward danger.

reported.

which killed 16 people, including two Iranian generals, and has been widely blamed on Israel – but has not specified how. Iran's Revolutionary **Terrified of response**

An adviser to Iran's supreme leader said that Israel was in "complete pan-

"They don't know what

gence France-Presse FRANKFURT

Germany said on Saturday it will send an additional Patriot air defence system to Ukraine to bolster its hard-pressed military and help it fend off increased Russian aerial attacks.

"Russian terror against Ukrainian cities and the country's infrastructure is causing immeasurable suffering," said German Defence Minister Boris Pistoannouncing the rius. move.

It will be the third Patriot system that Berlin has supplied to Kyiv, with the Defence Ministry saying the decision was taken at

nian government and in coordination with allies. Chancellor Olaf Scholz also spoke by phone with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Saturday, reaffirming his "unwavering solidarity with Ukraine in the face of massive and ongoing Russian airstrikes, particularly on civilian energy infrastructure," a German government spokesman said.

the request of the Ukrai-

As well as discussing Germany's delivery of a new Patriot system, Mr. Scholz and Mr. Zelenskyy agreed that "further efforts by partners are also required" to boost Ukraine's air defence.



Wild bluebells, which bloom around mid-April turning the forest floor blue, form a carpet in the Hallerbos near Brussels in Belgium. REUTERS

Terror attacks leave 11 persons dead in Balochistan province of Pakistan

Press Trust of India ISLAMABAD

At least 11 persons, nine of them from Punjab province, were shot dead by militants in Pakistan's Balochistan in two separate incidents, authorities said on Saturday, in the latest terror attack in the restive region.

At least nine passengers were killed in the Noshki area of the province when gunmen forced them off a bus they were travelling in and kidnapped them after verifying their Punjabi ethnicity, officials said.

"About 10-12 gunmen blockaded the Quetta-Taftan Highway, N-40, in the vicinity of Sultan Charhai near Noshki and abducted nine passengers from a

CM YK



Revenge victims: Paramedics carry the coffin of one of the victims at a hospital in Quetta on Saturday. AFP

In a separate incident,

two persons were killed on

the same highway when

gunmen fired at their car

bus," according to a senior vince. Later, they killed them and dumped their civilian official of the area, Habibullah Musakhel. bodies under a nearby bridge.

He said that the gunmen first checked the identity cards of passengers and then kidnapped only those hailing from Punjab proafter they tried to break through their cordon. One of the victims was a brother of provincial Assembly member Ghulam Dastgir Badini, the police said.

No group claimed responsibility for the attacks so far but Baloch nationalists often carry out such acts of violence against the people from Punjab. They allege that the people from Punjab were involved in extracting the mineral wealth of Balochistan.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif strongly condemned the attack and sought a report into the incident, according to Radio Pakistan. "We stand with the bereaved families in this hour of grief," he said and promised to eliminate violence from the country.

Ecuador court calls police raid on Mexico embassy 'illegal'

Agence France-Presse OUITO

Ecuador's National Court of Justice ruled on Friday that the seizure and arrest of former Vice-President Jorge Glas from inside Mexico's embassy in Quito was

"illegal and arbitrary." But the High Court an-

nounced that Mr. Glas would remain behind bars pending criminal investigation.

Mexico broke diplomatic relations with Ecuador following the arrest of Mr. Glas a week ago, carried out by security forces who stormed its embassy, a rare incursion on foreign diplomatic territory.

Mr. Glas, who served as tional law.

suggestions that the attack could have been an act of terrorism and said it is believed the attacker acted alone. "If it is in fact the

Ms Webb played down

(3	राज ऋषि भार्तृहरि मत्स्य विश्वव प्रस्थाई कार्यालय : महिला छात्रावास भवन, बाबुशोमाराम र Phone : 0144-2730321, 2730327, 288046 Website : www.rrbmuniv.ac	ाजकीय कला महाविद्यालय, अलवर) FAX : 0144-2730321
क्रमांक :	– राऋभमवि / अल / संस्था / 2024 / 236	दिनाक :—12.04.2024
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Midnigh 10 Posts form, Qu	last for the Online applications is extended t for various vacant Teaching/Academic pos s and Assistant Professor-15 Posts, in the Un Jalifications and other details will be available muniv.ac.in.	ts of Associate Professor- iversity. Online application
	/ad/C/24/31	Registrar

<u>OUTHERN RAILWAY</u> (CONSTRUCTION ORGANISATION) E-TENDER NOTICE NO. E148-CN-TPJ-TF-040 Dated: 12.04.2024

For and on behalf of President of India, the Deputy Chief Electrica Engineer, General, Construction, Southern Railway, Egmore, Chennai 600008 invites e-tender for the work Karaikal - Peralam Section -Modification to 02 Nos. of HT 11 kV and 03 Nos. of LT Over Head Power Line Crossings by underground cables in Karaikal - Peralam Section -Works Contract, with the above tender notice. Railway cash value is ₹ 4442594.80/- Date & Time of closing of tender is 06.05.2024 a 11:00 Hrs. All the other details of this tender are availab www.ireps.gov.in website

POSTGRADUATE INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL EDUCATION & RESEARCH CHANDIGARH

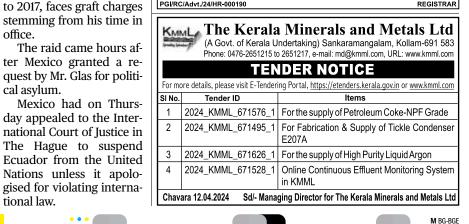
ADMISSION NOTICE NO.06/2024

Online applications are invited for admission to the following courses for the July 2024 sessic Computer Based Test (CBT) at various cities across the country as per detail given below:

