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Regd. DL(ND)-11/6110/2006-07-08 RNI No. UPENG/2012/49940

Vol. 14 · No. 103

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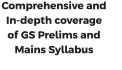
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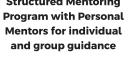
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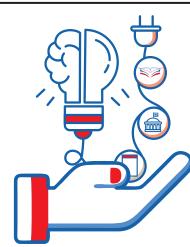
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JAVADEKAR CONTROVERSY
Jayarajan escapes
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STATES » PAGE 5

♥ Jaipur

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Report names Indian official in Pannun case



Varun and Salt shine as KKR crushes DC

Revanth gets notice over 'doctored' video of Shah

<u>Four office-bearers of Telangana Congress also summoned by the Delhi Police</u>; cases filed in Delhi, Assam, Maharashtra over video, which shows Home Minister's comments on quota; one arrested

Vijaita Singh Alisha Dutta Samridhi Tewari NEW DELHI

he police in Delhi, Assam, and Maharashtra filed three separate cases and arrested at least one person – a Congress functionary from Assam – in connection with a doctored video of Union Home Minister Amit Shah's April 23 speech in Telangana regarding reservation.

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, and four other Congress office-bearers in the State also found themselves embroiled in the controversy on Monday, as the Delhi Police issued notice to them under Section 91 (summons to produce documents) of the Code of Cri-



In a spot: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy in Yadgir, Karnataka on Monday. PTI

minal Procedure (CrPC).

A government source told *The Hindu* that the notice to appear before the Delhi Police on Wednesday has been sent to Mr. Reddy as he is the president of the Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC).

"The video that looks prima facie 'altered' was posted on X [formerly

Yadgir, Karnataka on Monday. PTI

Twitter] by the Telangana
Congress. Being the State
president of the party, Mr.
Reddy has to explain the
origin of the video," the
source said, adding that if

president of the party, Mr. Reddy has to explain the origin of the video," the source said, adding that if Mr. Reddy does not appear on the scheduled date, another notice will be sent. The video was fact-checked by a user on X the same day, and that user

will be asked to join the probe to trace the video, the source further said.

On reservation

While in the doctored video, Mr. Shah is heard saying that the BJP intends to eradicate reservation for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes, in the original video he says the party intends to remove the 4% reservation for Muslims in Telangana.

"When the BJP will form the government, it will end the unconstitutional reservation for Muslims in Telangana. This is the right of ST/SCs and OBCs and they will get their rights," says Mr. Shah in the original video, at a rally in Chevella.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10

JD(S) set to suspend Hassan MP Prajwal over video scandal

The Hindu Bureau BENGALURU

Amid growing pressure on the Janata Dal (Secular) to take action against Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna, accused of being involved in a sexual exploitation video scandal, the regional party, which is in an electoral alliance with the BJP, is set to suspend him from the party on Tuesday.

On Monday, the Special Investigation Team (SIT) set up to probe the case commenced its work while the MP, who is a grandson of former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda, is believed to have left for Europe on Saturday morning.

Former Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy, distancing himself and Mr. Deve Gowda from the scandal that has rocked Karnataka, told mediapersons at Shivamogga that Mr. Prajwal would be sus-



Prajwal Revanna

pended. "I had appealed to the former Prime Minister seeking action. It was decided yesterday itself that we would suspend him."

He, however, did not clarify whether only Mr. Prajwal would be suspended or action would be taken against his father H.D. Revanna, a former Minister and sitting MLA from Holenarasipura in Hassan, who is also named in a complaint to the State Women Commission.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10

IN BRIEF

SPORT » PAGE 15

'Non-cooperation with ED not a ground for arrest'

NEW DELHI
Delhi Chief Minister Arvind
Kejriwal put up a spirited stand
in the Supreme Court on
Monday against his arrest in
the excise case, saying mere
non-cooperation with the
Enforcement Directorate

(ED) cannot be a ground for his arrest. Mr. Kejriwal contended he had a right to not give an incriminating statement against himself to the ED. » Page 10



Sandeshkhali case: SC questions Bengal govt. for approaching it

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday wondered why the State of West Bengal has come to the Supreme Court objecting to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe into allegations of sexual assault and forcible land grabbing from Sandeshkhali by suspended Trinamool Congress leader Sheikh Shahjahan.

"Why should the State come here in this case?" Justice B.R. Gavai asked the West Bengal government, represented by senior advocates A.M. Singhvi and Jaideep Gupta.

Mr. Gupta said there were remarks made by the



A bomb squad team at Agarhati village in Sandeshkhali after the recent recovery of weapons by the CBI. ANI

Calcutta High Court against the State. "So you go and get that expunged in the High Court... why come here?" Justice Sandeep Mehta said. The court adjourned the case to July.

The State government had asked for an adjournment of two weeks, saying a "very important piece of information" had to be obtained in the case.

"The atmosphere will be more conducive in July," Justice Gavai said.

Mr. Gupta said the "long phases of elections" was trying. "There are seven phases in West Bengal."

The CBI is already investigating the case of attack on Enforcement Directorate officials in Sandeshkhali and has registered three FIRs related to incidents on January 5.

The Calcutta High Court is scheduled to next hear the CBI on May 2, the date on which it had directed the investigating agency to submit a comprehensive report.

Water ride



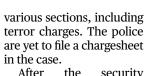
At snail's pace: Vehicles wade through a waterlogged road on the banks of Dal Lake after heavy rainfall in Srinagar on Monday. NISSAR AHMAD (SEE ALSO PAGE 4)

Delhi Police out; CISF takes over Parliament security

<u>Vijaita Singh</u>

Around 400 Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) personnel have been deployed in the past four months at the Parliament complex where a security breach took place in December last year, though an official order is awaited, a senior government official said.

The new Parliament building was inaugurated on May 28, 2023, and was first used for official business. On December 13, two men carrying colour spraying canisters had jumped into the Lok Sabha chamber during Zero Hour from the visitors' gallery in protest against the rising unemployment, the unending ethnic violence in Manipur and farmers' issues. In all, six persons have been arrested and booked under



CISF's deployment on Monday. FILE PHOTO

Around 150 Delhi Police personnel were withdrawn following the

After the security breach, eight Delhi Police security personnel who were responsible for frisking and baggage scanning were suspended.

On Monday, around 150 Delhi Police personnel were withdrawn following the CISF's deployment, the official said. A small unit of Delhi Police of around 75 personnel will, however, be retained for VIP duty, said another official. The CISF is also likely to

The CISF is also likely to replace the Parliament Security Service (PSS) that functions under the Lok Sabha Speaker and has various responsibilities such as issuance and scanning of passes of visitors and officials inside the Parliament building. The official said that the orders could not be signed yet due to the Model Code of Conduct in

place for the Lok Sabha election. Speaker Om Birla is contesting from the Kota Bundi Lok Sabha seat in Rajasthan where polls were concluded on April 26.

In the latest deployment, CISF personnel were stationed to train with PSS officials at several spots in the Parliament complex. In all, around 3,000 CISF officials are expected to be deployed.

The exercise has taken place in phases since January. The personnel have been deployed in additional areas such as the reception and offices located inside the old Parliament building or the Samvidhan Sadan. Access control such as frisking and baggage scanners are also being secured by the CISF now.

On December 20 last

year, the Union Ministry of

Home Affairs had accorded

in-principle approval to the

can CISF to survey the Parliament premises and its buildings for regular deployment of personnel (both Security Wing and Fire Wing) on a comprehensive pattern under the Government Building Security.

An official said that fire

tenders belonging to the Delhi Fire Service at the Parliament building had also been replaced with that of the CISF's fire tenders.

The Parliament complex is being refurbished again ahead of the composition of the new Lok Sabha in June.

"A new corner is being prepared to relocate all statues, including that of Mahatma Gandhi. Due to the construction work, Internet and phone lines are not working, all cables have been uprooted. They are laying down new terracotta tiles," said an official.

Indore Congress candidate pulls out of Lok Sabha race, joins BJP

Mehul Malpani ASHOK NAGAR (M.P.)

Congress candidate from the Indore Lok Sabha seat, Akshav Kanti Bam, on Monday withdrew his nomination and joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Mr. Bam was set to contest against incumbent BJP MP Shankar Lalwani in the upcoming election in the constituency scheduled for May 13. The move comes just days after a local court in Madhya Pradesh issued directions to add Section 307 (attempt to murder) of the Indian Penal Code in a land dispute case from

on work, Interone lines are not all cables have oted. They are n new terracotta an official.

2007 against Mr. Bam and his father.

Earlier in the day, Mr. Bam, accompanied by BJP MLA Ramesh Mendola, went to the returning offic-

er to take back his nomination form. Monday was the last day of withdrawing nominations for the third phase of polling. According to Election Commission data, a total of nine candidates, including Mr. Bam, have withdrawn their nominations. Now, 14 candidates are in the fray.

Indore is the second Lok

Indore is the second Lok Sabha constituency in the State where the BJP managed to make headway. Earlier, the candidature of INDIA bloc nominee in Khajuraho, Meera Yadav (Samajwadi Party), was rejected due to alleged irregularities in her form.

In neighbouring Gujarat's Surat, the BJP got a walkover after the candidature of Congress nominee Nilesh Kumbhani was rejected over "irregularities" and the other candidates withdrew from the race.

'This is the threat'

Congress national spokesperson Supriya Shrinate, at a press conference in Delhi, said, "It is not natural, normal or ordinary that somebody just withdraws... and joins the BJP. When we say that democracy is under threat, this is the threat... to coax candidates, to put pressure on them to withdraw, to intimidate them and their proposers... that is what is

happening."

Mr. Bam said that he took the decision in national interest and for *Sanatana Dharma*. BJP leader and State Minister Kailash Vijayvargiya also shared a picture with him on X, welcoming him to the party.

YK



HC bins plea seeking a 6-year ban on PM from fighting polls

The High Court on Monday dismissed a plea seeking the disqualification of Prime Minister Narendra Modi from contesting elections for six years for allegedly seeking votes "in the name of god and place of worship". The plea was filed by advocate Anand S. Jondhale, days after he complained to the Election Commission against the PM for an election speech in Pilibhit on April 9. "It is not permissible for the court to direct the EC to take a particular view on the petitioner's complaint or any other complaint for that matter. The EC is obliged to take an independent view on the petitioner's complaint," the court said.

17-year-old girl mowed to death by DTC bus in Dabri

A 17-year-old girl riding a cycle was mowed to death by a Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) bus near the Dabri powerhouse, the police said on Monday. An officer said the driver and conductor of the bus have been apprehended and appropriate legal action has been initiated against them. Information about the accident, which occurred on Sunday in Dwarka, was received at the Dwarka South police station, the police said. "The victim was identified as Isha, a resident of Mahavir Enclave," an officer said, adding that the incident happened when the victim was returning home. Her post-mortem report is awaited, the officer added. PTI

Not against party, but couldn't function under current system'

Congress leader Arvinder Singh Lovely says he is not against the choice of candidates for the Lok Sabha poll, stresses local unit should have some say on the party line; North West Delhi candidate Udit Raj accuses him of 'promoting factionalism'

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

day after Arvinder Singh Lovely quit as the Delhi Congress chief, the leader said he holds no grudge against the party, but his decision

was propelled by the current system under which it is being run.

"I couldn't give my

100% as chief due to issues over its functioning. The party should appoint someone else who can deal with the system that the party has in place," Mr. Lovely said, reiterating that he is not quitting the

Congress. Mr. Lovely had resigned on Sunday, alleging that he was not being allowed to "function" and questioned the seat-sharing pact with the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) for the Lok Sabha poll and party tickets to "outsiders"

According to sources, discontent has been brewing in the party ever since it entered into a seat-sharing pact with AAP against the wishes of the local Congress leadership.

Tensions escalated after the Congress fielded Udit



Arvinder Singh Lovely (second from left) said he did not agree with the working style of the party candidates. FILE PHOTO

Raj, a BJP turncoat, from North West Delhi and Kanhaiya Kumar from North East Delhi.

'Unilaterally vetoed'

In a four-page letter to Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, Mr. Lovely also said he found himself "handicapped and unable to continue" as all unanimous decisions taken by the local unit were being "unilaterally vetoed" by All **India Congress Committee** general secretary in-charge for Delhi, Deepak Babaria.

The leader, however, said he does not know how his letter got leaked to the

Mr. Lovely also clarified that has no issues with the choice of candidates for the Lok Sabha poll but disagreed with their working style, which confused party workers ahead of the May 25 polling in the city.

"A party candidate displayed a picture of [Delhi Chief Minister] Arvind Kejriwal on his campaign posters in large size instead of Congress leaders. How will party workers identify and work with the party if this is being done?" he said.

"The candidate was also praising Mr. Kejriwal, which is against the party

Lovely played a crucial role in our alliance with the Congress. I am not aware of the reasons for his contrary views now.

SANJAY SINGH,

line. The local unit should have some say on the party line," Mr. Lovely said.

Meanwhile, AAP's Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Singh credited Mr. Lovely with playing a crucial role in forging the Congress-AAP alliance in the Capital.

He thanked Mr. Lovely for coming to the Delhi Chief Minister's residence to show support when he was arrested last month by the Enforcement Directorate in a money laundering case linked to the nowscrapped Delhi excise policy for 2021-22.

"I say this with responsi-

NEW DELHI bility that Mr. Lovely played a crucial role in our

now," Mr. Singh said. Reacting to it, the former Delhi Congress president said the AAP leader was not present at the meeting he attended over seat sharing. "Mr. Singh was in jail. So, I don't know how he is crediting me with sealing the alliance," he said.

alliance with the Congress.

I am not aware of the rea-

sons for his contrary views

The Indian National Developmental, Inclusive Alliance bloc partners AAP and Congress are fighting the poll together in Delhi in 4-3 seat-sharing arrangement.

'He has done nothing'

A day after he was accused of disrespecting Congress workers, Mr. Raj accused Mr. Lovely of running the Delhi unit in a way that "promoted factionalism and favouritism".

"What has he done for the party? He was a Minister for 15 years in the past but did nothing when the party was struggling. People will come and go as the Congress is a big party," the Congress leader added.

2008 serial blasts: court denies bail to 'IM operatives'

Press Trust of India

The High Court on Monday refused to grant bail to three suspected Indian Mujahideen operatives facing trial for their alleged involvement in the September 2008 Delhi serial blasts that claimed 26 lives.

The court, however, directed the trial court concerned to conclude the trial by hearing the case at least twice a week, noting that the accused have been behind bars since 2008.

In three separate judgments, the High Court dismissed the appeals filed by Mubeen Kadar Shaikh, Saquib Nisar, and Mansoor Asghar Peerbhoy, challenging a trial court's orders denying them bail.

The High Court said it was informed by the prosecutor that 497 witnesses had been cited initially, of which, 198 were dropped and 282 had been examined so far. Only 17 witnesses were left to be examined.

On September 13, 2008, serial bomb blasts occurred at different places in the city, including Karol Bagh, Connaught Place, and Greater Kailash. The blasts created panic, resulting in the deaths of 26 people and injuries to 135.

BJP leader files defamation case against CM, Atishi

The Hindu Bureau **NEW DELHI**

BJP leader Praveen Shankar Kapoor on Monday filed a defamation case against Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Finance Minister Atishi over poaching allegations made by the two against the BJP earlier this year. The two senior AAP leaders had claimed that the BJP was trying to poach party

MLAs by offering ₹25 crore each and a ticket in next year's Assembly election to topple the government.

The case is listed for hearing on May 4 in the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Tanya Bamnival of the Rouse Avenue

Mr. Kapoor said the allegations made by the two senior AAP leaders were false and that they had not furnished any evidence to

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practices of both schools. 13 students and two

teacher escorts from Germany attended the school

on during this week-long visit where they were

substantiate their claims. He cited a press briefing

by Ms. Atishi on April 2, where she claimed to have received an offer to join the BJP to "save" her "political career" and threatened with arrest if she did not accept it. Mr. Kapoor said that by making "malicious, scandalous statements," the AAP leader had defamed the BJP and its members and tried "to

gain political mileage by

using the platform of press conferences to make such statements, knowing fully well that all social media platforms would carry such news as you are not only an MLA but a Minister in the Government of NCT of Delhi".

The BJP leader sought the withdrawal of the remarks by the Finance Minister and an apology on television and social media from her.

Timings **DELHI** TUESDAY, APR. 30

Safdarjang

Palam

RISE 05:42 SET 18:56 RISE 00:17 SET 10:31 WEDNESDAY, MAY. 01 RISE 05:41 SET 18:57

 □ RISE 01:06 SET 11:38 THURSDAY, MAY. 02

RISE 05:40 SET 18:58

RISE 01:50 SET 12:45 max min 23 23 Delhi City 38

38

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

Delhi Palam Tomorrow 40°C The weather will be dry, Morning will be pleasant. Day will be hot with uneasy. Night

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THE HINDU

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JNU student alleges sexual harassment by professor; authorities say probe on

<u>Ashna Butani</u> NEW DELHI

A 22-year-old Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) student was allegedly sexually harassed by a professor, forcing her to "leave the campus" for her hometown.

The student lodged a complaint in this regard on April 10, prompting complaints by nine other students supporting her cause and alleging that the professor made them "uncomfortable" too.

Reacting to it, Vice-Santishree Chancellor Dhulipudi Pandit said the matter is sub judice and the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) is handling it independently.

A member of the university panel said they are in the "process of conducting an inquiry in all the cases". The accused professor

did not respond to The Hindu's requests for response through an email, text message, and calls.

JNUSU seeks suspension Meanwhile, the Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union (JNUSU) demanded the suspension of the teacher and urged the university panel to expedite the inquiry proceedings.

"The professor in question has harassed the surviAt least nine other students also alleged that the professor had made them 'uncomfortable'

vor through constant messages and calls, including lewd poems, requests for "personal" meetings," the student body said, adding that the professor "threatened to fail the female student in exams" if she did not appear before him.

"The said professor then went on to harass other female students so as to know about the survivor's whereabouts," it said in a statement.

The students' union alleged that another complaint accusing the same teacher of "sexual and mental harassment" by the victim's batch mates also did not elicit an action by the university panel.

'Still taking classes' The complainants said the professor continues to take classes despite the grave allegations against him.

The JNUSU alleged that ICC did not issue a restraining order against the teacher barring him from taking classes to ensure that the accused does not contact the complainant in any

In a statement, a group of students demanded that the professor be immediately restrained from taking classes.

A friend of the primary complainant, a student of the School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, alleged that the professor used to "single out the survivor and ask her to meet him privately".

"He called her into his cabin and hugged her without consent," the friend alleged.

"Out of the blue, he would mention movies that revolve around student-teacher relationships. He would keep messaging her. Once, he messaged her a lewd poem in Chinese at 1 a.m. He would also constantly ask her if she was in a relationship," the friend said.

She said traumatised by it, her friend stopped going to his class. "Upon seeing her attend

other classes, he announced in the classroom that he would fail her if she did not attend his class. After this threat, the survivor decided to lodge a complaint," she said.

She said the continued harassment and inaction by the university authorities forced the student to leave the campus and return to her hometown.

BJP's North West Delhi candidate files nomination

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

Fifteen candidates, including BJP's North West Delhi nominee Yogendra Chandoliya, filed their nominations for the seven Lok Sabha seats of Delhi on Monday, the first day of filing nominations. for the seven Lok Sabha seats is slated for May 25, in the sixth phase of the general election.

The last day for filing nominations is May 6, and for withdrawing nominations, it is May 9. The scrutiny of nominations is scheduled for May 7.

Mr. Chandoliya filed his nomination in the presence of Rajasthan's Deputy CM Dr. Premchand Bairwa, BJP's Delhi Lok Sabha election in-charge Omprakash Dhanakhar, co-incharge Alka Gurjar, and party's Delhi unit chief Virendra Sachdeva.

'Expedite development'

Ahead of filing his nomination for the North West Delhi seat, reserved for members of the Scheduled Castes, Mr. Chandoliya held a roadshow in the presence of supporters. Speaking to mediapersons before filing the nomination, the BJP nominee said, "I will expedite development works in my constituency and will always be present among people."

THE CHAMPIONS OF SUNBEAM LAHARTARA

distinguished teachers, proud parents, and eager students. The highlight of the ceremony

was the solemn oath-taking by the newly elected members of the student council. The ceremony culminated with a heartfelt vote of thanks and the school song which filled the



Killian School Heilbronn in October.

Convent Sr. Sec. School, Delhi-6 conducted the

Investiture Ceremony of the Student Council 2024-25 with precision and solemnity. The school

welcomed esteemed guests, including Lt. Gen. Philip

Campose, Former Vice Chief of the Indian Army as

the Chief Guest, along with the School Management,

air, echoing the spirit of unity and pride.

Students of Sunbeam Lahartara excelled in various fields and received many accolades. Grade 7's Dhriti Rathi's publication. 'Life on Mars,' was victorious at the National Young Authors' Fair 2023, presented by Bri Books; The team of Shuban Singh (Class - VIII) and Hrishant Singh (Class - VI) were the winner of National Knowledge Quest held by S Chand Publications at Bal Bharti Public School in New Delhi. Bhumika Sharma of class XII shines as National Champion in Classmate's allrounder competition; Shaswat Mishra and Aditya Jaiswal were

the Second Runners-up in the Quiz On the Beach, Asia's largest quiz of its kind, hosted by T.A. Pai Management Institute in Manipal; Cadet Raghav Ranveer Singh of class IX participated in the Republic Day parade 2024 at New Delhi and received a Medal of Excellence presented by the NCC Directorate for behaviour and discipline.

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(ELECTION OFFICE)

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For setting up of polling station for General Election to Lok Sabha-2024 in Municipal Corporation of Delhi Area. Tender document including terms & conditions can be seen and downloaded on our website https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app from 01.05.2024 to 04.05.2024 upto 15:00 hrs. The last date of receiving of bids is 04.05.2024 upto Election Officer, Municipal Corporation of Delhi RO NO. - 03/DPI/MCD/2024-25

BJP's Rao Inderjit Singh files papers for Gurgaon Lok Sabha constituency

The Hindu Bureau GURUGRAM

BJP's Gurgaon Lok Sabha candidate and Union Minister Rao Inderjit Singh filed his nomination papers on Monday. Accompanied by Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Saini, among others, Mr. Singh, speaking to mediapersons, said the election for the Lok Sabha

the issue development. He expressed confi-

constituency will be fought

dence in registering his third successive Lok Sabha win on BJP's symbol with an improved margin. Mr. Singh declared total moveable assets of ₹23.19 crore in his name.

As per the affidavit, there is no pending criminal case against him and he has never been convicted of any criminal offence. While the Congress is

yet to announce its candidate for the Gurgaon seat, which includes three Assembly segments of Muslim-dominated Nuh district, the Jannayak Janta Party has put its bet on Bollywood singer and rapper Rahul Fazilpuria.

THE HINDU

CM's absence doesn't mean children won't get books: Delhi HC

Anyone who holds CM's post can't be absent indefinitely, says High Court; Kejriwal is a victim of political conspiracy, will continue being CM: AAP

NEW DELHI

he Delhi High Court on Monday said continuing as Delhi Chief Minister even after his arrest was Arvind Kejriwal's personal choice, but his unavailability could not come in the way of poor school-going children getting free textbooks. material, and writing uniforms.

"The decision of the Chief Minister to continue to hold the position is his personal decision. However, it does not mean that if the Chief Minister is not available, the fundamental rights of young children would be trampled upon, and they would go through the first term (April 1 to May 10) without free text**Fundamental right of** students to get free books can't be trampled upon: court

books, writing material and uniforms," a Bench of Acting Chief Justice Manmohan and Justice Manmeet P.S. Arora said.

Reacting to the court's observations, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) said Mr. Kejriwal was a victim of political conspiracy and that he will continue to serve as the Delhi CM as the decision to continue in the post even after being jailed was made by the people of Delhi.

The court's observation came while dealing with a public interest litigation (PIL) plea by NGO Social Ju-

rist, highlighting the nonsupply of educational material and other statutory benefits to 8 lakh students in the Municipal Corporation of Delhi-run schools even after the commencement of the new academic

session.

In response to the petition, the Delhi government counsel had last week told the court that the supply of textbooks requires certain approvals by Mr. Kejriwal, who is in judicial custody in a money laundering case related to the nowscrapped Delhi excise poli-

In response, the court had observed that Mr. Kejriwal had, by continuing to remain the Chief Minister even after his arrest, placed his political interest over national interest.

'BJP is anti-Maharashtra, exploits religious divide'

The president of Shiv Sena (UBT) youth wing says their fight is not against any leader but against BJP's dictatorial approach

INTERVIEW

Aaditya **Thackeray**

Abhinay Deshpande

he BJP lacks another prominent face to replace Prime Minister Narendra Modi, whereas the INDIA bloc has multiple leaders who can take up the role of the PM, Aaditya Thackeray tells The Hindu as he claims a strong undercurrent favouring the Opposition alliance across the country. Excerpts:

You have been campaigning across the State. What does the situation look like?

I can speak for the State, but what I've observed and heard from all over the country suggests a strong undercurrent favouring the INDIA bloc. This sentiment stems from a decade of misgovernance by the BJP. Despite being in power at the Centre and in many States simultaneously, if top leaders of a party still resort to dividing people along communal lines, it raises concerns about the progress claimed by them. The BJP tries to exploit the religious divide when not performing well in the

What do you have to say about PM's recent remarks [targeting a particular community] in Rajasthan?

It is unfortunate. I won't single out any specific leader as our battle is against the BJP's attitude, its divisive and dictatorial approach. I might receive a notice from the Election Commission of India (ECI) for discussing this but the BJP definitely won't get a notice or it will just get a 'friendly notice' as the poll body has been completely subdued by it and it is probably working from the BJP office.

The ECI has issued a notice to your party for using 'Jai Bhavani, Jai



Shivaji' in a campaign song.

The ECI has been biased towards us for almost the past two and a half years. While BJP leaders are attempting to polarise voters and spread hate, we advocate for something that is intrinsic to Maharashtra's identity. The Election Commission also appears to be anti-Maharashtra, just like the BJP. They seem to disregard our State. You can put us behind bars or hang us wherever you want, but we will not cease saying 'Jai Bhavani, Jai Shivaji'. We will not bow down to them.

What makes you believe that the BJP harbours animosity towards Maharashtra, a State

that sends 48 MPs to the Lok Sabha, second only to Uttar Pradesh's 80

The Centre allowed Gujarat to proceed with the export of onions, but Maharashtra was not granted the same permission. Additionally, Vedanta-Foxconn (semiconductor unit) was taken away from Maharashtra to Gujarat, only to eventually be lost altogether. Similarly, important projects such as Airbus-Tata, Bulk Drug Park, Medical Device Park, and even the World Cup final were shifted to Gujarat.

The BJP has been raising the slogan of 'abki baar 400 paar'. Do you think the Modi factor is influencing voters in Maharashtra?

People are saying 'abki baar BJP tadipaar'. Why aim for 400 seats? They had been in power for the past 10 years. They should tell what have they achieved in the past decade. Farmers' income was supposed to be doubled.

Has it been doubled? No. Where are the smart cities? These were some of the jumlas, now rebranded as guarantees.

Who do you see as a viable alternative to Mr. Modi?

The BJP lacks a prominent face to replace Mr. Modi. Are you suggesting that in a country of over a billion people, everyone else is worthless? The INDIA bloc has multiple leaders who can replace him.

As a young leader, how do you define Hindutva? Do you think your party's core agenda has been diluted, as alleged by **Eknath Shinde's outfit?**

This is laughable. Our Hindutva is very clear -- Hriday me Ram aur haath ka kaam (Ram in our hearts and skill in our hands). Religion resides in our hearts, but in governance, the Constitution must prevail. Our Hindutva does not dictate what to eat or what to wear.

Court convicts four in 2015 Malvani hooch tragedy

Press Trust of India MUMBAI

A sessions court on Monday convicted four accused and acquitted 10 others in the 2015 hooch tragedy in which more than 100 people lost their lives in Mumbai's Malvani area.

Additional Sessions Iudge Swapnil Tawshikar found the accused – Raju Tapkar, Donald Patel, Francis D'mello and Mansoor Khan – guilty of criminal conspiracy, culamounting to murder and other charges under the Indian Penal Code and Bombay Prohibition Act. The court will hear the prosecution and defence arguments on sentencing on May 6.

The judge, while pronouncing the order, held that "there was a marathon of evidence in the case and then a marathon final arguments".

While the prosecution argued that all the accused persons were involved in a criminal conspiracy, the court held that the examination of nearly 240 witnesses did not define a clear chain of evidence.

