

Printed at » Chennai » Coimbatore » Bengaluru » Hyderabad » Madurai » Noida » Visakhapatnam » Thiruvananthapuram » Kochi » Vijayawada » Mangaluru » Tiruchirapalli » Kolkata » Hubballi » Mohali » Malappuram » Mumbai » Tirupati » Lucknow » Cuttack » Patna



17 Indians aboard Israeli cargo vessel seized by Iran

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

<u>Dinakar Peri</u> Kallol Bhattacherjee NEW DELHI

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

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

BARELY ALIVE

Kodaikanal,



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

drones.

In the last 48 hours, Is-

rael and the United States

have been gearing up for

possible missile and drone

attacks by Iran, directly or

through its proxies in the

region, as a retaliation

against the recent air strike

on Iran's consulate in Da-

mascus that killed senior

Iranian personnel.

The vessel was sailing from Yemen have been targeting the United Arab Emirates Israeli-linked commercial to India. shipping on the high seas with ballistic missiles and

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

Israel warns Iran of 'consequences' of escalation

GAZA STRIP

Israel warned that Iran would suffer the "consequences for choosing to escalate the situation any further" as fears grew of wider conflict more than six months into Israel's war against Hamas militants in the Gaza Strip. The warning came after Iran seized a cargo ship linked to Israel. » PAGE 14

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

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 7

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

Suhasini Haidar Mayank Kumar NEW DELHI/LUCKNOW

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

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

At least 500 Indians, who were hired after a process facilitated by the National Skill Development Council (NSDC) along with Israel's Population, Immigration and Border Authority (PIBA), have already flown to Israel since April 2, when the first group of 64 workers were flagged off in a ceremony hosted by the Israeli Embassy in Delhi.

When asked, NSDC officials who facilitated the recruitment drive said that

group of 325 Indians who were packed and ready to leave India on April 16, says he is anxiously following news about developments in the region through social media chat groups.

"On Friday, we were informed that all plans had been put on hold until further notice, in view of

MAGAZINE >> 8 PAGES

IN BRIEF

NEW DELHI

Congress clears

names for 16 LS seats in 4 States

The Congress on Saturday

announced the names of its

candidates for 16 Lok Sabha

Former Union Minister Manish

Tewari will be contesting the

PLUTUS IAS

MATHEMATICS OPTIONAL

Both Online & Offi ogh | Mukherjee Nagar | C Shimlo | Bilaspur

C+918448440231

THE MAR HINDU

wishes its readers a

Happy

Tamil New Year

& Vishu

Chandigarh seat. » Page 9

seats across four States.

CLASSIFIEDS » PAGE 5

the advisory is for all citithe rising tensions," he told zens, and hence the pro-The Hindu over the telecess had witnessed a "temphone from Unnao. porary disruption". Unnao-based Satish Ku-**CONTINUED ON** mar, who was among a » PAGE 7



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

on the occasion of "Civil Services Day" Delhi's subsidy schemes आपके अपने शहर) 1. जयपुर 2. दिल्ली 3. कोटा 4. जोधपुर 5. बाइमेर 6. नागौर 7. भरतपुर to continue, assures L-G 8. हनुमानगढ़ 9.बीकानेर 10. उदयपुर 11. श्री गंगानगर 12. दौसा 13. झुंझुनूं, 14. चुरु, 15. अजमेर 16. जैसलमेर 17. सीकर 18. पावटा 19. शाहपुरा में Presents Samya An Institute For Civil Services CIVIL SERVICES OLYMPIAD YOU MAY GET 2nd 3rd-5th **TO ALL PARTICIPANTS** PRIZ PRIZE PRIZE 100% 80% 90% रजिस्ट्रेशन शुल्क ₹51 **SCAN QR FOR SYLLABUS SCAN QR** रजिस्ट्रेशन अंतिम तिथि FOR NCERT OF 9th & 10th : **19 APRIL** SST, SCI. & TECH. परीक्षा की तिथि NCERT OF 11th : **21 APRIL INDIAN CONSTITUTION** परीक्षा का समय **CURRENT AFFAIRS :** 9:00-10:30 AM OCT. 2023 - MAR. 2024

FIRST TIME IN INDIA

a microcosm of a national problem MAGAZINE » PAGE 1



Crisis ends, PVR to resume screening Malayalam movies

STATES » PAGE 6



It's KKR vs LSG and MI vs CSK in today's double-header SPORT » PAGE 15

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

Delhi Lieutenant-Governor V.K. Saxena on Saturday said none of the subsidy schemes being run in the Capital will be stopped just because Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal is lodged in jail, prompting AAP to claim the statement as a

victory for its government. Following Mr. Kejriwal's arrest on March 21, Mr. Saxena at a public forum had said that he won't let the government run from jail. AAP leaders had also claimed that efforts are being made to scuttle several welfare schemes being run by the Delhi government.

Raj Niwas, in a statement, said the L-G has taken serious note of "patently false and misleading deliberately

statements" issued by members of a particular party and Ministers claiming that subsidy schemes pertaining to electricity, water, and bus rides for women will be stopped.

"The purported imaginary stoppage of these schemes in future is being attributed to the Central government, and L-G Mr. Saxena has assured the people of Delhi that none of the subsidy schemes benefiting the poor will be discontinued," the statement read.

Cabinet Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj said on X, "Those who used to say that they will not let the government run from jail have accepted defeat. They have accepted that the work of Delhi will not stop. The Kejriwal government will run from jail."

> **NEAR RIDDHI-SIDDHI, GOPALPURA BYPASS, JAIPUR** 9875170111



...

A Bengal watering hole for Bihar tipplers

Business from drinkers of the dry State is transforming Dalkhola, with hotels, motels and eateries

Amarnath Tewary DALKHOLA

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

Since April 2016, Bihar has been a dry State, with

YK (



Checkpoints specifically set up to monitor movement to the West Bengal town of Dalkhola. AMARNATH TEWARY

strict penalties of jail time or fines for those violating the ban on liquor. Dalkhola is a municipality town of West Bengal's

Uttar Dinajpur district; just a small portion of the town juts into Bihar. It lies about 37 km north of Bihar's Purnea, with

Kishanganj lying almost the same distance further to the north.

As one travels between the two Bihari towns, one suddenly enters little Bengal, hearing Bangla voices, seeing the Bangla script on everything from shop signboards to number plates.

The display boards at the gates of the Dalkhola motels openly advertise "Beer" and "Bar", and "Som Ras Bar".

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 7

THE HINDU City

NBRIÐR



22 flights diverted due to rain, more showers expected today

Rain and gusty winds triggered by a western disturbances hit parts of Delhi-NCR on Saturday evening, leading to waterlogging and traffic jams in several areas. As many as 22 flights bound for the Capital were also diverted, an official said. The India Meterological Department (IMD) has forecast generally cloudy skies and light showers for Sunday, and said the effects of the western disturbances will be felt until April 19. "The temperature may drop by a few notches in the coming days, and will thereafter begin to rise again, said Kuldeep Srivastava, an IMD scientist. PTI

20-year-old domestic help found dead in Greater Kailash

A 20-year-old domestic help in south Delhi's Greater Kailash died by suicide, the police said on Saturday, adding that the woman's body was found at a four-storey house in G.K. I on Thursday. The woman had started working at the household on April 4, and two days before her death, she told her sister she was "scared", the police said. While foul play has been ruled, an official said they have requested the medical team to look into all angles during the autopsy.

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

Kejriwal denied in-person meetings at the Centre's behest, says Sanjay Singh

Three-time elected Chief Minister is being humiliated in a bid to 'break his morale', claims AAP leader; BJP says no bar on meeting anyone, Kejriwal even sending messages from inside prison

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

🕇 enior Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Sanjay Singh on Saturday said Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal was not being allowed in-person meetings with his family in Tihar Jail in a bid to "break his morale". Mr. Kejriwal is currently in judicial custody till April 15 after being arrested by the Enforcement Directorate in a money laundering case related to the now-scrapped 2021-22 Delhi excise policy.

While the jail authorities did not issue any official response to the accusation, the Opposition BJP said Mr. Kejriwal is being allowed to meet whoever he wants and has even been sending messages to the public.

Rule 602 of the jail manual states: "Every interview shall take place in a special part of the prison appointed for this purpose... The interview room will have fibreglass parti-



tion with intercom facilities or equipped with any other latest technology." It adds that the Superintendent of Prisons may allow well-behaved prisoners to have face-to-face interviews with safeguards.

Addressing a press conference, Mr. Singh said according to rules 602 and 605 of the jail manual, anyone can have a face-toface meeting. "In the same Tihar Jail, many meetings take place in-person, but Arvind Kejriwal, a threetime elected Chief Minister, is being humiliated and made to meet his family

Arvind Kejriwal, a three-time elected CM, is being humiliated and made to meet his family through the jangla (glass wall). This is happening at the behest of the BJP-led Centre."

SANJAY SINGH AAP Rajya Sabha MP

through the jangla (glass wall). This is happening at the behest of the BJP-led Centre," said the AAP Rajya Sabha MP, who was recently let out of bail after spending over six months in Tihar Jail in connection with the excise policy case. Mr. Singh said when he

recently put in an application to meet Mr. Kejriwal, he was given a token number but later denied a meeting "due to security reasons". Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann was granted permission to meet Mr. Kejriwal on April 15, but that too has been

shifted to an unspecified date since the jail authorities want to ensure adequate security for the dignitary, who enjoys Z-plus security.

'Glass wall mandatory' Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva hit back at Mr. Singh, saying he should have knowledge about the jail manual having spent time in Tihar Jail. "As per jail manual rule 602, inmates and their visitors are seated across a screen. Only courts can allow any special permissions to the inmates," he said.

A senior officer at Tihar Jail told *The Hindu* said that all visitors have to speak to the prisoners through a glass wall. "Sunita Kejriwal, like all other visitors, has been speaking to [her husband] Arvind Kejriwal through the *jangla*," he said. "Face-to-face meetings are only arranged when officials are interrogating a matter or following a specific court order."

'Oust from power those wanting to alter Constitution'

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

The Delhi Congress on Saturday urged people to oust from power the inimical forces that it said are hell-bent on changing the Constitution and destroying democracy, a poll plank its INDIA bloc partner – Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) - has also adopted ahead of the Lok Sabha

poll. The ruling AAP in Delhi and Punjab has given a call to observe "Save Constitution, Remove Dictatorship Day" on Sunday, the birth anniversary of Dalit icon B.R. Ambedkar. Remembering Ambed-

kar at a party programme, Delhi Congress chief Arvinder Singh Lovely targeted the ruling BJP at the Centre, and said the true tribute to the leader would be to defeat its divisive agenda in the poll.