	Courses	Date of Exam	Starting Date for online application	Closing Date for online application	
	h.D./ MPH/M.Sc. (Nursing) PGDPHM	23.05.2024 (morning shift)	16.04.2024	06.05.2024	
	ellowship/ PDF, House Job DHS), M.Sc / M.Sc (MLT)	23.05.2024 (Afternoon Shift)	16.04.2024	06.05.2024	
M	lode of payment- Through Debit/C	redit Card/Net Banki	ng only (except UPI).		

umber of seats and other details, applicants are advised to read the pro and instructions given there in carefully before starting online registration and filling of applicatio rm. The prospectus of admission is available on Institute's website i.e. www.pgimer.edu.in. The ates are requested to visit the PGIMER website regularly for all sul PGI/RC/Advt./24/HR-000190

REGISTRAF



Mexico broke diplomatic relations with Ecuador after officials stormed its embassy in Quito

office.

cal asylum.

Vice-President from 2013

•••



STILL RECOVERING

Fleming virtually rules out Pathirana against Mumbai Indians



CSK head coach Fleming has virtually ruled pacer Matheesha Pathirana out of Sunday's game against Mumbai Indians but was confident he was close to being match-fit. "It wasn't as bad as what we had thought, so we are very hopeful that if not tomorrow, then very close. We will make sure he is 100%."

NOT IMPORTANT

Gambhir not stressing on his switch from LSG to KKR colours



Gautam Gambhir, who earlier served as LSG's mentor, did not give much importance to his switch to the KKR colours, saying performances on the field mattered the most. Gambhir also said

KKR needed to perform in all conditions. "To be successful in a

competition like this, we have to keep improving."

TIMELY

Amre defends Fraser-McGurk's late inclusion in DC's playing XI



SANDEEP SAXENA

DC assistant coach Pravin Amre said that the side did not miss a trick by not including Jake Fraser-McGurk in its final eleven earlier. "We knew that Jake would get an opportunity and he grabbed the chance with both hands. He was batting really well in the nets, and we could make out that he has that X-factor."

HOME-COMING

(31b, 3x4), Sanju Samson Ibw b

Parag c Rabada b Arshdeep 23

(18b, 1x4, 1x6), Dhruv Jurel c

Shashank b Harshal 6 (11b),

Jitesh b Curran 11 (5b. 2x4).

Shimron Hetmyer (not out) 27

(10b, 1x4, 3x6), Rovman Powell c

Keshav Maharaj c Livingstone b

Curran 1 (2b), Trent Boult (not

(for 7 wkts. in 19.5 overs): 152.

out) 0 (0b); Extras (w-3): 3; Total

FALL OF WICKETS

1-56 (Kotian, 8.2), 2-82 (Jaiswal,

11.4), 3-89 (Samson, 13.2), 4-113

(Parag, 16.4), 5-115 (Jurel, 17.2),

PUNJAB KINGS BOWLING

Arshdeep 3.5-0-45-1, Rabada

Livingstone 3-0-21-1, Harsha

Toss: Rovals. PoM: Hetmver.

RR won by three wickets with

Next assignment

the equation down to 12 off

10 balls. But Curran had

Powell caught behind off a

short ball and Maharaj

holed out to long on in the

last ball of that over.

2-0-21-1, Harpreet Brar 3-0-22-0.

4-0-18-2. Curran 4-0-25-2.

6-136 (Powell, 18.3), 7-138

(Maharaj, 18.6)

one ball to spare.

RR: April 16 vs KKR

PBKS: April 18 vs MI

Mullanpur, 7.30 p.m

Kolkata, 7.30 p.m.

Rabada 18 (14b. 1x4. 1x6). Rivan

Kuldeep was looking forward to playing in Lucknow, says Amre



17

DC assistant coach Pravin Amre revealed that Kuldeep Yadav was desperately looking forward to playing in Lucknow after missing out on the last three games. "Every player wants to perform well at his home ground because there are quite a few sentiments attached to it. He treated us to some good food and also won us the match."

Hetmyer cameo powers Royals past the finish line

The Rajasthan side makes heavy weather of a modest chase, but the West Indian's 10-ball 27 seals the deal with a ball to spare; the visitors, led by Maharaj, restrict Kings to 147

IPL-17

S. Prasanna Venkatesan MULLANPUR

fter Yashasvi Jaiswal top-scored with 39 (28b, 4x4), Shimron Hetmyer (27 n.o., 10b, 1x4, 3x6) held his nerve to help Rajasthan Royals (RR) beat Punjab Kings (PBKS) by three wickets in the ongoing Indian Premier League (IPL) at the Maharaja Yadavindra Singh international cricket stadium here on Saturday.

With 10 needed off the last over, Arshdeep Singh nailed a couple of wide yorkers for dot balls. Hetmyer then hit a straight six, picked up a double, and hit a six again over the fine-leg boundary.

The match surprised even before it began.

Sam Curran, not Shikhar Dhawan, walked out for the toss for Kings. Dhawan, out with a niggle, had been replaced by Atharva Taide, informed Curran.