During the trial, special public prosecutor Pradeep Gharat that the deaths of people by consuming spurious liquor in the State is a rarest of the rare case since only one or two such deaths have occurred in the last two decades in Maharashtra.

'How could PM let a 'criminal' flee from right under his nose?'

The Hindu Bureau

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Monday questioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi on how a "rakshas" could be allowed to leave the country, referring to the alleged sexual crimes involving incumbent Lok Sabha Hassan MP and JD(S) leader Prajwal Revanna. The MP has reportedly left the country even before the Special Investigation Team could begin to look into the allegations.

Addressing a public rally, along with party president Mallikarjun Kharge, in Kalaburagi district, she said Mr. Modi, "who keeps track of the



election rally in Kalaburagi on Monday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

movements of every leader in the country", was mysteriously silent when the "criminal who left the country was right under his nose".

"They did not know when

a criminal left the country. How can we believe it? You, my sisters, must continue to question Mr. Modi so that he would never dare to speak on women's *mangalsutra* again," she said.

Speaking at Sedam, Ms. Vadra questioned where Mr. Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah were when the country's Olympic medallists were sexually assaulted and girls were raped in Hathras and Unnao.

"In Karnataka, Mr. Modi shared dais with a criminal who harassed thousands of women and sought votes for him. I would like to ask Mr. Modi what he would say about it," she said.

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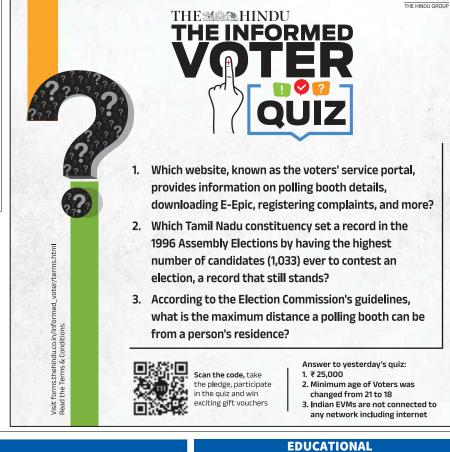
Sunita Kejriwal, Atishi meet CM

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal met his wife Sunita Kejriwal and Finance Minister Atishi in Tihar Jail on Monday. The meeting came after the ruling AAP

alleged that the jail authorities had denied both the permission to meet the

Addressing reporters after the meeting, Ms. Atishi said the CM assured women of fulfilling his promise of crediting ₹1,000 per month into their accounts. The scheme was announced by the Minister in her budget speech. Ms. Atishi said the CM took stock of the functioning of the Delhi government and instructed to ensure that there is no water shortage.



NEET aspirant found dead; 'murder likely'

Press Trust of India KOTA (RAJASTHAN)

A 20-year-old NEET aspirant was found dead in his hostel room in Kunhari area here, with his parents suspecting he was murdered, police said on Monday.

Panchal, Sumit from Rohtak, had been preparing for NEET at a coaching institute here for over a year, the police said.

His parents and family have demanded the registration of a murder case against unidentified persons, and an impartial investigation into the matter.

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A medical board was constituted to perform the autopsy, said ASI Kaptan, who is investigating the case. The body was

handed over to the family after the postmortem, they said. A case of unnatural death has been

lodged, they said. Meanwhile, the deceased's father, uncle and grandfather, who reached Kota on Monday morning, suspected foul play and

murdered. (Those in distress may contact Sanjivini, Society for Mental Health helpline 011-40769002.)

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November 15, 1937 - April 25, 2024

With deep sorrow we announce the demise of Dr. Jeeji Bai, who breathed her last peacefully on April 25, 2024 at 3.30 pm at Bengaluru. She was 86 years old, survived by an elder brother and

Dr. Jeeji Bai was a renowned Algologist obtained her M.Sc in Botany in 1960 and PhD degree in Algal Taxonomy in 1965 from the University of Madras. Her contributions in the field of Algology particularly Spirulina as Nutritional Supplement for the Malnourished were outstanding that she earned the prestigious Alexander Vor Humboldt Fellowship to work at Univ. of Tübingen, Germany, Pool Officer at CFTRI, Mysore, Post-doctoral fellow at the Univ of Madras, Federal Government Employment at Institute of Algal Research & Technology at Dortmund, Germany, Lecturer, CAS in Botany, Univ. of Madras, Chennai, Scientist at Murugappa Chettiar Research Centre, Chennai and Consultant Scientist, Parry Agro Industries. She was the recipient of Life Time Achievement Award by Krishnamurthy Institute of Algology in the year 2012.

The family, friends and the scientific community pay their homage to Dr. Jeeji Bai. Contact: +91 89035 06708

Padma Shri Prof

Dr P K Rajagopalan (1930-2024)Our dear father, Padma Shri Prof

Dr P K Rajagopalan (1930-2024) Former Director, Vector Control Research Center, Indian Council of Medical Research. Attained the lotus feet of the Lord at

10:15 a.m. 29th April 2024.

Bereaved family Gowri & Dr. C.S. Ramachandran Ramya & Ravi Rajagopalan Dr. Lata & Dr. Murlidhar Rajagopal and his beloved grand children. Ph: Ravi - 9987457802

Dr. Murlidhar - 9840045500.

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BJP is the most dangerous 'family', says SP chief Akhilesh

Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav on Monday hit back at the BJP over Union Home Minister Amit Shah's remarks about his family. He said the BJP was was not only the most dangerous "family" of India but also of the world. He said there was another dangerous "family' which wanted to end reservation, hinting at the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). Mr. Yadav pushed his Pichda, Dalit and Alpasankhyak (PDA) plank at a party rally in Etah, asking backward, Dalit, and minority voters to dislodge the BJP from the Centre to save democracy and the Constitution.

Former Haryana JJP chief joins Cong. with supporters

Former Jannayak Janta Party's (JJP) Haryana chief Sardar Nishan Singh on Monday joined the Congress along with a large number of his supporters. Mr. Singh had quit the JJP earlier this month. Welcoming him to the party fold at a function in Chandigarh, senior Congress leader Bhupinder Singh Hooda said many leaders were joining the Congress every day and this was guarantee of the fact that the party would form the next government in the State. Haryana Congress chief Udai Bhan said the party would be strengthened with the joining of leaders like Mr. Singh. Mr. Singh had quit the JJP after his three decades old association with the Chautalas.

Rahul reiterates Cong. plan for caste survey and economic survey

At rallies in PM's home State and Chhattisgarh, the Cong. leader touches upon his pet themes of widening economic inequality, unemployment, inflation and neglect of the OBCs, STs and SCs

The Hindu Bureau AHMEDABAD/RAIPUR

pocket-sized Constitution in hand, former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Monday held his first rally in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home State as well as in Chhattisgarh and reiterated his charge that the ongoing Lok Sabha poll is the only chance for the people of the country to defeat the BJP and save democracy.

In both Patan, Gujarat, and Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh, he held up the copy of the Constitution for the

In Bilaspur, canvassing in support of the Congress candidate Devendra Yadav, Mr. Gandhi said the PM is not saying char sau paar [over 400 seats] these days. "Earlier Narendra Modi said char sau paar. Now he isn't talking about crossing 150. Statements are coming that we are not against the Constitution, we are not against reserva-



Going all out: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi being welcomed by partymen during a poll rally in Gujarat's Patan on Monday. ANI

tion, we are not against democracy. Why? Because they have come to know... the people of the country have caught the pulse that these people [BJP and RSS] want to uproot the Constitution and rights of the poor," he said.

Unemployment issue In both poll-bound States,

Congress leader touched upon his pet themes of widening economic inequality, unemployment, inflation, neglect of the OBCs, STs and SCs and the need for a caste census, and Mr. Modi's "support" to industrialists such as Gautam

Mr. Gandhi emphasised that this general election is a battle between two ideologies: one of the RSS, which believes in dividing the country and its people along social and communal lines, and that of the Congress and its allies, which believe in uniting the country and its people. "This is a fight between two thought processes. On one side, the BJP and RSS want to finish our Constitution while on the other, we in the Congress and the IN-DIA bloc are safeguarding it," he said.

Suggesting that the tribals and Dalits don't figure on the agenda of the RSS and BJP, the Congress leader stressed the importance of a caste census for ensuring justice and proper representation for these communities.

'Money for billionaires'

Elaborating on the increasing inequality, he said in Bilaspur that that the Centre had given "₹16 lakh crore to 22 billionaires, an amount equal to 25 years of MNREGA wages" and the money needed to waive the loans of farmers for "24 years".

In Patan, Mr. Gandhi also thanked the former ruler for Bhavnagar becoming the first princely state to offer to integrate with the Indian Union. He was canvassing for his party candidate Chandanji Thakor.

Senthilbalaji played pivotal role in job racket, ED tells SC

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has maintained in the Supreme Court that former Tamil Nadu Minister V. Senthilbalaji played a "central and pivotal role" in a "job racket scam" during 2014-15.

A Bench, headed by Justice A.S. Oka, posted the petition filed by Mr. Senthilbalaji for regular bail, for hearing on May 6.

The case involves alleged kickbacks for jobs in the Metropolitan Transport Corporation and the Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation when Mr. Senthilbalaji was the Minister for Transport.

The Enforcement Case Information Report (ECIR) was based on three FIRs and a charge-sheet filed by the Law Enforcement Agency of the Central Crime Branch of Chennai.

The ED said that bank statements showed cash deposits of ₹1.34 crore in Mr. Senthilbalaji's account and ₹29.55 lakh in that of S. Megala, his wife. Further, cash deposits of ₹13.13 crore were found with his brother Ashok Kumar, ₹53.89 lakh with his wife, A. Nirmala, and ₹2.19 crore with B. Shanmugam, a



ED said that bank statements showed deposits of ₹1.34 crore in account of Mr. Senthilbalaji.

private assistant of Mr. Senthilbalaji.

"Cash deposits are huge compared to their income disclosed in the income tax returns," the 93-page affidavit filed by the Central agency said.

"Proceeds of crime"

Senior advocate Aryama Sundaram, appearing for Mr. Senthilbalaji, said that his client had been under incarceration for over 150

The ED said that the "huge cash deposits" traced to Mr. Senthilbalaji was "nothing but part of proceeds of crime brought into the financial system for the purpose of laundering. The proceeds of crime identified in his bank accounts were utilised and layered".

Dalit groups demand filing of appeal against acquittals in Kumher massacre

The Hindu Bureau

Dalit groups in Rajasthan on Monday demanded filing of appeal against a seven-month-old judgment of Bharatpur's special court acquitting 41 persons in the infamous Kumher massacre of 1992, in which 16 Dalits were killed and 45 were injured.

Neither the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), which probed the case, nor the State government has moved an appeal in the Rajasthan High Court in the matter.

The special court in Bharatpur hearing the cases under the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act had on September 30, 2023 acquitted 41 persons for lack of evidence and convicted nine accused, while handing down the life sentence to them 31 years after the incident. Of

It relates to attack on Dalits 32 years ago in Kumher town by a crowd from the Jat community, in which 16 Dalits were killed and 45 injured

the 83 accused in the case, 32 died during the protracted trial and one absconded.

A 5,000-strong crowd of the Jat community had attacked a locality inhabited by Dalits belonging to the Jatav community in broad daylight in Bharatpur district's Kumher town following a dispute on June 6, 1992, and set ablaze 254 homes and hutments. All the houses were destroyed and the victims, including some women, were burnt alive in the worst-ever anti-Dalit carnage.

The case, which was initially investigated by the Rajasthan Police, was later

handed over to the CBI. The CBI recorded the statements of 283 witnesses, who were produced in the court for evidence, and filed chargesheets against 83 accused persons.

The convicts punished with life imprisonment were Lakho, Prem Singh, Man Singh, Rajveer, Pitam, Paras Jain, Chetan, Shiv Singh and Gopal. The court also imposed a fine on the convicts. A Division Bench of the High Court has since suspended the life sentence of the nine convicts on their plea that their names did not appear in the original first information report (FIR) and the police had failed to recover any weapons from

The Centre for Dalit Rights (CDR) and some other Dalit groups have submitted memorandums to the CBI Director, Union Minister of State for Law and Justice Arjun Ram Meghwal, and the State government's Principal Secretary (Home) and Princi-Secretary (Social Justice and Empowerment), seeking immediate action in the matter.

CDR director Satish Kumar said the prosecuting agencies had not filed an appeal in the High Court to challenge the acquittal and seek stern punishment to those responsible for the massacre despite the lapse of seven months since the judgement was delivered.

'Govt. not serious'

"The lack of action not only shows a blatant administrative apathy but also proves that the government is not serious about controlling the crimes against Dalits," Mr. Kumar

"The trial court's judgment has several shortcomings which need to be challenged in the High Court," he added.

Sinister agenda to defame, weaken Akali Dal, says Badal

Press Trust of India CHANDIGARH

Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) president Sukhbir Singh Badal on Monday alleged that the central agencies started a campaign against his party immediately after it quit the BJP-led NDA government. Mr. Badal was addressing a huge gathering in Sardulgarh in Mansa in favour of his party's Bathinda candidate and his wife Harsimrat Kaur Badal.

"Those who had attacked the SAD virulently for the acts of sacrilege eight years back, including self-styled panthic leader Baljit Singh Daduwal, had now joined the BJP. This proves there is a sinister agenda to defame the SAD and weaken it," alleged Mr. Badal.

The SAD had parted ways with the BJP-led NDA in 2020 over the issue of now-repealed three farm

The SAD leader accused



Akali Dal chief Sukhbir Singh Badal is greeted by supporters during election campaign in Punjab's Sardulgarh on Monday. PTI

the BJP of taking over Sikh religious bodies. The BJP government in Maharashtra had "tinkered with" the Sri Hazoor Sahib gurdwara managing board and nominated 12 members to the board to take it in its control, he claimed. further

Mr. Badal claimed that members of the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee had been co-opted into the BIP even as the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee had been "broken" to create a separate gurdwara committee for Harvana.

He said the Sikh bodies under the "control" of the BJP like the Delhi committee led by Manjinder Singh Sirsa were now even "denving" *langar* to those who were holding 'dharnas' against Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The SAD president also asserted that the Central government had virtually taken over the AAP government in Punjab.

Two injured as hill State faces 47 new forest fires

<u>The Hindu Bureau</u>

Uttarakhand on Monday reported 47 fresh cases of forest fires which gutted over 78 hectares of land in the hills and left two persons injured.

Petition in SC

Amid the raging forest fires sweeping through the dense foliage in mountains in the state, a petitioner made a special mention of the devastation in the Supreme Court on Monday and sought urgent listing of the matter.

"Forest fire petitions are pending in the courts for the last three years," senior advocate Rajiv Dutta told the Bench comprising Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud. The apex court said it will consider listing the matter. The State lost 3,425 hectares of forest cover to fires in 2022.

Weather plays spoilsport in poll-bound Kashmir

Peerzada Ashiq SRINAGAR

Rain and fresh snowfall wreaked havoc in Kashmir valley on Monday, with landslides and flooding resulting in the closure of intra-district roads in the three Lok Sabha seats of Anantnag, Baramulla and Srinagar. It also impacted the poll campaigning in

several areas. The worst affected by rain and snowfall is north Kashmir's Baramulla constituency, where all three districts of Baramulla, Kupwara and Bandipora witnessed snowfall in upper reaches and torrential rain in the plains.

Snowfall has completely cut off the Gurez valley, the Machil valley and Tangdhar from the district headquarters of north Kashmir, with two to three feet of



snowfall at Chandanwadi in Anantnag district on Monday. PTI

snow accumulation recorded at the Razdan Top and the Sadna Top. Thousands of voters hail from these pockets. Snowfall badly impacted electioneering in these areas.

An official said several pockets of Kupwara witnessed flash flooding and submerging of highways, cutting off Kupwara district from Sopore. Landslides were also triggered in several areas like Kupwara's Gujarnar-Rangpath and Qaziabad-Langate. Residents of Bungam

and Chogal in Handwara alleged that several houses started submerging around 4 a.m. An official said the Kupwara police along with SDRF, CRPF and the Army was carrying out rescue operations. The

police advised locals to stav away from water bodies and urged those living near banks to "shift to safer

In central Kashmir's Srinagar Lok Sabha seat, landslides and snowfall impacted the upper reaches of Kangan, where class work was suspended due to inclement weather. Budgam district recorded multiple instances of landslide, cutting off several pockets of upper reaches. The worst affected were areas close to the Sonamarg area, which saw a major landslide.

In south Kashmir's Anantnag constituency. traffic remained suspended on the Mughal Road where a fresh spell of snowfall was recorded. The Srinagar-Jammu national highway was also closed due to landslides. Several pockets of Pulwama witnessed flash floods and waterlogging.

"Water in the Jhelum river is below the danger mark so far. It's likely to go up because of fresh rainfall in south Kashmir. People are advised to follow official advisories. We are fully prepared to deal with the situation," Mifta Alam, Technical Officer of the Flood & Irrigation Department in Kashmir, said.

Alert in Srinagar

In Srinagar, the authorities formulated "an efficient plan to ensure prompt response to any flood like situation". Deputy Commissioner Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat called for round the clock monitoring of floodprone spots.

The MeT office has predicted a fresh wet spell in the next 24 hours.

Namesake candidates set to add a twist in Maharashtra poll scene

Ateeq Shaikh SINDHUDURG

Four of the 11 seats to go to polls in Maharashtra on May 7 in the third phase of Lok Sabha poll have namesake candidates.

There are two Satyajeet Babaso Patils in the fray, one an Independent and another on Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray's (UBT) Shiv Sena ticket.

Three-cornered contest At Hatkanangle, there is a three-cornered among both the Shiv Sena representatives and Swabhimani Shetkari Sanghatna's Raju Shetti. Here, it is only Mr. Shetti who does not have a namesake competitor.

On having candidates

with similar names other than him, Mr. Shetti was asked if this is his strategy to reduce votes of his rivals. He denied any such game plan. "They have fielded them against one another. The sway in votes would not be much, only 5,000 to 10,000," he said.

In Ratnagiri-Sindhudurg, where there is a close contest between incumbent Vinayak Raut of Shiv Sena (UBT) and Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) Narayan Rane, Vinayak Lavu Raut, an Independent candidate is likely to take away a few thousand votes.

"He is likely to take away about 4,000 votes. Even I could have done such kind of politics, I have someone by the name Narayan Thattu Rane," said Mr. Raut of Shiv Sena (UBT).

At Baramati, where Sharad Pawar's daughter Supriya Sule is contesting from her father's faction of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) against family member Sunetra Pawar, wife of Ajit Pawar, as an NCP (Ajit Pawar) candidate, an Independent Sharad Ram Pawar, is also in the fray.

Three Anant's in race In Raigad, there are three

Anants in the fray. One is Shiv Sena (UBT) Anant Geete, and two Independents, Anant Padma Gite and Anant Baloji Geete. In this constituency, Sena's Geete is challenging the sitting Member of Parliament, Sunil Tatkare of NCP (Ajit Pawar).

Published by Nirmala Lakshman and Printed by S. Ramanujam at HT Media Ltd. Plot No. 8, Udyog Vihar, Greater Noida Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P. 201306, on behalf of THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., Chennai-600002. Editor: Suresh Nambath (Responsible for selection of news under the PRP Act) ISSN 0971 - 751X

SC issues notice to govt. on petition of non-believer Muslim

The Hindu Bureau

The Supreme Court on Monday sought the Union government's response to a petition filed by a Keralabased woman, who said she, though born a Muslim, is now a non-believer, and should be governed by the secular statutes rather than the Sharia law.

Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud, heading a three-judge Bench, said P.M. Safiya, a resident of Alappuzha district and represented by advocate Prashant Padmanabhan, has raised an "important issue". The court issued formal notices to the Centre and the State of Kerala. The case was posted for detailed hearing in July.

Mr. Padmanabhan submitted that the Supreme Court has already underscored the "fundamental postulate of secularism which treats all religions on an even platform and allows to each individual the fullest liberty to believe or not to believe"

To realise the full meaning of what the top court intended, Mr. Padmanabhan submitted that a person who leaves her faith should not incur any disqualification in matters of inheritance or other important civil rights.

"Persons who do not want to be governed by the Muslim Personal Law must be allowed to be governed by the secular law of the country, viz, the Indian Succession Act, 1925 both in the case of intestate and



testamentary succession," the petition said.

Inheritance right

Ms. Safiya said that once she leaves her faith in Islam, she will be ousted from her community and is not entitled to any inheritance right in her parental property.

"The petitioner wishes to get a declaration that she shall not be governed by Muslim Personal Law for any of the matters listed in Sections 2 or 3 of the Muslim Personal Law [Shariat] Application Act, 1937, but there is no provision either in the Act or in the Rules wherein she can obtain such a certificate. There is a clear vacuum in the statute that can be plugged by judicial interpretation," the petition noted.

It noted that the legal vacuum would leave the petitioner with no recourse to succeed to her parental property even if she officially got a no-religion, nocaste certificate from an authority.

This state of affairs was a direct violation of the fundamental right to believe (or not to believe) in a religion under Article 25 of the Constitution, Mr. Padmanabhan said.

CPI(M) tells LDF convener not to hobnob with middlemen

Party's Kerala secretary Govindan says the secretariat saw no wrong in meeting leaders from rival political outfits; dismisses claim that BJP had held talks with E.P. Jayarajan in Chennai and Delhi

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

he CPI(M) State Secretariat on Monday counselled Left Democratic Front (LDF) convener E.P. Jayarajan to sever connection with selfstyled power broker T.G. Nandakumar.

However, it stopped short of reprimanding Mr. Jayarajan for stirring up an election day controversy by publicly admitting that he had met the BJP's Kerala in-charge Prakash Javadekar, together with Mr. Nandakumar, at his son's apartment in Thiruvananthapuram in March 2023. Mr. Jayarajan will continue as LDF convener.



Facing troubles: LDF convener E.P. Jayarajan leaving AKG Centre after attending CPI(M) meeting on Monday.

CPI(M) State secretary M.V. Govindan said the secretariat saw no wrong in party apparatchiks meeting leaders from rival political outfits. However, Mr. Govindan said such meetings in the company of "dubious persons" gener-

ated politically damaging optics and made the party leadership vulnerable to public criticism and Opposition attacks

Mr. Govindan said the secretariat tasked Mr. Jayarajan to seek legal recourse to bring the slanderers to

book. Mr. Govindan denied that Mr. Jayarajan's public admission of his meeting with Mr. Iavadekar had disadvantaged the CPI(M) on poll day and ceded a propaganda advantage to the Congress and the BJP. He said Mr. Jayarajan had come clean about the meeting to parry the Congress-BJP misinformation campaign. Mr. Govindan dismissed

BIP leader Shobha Surendran's claim that the BJP had held talks with Mr. Jayarajan in Chennai and Delhi. He said Mr. Jayarajan did not require to report the impromptu meeting with Mr. Javadekar where no politics was on the table to the party's leadership.

Revoked licences of 14 Patanjali drugs, Uttarakhand govt. tells Supreme Court

<u>Ishita Mishra</u> NEW DELHI

The Uttarakhand government on Monday informed the Supreme Court that it has suspended the licences of 14 products sold by Patanjali Ayurved and Divya Pharmacy. The declaration came with an apology by the State Licensing Authority (SLA) along with a promise that it would commit "no deliberate or wilful act" that would violate any orders of the Supreme

An affidavit by the State, filed through Dr. Mithilesh Kumar, joint director of State Licensing Authority, Avurvedic and Unani Services, said that in an order issued on April 15, 2024, to Divya Pharmacy and Patanjali Ayurved Limited, it was conveyed that the manufacturing licences for 14 products were suspended with immediate effect. The suspension took place for repeated violations of regulations, particularly concerning misleading advertisements, under Rule 159(1) of The Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945.

These drugs were Swasari Gold, Swasari Vati, Bronchom, Swasari Prava-Swasari Avaleh, Mukta Vati Extra Power, Lipidom, Bp Grit, Madhugrit, Madhunashini Vati Ex-Livamrit Power, Advance, Livogrit, Eyegrit Gold and Patanjali Drishti Eye Drop.

It was also informed that on April 16, 2024, the



The suspension took place for repeated violations of regulations, particularly concerning misleading advertisements. REUTERS

drug inspector/district Ayurvedic and Unani officer, Haridwar, had filed a criminal complaint before the Chief Judicial Magistrate against Ramdev, Acharya Balkrishna, Divya Pharmacy and Patanjali Ayurved Limited under sections 3, 4 and 7 of the DMR Act.

In the affidavit in the court, the SLA tendered an unconditional and unqualified apology against any inadvertent and unintentional non-compliance with the orders of the Supreme Court.

The affidavit was filed in response to a plea filed by the Indian Medical Association against Patanjali and its founders Mr. Ramdev and Mr. Balkrishna for a campaign against the CO-VID-19 vaccination drive and modern medicine. The Supreme Court, earlier this month, had refused to accept a second round of apologies from Mr. Ramdev and the other accused in the matter.

People who question BJP on social media intimidated: Revanth

The Hindu Bureau HYDERABAD

Declaring that he will not be scared by the notices from the Delhi Police on a case related to the 'doctored' video of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy said the BJP government is trying to intimidate people who question them on social

"We will reply to the notices. In the coming elections, we will defeat Narendra Modi and Amit Shah in Telangana and Karnataka. Rahul Gandhi's padyatra from Kashmir to Kanniyakumari has stirred the emotions of people and they want to defeat the divisive forces," he said.

Mr. Reddy made these comments while addressing a public meeting in Karnataka on Monday.

BJP MP, ex-Union **Minister Srinivas** Prasad passes away

The Hindu Bureau MYSURU

BJP MP and former Union Minister V. Srinivas Prasad, 76, who was undergoing treatment at a private hospital in Bengaluru, passed away on Monday. The influential Dalit leader represented the Chamarajanagar Lok Sabha seat six times and the Nanjangud

Assembly segment twice. He is survived by wife

Bhagyalakshmi and three daughters. His last rites will be performed as per Buddhist rituals in Mysuru on Tuesday.

He first contested election in 1974 as an Independent and later joined the Congress and won from the Chamarajanagar Lok Sabha seat. He had stints with the JD(U) and the JD (S). Mr. Prasad served as the Union Minister of State from 1999 to 2004.

Congress running tanker mafia in Bengaluru: Modi

The Hindu Bureau BELAGAVI

Training guns on alleged corruption in the Congress government in Karnataka, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said the Siddaramaiah-led government here had turned the tech hub into "tanker hub". "Forget about other things, the Congress leaders are making money by running water tanker mafia in Bengaluru," he said in Bagalkot on Monday. Rampant corruption by the Congress had "pushed Karnataka to the brink of bankruptcy," he said.

"In a short time, the Congress government has emptied the exchequer. Very soon, they will have



Narendra Modi being feliciated by B.S. Yediyurappa and other B. leaders at a public meeting in Bagalkot on Monday. ANI

no money to pay government employees," Mr. Modi said.

Fake news

He contended that while "the BJP has used social media for many good things including delivering its agenda", the Congress was using AI "to spread fake news". "They are making fake videos using my voice. In Uttar Pradesh, they used Amitabh Bachchan's voice to spread fake news," he said. He added that the NDA government had tried to take up more development works in 10 years, than the Congress could do in 60 years.

Poor won't get justice as long as Modi is at the helm, says Kharge

The Hindu Bureau KALABURAGI

Accusing the BJP-led government at the Centre of being "anti-poor and procapitalist", Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge has said that the poor and deprived sections of society will not get justice as long as the Modi-led BJP remains in power.

He was addressing an election campaign rally in Kalaburagi district in support of the party's candidate Radhakrishna Doddamani. Mr. Kharge criticised the BJP-led government at the Centre for what he said meting out injustice for 10 years affecting the people, and the democracy Constitution.

Clarifying that the Congress poll manifesto comprises five proposals (Paanch Nyay) for the common masses – Nari Nyay (justice for women), Yuva Nyay (justice for youth), Kisan Nyay (justice for farmers), Hissedari Nyay (justice for participants) and Shramik Nyay (justice for workers) - he said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has deliberately misinterpreted the manifesto by stating that the Congress wants to redistribute people's wealth.

Mr. Kharge further criticised the Modi government's performance on various fronts such as unemployment, farm issues and economic policies. Accusing Mr. Modi of waiving loans of industrialists, he said the richest 22 Indian billionaires have more wealth than what 70 crore of the country's popcan together ulation muster.