"The Constitution of India is under threat now and the greatest tribute that can be offered to Ambedkar is to throw out from power those forces that are determined to change the Constitution to serve their divisive and urges voters to defeat BJP's divisive agenda in the LS poll to save democracy

Like AAP, Congress

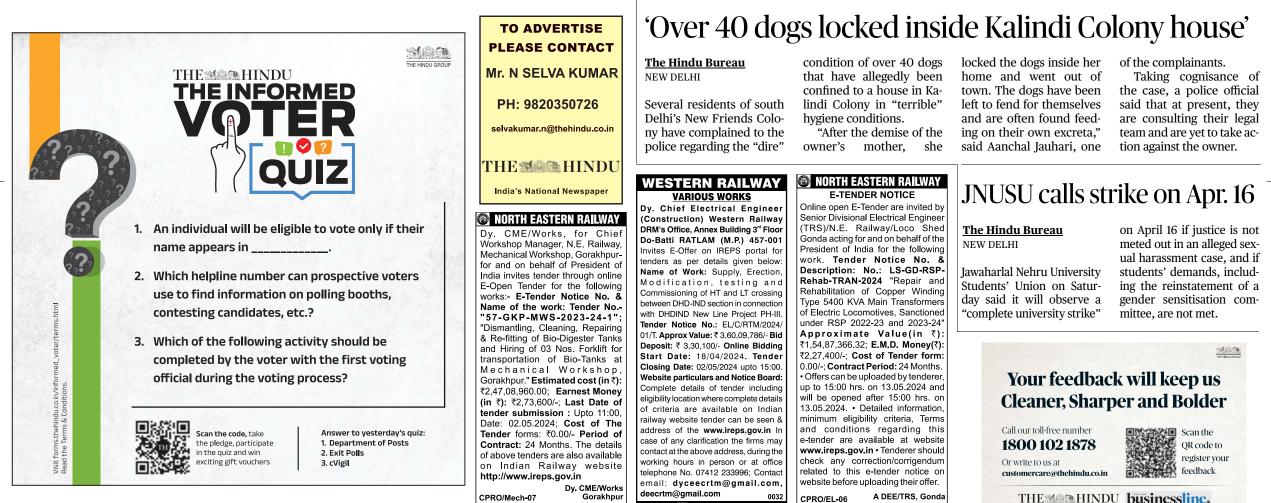
destructive agenda," Mr. Lovely said.

He also alleged that the election process is not being held in a transparent manner as the voice of the Opposition is being "suppressed".

AAP protest today

Meanwhile, AAP leader and Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai said his party workers and leaders will read the Preamble of the Constitution and take an oath to save the founding document of the country in events across the nation on Sunday.

The Minister told reporters that the BIP-led Centre is "attacking democracy and the Constitution". "To counter that, we need to be united," Mr. Rai said, adding that the programme is being held on the advice of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, who had sent a message in this regard from Tihar Jail.



CPRO/Mech-07 OO NOT SMOKE BIDI/CIGARETTE IN TRAINS deecrtm@gmail.com 0032 Like us on: 📑 facebook.ce

A DEE/TRS, Gonda CPRO/FI -06 DO NOT SMOKE BIDI/CIGARETTE IN TRAINS

THE HINDU businessline. FRONTLINE SPORTSTAR Youngworld THE MINDU

DON'T MISS THE CHANCE **TO CAST YOUR VOTE IN UPCOMING** LOKSHABHA ELECTION IN DELH **ON 25[™] MAY 2024**





Smt. Kanthimathy Lakshmanaswamy

(ex HM / Orient Industries) passed away on 06-04-2024 at 9.15 AM. his devoted and loving children (Sandhya, Vidhya, Priya, Sridhar) doting grand children, loving sisters/ brothers, friends and relatives. 742343487/

nes

A ND-NDE

https://t.me/HuB_Newss

or Visit: www.voters.eci.gov.in

CM YK

DIP/Shabdarth/Display/00

Chief Electoral Officer, Delhi Old St. Stephen's College Building, Kashmere Gate, Delhi - 110006 ni.gov.in | Log on to: www.voters.eci.gov.in

For more information, Call on Voter Helpline No.: 1950 **NO VOTER TO BE** Follow us: **LEFT BEHIND** 📑 🛛 🔯 🕨 /ceodelhioffice

•••

To dedicate a space in this section, Please contact: 011-43579797 from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. For Placing Advertisements Online log on to www.thehinduads.com

DONATE EYES - GIFT SIGHT

Probe into dam project, phone-tapping is not revenge politics: Reddy

Telangana CM predicts BJP will end up with around 240 seats as there would be little support from south India; says BJP not in a position to win more than 20 out of 129 seats in south India

R. Ravikanth Reddy HYDERABAD

hief Minister A. Revanth Reddy said that he has not yet started "revenge politics" and indicated that if the ongoing investigations into the Kaleshwaram lift irrigation project and 'phonetapping' case were considered as taking revenge against former CM K. Chandrasekhar Rao, "that is their problem".

"In fact, I have not yet started taking revenge," he said with a grin in response to a question that he was in a 'revengeful mood' against Mr. Rao for sending him to jail when he was in the Telugu Desam Party (TDP).

Mr. Reddy, who participated in a talk show on a private television channel on Saturday, answered a range of questions, including calling Prime Minister Narendra Modi 'Bade Bhai' (big brother), the impact of BRS MLC K. Kavitha's arrest in the Delhi liquor policy case, Ram Mandir politics, arrest of Arvind Kejriwal and investments of Gautam Adani in Telangana.

'I only target lions'

On the oft-repeated claims of the BRS that the lion (KCR) will come out roaring, he shot back saying he was waiting with a "gun to shoot the lion".

₩ ₩



Chief Minister Revanth Reddy at a meeting in Telangana. FILE PHOTO

Gujarat."

at his critics.

will continue.

not the PM per se.

One has to be mature to

understand the meeting

between a Chief Minister

and a Prime Minister, he

said while taking potshots

logical fight with the BJP

was doing the same; his tar-

get is divisive politics and

the BJP, saying that if the

party wants to win 400

seats in the Lok Sabha elec-

tions, it should also fight

elections in other coun-

tries. He predicted that BJP

would end up with around

240 seats as there would be

little support from south

in the south, BIP is not in a

position to win more than

20. Even KCR claimed

He said out of 129 seats

India.

Mr. Reddy said his ideo-

He said Rahul Gandhi

Mr. Reddy also mocked

"I don't target cats but only lions," he said, reflecting his long rivalry with KCR.

Ruling out any sympathy for BRS after Ms. Kavitha's arrest, he said no one in Telangana was even discussing it.

"If KCR was arrested by BJP during the Assembly elections, there would have been a little sympathy for him. But Ms. Kavitha's arrest is not at all an issue here," he said, arguing that she was arrested in a corruption charge in Delhi and not Telangana.

In his trademark style, Mr. Reddy defended his reference to Mr. Modi as 'Bade Bhai'.

"Yes, being the PM, Mr. Modi is the bade bhai of all States. So I asked him to show some large-heartedness in giving more funds to Telangana and not just PM ignored Lord Rama To a question if Mr. Gandhi was sending a wrong signal by continuing to target Mr. Modi on Ram Mandir politics, the Chief Minister re-

plied that it was late Raiiv Gandhi who first allowed the *pooja* to the Ram idol. Mr. Rahul Gandhi is a 'Shiv bhakt' and he should not be targeted for religion, he said.

more than 100 Assembly

seats but ended up with 39

seats.

"BJP will not gain much from Ram Mandir politics," he said, referring to a recent survey, and added, "Unemployment and inflation are the major issues that came up in the survey and not religious and emotive issues."

On the criticism that Mr. Adani is being welcomed for investments, he said Telangana was open for investments and not loot. "We will ensure that Mr. Adani invests in Telangana and creates employment. Let him invest all the profits he made elsewhere with the support of the BJP government."

Mr. Reddy said south India has experienced leaders like Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, K.C. Venugopal and Mr. Rahul Gandhi. "They all have the qualities to lead the country," he said.

Cong. will abolish Agniveer scheme, says Raj Babbar

The Hindu Bureau IAMMU

Congress leader Raj Babbar, canvassing for Chaudhary Lal Singh in Udhampur, on Saturday said his party "will abolish the Agniveer scheme and restore regular recruitments". "The Modi government

is dashing the dreams of the youth who want to join the armed forces by launching the Agniveer scheme. The Congress will abolish the scheme and restore regular recruitments," Mr. Babbar said,

Ram Mandir not possible without PM: **Raj Thackeray**

The Hindu Bureau PUNE

The Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) chief Raj Thackeray on Saturday said that the construction of the Ram Temple would not have been possible without Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Justifying his support for the BIP, Mr. Thackeray, speaking after a meeting of his party leaders and office-bearers in Mumbai, took a dig at the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi and INDIA bloc.

"On the one hand, you have a weak and confused leadership. On the other, a strong one under Mr. Modi. Hence, we decided to support the BJP," Mr. Thackeray said.



Raj Babbar

during a public rally in Udhampur. The Congress leader urged people to help "bring back the good days, ballot," he added.

as people are fed up with the economic policies and programmes of the BIP."

Mr. Babbar lauded the leadership of Mr. Singh and called him a "crusader against injustice". I have seen Lal Singhji fighting for the cause of the common man and the rights of his people. He will represent you effectively as reflected in the crowd here," he said. He accused the BJP of meting out injustice to the people of Jammu and Kashmir. "It's time to bring SUNDAY, APR. 14 RISE 05:57 SET 18:47 RISE 10:09 SET 00:02 MONDAY, APR. 15 RISE 05:56 SET 18:47 RISE 11:08 SET 00:57 TUESDAY, APR. 16 RISE 05:55 SET 18:48 RISE 12:07 SET 01:44

🖲 🧅 Timings

DELHI

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	39	23
Safdarjang	39	23
Palam	39	25

Delhi Palam Today

35°C Humid conditions to increase. Weather will be warm. Spell of duststorm and thundershower with strong winds to occur

Delhi Palam Tomorrow 37°C Temperature to increase A mostly dry weather to prevail, Day will be very warm and unasy. Night will be about change through the pleasant.

© Copyright Skymet Weather 2024 All rights reserved.





CONCERTAM 306, City Center, Sector 25 (Near Hoter Haze)
 PUNCHKUIAN ROAD, Garwal Bhawan, (Near Jhandewalan, Gole Chkr.)
 WAZIRPUR A-5, Near Richi Rich Banquet (Opp. Shalimar Bagh)
 JANAKPURI B-1/2, Main Najafgarh Road, Opp. Metro Pillar 543
 NOIDA, Nirula's Sec-2, Near Metro Station, Sec-15, Noida, UP
 LAJPAT NAGAR, 49, Main Ring Road, Adj. Haldi Ram, Near Moolchand Crossing



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

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

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

> > THEMOMHINDU

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

•••

THE HINDU **States**

NBRIÐR



Do not fall for PM's words. vote for change, says Priyanka

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra asked people to not get carried away by the words used by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his speeches and to vote for change in the upcoming Lok Sabha polls. Addressing a rally in Uttarakhand's Ramnagar on Saturday, she said elections should be fought on real issues and not on the basis of empty rhetoric. "Before casting your vote, you should honestly ask yourself whether 10 years of the Modi government have really brought about a positive change in your lives," she said. PTI

Corruption increases when Cong. comes to power: Rajnath

Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said corruption increases every time the Congress comes to power whereas there was not a single allegation of irregularity against the Narendra Modi government in its 10-year rule. Addressing a rally in Geedam in Chhattisgarh's Dantewada district on Saturday, he said the Congress would be finished in the State after the Lok Sabha polls and the party would be extinct. PTI

'AAP most dishonest party; Cong. fighting for 40 seats'

Union Minister Anurag Thakur on Saturday called AAP the "most dishonest party", and claimed that the Congress is fighting the upcoming Lok Sabha election for "abki baar, 40 *paar*" while the BJP is aiming for over 400 seats. Congress leaders are leaving for the BJP due to the spectacular performance of the BJP-led NDA government for the past ten years, he said in Madhya Pradesh's Pandhurna district, a part of the Chhindwara Lok Sabha seat. PTI

2024 poll is for saving democracy and India's **Constitution:** Akhilesh

SP chief says on one side are those who want to run the government according to the Republic's values, on the other forces that are snatching away every power given by the Constitution

Mayank Kumar LUCKNOW

🗖 amajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav on Saturday pitched the upcoming general election as one being held under "special circumstances" to save the values of the Indian Republic and accused the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of endangering democracy and the Constitution.