It was then Royals captain Sanju Samson's turn to surprise. He revealed that Jos Buttler and R. Ashwin, both out with their own



Coming to the party: Hetmyer saved RR's blushes with a typically aggressive knock after Maharaj shone with the ball. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

niggles, had been replaced by Rovman Powell and Tanush Kotian.

Then, it was a bore snore of an overall batting ers. display by Kings to get to 147 for eight. Only 38 runs were scored in the Power-Play with 14 dot balls. As la-

boriously as someone tethtosh Sharma (31, 16b, 1x4, ered to a rock would, Kings 3x6) dazzled like Ninja Turpanted and heaved their tles in a combat, only in way to 53 for four in 10 ovparts.

And there was surprise In the next 10 overs, Jiagain when Royals began tesh Sharma (29, 24b, 1x4, their chase. Kotian, who of-2x6), Liam Livingstone (21, ten bats at Nos. 8, 9, and 10 14b, 2x4, 1x6), and Ashufor Mumbai in the Ranji

Trophy, opened the batting with Jaiswal.

The openers managed to get their team to 50 in 7.1 overs. Even after Kotian fell, Jaiswal and Samson seemed to be in control of the chase. But Kagiso Rabada had them both dismis-

SCOREBOARD

PUNJAB KINGS

Atharva Taide c Sen b Avesh 15 (12b, 2x4), Jonny Bairstow c Hetmyer b Maharaj 15 (19b, 1x4), Prabhsimran Singh c Jurel b Chahal 10 (14b. 1x4). Sam Curran c Jurel b Maharaj 6 (10b), Jitesh Sharma c Parag b Avesh 29 (24b, 1x4, 2x6), Shashank Singh c Jurel b Sen 9 (9b, 1x4), Liam Livingstone run out 21 (14b, 2x4, 1x6), Ashutosh Sharma (Impact Player in place of

Prabhsimran) c Maharaj b Boult 31 (16b, 1x4, 3x6), Harpreet Brar (not out) 3 (3b); Extras (lb-2, nb-1, w-5): 8; Total (for eight wkts. in 20 overs): 147.

FALL OF WICKETS 1-27 (Taide, 3.4), 2-41

(Prabhsimran, 6.3), 3-47 (Bairstow, 7.6), 4-52 (Curran, 9.3), 5-70 (Shashank, 12.1), 6-103 (Jitesh, 16.1), 7-122 (Livingstone, 17.5), 8-147 (Ashutosh, 19.6).

ROYALS BOWLING Boult 4-0-22-1, Sen 4-0-35-1, Avesh 4-0-34-2, Chahal 4-0-31-1, Maharaj 4-0-23-2.

RAJASTHAN ROYALS Yashasvi Jaiswal (Impact Player in place of Kuldeep Sen) c Harshal b Rabada 39 (28b. 4x4). Tanush Kotian b Livingstone 24

sed in consecutive overs. And Royals briefly struggled to be assertive.

With 20 runs needed off 12 balls, Rovman Powell hit back-to-back fours to bring

Challenge is how bowlers can even the game: Fleming

<u>Amol Karhadkar</u> MUMBAI

Chennai Super Kings head coach Stephen Fleming hopes the bowlers are given more leeway in the IPL to ensure balance is maintained and the league continues its reputation.

"Batting, in particular, has evolved at a huge rate of knots over the last five years. The challenge of the IPL, from a skill point of view, is how the bowlers can even the game up a little bit," Fleming said on the eve of CSK's high-profile match against Mumbai Indians.

"The two bouncers is one, and maybe we need to keep looking at other ways to do that. But I think from an entertainment package, it's right up there.

Fleming admitted that the CSK players also look forward to the competitive rivalry between the boys in yellow and blues. "We love it, to be honest. Over the years it has developed into a really competitive rivalry, and it's based on two good teams playing successful brand of cricket."

MI, CSK seek consistency and rhythm in titanic clash

Amol Karhadkar MUMBAI

It is often billed as El Clasico of the Indian Premier League.

Instead, it should just be referred to as IPL Personified. Not just the Gen Z and the millennials, but even Gen X and boomers are equally excited about it, much like the India-Pakistan game.

The feature match perhaps the most soughtafter match at the time of the announcement of IPL schedule every year - of the franchise extravaganza is here yet again.

With 10 of the 16 IPL titles having been equally shared between them, Mumbai Indians and Chennai Super Kings will lock horns against each other at the Wankhede Stadium on Sunday.

Just like the fans, the teams, as admitted by CSK head coach Stephen Fleming, "look forward" to the fixture. Beyond the arch rivalry, however, both the teams will be hoping to get into a rhythm after a shaky three weeks at the start.

While Super Kings have three wins out of five, Mumbai Indians enters the game on the back of consecutive wins at home in its last two games.

Add to the fact that Super Kings' shaky record away from home this season and it lends Mumbai

YK



Eternal star: CSK fans will be hoping for more than just a glimpse of Dhoni's prowess at the crease. EMMANUAL YOGINI

Points table

	м	w	L	PTS	NRR
Rajasthan Royals	6	5	1	10	0.767
Kolkata Knight Riders	4	3	1	6	1.528
Chennai Super Kings	5	3	2	6	0.666
Lucknow Super Giants	5	3	2	6	0.436
Sunrisers Hyderabad	5	3	2	6	0.344
Gujarat Titans	6	3	3	6	-0.637
Mumbai Indians	5	2	3	4	-0.073
Punjab Kings	6	2	4	4	-0.218
Delhi Capitals	6	2	4	4	-0.975
Royal Challengers	6	1	5	2	-1.124
After the PBKS-RR match on April					

will bank on its three Mum-

baikars to set the stage on

fire. If Ajinkya Rahane, Shi-

vam Dube and Tushar

Deshpande deliver the

goods against the likes of

Bumrah, Rohit Sharma

and Suryakumar Yadav,

CSK will hope to improve

its away home record.