Holding steady



Stranded in the lake: Tourists were rescued and brought to the shore after a houseboat partially sank in Vembanad Lake in Alappuzha on Monday. The town has seen an increase in tourists this month. SURESHALLEPPEY

Hot and humid weather likely to persist in Kerala till May 3

The Hindu Bureau THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

As the IMD has said that hot and humid weather is likely to persist in most districts of Kerala at least till May 3, the Health Department has again issued a warning that people take utmost care to prevent themselves from succumbing to the excessive heat.

Educational institutions will remain closed till May 2 in Palakkad district in view of a heat wave threat. An orange warning was issued for Palakkad on Monday on account of the heat wave conditions.

Maximum temperatures are likely to be around 41 degrees Celsius in Palakkad, around 40 degrees Celsius in Kollam and



Sweltering heat: Students cover their heads in Alappuzha as Kerala witnesses heatwave. SURESH ALLEPPEY

Thrissur districts, around 39 degrees Celsius in Kozhikode, 38 degrees Celsius in Alappuzha, Kottayam, Pathanamthitta and Kannur districts, around 37 degrees Celsius in Ernakulam, Malappuram and Kasaragod, and around 36 degrees Celsius Thiruvananthapuram.

In an advisory, the Kera-

la State Disaster Management Authority (KSDMA) has urged the public to avoid direct sunlight between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. and remain hydrated at all times

Health Minister Veena George reviewed the heatwave situation in districts at a high-level meeting here on Monday.

corridor, shifting Chinnakanal colonies Sandeep Vellaram

An expert panel appointed by the Kerala High Court to address human-wildlife conflict in Chinnakanal in Kerala's Idukki district has recommended the reopening of the elephant corridor from Anayirankal to Old Devikulam in Munnar.

In its recent report submitted to the court, the panel suggests both shortterm and long-term measures to tackle the issue.

Chinnakanal is the former habitat of Arikomban, the wild elephant that regularly raided ration shops for rice. Following repeated attacks, the tusker was translocated to a tiger reserve in Tamil Nadu. The move evoked protests



Expert panel favours reopening elephant

Home ground: A wild elephant roaming in Chinnakkanal in Idukki district of Kerala. JOMON PAMPAVALLEY

from some quarters.

ulam, spanning a 60-acre

shola forest, can facilitate Highlighting the isolathe free movement of wild tion of the elephant popuelephants and give them access to a vast 4,500 sq. lation in Chinnakanal, the panel underscored the critkm area within the Munnar ical importance of providlandscape. ing it access to the broader The panel recommend-Munnar landscape. Securing the corridor between Anayirankal and Old Devik-

ed voluntary relocation of two colonies spanning 301 acres and 80 acres of Chinnakanal. The possibility of

servation reserve is suggested to deter illegal activities.

declaring the area as a con-

'Fence ration shops'

In terms of immediate action, the panel has proposed installing solar fencing around ration shops to prevent elephant attacks.

The panel recommended close observation of tuskers such as 'Padayappa' to prevent them from approaching human habitations. They should not be captured under the pretext of damage to property. The presence of such tuskers is critical to maintaining genetic viability. Their removal will lead to a vacuum, which will be filled by another tusker or herd, the panel noted.

Matters of heartland

Livelihood issues compete with caste and religious identities in campaigning

he Hindi heartland, more often than not, decides who forms the government in Delhi. Of the 189 Lok Sabha seats in the six States of Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, U.P. and Uttarakhand that make up the very core of this territory, votes have been cast for 71 seats, in the first two phases. In Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan – where the BJP won the Assembly polls last year – the two principal national parties are in a direct contest which could determine who gets to lead the next government. For the BJP, the general election had begun on a high note with Prime Minister Narendra Modi setting the target of 400 seats for the party and its allies to win, even before the poll notification on March 16. The very next day, he even asked the Cabinet to draft the plan for the first 100 days of the next government which he is confident of forming. The Opposition on the other hand, began its campaign from a position of relative weakness and far less enthusiasm. The constituents of the INDIA bloc were still fighting among themselves on the seat-sharing formula. Developments since then have led to fresh questions. The Supreme Court-dictated disclosure of electoral bond data, and the arrest of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal by the ED, were two events that energised the Opposition's low-key campaign and highlighted the issues of economic downslide, inflation and unemployment.

The BJP is trying to counter this with a far sharper cry on nationalism, and Hindu consolidation. It terms the Opposition as being 'anti-Santana dharma", and is targeting the Congress and labelling its manifesto as having an "imprint of the Muslim League". An apparent fear among Hindu subaltern segments with regard to the '400-plus' slogan has now put the BJP on the defensive. Statements by BJP leaders that a massive majority will enable it to rewrite the Constitution have been read as a threat by OBCs, Dalits and tribal communities. The BJP, with its ears to the ground, heard the fear, reflected in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's speeches ahead of polling for the first phase, where he assured voters that the Constitution would not be tampered with. The BJP campaign is focused on explaining that there is no threat to caste reservations from it. And it accuses the Congress of planning reservations for Muslims. In the heartland where caste and communal identities are locked in a complex interplay, the BJP's success is determined by religious mobilisation that overwhelms caste. The Congress's promise of policies that advance economic and social justice are also at the centre of the campaign. While the Congress's hope is to galvanise the poor and the subaltern castes, the BJP is trying to instigate fear of a socialist dictatorship. That it is addressing the poorest of the country with the fear of redistribution of wealth is a particularly striking paradox of the heartland.

Trying for a repeat

India is looking to defend its astonishing title win in men's badminton

n an Olympic year, the quadrennial extravaganza dwarfs every other competition. This is especially true in a sport like badminton where the Olympic gold is the holy grail. Yet, events that lead up to the marquee sporting festival do carry importance, and the ongoing Thomas & Uber Cup in Chengdu, China, is one such tournament. The de facto 'World Cup' of badminton, the biennial championship became an indelible part of the national consciousness when the Indian men's outfit won its maiden Thomas Cup crown in 2022. While a repeat is very much in the realm of possibility, the strong Indian side (H.S. Prannoy, Lakshya Sen, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty among others) will look at it as a great opportunity to test their competitive mettle ahead of the Paris Olympics. Two years ago, the triumph had acted as a springboard for Satwiksairaj and Chirag, who went on to clinch the coveted Asian Games doubles gold in 2023 and help secure a historic team silver before becoming the first Indians to be ranked No.1 in doubles. Prannoy, India's No.1 singles player and an Asian Games bronze medallist, will be looking for similar inspiration after a not-so-good year while Lakshya will be keen to sharpen his skills ahead of his first-ever Olympics.

The women's Uber Cup roster does not include the Olympics-bound trio of singles star P.V. Sindhu and doubles practitioners Ashwini Ponnappa and Tanisha Crasto. The three have prioritised a solid training block - a luxury in a chocka-block tournament calendar – while an inexperienced side gets a taste of elite-level badminton. The focus will be on 17-year-old Anmol Kharb, who played a stellar role in India winning the Badminton Asia Team Championship in February, and Isharani Baruah, 20. There is also an expectation for Ashmita Chaliha, 24, long marked out for success, to make good on her promise. The tourney comes at a time when India is looking to restock its women's singles cupboard. As Saina Nehwal inches closer to retirement, the cabinet, barring two-time Olympic medallist Sindhu, has appeared bare in recent times. But going by the results in Chengdu, there is optimism that the next generation of stars could emerge from this lot. They have beaten Canada and Singapore back to back – by convincing 4-1 scorelines – to qualify for the quarterfinals, and further progress will confirm the green shoots. Even as all eyes are on the Thomas Cup defence and Olympics preparation, the women in the Uber Cup can well make it a week to remember.

The EVM-VVPAT case judgment is disappointing

tatistical thinking will one day be as necessary for efficient citizenship as the ability to read and write." - H.G.

In February 1897, the House of Representatives of the U.S. State of Indiana passed Bill no. 246 that sought to legislatively establish the 'true value' of pi (π) as 3.20. This strange Bill was introduced at the behest of a certain Edward Goodwin who claimed to have solved the ancient geometrical problem of "squaring the circle" thanks to a revelation from god, but it required changing the value of pi to 3.20! Fortunately, the Bill was stalled by Indiana's Senate due to the efforts of a mathematician called C.A. Waldo, and Indiana was saved from embarrassment.

My point in narrating this anecdote is that in the fields of science, mathematics and statistics, truths cannot be established by fiats of the executive, parliament or the judiciary. Just as Parliament cannot legislate water to run uphill, the Supreme Court of India cannot arbitrarily mandate that a uniform sample size of "5 EVMs per Assembly Constituency" is good enough for Voter verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT)-based audit of electronic voting machines (EVMs) for all Assembly Constituencies across the country. With due respect, its sample size does not conform to fundamental principles of statistical sampling

Voter verification of VVPAT slips ensures that the votes have been "recorded as cast" but it is no guarantee that they have been "counted as recorded". There is always some risk, however small, of EVM malfunction or manipulation. To ensure "counted as recorded", we should tally the EVM count with the manual count of VVPAT slips for a statistically significant sample size of EVMs drawn at random from a suitably defined 'population' of EVMs.

A typical case

The VVPAT-based audit of EVMs is a typical case of "lot acceptance sampling", a statistical quality control technique widely used in industry and



Shetty

is a former IAS officer of the Tamil Nadu cadre and a former Vice-Chancellor of the Indian Maritime University, Chennai

India needs a

VVPAT-based

system of EVM

audit which can

detect instances

99.9% accuracy;

and done at the

of mismatch

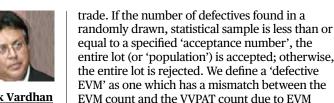
with 99% or

beginning of

counting day

statistically

sound



acceptance number as 'zero defective EVM'. The Supreme Court did not specify the 'population' of EVMs to which its sample size relates and the 'next steps' in the event of a 'defective EVM' turning up in a sample. The Election Commission of India (ECI) has also chosen to leave them vague. Both these are important because in the event of one or more 'defective EVMs' turning up in a sample, the entire 'population' from which that sample was drawn should be 'rejected'. In other words, manual counting of VVPAT slips should be done for all the remaining EVMs of that particular

'population' and its results declared based on

malfunction or manipulation. We specify the

VVPAT count only. Statistical sampling theory tells us that the probability that the Court-mandated sample size will fail to detect a 'defective EVM' is 95% if 'EVMs deployed in an Assembly Constituency' are defined as the 'population', and 70% if 'EVMs deployed in a Parliamentary Constituency' are defined as the 'population'. This defeats the very purpose of introducing VVPAT.

Reasons behind the ECI's claim

The ECI has claimed that there was not a single instance of mismatch between the EVM count and the VVPAT count in all these years. Leaving aside the fact that this is not true, there could be three possible reasons for the very few mismatches: the EVMs are in fine fettle; the prescribed sample size is erroneous and fails to detect a 'defective EVM' most of the time; both. The correct answer is the last one – both. The ECI and the Supreme Court cannot proclaim "all is well" with the present egregiously wrong sample size and opaque audit protocol.

The Court's judgment in the Association for Democratic Reforms vs Election Commission of India and Another (2024) is disappointing because it did not compel the ECI to make public how it has defined the 'population' to which its sample size relates and its 'next steps' in the event of a mismatch.

The Court also did not clarify these points on its own after seeking expert opinion. Even more disappointing was the ADR not pressing for these vital clarifications. Instead, it demanded a return to paper ballots or 100% verification of VVPAT slips. The Court was right in rejecting both these demands.

Other critics of the ECI have been guilty of demanding arbitrary, non-statistical "percentage samples" for EVM audit under the mistaken belief that a bigger "percentage sample" guarantees greater accuracy of results. Congress leader Kamal Nath sought a "10% sample" and lost (2018). Then Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu sought a "50% sample" and

The Supreme Court rightly rejected these demands but the uniform sample size prescribed by it in 2019 was equally arbitrary, non-statistical

What needs to be done

We do not know and we do not need to know the various ways in which an EVM may fail or be manipulated. What we need to do is implement a statistically sound VVPAT-based system of EVM audit which can detect instances of mismatch with 99% or 99.9% accuracy. The matching exercise should be done at the beginning of the counting day. Not at the fag end. Where there is a perfect match, the results should be declared based on the EVM count. Only where there is a mismatch, should manual counting of VVPAT slips for all the remaining EVMs of the particular 'population' be done and its results declared based on the VVPAT count. This statistical sampling-based, 'management by exception' approach represents the golden mean.

Court's nudge on hospital charges, a reform opportunity

he Supreme Court of India, while hearing a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) in February this year, directed the central government to find ways to regulate the rates of hospital procedures in the private sector. The trigger for the PIL and directive were the high procedure rates and their large variations. The Court highlighted the problem using the procedure costs of cataract surgeries that cost only around ₹10,000 in a government set-up and between ₹30,000 to ₹1,40,000 in private hospitals. It invoked Rule 9 of the Clinical Establishments (Registration and Regulation) Act, 2010, of which Clause 2 requires that "clinical establishments shall charge the rates for each type of procedures and services within the range of rates determined and issued by the Central Government from time to time, in consultation with State Covernments" The Court ruled the Central Government Health Scheme rates as an interim measure if the government failed to find ways to regulate rates.

In India, care delivery is predominantly through private providers, with market-determined prices. Health-care markets are imperfect, leading to inefficiencies and inequities and require regulation. While a problem does exist, the proposed solution oversimplifies the complex issue. However, it is the right step if it aims to spark debate and spur action. Here, we outline key considerations for addressing these challenges.

Benchmark for pricing

In an unregulated market-driven scenario, health-care providers focus on profit through higher prices and overprovision of care (supplier-induced demand). One potential solution, "yardstick competition", involves regulatory authorities setting benchmark prices based on market observations. However, this approach faces challenges in India due to diverse patient profiles, unreliable price data, and weak regulatory frameworks. Relying solely on competition from government hospitals is insufficient due to long wait times, perceived service quality issues, and patient information gaps, perpetuating the risk of supplier-induced

As the Court observed, pricing-related

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Affordable hospital care requires health-care financing reforms that go beyond price regulations

discussions must start with a benchmark for price determination. Standard treatment guidelines, or STGs, can help establish relevant clinical needs, the nature and extent of care, and the costs of total inputs required. STGs can address confounders that account for varying levels of care for various hospital procedures while ensuring clinical autonomy to respond to individual needs. Consequently, it enables valuing health-care resources consumed for the precise cost of multiple procedures.

Given limited regulatory capacity, STG formulation and adoption require that providers' revenues are tied to fewer payers. Providers must rely on reimbursements from pooled payments, covering most of the population with low out-of-pocket (OOP) payment levels. With government support, payers and providers could gree on pricing that provides a reasonable and sustainable surplus over and above the input

However, this would be hindered if providers could access markets with OOP payments as an alternative or add-on to reimbursement payments. Several countries have accomplished this difficult feat through coordinated health-care purchasing reforms, highlighting that pricing issues are health systems challenges rather than law-and-order problems.

In India, over half the total health expenditure is OOP. The other half comes from a multitude of publicly and privately pooled resources. The private sector is predominantly composed of small-scale providers. Even if rates are standardised, their implementation will be uncertain. Enforcement mechanisms for adherence to prescribed rates remain unclear, raising questions about the feasibility of such regulatory measures. What if providers do not adhere to the prescribed procedure rates, much like they have resisted the rates in various health schemes?

Weak implementation

Command-and-control regulations through pecuniary measures such as price caps can swiftly influence actors' behaviour by making them follow the pronouncements. However, when enforcement mechanisms are weak, these effects are temporary because the overall

environment remains unchanged. The suggested measures face enormous enforcement challenges. Only 11 States and seven Union Territories have notified the Clinical Establishment Act, and its implementation remains weak, with little or no evidence about the impact on affordability, care quality, and

Similar design and implementation capacity constraints have hampered the effective adoption of the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority's decision to cap the prices of stents and implants since 2017 and of the many directives that mandate doctors to prescribe generic medicines.

Rate standardisation, through capped prices, may not address the fundamental problem of stakeholders' misaligned incentives. A comprehensive health financing reform informed by robust and ongoing research on appropriate processes for formulating and adopting STGs must be in place, without which the actual pricing can be manipulated and justified in any manner. For example, hospitals with lower average revenue per bed can push their rates higher by appealing to their better care quality. Without STGs, it will be nearly impossible to verify such claims objectively.

Limited data

The Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana and the Department of Health Research have made significant strides in developing STGs for common conditions and adopting a comprehensive costing framework. Efforts are also ongoing to create an Indian version of Diagnostics-Related Groups (DRGs). Although the insurance industry initiated STGs for hospitals in 2010, progress was hindered by a lack of representative and accurate costing data due to limited participation from private hospitals.

This judgment is an opportunity to create effective processes to solve a major health system problem. Rate standardisation policies must be feasible, easily implementable, and follow established price discovery practices. Future efforts must build on previous and ongoing health financing reforms, address anticipated challenges, and ensure broader stakeholder participation.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

On the campaign trail It is unfortunate that there is no let-up in bringing up unrelated issues in the speeches being made by the Prime Minister of India during his election campaigns (Inside pages, "Rahul insulted great kings, queens of this country: Modi", April, 29). It is undeniable that the rulers of the bygone era, irrespective of their religious identities, have made sterling contributions to society in multiple spheres. However, nothing will accrue if encomiums are showered on one band of kings or queens and mud slinging on the other. When a particular religion

becomes a pawn in the hands of the Prime Minister, how could his own partymen be expected to keep a low profile on public platforms? It is hoped that the utterances by the leaders of all political parties in India are confined to the norms of etiquette and decorum, lest it will lead to distrust and misgivings among the people. V. Johan Dhanakumar, Chenna

The Prime Minister's latest speech, in Belagavi, has touched a new point. Day by day, the tone and tenor of his speeches seem to be getting more and more

communal in content, which the Election Commission of India cannot easily ignore. The top leader's references to the role of nawabs, sultans, and particularly Aurangzeb, were neither warranted nor relevant. Raking up memories of the painful past is only going to result in bickering and will have a far-reaching impact on the communal front. His speeches are unstatesmanly and unbecoming of his status. Let him not sacrifice communal amity at the altar of short-term political gains. Is it too much to expect a

proper and healthy

response from the Prime Minister? S.V. Venkatakrishnan, Bengaluru

Import bill

The sorry state is that China is the top supplier to India in eight major industrial sectors, particularly in pharmaceuticals, textiles and electronic goods (Inside pages, "India's Chinese import bill up 2.3 times in 15 years", April 29). One wonders what happened to the 'Make in India' projects which were more laudably launched by the government of the day. We boasted of sending Covaxin and Covishield vaccines. Ironically, the Indian textile

industry saw glory under the phase of history that the Prime Minister highlights in a critical way in his campaign speeches. Who can forget the quality of textiles like the muslin and linen of those days? Now, we look to China for textiles. The match-stick industry is heading to an end with the import of cigarette lighters from China. The BJP's election manifesto has nothing about industrial development or alarming imports from China. Kiruba Arul,

C.V. Aravind, Bengaluru

match.

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

achieved by several teams

IPL are any indication it is

becoming abundantly clear

that the bowlers are being

sent on a leather hunt and

are being battered black

and blue in every single

Full marks, however, to

those bowlers who are still

good enough to take five

wickets in the four overs

shortest format is really a

allotted to them. The

bonanza for batters.

in the current edition of the

On a leather hunt If the massive scores being

Palayamkottai, Tamil Nadu

The poultry industry needs urgent reforms

he current outbreak of H5N1 was a disaster waiting to happen, as experts have been sounding alarm bells on the unsafe conditions at industrial livestock production for more than 10 years now. There has never been a more pressing time to discuss the welfare of farmed animals in the Indian enviro-legal perspective. India's environmental laws and regulations must reflect what the public health crisis is showing us: that animal welfare is closely interlinked with public health, ecosystem health and biodiversity conservation – the One Health principle.

Scale of the biosecurity issue

The first H5N1 infection spilt over to humans directly from chickens in Hong Kong in 1997. In India, the first H5N1 patient was reported in Maharashtra in 2006. An outbreak in December 2020 and early 2021 spread across 15 States. This pathogen has crossed many species barriers, causing mortality among the polar bears in the Arctic and seals and seagulls in Antarctica. With humans, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates the fatality rate for H5N1 at 52%, based on the 463 deaths recorded since 2003 among the 888 people diagnosed with the virus. Almost all cases of human infection with avian influenza A (H5N1) have been linked to close contact with infected birds, or contaminated environments.

These contaminated environments are created by cramming chickens in wired cages, or 'battery cages', in high densities. The resultant air quality and waste problem has a significant footprint in India due to the odour, particulate matter, and other greenhouse gas emissions. The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has classified poultry units with more than 5,000 birds as a polluting industry that requires compliance and regulatory consent to establish and operate. Some poultry industrial units have been



is Head of Programs, Animal Law Centre, Nalsar University of

India's

laws and

environmental

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us: that animal

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health and

biodiversity

conservation

closely

public health

issued closure notices by the CPCB for being in violation of the law.

Due to contract farming, large debts and a very specialised skill set, poultry farmers often find it difficult to exit the industry, despite the losses. However, the myriad problems faced by these farmers often push them out of business. The farmers suffer due to market volatility and the prevalent practices pushed by industry giants. For instance, antibiotics are regularly given to birds as a prophylactic and as growth promoters so that more animals can be grown for greater profit. Experts predict the rising demand for protein will cause a surge in antibiotic use in livestock.

Several antibiotics classified as critically important and highly important by the WHO are widely sold to farmers for preventative use. Prescribed to day-old chicks to reduce the likelihood of disease and mortality, this practice is still being commonly recommended, according to an investigation by The Bureau of Investigative

Journalism, reported in The Hindu. Animals are heavily stocked in unsanitary conditions. Not only does this have a detrimental effect on the welfare of animals and the health of those who consume the food derived, but also on the people working at these facilities and residing in the vicinity. The impact of the emissions in the atmosphere, effluents in the water systems, and solid wastes in the soil generated by these industries is felt by humans, other animals, and the environment. There is an urgent need for monitoring as well as enforcement of legal and regulatory mechanisms.

The faecal matter generated at these facilities is collected periodically by local farmers for use as fertilizer. The amount of piled-up manure exceeds the carrying capacity of the land and becomes a pollutant. Farmers complain of their crops getting damaged and piles of waste becoming a breeding ground for disease vectors such as flies. Residents are compelled to adopt measures such as spraying insecticides inside homes, leading to breathlessness and a nauseating smell.

Keeping animals in intensive confinement constitutes a crime under the provisions of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCA) Act, 1960. Moreover, the operational activities at these industrial facilities cause unnecessary pain and suffering to the animals because of mutilation, starvation, thirst, overcrowding, and other ill-treatment, which is also a violation of the PCA Act

Path to legal reform

The 269th Law Commission of India Report in 2017 placed on record a representation by the Tata Memorial Centre that contained evidence that non-therapeutic antibiotics given to poultry cause antibiotic resistance since living conditions are unhygienic. It further said that with more open, cleaner, and ventilated living spaces, animals are less likely to need constant antibiotics, making their eggs and meat safer for consumption. Finally, it made recommendations for a set of two draft rules for the welfare of chickens in the meat and egg industries, noting that improved animal welfare results in better and safer food. These rules laid down guidelines as per existing laws and international best practices for animal care, waste management, and antibiotic use, among others.

However, the Draft Rules for the egg industry released by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare in 2019 are weak and tokenistic. They must meet the recommendations of the Law Commission. Strict oversight for compliance and enforcement of environmental regulations is the need of the hour, given the CPCB's reclassification of the poultry industry as a highly polluting 'orange category' industry. In light of the bird flu public health crisis and the climate emergency, it is crucial for the situation to be

Pulling out all the stops in Kerala

The BJP intensified its campaign this time, but remains unsure of winning seats

STATE OF PLAY

Biju Govind biju.govind@thehindu.co.in

here were key takeaways from the recently concluded Lok Sabha elections in Kerala. The first was the fact that Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the State five times in just four months. This is an unprecedented number for Mr. Modi, who did not make such efforts in Kerala during Lok Sabha or Assembly elections in the past.

The second was that the two main rival parties - the Congress and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) - approached these polls with a political fervour usually seen only in Assembly elections. However, given that the voter turnout was only 71.27%, much lower than the 77.84% recorded in the 2019 polls, both the parties are now cautiously awaiting the outcome.

With lofty electoral ambitions and a strategic push in the south to establish the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) as a pan-India party, Mr. Modi deftly navigated the rivalry between the Congress and the CPI(M) and their alleged appeasement politics. He also leveraged the perceived antiincumbency against the CPI (M)-led Left Democratic Front (LDF) government. During his campaign in north India, he made it a point to mention the bitter exchange between Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, who is seeking re-election from Wayanad, and Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan. While Mr. Gandhi alleged that a CPI(M)-BJP nexus shielded Mr. Vijayan from Central agencies, the Chief Minister retaliated with indirect references to the 'Pappu' jibe.



At the same time, both the Congress and the CPI(M) failed to effectively capitalise on Mr. Modi's anti-Muslim rhetoric at a rally in Rajasthan.

Since the BJP-led government came to power at the Centre in 2014, the party has tactically attempted to make advances in Kerala. Through its campaign during the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, it also seemed to be preparing for the 2026 Assembly elections. The BJP leadership has attempted to cement its relationship to some extent with the leadership of the Nair Service Society and the Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam to win the votes of two dominant Hindu communities Nairs and the the

Ezhavas/Thiyyas. Unlike in the past, the BJP central leadership decided not to involve the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh during electioneering, perhaps under the belief that the heightened activism of the organisation may mar the chances of its candidates in Thiruvanananthapuram and Thrissur, i.e., Union Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology Rajeev Chandrasekhar and actor-politician Suresh Gopi, respectively.

Simultaneously, the controversial movie, The Kerala Story, was aired on the national broadcaster Doordarshan. It was aimed at reigniting the socalled 'love jihad' conspiracy theory propagated by both Hindutva outfits and radical Christian groups. Soon afterwards, the Idukki Diocese, under the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church, screened the movie for students. The Kerala Catholic Youth Movement unit of the Thamarassery Diocese of the Syro-Malabar Church in Kozhikode also decided to screen the movie. However, the organisers later postponed the screening for a date after the general elections, as they felt that the issue was getting overly politicised. Many believe that the timing of the decision to screen the movie was part of a wider game plan of a section of the laity and the clergy within the Catholic Church to help the BJP win over the Christian community. The party also fielded Anil K. Antony, son of Congress Working Committee member A.K. Antony, in Pathanamthitta.

During the polls, Delhi Lieutenant Governor V.K. Saxena visited Kerala to have an audience with the heads of the Syro Malabar Church, the Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church, and the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church. This sparked a controversy, though he clarified that his visit was without any political motive.

The BIP also actively poached disgruntled leaders from the Congress and CPI(M) and tried to engineer defections from other parties. The admission of LDF convener and CPI(M) Central Committee member E.P. Jayarajan on polling day that he had met BJP Kerala in-charge Prakash Javadekar caused embarrassment to the CPI(M).

It was clear that the BJP intensified its campaign in Kerala this time. It seems confident of increasing its vote share in nearly all the 16 out of 20 seats where it contested banking on the Modi factor. But it remains uncertain on winning any

The rising share of personal income tax and indirect tax is a concern

Recent data show that personal income tax collections have increased, while collections from corporate taxes have reduced

DATA POINT

Vignesh Radhakrishnan, Rebecca Rose Varghese & Rachita Rabboni

ver the last week, during the election campaign, the Congress' manifesto and the party's emphasis on social justice and welfare were suddenly thrust into the limelight. Prime Minister Narendra Modi sought to give the Congress' demand for a caste census and its plans to study distribution of surplus government land to the poor, among others, a communal turn. The Congress defended its manifesto saying the rising wealth inequality in the country needs to be addressed and dismissed Mr. Modi's claims that its plans intended to favour a particular religious group. In the midst of this political controversy, the Chairman of the Indian Overseas Congress, Sam Pitroda, floated the idea of an inheritance tax, which is not in place in India and is also not men-

tioned in the Congress' manifesto. Almost concurrently, the Finance Ministry released provisional data that showed an uptick in net tax collections. This is mostly driven by an increase in personal income tax and securities transaction tax collections. On the other hand, net corporate tax collections have reduced marginally. The data also show that revenues from personal income tax and securities transaction tax grew at almost double the pace compared to revenues from corporate tax last year.