Triangular contest

"The BJP people are playing with the Constitution and democratic institutions. Neither are our farmers getting the right price for their crops nor are our youth getting proper employment. They (BJP) are playing with everyone's future. The 2024 election is being held under special circumstances where on one side there are people who want to run the country as per the Constitution, and on the other side those forces that are snatching away each and every power given to us by the Constitution," he said at an election rally in support of the SP candidate Deepak Saini in Bijnor, which goes to the polls in the first phase on April 19.

Bijnor Lok Sabha constituency is likely to witness a



Seeking votes: Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav with party leaders at an election rally in Mirpur, Muzaffarnagar, on Saturday. PTI

triangular contest with Mr. Saini pitted against Chandan Chauhan of the Rashtriya Lokdal Dal, a BJP ally, and Chaudhary Vijendra Singh of the Bahujan Samaj Party.

'Bribed, poached'

The former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister and current Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly alleged that MLAs in the State are being bribed and poached by the BJP.

"Our rights are being snatched away. Even the MLAs who were elected by your vote and support were swayed to their side through bribes. You made them win with your votes.

They did not only deceive us, they also deceived common voters," he said. Mr. Yadav brought up the U.P. examination paper leak issue, which has roiled the State recently, alleging that the big claims of world-class arrange-

ments went into a tailspin adversely impacting the lives of millions of youth.

Paper leaks

"Think about it. The government claimed that the paper cannot be leaked. Did the paper get leaked or not?" he asked the crowd.

The SP chief cautioned people about being taken in by the BJP slogan of '400 paar' (over 400 seats), saying the party will bring the now-scrapped farm laws. "If they win 400 (seats), they will hand over our agriculture and the produce grown in our fields to big industrialists," he said. Mr. Yadav also hit out at the BJP for calling the opposition INDIA bloc "INDI alliance".

"These people cannot even read the name of IN-DIA, who is going to vote for them," he said.

Besides Bijnor, seven other Lok Sabha constituencies in U.P. are going to polls in the first phase -Saharanpur, Kairana, Muzaffarnagar, Nagina (SC), Moradabad, Rampur and Pilibhit.

Adhir, Ahluwalia face protests during campaign

Shiv Sahay Singh KOLKATA

Veteran MPs Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury and S.S. Ahluwalia on Saturday faced protests during election campaign in their respective constituencies in West

Bengal. "Go back" slogans were raised at Baharampur from where five-time MP and West Bengal Congress president Mr. Chowdhury is seeking re-election. He said a group of "drunken" vouths came in front of this vehicle when he was returning home after campaigning in the afternoon.

"They were yelling: Go back, go back!! I stopped and asked them their complaints. Initially, only one person was there, but then several others joined him. I realised that it was organised by the Trinamool Congress. But they would not be able to stop me in this way," Mr. Chowdhury said. Mr. Chowdhury, who is

facing former cricketer Yusuf Pathan as the TMC candidate, accused the State's ruling party of a 'conspiracy' to stop him.

While videos of the scuffle between the TMC and the Congress supporters had surfaced earlier in the day, later the TMC shared a video of Mr. Chowdhury pushing a youth.

"Sheer display of hooliganism by Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury. Your fear of losing elections is pretty evident from your actions. But using muscle power won't help you in any way! **Baharampur** in Murshidabad and Asansol in Paschim Bardhaman go to the polls on May 13

SHAME!" the TMC posted from its official handle.

'Angry' BJP workers

Mr. Chowdhury is not the only politician who has faced protests. BJP candidate from Asansol S.S. Ahluwalia, who has represented two different constituencies in the State in the past, had to face angry party workers on the

first day of the campaign. A few youths holding party flags approached Mr. Ahluwalia's vehicle and reportedly made angry gestures at him. The MP's security personnel and the BJP supporters present during the campaign removed the protesters.

A section of BJP supporters are upset with Mr. Ahluwalia's nomination from the seat. He said that the decision to field him from Asansol was taken by the party leadership from Delhi. Mr. Ahulawlia is pitted against Trinamool Congress' Shatrughan Sinha.

Asansol had elected BJP's Babul Supriyo in 2014 and 2019, but he later defected to the TMC. In 2022, the constituency elected Mr. Sinha as the TMC candidate with a margin of ov-

er three lakh votes. Baharampur and Asansol are going to the polls on May 13.

PDM Nyay Morcha announces 7 Lok Sabha candidates in U.P.

The Hindu Bureau LUCKNOW



From Kamaraj to Stalin, alliances a constant poll theme

T. Ramakrishnan CHENNAL

Despite being the homeland of the two main Dravidian parties. Tamil Nadu



had, by then, become acceptable to him. At that time, the other Congress group, comprising the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, C. Subramaniam. and R.V. Swaminathan, ters: A. Bala Pajanor and joined hands with the DMK Sathyavani Muthu of the and the CPI. AIADMK in the short-lived The demise of Kamaraj Charan Singh Ministry in in October 1975 sent one 1979 and "Murasoli" Maran clear message to the Conof the DMK in the V.P. gress leadership: partner-Singh Ministry 10 years laship with either of the Drater. vidian parties is inevitable. dent of the Tamil Nadu This norm was breached only twice in the last 50 Congress years: in 1998 when Javala-(TNCC), says that with the lithaa preferred the BJP to Dravidian parties, the talk the Congress and in 2014 of sharing in power in the when DMK leader M. Karunanidhi chose to have no

truck with the Congress.

Though the Dravidian

parties had an alliance,

between 1971 and 1996,

with national parties such

as the Congress, the Janata

Party, and the Janata Dal,

the idea of sharing power

at the Centre was not a ma-

jor issue in the run-up to the elections. However, in the 25-year period, there were two instances of representatives of the two parties being Union Minis-

A. Gopanna, vice-presi-

Committee

The PDM Nyay Morcha, a new Opposition front in Uttar Pradesh, declared candidates for seven Lok Sabha seats on Saturday.

The candidates are Hafiz Mohammad Mobeen (Rae Bareli), Prem Dutt Baghel (Firozabad), Subhash Patel (Bareilly), Jaiveer Singh Dhangar (Hathras), Prem Chand Bind (Bhadohi), Ramkishan Pal (Fatehpur), and Jawahar Bind (Chandauli).

The Apna Dal (Kamerawadi), an OBC-centric party led by Krishna Patel, formed the new front last month along with three other parties - the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Mulimeen led by Asaduddin Owaisi, the Pragatisheel Manav Samaj Party led by

AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi and Apna Dal (K) leaders at the launch of the PDM Nyay Morcha in Lucknow on March 31. FILE PHOTO

Premchand Bind, and the Rashtriya Uday Party.

The alliance leaders vowed to put up candidates in as many seats as possible in order to protect the interests of the PDM: Pichda (backward classes), Dalits, and Muslims. The leaders alleged that both the ruling BJP and the Opposition Samaj-

wadi Party, which is part of the INDIA bloc, failed to serve the interests of these oppressed sections and injustice against these social groups had increased

manifold. The Apna Dal (Kamerawadi) enjoys support of the Kurmis, an OBC community, in the eastern and central Uttar Pradesh.

has been the battleground for coalitions led by the DMK and the AIADMK. Since 1977, when the AIADMK emerged as a major player, either of the parties has gone solo only once in the Lok Sabha election. This happened when the AIADMK, headed by the then Chief Minister Jayalalithaa, put up its nominees in 40 constituencies, including Puducherry, in 2014.

On all other occasions, both parties struck a deal with smaller parties. The situation is no different this time. However, what is new is that the BJP is leading a front comprising the PMK, the Tamil Maanila Congress (Moopanar) (TMC-M), and the AMMK.

K. Kamaraj with C. Rajagopalachari. THE HINDU ARCHIVES

A look at the LS elections since 1952 reveals that the first three elections – 1952, 1957, and 1962 - were generally bereft of pre-poll alliances. The Congress was the dominant force.

Under the leadership of K. Kamaraj, CM during 1954-1962, the party did not feel the need for any alliance. But his political opponents, including C. Rajagopalachari or Rajaji, felt the importance of an al-

liance. The DMK-led front in the 1967 election was the first successful case study for the Index of Opposition Unity. Apart from Rajaji's Swatantra Party, the front included the CPI(M) and the Muslim League.

Split in the Congress

The split in the Congress in 1969 compelled Kamaraj to change his strategy; he struck an electoral deal two years later with the Swatantra Party, which

State does not click. M. Chakravarthy, a key BJP functionary in charge of election coordination, says that unlike in 2014, when it was extremely difficult to cobble together a coalition, the task this time has become easier due to the "popularity of Prime Minister Narendra Modi".

Gangster's new wife could give JD(U) warhorse tough fight in Bihar's Munger

Amarnath Tewary MUNGER

Country-made kattas and the oldest locomotive repair workshop at Jamalpur have dominated Munger's landscape for years. But of late, the town, 180 km east of Patna, has been talking about a new bride from Delhi, who married a convicted gangster last month and entered the Lok Sabha poll fray a few days later.

Anita Kumari Mahto, 45, wife of dreaded and convicted gangster Ashok Mahto, 57, is fighting on a Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) ticket. She is expected to give sitting MP Rajiv Ranjan Singh, alias Lalan Singh, a tough fight. Mr. Singh, a

former JD(U) president considered close to Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, has

been an MP from Munger twice - in 2009 and 2019. But in 2014, he lost to Veena Devi, wife of yesteryear don Surajbhan Singh, who fought on a united Lok Janshakti Party ticket.

In the 1990s and early 2000s, Mahto was the most-dreaded gangster in central Bihar. After 17 years in jail, when he came out in November 2023, he set his eyes on the Lok Sabha election. But since the law prohibits convicts jailed for over two years from contesting an election until six years of release, he married Ms. Kumari during the

'inauspicious' month of

kharwas and two days later reached RJD chief Lalu Prasad's house in Patna. Mr. Prasad gave them his blessings and a ticket to Ms. Mahto.

'Here to win'

"Laluji has always been a guardian," Mahto told The *Hindu* while campaigning with his wife and other party leaders at Idgah in Munger's fort area on Thursday.