Indians a slender edge. With dew making a huge impact on Thursday, the toss will be critical come Sunday. Irrespective of the toss, however, Super Kings will hope to combat a relentless Jasprit Bumrah.

Besides hoping for the best against Bumrah, CSK

Knight Riders will hold edge over Super Giants

<u>Y.B. Sarangi</u> KOLKATA

As Kolkata Knight Riders and Lucknow Super Giants intend to return to winning ways, the host will hold an edge during the Indian Premier League duel at the Eden Gardens here on Saturday.

Having crossed 200plus scores twice, KKR, which has benefitted from Sunil Narine, Andre Russell, and Phil Salt's fine contributions, will rely on its foreign batters to outbat its opponent.

The Indians, including captain Shreyas Iyer, Venkatesh Iyer, Angkrish Raghuvanshi, and Rinku Singh, are capable of moulding their game as per necessity. Vaibhav Arora, replac-



Bracing up: Raghuvanshi, Venkatesh will have a big role to play. PTI

ing an injured Harshit Rato-head, will depend on its na, has done well, while prominent scorers, Nichostar pacer Mitchell Starc is las Pooran, K.L. Rahul and yet to impress. Russell and Quinton de Kock. Ayush Narine have also contribut-Badoni's half-century was ed with the ball and the latter may shoulder the spin Delhi Capitals. responsibility with Varun Chakaravarthy.

LSG, ahead 3-0 on head-

Today's matches Kolkata, 3.30 p.m. Mumbai, 7.30 p.m. HEAD-TO-HEAD HEAD-TO-HEAD Played: 3 Played: 36 KKR 🕕 | LSG 🔁 MI 20 | CSK 16 **PREVIOUS MEETING PREVIOUS MEETING** LSG won by one run, 2023 CSK won by six wickets, 2023

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD) & JIO CINEMA

will showcase their best. Seamers Yash Thakur, who recorded a five-for, and Naveen-ul-Haq can check any side.

a bright spot in its loss to Ravi Bishnoi and Krunal Pandya are the leading The tourists will hope spin options. In a battle of Devdutt Padikkal and allequals, LSG may have to work hard to stop KKR, rounder Marcus Stoinis

which is keen to regain momentum in the first of its five straight home matches after the loss to CSK.

Eden, which produced 400-plus runs three weeks ago, may have regained some freshness but the hot afternoon should make the conditions batter-friendly.

Gambhir backs Starc to come good

Y.B. Sarangi KOLKATA

Kolkata Knight Riders' mentor Gautam Gambhir backed his team's costliest buy, Mitchell Starc, hoping that the Australian pacer would make an impact later in the Indian Premier League.

Bowling with an economy of 11.00, Starc has claimed only two wickets in four matches.

"We all know how big a threat Starc is. Four matches won't make him a bad bowler. I know what im-

"In a team sport, it's the

Man City eases to the top

The results: Premier League:

Newcastle 4 (Isak 30, 51, Gordon

Onyeka 90+3) bt Sheffield United

0; Burnley 1 (Brownhill 74) drew

2-og, Kovacic 64, Haaland 76-pen

Doku 87, Gvardiol 90+3) bt Luton

1 (Barkley 81); Nottingham Forest

2 (Gibbs-White 45+1, Danilo 57)

drew with Wolves 2 (Cunha 40,

Kluivert 36) drew with

31, 65-pen).

62); Bournemouth 2 (Solanke 16,

Manchester United 2 (Fernandes

with Brighton 1 (Muric 79-og);

Manchester City 5 (Hashioka

32. Schar 87) bt Tottenham 0:

Brentford 2 (Arblaster 63-og,

EURO LEAGUES

Agence France-Presse MANCHESTER

Manchester City moved to the top of the Premier League asLuton was eased aside 5-1, while Newcastle thrashed Tottenham 4-0 on Saturday.

Bayern Munich beat Cologne 2-0, delaying Bayer Leverkusen's Bundesliga title party to Sunday at the earliest. In LaLiga, Real Madrid beat Mallorca

•••

45+6) bt Girona 1 (Dovbyk 4); Mallorca 0 lost to Real Madrid 1 (Tchouameni 48).

Bundesliga: Bayern Munich 2 (Guerreiro 65, Muller 90+3) bt Cologne 0; RB Leipzig 3 (Olmo 13, Sesko 68, Openda 81) bt Wolfsburg 0. Borussia M'Gladbach 1 (Woeber 36) lost to Borussia Dortmund 2 (Sabitzer 22, 28-pen); Bochum 1 (Schlotterbeck 90) drew with Heidenheim 1 (Schlotterbeck 81-og). Serie A: Torino 0 drew with

Juventus 0 On Friday: LaLiga: Real Betis 2

LaLiga: Atletico Madrid 3 (Miranda 53, Fekir 84) bt Celta (Griezmann 34-pen, 50, Correa Vigo 1 (Strand Larsen 90+1).

ably okay. He has bowled some tough overs. He will make an impact, what he has been picked for," said Gambhir on the eve of KKR's home match against Lucknow Super Giants.

pact he can create.

victories that matter... I feel Starc has done reason-

18



Gill finishes in top-three on the first day of Otago Rally

Gaurav Gill of JK Tyre put himself in contention for a podium finish after grabbing a top-three spot at the end of the opening day of the Otago Rally in New Zealand. Gill and New Zealand-based co-driver Jared Hudson were third on the timesheets, a little over 30 seconds behind overall leader Jack Hawkeswood and 11 seconds adrift of second-placed Robbie Stokes. Gill and Hudson were piloting 2022 APRC champion and 10-time Otago Rally winner Haydon Paddon's Hyundai i20 N Rally2 machine.