We look at some numbers to provide context to the ongoing debate and the recent release of tax data. Chart 1 shows corporate tax and personal income tax as a share of gross tax revenue, as of February every year. As can be seen from the chart, the share of corporate tax has been on a decreasing trend, while that of personal income tax has been increasing. As

of February 2024, the gap between the two tax shares further increased, with income tax forming 28% of the gross tax – a new peak. The sharp fall in corporate tax after FY19 can be attributed to the deep corporate tax cuts introduced by the Bharativa Ianata Party-led government in September

The data also show that the share of direct taxes has been decreasing, while that of indirect taxes has been increasing. Direct taxes, which include taxes levied directly on the incomes of corporations and individuals, are said to be "progressive" because those who earn less are taxed less and vice-versa. On the other hand, indirect taxes, which include union excise duties and the Goods and Services Tax, are considered "regressive" as all consumers, regardless of their income levels, pay the same amount.

Chart 2 shows the share of direct and indirect taxes in the combined tax revenue receipts of the Centre and the States across years. As can be seen from the chart, the share of indirect taxes, which had been falling steadily since the 1980s, has increased in the past decade. On the other hand, the share of direct taxes, which had been increasing, has consistently recorded a downturn in recent

Importantly, Chart 3 shows that a bulk of those who file personal income tax earn an annual income of ₹1 lakh-₹5 lakh. Richer individuals who earn more than ₹50 lakh are few and far between.

Moreover, a comparison with BRICS economies, for which data are available, shows that the effective personal income tax rate in India is among the highest (Chart 4).

Put together, the data show that poorer citizens and those in the middle-class category are increasingly shouldering a higher share of the tax burden. This is due to the combination of the rising share of personal income tax and indirect taxes in total revenue.

Taxing times

The data for the charts were sourced from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy, the Controller General of Accounts, and PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC)



income tax as a share of gross tax revenue, as of February Corporate tax 20 Personal income tax

Chart 1: The chart shows corporate tax and personal

Chart 2: The chart shows the share of direct and indirect taxes in the combined tax revenue receipts of the Centre

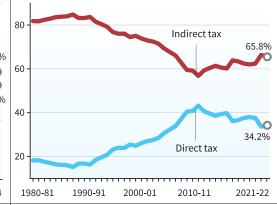


Chart 3: The chart shows the annual income bracketwise share in total income tax returns filed and the share in total amount of income tax paid

2014-15

2009-10

Rachita Rabboni is interning with The Hindu Data Team

2000-01

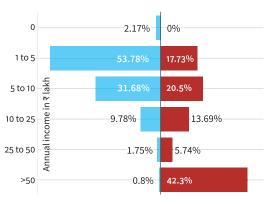
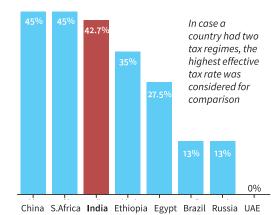


Chart 4: The chart compares the effective personal which had data





FIFTY YEARS AGO APRIL 30, 1974

Presidential polls: Supreme Court's opinion to be got

New Delhi, April 29: The Union Government has decided to seek the opinion of the Supreme Court on whether the Presidential election due before August 24, could be held despite the dissolution of the Gujarat Legislative Assembly. An announcement to this effect was made in Parliament to-day.

The following is the text of the Law Minister's statement: "The House is aware that the term of office of the present President of India expires on August 24, 1974. Under Article 62(1) of the Constitution an election to fill a vacancy caused by the expiration of the term of office of the President is required to be completed before the expiry of the term. This House is also aware that the Gujarat State Legislative Assembly was dissolved on March 15, 1974. A question has been raised whether the election to the office of the President can be held notwithstanding the dissolution of the Gujarat Assembly. The Government is prima facie of the view that on a true and correct interpretation of Article 54, 55, 56 and 62 and 71 of the Constitution, the electoral college consists only of the elected members of such of the Legislative Assemblies of States as are in existence at or before the expiry of the term of office of the President. However, a contrary view has been expressed both inside and outside this House. Quesions of far-reaching importance have arisen as to the composition of the electoral college where Legislative Assemblies of one or more States stand dissolved and in view of the fact that a question of great public importance has arisen, the Government has decided to recommend to the President to obtain the opinion of the Supreme Court under Article 143 of the Constitution as regards the true and correct interpretation of Articles 54, 62, 71 and the relevant provisions of the Constitution so far as they concern the election of the President to fill the vacancy caused by the expiration of the term of office of the President."

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO APRIL 30, 1924

Swedish match co

Stockholm, April 29: The Swedish Match Manufacturing Company has doubled its share capital to 190 million crowns. It will use the new capital to complete its factories in Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, and Karachi.

M ND-NDE

Text&Context

THEMOHINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Indian tourists who visited Singapore from January to March

received 2.9 lakh tourists during January-March 2019. The Singapore tourism board has focussed on family and film tourism to improve arrivals. PTI

Iraqi citizens repatriated from Syrian camp

Iraqis, predominantly women and children, linked to the Islamic State group arrived at a camp near Iraq's city of Mosul. Iraq announced they will undergo a rehabilitation program. AP

Arrests made as protests continue in U.S. campuses

These protestors were arrested on Saturday from Universities including, Indiana University, Arizona State University, and Washington University in St. Louis. AP

Volume of India's first commercial crude storage in the works

in million tonnes. Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Ltd, an SPV created by the government, has invited bids for constructing 2.5 million tonnes of underground storage in Karnataka. PTI

Aid needed to alleviate El Nino dry spell in Zimbabwe

in billion dollars. Zimbabwe President Emmerson Mnangagwa declared the drought a national disaster. A dry spell induced by El Nino is wreaking havoc across southern Africa. AFP COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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Why are unclassed forests 'missing'?

What does the Forest (Conservation) Act Amendment (FCAA) 2023 mandate with respect to unclassed forests? What was the criticism against the amended Act? Have all States submitted their State Expert Committee reports as per the Supreme Court directives?

EXPLAINER

Prakriti Srivastava Krithika Sampath Prerna Singh Bindra

The story so far:

n compliance with a February 19, 2024, Supreme Court order, the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) uploaded the various State Expert Committee (SEC) reports on its website earlier in April. This interim order was in response to a public interest litigation challenging the constitutionality of the Forest (Conservation) Act Amendment (FCAA) 2023. A key concern in the petition was that the status of unclassed forests, which were to be identified by the SEC reports, wasn't known or if they had been identified at all.

What does the FCAA stipulate?

With the enactment of FCAA, unclassed forests – which have legal protection under the landmark T.N. Godavarman Thirumalpad (1996) case – would lose this protection, leading to their inevitable diversion. The SEC reports were to be prepared in pursuance of the order, which specified that 'forests' as per their dictionary meaning and all categories of forests irrespective of ownership and notification status would be included under the ambit of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. As a result, unclassed forests, also known as deemed forests, would require the Central government's approval in case a project proponent sought to divert that land for non-forest use. Unclassed or deemed forests may belong to forests, revenue, railways and other government entities, community forests or those under private ownership, but are not notified.

Have these forests been identified? The status of the reports were unknown from 1996 until they shot back into prominence when the MoEFCC told a Joint Parliamentary Committee that the



Needs protection: Wild gaurs grazing in a forest area under Munnar wildlife division in Idukki. FILE PHOTO

SECs had identified unclassed forests that had been taken on record. This was in response to criticism that the proposed law undermined the Godavarman iudgment and would exclude all unclassed forest land from its purview. The MoEFCC had assured the Committee that "the amended Act would be applicable" to the SEC-identified unclassed forests. However, in response to an RTI application filed on January 17, the MoEFCC said it "did not have the requisite reports".

While the MoEFCC has now uploaded the SEC reports on its website, they reveal a grim picture: no State has provided verifiable data on the identification, status, and location of unclassed forests. In fact, seven States and Union Territories – Goa, Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Lakshadweep, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal – appear not to have constituted the SEC at all. Twenty-three

States have shared their reports but only 17 are in line with the Court's directives. Many States have said the one month

provided by the top court was too short and "the nature of work voluminous". and as a result haven't undertaken physical cadastral surveys nor demarcation of unclassed forest lands.

What do the reports say?

Only nine States have provided the extent of unclassed forests. Most states and UTs only shared the extent of different types of forest areas specified in the order: under government ownership, either with forest or revenue and in a few cases under other government departments.

Also, almost no State or UT specified the geographic locations of forests. Any identifying geographical information of forest land, where given, is only of reserve or protected forests, which isn't useful because this information is already

available with Forest Departments. The SEC reports also question the veracity of the reports of the Forest Survey of India, the only government agency to survey and assess forests. For example Gujarat, whose SEC report says its unclassed forests cover 192.24 sq. km while the Survey has reported it as significantly higher at 4,577 sq. km (1995-1999).

The treatment of SECs without on-ground verification is likely to have resulted in the large-scale destruction of forests – which ought to have been identified, demarcated, and protected 27 years ago. But with no baseline data from 1996-1997, we have no idea how much unclassed forest has been lost. For example, Kerala's SEC didn't include the Pallivasal unreserve, an ecologically fragile area in Munnar; this area was also devastated during the 2018 floods.

What would be the effects of FCAA? The loss of such forests is likely to be a

recurring theme in all States, and needs to be investigated. It is also clear the reports were hastily put together, using incomplete and unverified data collected from readily available records, and submitted to the Supreme Court in order to fulfil their obligations.

The Godavarman order of the SC was to be implemented in letter and spirit. The failure to do this is a lost opportunity to achieve the requirements of the Indian Forest Policy, which envisages 33.3% forest cover in plains and 66.6% in the hills. Promulgating the FCAA without examining the SEC reports displays a lack of diligence on the MoEFCC's part and will have consequences for India's ecosystems and ecological security. Those responsible need to be held to account, and the national government needs to take ameliorative action to re-identify, retrieve, and protect forest areas as per the 1996 judgment.

Prakriti Srivastava is an IFS (retd.) officer who has served as DIG (wildlife) in the MoEFCC. Prerna Singh Bindra is former member, National Board for Wildlife. Krithika Sampath is a researcher from the University of Michigan.

THE GIST

With the enactment of FCAA, unclassed forests - which have legal protection under the landmark T.N. Godavarman Thirumalpad (1996) case would lose this protection, leading to their inevitable diversion.

No State has provided

verifiable data on the identification, status, and location of unclassed forests. In fact, seven States and Union Territories appear not to have constituted the SEC at all. Twenty-three States have shared their reports but only 17 are in line with the Court's directives.

It is clear that the reports were hastily put together, using incomplete and unverified data collected from readily available

Why is Venice charging an entry fee for tourists?

How have local residents' associations responded to the move? Is overcrowding a significant issue in the city?

Atanu Biswas

The story so far:

n April 25, Venice, a city in Italy, to control overtourism, introduced an entry fee for visitors who are coming in to visit the city.

What is the Venice access fee?

Day-trippers coming to the city between 8.30 am and 4 pm are now required to pay €5. Overnight visitors are not charged, nor are residents, commuters, students, or children under 14. As part of a trial period, the entrance fee, which can be paid online and is only necessary to enter Venice's historic centre, is applicable on 29 peak days from April 25 to July 14. Transgressors risk fines ranging from €50 to €300.

What has been the response? Some locals consider it a "joke," arguing that it could turn Venice into a 'theme park'. A number of residents' associations have protested, claiming that it is a political ploy that most likely won't stop tourists from visiting St. Mark's Square and the Rialto Bridge. On its first day, 5,500 individuals purchased tickets, bringing in €27,500, which may just be enough to cover operating costs.

It's a "first-of-its-kind experiment," according to Venice Mayor Luigi Brugnaro, to lessen overcrowding, promote longer stays, and enhance the quality of life for locals in one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world. It's an effort to find a new equilibrium between residents and visitors. It would also aid in gathering basic data and controlling visitor flows. But some have also brought up privacy-related issues.

Is overcrowding an issue in Venice? The introduction of the tourist tax comes after Venice just managed to avoid being

included on UNESCO's danger list last year due to the harm that overtourism was causing to its fragile ecosystem. Due to mass tourism, Venice's main island, which was once the heart of a powerful maritime republic, has lost more than 1,20,000 residents since the early 1950s. The population shrank to fifty thousand. With 3.2 million overnight guests in the historic centre in 2022 and over 30 million day-trippers annually, the city experiences congestion when the number of day-trippers approaches 30,000-40,000. It is thought that day-trippers contribute very little to the local economy.

What about sustainability?

Venice has been making an effort to re-establish a more sustainable relationship with tourists. The insistence from UNESCO and other environmentalists' eventually forced the authority to forbid big cruise ships from

passing through the Giudecca canal and past St. Mark's Square. A positive spillover effect of the Venice entry tax would be the reducing of the rapidly increasing number of unauthorised Airbnbs within the city. People operating illegal rentals will need to register legitimately (and pay tax) since anyone staying overnight will have to disclose where they are staying.

What about other popular spots?

Overtourism is a problem in many other European cities, including Amsterdam, Barcelona, and London. Tens of thousands of Spanish citizens recently protested in the Canary Islands, demanding a cap on the number of tourists allowed to visit the archipelago.

Seville's main Plaza de España also requires a fee to enter.

The small admission price might just be the beginning. The Italian town of Bagnoregio levied a fee on visitors in 2018 to collect funds for its rescue since portions of the town are collapsing and it was successful. The most visited place in Wales is the town of Portmeirion in north Wales, which is one of the few British towns which charges for admission.

Can India follow suit?

Similarly, India which is home to a large number of tourist spots can definitely earn a lot from tourism while simultaneously deterring insignificant revenue-generating tourists.

THE GIST

Day-trippers coming to the city between 8.30 am and 4 pm are now required to pay €5. Overnight visitors are not charged

Overtourism is a problem in many other cities, including Amsterdam, Barcelona, and London

The introduction of the tourist tax comes after Venice just managed to avoid being included on UNESCO's danger list last year due to the harm that overtourism was causing to its fragile ecosystem.

KEYWORD



The paradox of thrift: does a rise in savings cause a fall in investment?

Keynesian economists argue that a rise in individuals' savings, by reducing the amount of money that is spent on final goods and services, can in effect cause a significant fall in overall savings and investment

<u>Prashanth Perumal</u>

he paradox of savings, also known as the paradox of thrift, refers to the theory that a rise in the savings rate of individuals can surprisingly cause a fall rather than a rise in the overall savings in an economy. This is in contrast to the general belief that a rise in individuals' savings rates will cause a rise in the overall savings in the economy. So even though savings may be good for an individual household, it is believed that it may not be good for the wider economy. The idea is part of the under-consumption theories of the

business cycle which attribute economic downturns to weak consumption and high savings.

Origins of the theory

The concept was popularised by British economist John Maynard Keynes in his 1936 book *The General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money*. Prior to Keynes, it was discussed by economists William T. Foster and Waddill Catchings in works such as *Business without a Buyer* and *The Dilemma of Thrift*.

Keynesian economists believe that

higher savings is bad for the wider economy, and that boosting consumer spending is the way to grow an economy. They argue that savings are invested by capitalists with the ultimate aim of selling their output in the form of final goods and services to consumers. So, if consumers fail to spend enough money on the output that capitalists bring to the market to sell, it can cause losses to capitalists and discourage further investment. On the other hand, a rise in consumer demand for final goods and services is expected to encourage people to save more and invest.

So, Keynesian economists argue that a rise in individuals' savings, by reducing the amount of money that is spent on final goods and services, can in effect cause a significant fall in overall savings and investment. In fact, many economists today believe that fluctuations in consumer spending are the primary reason behind the business cycle. They recommend that the government should take various measures, including increasing government spending, to put more money in the hands of consumers during economic downturns. Basically, in the Keynesian view of the economy, the primary challenge that fiscal and

monetary authorities need to solve is how to get people to spend enough money on final goods and services to justify the costs that capitalists incur to produce these goods and services.

Criticisms of the idea

Critics of the idea argue that saving more is not bad for the economy and that a fall in consumer spending does not actually cause a fall in investment. In fact, they argue that a fall in consumer spending leads to a rise in savings and investment. This is simply because any money that people don't spend on consumer goods or hoard under their beds has to go towards their savings, which in turn gets invested.

A rise in savings, they further note, causes an increase in entrepreneurial demand from capitalists for various factors of production. So, lower consumer demand for final goods and services gets offset by higher demand for factors of production, and hence there is no drop in aggregate demand in the economy as a result of higher savings.

Secondly, critics argue that it is not really true that a drop in consumer spending will lead to a drop in investment owing to a lack in consumer demand for

the final goods and services produced by businesses. Instead, they argue, a drop in consumer spending will simply cause a change in the way capitalists allocate their savings across time. In other words, these economists note that there won't be any adverse consequences due to lower consumer spending.

When people spend less on consumer goods and save more, they note, this will cause capitalists to invest a greater amount of available savings to satisfy consumer demand in the more distant future. So, longer-term business projects which were earlier unviable due to people's preference to consume goods and services in the near future rather than in the distant future suddenly become viable.

Now, the greater time allowed for capitalists to bring finished products to the market is a major reason why economic output is much higher in an advanced economy, these economists point out.

Put another way, the critics argue that capitalists in a free economy will effectively reallocate higher savings in accordance with the greater preference that consumers show for goods in the distant future than in the near future.



THE DAILY QUIZ

A quiz on all things jazz on the occasion of International Jazz Day celebrated on April 30

V.V. Ramanan

QUESTION 1

Which famous American jazz musician and composer mooted the idea of having an International Jazz Day and when was it first observed?

QUESTION 2

Which African city is the Global Host for 2024 and will anchor International Jazz Day programmes around the world?

QUESTION 3

Characterised by heavy mode modulation and few chord changes, which type of jazz had its pioneers in Miles Davis and John Coltrane?

QUESTION 4

Bird, the 1988 biographical film directed and produced by Clint Eastwood, is about which famous jazz musician?

QUESTION 5

What is the claim to fame of 'Livery Stable Blues' released in February 1917?

QUESTION 6

Which acclaimed jazz musicians were nicknamed 'High Priest of Bop' and 'King of the Clarinet'?

QUESTION 7

Whose autobiography is titled *Lady Sings the Blues* that was adapted into a movie in 1972, starring Diana Ross?



Visual question:
Identify this legendary singer dubbed the 'the Lady of Swing' and also famous for improvised scat solos. AP

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. This country has won the Thomas Cup the most number of times. Ans:

Indonesia
2. The only European/non-Asian country to have won the Thomas Cup. Ans: Denmark

3. India hosted the Cup only once here. **Ans: In 2014 in New Delhi** 4. This country has won the Uber Cup the most number of times. **Ans:**

5. The only non-Asian country to have won the Uber Cup so far. **Ans: The U.S.**

6. The number of times India has qualified for the semi-finals in the Uber Cup. Ans: Three times Visual: Identify this Indian athlete. Ans: K. Srikanth

Early Birds: Varghese Joseph Saheni George | Sadhan Kumar Panda | M. Suresh Kumar | Abhay Krishan



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

K. Subramanian

"In limbo (Dr. K. V. K. Veereswaran, Dindigul)."

"'In limbo' is an idiom which means 'in an intermediate or uncertain state; neglected.'

The proposal has been in limbo for several years.

According to early Christian theology, good people born before Christ and unbaptised children born after Christ were sent after their death to the border of Hell called Limbo. Their souls, it was believed, would reach Heaven during the second coming of Christ."

"Umbrella organisation (G. Chandramouli, Mysore)."

"'Umbrella organisation' is 'a controlling agency for a group of related companies, groups, projects, etc.' UNESCO is an umbrella organistion."

"Familiar with, familiar to (Sabir Kr. Dey, Basudevpur, West Bengal)." " 'Familiar with' means 'knowing a

thing well or in detail'.

I am familiar with this subject.
I am not familiar with this route.

'Familiar to' means 'well known.'

This area must be familiar to you.

'Familiar with' also means 'friendly

and informal.'

I am on familiar terms with him."

"Latitudinarian (T. R. R. lyengar,

Madurai)."
"One of the meanings of latitude is 'freedom to do, say, etc. what one likes.' A latitudinarian is one who allows latitude, especially in religion. He pays little attention to dogma and orthodoxy.

Orthodox people dislike him as he is a latitudinarian."

"Samey (K. Puranik, Bombay)."

"'Samey' means 'lacking in variety, monotonous, dull.' This is a colloquial word. It is from 'same'.

His paintings are samey. I don't like them.

Her plays are samey."
"Steal as a noun (Girija Joshi,

"Steal as a noun (Girija Josh Varanasi)."

"Steal is used as a noun in colloquial American English. It has two meanings. One is 'an act or instance of stealing or theft'. The other is 'an expectedly easy task or bargain'.

At ₹200, this camera is a steal."

"Not do a hand's turn (K. Sasidaran, Kozhikode)."
"(Not do a hand's turn' mana 'not

" 'Not do a hand's turn' means 'not do any work.' He does not do a hand's turn at home.

He just eats and sleeps."
"Evident, obvious (P. D. Moorthy,

"Both mean 'clear, plain'. You say that something is evident when it can be inferred from indications.

It is evident that he has stolen them. 'Obvious' is from Latin 'obvium' which means 'on the road.' What is on the road is unmistakably clear.

It is obvious that he is the thief.
Evident means 'plain,' 'obvious' means 'unmistakably plain.'

Published in The Hindu on October 22, 1991.

Word of the day

Hardscrabble:

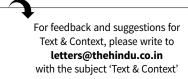
barely satisfying a lower standard

Synonyms: scrimpy, stingy, meagre

Usage: He lived a hardscrabble life.

Pronunciation: bit.ly/hardscrabblepro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /hɑɹdˌskɹæbəl/



M ND-NDE

From Page One

Revanth gets notice over 'doctored' video of Shah

The doctored video was reportedly posted on X by Telangana Congress on April 27. The post was not available on Monday.

Reacting to the FIR by the Delhi Police, Mr. Reddy, who was addressing a rally in Kalaburagi in Karnataka, said he was not "scared". "So far, the Enforcement Directorate, Central Bureau of Investigation and Income Tax Department were used by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Home Minister to win elections, but today I got to know that a team of Delhi Police reached the Telangana Congress's office because someone posted something on social media. They came to arrest the Telangana Congress president and the Telangana CM, this means the PM is using Delhi Police to win elections now, but we aren't scared", he said.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma posted on X that the police have arrested an individual of the State named Reetam Singh in connection with the fake video. Further, a senior police official from the Assam Police too confirmed the arrest of the 31-year-old Mr. Singh, a lawyer at the Guwahati High Court. He is currently the State War Room Coordinator of the Congress's Assam

The Delhi Police lodged an FIR in the matter on Sunday, after an official of the Ministry of Home Affairs submitted a complaint about the doctored video. The FIR was registered under Sections 153 (causing provocation with intention to cause riot) , 153A (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc), 465 (forgery), 469 (forgery to harm the reputation of any party), and 171G (publishing false statement with intent to affect the result of an election) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and under the Information Technology Act, the police said.

The Mumbai Police and Assam Police too registered cases under similar sections.

Taking a dig at Congress leaders who allegedly posted the doctored video, Mr. Modi said that those who lost elections are using technology to create fake videos and AI to spread misinformation. "I request the Election Commission to take action against those responsible," said Mr. Modi.

JD(S) set to suspend Hassan MP Prajwal

Home Minister G. Parameshwara has already announced that all facets of the complaint will be

After several pen drives containing sex videos allegedly involving Mr. Prajwal came out in public days ahead of the election early last week, the Karnataka government on Sunday constituted the SIT to probe the scandal that is believed to involve several women in about 3,000 files. The Congress has upped the ante seeking answers from the JD (S) as well as the saffron party on the scandal. Mr. Praiwal the ID(S) candidate is nitted against the Congress nominee Shreyas Patel in Hassan where the election has been completed in the second phase. A formal announcement on suspension is expected after discussion at the core committee meeting that has been convened in Hubballi.

'We are demanding a comprehensive inquiry. If found guilty, we will raise our voices on behalf of women seeking punishment to the accused. Our stand is that if found guilty, he has to be punished," Mr. Kumaraswamy said while maintaining that neither Prime Minister Narendra Modi nor the BJP had anything to do with the scandal.

Multiple teams

Meanwhile, the SIT began its probe by questioning one of the suspected victims in the case on Monday, sources said, adding that multiple teams have been assigned with specific tasks. Sources in the SIT said the big task before them was to identify the victims in the videos now being circulated.

Cache of arms recovered in Nagaland; one arrested

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

In an intelligence-based operation code-named Cloudburst, the Assam Rifles on Monday recovered a huge cache of arms, ammunition and war-like stores and arrested one individual in Mon district of Nagaland near the Indo-Myanmar border.

The recoveries include four 106mm RCL tubes, 11 82-mm mortar tubes, 10 pistols of various kinds, 198 hand-held radio sets and one satellite phone, the Defence spokesperson Lohima said. They were recovered from a Bolero jeep and a motorbike.

"Recovery of these heavy calibre, military grade weapons close to the border area is a major success for the border sealing operation under way by Assam Rifles. The recovery is also a major blow to the nefarious designs of inimical elements trying to disturb peace in the region," the statement said. The apprehended individual and the recovered items have been handed over to the Nagaland Police, the spokesperson added.

BJP, Cong. seek time to reply to EC notice on violation of code

Both parties miss the 11 a.m. deadline on Monday; the BJP has requested a week's time, while the Congress wants 14 days to submit its response

Sreeparna Chakrabarty NEW DELHI

he Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) on Monsought a week's time to respond to the Election Commission's notice issued to party president J.P. Nadda on complaints against Prime Minister Narendra Modi, while the Congress has sought 14 more days on a similar plaint against Rahul Gandhi.

Both parties were supposed to submit their responses by 11 a.m. on Monday.

The EC sources said that the Congress had initially sought time till 5 p.m. on Monday but later asked for 14 more days.

No names of leaders

On April 25, the EC had for the first time issued a notice for violation of the Model Code of Conduct by Mr. Modi. However, taking a circuitous route, the notice



The EC issuing notices to party unprecedented.

was sent to Mr. Nadda and not to Mr. Modi directly. The notice failed even to mention the Prime Minister by name but the complaints attached along with it were those of the Congress, CPI(M) and so on, against Mr. Modi's "malicious election speech deli-Banswara vered at (Rajasthan)".

A similar notice issued to Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge contained complaints against him and Mr. Gandhi. This notice, too, did not name any of the leaders.

The EC issuing the notices to the respective party presidents instead of the leaders concerned was considered unprecedented. In its notice to the BJP, the EC asked Mr. Nadda to get all the star campaigners of the party to "set high standards of political discourse and observe provisions of the model code of conduct in letter and spirit". The commission said it had decided that while individual star campaigners would continue to remain responsible for the speeches they made, the Commission would address party chiefs "on a case-to-case basis".

The poll panel also held that campaign speeches made by those holding high positions had more serious consequences.

In the notice to Mr. Kharge, the EC included complaints filed by the BJP, alleging that he and Mr. Gandhi had violated the

SC issues notice to ED on Hemant Soren's plea for interim bail

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday issued notice to the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on former Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren's plea for interim bail.

A Bench headed by Justice Sanjiv Khanna posted the case for the week commencing on May 6.

Meanwhile, the Bench, including Justice Dipankar Datta, gave the Jharkhand High Court liberty to pronounce judgment on Mr. Soren's petition challenging his arrest by the ED in January.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, for Mr. Soren, said none of the predicate offences, including forgery or fraud, could be linked to his client. "He is not involved in any of that," Mr. Sibal said.

Justice Khanna, however, said there were allegations of proceeds of crime linked to Mr. Soren. "There is a plot of [land of] 8.5 acres," Justice Khanna said.

Mr. Soren had moved the Supreme Court on April 24, saying the High

My arrest came

after the

declaration of the Model

Code of Conduct... So.

did you leave a guilty

Chief Minister to roam

free all these years?



Hemant Sorer

Court was not pronouncing its verdict on his plea challenging his arrest by the ED in the money laundering case. He was arrested on January 31 after he resigned as the Jharkhand Chief Minister, and party loyalist and State Transport Minister Champai Soren was named as his successor.

He was arrested after being questioned by the ED for seven hours in the

The ED is probing the alleged "huge amounts of proceeds of crime generated by manipulation of official records by showing dummy sellers and purchasers in the guise of forged/bogus documents to acquire huge parcels of land having value in crores".

SC asks if untainted teacher appointments in Bengal can be saved

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday asked if untainted appointments, among the nearly 24,000 made in 2016 by the West Bengal School Service Commission to teaching and noteaching posts in State schools, can be salvaged.

A Bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud was hearing a petition filed by the State government against a Calcutta High Court order to terminate 23,123 teaching and non-teaching staffers en bloc. The government had argued that such a move would drastically affect students and put school education in the State in a quandary, that too, at the beginning of the new academic year. The education system itself may come to a standstill.

Though the Supreme Court declined to immediately stay the High Court order, it posted the case for further hearing on Mon-

day. "The question is whether, on the basis of material available, is it possible to segregate valid and invalid appointments and who are the beneficiaries of the fraud. We see those 25,000 jobs taken away is a serious thing. Unless we see that the entire thing is fraught with fraud," the Chief Justice observed.

The Bench asked the CBI to hold its hand in an investigation into a State government decision to create conditional supernumerary posts to accommodate the teachers whose appointments were allegedly irregular.

The State had argued that even the CBI report had alleged irregularities in the recruitment of only a little over 4,000 appointments. Neither the SSC nor the CBI had ever indicated that the entire recruitment process was tainted.

The SSC had held the selection process in 2016 for assistant teachers for Classes 9 to 12 and non-teaching

Mere non-cooperation with ED not a ground for arrest, Kejriwal tells SC

Krishnadas Rajagopal NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal put up a spirited stand in the Supreme Court on Monday against his arrest in the liquor policy case, saying mere noncooperation with the Enforcement Directorate (ED) cannot be a ground for his incarceration by the Central agency.

"My arrest came after he declaration of the Model Code of Conduct. Was I a hardened criminal or a terrorist who would run away... So, did you leave a guilty Chief Minister to roam free all these years?" senior advocate A.M. Singhvi, appearing for Mr. Kejriwal, submitted before a Bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar

'Right to not speak'

Mr. Kejriwal contended he had a right to not give an incriminating statement against himself to the ED. He invoked his fundamental right against self-incrim-



ination under Article 20, the right to due procedure and liberty (Article 21) of the Constitution and even referred to the Magna

"... I have a right to not speak against myself," Mr. Singhvi said.

Justice Khanna, at one point, asked whether Mr. Kejriwal had applied for bail in the trial court as yet. Mr. Keiriwal's petition, after all, was against both his arrest and remand.

Additional Solicitor-General S.V. Raju, for the ED, pointed out that the Chief Minister had not challenged subsequent remands. He had been remanded five times so far. He is currently in judicial custody till May 7.

ARVIND KEJRIWAL

"I am not saying Chief Minister has immunity, but does he have lesser rights," Mr. Singhvi queried in a retort to the ED's affidavit that "criminal" politicians did not have immunity from arrest, especially to campaign for the Lok Sabha election.

Justice Khanna wondered if Mr. Singhvi was saying that an arresting authority ought to objectively weigh factors both for and against a person before arrest. The power to arrest did not necessarily mean an obligation to arrest, Mr. Singhvi replied. The ED's power to summon under Section 50 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) did not inherently include the power to arrest under Section 19 of the law, Mr. Singhvi noted. He said arrest should be based on material in the possession of the ED which gave it reason to believe that the person was guilty of an offence punishable under the PMLA.

'... Can the ED say 'you did not come' and that by itself is grounds for holding you guilty and arresting you under Section 19?" Mr. Singhvi asked.

"I was arrested the day I was unable to get interim protection from the Delhi High Court. You [ED] came to my house and spent 10 hours, then arrested me. The ground for arrest should be positive and inculpatory, not because I was unable to get protection or I did not cooperate. Where is the 'reason to believe', where is the material in your [ED] possession?" Mr. challenged.

Arguments would continue on Tuesday.

Asst. Prof convicted for bid to traffic T.N. students

The Hindu Bureau SRIVILLIPUTTUR

A Fast Track Mahila Court at Srivilliputtur on Monday convicted Nirmala Devi, a former assistant professor at the Devanga Arts College at Arupukottai, on the charge of attempting to traffic four girl students of

the college in 2018. But judge T.T. Bagavathiammal acquitted two other accused. The quantum of sentence for Nirmala Devi will be pronounced on Tuesday. The case had sent shock waves because of the nature of the crime and because the office of Governor was dragged into the scandal. The then Governor had denied any connection with the accused

Why is Prime Minister silent on Prajwal Revanna, asks Congress

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

The Congress attacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP, accusing them of fielding Prajwal Revanna - ID(S) MP and grandson of party supremo H.D. Deve Gowda from the Hassan Lok Sabha constituency, despite being informed by the Karnataka BJP leaders about his sexual misconduct.

The JD(S) is fighting the Lok Sabha election in Karnataka in alliance with the

A case has been registered in the State against Mr. Prajwal and his father H.D. Revanna, after a domestic help at their household filed a complaint. She alleged that four months after she started working



Public outrage: Congress supporters protesting against Prajwal Revanna, in Bengaluru on Monday, SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

for them, Mr. Revanna used to sexually harass her, and Mr. Prajwal used to make video calls to her daughter and have "vulgar conversations" with her.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said that in December 2023 itself, a BJP leader had informed [the party] about the "atrocities of Prajwal Revanna". "... This is not surprising. Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, Kuldeep Sengar and now Prajwal Revanna - the Prime Minister has shown his true face time and again," Mr.

Ramesh said in a post in Hindi on X. "These women are domestic workers, and party workers, MPs, and

their lives have been destroyed by him. One of the videos shows how a 63year-old woman, old enough to be his mother or grandmother, is seen pleading to him," the Congress spokesperson Supriya Shrinate said. She pointed out that on

December 13, 2023, BJP leader Devaraj Gowda wrote to the Prime Minister, the BJP president and the local BJP unit on the issue, and later held a press conference in January this year.

The issue was also raised during Home Minister Amit Shah's trip to the State to finalise the alliance, with BJP leaders Preetham Gowda, A.T. Ramaswamy and others trying to dissuade him from it, she said.

NCW says 'no information' on the political affiliation of its Chairperson, Members

S. Vijay Kumar

CHENNAI

The National Commission for Women (NCW) has said it has no information on whether its Chairperson and Members are members of any political party.

Replying to a query under the Right to Information Act, 2005, the Public Information Officer (PIO) replied that the NCW was a statutory body set up under the NCW Act, 1990, by the Ministry of Women and Child Development. The Chairperson and Members of the Commission are nominated by the government of India.

To specific questions, which also included one on whether the Chairper-

The Chairperson and Members of the Commission are nominated by the **Government of India**

son and Members could participate in political meetings, and if they should not, then what legal and other action could be taken against them, the PIO replied, "From the records in this office, no such information is available."

The petitioner Raj Kapil said that in the last year he had been witnessing one of the NCW Members attending political party events of the BJP. At the time of nomination to the NCW, she was serving as a member of the BJP's national executive committee.

The NCW had the res-

ponsibility to evaluate the

progress of the development of women under the Union and State governments. "With this being the mandate, the Chairperson or Member should not be a member of any political party, at least for the term of office to uphold the principle of neutrality and serving without any fear or favour," he said. Mr. Kapil said the NCW's reply stating that "no information is available" would only lead to larger questions on transparency and accountability directly, casting aspersions on the decisions and whether they were serving without political bias.

and the crime.

I apologise for failing Pandits: **NC** candidate

National Conference candidate Aga Ruhullah Mehdi, contesting the Srinagar-Budgam seat, on Monday apologised to Kashmiri Pandits for the party's failure to stop their migration in the wake of growing militancy in the

1990s. "It was the grim and

beyond-control situation that drove Kashmiri Pandits away from Kashmir and not us. Those were very tumultuous times. The guns that murdered vou, murdered us too. We were as helpless as you were. Still, I think we (NC) could not find a way to save and stop the migration of Pandits. I apologise for that," Mr. Mehdi, whose father was killed in a militant attack in 2000, said. He said the NC wanted to see "a dignified return of Kashmiri Pandits to the place of origin".



Aga Ruhullah Mehdi during a rally in Srinagar. PTI

Lalu's daughter files nomination from Saran

Rohini Acharya, daughter of Rashtriya Janata Dal chief Lalu Prasad, filed her nomination papers on Monday from the Saran seat.

She was accompanied by Mr. Prasad, her mother Rabri Devi, eldest sister Misa Bharti and two of her brothers, former Deputy Chief Minister

Tejashwi Yadav and Tej Pratap Yadav, MLA. Appealing to people, Ms.

Acharya said, "After roaming the entire constituency, I have understood the problem and issues over here. I have left all the facilities which I was getting abroad and have come here to make Saran a beautiful, developed and modern constituency. Like a mother taking care of the family members, I will take care of this constituency."

Saran will go to the polls on May 20.



Is Rahul on bail or not? Is Sonia on bail or not? All these people are on bail. P. Chidambaram, Karthi Chidambaram, Lalu Yadav, all are on bail J.P. NADDA

Jailed AIP leader files papers for Baramulla seat

Abdul Rashid Sheikh, head of the Awami-e-Ittihad Party who is in prison, on Monday filed nomination papers through his representative from the Baramulla seat. The AIP has named his son, Abrar Rashid, as the covering candidate for the nominated candidate.



BJP leaders are saying they will change the Constitution, which protects the poor. Modi wants only 22-25 people to control all wealth and resources

RAHUL GANDHI

NCP (Ajit faction) leader Chhagan Bhujbal says the Mahayuthi may even go down a few seats from the last time but we will get the largest share. FILE PHOTO

Not a cakewalk for BJP but people will choose Modi again: Bhujbal

Nistula Hebbar

enior Nationalist Congress Party leader (Ajit Pawar faction) Chhagan Bhujbal says that while the BIP and the Mahayuthi ruling coalition in Maharashtra will not find the election in the State a cakewalk, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will still have an advantage in forming the government at the Centre.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Mr. Bhujbal said while it was true that this time around, with the split in the NCP and the Shiv Sena, and with six parties ranged against each other in two alliances, it was difficult to gauge what election would still gave Mr. Modi the

"While people are attending political meetings of this leader and that, they do come around to the view that this is an election to elect the Prime Minister of the country, who should be strong and who should be able to navigate what is going on internationally, be it Russia-Ukraine or West Asia. That gives Prime Minister Modi an undeniable advantage as the INDIA group is not united across the country," he said.

"In Maharashtra, it is not as though the BJP has a cakewalk as it was in 2014 and 2019, but it is also not the case that the Opposition parties will be able to dominate. The BIP and the Mahayuthi will have to work hard, and we may even go down a few seats from the last time, we will get the largest share," he said.

Mr. Bhujbal met The Hindu in Nashik, where he was first tipped to contest but later withdrew from the fray, sowing doubts about dissension in the ranks of the Mahayuthi. He said that he had been sounded out to contest by senior leaders of the alliance, around a month ago, and at that time, he had been advocating for his nephew, former MP Sameer Bhujbal. Soon after, he started preparations to contest. "But list after list has come out without my name, with news that the Shiv Sena (Shinde) was negotiating to hold on to the seat, and I felt humiliated, which is why I publicly withdrew from the contest," he said.

Being considered for the seat but followed later by procrastination, he feels, owes also to the feeling that there is a "Maratha versus all" type of contest developing in the State, with confusion among parties over how to deal with the situation in the light of the Maratha quota agitation led by Manoj Jarange-Patil.

"Whatever happened during the Maratha agitation, their striving for cutting into the OBC reservations, the violence that happened during the agitation, has created this situation. Some non-Maratha sections of the population feel why is it that only Marathas will get leadership roles, own sugar factories, dominate cooperative banks and milk cooperatives, and others are kept out," Mr. Bhujbal said.

Successive governments, he said, had striven to address the issue, but Mr. Patil's agitation "was a bit much" due to his insistence that the Maratha quota should be carved out of the existing OBC quota, a demand rejected by four commissions and later the Supreme Court, he added.

Rift in INDIA bloc comes to fore in Bengal ahead of third phase

Mamata has been saying there is no INDIA tie-up in West Bengal and that the Left and Congress have been working for BJP; four constituencies in one of the most economically backward regions of the State are going to the polls on May 7

OVERVIEW

Shiv Sahay Singh KOLKATA

he schism in the Indian National Developmental, Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) in West Bengal has become more pronounced ahead of the third phase of the Lok Sabha election in which four constituencies in the central region of the State go to the polls.

Chief Minister and Trinamool Congress chairperson Mamata Banerjee, who had participated in a few meetings of the INDIA bloc and had claimed to have given the name to the alliance, finally decided to field candidates from all the 42 Lok Sabha constituencies in the State.

She blamed the Congress for not being able to reach an electoral understanding.

During her campaign, Ms. Banerjee has been saying there is no INDIA bloc in West Bengal and the Left have been working for the

The Congress, led by Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, and the Communist Party of India (M), led by Mohammad Salim, are not sparing an opportunity to target the Chief Minister and her government eith-

Past results

Here's a look at the 2019 Lok Sabha election results for the four key constituencies in West Bengal that will go to the polls on May 7

Constituency	Parties	Vote Share (in %	
Malda Uttar	BJP	37.61	
Malua Ottai	Trinamool Congress	31.39	
Malda	Congress	34.73	
Dakshin	BJP	34.09	
la a ai a	Trinamool Congress	43.15	
Jangipur	ВЈР	24.3	
Murchidahad	Trinamool Congress	41.57	
Murshidabad	Congress	26	



addressing a rally in Murshidabad. PTI

At a rally in Murshidabad's Domkal, Mr. Salim, while sharing the stage with Mr. Chowdhury, vowed to drag the Chief Minister out of the State Secretariat in the 2026 Assembly election.

Minority voters

The region has a distinct geography and demography, and the issues are constituency-specific. Both Malda and Murshidabad districts have a significant minority population and the Trinamool, the Left and the Congress leaderport of the Muslim com-

The BJP is hoping that a split in the Muslim vote and a polarisation of voters will help the party.

Out of the four constituencies, the BJP had won Malda Uttar, the Congress had wrested Malda Dakshin and the Trinamool had won Jangipur and Murshidabad in the 2019 Lok Sabha election. This time, the BJP has launched a highpitched campaign not only in Malda but also in Murshidabad district. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah have campaigned in Malda, while BJP president J.P. Nadda has held rallies in Murshidabad.

Ms. Banerjee and Trinamool general secretary Abhishek Banerjee are campaigning extensively in the region.

These constituencies battles. The CPI(M)'s Mr. Salim is contesting from Murshidabad against sitting MP Abu Taher Khan of the Trinamool. In Jangipur, sitting MP and bidi baron Khalilur Rahaman, is pitted against Congress candidate Mohammad Murtaza Hossain, grandson of Congress leader Abu Hena.

In Malda Dakshin, Congress candidate Isha Khan Chowdhury is defending his family bastion. His father, Abu Hasem Khan Chowdhury, had represented the constituency since 2006, and prior to this, his uncle, the late A.B.A. Ghani Khan Chowdhury, was the MP.

The Congress candidate is facing the Trinamool's Shahnawaj Ali Raihan, a scholar from Oxford, and the BJP has fielded English Bazaar MLA Sreerupa Mitra Chowdhury.

Malda Uttar will see a fight between sitting BJP MP Khagen Murmu and former IPS officer and Trinamool candidate Prasun Banerjee.

The region is one of the economically most backward regions of the State, with millions of youth migrating in search of work. While men move to the States in the south and in the north for higher wages, women roll bidis to add to their income.

The districts have also borne the brunt of river erosion that has left thousands of people homeless and the State losing about 200 square kilometres of land in the past several decades. Like the previous elections, politicians both in power at the Centre and in the State are giving assurances to the migrants and to the people affected by river erosion that they will take concrete steps after the election.

CAA-NRC issue

Another key issue that has dominated the election campaign is the Citizenship (Amendment) Act. The Trinamool leadership, including the Chief Minister, has been highlighting that the CAA and the Rules notified in March are a precursor to the National Register of Citizens and aimed at sending "Muslims to camps".

While the region was considered a Congress basthe Assembly election in 2021 on the issue of the CAA-NRC.

The Left-Congress leadership claims that the "CAA is an attempt to create a political binary of BJP-Trinamool" and will not have an impact on the electorate of the region in the Lok Sabha election.

nomination papers for Lucknow seat

Rajnath files

The Hindu Bureau LUCKNOW

Union Minister and senior BJP leader Rajnath Singh on Monday filed his nomination papers from the Lucknow constituency, seeking a third consecutive term from the seat.

Mr. Singh led a roadshow from the State BJP office to the Lucknow Collectorate, along with Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami, and U.P. Deputy Chief Ministers Brajesh Pathak and Keshav Prasad Maurva, among other senior leaders. Mr. Singh, a former BJP president, expressed gratitude to the people for turning up in record numbers for the roadshow.

"I have filed my nomina tion papers from the Lucknow Lok Sabha constituencv today. I have received love and blessings from the people of Lucknow. The blessings of the people give me energy and inspiration to serve the country and society," Mr. Singh posted on social media platform X after filing the nomination.

Cong. names four more candidates for Punjab

The Hindu Bureau CHANDIGARH

The Congress on Monday declared four more candidates for the Lok Sabha election in Punjab, fielding State party chief Amarinder Singh Raja Warring from Ludhiana.

With this list, the party has announced candidates for 12 of the total 13 seats in Punjab that go to the polls on June 1.

Apart from the party's State president, the other candidates include Sukhjinder Randhawa, the party's MLA from the Dera Baba Nanak segment, who will contest from the Gurdaspur seat, which is currently represented by Sunny Deol.

It has named former Cabinet Minister Vijay Inder Singla from Anandpur Sahib, where the SAD's Prem Singh Chandumajra and the AAP's Malvinder Singh Kang are in the race.

Congress MLA Kulbir Zira has been fielded from Khadoor Sahib.

Stage set for three-way tussle in Anantnag-Rajouri even as EC considers request to defer election

Peerzada Ashiq SRINAGAR

The election to the Anantnag-Rajouri seat on May 7 will be the most-watched election in Jammu and Kashmir for its intrigues, suspense, and drama.

Fast slipping into a complex political drama, the election will witness a triangular contest in the constituency layered with a complex voter demography, comprising Kashmiri speakers, Gujjars, Bakerwals, and Paharis.

National Conference (NC) candidate Mian Altaf, Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) candidate Mehbooba Mufti, and J&K Apni Party candidate Zaffar Manhas who is likely to get support from the absent parties like the BJP and the J&K Peoples Conference – are the main contestants.

So far, the poll narrative of the NC and the PDP has revolved around the BJP, a party which is not contesting the seat. Both the PDP and the NC accused the BJP of "assault on Kashmiri identity, special status, and



Riveting contest: PDP president Mehbooba Mufti during an election rally for the Lok Sabha polls, in Anantnag on Monday. PTI

natural resources".

However, the BJP is joining multiple political forces to seek postponement of elections in Anantnag, citing concerns over weather and voter accessibility due to the current spell of rainfall. It keeps the door ajar for the BJP, and the party's re-entry cannot be ruled out in case the Election Commission (EC) heeds the request.

The Anantnag-Rajouri constituency is the only seat the BJP believes could be its gateway into the once-no-go area of the Kashmir Valley. The party has focused on several

tribes of the Rajouri-Poonch region of the Pir Panjal Valley in the past five years to reap electoral gains, especially after it scrapped the special status of J&K in 2019.

Several BJP leaders from the Kashmir valley, in a joint letter to the party high command, pressed for fielding candidates from the three seats in Kashmir. However, Union Home Minister Amit Shah silenced the demand, saying "the party is into winning the hearts of the people in Kashmir before the lotus will bloom there".

The BJP faces a political

dilemma. There is fear of polarisation and consolidation of Muslim votes. Also, the BJP's stated political goal in Kashmir remains to see a non-Abdullah and non-Mufti MP, especially from Anantnag. It can only be achieved by supporting other players in Kashmir.

The election has also pitted the NC and the PDP, former allies of the People's Alliance for the Gupkar Declaration, against each other. The Gupkar alliance, formed on August 4, 2019, pledged to fight jointly for the restoration of the pre-August 5, 2019 position of J&K, seeking restoration of special status. However, the hardening position of the NC to retain the Anantnag seat pushed the PDP away from any electoral alliance within the INDIA bloc.

For Ms. Mufti, Anantnag is the hometown of the Muftis and the party, as most of her leaders come from south Kashmir. The NC, on the other hand, sees it as an opportune time to reclaim south Kashmir from the PDP, which saw an exodus of leaders after 2019. Ms. Mufti's image and political future is at stake. The NC's poll prospects for the upcoming Assembly polls also hinge on the seat.

Anantnag-Rajouri is a newly carved out constituency. In 2022, the J&K Delimitation Commission stitched together geographically disjointed regions of Rajouri and Poonch of the Pir Panjal valley and Anantnag-Shopian-Kulgam of the Kashmir Valley and recast the voter demographics.

This forced the NC to field Mr. Altaf, a popular and well-respected Gujjar leader and spiritual guru, from Anantnag. Ms. Mufti too is reaching out to tribal people and banks on the goodwill generated for her stand over the rape and murder of a Gujjar girl in 2018 and her street protests against eviction of Gujjars and Bakerwals from forest land after 2019.

J&K Apni Party candidate Manhas is a Pahari and banks on the support from the BJP.

News



Amit Shah takes jibe at INDIA bloc for not having a PM face

BJP leader and Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday targeted the INDIA bloc for not having a prime ministerial candidate. Praising Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his leadership qualities, Mr. Shah, at a rally in Madhubani, Bihar, lashed out at the alliance saying the country did not need helpless leadership but required a strong leader. He asserted that Mr. Modi's victory was certain. "However, if it happens in the dream and the INDI alliance comes to power, who will be the PM of the country. Do they have any leader? God forbid, if the INDI alliance comes to power, they will share the PM's post for one year each," he said.

'Ranting' by Rahul and Nadda has no impact in Odisha: BJD

The Biju Janata Dal has reacted sharply to its criticism by Bharatiya Janata Party president J.P. Nadda and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, saying their 'ranting' would not have any impact on the electoral outcome in Odisha. "Mr. Gandhi visited Odisha on Sunday and addressed an election rally in Salepur in Cuttack district. His visit will not have any impact on the electoral fortunes of Odisha Congress," said Sasmit Patra, BJD's national spokesperson here. Mr. Patra, on a sarcastic note, said it would surely motivate the demotivated Congress cadre, which had been losing elections consistently.

Hemant Soren's wife Kalpana files her papers for byelection

Kalpana Murmu Soren, wife of jailed former Chief Minister Hemant Soren, on Monday filed her nomination from the Gandey Assembly constituency as Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) candidate for which a bypoll is scheduled on May 20 along with Lok Sabha polling for the fifth phase. The seat in Giridih district fell vacant after resignation of JMM MLA Sarfaraz Ahmad, who is now Rajva Sabha member. Several senior leaders, including JMM leader and Chief Minister Champai Soren, were present. After submitting her papers, she addressed a public meeting at Paparwatand Sports ground in Giridih in the presence of party founder Shibu Soren.

'Delaying polling in Anantnag will harm EC's credibility'

Communist Party of India (Marxist) leader M.Y. Tarigami on Monday warned against postponing the election in the Anantnag-Baramulla constituency, saying that such a step will "harm the electoral process in Jammu and Kashmir as well as the credibility of Election Commission". "Some parties have requested the ECI to postpone polls in Anantnag-Rajouri seat. I feel this is a baseless demand. Such steps will harm the electoral process in J&K," Mr. Tarigami said, adding that the BJP and some parties, which are not fighting elections, were hatching a conspiracy to reschedule polls by citing the poor state of the Mughal Road area. Anantnag is scheduled to vote on May 7.

Canada envoy summoned over slogans in public meet

Kallol Bhattacherjee NEW DELHI

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Monday summoned the Canadian Deputy High Commissioner and lodged a "strong protest" after pro-Khalistan slogans were raised at a public meeting attended by Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

At the event attended by Mr. Trudeau, he was heard saying that the Canadian government will support right to religion of the Sikh community in his country without "discrimination". The rally featured at least one poster that blamed the Indian leadership for the Iune 2023 murder of pro-Khalistan leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar, who was slain by unknown assassins in British Columbia.

"The Government of India's deep concern and strong protest was conveyed at such disturbing actions being allowed to continue unchecked at the event," said the MEA in a press release.

The message was delivered on the day a news report revealed the name of a R&AW officer alleging his involvement in plotting the assassination of pro-Khalistan advocate Gurpatwant Singh Pannun.

PM says Congress, INDIA bloc conspiring to 'steal' quotas

Narendra Modi accuses Congress of being 'blinded' by vote bank politics, dividing the nation along religious lines; he warns that these 'forces' are trying to do something big to disrupt harmony

Shoumojit Banerjee

aunching a campaign blitz across western Maharashtra on Monday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi provocatively accused the Opposition Congress and the INDIA bloc of hatching a conspiracy to aggravate social tensions. He also accused the Opposition of wanting to "steal" the reservation of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) to hand them over to Muslims in an act of political appeasement.

The thrust of Mr. Modi's addresses in Solapur, Satara, and at the mega rally in Pune was that the Congress, "blinded" by vote bank politics, was reportedly dividing the country along religious lines. The PM launched broadsides on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and Nationalist Congress Party (SP) chief Sharad Pawar, dubbing Mr. Gandhi's ideas as "dangerous" while calling the 83year-old Mr. Pawar a "roving spirit" who was responsible for Maharashtra's chronic political instabili-



Shinde and Deputy CMs Devendra Fadnavis and Ajit Pawar. ANI

Alluding to the Congress and the INDIA bloc, he said: "Those people who cannot challenge the Bharatiya Janata Party and the National Democratic Alliance head-on are now spreading fake videos on social media. By using Artificial Intelligence, statements that we would never have imagined of are being spread through our fake voices... sometimes in my voice, sometimes in Amit Shah or J.P. Nadda's voice, and sometimes in the voices of our Chief Ministers [NDA CMs]. These people are deliberately trying to

create a social conflagration and are hatching a conspiracy to aggravate social tensions."

Mr. Modi warned that in the coming days, these "forces" were trying to do "something big" in the country by way of disrupting social harmony. He requested the Election Commission to take stern action against those who were spreading such deepfake videos.

The PM lashed out at the Congress and Mr. Gandhi for reportedly attempting to snatch the reservation given to Dalits, Adivasis, and OBCs in order to redithem towards rect Muslims.

'You will be astonished with what the Congress is planning. The Constitution strictly forbids giving reservation along religious lines. After the SC rapped the Congress on this count, they have developed this 'Karnataka model' wherein overnight they took out a fatwa and made all Muslims into OBCs, snatching the latter's 27% quota and leaving the OBCs in limbo," he said, accusing the Congress of trying to tamper with Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's Constitution and then deploy the Constitution tweaked across the country.

"But the Congress and INDIA bloc should beware that as long as Modi is alive, as long as the public's blessings are with me, I will foil all your efforts at changing the Constitution in the name of religion," Mr. Modi said.

In a blistering attack on Sharad Pawar, Mr. Modi said there were "some roving spirits" who keep upsetting not just the Opposition party but also cause disturbance within his party and his family.

SC stay on proceedings against T.N. BJP chief to continue

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday continued its February order of stay on criminal proceedings against BJP Tamil Nadu president K. Annamalai in a hate speech case over his remarks that a Christian missionary NGO was behind a petition filed in the top court for a ban on the bursting of firecrackers during Deepavali.

A Bench, headed by Justice Sanjiv Khanna, adjourned the case to September, after the Lok Sabha election. The adjournment came on a request from Salem-based activist V. Piyush, who had filed the complaint against Mr. Annamalai.

The BJP leader had approached the court after the Madras High Court refused to quash the criminal trial pending against him before a magistrate court in Salem. The complaint accused Mr. Annamalai of resorting to hate speech with his remarks, during a video interview in October 2022, that "a Christian missionary had filed a writ before the Supreme Court against bursting of crackers during Diwali".

Biren says 'unnatural growth' in population of Chin-Kuki-Zo tribes

The Hindu Bureau

Amid the ongoing ethnic conflict in Manipur, Chief Minister N. Biren Singh on Monday posted a thread on X, along with a video, which claimed that there had been "unnatural growth" in the population of "Chin-Kuki-Zo" tribes in the State.

Mr. Singh said this was a threat to the "indigenous national people and security".

The Chief Minister compared the deportation of illegal immigrants by his government and the Union Home Ministry with the Rishi Sunak-led U.K. government's "unyielding commitment" to do the same, questioning "certain sections of people" for calling his government "communal" when it was only "asserting" itself on the issue as the British PM did. The remarks came just

as the State witnessed a fresh spate of violence in the past 72 hours, during which unidentified militants attacked a Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) camp in Bishnupur district, killing two security personnel. Gunfight along the buffer zone between Kangpokpi and Imphal West districts led to the killing of one more person.