The bespectacled Ms. Mahto, who till her marriage was working as chief pharmacist at the Northern Railway Central Hospital in New Delhi, said she was here "to win". "Ensuring justice and rights of the poor and marginalised sec-



The Lok Sabha ticket came as a surprise, says Anita Kumari Mahto. Her husband Ashok Mahto is also seen. AMARNATH TEWARY

tion of the society will be my priority," she said.

When *The Hindu* asked her about the chances of a political novice winning the election, Mahto interrupted and said, "You can ask the voters who are fed

up with corruption in the welfare schemes". Ms. Mahto nodded her head in agreement.

It's not every day that one gets a Lok Sabha ticket as a 'mooh dikhai' gift in Bihar, and for Ms. Mahto it came as a surprise. "I was happy working in Delhi. The marriage happened suddenly as if it was a match made in heaven. I did not know that I will fight an election ...," she said.

Before she could complete, Mahto interrupted again and said "we plan things in life but everything is fixed from above," and hit the campaign trail again with his wife in a white Mercedes SUV followed by a fleet of cars.

Mahto was the main accused in the Apsadh massacre case in which 12 people were killed in Nawada, in the murder of five-time MLA and twice MP Rajo Singh (2005) and the Na-

wada jailbreak (2001). In 2006, he was arrested from Pakur in Jharkhand and jailed. The web series, Khakee - The Bihar Chapter, is based on the writings of then Superintendent of Police of Nawada Amit Lodha on how he had ar-

rested Mahto and his accomplices. Mahto though dismisses the web series as "fiction and frivolous".

The convicted lawbreaker's foray into politics is expected to change the caste equations in the election as Mahto hails from the OBC community. "This time it is going to be very tough for NDA candidate Lalan Singh to get through because of Ashok Mahto's wife," said Srikrishan Prasad, a senior who has been covering the campaign, said "the lower caste and backward caste votes are going to Anita Kumari Mahto". The Munger Lok Sabha constituency has 3 lakh Extremely Backward Classes (EBC) votes, more than 2 lakh votes each from the

journalist and observer

from Munger. Mr. Prasad,

backward Kurmi and Dhanuk castes. The Yadavs have 1.8 lakh votes and Muslims comprise nearly 1 lakh voters. The upper caste Bhumihar and Vaishva communities have over 2 lakh votes each and the Rajput community has 1.5 lakh voters.

Munger votes in the fourth phase on May 13.

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 PRB Act) ISSN 0971 - 751X

YK

TELUG

7094991999

Classifieds FE MADE SIMPLE

trimonial BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

BRIDEGROOMS WANTED

INDEX OF MATRIMONIAL **BRIDEGROOMS WANTED BRIDES WANTED BRIDES & GROOMS** WANTED Classification Common

for Brides, Bridegrooms, **Brides & Grooms** ASSAMESE AWADHI BENGALI BHOJPUR BIHAR

CHHATTISGARHI ENGLISH GUJARAT HARYANI HINDI KANNADA KASHMIRI KONKANI MALAYALAM

MANIPUR MARATHI MARWAR NEPAL ORIYA PARSI PUNJAB SAURASHTRA SINDH TAMIL TELUGU TULU

9447296008 95672 70524 URDU ADVOCATE BUSINESS DEFENCE 9417180222 gmail.com DOCTOR ENGINEER

TAMIL 9710091999 DOCTO DOCTOR 32 MBBS Fair Upper middle class settled in Kerala vannar. Seeks CA, Elite Family, well settled Elite Family, well settled. Souitable Groom, CNB. Ct: Groom Doctor or Officer in State / Central government / Public sector from Kerala. 75300 32854 Seeks 9047192999 HINDU GROOM with moral values for well to do Mudaliar girl BE/ 28y/ 155cm working at Bengaluru. Ct: 7975421774 MS (OG) FRM Chennai - Hindu, BC Telugu,1995, fair, Elite, Well set-tled, working in Corporate Hospi-tal Seeks Dr/IAS/ Group I/ Indus-NADAR PRETTY Girl Rich Family Diverse No Child Seeks Groom 36–38/5– 6ft income 1/L Chennai Only rialist/Business Whats app BHP 7845039243 9940456098 PG DOCTOR (Peadiatrics), 27yrs, Fair 45.BA HINDU Divorcee.2 Children Bride from a reputed family seeks PG Doctor Groom. Contact: 94439 69969/ Very Fair.Seeks Below 50yrs Good Family Back Ground Chennai Family Back 9025791355 s.veeranan@gmail.com DOCTOR AGE 27 MBBS MS well settled 34vrs BA Govt, Bank employee seeks good looking seeks: Dr,B.E and PG degree.contact 6374767370 Govt Job groom age upto 37, caste no bar. Ct: 9597061541 MUDALIAR: 25/ V. Fair & Beautiful, B. Tech, Accenture, Sr. Analyst, Bangalore, Rs.1200000 PA, Well set-**GROOM WANTED** Hindu Reddy tled Family - Seeks Abroad - 8925019776 November 1990 / 165 cms, - Seeks groom India Doctor (Surgeon) MBBS, MS, HINDU NADAR Fair 162cm 28yr BE Fair, Slim, Well Settled Chennai Bride Seeks Engineer Groor Seeks Suitable Groom from Work in Chennai /Bangalore 93810 Chennai, Caste No Bar, 44905 Call: 89256 40111 HINDU NADAR 33/5'6" MBA working Chennai Elite Family Seeks guali SAMBAVAR, MBBS, 25/176cm, Fair fied Groom working in Chennai. Bride seeks Teetotaler PG Doctor 9962991972 Groom from good family background. Contact: 94423 86315. AGE 48, PhD, Central Governmer never married, good looking wheatish bride seeks never married, employed groom below 50 years from decent family back-MUMBAI BASED Nair Girl. 32/173. working in USA. Invite suitable propoground. Serious Contact: 9443553063 Serious inquiries only sals from parents of well settled, professionally qualified grooms. Contact 97020 73860 B.TECH(NIT) MBA(IIM) Product Cnslt-nt DKV girl 30/161 Sks suitbl edu groom Caste/Relign/L Nobar MALAYALAM groom (9445687535 HINDU – SC Girl: 37/157, Agri -Scien-tist - (CG-Pune) from south Kerala, seeks alliance from well educated pro-fessionals. Contact: 7972420241, HINDU SC MBBS Doctor Age 27 Uthi ram-I/Simmam seeks suitable em ployed & qualified bridegroom Ph 9500182723 MAY 94/167 fair SC/PL BE, TCS Chennai, Parents Hindu/CSI. Seeks HINDU VANIYACHETTIAR girl / fair / 26,165 cm/ Anizham / B.Com. MBA / Employee GroomDr/Fr Govt Working in IT Company, Bangalore. Mob - 9746326125, 7736872992. 8056143638 EZHAVA GIRL, 29, 167cm, Avittam, Qualified CA & CS, Bank Mana-ger,Ernakulam, seeks match from pro-fessional, from Hindu family. Phone: ELITE MUDALIYAR 25yrs B.Tech Business family Chennai.Seeks Groom in Business Family 9710093999/ 9710091999 HASTHAM, FAIR 36, MCA Well Settled Chennai Seeks Mudaliar/Pillai. fly Qualf working Groom working 8220757159 SMART, FAIR, Slim, Punjabi Girl Khatri-Arora 33/5ft 1inch BTech. Wrkg as Soft Developer in Canada, SC AD, 37/153cm, M.SC Working in Trichy. First Marriage seeks suit able groom. Contact Number 9600433867, 8438667107 Groom Required nitin.bhatia151@

VANIYA CHETTIYAR, 32, BE., IT JOB, Second Marriage, No Children. Pref. Any Chettiyar Community.Govt RC 34/ 165 MDS Associate Prof Den- or Private Job Ct: 9677079708

TAMIL

GROOM WANTED Elite Mudaliyar, 25yrs, MA(HRM), Own Textile busi-ness in Chennai. Ct: 9710093999/ Variable Chennai. Ct: 9710093999/ duate Government Lady Doctor. Caste No Bar. Please Call: 9677773683. KAMMA NAIDU 25yrs, MBBS, Elite Business family in Chennai. Seeks Suitable Groom Ct:9710093999/

9710091999 HINDU TELUGU Naidu Born Aug 1990/ 165cm Ph.D Scholar smart medium complexion from a Reputed family groom in India born after 1987 Ct:9790908109

KAMMA, 98 born/ 180cm pretty smart , very affluent with engineeer-colleges and business looking tall handsome affluent kamma girl, ing for preferably Chennai.

7305010105

BRIDES WANTED

ADVOCATE SIKH, 32/ 5ft 5inch/ LLB, LLM, PhD (Law), own Office and House in Delhi seeks Hindu/ Punjabi/ Sikh Beau-tiful, Well Educated Bride prefer-ably Lawyer/ Teacher/ Professor. Contact 9810000140

BUSINESS AGE 37 Handsome Comfortable Groom needs VIP Girl and first Marriage, Remarriage, Divorce. Ct: 7401489892

Contact: 6366448344

Contact: 6366448343

Contact: 6366448344

ELITE BRIDES WANTED

BRAHMIN, 29. 188 cms, Working Professional,

MS. Lives in USA. Father is a Businessman. Family is

financially well off. Looking for a like minded match.

NAIDU, 25, 180 cms, Businessman, LLM. Lives in

Kallakurichi, Father is a Businessman, Family is

financially well off. Looking for a like minded match.

REDDY, 30, 180 cms, Doctor, MD. Lives in

Hyderabad. Father is a Businessman. Family is

financially well off. Looking for an amiable match.

GAVARA NAIDU, 24, 175 cms, Entrepreneur

MBA. Lives in Chennai. Father is a Businessman.

Family is financially well off. Looking for a like

minded match. Contact: 6366448343

Age 27, B.Com, MBA, working a MNC, Seeking Groom. Ph: 9444265786 Chennai-based SMU Girl, 29/153 cm Ph.D. (Indian Institute of Manage ment), belonging to a well-educated Family, seeks Alliance. Contact 9003097969. Email: meshaadi2024@ gmail.com KAMMA

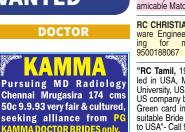
Chennai Mrugasira 174 cms 50c 9.9.93 very fair & cultured, seeking alliance from PG A DOCTOR BRIDES only ①:9396366200

EliteMatrimony

Exclusive matchmaking service for elites from matrimony.com group

6366448343

ership plans starts from ₹ 50,000*/-



University (Melbourne, Australia,55th best in the World); Physically challenged, cannot walk, and is Super intelligent, has Good hearing and Good vision Ancestral Native Coimbatore Tamilnadu. CHENNAI, BALIJA naidu, only daugh-ter, upper middle class 25yrs/5') MCA working in Bangalore seeks well educated well settled groom. We are looking for a girl of Non-Consummation. Caste no bar, religion no bar, well educated well settled groom Subsect no bar.Ct: 87542 29161. education no bar, money no bar, must speak Tamil or ELITE KAMMA Naidu, 25yrs, BE, Owr English and must be Industries in Chennai, Seeks Groom in Chennai. 9710093999/ 9710091999 interested in taking care of her physically challenged husband URDU MUSLIM, Divorced No child, +61 492 279 067

ΤΑΜΙΙ

PHYSICALLY

CSI CHRISTIAN NADAR 30/ 175/ B.E., M.S./Smart. Work in Europe. Seeks Suitable Bride. Contact: 8610774283 CSI NADAR, 39, 180cm, Divorced, DHMCT, PGDHRM, Entrepreneur, Par-ents Entrepreneurs, Family is Fi-nancially Well off, Looking for a

amicable Match. Ph: 7305316655 RC CHRISTIAN, 41vrs/170 B F Soft

ware Engineer, never maried, work-ing for mnc, Chennai, CT-9500188067

"RC Tamil, 1992 born, 6'1", well sett-led in USA, MS(Engg) from Michigan University, USA, Manager position in a US company based in California, USA, Green card in process - looking for a suitable Bride who is ready to relocate to USA"- Call 98490 79688.