Hockey: Indian men go down to Australia again

The Indian men's hockey team failed to avoid a 0-5 series whitewash after going down 2-3 in the fifth Test against Australia here on Saturday. Skipper Harmanpreet Singh (fourth) and Boby Singh Dhami (53rd) were the goal scorers for India, while Australia sounded the board through Jeremy Hayward (20th), Ky Willott (38th) and Tim Brand (39th).

Silver for Radhika while Shivanee takes bronze

Indian women managed a silver and a bronze medal in the Asian wrestling championships at Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, on Saturday. Radhika Jaglan, a 2022 silver medallist in 65kg, bagged another silver in 68kg, while Shivanee Pawar secured a bronze in 50kg. Fighting the final against Japan's Nonoka Ozaki – a 65kg World champion who went up in weight class to beat Asian champion compatriot Ami Ishi in a playoff to take Japan's 68kg slot in the Paris Olympics -Radhika was convincingly beaten 15-2 with 1:31 minutes left on the clock. Shivanee defeated Mongolian Otgonjargal Dolgorjav 9-7 to win the bronze.

Arjun and Jeevan make the doubles final in Mexico

Arjun Kadhe and Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan defeated top seeds Luke Johnson and Skander Mansouri 4-6, 7-6(5), [10-8] to set up a title clash with second ranked Piotr Matuszewski and

A roller-coaster ride for leader Nepo; Pragg and Tan very impressive

Gukesh will have to put the disappointment of the Firouzja game aside; experienced players are more relaxed when things are not going their way



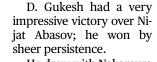
Viswanathan Anand

an Nepomniachtchi, the sole leader at the Candidates tournament after seven rounds, had a roller-coaster ride over the last three days.

Against R. Praggnanandhaa, he faced a very difficult opening test, did not solve it, and managed to stumble into a lost position where the winning move was incredibly difficult to find. Praggnanadhaa tried but only man-

aged a draw. The next day, Nepomniachtchi did not try hard against Fabiano Caruana. In the seventh round,

Hikaru Nakamura also put him through a test of fire. Once again, he came very close to losing, but he managed to create practical problems and when Nakamura went wrong, he got a draw.



He drew with Nakamura in the sixth round and then tragedy occurred in the seventh.

His position against Alireza Firouzja, who had lost three games, looked better than it might have been.

Dangerous opponent

Even in the shakiest of forms, Firouzja is a dangerous opponent. As the time pressure increased, Gukesh suddenly collapsed and lost. Though he is playing very, very well, he will have to put this disappointment aside.

Caruana escaped against Vidit Gujrathi in the fifth round. After drawing with Nepomniachtchi, he pressed against Praggnanandhaa but was matched completely.

So he has had three quiet draws. It is noticeable that the experienced players are more relaxed when things are not going their way.



In control: Tan is ahead by half-a-point going into the second half and looks the favourite. FIDE

black.

second half.

Praggnanandhaa's play is very impressive. He managed to give himself a chance to beat Nepomniachtchi and then proceeded to defeat Abasov.

He effortlessly held against pre-tournament faIt has allowed him to comeback with a 50% score, but he is well off the pace. He will have his chances.

Vidit was extremely impressive. He missed an excellent chance to beat Caruana.

He defeated Alireza for the second time this year and came close to winning his seventh round game against Abasov. Though he is only on a 50% score, he is able to create chances every day.

In the women's tournament, Tan Zhongyi is looking very impressive. There was a wobble or two in her victory over Anna Muzychuk but she played that game very well until that point.

She takes a half-a-point lead into the second half and I think she is now the favourite.

Aleksandra Goryachkina, the highest-rated player, won one more game to keep up with Zhongyi and was unable to beat her main rival in the seventh round. She trails the leader by half-a-point. ryachkina and Tan are fighting for the top prize. Lei Tingjie is also very highly rated and seems to be playing herself back to

At the moment, only Go-

strength, saving difficult positions, as against Kateryna Lagno, and then raising her game to beat two strugglers – Koneru Humpy and R. Vaishali. I feel because of the momentum, she still has hopes.

Out of shape

Humpy is now struggling. In the two games she made big efforts, she ended up losing. She seems to be out of shape in this tournament. Hopefully she will be able to show her strength.

Vaishali was in a good situation but lost her last two games and is clearly suffering from a crisis of form. She will need to pull herself together.

Lagno had three consecutive winning games but only managed to beat Vaishali. Lei has showm momentum.

Three-way tie after two rounds; Woods claims another Major record

GOLF

Reuters AUGUSTA

Bryson DeChambeau, Max Homa, and Scottie Scheffler weathered a wild windy day seldom seen at Augusta National to share the Masters second round lead on Friday while Tiger Woods targeted a sixth Green Jacket after claiming another Major record.

First round leader De

total of six-under 138.