The conflict that began on May 3, 2023 has killed over 220 people so far, with thousands injured and tens of thousands internally displaced.

Mr. Singh went on to claim that there had been an "unnatural" growth in the number of new villages, with the video alluding to such growth spurts in Churachandpur, Kangpokpi, Tengnoupal, Kamjong, and Chandel.

Warming of Indian Ocean set to accelerate: study

Jacob Koshy

From 1950 to 2020, the Indian Ocean had become warmer by 1.2 degrees Celsius, and climate models expect it to heat up a further 1.7 degrees Celsius to 3.8 degrees Celsius from 2020 to 2100. While we are familiar with heatwaves on land "marine heatwaves' their counterparts in the sea and linked to the rapid formation of cyclones, are expected to increase tenfold from the current average of 20 days per year to 220-250 days per year.

Mostly attributable to global warming, the tropical Indian Ocean will likely be in a "near-permanent heatwave state" and accelerate coral bleaching, seagrass destruction, and loss of kelp forests, affecting the fisheries sector adversely, said an analysis led by scientists at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteo-



heatwave state'. FILE PHOTO

'One Hiroshima bomb'

rology (IITM), Pune.

The heating of the ocean was not merely restricted to the surface but went deeper and increased the overall "heat content" of the ocean. The heat content of the Indian Ocean, when measured from surface to a depth of 2,000 metres, is currently increasing at the rate of 4.5 zetta-joules per decade, and is predicted to increase at a rate of 16-22 zetta-joules per decade in the future. Joule is a unit of energy and one zetta-joule is equal to one billion-trillion joules (10^21). "The future increase in heat content is comparable to adding the energy equivalent of one Hiroshima atomic bomb detonation every second, all day, every day, for a decade," said Roxy Mathew-Koll, scientist at IITM and lead author of the study.

The study constitutes a chapter in a forthcoming publication The Indian Ocean and its role in the global climate system by Elsevier.

Rising heat content contributes to sea-level rise also. Heat causes the volume of water to increase, called the thermal expansion of water, and this is responsible for more than half of the sea-level rise in the Indian Ocean – larger than the changes arising from glacier and sea-ice melting.

Punjab Police bust global drug cartel; three arrested

The Hindu Bureau CHANDIGARH

The Punjab Police on Monday said they had busted an international drug syndicate with the arrest of three of its members, after recovering 48 kg of heroin and ₹21 lakh in cash from their possession, making this the biggest heroin seizure so far in 2024.

Punjab DGP Gaurav Yaday said the arrested trio were identified as Satnam Singh, alias Babbi, his daughter Aman Rozi, and his son-in-law Hardeep Singh. "Apart from seizing heroin and drug money, police teams have also impounded three high-end cars, besides recovering one cash counting machine," he said while suggesting that Gujarat's sea route and J&K's land route were used to smuggle drugs into Indian territory.

TH CROSSWORD + 14162

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





- regularly, is excessively stretched (10) One of five in a litter of horses, discovered (4)
- **16** Mountain spewing Uranium chokes island nation (4)
- 18 Group of relatives fly Emirates mostly, when travelling (6,4) Recorded delivery by agitated deer after tigers dispersed near
- camp (10,4) Flyers making short trips from half a dozen courtyards on the
- return journey (3,5) Absorbing cricket match - openers from Zimbabwe, African
- champions, belt high above (6)
- 25 Scenes from Sci-Fi movie inspired by cheats (8)
- **26** Empty wagon haunted by very troubled monster (6)
- 1 Staff skipping college for noon meal (4)
- 2 Guarantee by Avtaar not small amount (7)
- Stir fresh greens with bits of Indian eggplant (8) Name every local heading out, carrying protective gear (11)
- Rear entrance to access Lord's ground (6) Gas and water for the French manor (7)
- Was, perhaps, father nervous about street being evacuated? (4,5) Exposing edges, bird, say, is placing shoots one over the other
- 13 Baker's deliveries (3-6)
- Extremely scratchy mandolin at the start affected musical performance (8)
- Judge got upset with corrupt routine (3,4) Do Pranayama on top of church (7)
- Demand by revolutionary group to return soldier in East Africa
- 22 Saint John's study (4)

SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: Solution to yesterday's Sudoku 4 9 6 5 7 2 3 8

964571





Divine grace of Sita

The divine grace of Goddess Mahalakshmi abounds, and in Her manifestation as Sita, she displays the same. Smt. Prabha Senesh, in a discourse, cited multiple instances of the Goddess extending grace even to demonesses. When Surpanaka pounced on Sita, at the command of Rama, Lakshmana maimed Surpanaka's nose and let her off. The same Rama had killed Thataka before at the instance of sage Viswamithra. (The presence of) Sita was a saviour to Surpanaka.

Ravana came to Asokavanam with a few women to threaten Sita. Sita's advice then relieved the demonesses.

Trijata, Visbhishana's daughter, developed saner thoughts with Sita's blessings. Though the women in Asokavanam disturbed and gave Sita all the trouble, she decided to extend asylum to them.

They fell unconscious when Indrajit tied Rama and Lakshmana with Nagastra. Trijata, Sita's well-wisher, said it was a gimmick of Ravana and pacified Sita that Rama and Lakshmana were still alive. Sita poured her love and affection on Trijata.

After Ravana's death, Hanuman wanted to kill the demonesses who inflicted multiple torments on Sita, but she prevented Hamuman out of sheer compassion. All the women became elated.



11 Balanced diet? (4,10)

banks of Amazon (8)

Across 1 Stunned by Queen's single (6) Coach and I capably overcome disability (8) Murderer's introduction in suspense film (6)

They are extremely frugal, singular characters around the



Tata, South Indian Bank in tie-up to offer finance for CVs

Tata Motors on Monday said it had tied up with South Indian Bank to offer financing solutions to its commercial vehicle customers and dealerships. As part of the MoU, South Indian Bank will offer financing solutions across the auto major's entire commercial vehicle portfolio, Tata Motors said in a statement. "Our alliance aims to empower fleet owners and dealerships to achieve their business goals," Rajesh Kaul, Commercial Vehicles VP & Business Head Trucks, said. PTI

Honeywell bags supply order for jet propulsion sensors

Tech firm Honeywell on Monday said it had been selected by Lilium, the developer of the first all-electric vertical take off and landing (eVTOL) jet, to supply propulsion unit position sensors (resolvers) for the Lilium jet. These sensors will play a critical role in accurately sensing the engine's position, ensuring that the jet can safely reach the exact position required for a successful take off, Honeywell said. Honeywell is an investor in Lilium and supplies key components.

Indegene fixes IPO price band at ₹430-452 per share

Indegene, a digital-first commercialisation company focused on the global life sciences industry, has announced to open its IPO on May 6. The offer will close on May 8. The price band has been fixed from ₹430 per equity share to ₹452 per share. Bids can be made for a minimum of 33 shares and in multiples of 33 shares thereafter. The offer comprises fresh issue of equity shares aggregating up to ₹760 crore and an offer for sale of up to 2,39,32,732 shares.

Don't take strong services exports story for granted'

Goldman Sachs projects \$800 billion of exports by 2030, but flags concerns about challenges such as the lack of skilled talent and the resource stress in key hubs like the water crisis in Bengaluru

NEW DELHI

hile India's services exports had grown sixfold between 2005 and 2023 to about \$340 billion and were potentially poised to hit the \$800-billion mark in 2030, Goldman Sachs cautioned against complacency citing challenges such as the lack of skilled talent and resource stress in key hubs like Bengaluru.

Goldman forecast services exports would reach Growth challenges

India's services exports potentially poised to surpass \$800 bn in 2030, from about \$340 bn in 2023, says Goldman Sachs

If commodity prices, goods trade balances don't move much CAD may be limited to average about 1% of GDP between 2024 and 2030

■ Cites training technology graduates as fit for the job market as a



between 2024 and 2030.

11% of GDP by 2030, from move much, this will help limit current account defi-9.7% in 2023, and if commodity prices and goods cit to an average of 1% GDP trade balances did not

Despite resilient growth in IT services and the opportunity from Global Capability Centres, it would be prudent not to take services export growth for granted, Goldman said. "In terms of domestic constraints, training technology graduates as fit for the job market has been cited as a challenge," it noted.

"Growth in these sectors is putting pressure on the natural resources of cities... Bengaluru, which has the largest share of IT" firms was facing a water crisis, Goldman observed.

GDP growth may surpass 7% this year, says NCAER

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

India's GDP growth could surpass the central bank's 7% estimate for 2024-25, the National Council for Applied Economic Research (NCAER) said on Monday, citing the forecast of an above-normal monsoon this year as well as upgraded hopes for global growth and trade volumes.

Stating that high-frequency indicators had done well over March and April, NCAER director general Poonam Gupta said the monsoon forecast augurs well for the immediate future and the more benign global outlook projected by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Trade Organisation (WTO) bode well for the Indian economy during the current year.

"The projected acceleration in both global growth and trade volumes as well as forecast of an above normal monsoon indicate that the Indian economy can again attain growth rates higher than 7% during the current fiscal year," she said. In its latest World Economic Outlook, the IMF has upgraded global growth to 3.2% for 2024 and 2025, while WTO had recently projected that world merchandise trade volumes would rise 2.6% this year after a 1.2% slippage in 2023.

The NCAER noted in its monthly review of the economy that indicators such as GST collections and digital payments showed resilience in March.

Sensex..... US Dollar Brent oil

NIFTY 50 PRICE CHANGE 3081.20

Asian Paints	2868.20	24.05
Axis Bank	1159.25	28.95
Bajaj Auto		
Bajaj Finserv	1595.65	1.70
Bajaj Finance	6826.60	95.40
Bharti Airtel	1332.45	6.45
3PCL	618.80	9.35
Britannia Ind	4799.85	-0.60
Cipla		
Coal India	453.25	2.55
Divis Lab	3989.25	27.10
Or Reddys Lab	6297.10	45.00
icher Motors	4571.85	29.15
Grasim Ind	2386.60	44.15
HCL Tech		
HDFC Bank		
HDFC Life		
Hero MotoCorp	4457.70	33.90
Hindalco	650.05	0.75
Hind Unilever		
CICI Bank	1160.15	52.25
ndusInd Bank	1487.25	40.85
nfosys	1434.75	4.50
TC	438.20	-1.80
ISW Steel	895.75	8.50
Kotak Bank	1640.40	31.90
.&T	3634.30	29.10
TIMindtree Ltd	4743.95	-44.10
M&M		
Maruti Suzuki		
NestleIndia	2509.80	27.05
NTPC		
DNGC		
PowerGrid Corp	293.70	1.45
Reliance Ind		
SBI Life		
State Bank	826.50	25.20
Shriram Finance		
_td		
Sun Pharma	1521.60	15.05
「ataConsumerPro-		
luct		
Tata Motors		
「ata Steel	167.40	1.60

EXCHANGE RATES

UltraTech Cement.

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 CURRENCY US Dollar. . 83.27. British Pound Chinese Yuan. 11.50 .. 11.54 Singapore Dollar 61.24

3870.20..

. 1288.30

Banking stocks lift Sensex by over 1%

The Hindu Bureau MUMBAI

Benchmark S&P BSE Sensex gained more than 1% on Monday led by banking stocks, closing 941 points, or 1.28%, higher at 74,671.

Sensex stocks which gained the most included ICICI Bank (up 4.67%), State Bank (3.09%), IndusInd Bank (2.9%), Ultra-Tech Cement (2.7%), Axis Bank (2.6%) and NTPC (2.07%). The NSE Nifty-50 index too surged 223.45 points to 22,643.40.

"Nifty PSU Bank and Nifty Bank indices outperformed... and were up by 2.56% and 2.54% respectively," said Vaibhav Vidwani, Research Analyst, Bonanza Portfolio.

"Strong results from ICI-CI Bank and the Bank of Maharashtra, along with high expectations of good results from other banks, attracted investors to PSU and private banks.'

Ajit Mishra, SVP, Research, Religare Broking said, "Favourable global cues combined with noticeable traction in banking majors aided a positive start, which strengthened as the day progressed. The fresh buoyancy in the banking index has paved the way for a new high in the Nifty index."

Strong demand lifts UltraTech Q4 PAT by 36% to ₹2,258 crore

The Hindu Bureau

UltraTech Cement Ltd., an Adity Birla Group firm reported fourth quarter consolidated net profit grew 36% year-on-year (YoY) to ₹2258 crore. Consolidated net sales revenue at ₹20,069 crore rose 9% YoY on the back of strong demand and ongoing production expansion across locations to reach 200 mtpa.

For FY24 the company's consolidated net profit grew 38% to ₹7,005 crore. Consolidated net sales for



FY24 rose 12% to ₹69,810 crore, the company said in a filing.

The Board recommended a dividend of ₹70 per equity share of face value ₹10 each, aggregating ₹2,020.84 crore.

Chola MS posts 23% growth in FY24 GWP to

The Hindu Bureau CHENNAI

₹7,598 crore

Cholamandalam MS General Insurance Co. Ltd. (Chola MS) posted a 23% YoY growth in gross written premium (GWP) to ₹7,598 crore for FY24.

Chola MS recorded a profit before tax of ₹444 crore against ₹264 crore. During the fourth quarter, it recorded a GWP of ₹2,020 crore and PBT of ₹91 crore, the Murugappa group firm said.

The investment corpus crossed ₹16,811 crore with growth in investment income. Solvency margin stood at 1.79 times against the regulatory minimum of 1.5 times, Chola MS said.

Increasing global uncertainties may impact exports, says FIEO

Press Trust of India

The escalating geopolitical tensions may have implications for the country's exports as it is likely to impact global demand, apex exporters' body FIEO said.

uncertainties caused by the continuing war between Russia and Ukraine impacted India's outbound shipments in 2023-24, which recorded a dip of 3.11% to \$437 billion. Imports too slid by more than 8% to \$677.24 billion.

"If the global situation continues to be like this, it will impact global demand," said FIEO Director General Ajay Sahai said. "In the first quarter numbers, the demand slowdown may be visible."



He added that freight rates were softening, giving an indication that demand may be impacted in the times to come.

He also said that India's rupee depreciated only about 1.3% during 2023-24 as against Chinese Yuan's 4.8%, Thai Baht's 6.3% and Malaysian Ringgit's 7%.

The FIEO DG suggested the government take certain steps for exporters on the liquidity front.

"Due to demand slowdown, offtake of goods will be low so foreign buyers will also take a longer period to make payments. So we require funds for a longer period. Exporters also need interest subvention support," Mr. Sahai said.

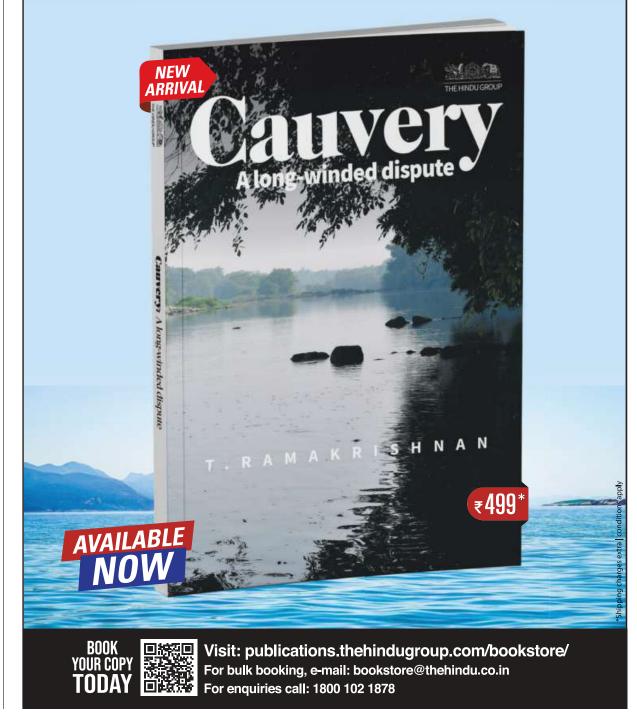
He sought continuation of interest equalisation scheme. On December 8, the Union Cabinet approved an additional allocation of ₹2,500 crore for the continuation of the scheme up to June 30.

The scheme helps exporters from identified sectors and MSME manufacturer exporters to avail competitive rates on preand post-shipment rupee export credit. "The rates should be enhanced to 3% and 5%," Mr. Sahai added.

A SPECIAL PUBLICATION FROM THE HINDU GROUP

RESOLVING A VEXATIOUS ISSUE

Finding a solution to the vexatious Cauvery dispute has been a challenge to even the collective wisdom of veteran politicians, seasoned policy makers, experts and farmers. It even tested the strength of India's federal structure at times. After bickering among riparian constituents of the Cauvery basin for over a century and exhausting all avenues, judiciary, finally, had to do the task of apportioning the quantum of water for each riparian party. This book gives an account of how the dispute evolved over the years, especially after the 1924 Agreement between Madras Presidency and the Princely State of Mysore. It also drives home the point that the last word has not yet been said on the issue. Apart from the subject of water sharing, the work discusses challenges facing the river on various fronts, including environment.



'India can lead on sustainability initiatives for entire Asia-Pacific'

Mini Tejaswi MUMBAI

India is uniquely positioned to lead on climate change, drive sustainability and ESG initiatives for the entire Asia-Pacific, said Paul Marriott, President, SAP Asia-Pacific and Japan.

"The Asian market represents more than 50% of global emissions, and as one of the fastest growing hotbeds of innovation and economic activity in the region, India is in a unique position to lead against climate change," he said speaking at the company's annual tech exposition, SAP NOW India 2024.

Mr. Marriott, a technocrat with a master's in AI, said it was encouraging to



Paul Marriott

see several Indian firms recognizing the need to embrace investing in sustainability and ESG activities.

Sounding confident, Mr. Marriott said strong leadership, young talent, sprawling AI and start-up landscape and innovation capabilities across businesses would aid India reach its \$30 trillion GDP goal by 2047.

"It is a staggering 10 times from today, but it is possible with the kind of innovations we are seeing in businesses across all the segments," he said.

He said SAP, the German cloud software firm, is investing significantly in India to empower cuttingedge technology to give businesses the next big opportunity in an AI era. Citing a recent SAP stu-

dy, he said 86% of Indian firms saw a positive correlation between sustainability and profitability, leading to greater investments in sustainability. He added that we must integrate carbon and financial data to inform decision-making.

(The writer was invited by SAP India to the event)

Coca-Cola bottler SLAM establishes ₹700-cr. plant

The Hindu Bureau MUMBAI

SLAM Beverages Private Ltd., Coca-Cola's biggest independent bottler in South Asia, said it had almost fully commissioned it's biggest-ever bottling plant located at Trishundi in Amethi, U.P.

The last line would go into production in the second week of May and help cater to the growing need for its products in summer.

The plant has a total manufacturing capacity of 4,600 bottles per minute. The firm added it would invest ₹200 crore more in capacity expansion at the same location.

MAI MAHIU

At least 45 killed in Kenya after dam bursts amid torrential rains



At least 45 people died when a dam burst near a town in Kenya's Rift Valley, the police said on Monday, as torrential rains and floods battered the country. The disaster raises the total death toll over the March-May wet season in Kenya to more than 120 as heavier than usual rainfall pounds East Africa, compounded by El Nino. AFP

DHAKA

Bangladesh again closes schools nationwide due to heatwave



A Bangladeshi court ordered a nationwide shutdown of schools on Monday due to an ongoing heatwave, the day after the government sent millions of children back to class despite searing temperatures. Average temperatures in the capital Dhaka over the past week have been 4-5° C higher than the 30-year average for the same period. AFP

HONIARA

Solomon Islands' pro-China PM will not be standing for new term



Solomon Islands' Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare said on Monday he would not stand for a new term, ending his pro-China rule of more than four years. His withdrawal followed inconclusive April 17 elections that led his party to choose Foreign Minister Jeremiah Manele as its parliamentary leader. AFP

TURIN

G-7 Ministers agree to phase out coal-fired power plants by 2030s



G-7 Energy Ministers have agreed a time frame for phasing out coal-fired power plants, a British Minister said on the sidelines of a G-7 meeting in Turin on Monday. "We do have a deal to phase out coal in the first half of the 2030s", British Nuclear and Renewables Minister Andrew Bowie said, calling it "an historic agreement". AFP

Report names Indian official in Pannun case

According to Washington Post, RAW official Vikram Yadav directed businessman Nikhil Gupta, now in custody in the Czech Republic, to hire a hitman to kill Pannun outside his New York residence; it says NSA Ajit Doval was 'probably aware of RAW's plans to kill Sikh activists'

Suhasini Haidar

.S. authorities believe the alleged plot to kill Khalistani activist, Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, who is wanted on terror charges in India, was ordered by the previous chief of the Indian Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), and had official sanction from senior intelligence officials "with ties to [Prime Minister Narendra Modi's inner circle", the Washington Post reported.

Escalating campaign The report identified, for the first time, an RAW officer whose name had been withheld in the case pap-

ers made available by the Justice Department in New York in November 2023.

In a separate press release, the *Post* said, on the basis of interviews with "more than three dozen current and former senior officials in the United States, India, Canada, Britain, Germany and Australia", that other RAW officers have faced "arrest, expulsion and reprimand" in recent months, indicating that there was more international coordination about what it called "escalating campaign of aggression" against Indian diaspora members by India's intelligence operatives.

The Ministry of External Affairs declined to comment on the *Post* report on



Controversial figure: The report says the plot to kill Gurpatwant Singh Pannun had sanctions from senior intelligence figures. AP

Monday. Last week, in response to a question on the allegations, the MEA spokesperson said a "high-level committee is looking into information that was shared by the American

side with us, because [it] also equally impacts our national security.

"In reports that have been closely held within the American government, U.S. intelligence officials

have assessed that the operation targeting Pannun was approved by the RAW chief at the time, Samant Goel," said the report.

"U.S. spy agencies have more tentatively assessed that Mr. Modi's National Security Adviser, Ajit Doval, was probably aware of RAW's plans to kill Sikh activists," it added.

'Not our policy'

According to the story, the R&AW official identified as Vikram Yadav had directed Indian businessman Nikhil Gupta, now in custody in the Czech Republic pending extradition to the U.S. to stand trial in the case, to hire a hitman to kill Pannun outside his New York residence.

Mr. Yadav, believed to be a Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) official on deputation to the RAW, has subsequently been repatriated to the paramilitary forces, other U.S. media have reported.

While the MEA has maintained that such killings are not Indian policy, and has denied Canadian allegations of a similar hit on Khalistani activist Hardeep Singh Nijjar in Canada, the government has agreed to an enquiry on the U.S. allegations.

The *Post* story also dwells at length on differences between the White House and the Justice Department that oversaw the FBI-DEA investigation in the case.

Humza Yousaf quits as Scottish First Minister, SNP leader

Sriram Lakshman

Scotland's First Minister Humza Yousaf said he will resign as First Minister and from the leadership of the Scottish National Party (SNP) following days of political drama that unfolded after he ended the 'Bute House' power-sharing agreement with the Scottish Greens. Mr. Yousaf said he would continue in the role of First Minister until a replacement was found.

Policy differences between the Greens and the SNP reached a breaking point with the SNP backtracking on climate-related commitments earlier in April. Mr. Yousaf decided to be the first to pull the plug on the relationship on April 25, as the Greens proposed an internal party vote on whether to stay in the power-sharing agreement. The outgoing First Minister had hoped to have a more informal set up with the Greens, built on issue-based support while leading a minority government (the SNP has 63 of 129 seats in the Scottish parliament). However, the Greens did not appear ready to participate in this watered-down set up.

"I clearly underestimated the level of hearts and upset that caused," Mr. Yousaf said, as he announced his resignation on Monday, from Bute House, his official residence in

Edinburgh. Within hours of the drama unfolding last week, unionist parties (the SNP is indepenpro-Scottish dence) mounted an attack on Mr. Yousaf and the SNP.



Humza Yousaf

The Scottish Conservatives tabled a no-confidence motion against Mr. Yousaf and Scottish Labour tabled a motion against the SNP government. On Monday, Mr. Yousaf said that while it was "absolutely possible" to have faced this week's motions, he did not want to make deals that would compromise his values.

Mr. Yousaf, 39, a first generation Briton and child of Pakistani immigrants, said he could not imagine, as a child, that someone who looked like him could be First Minister.

"But we now live in a U.K. that has a British Hindu Prime Minister, a Muslim Mayor of London at Black Welsh First Minister," he said, adding this was evidence that multiculturalism in the U.K. had not failed.

He talked about needing a fairer tax system and the descent into "a toxic culture war".

"Each and every one of us must resist the temptation of populism at the expense of minorities, particularly in a general election vear," he said. He made references to Gaza, where some of his wife's relatives were stranded, following the hostilities between Israel and Hamas.

U.S. finds five IDF units at fault for rights violations

Reuters

The U.S. State Department found five units of the Israeli military responsible for gross violations of human rights in incidents that took place outside of Gaza before conflict broke out between Israel and Hamas in October, the State Department said on Monday.

Four of the units have effectively remediated the violations, while Israel has submitted additional information regarding the fifth unit and the U.S. is continuing conversations with the government, State Department deputy spokesperson Vedant Patel told reporters.

U.S. weapons sales to the units will not be affected, Mr. Patel said. He declined to offer specifics on what violations of human rights were committed, which units were involved or what remediation steps were taken.

"After a careful process, we found five Israeli units responsible for individual incidents of gross violations of human rights. All of these were incidents much before October 7th and none took place in Gaza," Mr. Patel said.

"Four of these units have effectively remediated these violations, which is what we expect partners to do... For a remaining unit, we continue to be in consultations and engagements with the government of Israel."

Israel's military conduct has come under increasing scrutiny as its forces have killed some 34,500 Palestinians in Gaza. The Gaza Strip has been reduced to a wasteland, and extreme food shortages have prompted fears of famine.

Demonstrations roil U.S. campuses ahead of graduations as protesters spar over Gaza war

Associated Press LOS ANGELES

Protests are roiling college as upcoming graduation ceremonies are threatened by disruptive demonstrators, with students and others sparring over the war in Gaza and its mounting death toll.

Many campuses were largely quiet over the weekend as demonstrators stayed by tents erected as protest headquarters, although a few colleges saw forced removals and arrests. Many students are demanding their universities cut financial ties with Israel over the large-scale operation in Gaza it says was launched to stamp out the militant Palestinian group Hamas

Protesters on both sides of the rancourous debate shouted and shoved each other during duelling demonstrations on Sunday at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).

About 275 people were arrested on Saturday at various campuses including Indiana University at Bloomington, Arizona State University and Washington University in St. Louis. The number of arrests nationwide approached 900 since the New York police



Face-off: A pro-Israel counter-protester during a demonstration by protesters in support of Palestinians at the UCLA. REUTERS

removed a pro-Palestinian protest encampment at Columbia University and arrested more than 100 de-

monstrators on April 18.

The plight of students who have been arrested has become a central part ber of faculty demanding amnesty for protesters. At issue is whether the suspensions and legal records will follow students through their adult lives. Faculty members at un-

of protests, with the stu-

dents and a growing num-

iversities in California, Georgia and Texas have initiated or passed largely symbolic votes of no confidence in their leadership.

White House national security spokesman John Kirby said U.S. President Joe Biden "knows that there are very strong feelings" but would leave managing the protests to local authorities.

Tesla CEO Musk visits China during time of auto show

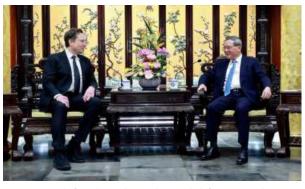
Associated Press BEIJING

Tesla CEO Elon Musk met with a top government leader in the Chinese capital on Sunday, just as the nation's carmakers are showing off their latest electric vehicle models at the Beijing auto show.

Chinese Premier Li Oiang told Mr. Musk that he hopes the U.S. will work more with China on "winwin" cooperation, citing Tesla's operations in China as a successful example of economic cooperation, China's state broadcaster CCTV said on its main evening news program.

Welcome antidote

For China, Mr. Musk is a welcome antidote to the tough talk from U.S. officials, which played out most recently during a visit by Secretary of State Antony Blinken. Mr. Li's re-



Hot seat: Tesla founder and CEO Elon Musk, left, meets with Chinese Premier Li Qiang in Beijing on Sunday. AP

marks also reflect China's efforts to attract foreign investment to boost its flagging economy.

It was not clear whether Mr. Musk would visit the auto show, which runs through this week. Chinese automakers and startups have launched a bevy of electric cars in recent years, some going head-tohead with Tesla and undercutting the American maker on price.