MUSLIM BOY 29/176 BE(ECE) MBA (IIM) Proj Manager MNC 34L P/A well todo Family in Chennai 9445556810

ELITE GROOMS WANTED

BRAHMIN, 27, 155 cms, Working Professiona

Masters. Lives in Australia. Father is an Auditor

Family is financially well off. Looking for a like

minded match. Contact: 6366448344



TAMIL

ly son, aged 30, who holds B.Tech degree and a PG from IIM. He man-ages our family business in the Lo gistics industry with a turn over of around 15 Cr. We are primarily Age 31/174 cm/ Engineer with MBA in Corporate Finance(Canada), CFA candidate, Fair, Investor, Rich /Affluent Business based in Hosur & Chennai. He has a younger sister who is yet to be married, parents intercaste mar riage and managing the family busi-ness. Earlier marriage ended in a Phone: 9884043225/Whatsapp. divorce. We are open to any commu nity from a decent Hindu family. Looking forward to a prospective BRIDES WANTED bride with recent photograph and horoscope. Parents from Government services are preferred. Contact us at devtara093@gmail.com

AGE 37 Handsome Comfortable Groom needs VIP Girl and first Marriage Remarriage, Divorce. Ct: 9597834451

TAMIL IVER Unmarried Bharad Way jam Pooradam-1. 39 years, B.Tech, Working in Bangalore Drawing Rs. 25 LPA, Looking for Suitably Qualified any South Indian Brahmin Girls. Whats-App: 9715717881 gvcs49@gmail.com

B.TECH.38.BUSINESS AFFLUENT.INTER-CASTE, Pooradam, Dhanusu @Chennai want Slim, Beautiful bride CNB, Prefer Dr,Engr/Any Deg 9840362628, 8925413491

PILLAI(KARUNEEGAR), DOB:24–01-92, BE, Veg, Job: MNC (Software) Chennai, Annual Income: 25 lakhs. Seeking a suitable bride from the

same or any other community. Ph: 9841784047 Email: pingme.arul@ gmail.com. HINDU TAMIL Nadar 44/181 B.E., Carleton Univ, IISc. CT : 99943-51766, vimalkrishna@tamilfilmmakerspro.com

KONGU VELLALAR, 36, 5.6, 61 kgs, SW. [Engg] (BE., M.S) working in USA, seeking bride. Caste no bar. There is a minor well managed health consideration that might re-quire support on our path to par-enthood. Happy to discuss. Ct. 8438688725.

8438688375. AGE 46, 2nd Marriage, Working in Hospital at Qatar. Suitable Bride who willing to come Qatar. Ct: +97433840227 / 9498328263

PILLAI / SOZHIYA VELLALAR Non-Veg 34/174 BE MIB(France) Fair Punarpoosam Business Analyst MNC Chennai.Seeks apt Bride 9597866978

MUDALIYAR, 27, 157 cms, Gynecologist, MS ir REMARRIAGE NAIDU 39, 5'6" BE MBA Obstetrics. Lives in Chennai. Father is a Pooram IBM Chennai seeks suitable Businessman. Family is financially well off. Looking Bride CNB. Geetham 9884858014 for a like minded match. Contact: 6366448343

HINDU NADAR, 32/172cm, MBBS, MD or CHETTIAR, 23, 152 cms, Student, MBA. Lives ir DNP. Seeks Bangalore. Father is a Businessman. Family i 9380791999 financially well off. Looking for a like minded match Contact: 6366448344

HINDU/AD/ 31/ MS-IT Boy Software Australia. Seeks Suitable Al-liance. Ct: 9884229468 YADAV, 27, 178 cms, MBA. Lives in Chennai. Fathe is a Businessman. Family is financially well off Looking for a like minded match. Contact

MUDALIAR/ PILLAI, 29.05.93 / Poram Simman 183cm, BE, MS (USA) N.Veg, Working In USA, Seeks Suitable Bride (25–28yr) Studying / Working

NO Bar

, Own Hospital, Elite Family. s Suitable Bride. Ct:

unit

HEAVY VEHICLES

THEMOMHINDU

AGAMUDAYA MUDALIYAR, 42 Mirugasiri-dam PhD TN Govt Job Rs 1.35 Lakh P/ M. 'No Broker' Divorced: 7904550883 MAYAKKAR SPELECTRITION 32/

IYER VADAMA, Srivatsa, Bharani 29/ BRIDE WANTED Rich Naidu 28vrs MBBS. 167 B.E.,M.S(USA) Very Fair, Hand-some, clean habits working in Ban-MS Own Hospitals Chennai, Elite Business Family 9710093999 9710091999 galore, clean hadis downing in part galore, seeks good looking, slim, PG Iyer girl from good family. Send BHP to: akcmat94@gmail.com

WANTED BRIDE

ahmin,lyer, Ashtasahasram,Kaushik

nily seeks a Beautiful, Well Educate

able Iyer Girl of 28 - 29 years fro

Vellala Mudaliyar,

RC Christian: 31,

a good Family Backgroun

BALIJA 29/180 cms, BE/ M.S (Ger) working in Germany 51Lpa. Seeks Suitable Qualified Bride- Sub Sects No Bar. Ct: 9442623203 /

9442838203 KAMMA NAIDU, TELUGU, 27, 172cm, Fair, Visakam,Thulam,B.E., Chemical Engineer, Own Business, 5Lac/pm. Well Settled Family in Chennai. Seeks:Fair & Profesionaly Quali-fied Bride. Call: 9962518199 9962518199 Email: sm@smsla.in

ELITE GAVARA NAIDU Family from Chennai,only Son having Business in Entire SouthIndia with good Net-worth 02/08/1999, 5.9,Meenam,Uttara tthee,Veryfair,Seeks Bride from Elite Family only(Sub sect ok)Ct:0-9444071701

B.Tech, MBA, 6.1 ft, BRIDE WANTED Rich Kamma Naidu, 27yrs,B.Tech, Elite Business Fami-ly in Chennai. Ct: 9710093999/ Fair & Good looking 35L PA. Seeks educated

Bride from decent family 9710091999 Caste no bar. CHENNAI, BALIJA naidu, only son, Ct: 98405 73419

with good net assets, 29yrs/5.5' BE,MS, own business, seeks well ed-Mudalivar/ Pillai, 29/165cms, B.com. ucated bride. Subsect no bar. Ct MSW, LLB Advocate, Chennai, well settled seeks educated working bride. Contact: 94450 77918 / 94444 95948. 9840445567.

RICH NAIDU, 26yrs, M.Tech (IIT), Elite Business family. Seeks Suit-able Bride Cont: 9710093999/ AGAMUDAYAR, B.E., 31yrs, 173cm, Pooradam, Fair, Software Engineer, 2 Lakhs per month seeks SWE/ BE/ Dr 9710091999

Bride. Ct: 6382086919, 8508099103 NAIDU, KANNI/HASTHAM 07.01.1991/ B.Tech, IT,Software Engr. seeks Ed-ucated Girl Ct: 9361783287/ 9150851950 BE.MS/ PhD - IITM, Hindu/30/Fair NC-BLR, BCs, Contact: 9840161742

DOCTOR. M.D., D.M. 44/165. SC/AD. TELUGU BRAHMIN velanadu RISHBA 30/ 165 B.Sc 6 LPA Seeking same caste ge bride below 35yrs Any degree, cas-te no bar CONTACT : 9445205446. Girl Ct- 7397640726/ 8681992272

Tamil / Hindu / CNB / 180cm / 41 / BE, MS US / Divorced /No issues / American Citizen / teetotaller / seeks suitable bride from US / Ind 37 or less old. Contact: 9444608449. (IIM) Proj Manager MNC 34L P/A well todo Family in Chennai 9445556810

MARRIAGE BUREAU

Seeks Naidu(Any) Bride educated Dr/ CA/Engg & employed Cell: 9444753417 US UK Australia All Caste Religion 1st Marriage Remarriage. 8248757840



ಕನ್ನಡ

ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ



Crisis ends, PVR to screen Malayalam films

Director Blessy and film employees group thank Lulu Mall MD Yusuff Ali for his intervention to resolve the issue; PVR had stopped screening movies after the Kerala Film Producers' Association stuck to its position that films should be released at low virtual print fee using content mastered at PDC

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

6

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

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

BRIÐF

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

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

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



FEFKA president Sibi Malayil, its general secretary B. Unnikrishnan and filmmaker Blessy during a press conference in Kochi. H. VIBHU

lam movies after the KFPA vies. They are also ready to hold talks within a week to stuck to its position that resolve the pending issues, Malayalam films should be released at the screens in The company had the Forum Mall in Kochi at stopped screening Malayaa low virtual print fee (VPF) using the content mastered at the PDC (Producers' Digital Cinema), a facility under the association. The producers and distributors found the VPF being charged by existing content providers like Qube, UFO, PXD, TSR to screen the movies in the theatres too high.

FEFKA's role

Mr. Blessy said that the intervention by FEFKA remained crucial in resolving the issue. We had suffered considerable loss after the movie was pulled out from the screens of the company, he said. Though he had

plans to stage a protest in front of the PVR Cinemas in Lulu Mall here, it was called off after the truce.

He told The Hindu that Lulu Group managing director M.A. Yusuff Ali intervened just before planned protests were set to begin. The multiplex player has several screens in malls under the group in Kochi and Thiruvananthapuram. Mr. Blessy's movie Aadujeevitham released in theatres on March 28.

B. Unnikrishnan, general secretary of FEFKA, thanked Mr. Ali for his intervention to resolve the deadlocks

In months leading to Lok Sabha election, SC batted for fair and level playing field

Krishnadas Rajagopal NEW DELHI

The months leading to the Lok Sabha election has seen the Supreme Court set aside its usual self-imposed restraint to step in and level the playing field for the sake of electoral democracy. "Where issues crop up,

indicating unjust executive action or an attempt to disturb a level playing field between candidates and/ or political parties with no justifiable or intelligible basis, the constitutional courts are required, nay they are duty-bound, to step in," a Bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Ahsanuddin Amanullah said in a judgment in September last year.