SNAPSHOTS

NZ dashes India's

qualification hopes in

New Zealand scotched

India's hopes with a 2-1

group-1 Billie Jean King

tournament on the clay

courts of Changsha, China,

There was a three-way tie

qualification spot between

Korea, India and New

all-conquering Chinese.

Korea took the second

qualification berth as it

matches from five ties, to

eight by India and seven

India won the tie against

New Zealand, it would

have qualified with four

victories against Taiwan

and Korea, it was a heart

break for the Indian team.

group play-off, Taiwan and

relegated to Asia-Oceania

While China and Korea

qualified for the World

Pacific Oceania got

After such fighting

wins.

had won 11 individual

by New Zealand. Had

Zealand, behind the

Cup women's tennis

on Saturday.

for the second

victory in the last league

match of the Asia-Oceania

the Billie Jean King Cup



Small setback: First-round leader DeChambeau, after a bogey at the 18th, shares the top spot with Homa and Scheffler. AFP

ny have at par five 13th. Chambeau had looked Landing his approach in had never experienced before at Augusta National.

vourite Caruana with

switched his openings and

is very well poised for the

win against Firouzja more

or less by sheer will power.

Nakamura managed to

He constantly

As always the spotlight was on Woods as he scrapped his way to an even par 72 securing him a record 24th consecutive cut at Augusta National.

Meanwhile, Indian-Americans Akshay Bhatia and Sahith Theegala made the 36-hole cut. Bhatia, 22, who won the Valero Texas Open last week, shot (72, 75) to be T-30, while Theegala (74, 74) was T-35, despite a triple bogey after the

Leading scores, second round:

138: Max Homa (USA, 67, 71).

Scottie Scheffler (USA, 66, 72),

Bryson DeChambeau (USA, 65,

140: Nicolai Hoejgaard (Den, 67,

141: Cameron Davis (Aus, 69, 72);

Collin Morikawa (USA, 71, 70).

142: Ludvig Aberg (Swe 73, 69).

second round.

73).

73).

Airee smashes 36 in an over against Qatar

CRICKET

Press Trust of India AL AMERAT (QATAR)

Nepal's Dipendra Singh Airee became the third batter to smash six sixes in an over in T20Is here on Saturday. Airee achieved the feat against host Qatar during the ACC Men's Premier Cup T20I.

during the T20 World Cup

lard (against Sri Lanka's

Akila Dananjaya in 2021) as

batters with six maximums

The 24-year-old Airee

remained unbeaten on a

21-ball 64 that included

three fours and seven sixes

at a monstrous strike rate

The Nepal man became

the fifth batter to achieve

this rare feat in interna-

in one over.

of 304.76.

in 2007) and Kieron Pol-



Airee... in familiar territory. CRICKET NEPAL

ODIs earlier.

tional cricket, with Her-

schelle Gibbs of South Afri-

ca and USA's Jaskaran

Malhotra completing it in

However, Airee is no

stranger to hitting six sixes.

During Nepal's Hangzhou

Asian Games T20I clash

against Mongolia in Sep-

tember last year, he had

pummelled six consecu-

tive sixes across two overs.



Matthew Romios in the \$82,000 Challenger tennis tournament at Cuernavaca, Mexico.

Other result: Doubles, semifinals: Piotr Matuszewski (Pol) & Matthew Romios (Aus) bt Rithvik Bollipalli & Niki Poonacha 6-4, 3-6, [10-7].



NorthEast United FC eases past Odisha FC in the ISL

NorthEast United FC breezed past Odisha FC 3-0 in an Indian Super League match at the Indira Gandhi Athletic Stadium in Guwahati on Saturday. Parthib Gogoi, Nestor Albiach, and Konsam Phalguni Singh found the net for Juan Benali's side. NEUFC finished its season with 26 points from 22 outings while Odisha goes into the playoff clash against Kerala Blasters after finishing the league stage with 39 points from 22 matches.

The result: NorthEast United FC 3 (Gogoi 12, Albiach 16, Phalguni 45+3) bt Odisha FC 0.

LIVE TELECAST

IPL: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 3.30 & 7.30

Serie A: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 4, 6.30, 9.30 p.m. & 12.15 a.m. (Monday)

LaLiga: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 5.30, 7.45, 10 & 12.30 a.m. (Monday)

Premier League: SS Select 1, 2 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 6.30 & 9 p.m.

Bundesliga: Sony Sports Ten 2 (SD & HD) & LIV, 7 & 9 p.m. ISL: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 7.30 p.m.

On Monday

IPL: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 7.30 p.m. Serie A: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 12.15 a.m. (Tuesday)

LaLiga: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 12.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

YK

Rae's Creek Scheffler did poised to spend another night alone atop until a bowell to escape with bogey gey at the 18th left the 2020 then playing error free to U.S. Open champion with a the finish signing for an one-over 73 and a two day even par 72.

Homa, who had never Scheffler also had a broken 70 at Augusta until wrapping up his weatherchance to take solo possession of top spot, the World delayed first round on Fri-No. 1 cruising along with a day morning with a fiveone shot lead until running under 67. was quickly back into trouble where so maout on the course and on

India and New Zealand

will continue to stay in

group-1 for next season.

The results (league): New

Zealand bt India 2-1 (Monique

Barry lost to Rutuja Bhosale 2-6,

6-7(5); Lulu Sun bt Ankita Raina

6-2, 6-0; Paige Hourigan & Erin

Routliffe bt Ankita & Prarthana

Karnataka girls shock

Thombare 6-1, 7-5).