An earlier CCTV online report said that Mr. Musk had come at the invitation of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade and met with its president, Ren Hongbin, to exchange views on further cooperation and other topics. Tesla has a major manu-

facturing base in Shanghai for both domestic sales in China and exports to Europe and other regions.

SOUTHERN RAILWAY MATERIALS MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT ADDENDUM TO AUCTION PROGRAMME MAY'24

NOTTCE NO:5/2024 e-Auction will be conducted for disposal of Ferrous scrap, Non-Ferrous scrap, other Misc scrap, condemned Wagon, Coaches & Locos, Scrap Rails and

other Fermanent way scrap material.					
SI. No	e-auction conducted by	Existing Auction date which is cancelled	Re-Scheduled Auction date for 03/05/24		
1.	GSD/PER	03/05/24	07/05/24	The details of items to be sold in e-auction will be available in catalogue www.ireps.gov.in website	

All other auctions scheduled for May'24 remains unaltered For detailed terms and conditions and downloading of catalogue please visit our web-site http://www.ireps.gov.in -> E-Auction->Sale->Live Auctions. **Principal Chief Materials Manager**

KMML, The Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd (A Govt. of Kerala Undertaking) Sankaramangalam, Kollam-691 583 Phone: 0476-2651215 to 2651217, e-mail: md@kmml.com, URL: www.kmml.com

TENDER NOTICE

For more details, please visit E-Tendering Portal, https://etenders.kerala.gov.in or www.kmml.com			
SI No.	Tender ID	Items	
1	2024_KMML_671995_1	For the supply of Squirrel Cage Induction Motor	
2	2024_KMML_671798_1	For the supply of CS Pipes	
3	2024_KMML_671896_1	For the supply of Roaster Discharge Grating Assembly	
4	2024_KMML_671926_1	For the supply of 1100V grade XLPE and PVC insulated PVC sheathed steel armoured Aluminium conductor cable of various sizes	
5	2024_KMML_672097_1	For fabrication & Supply of Crude Tickle Storage Tank F-205	
6	2024_KMML_672092_1	For the supply of 2 x 10 KVA Parallel Redundant Industrial Type UPS	
Chavara 29.04.2024 Sd/- Managing Director for The Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd			

notification and link for application.

FOR EMPANELMENT OF DIFFERENT CATEGORY OF HOSPITALS PATHOLOGICAL LABS / CLINICS / PHYSIOTHERAPY CENTERS The last date of submission of offer for RFQ Ref no. TNCC-021/2024 for empanelment of different category of Hospitals / Pathological Labs / Clinics / Physiotherapy Centers etc is hereby extended upto 31/05/2024. For details and further updates visit etc is hereby extended upto 0.00522.

www.nalcoindia.com(under Menu / Active Tender).

Dy. General Manager (T&C)

EXTENSION OF RFQ SUBMISSION DATE

ICMR-NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF NUTRITION (INDIAN COUNCIL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH) Jamai Osmania Post, Tarnaka, Hyderabad - 500 007, TS.

ADMISSION NOTIFICATION

Applications are invited from eligible candidates for admission into NIN Commo

Sports Nutrition) at ICMR-NIN, Hyderabad "under the aegis of AcSIR".

Entrance Test - NCET-2024 (ONLINE) for 2-year M.Sc (Applied Nutrition) & M.Sc

Last date: 20th May, 2024. Please see the website https://www.nin.res.in fo

Sd/- SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Bhubaneswar-751013, Odisha, India

CIN: L27203OR1981GOI000920



NSIC invites online bids on CPP Portal against the 18 no. of RFPs stated in title above.

The details of RFPs are available under the web link https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app and may be downloaded.

Last date & time for submission of proposals is 20.05.2024 by 1300 hours.

Any further announcement/ corrigendum regarding RFP will be made available on above two web links.

THE HINDU

PUTTING HIS HAND UP

The way Varun turned up today was simply brilliant: Shrevas



K.R. DEEPAK

KKR skipper complimented Varun Chakravarthy for his superb spell against DC. "He (Varun) was not at his best in the last few games, but the way he turned up today was simply brilliant. We have been thinking about it (qualification) from match one, that has been our mindset. Just focusing on our work ethic," said Shreyas.

'PHIL'OSOPHY

'It's high-risk, but it's also about putting the odds in your favour'



Phil Salt said though an attacking approach is high risk, it is the way to go in T20s. "It is high-risk but it is also about putting the odds in your favour and not taking the risks you don't want to. You just have to keep backing yourself and keep going for the right options. It's helpful to keep on it first and see what it is doing," he said.

RUNS, MORE RUNS

There is no help for the bowlers, savs Royal Challengers' Sirai



VIJAY SONEJ

RCB's Mohammed Siraj opened up about the batter-friendly conditions in the IPL. "Good luck to the bowlers. Earlier conceding 40 in four overs used to be considered expensive, now it's the new normal. There is no help for the bowlers. The grounds are small and the wickets are flat. There's no swing," Siraj said.

POSITIVE OUTLOOK

Kartikeya confident of MI making it to the playoffs



Despite his side sitting ninth in the standings, off-spinner Kumar Kartikeya backed Mumbai Indians to make it to the playoffs. "We are not under pressure. We have been in similar situations before. Last year, we had to win many games in the end to qualify, and we did it. So, we're pretty positive that we can still make it," Kartikeya said.

Knight Riders have the measure of Capitals in quick time

After the Varun-led attack restricts the visitors to 153, Salt conjures up another explosive innings to set up an easy win

IPL-17

Y.B. Sarangi KOLKATA

hil Salt's explosive half-century put Kolkata Knight Riders back on winning ways as the host recorded an emphatic seven-wicket win over Delhi Capitals in the Indian Premier League at the Eden Gardens here on Monday.

KKR rode on Varun Chakravarthy's brilliant three-wicket haul to restrict DC to 153 before overhauling the modest target in the 17th over to post its sixth win.

Salt, let off on 15, took charge of the chase. He executed some clinical clean hitting, plundering seven fours and five sixes, primarily through cut, pull and drives, in a glorious 33-ball

Quickfire knock

Salt, who collected 18 runs off the sixth over, reached his fourth 50 by hammering Khaleel Ahmed for a stunning six. He added 79 with Sunil Narine in 6.1 overs to put the home side in a commanding position.

Axar Patel claimed both the openers. Narine was caught in the deep, while Salt was played on. Rinku Singh fell cheaply, but the two Iyers, Shreyas and Venkatesh, ensured victory.

Earlier, KKR bowlers struck at regular intervals to dent DC's progress. On their return, pacers Mitchell Starc and Vaibhav Arora scalped three wickets even as the tourists plundered 66 runs in the PowerPlay.

Vaibhav asked some questions of the batters and captured two wickets. Prithvi Shaw was caught



behind, while Shai Hope was bowled by a peach of a

Meanwhile, Starc got rid of the dangerous Jake Fraser-McGurk, pulled one to Venkatesh Iyer at deep square-leg before Harshit Rana accounted for Abishek Porel.

Using the conditions

The crafty Varun and the accurate Narine combined well and enjoyed the slight turn on offer. The former began by taking the vital wicket of Rishabh Pant (27) and added two more to deny DC any scope of revival.

Pant (27), dropped by Harshit off Varun, could not capitalise on the 'life' he got on 18. The southVarun delights with a three-wkt. haul, while Vaibhav and Harshit scalp two wickets each

paw miscued another one to Shrevas at extra-cover.

Tristan Stubbs and impact player Kumar Kushagra were smartly caught by Salt, while Narine foxed Axar. Kuldeep Yadav (35 not out) utilised a reprieve to swing his bat to register his highest score and contribute some valuable runs.

Next assignment

KKR: May 3 vs MI Mumbai, 7.30 p.m.

DC: May 7 vs RR Delhi, 7.30 p.m.

SCOREBOARD

DELHI CAPITALS Prithvi Shaw c Salt b Vaibhav 13 (7b, 3x4), Jake Fraser-McGurk c

Venkatesh b Starc 12 (7b, 1x4, 1x6), Abishek Porel b Harshit 18 (15b, 2x4, 1x6), Shai Hope b Vaibhav 6 (3b, 1x6), Rishabh Pant c Shreyas b Varun 27 (20b, 2x4, 1x6), Axar Patel b Narine 15 (21b, 2x4), Tristan Stubbs c Salt b Varun 4 (7b), Kumar Kushagra (Impact Player in place of Shaw) c Salt b Varun 1 (3b). Kuldeep Yaday (not out) 35 (26b. 5x4, 1x6), Rasikh Salam c Shreyas b Harshit 8 (10b, 1x4), Lizaad

(lb-3, nb-1, w-9): 13; Total (for nine wkts. in 20 overs): 153. **FALL OF WICKETS**

Williams (not out) 1 (2b); Extras

1-17 (Shaw, 1.3 overs), 2-30 (Fraser-McGurk, 2.5), 3-37 (Hope, 3.3), 4-68 (Porel, 6.4), 5-93 (Pant, 10.1), 6-99 (Stubbs, 12.1), 7-101 (Axar, 13.3), 8-111 (Kushagra,

14.3), 9-140 (Rasikh, 18.2).

KNIGHT RIDERS BOWLING Starc 3-0-43-1. Vaibhay 4-0-29-2. Harshit 4-0-28-2, Narine 4-0-24-1 Varun 4-0-16-3, Russell 1-0-10-0.

KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS Phil Salt b Axar 68 (33b, 7x4, 5x6), Sunil Narine c Fraser-McGurk b Axar 15 (10b, 3x4), Rinku Singh c Kuldeep b Williams 11 (11b, 1x4), Shreyas Iyer (not out) 33 (23b, 3x4. 1x6). Venkatesh Iver (not out) 26 (23b, 2x4, 1x6); Extras (lb-2, nb-1, w-1): 4; Total (for three wkts. in 16.3 overs): 157.

FALL OF WICKETS 1-79 (Narine, 6.1), 2-96 (Salt, 8.1), 3-100 (Rinku, 9.2).

CAPITALS BOWLING Williams 3-0-38-1 Khaleel

3-0-28-0, Rasikh 2.3-0-30-0, Axar 4-0-25-2, Kuldeep 4-0-34-0. Toss: DC; PoM: Varun. KKR won by seven wickets with 21 deliveries remaining.

Ruturaj one step ahead of the bowlers, feels Hussey

S. Dipak Ragav CHENNAI

Not many players entered this year's edition of the IPL with more pressure and expectations than Ruturaj Gaikwad. On the eve of the tournament opener, the 27-year-old took over the captaincy of Chennai Super Kings, filling in the enormous shoes of M.S. Dhoni. And it was not easy for him at the start of the season, as it took five games to get his first half-century.

Especially with an outof-form top order and the absence of his regular opening partner, Devon Conway, the Super Kings skipper was searching for the right approach. He even demoted himself to number three in two outings to accommodate Ajinkya Rahane, who was struggling with a calf issue.

But in the last five matches, Ruturaj has come into his own with three half-centuries and a ton while striking at over 170. At a time when the focus of most openers is to blast the leather off the cork, Ruturaj has shown the virtues of timing and placement can still do

CSK batting coach Michael Hussey praised Ruturaj and felt the latter was one step ahead of the bow-



into his own now. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

"He is a brilliant timer of the cricket ball," said Hussey. "I've been asking him what his secret is in terms of his placement; he always finds the gaps. He is also a smart batter; he knows when to attack and when to soak up pressure."

One question the season was how he would perform with the burden of captaincy, and Hussey felt he was growing nicely into the role.

"It's been challenging for him as well. He has taken over the captaincy role from arguably the greatest skipper of all time in this country and has been able to come in and keep his batting standards up very high. He's got some good help around him with Stephen Fleming and Dhoni. But to take care of the captaincy aspect in addition to his batting is a real credit to him," Hussey added.

Race for the caps Runs HS SR 100s/50s Kohli (RCB) 10 500 113* 147.49 1/4 Ruturaj (CSK) 447 108* 149.49 1/3 Sai Sudharsan (GT) 10 418 84* 135.71 0/2 PURPLE Inns Wkts Econ Bumrah (MI) 9 14 5/21 6.63 8 9.75 Mustafizur (CSK) 14 4/29 1/0 Harshal (PBKS) 14 3/15 10.18

LSG, MI will want to mend inconsistent form for a shot at playoffs



Back in the swing: Mayank's return brings a handy reinforcement for a misfiring Super Giants pace unit. SANDEEP SAXENA

LUCKNOW

Hanging on to its playoff chances by a thread and fast running out of time, Mumbai Indians (MI) will hope its season turnaround can begin with the Indian Premier League match against Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) at the Ekana Cricket Stadium in Lucknow on Tuesday.

The dwindling returns from its batters, starting at the top with Rohit Sharma and Ishan Kishan, have been symptomatic of its ailing season.

The opening salvo had four 50-plus stands in the side's first six games. In the three outings since, it has had none.

MI will hope Pandya's 46 off 24 against the Capitals last week can help him turn a corner and bring some support for Tilak Varma.

With the ball, Nuwan Thushara has made an unceremonious start to his IPL career, conceding at 12 runs per over. The potential return of Gerald Coetzee will ease some of Jasprit Bumrah's burden. These issues hold a fami-

liar ring for the Super Giants too, who will want to mend their inconsistent form before it weighs on their playoff contention. On the ascendency after back-to-back wins over Chennai Super Kings, Lucknow was handed a reality check by Rajasthan Royals last week.

Today's match



PREVIOUS MEETING

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD) &

To begin with, Mayank Yadav's return to fitness brings handy reinforcement for a misfiring pace unit.

K.L. Rahul would want to put his spinners, Ravi Bishnoi and Krunal Pan-

Points Table

	М	W	٦	PTS	NRR
Rajasthan Royals	9	8	1	16	0.694
Kolkata Knight Riders	9	6	3	12	1.096
Chennai Super Kings	9	5	4	10	0.810
Sunrisers Hyderabad	9	5	4	10	0.075
Lucknow Super Giants	9	5	4	10	0.059
Delhi Capitals	11	5	6	10	-0.442
Gujarat Titans	10	4	6	8	-1.113
Punjab Kings	9	3	6	6	-0.187
Mumbai Indians	9	3	6	6	-0.261
Royal Challengers	10	3	7	6	-0.415

heavy lifting having been

left for Rahul and Nicholas

Pooran so far. The contri-

dya, to better use. The pair has bowled a combined 50.4 overs across nine games.

butions from overseas star-Calls for improvement ters Quinton de Kock and will fall on the Lucknow Marcus Stoinis have been batters as well, with the too far and few between.

S. Prasanna Venkatesan CHENNAI

Mitchell has found a nice

role at No. 3:

Hussey

Chennai Super Kings batting coach Michael Hussey said Darvl Mitchell has found a nice and comfortable role as the No. 3 batter.

"It's not easy. He's a new player who's come to the team – Rachin Ravindra and him. We just expect them to be able to come in, fit in straight away, feel like they belong and come out and perform right from the word go. In reality, it's not easy. This is the IPL. It's the best T20 competition in the world. Sometimes it takes time," said Hussey.



Sharvaanica and Divith win gold medals in World chess

India won two gold, one silver and a bronze in the World cadet rapid and blitz chess championships held in Durres, Albania. A.S. Sharvaanica bagged a gold (rapid girls' under-10) and silver (blitz girls' under-10) while Divith Reddy won a gold (rapid open under-8) and bronze (blitz open under-8).



Resilient Nadal overcomes Cachin in Madrid Open

Rafael Nadal's body withstood its toughest test yet at the Madrid Open as he needed three sets and more than three hours to get past 91st-ranked Pedro Cachin on Monday. Nadal won 6-1, 6-7(5), 6-3 to make it to the round-of-16 at the clay-court tournament where he is the record five-time champion. He will next face 31st-ranked Jiri Lehecka. The 37-year-old Nadal is trying to get in shape for next month's French Open. Since his latest injury layoff, he's had two matches in Barcelona and was pessimistic about his physical condition after arriving in Madrid. But he's won three more times in the capital.



Sultana and teammates visit schools to promote T20 WC

Bangladesh women's cricket team captain Nigar Suitana, along with teammates Fanima Knatui and Marufa Akter, visited three schools in Sylhet. The visit was planned to promote women's cricket in the country ahead of the Women's T20 World Cup which will be hosted by Bangladesh later this year.

Fencer Bhavani fails to secure Paris Olympics quota place

A six-member Indian fencing team, led by Bhavani Devi, failed to secure a single Paris 2024 Olympics quota place from the Asia Oceania Zonal Qualifiers here over the weekend. Bhavani, who became the first Indian fencer to compete in the Olympics at Tokyo 2020, was the top seed in women's sabre at the event here. She defeated Juliet Jie Min Heng of Singapore 15-8 in the quarterfinals, but lost 15-12 to Chu Wing Kiu of Hong Kong China in the semifinals. Only the winners of each event secured an Olympic quota for their respective countries. Karan Singh, Tanishka Khatri, Dev, Udaivir Singh and Joys Ashitha Stalinraj were the other Indians.

Thiago Silva to leave Chelsea at end of the season

Brazilian defender Thiago Silva announced on Monday his departure from Chelsea at the end of season after four years at the Premier League club but said he hoped to return in a different role. The 39-year-old joined from PSG on a free transfer in August 2020 and has made 151 appearances for Chelsea, winning the Champions League, Club World Cup and Super Cup. "Chelsea means a lot to me. I came here with the intention of only staying for a year and it ended up being four years," said Silva, whose sons are now on Chelsea's books, in an emotional video on the club website.

LIVE TELECAST

Badminton: Thomas & Uber Cup, Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & JioCinema, 7 a.m.

Bangladesh Women vs India Women: 2nd T20I, FanCode, 3.30 p.m

IPL: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & JioCinema, 7.30 p.m. Champions League: Sony Sports Ten 2 (SD & HD) & LIV, 12.30 a.m. (Wednesday).

India cruises into the quarterfinals

Prannoy returns to winning ways; Satwiksairaj-Chirag pair stretched even as other compatriots win easily

THOMAS CUP

Press Trust of India

efending champion India sailed to the knockout stages of the Thomas Cup with a 5-0 rout of England in a Group C contest here on Monday.

India, which defeated Thailand 4-1 in its opening tie, notched up a second consecutive win to qualify for the last eight.

H.S. Prannoy returned to winning ways, defeating Harry Huang 21-15, 21-15 to give India a 1-0 lead.

Morale-booster

"To give a start to the team is really important, it gives a good boost to the team to go ahead. It is really important to finish off the matches clinically as you saw against Thailand one match was bad for us," said Prannoy.

The star pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty was stretched to three games by Ben Lane and Sean Vendy in the first doubles fixtures before the 2022 World champion bronze medallist picked up a 21-17, 19-21, 21-15 win in 65 minutes.

Former World No. 1 K. Srikanth recorded a 21-16,



Did it! Prannoy gave India a flying start. X@BWFMEDIA

21-11 victory over Nadeem Dalvi to give India an unassailable 3-0 lead.

"Happy with the way both the matches have gone for me (in the tournament). There is a lot of pressure on players to win games. I feel I have played little easier opponents so far. But from now we will face better opponents and I have to be my best," Srikanth said.

The second doubles pair of M.R. Arjun and Dhruv Kapila then brushed aside Rory Easton and Alex Green 21-17, 21-19 before Kiran George prevailed 21-18, 21-12 over Cholan Kayan to wrap up the fixture.

India will take on group topper and record 14-time champion Indonesia in its final group fixture on Wednesday.

The result:

India bt England 5-0 (H.S. Prannoy bt Harry Huang 21-15, 21-15; Satwiksairaj Rankireddy & Chirag Shetty bt Ben Lane & Sean Vendy 21-17, 19-21, 21-15; K. Srikanth bt Nadeem Dalvi 21-16, 21-11; M.R. Arjun & Dhruv Kapila bt Rory Easton & Alex Green 21-17, 21-19; Kiran George bt Cholan Kayan 21-18, 21-12).

Seven Indian shuttlers qualify for the Olympics

Press Trust of India NEW DELHI

Seven Indian shuttlers, including P.V. Sindhu, have officially qualified for the Paris Games across four categories based on their Olympic Games Qualification rankings.

While Sindhu and singles men's shuttlers H.S. Pranoy and Lakshya Sen had sealed their Olympic spots long back, the formality was completed on Monday, the cut-off date set by international badminton federation (BWF).

As per the criteria, the top-16 shuttlers in men's and women's singles based on their Olympic Games Qualification ranking on the cutoff date book their tickets to the quadrennial showpiece.

Sindhu, a silver and bronze medallist at the Olympics, was placed 12th, while Prannoy and Sen were placed ninth and 13th respectively in men's singles.

The crack men's doubles pair of Satwiksairai Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty was placed third at the end of the Olympic qualification cycle and will go into the Paris Games as one of the best medal hopes.

In women's doubles, Tanisha Crasto and Ashwini Ponnappa made the grade after finishing 13th at the end of the qualification

Selectors to meet in Ahmedabad today, squad to be announced later

T20 WORLD CUP

Press Trust of India NEW DELHI

The national selection committee led by Ajit Agarkar will meet BCCI secretary Jay Shah in Ahmedabad on Tuesday to finalise India's 15-member squad for the ICC T20 World Cup in the Americas but the official announcement might happen a day later.

The BCCI secretary is the convenor of the senior selection committee (men) and with Shah busy with his political commitments, it is understood that the meeting will be held in Ahmedabad.

The second wicketkeeper's slot and all-rounder Hardik Pandya's place in the side will be the two talking points of the meeting. It is understood that K.L. Rahul (IPL strike rate of 144 and 378 runs so far) and Sanju Samson (385 runs at 161) are still locked in a battle for the second 'keeper's place.

Indians assured of eight medals in vouth category

BOXING

Sports Bureau

Brijesh Tamta, Sagar Jakhar and Sumit ensured semifinal spots and medals in the youth category at the ASBC Asian u-22 & Youth Boxing Championships 2024 in Astana on Monday.

While Sagar (60kg) and Sumit (67kg) had easy 5-0 victories to reach the last four, Brijesh (48kg) had to fight hard against Uzbekistan's Sabirov Sayfiddin with both boxers winning one round each. The Indian pugilist won the final round, and the bout, 4-3 after it was reviewed.

India is now assured of eight medals in the youth category as five women -Annu (48kg), Parthavi Grewal (66kg), Nikita Chand (60kg), Khushi Pooniya (81kg) and Nirjhara Bana (+81kg) - will begin campaigns in the semifinals.

Women in Blue will be eager to pull away further

INDIA IN BANGLADESH

Sports Bureau

An upbeat India will hope to take a 2-0 lead in the against Bangladesh when the sides meet in the second game at Sylhet on Tuesday.

An all-round display

helped the Women In Blue seal a 44-run win in the opening match on Sunday. After opting to bat, the visitors finished with 145 for seven. Bangladesh's batting woes, the side's Achilles heel against Australia, cost it again. Only skipper Nigar Sultana put up a fight, scoring a halfcentury. India's disciplined bowling in the first T20I will give it a lot of confidence. Renuka Singh and Pooja Vastrakar, who was handed new-ball duties, were able to keep the Ban-



In her element: Yastika, who top-scored in the opening game, will look to continue in the same vein. X@BCCIWOMEN

gladesh openers quiet, allowing them little room to score freely.

Sajeevan Sajana made her debut while Radha Yaday returned to the side after a year. Given that this is a dress rehearsal ahead of the World Cup to be held in Bangladesh later this year, Harmanpreet Kaur's team could experiment with legspinner Asha Sobhana Joy, too. The hosts' fielding left a lot to be desired as a number of catches were dropped.

The bowling, however, posed questions of India's experienced batting order, not letting the batters give the final flourish.

Match begins at 3.30 p.m. IST.



d of the ICC TON World Cup VerlackCAE

Ravindra and Henry in NZ squad for T20 WC

Agencies AUCKLAND

Kane Williamson will lead New Zealand in the T20 World Cup for the fourth time while opener Devon Conway, recovering from a thumb injury, has also been named in the 15-man provisional squad for the ICC event in USA and Caribbean in June.

The squad led by Williamson was named here on Monday. Conway was

ruled out of the ongoing IPL due to a thumb injury he suffered in February. Matt Henry and Rachin Ravindra are the only two of the 15 without T20 World Cup experience.

The squad: Kane Williamson (capt.), Finn Allen, Trent Boult. Michael Bracewell, Mark Chapman, Devon Conway, Lockie Ferguson, Matt Henry, Daryl Mitchell, Jimmy Neesham, Glenn Phillips, Rachin Ravindra, Mitchell Santner, Ish Sodhi, Tim Southee. Travelling reserve: Ben Sears.

squad for Olympic qualifier

WFI names

Press Trust of India NEW DELHI

The Wresting Federation of India (WFI) has named alcompeted in the Asian Qualifiers in Bishkek for the final Olympic Qualifying tournament in Istanbul next month.

The squad for the World Olympic Games Oualifiers (WOGQ) from May 9-13 will remain the same, except leaving out Vinesh Phogat (50kg), Anshu Malik (57kg) and Reetika (76kg) as they had sealed quota places.

The squad: Freestyle: Aman (57kg), Sujeet (65kg), Jaideep (74kg), Deepak Punia (86kg), Deepak (97kg), Sumit (125kg). Greco-Roman: Sumit (60kg), Ashu (67kg), Vikas (77kg), Sunil Kumar (87kg), Nitesh (97kg), Naveen (130kg).

Women: Mansi (62kg), Nisha

petitors in the women's

Eldhose Paul, who re-

The title is in our hands, says City's Ake

EURO LEAGUES

Agence France-Presse

Nathan Ake is confident Manchester City will hold its nerve to overhaul Arsenal in the tension-filled Premier League title race.

City closed the gap on leader Arsenal to one point with a 2-0 win at Nottingham Forest.

"It's in our hands so we're not depending on what they do. That's the difference from last year, we were still depending on what they were doing," Ake said. "This season it's in our hands. The only thing we have to do is focus on the next one. It's so



clinch the title if it wins its last five league matches. AFP

close but it's also so far

The results: LaLiga: Real Betis 1 (Isco 38-pen) drew with Sevilla 1 (Salas 56). Serie A: Fiorentina 5 (Sottil 17, Martinez Quarta 54, Gonzalez 58, 66, Barak 62) bt Sassuolo 1 (Thorstvedt 57).

Archer Deepika re-inducted in TOPS

Press Trust of India NEW DELHI

Archer Deepika Kumari has been re-inducted into the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) core group ahead of the Paris Games, the Sports Ministry announced on Monday.

Another archer, Mrinal Chauhan, has been added to the TOPS Development Group, while Pravin Jadhav has been moved from Development to Core Group.

The MOC also inducted squash players Anahat Singh, Abhay Singh and Velavan Senthilkumar to the **TOPS Development Group** to help them prepare for the 2028 Olympics.

Opportunity for shot putter Tajinderpal to make it to Paris

INDIAN GP

Ashwin Achal BENGALURU

Shot putter Tajinderpal Singh Toor will strive to make a mark in the Indian Grand Prix track and field competition at Sree Kanteerava Stadium on Tuesday.

Tajinderpal will hope to breach the Paris Olympics qualification standard of 21.50m. This is not beyond the reach of the Services athlete, whose personal best stands at 21.77m.

The tournament also marks the return of sprinter Hima Das, who was provisionally suspended by the National Anti-Dop-



ing Agency (NADA) for three whereabouts failures last year.

Hima and 2016 Rio Olympian Srabani Nanda are among the eight com-

corded a wind-assisted 17.03m jump to win the men's triple jump gold at the 2022 Commonwealth Games, is also in action. The Olympic qualification mark, set at 17.22m, might be a bridge too far.

200m event.

Close fight

The 2023 Asian Athletics Championships silver medallist Shaili Singh and Kerala's Nayana James fight for the women's long jump crown.

In the third edition of the Indian Open Jumps competition held here recently, Nayana had edged out Shaili for the gold medal.

THE HINDU

Bayern and Real rekindle rivalry in the semifinal stage

Ancelotti's side travels to Bavaria for the first-leg clash, a fixture most repeated in the competition's history; the Spanish outfit knocked out the German giants in their three most recent tangles

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Agence France-Presse MADRID

eal Madrid has its sights set on a La-Liga and Champions League double, but to lift the latter it must find a way past Bayern Munich, its 'bestia negra'- 'black

Carlo Ancelotti's side travels to Bavaria for the semifinal first-leg clash on Tuesday, a fixture most repeated in the competition's history.

Despite Real's forbidding nickname for Bayern, they have shaded the Bundesliga side across their 26 encounters, with 12 wins to Bayern's 11.