The Bench was dealing with the non-allocation of the 'plough' symbol to the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference party ahead of polls to the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, Kargil. Justice Amanullah, who

wrote the judgment for the Bench, dismissed the petition filed by the Union Territory of Ladakh and declared the party's exclusive entitlement to the symbol for its candidates.

On electoral bonds

A Constitution Bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud swept out anonymity in the political funding with its judgment in February declaring the electoral bonds scheme "manifestly arbitrary and unconstitutional". The court agreed with the petitioners that the huge difference in the anonymous political donations received by ruling parties both at the Centre and the States has vitiated the level playing field, subverted democracy and left

arashtra Deputy Chief Minister Aiit Pawar, the nephew of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) founder Sharad Pawar, to fight his uncle true and fair at the polls.

The court told the younger Pawar to not "ride piggyback" on the shoulders of the NCP patriarch, using the latter's photos on the pamphlets and notices of his faction.

Symbol issue

The Bench directed the Election Commission to allow the Sharad Pawar faction to fight the Lok Sabha polls under the 'man blowing a turha' symbol and title 'Nationalist Congress Party-Sharadchandra Pawar'. Besides, it ordered Mr. Ajit Pawar to include a rider that the NCP's original symbol 'clock' was still under legal contest in the Supreme Court.

The top court had pointed out in judgments like Edappadi K. Palaniswami v T.T.V. Dhinakaran that party symbols during elections hold a prime place in a country where illiteracy was still very high.

"The use of a symbol, be it a donkey or an elephant, does give rise to a unifying effect amongst the people with a common political and economic programme," the court had said.

The court's drive to maintain a level and fair playing field percolated to

Jagan injured after stone thrown at him in Vijayawada

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

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

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

Rameshwaram Cafe blast: NIA gets 10-day custody of 2 accused

<u>The Hindu Bureau</u> BENGALURU

he said.

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has secured a 10-day custody of the two terror accused arrested from Kolkata, West Bengal, in the Rameshwaram Cafe

blast case. The arrested Abdul Matheen Ahmed Taahaa, 30, the alleged key conspirator, and Mussavir Hussain Shazib, 30, the alleged bomber, were brought to the city on Saturday. They were produced before the special NIA court in Bengaluru, which remanded them in 10 days police cus-

Heralding New Year

tody. The duo were on the run since 2020 and were nabbed by the NIA from a lodge near Kolkata where they were staying under false identities. Both hail from Shivamogga district. Security agencies have

recovered the cap the bomber was wearing while placing the IED at the restaurant on March 1. Agencies have recovered DNA samples of the bomber from the cap and it would now be matched with Mussavir, sources said.

The NIA said the monthlong manhunt succeeded with the joint efforts of several State police forces.

elephants at festivals rules, it is likely to file an af-The Hindu Bureau THIRUVANANTHAPURAM With the Thrissur Pooram

Department has relaxed its regulations for the use of firecrackers within a 50metre radius of captive elephants during the festivals. The move follows criticism by temple committees and elephant owners

the Chief Wildlife Warden on the maintenance of captive elephants chosen for parades.

fidavit on Mondav to emphasise the need to relax the contentious norm, official sources said. Various groups, includ-

ing the Kerala Elephant Owners Federation, Kerala Coordination Committee and Ana Thozhilali Union (Elephant have threatened to abstain from parading elephants at festivals, alleging the rules were impractical. They stressed the need for voluntary groups to attend to exigencies and overcome the dearth of squads deployed by the department.

approaching, the Forest

against a circular issued by

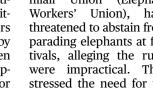
While the government has already apprised the

Forest Dept. to relax

norms on parading

Kerala High Court of the

Festival



Cong. asks PM's assurance on clearances for water projects

Ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Karnataka on Sunday to campaign for the BJP-JD(S) candidates, the Congress has posed a bunch of questions to him related to denial of permissions and funds to irrigation projects, including Mekedatu reservoir. Minister for Revenue Krishna Byre Gowda asked: "Will the Prime Minister assure voters on providing clearances to the Mekedatu project during his rally in Mysuru and Mangaluru on Sunday?"



Festive cheer: On the eve of Vishu, people shop for Krishna idols kept for sale at a roadside shop in Kerala's Thrissur. K.K. NAJEEB

the idea of free and fair elections gasping for dear life.

Having fought the Indian National Congress in the Delhi High Court despite allegations of "tax terrorism", the Income Tax department unexpectedly decided to temporarily halt its pursuit of the main Opposition party for ₹3,500 crore raised against it in tax demands. The court promptly listed the case for July 24, well after the election.

In March and April, a Bench headed by Justice Surya Kant cautioned Mah-

even local body elections. The Bench headed by Chief Justice Chandrachud declared Aam Aadmi Party's Kuldeep Kumar as the new Chandigarh Mayor, refusing the BJP's plea for a fresh election. It also initiated action against the Returning Officer, caught on camera tampering with ballots to favour BJP candidate Manoj Sonkar.

"This court is dutybound to ensure that the process of electoral democracy is not thwarted by subterfuges," the Supreme Court had observed.

The 'cradle bond' of the Muria tribe

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

T. Appala Naidu CHUKKALAPADU

ovvasi Chukkayya, 40, a Muria tribal farmer, in the Chukkalapadu settlement, Alluri Sitarama Raiu district, Andhra Pradesh, holds two baskets in his hands: one each for his two children. The first was woven some years ago for his first son; the second, a few months ago, for his second.

"It is portable and can be taken into the forest when we go to work," Mr. Chukkayya said.

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

YK



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

entire lactating period.

Children develop a bond

with their cradle as they

grow older. We also tell

them the cradle is a gift

from their father," said

mother of two children.

The child is allowed to use

Ravva Masamma, a

the forest, collect the bamboo, dry it, and weave the cradle with his own hands, with no help from anyone.

"In our Gond language, the cradle is called vookada. We put the baby in the cradle during the

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

"Irrespective of gender, the *vookada* is gifted to every child in the family. The number of cradles in the house indicates the total number of children born to a family," said Ravva Pojayya.

His eight-year-old son Suresh still plays with the cradle his father made for him. As many as 54 Muria

settlements exist in Andhra's reserve forests.

<u>John L. Paul</u> KOCHI

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

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

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



'Fort' in Fort Kochi cries for conservation

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

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

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

•••

Visitors will benefit if a part of the fort's remains is rebuilt using laterite bricks, similar to the ones that were used 500 years ago. A few pillar-like structures can be erected atop them using these bricks, that can then be used as gateways to the beach, helping recreate memories of the fort in Fort Kochi, he says.

Portuguese strategy

Referring to forts that the Portuguese built in Fort Kochi and also in Goa, Kollam, Kozhikode and Kodungalloor, historian and

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

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

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

News

From Page One

17 Indians aboard Israeli vessel seized by Iran

"We have been assured that the ₹66,800 paid by us for flight tickets and other charges will not be lost, that the delay is temporary, but I am very worried," he added, explaining that he had taken a loan from a relative to pay for all the expenses ahead of the trip.

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

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

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

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

Against the backdrop of the Houthi attacks, Somali pirates have also become increasingly active, with a string of piracy attempts in the Gulf of Aden and the Horn of Africa. In response, the Indian Navy has deployed in strength and thwarted several piracy attempts. From December 2023, this has involved the deployment of over 5,000 Naval personnel at sea, over 450 ship days, in more than 21 ships, and 900 hours of flying by maritime surveillance aircraft to address threats in the maritime domain, Navy Chief Adm. R. Hari Kumar had said on March 23, as Operation Sankalp completed 100 days.

Iran-Israel crisis clouds plans for Indian workers

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

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

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

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

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

Press Trust of India WASHINGTON

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

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

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

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



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

Indo-Pacific, an official statement said.

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

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

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

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

Bilateral cooperation

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

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

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

Department of Defence, the Department of Commerce and the Department of Energy. He met representatives of leading thinktanks and chambers of commerce.

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

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

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

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

noupal, where one person was said to be injured. The Lok Sabha election is to be held in Manipur on April 19 and 26.

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

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

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

Congress president Malment on the issue, asking: likariun Kharge has also "What were the 19 rounds castigated the government of bilateral talks with your for its "meek" policy to-Chinese counterpart for? wards China. Was it to increase Chinese Referring to Mr. Jaishankar's statement as a "double clean chit" to China, Mr. Kharge, in a post on X, questioned why status quo ante has not been achieved to that of pre-2020 position. Mr. Jaishankar's remarks made during a press briefing in Pune, which follows Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent interview to foreign press, is the second instance of absolving China of the crimes that it committed by a series of incursions, including the June 2020 incident at Galwan where 20 Indian

soldiers were killed, the

Congress said.

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

Jaishankar insulted the nation's fallen soldiers at Galwan and also legitimised the Chinese claims over thousands of square kilometres of land to which Indian troops had access until May 2020.

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

'Bland statement'

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

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

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

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

tract for the works of intake well and pump house, drinking water treatment plant, and cross-country pipeline, including fiveyear operation and maintenance, at Chhattisgarh's Jagdalpur had been awarded to MEIL.

Payments for favours

The CBI came across email communications which revealed that payments were made to the accused for various favours, including

Two killed in Manipur ahead of Amit Shah's visit

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

months, violence erupted in Manipur on Saturday when two men were killed at the boundary of Kangpokpi-Imphal East districts. The incident comes days ahead of the proposed election-related visit of Home Minister Amit Shah to the State on Monday. This will be Mr. Shah's first visit to Manipur after he last visited the State on May 29, 2023, in the aftermath of the ethnic violence that erupted on May 3 the same year.

After a lull of about two

After the incident, two videos of the violence surfaced on social media where armed men in camouflage uniforms are seen mutilating the bodies of the deceased persons. Police sources confirmed the veracity of the video to The Hindu.

The incident follows a gunfight between two groups on Friday in Teng-



asked, in comments to The Hindu.

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

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

A Bengal watering hole for tipplers from Bihar

They are all abuzz with truckers, drivers, and people travelling between Purnea and Kishanganj, all lined up to enjoy a drink.

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

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

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

"Most of those who take liquor at Dalkhola stay there for a night and continue their journey next day to avoid being caught," said an Excise Department official who did not want to be named.

YK (

imports of India? Or take PMCARE funds from 3,000 companies having Chinese directors? Why has the status quo ante, pre 2020, not returned? Why is India still denied access to areas in Depsang Plains, Demchok Nalla and several patrolling points in Hot Springs and Gogra Post?'

'M for Meek'

He branded the Prime Minister's policy towards China as "M for Meek"!

Mr. Kharge shot off

questions to the govern-

In a detailed statement, Congress general secretary (communication) Jairam Ramesh said these statements by Mr. Modi and Mr.

Blocked access

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

"Chinese troops remain in place despite 21 rounds of military talks over four years. Where withdrawals have been negotiated, the ing "both countries are well aware of their respective traditional grazing zone. Any spat, controversy, or dispute is dealt with by the established mechanism"

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

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

tract worth over ₹314.57 crore.

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

FIR on March 31.

It was alleged that a con-

clearance of bills and invoices. The company allegedly prepared fake vouchers to show that payments were made to labourers. The agency also found details of the amounts which, as decided, were to be given to different officials.