Maharashtra

Karnataka shocked

67-54 in the girls'

championships in

In the boys' section,

Pradesh 75-65 while

challenge 84-77.

defending champion

Maharashtra 50-48 while

Kerala got past Gujarat

quarterfinals of the 38th

youth National basketball

Puducherry on Saturday.

Haryana defeated Uttar

The results (quarterfinals):

Boys: Rajasthan 65 bt Kerala 60;

Haryana 75 bt Uttar Pradesh 65;

Punjab 84 bt Telangana 77.

Maharashtra 48; Kerala 67 bt

Gujarat 54; Rajasthan 69 bt

Madhya Pradesh 64; Tamil Nadu

Girls: Karnataka 50 bt

75 bt Punjab 42.

Punjab saw off Telangana's

group-2.

the move with birdies at the second and fourth. Masters debutant Nico-

lai Hojgaard of Denmark battled to a one-over 73 to sit alone in fourth at fourunder with Australian Cam Davis (72) and Collin Morikawa (70) one further back.

Only eight players managed to break par on a sunkissed day of devilish winds that most said they

BENGALURU ROUND-UP



Champs: Winners of the Yonex-Sunrise All India senior ranking badminton tournament

21-18, 21-9.

Doubles: H.V. Nithin /

Vishnuvardhan Goud bt G. Suraj /

Pruthvi Roy 19-21, 21-18, 21-15.

Yonex-Sunrise All India senior ranking badminton. The results: Men: Maisnam Meiraba bt D.S. Saneeth 12-21,

•••

Women: Devika Sihag bt U. Anupama 21-15, 4-1 (Retired). Doubles: Shikha Gautam / Ashwini Bhat bt Arathi Sara / V.S. Varshini 18-21, 21-13, 21-15. Mixed doubles: Sathwik Reddy / K. Vaishnavi bt Sanjai Srivatsa / K. Maneesha 23-21, 21-16.

Narrow win for Raichur

Raichur District HA edged out Falcon HC 3-2 in the KSHA Super Division hockey league championship here. The results: Raichur District HA 3 (Prashanth 7, Babu 14, M. Vishal 40) bt Falcon HC 2 (R. Royan 9, 49); RWFSA 5 (Ranjith 5, 47, Sudhir Kujur 36, 58, Dinesh 43) bt Delhi PS HC 1 (Shahanul Shafas 28).

United – which earned a miraculous 2-2 draw against The Oranje FC on Wednesday - and Sudeva Delhi FC are joint-second on 20 points.

and the top-two will be promoted to the I-League. The results: Sporting Clube de Goa 4 (Alister Anthony 1, Doyal Alves 45+2, Biswa Darjee 56, Adil Khan 86) bt Sporting Club Bengaluru (Thomyo L. Shimray 16, 70, Johnson Joseph Mathews 81); The Oranje FC 2 (Aimar Adam 34, Sanchit Singh 37) drew with FC Bengaluru United 2 (Ngangbam Naocha Singh 45, Ashley Alban Koli 94).

emerge victorious Maisnam Meiraba and

Devika Sihag emerged as the men's and women's singles champions respectively in the



Sporting Club stays atop I-League 2

Sporting Club Bengaluru maintained its position atop the I-League 2 table despite a 3-4 away loss to Sporting Clube de Goa on Thursday.

Sporting leads with 24 points while FC Bengaluru

There more rounds are left

Maisnam and Devika

News in Frames



To the rescue: Two men deliver food on boats in a flooded area in Orenburg, Russia on April 11. The Ural river had burst through embankment dams. AP



Quick shift: The settlement of Zarechny in northern Kazakhstan, from where thousands of people were evacuated after floods on April 10. AFP



Danger zone: A firefighter walks by train tracks near a paper factory affected by a forest fire in Veracruz, Mexico on March 26. GETTY IMAGES

Uncertain times

<u>Global monitors have warned that 2024 is shaping up to be the hottest year on record,</u> marked by climate extremes; the vulnerable population is the most affected

n a world where global warming and climate change have become buzzwords, everything seems to be in a flux. There's either a deluge or a drought. Disasters like forest fires and floods seem to be increasing in frequency, pushing vulnerable people to the edge.

This month, extensive flooding impacted the Central Asian regions of Kazakhstan and Russia, specifically in the Ural Mountains and Siberia. The Ural river, which rises in the Ural mountains and flows through Kazakhstan into the Caspian Sea, burst through embankment dams in the Urals city of Orsk on April 5 and flooded parts of the city of Orenburg.

At least 12,000 people in Russia are recorded as having been evacuated. In Kazakhstan, more than 97,000 people have been evacuated. The worst hit areas mostly border Russia and are crossed by rivers flowing from or to Russia.

In a 2009 research commissioned by the U.S. National Intelligence Council on the impact of climate change on Russia to 2030, the authors said the rise in temperatures would lead to a series of complex issues for Russia.

Among them were the increased frequency of extreme climatic events including heavy rain, fires in Siberian peatlands and more frequent flooding of Russia's Arctic rivers due to heavy rain and earlier break-up of river ice.

The European Union's climate change

monitoring service recently said that March 2024 was the warmest on record. Each of the last 10 months ranked as the world's hottest on record, compared with the corresponding month in previous years, the EU's Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) said in a monthly bulletin. The 12 months ending with March also ranked as the planet's hottest ever recorded 12-month period, C3S said.