In the last decade, Real clearly have the edge on the German giants. The record 14-time winners knocked out Bayern in each of their three most recent tangles, in the semifinals in 2014 and 2018, and the quarterfinals in 2017.

'They've had a tough season but right now they are probably in their best moment and they have Kane, who scores a lot of goals," Ancelotti said about his opponent. "It will be an even tie, hard-fought, and we will have to battle, but we're delighted to play it, and with a lot of confidence."

Real goalkeeper Andriy Lunin was the hero in the shoot-out win over City as he saved two penalties, but will feel the pressure of



Bracing up: Bellingham would love to get one over his former rivals in the 'European Clasico X@RFAI MADRID



Right now they are probably in their best moment and they have Kane, who scores a lot of goals

ANCELOTTI

Thibaut Courtois breathing down his neck as he prepares to keep Kane at bay.

Ancelotti said the Belgian is fit again and will play next weekend in LaLiga, meaning Lunin may face a fight for his place for the second leg or potential final. The Ukrainian made a mistake in the Clasico on April 21 against Barcelona to hand the Catalans a goal but his side won 3-2 to take a dominant lead in La Liga. Bayern goalkeeper Sven Ulreich's horrendous mistake the last time the teams met may play on his mind.

Deputising for the injured Manuel Neuer, Ulreich went to collect a backpass before realising he could not handle the ball. The reserve goalkeeper let it slide past him, to the delight of Karim Benzema who pounced, sending Real through to the final.

Jude Bellingham has stepped into Benzema's shoes as Real's top scorer, and he has delivered on the big occasion this season, with three goals in three games Barcelona.

The England international was injured and did not play on the final day last season as Dortmund lost out to Bayern in the German title race and Bellingham would love to get one over his former rivals in the 'European Clasico'.

Match starts at 00.30 a.m. (Wednesday).



Thrilled twosome: Aakanksha and Shainy celebrate their SUCCESS, SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Indians strike it rich at the Asian carrom

Sports Bureau

Aakankssha Kadam and Shainy Sebastian surprised multiple World champion Rashmi Kumari and K. Nagajothi 21-25, 25-17, 25-17 in the women's doubles final of the sixth Asian carrom championships in Maldives. The men's doubles title was claimed by K. Srinivas and Mohd. Ghufran who beat the Maldivian duo of Ismail Azmeen and Hassan Nazim 25-15, 25-16 in the final. In Open Swiss league, Prashant More won the title.

The results:

Men's doubles: Final: K. Srinivas & Mohd, Ghufrran bt Ismail Azmeen & Hassan Nazim (Mdv) 25-15, 25-16.

Semifinals: Azmeen & Nazim bt Sandeep Dive & Jugal Kishor Dutta 10-25, 25-5, 25-22; Srinivas & Ghufran bt Anass Ahamed & Hasitha Anuruddha (Sri) 25-18, 22-25, 25-0.

Women's doubles: Final: Aakanksha Kadam & Shainy Sebastian bt Rashmi Kumari & K Nagajothi 21-25, 25-17, 25-17. Semifinals: Aakanksha & Shainy bt Roshita Joseph & Tasmila Kavindi (Sri) 25-13, 25-5; Rashmi & Nagajothi bt Aminath Vidhadh & Aishath Nahufa (Mdv) 25-5,

Swiss League: 1. Prashant More, 2. Mohamed Shaheed Hilmy (Sri), 3. Hafizur Rahman (Ban)

Clinical Mumbai City storms into the summit clash

Karthik Mudaliar MUMBAI

Mumbai City FC downed FC Goa 2-0 (5-2 on aggregate) in the second leg of the ISL 10 semifinal at the Mumbai Football Arena on Monday.

MCFC, which was already ahead by a goal coming into the match, sealed the tie after Jorge Pereyra Diaz and Lallianzuala Chhangte found the net in the 69th and 83rd minute.

Goa started the game aggressively, pushing its players high up while the home team was happy to sit back and operate solely on counter-attacks. Diaz scored the opener after a corner kick was met by Ra-



Roaring victory: Chhangte's strike closed the doors on a Goa comeback. X@INDSUPERLEAGUE

hul Bheke's header and although it was stopped by the keeper, the ball landed straight onto the goalscorer's foot as he tapped it in.

Goa lost possession after a corner-kick as Vikram Partap Singh launched a counter on the left flank with a perfectly weighed through-ball to Chhangte behind the defence.

The winger dribbled

past the keeper and passed it into an empty net.

MCFC will be looking to avenge its Shield defeat against Mohun Bagan Super Giant when the two sides meet in the ISL Final in Kolkata on May 4.

The result:

Mumbai City FC 2 (Pereyra Diaz 69, Chhangte 83) bt FC Goa 0 (MCFC won 5-2 on aggregate).

Arpit in sizzling form

Player-of-the-match Arpit Rana smashed an 86-ball 163 while Aditya Choudhary made 75 not out and Ankit Redhu took four wickets as NK Khanna Club beat Sporting Club by eight wickets in the DDCA League.

The scores:

Sporting 276/9 in 40 overs (Manish Sehrawat 63, Ankit Redhu 4/48) lost to N.K. Khanna 278/2 in 29 overs (Arpit Rana 163, Aditya Choudhary 75 n.o.). Maulana Azad 254/9 in 40 overs (Revaant Rakyan 104, Aryan 48, Sanket Dua 4/34) lost to Ravi Brothers 255/8 in 36 overs (Ayush Doseja 117 n.o.). Delhi Audit 256/9 in 40 overs (Himashu Rana 93) bt Rajnigandha 250/8 in 40 overs

(Aryan Sehrawat 88 n.o., Parth Goswami 47).

Friends 211/9 in 40 overs (Shubham Kant 62, Prince Mehra 47. Eshaan Arora 39. Rishi Sharma 4/25, Rohan Parchanda 3/46) bt South Delhi Colts 195/9 in 40 overs (Sudeet Thakur 58, Eshaan 3/30).

Kishan Ganj Gymkhana 251 in 40 overs (Swarnim Bansal 86, Nikhil Malik 84, Kunal Sharma 5/35) lost to Golden Hawks 255/5 in 39 overs (Vaibhav Sharma 64. Mohammed Bilal 63, Keshav Dabas 58). Kashmere Gate Colts 236/6 in 40

overs (Atul Tyagi 71 n.o., Dushyant Yadav 59, Vaibhav Pandey 4/38) bt DDA 219 in 39 overs (Nikhil Bhatt 93). R.P. Academy 219/6 in 40 overs (Rahul Saini 64, Raj Bahadur 4/54)

lost to Indian Air Force 221/7 in 31

overs (Rajat Paliwal 54, Yogesh

Singh 4/37).

Malik Sports 401/6 in 40 overs (Mayank 117, Chandresh 94, Karan Yadav 49) bt Tedco 74 in 11 overs (Vipin 4/7, Samar 3/19).

Unmukh and Prashant shine

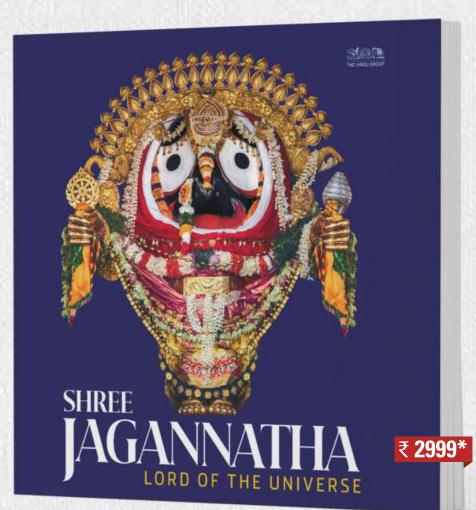
Unmukh Chand scored 90 and Prashant Chaudhary claimed three wickets as Carpediem India beat Haryana Academy by six runs in the 39th all-India Laxman Das Chabra

cricket tournament.

Haryana Academy 331/6 in 40 overs (Parth Nagil 93, Prashant Chaudhary 3/60) lost to Carpediem India 333/4 in 35 overs (Priyam Garg 112, Unmukh

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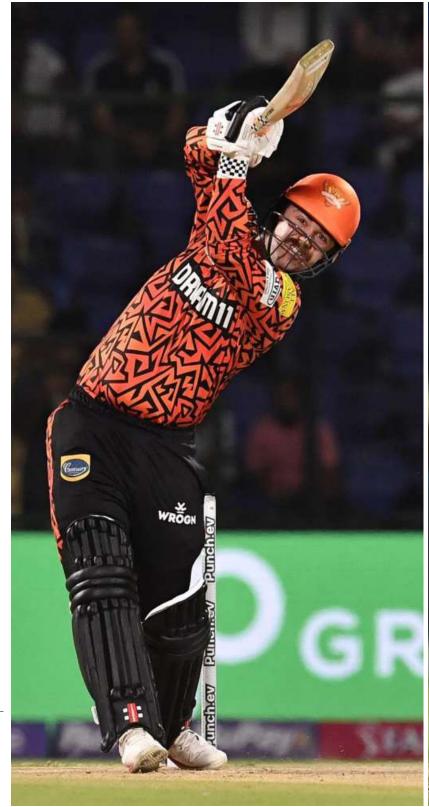


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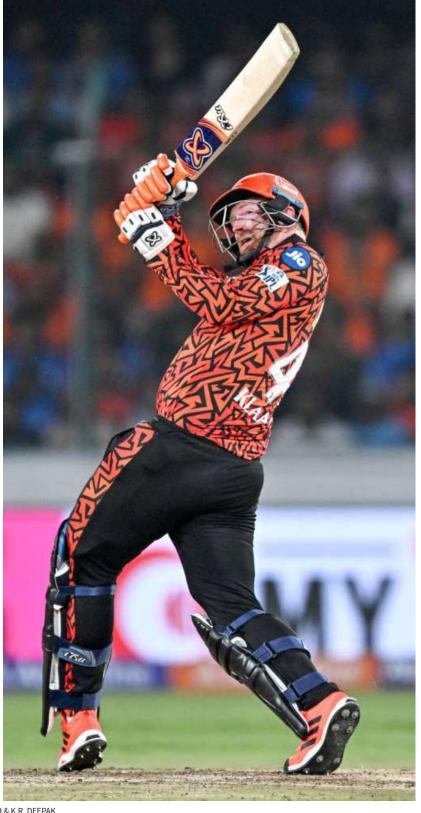


Sunrisers throw up template for T20 batting

Armed with a no-fear approach and bolstered by the Impact Player rule, the 2016 champion has notched up gargantuan totals and emerged as a trailblazer







Power Play: While Head and Abhishek have gone on the attack right from the word go, Klaasen has sustained the momentum with his punishing blade. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR, K. BHAGYA PRAKASH & K.R. DEEPAK

wo-thirds of the way into the league phase of the tournament, this edition of the IPL has already been one of plenty. Plenty of fours and sixes. Plenty of totals in excess of 200. Plenty of joy for the willow-wielders. And plenty of agony and anguish for the hapless bowlers who have been reduced to bowling machines, serfs who are only there to do the power-packed batters' bidding.

Among those wreaking the most havoc is the batting group from Sunrisers Hyderabad. The 2016 champion has been the talk of the cricketing world, defeats in its last two encounters notwithstanding. Twice this season, SRH has broken the record for the highest total in IPL history, backing up 277 for three against Mumbai Indians at home with 287 for three against Royal Challengers Bengaluru at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium. Its unfettered approach to the Powerplay has subsequently found resonance in other teams; only the other night, Punjab Kings mounted the highest successful chase in the IPL, against Kolkata Knight Riders, sending out a strong message that there is no such thing as a 'safe' score any longer.

There is much to admire in the manner in which SRH has gone about its business. It already had a strong batting core, but the acquisition in the December auction of Travis Head, the explosive Australian opener, has lent a whole new dynamic. Head may not be the most appealing aesthetically, but what he lacks in grace and elegance, he more than makes up for with his ferocious onslaughts based on unmatched hand-eye coordination and a comprehensive understanding of what his strengths – and his limitations – are.

In a way, SRH was compelled to recalibrate its approach following a disastrous 2023 season which it finished at the bottom of the pile. Despite the resources at its command, it was timid and hesitant with the bat, and in a format where the bat is the one that rules the roost, that was a guaranteed recipe for disaster. Stung by its last-place finish, the ownership group rang in the changes. Out went West Indian legend Brian Lara, who was replaced as head coach by Daniel Vettori. With the call to divest Aiden Markram of the captaincy, SRH identified Pat Cummins, Australia's undisputed

leader, as best suited to helm their campaign. SRH pursued the quick with single-minded zeal at the auction, dishing out ₹20.50 crore to secure his services. Against that backdrop, Head was a steal at ₹6.8 crore. That it is money well spent is all too obvious.

Brutal batting tree

SRH isn't all about Head alone, of course. The devastating left-hander sits atop a brutal batting tree with Abhishek Sharma, his opening partner, and South African stumper Heinrich Klaasen as equal contributors to the carnage that hasn't spared any bowler. The franchise has invested hugely in Abhishek over the years and the young left-hander is finally beginning to repay the faith, while Klaasen's class – pardon the pun – has seldom been in doubt. He, more than anyone else, has ensured that the exceptional starts provided by the fearless Head-Abhishek combine haven't gone to

There was a time when teams targeted conservative PowerPlays. They constructed their innings around keeping wickets in hand and teeing off in the last quarter, an approach that doesn't always pay off. SRH has radically transformed thought processes by going hard at the bowling from the get-go. The profusion of batting riches – the impressive Nitish Kumar Reddy has been the find of the season, Abdul Samad has embraced greater consistency in his role as finisher and Shahbaz Ahmed has come into his own – as well as the introduction of the Impact Player has allowed it to keep going hard even if a couple of wickets tumble in quick succession. The onus is no longer on beginning quietly and finishing in a frenzy; SRH has treated every over as a PowerPlay over, with spectacular results.

This approach comes with its attendant risks, needless to say. There will be days – or is it nights? – when the implosion will be dramatic and decisive, like against Royal Challengers Bengaluru last week. Chasing 207 for victory at home, SRH stumbled to 56 for four after five overs, its reply in a shambles with its big guns silenced. Even so, there was not even a token effort to bat out the overs, no overt bid to reduce the margin of defeat with an eye on the net run rate. Such mundane thinking has gone out the window.

face, SRH kept attacking, Cummins briefly raising visions of an unexpected victory. It eventually recovered to finish on 171 for eight, beaten by 35 runs. 'A matter of six deliveries,' is how they described their abortive chase. So simple, perhaps too much so, some might say, but how can you argue with a side that has smashed 112 sixes in nine matches to date?

Head has walked away with all the accolades, which is perhaps understandable because he is a celebrated international star who boasts hundreds in the final of the World Test Championship and the 50-over World Cup, both against India. His franchise-high 338 runs have come at an average of 42.25 and a humongous strike-rate of 211.25. He has unleashed 40 fours and 19 sixes; in effect, he has hit a boundary every 2.7 balls. Those are exceptional stats.

Perfect partner

But Abhishek hardly suffers in comparison. With 303 runs to his name, he is his team's second highest scorer. Remarkably, his strike-rate of 214.89 is more than three higher than Head's. He has hit a boundary every 2.8 balls, and while his four-count (22) is nearly half of Head's, he has hammered a whopping 27 sixes. It's no wonder then that, against Delhi Capitals, SRH ended the PowerPlay at 125 without loss, the most runs ever in the first six overs of a T20 game.

Then, there is Klaasen – 295 runs, strike-rate 185.53, just nine fours but an extraordinary 28 sixes. Admittedly, some of the grounds at this year's IPL, like at every year's IPL, haven't been the largest, but the distance these sixes have travelled would lead one to believe that no matter where, they would still have been sixes. That's an offshoot of the prep that goes in behind the scenes. There is a concerted attempt to smite the ball longer and harder, with range-hitting a fearsome, awe-inspiring and intimidating experience on the eve of a match.

The key to being a T20 destroyer is shedding the fear of getting out. That goes against the basic grain of batsmanship. Even in this world of instant gratification and the overwhelming desire to get into franchise cricket – playing for the country isn't quite the ultimate aim, as it

Even when staring a huge loss in the ____ used to be in a more relaxed era – young kids are taught to put a price on their wicket in their formative years. To therefore bat with freedom, and without the attendant fear of being dismissed to a 'poor' stroke, calls for an equanimity and a mindset that can and must overlook the consequences of getting out. It's not as if SRH is the first team to introduce this concept, but no one has espoused it more stridently and consistently than the Cummins-inspired outfit that still has plenty of runs, and sixes, in it.

> While SRH has been an extraordinary front-runner, it hasn't quite mastered the art of chasing yet. Three of its four losses have come when its has batted second, and its has chased successfully just once, which might point to a soft underbelly that other sides would have taken note of. That's an area of concern, no matter what spin the team management might seek to put on it, but one can rest assured that it will be addressed post-haste, if it already

Is SRH's approach capable of being emulated? Can it be the trend-setter, the trailblazer that can inspire others to follow suit? On the evidence of IPL 2024, most certainly. SRH has redefined the art of run-making, especially while batting first, in the 20-over format but for others franchises and international teams – to follow suit will require not just a change in mindset but also bringing together resources that can facilitate that methodology. It's easier, if that's the right word, to piece a franchise team together because one can draw from so many options, from so many countries. To assemble a national side in like fashion will be a more daunting and trying exercise, with the added rider that the Impact Player hasn't yet percolated to country versus country battle.

T20 games are no longer won and lost in the PowerPlay, but the tempo is often set in the first six overs when only two fielders are allowed outside the 30-yard circle. When the run-rate is in the 15s after six overs, it's relatively easier to ride on that momentum, as SRH's largely productive middle order has showcased. Abhishek and Head starts – apologies again for the horrible pun – have been integral to the fortunes of SRH, which has unveiled a style that is certain to become a T20 template.

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Abhishek, his opening partner, and South African stumper

Cummins' men have treated every over as a PowerPlay over, with spectacular results

The physics and maths of keeping elections fair and representative

While mathematical analysis helps sharpen an algorithm for the election, a physics perspective can diagnose if it is fairly implemented in practice. The science of elections has a long way to go but for millions across the world, the elections of 2024 provide hope that the future is in their hands

M.S. Santhanam <u>Aanjaneya Kumar</u> **Ritam Pal**

here are about 60 national elections in 2024 involving two billion people, including the biggest of them – the national elections underway in India – and the election to the U.S. presidency. Across the world, elections are a volatile mixture of emotions, aspirations, competing ideologies, and sometimes even violence. It might then surprise many that, despite the cacophony, there is science behind the election's processes.

About 2,500 years ago, the earliest form of elections in ancient Athens was a system that ultimately depended on the candidate's luck. Among all the suitable candidates, one was randomly chosen. Since the winning criterion was based on random choice, campaigning or influence couldn't help the candidate.

Tenth-century Chola inscriptions at Uthiramerur in Tamil Nadu reveal the practice of choosing village representatives through a 'Kudavolai' system. The final choice was made by randomly picking one among the candidates the people had voted for.

The 'first past the post' system?

Today, social choice theorists and mathematicians who study elections call this the approval voting system followed by a random choice. As a means of electing candidates, this process fails to reflect the will of the people. If this is a flawed process, what would be the right way to elect candidates? Surprisingly, mathematics tells us that there is no simple answer to this question.

The first-past-the-post (FPTP) system followed in India, the U.S., the U.K., and several other countries has many drawbacks. Critics have pointed out the disproportionate difference between the popular vote share and the seat share in many Parliaments. For example, in the 2015 Delhi Assembly elections, the Aam Aadmi Party received 54% of the popular vote but won 96% of the seats, whereas the Bharatiya Janata Party won 32% and 4%, respectively.

Second, winners in the FPTP system often secure far less than 50% of the vote share. No government in India, irrespective of its strength in the Lok Sabha (i.e. number of seats), has ever surpassed 50% vote share. Since 1918 only once, in 1931 in the U.K., did a government command more than 50%. So by the vote-share metric India and the U.K. were always ruled by "minority" governments. Expectedly, social choice theorists disfavour the FPTP system, though it continues to find wide use for its simplicity.

Condorcet and Borda systems Are there better alternatives?

Mathematical analysis to design better electoral systems dates back to the 13th century in the works of Ramon Llull, a missionary and theologian. His book De Arte Eleccionis, in the Catalan language, gives a detailed algorithm for a two-stage election process for church officials. It ensures that the winner, when pitted against each of the other contenders, receives more than 50% votes and is the most preferred candidate. This work was lost for centuries until it was discovered in the late 1980s.



The first-past-the-post system followed in India, the U.S., the U.K., and several other countries has many drawbacks. REUTERS

Today, Llull's method is called the Condorcet system after the 18th-century French mathematician Nicolas de Condorcet, who rediscovered it in the 1780s. While better than FPTP, the Condorcet system can be difficult to understand and isn't used in any national election, not least because its mechanism allows participants to prevent the election of a particular candidate. Some smaller organisations use it to elect their leaders and board members, however.

The Borda electoral process, proposed by French mathematician Jean-Charles de Borda in 1784 – but first described by the 15th-century German astronomer Nicolas of Cusa – is a rank-based voting system (RVS) similar to the points table in sporting tournaments like the India Premier League.

It allows voters to rank each candidate on the ballot paper, and through a process of vote redistribution, the winner is guaranteed to have at least 50% of the vote.

Redistribution of votes can take several forms; the most common is to add the second and even third preference votes until one of the candidates crosses 50% vote share.

Are there problems with RVS?

The President of India is elected with the RVS system. In 1969, none of the 15 presidential candidates secured 50% of the first-preference votes. After adding second preference votes, V.V. Giri (who had 48% first preference votes) reached 50.8% and was declared the winner, defeating Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy.

Like Condorcet, the original Borda method is complex and challenging to implement in large elections such as

Chemical weapons of the Vietnam War, which ended 49 years ago

Across the world, elections are a volatile mixture of emotions, aspirations, competing ideologies, and sometimes even violence. It might then surprise many that, despite the cacophony, there is science behind the election's processes

those in India.

In 1951, the American economist and Nobel laureate Kenneth Arrow proved that RVS can conflict with certain fairness criteria required of elections. This doesn't imply such systems are unfair, even if occasionally the most popular candidate may fail to get elected.

Consider an RVS election with three candidates, A, B, and C, with nine voters ranking their preferences.

The results can read thus: four voters prefer B over C, and prefer A over both B and C. This information can be represented as A > B > C (4). Similarly, other voters may yield different combinations: B > C > A (3) and C > A > B(2). The distribution indicates A received the maximum number of first preference votes and C the least. Suppose B withdraws from the election. In a fair election, we should expect the result to remain unaffected – but this isn't the case

Here, with the same vote distribution, the result will now read A > C (4 votes) and C > A (5 votes). So C has the most first preference votes now and wins. Arrow's theorem asserts that such outcomes are unavoidable in an RVS election.

How can maths, physics help?

Ironically, while the cold rigour of mathematics sheds light on the inherently boisterous election processes, more grounded physics approaches draw on this lack of order to seek universal patterns irrespective of electoral systems. This is not unusual in physics.For example, inside a balloon, billions of molecules, moving randomly and bumping against one another, conspire together to produce a constant pressure that keeps the balloon puffed up.

This is the central lesson of statistical physics: order can emerge at the large scale even if dominated by disorder at smaller scales. Two decades of election data analysis has revealed emergent patterns in the form of the distribution quantities that matter to an electoral process. Despite the superficial chaos surrounding the elections, these patterns are robust and independent of details, such as where elections were held, the voting paradigm or the cultural context.

Axiomatically, the absence of such order would suggest that elections are/were not fair and could be used to diagnose and flag electoral malpractices.

In short, while mathematical analysis helps sharpen an algorithm for the election process, a physics perspective serves to diagnose if the algorithm is fairly implemented in practice. The science of elections has a long way to go, but for millions of people across the world, the elections of 2024 provide hope that the future is in their hands.

(M.S. Santhanam is a professor of physics, and Aanjaneya Kumar and Ritam Pal are doctoral students, all at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Pune.)

Please send in your answers to

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The Chang'e 6 lunar probe and the Long March-5 Y8 carrier rocket combination at the launch pad at the Wenchang Space Launch Site in Hainan province, China on Saturday. REUTERS

China all set for launch of mission to far side of moon

China will send a robotic spacecraft in the coming days on a round trip to the moon's far side in the first of three technically demanding missions that will pave the way for an inaugural Chinese crewed landing and a base on the lunar south pole.

Since the first Chang'e mission in 2007, China has made big leaps in its lunar exploration programme, narrowing the technological chasm with the U.S.

In 2020, China brought back samples from the moon's near side in the first sample retrieval in more than four decades, confirming for the first time it could safely return an uncrewed spacecraft to the earth from the lunar

This week, China is expected to launch Chang'e-6 using the backup spacecraft from the 2020 mission, and collect soil and rocks from the side of the moon that permanently faces away from the earth.

With no direct line of sight with the earth, Chang'e-6 must rely on a recently deployed relay satellite orbiting the moon during its 53-day mission, including a

China is expected to launch Chang'e-6 using the backup spacecraft from the 2020 mission, and collect soil and rocks from the side of the moon

never-before attempted ascent from the moon's "hidden" side on its return journey home.

The same relay satellite will support the uncrewed Chang'e-7 and 8 missions in 2026 and 2028, respectively, when China starts to explore the south pole for water and build a rudimentary outpost with Russia. China aims to put its astronauts on the moon by 2030.

Beijing's polar plans have worried NASA, whose administrator, Bill Nelson, has repeatedly warned that China would claim any water resources as its own. Beijing says it remains committed to cooperation with all nations on building a "shared" future.

On Chang'e-6, China will carry payloads from France, Italy, Sweden and Pakistan, and on Chang'e-7, payloads from Russia, Switzerland and Thailand.

NASA is banned by U.S. law from any collaboration, direct or indirect, with China. Under the separate NASA-led Artemis programme, U.S. astronauts will land near the south pole in 2026, the first humans on the moon since 1972.

Chang'e 6 will attempt to land on the northeastern side of the vast South Pole-Aitken Basin, the oldest known impact crater in the solar system.

The southernmost landing ever was carried out in February by IM-1, a joint mission between NASA and the Texas-based private firm Intuitive Machines.

The south pole has been described by scientists as the "golden belt" for lunar exploration.

Polar ice could sustain long-term research bases without relying on expensive resources transported from the earth. India's Chandrayaan-1 launched in 2008 confirmed the existence of ice inside polar craters.

Chang'e-6's sample return could also shed more light on the early evolution of the moon and the inner solar system.

For feedback and suggestions

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Visual: At a U.N. conference in June 1972, this man described the effects of X (from Q1) in Vietnam as "ecocide" and wanted it designated an international crime. Name him. PUBLIC DOMAIN

THE SCIENCE QUIZ

Vasudevan Mukunth

QUESTION 1 During the war, U.S. forces used X, substances that, when applied to a plant, cause its leaves to fall off. The U.S. sprayed X en masse over forests to deprive North Vietnamese forces of foliage cover.

QUESTION 2

The most infamous example of X (from Q1) used during the war was called Y. It's a mixture of two compounds called 2,4,5-T and 2,4-D in a 1:1 ratio. After the war, more than a million people in Vietnam were estimated to have developed major illnesses due to exposure to Y. Name Y.

QUESTION 3

Britain was the first country to use X (from Q1) as a weapon of war, during the Malayan Emergency. It prepared a substance nearly identical to Y (from Q2) but in a way that also contained a toxin called Z. Z was the culprit in the Seveso disaster of 1976. Name Z.

OUESTION 4

Alongside Y (from Q2), the U.S. developed a mixture of cacodylic acid, sodium cacodylate, and water to destroy plants. These plants were otherwise very difficult to destroy, even with fire. The mixture killed these plants by dehydrating them. Fill in the blank.

QUESTION 5

Name it. Answers to April 25 quiz: 1. Value of a dodrant – Ans: Three-fourths 2. Name in Urdu for the number 1 followed by 11 zeroes - Ans: Kharab 3. Name in Tamil for the number 1 lakh lakh crore - Ans: Anniyam 4. Name for a number worth 10,000 - Ans:

The use of this substance has been banned

against civilian populations since 1980, but

its use affected civilians during the Vietnam

War. Its effects were the subject of a famous

photo taken in 1972 by Nick Ut. It burns,

spreads easily, and sticks to surfaces.

Myriad 5. Name of a quadrillion on the long scale -**Ans: Billiard** Visual: Clever Hans

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