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

SC to hear Kejriwal's petition against ED arrest tomorrow

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

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

The case is listed before the Bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta. The petition is listed at the very end of the board at item number 57.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

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

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



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with some of the top Indian gamers, discussing issues relating to the gaming industry, in New Delhi. ANI

video categories on You-India. He also played Stum-Tube in India. ble Guys, a multiplayer survival royale game. On a vir-

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

• • •

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

Gaming vs gambling

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

"There's no need for regulation," Mr. Modi said of the video gaming industry.

A ND-NDE

tual reality headset, he

played Beat Saber, a

rhythm game.



RJD manifesto promises 5 new airports in Bihar

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

(letter of change), the

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

200 units.



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

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

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

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



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

Phase 1

Phase 2

BJP's New Delhi candidate



Singh Cheema from

Sahib.



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



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

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

<u>Ishita Mishra</u> DEHRADUN

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

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

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

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

OVERVIEW

Mohammed Iqbal JAIPUR

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

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

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

Past results

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

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

first phase.

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

voice of the common party workers is suppressed in the BJP. Mr. Kaswan, who has won the Churu Lok Sabha seat twice since 2014, shifted to the Congress fold after he was denied ticket by the BJP.

Alliance deals

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

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

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

Churu, Kota, Banswara, test triangular in the constituency. The BJP has given ticket

Singh Malviya. The veteran

leader's defection to the

BJP in February was a ma-

jor loss for the Congress,

though the party expects

that Mr. Roat will get a

good chunk of votes of tri-

bal communities in the

The BJP has inducted a

large number of Congress

leaders and party workers,

mainly belonging to the Jat

community and Other Backward Classes, at

much-publicised events in

the run-up to the election.

The leaders included form-

er Ministers Lalchand Ka-

taria and Rajendra Singh

Yadav as well as those from

the influential Mirdha clan.

Besides, former External

Affairs Minister Jaswant

Singh's son Manvendra

Singh returned to the BIP's

fold after five years in

Defections galore

region.

and Barmer. The fight has become inin Banswara to Congress teresting in Barmer with turncoat and an influential Independent MLA from tribal leader and former Sheo, Ravindra Singh Bha-Minister, Mahendrajeet

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

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

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

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

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

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

combined astutely.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

YK (

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

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

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

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

INTERVIEW

Sarbananda Sonowal

Rahul Karmakar DIBRUGARH

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

What makes you



confident that the people will vote for the NDA?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Is the Citizenship (Amendment) Act an issue then?

•••

It is not much of a factor because the people know Congress misinterpreted the CAA to reap political benefits. I am aware that my rivals refer to my crusade against the Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunal) Act which the Supreme Court scrapped in 2005. One has to understand that the IMDT was dangerous, discriminatory, unconstitutional, and undemocratic - imposed only on Assam without the consent of its people although there was the Foreigners' Act of 1946 to detect illegal migrants. No suspected foreigner could

have been identified through the IMDT under which the onus of proof lay with the complainant. The CAA, on the other hand, is a national law that allows religiously persecuted people (from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan) to live in the country. It is not Assam-specific and does not say only Assam will take the burden of refugees granted citizenship.

<u>The Hindu Bureau</u> JAGDALPUR

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

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

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

News

INBRIEF



NHRC flags 'violation' of human rights in Sandeshkhali

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

Air India, Vistara flights to avoid Iranian airspace

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

President asks people to adopt Ambedkar's ideals

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

Congress clears candidates for 16 LS constituencies in four States

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

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

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

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

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

testing from Balasore in Odisha. Former Leader of the Opposition Paresh Dhanani has been fielded from Rajkot against Union Minister Purshottam Rupala. Mr. Rupala is at the centre of a controversy with his remarks against Rajputs and is facing protests from many within the Gujarat BJP.

After 22 years, Mr. Rupala and Mr. Dhanani are

fighting against each other.

The names were announced after a meeting of the party's Central Election Committee (CEC). According to sources, candidates for Haryana and Delhi were also discussed.

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

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

AAP Minister in a soup over casteist remark

9

<u>The Hindu Bureau</u> CHANDIGARH

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

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

secretary K.C. Venugopal.

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

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

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

<u>Anuj Kumar</u> GHAZIABAD

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Ateeq Shaikh MUMBAI

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

For the Mumbai South constituency, earlier the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena wanted to field Bala Nandgaonkar but backed out and announced unconditional support for the

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

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



Himachal Pradesh CM Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu is flanked by Congress State president Pratibha Singh and Deputy CM Mukesh Agnihotri during the CEC meeting in New Delhi on Saturday. ANI

Remove beverages from 'health drinks' category: govt.

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

SUDOKU



Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

CM YK

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

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

Thakurs or Rajputs con-

Discontent surfaces

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

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

unacceptable. "Also, the

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

NDA. With both the BJP and Shiv Sena unrelenting, the wait continues.

The contenders from Shinde's Sena for this prestigious constituency are former Union Minister Milind Deora, who earlier this year joined the party after quitting the Congress, and former Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation Standing Committee's chairman and House Leader Yashwant Jadhav. Mr.

Jadhav is a three-time

against two accused in car blast case

Press Trust of India NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

Jacob Koshy NEW DELHI

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

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

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



New frontiers: Gopichand Thotakura. PTI

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

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

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

• • •

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

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

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

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

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

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

THE HINDU **Business**

NBRIEF

10



Granules facility in Vizag completes U.S. FDA inspection

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

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

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

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

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

Firms told to run gas units as power ask rises

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

Reuters NEW DELHI

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

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

be informed two weeks in advance about the requirements so they could import gas, the government

the fuel.

Idle capacity

day, the government for

the first time invoked an

emergency clause mandat-

ing companies to operate

underutilised gas-based

power plants by importing

India has about 24 giga-

watts (GWs) of gas-based

power plants that have

been idling or underused

for decades due to lack of

fuel. Power stations would

said in its order. "Gas-based





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

They also have lowered the

number of anticipated rate

But inflation is not spi-

ralling out of control, with

cuts to two from three.

power

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

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

Torrent and NTPC are

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

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

first offer their power to PPA holders.

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

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

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

(With inputs from PTI)

U.S. consumer sentiment slips; inflation expectations increase

Reuters WASHINGTON

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

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

Stubbornly high inflation and a strong labour market prompted markets



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

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

Govt. to e-com

firms: remove

Bournvita as a

'health drink'

producer prices increasing moderately last month.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

on Saturday.

reached out to me to get clarity on their contracts and whether there will be any changes implemented for them ahead of the merger," he added. Mr. Kannan acknowledged that there was wi-

"Cabin crew have also

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

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

EPAM bets big on India as more clients set up GCCs



change dynamics overall," Mr Feies who was here re

Meenakshi Verma

INDIAN INSTITUTES OF SCIENCE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH (Autonomous Institutions established by the Ministry of Education, Government of India) 10 IISER BISER 811

India has about 24 GW of gasbased plants that have been idling or underused for decades Power Ministry has projected

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

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



Balazs Fejes

you need to focus and try to sell to them going forward," he added.

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

Describing the trend of GCCs and business functions being moved to India as a "very interesting change and [poised to]

dy been important for EPAM from a talent availability perspective. EPAM employs more than 53,000 people globally. EPAM India MD Srinivas Reddy, present during the interaction, said "our

headcount in India is 7.300 engineers with half of them based out of Hydera-

bad" and the rest in Pune, Bengaluru, Gurgaon, and Chennai. The plan was to increase

the headcount in India to more than 10,000 by 2025, Mr. Fejes said, seeking to highlight how the company takes clients through their digital transformation process, from design to the

actual creation of software.

being added into the mar-

He said luxury always goes

growth, more importantly

stock market growth and

wage growth. And there

don't seem to be any major

economic headwinds for

the economy right now, he

said adding in next two to

four years, "we're not see-

ing any issues barring any

global unforeseen events."

up because of the demand

He said prices are going

economic

The growth factor

along with

added.

cently, said India has alrea-Ambwani NEW DELHI

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

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

(The writer is with The Hindu businessline)

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

Lalatendu Mishra MUMBAI

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

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

CM YK



Kalpesh Mehta

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

"As long as the equity markets continue to do well and the economy continues to do well, the demand for luxury homes will stay strong. There is a and challenges associated fair amount of supply also with a "good market."

"In a good market eveket. So, I think the imbarything is expensive. Land, lance that we see should contractors, the building flatten out eventually," he and hiring people is expensive," he added.

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

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

BERHAMPUR	BHOPAL	KOLKATA	MOHALI	PUNE	THIRUVANANTHAPURAM	TIRUPATI	

ADMISSION NOTICE 2024

5-YEAR BS-MS (DUAL DEGREE) AND 4-YEAR BS DEGREE PROGRAMS

ONLINE APPLICATION WINDOW IS NOW OPEN

Applications are invited from highly motivated students studying in the science stream for admission to 5-Year BS-MS (Dual Degree) and 4-Year BS Degree Programs in Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISERs) at Berhampur, Bhopal, Kolkata, Mohali, Pune, Thiruvananthapuram and Tirupati for the academic session of 2024-25

For more information, please visit: https://www.iiseradmission.in

ATTRACTIVE FEATURES

- 5-Year BS-MS (Dual Degree) Programs in Sciences and 4-Year BS Program in Engineering Sciences and Economic Sciences (at IISER Bhopal only)
- Curricula distributed in breadth and depth with an opportunity to learn subjects from internationally reputed academicians
- Candidates choose their specialization only after exploring different subjects
- Exposure to the front line research areas at the world-class laboratories/research groups
- Research internships and year-long research projects leading to MS thesis with opportunities for interdisciplinary research
- Fully residential campuses with well-equipped hostels and medical facilities
- Opportunities for sports, cultural, and other extracurricular activities for holistic development

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

- Applications are to be submitted online only at https://www.iiseradmission.in
- Applicants must carefully go through the instructions and the FAQ section on the website before filling up the form
- A non-refundable application fee of ₹2000 (₹1000 for SC/ST/Kashmiri Migrant/PwD candidates) is applicable

SCHOLARSHIP

Admitted students may be eligible for a limited number of INSPIRE scholarship as per the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India norms

All inquiries must be addressed to:

CHAIRPERSON, JOINT ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE 2024

Email: askjac2024@iiserb.ac.in, Website: https://www.iiseradmission.in Phone: 0755-2691798 (2 PM to 5 PM, Monday to Friday)

...(



April 1, 2024

June 9, 2024



ELIGIBILITY

Candidates who have passed Class

XII/equivalent examination in science stream

(in 2022, 2023 or 2024) with minimum 60%

marks (55% for SC/ST/PwD) are eligible to

apply for the IISER Aptitude Test (IAT) 2024

*All admissions will be only through

IAT 2024*

IMPORTANT DATES

Last Date for Online Applications May 13, 2024

Application Portal Opened on

IISER Aptitude Test (IAT)

SCIENCE

Concurrent heatwaves, sea level rises pose a threat to coastlines

The Hindu Bureau

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

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

2049 under a modelled high emissions scenario.