Extreme weather and exceptional temperatures have wreaked havoc this year. Wildfires affecting Mexico have destroyed over 3,000 hectares of forested areas. Heatwaves in Vietnam have caused severe drought in central Ninh Thuan province, badly affecting vegetation and lifestock.

Closer home, the India Meteorological Department has said the country will see more than the average number of heatwave days this year between April and June. Heat waves can be lethal as they affect the ability to breathe, making the old and young particularly vulnerable.

Benjamin Horton, director of the Earth Observatory of Singapore where natural phenomena such as climate change are studied, said three factors determine heat waves; El Nino, a natural, temporary and occasional warming of part of the Pacific, an increase in global temperatures and human-induced climate change.





Land at risk: A

farmer walks along a field abandoned due to saline intrusion after a drought in Vietnam's southern Ben Tre province on March 19. AFP

Drop by drop: A woman collects water from a storage tanker outside her home in Haripura village in Rajasthanon March 31. India, too, is experiencing heatwaves. GETTY IMAGES

Text: Agencies

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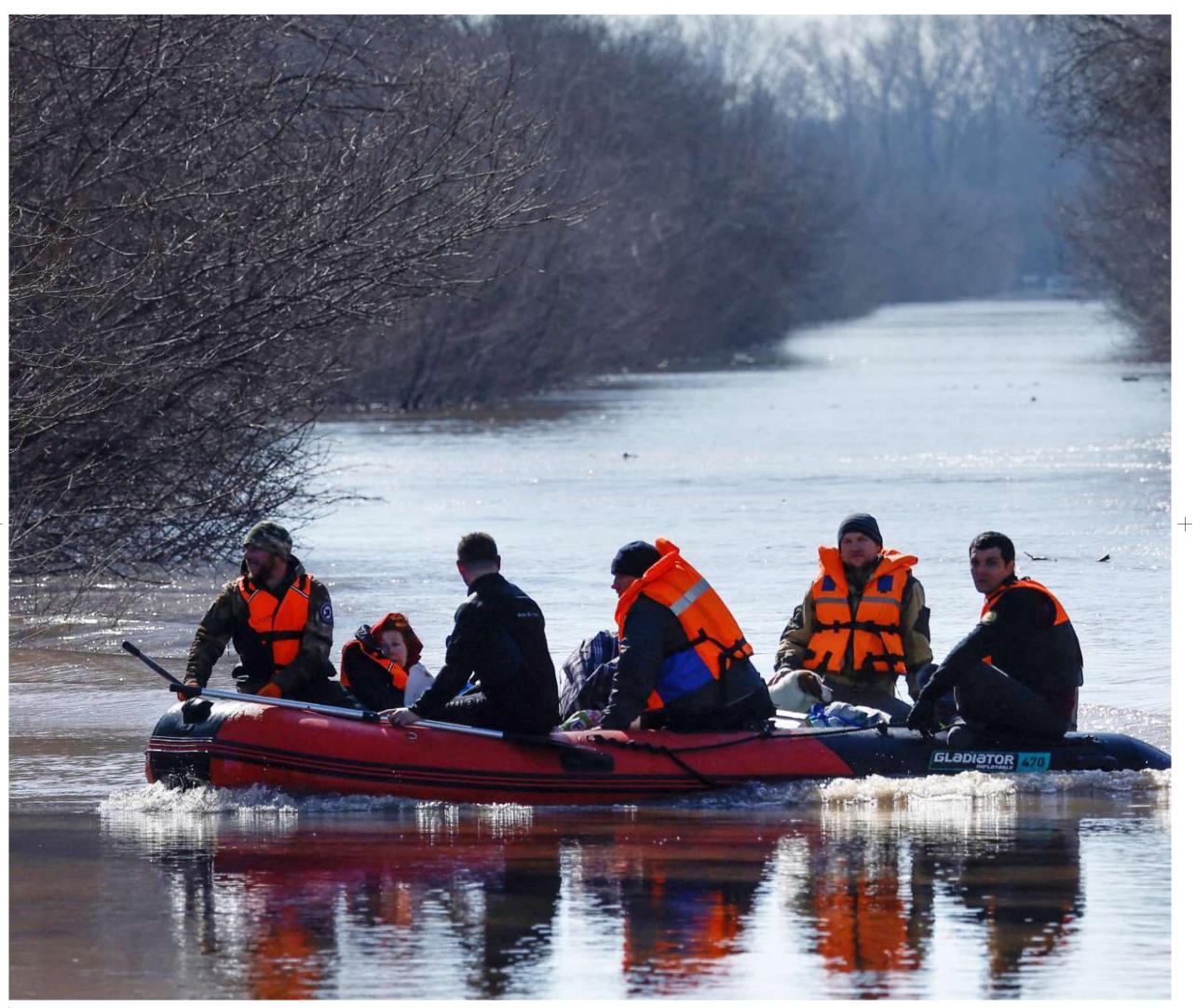
Sunday, April 14, 2024 Bengaluru



Greenery lost: Trees affected by a forest fire in an avocado plantation in Cerro del Aguila, recognised as a protected area in Mexico on March 26. AFP



To safety: People wait to cross a flooded area in Spin Boldak district of Kandahar province in Afghanistan on April 13 after a flash flood. AFP



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II

Seeking high ground: Rescuers from the Russian Emergencies Ministry evacuate people from a flooded residential area in Orenburg on April 11. REUTERS





A wet world: Residents ride boats in a flooded street in Orenburg. AP