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

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

Polytechnic University, Hong Kong, investigated CHWESL events worldwide between 1979 and 2017 and projected future events between 2025 and

2049 under a high emissions climate scenario (the IPCC's SSP5-8.5 scenario). The authors only included events occurring in the extended summer season, spanning May to September in the Northern Hemisphere, and November to March in the Southern

Zhou from the Hong Kong

Hemisphere. The authors found that approximately 88% of the world's coastlines experienced a CHWESL event during the period 1979-2017. Approximately 39% of coastlines recorded a significant increase in the total duration of CHWESL conditions experienced over a vear during the period 1998-2017 compared to during 1979-1998, with tropical regions more likely to experience a greater increase.

The authors also found

infected after blood donation

Among those who were infected with

symptoms, while the symptoms had

had cardiac or respiratory symptoms

discovered

resolved in the remaining 15.5%

SARS-CoV-2, 84.5% were still experiencing

Neurological symptoms were reported by

23.6%, while 23.1% experienced problems

such as changes in taste or smell, and 15.8%

health

were difficulty thinking or

concentrating (12.7%) and

fatigue (11.1%). Surprising-

ly, the picture of mental

Among those without in-

fection, as many as 9.8%

developed mental health

problems such as anxiety

and depression. The inci-

was different.

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

crease of 31 days compared

to the historical period of 1989-2013. The authors conclude

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

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

SNAPSHOTS



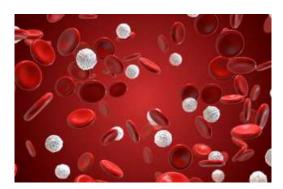
Thin oil films enable water mixtures sans surfactant

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



Patient's skin microbiome may cause surgical infections

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



Blood bank study reveals true incidence of Long COVID

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

LONG COVID:

Among COVID-19

survivors, a

significant number

develop long-term

health problems

researchers

Rajeev Jayadevan

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

that 43.3% of individuals with confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infections experienced new symptoms lasting four weeks or longer, after recovering from COVID. Among those without infection, 22.1% reported new-onset symptoms, as might be expected in the general population. This indicated that 21.2%, or the difference between 43.3% and 22.1%, had long-term health problems genuinely resulting from SARS-CoV-2 infection. Among them, 84.5% were still experiencing symptoms, while 15.5% said that their symptoms had resolved. Neurological symptoms were reported by 23.6%, while 23.1% experienced other problems such as changes in taste or smell, and 15.8% had cardiac or respiratory symptoms. The two most common indivi-

(16.5%) said that their current physical health was worse than before the pandemic. For those without prior infection, the corresponding percentage was 10.9%. Although symptoms lasting over a year are common, the study also reveals that Long COVID resolves in a significant number of cases. Accordingly, household pulse surveys in the U.S. indicate that the percentage of people currently experiencing Long COVID has remained steady, with 10% of adults with prior COVID-19 (equivalent to 7% of all adults) still affected by it. Studies from India show dual long-term symptoms

prior infection in the stu-

dy, one out of six people

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

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

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

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

Among those who had a

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

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

Particles that mimic platelets staunch traumatic bleeding

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

Geroscience: the science related to aging



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

Tool to target aging

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

YK

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

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

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

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



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

Centre has found that a basources of proteins, lanced diet supports brain healthy fats, and foods rich in antioxidants, such as health by reducing inflammation, and promotes healthy fats, vegetables, proper blood flow by supfoods rich in oils, and plenplying essential nutrients ty of fruits help in supportwhich aid cognitive funcing healthy aging. This is of tion. particular value to us in India, since the number of

The website healthline-.com elaborates on this people above the age of 60 and states that healthy years is about 10 crores

.com suggests that proteins (animal and vegetable), nutritive grains (wheat, rice, ragi, bajra), oils, fruits and soft drinks help in healthy aging. These are easily available, both for meat eaters and vegetarians. Researchers at Stanford University have found that a drug which can boost

(out of a total population of

143 crores). Healthline-

strength in injured or aging mice restores connections between nerves and muscle fibres. This drug blocks the activity of an aging-associated gerozyme called 15-PGDH which naturally increases in muscles with age and in neuromuscular disease. But with this drug, aging mice become physically active again.

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

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

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

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

•••(

Question Corner Evolution of eyes

Is there any evidence that eyes have evolved several times independently of one another?

Scientists have discovered a bristle worm with such sharp-seeing eyes that they can measure up to those of mammals and octopuses. The Vanadis bristle worm, also known as polychaetes which are nocturnal, has eyes as big as millstones, relatively speaking. As a set, the worm's eyes weigh about twenty times as much as the rest of the animal's head. Its eyesight is on a par with that of mice or rats, despite being a relatively simple organism with a minuscule brain. These worms see

ultraviolet light. This may indicate that the purpose of its eyes is to see bioluminescent signals in the otherwise pitch-black nighttime sea. Vanadis' eyes are built simply, but equipped with advanced functionality. They have evolved in a relatively short evolutionary time span of just a few million years. This means that they must have developed independently of, for example, human eyes and that the development of vision, even with a high level of function, is possible in a relatively short time.

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



How did the law on disclosure of assets evolve?

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

K. Venkataramanan

The story so far:

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

What is the law related to disclosure?

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

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

Rejecting the contention that the voter's right to know all particulars is absolute, the Supreme Court said there was no need for a candidate to lay bare his entire life for the electorate to examine

Act. The amendments introduced Sections 33A (concerning disclosure of pending criminal cases), Section 33B (which effectively nullified the ECI's notification by saying no

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

What are the consequences of any omission?

Section 125A of the RPA, 1951, prescribes a six-month prison term, or a fine, or both, fo candidate's failure to disclose the required information, or giving false information or concealing such information.

Why is there a WHO alert on viral hepatitis?

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

Hepatitis B

can be

Bindu Shajan Perappadan

The story so far:

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

What does the report highlight?

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

What is hepatitis?

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



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

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

Why is India vulnerable?

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

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

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

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

Why is the report significant?

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

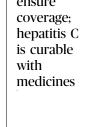
What is the way forward?

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

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

The trend in climate change jurisprudence

prevented through vaccination, and the report highlights the need to ensure coverage; hepatitis C is curable



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

What is the latest court ruling?

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

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

What is the takeaway from the verdict?

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

YK

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

Supreme

judgments

on environ-

Court

mental

matters

altered

public

mental

action

discourse

and govern-

have often

significantly

Jacob Koshy

The story so far:

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

What is the context?

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



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

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

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

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

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

•••

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

Are their international precedents?

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

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

What are the implications of such a ruling?

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

PROFILES

Guardians of the revolution

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

Stanly Johny

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

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

The rise

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Axis of resistance

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

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

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

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

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

THE GIST

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

-

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

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

Under the shadow

Kalvakuntla Kavitha

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

B. Chandrashekhar

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

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

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

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

YK



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

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

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

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

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

and the CBI.

Political vendetta

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

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

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

gana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy and other Congress leaders from the State supported the arrest of Ms. Kavitha in the same case, the BRS said. "How can a national party have two stands - one at national level and the other at local level - on the same issue?" BRS senior leader and former Minister T. Harish Rao said. Interestingly, BRS MLA

Kadiyam Srihari, who is now with the Congress, had led a protest on March 16 against Ms. Kavitha's arrest, terming it undemocratic and a conspiracy hatched by the BJP to hit the morale of the BRS and target KCR politically ahead of the Lok Sabha elections. After joining the Congress, Mr. Srihari changed his opinion. He now says the BRS's graph is coming down because of corruption allegations against its leaders, and that he had no other way left but to join the Congress "for the development of my constituency".

Irrespective of what's in store for her in courts in the coming months, it's a testing time for Ms. Kavitha as well as the first family of the BRS. She says she would come clean as a pearl as she has done nothing wrong. It's time for her to prove her critics wrong, as the BRS is still struggling to recover from the Assembly election defeat.

The Orbán challenger

Péter Magyar

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

Saumya Kalia

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

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

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

Until recently, Mr. Ma-

ILLUSTRATION: SREEJITH R. KUMAR

opportunity seeker look-

ing for fame in the after-

math of his divorce. But he

in Hungary's political land-

scape quells several con-

cerns for the Hungarian

public. The Fidesz party

has since 2010 taken on a

right-wing, illiberal charac-

ter, transforming Hungary

into a "hybrid regime of

electoral autocracy," ac-

cording to the European

In contrast, Mr. Magyar's

2026. His first interview on

February 12 with Partizán

Parliament.

Centrist promise

Mr. Magyar's emergence

seems unperturbed.



gyar's social capital crafted his reputation. The lawyer was known for his marriage to Mr. Orbán's popular ex-Justice Minister Judit Varga. The two were married for nearly a decade; Ms. Varga served as an adviser at the EU Parliament while Mr. Magyar held different positions on state boards. The couple, with their three children, were framed in the media as a modern nuclear family.

The former government insider blew the whistle on Mr. Orbán's government in February, triggering what analysts termed the biggest political crisis during the Prime Minister's 14-year rule. The series of events unspooled thus: Mr. Magyar resigned from the board of the state-owned MBH Bank, publicly lambasted "the reign of corruption" and published incriminating tapes on Facebook on how the government 'controlled the Hungarian justice system'. The government has dis-

missed Mr. Magyar as an

most 68% of Hungary's voters had heard of Mr. Magyar, and 13% said they were likely to support his party (making it the third most popular outfit in the country). Mr. Magyar has separated himself from the mainstream Opposition land-

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

has more than 2 million

views. By mid-March, al-

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

politics is a challenge to Mr. Orban's "power factory". On Instagram, Mr. Ma-His centrist promise is targyar's recent post is capgeted to reach out to peotioned with the words of A ple across the political Tisza, a poem by the Hunspectrum. He also vows to garian revolutionary figure build a more civil foreign Sándor Petőfi: "like a mapolicy that maintains relaniac just freed from chains, tions with both the EU and the Tisza rushed in rage NATO. Mr. Magyar's former across the plains", ready status as a government in-"to swallow up the whole wide world". sider carries some favour among voters, who will A comment addressed head to national polls in

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

A ND-NDE



...(

KYIV

14

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



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

ISTANBUL

Passengers rescued from Turkiye cable car accident after 23 hours



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

NIAMEY

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



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

MIAMI

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



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

Iran police toughen rules on women without hijab

Agence France-Presse TEHRAN

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

"From today the police in Tehran, as in other provinces, will implement their measures against this sort of violation of the law regarding hijab," the capi-

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

Germany to send

additional Patriot

system to Ukraine

Agence France-Presse GAZA STRIP

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

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

The White House has repeatedly warned Tehran against carrying out a po-

As Iran seizes container ship, Israel warns of 'consequences' of escalation U.S. announces decision to send more troops to the troubled region; Tehran official says Tel Aviv is in complete panic about

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

tentially imminent attack



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

Iran's

which killed 16 people, inon Israel in response to an cluding two Iranian generair strike on an Iranian diplomatic building in Daals, and has been widely blamed on Israel – but has mascus earlier this month. Tehran has vowed to not specified how. avenge the April 1 strike -

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

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

Terrified of response An adviser to Iran's supreme leader said that Israel was in "complete panresponse.

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

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

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

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

Five women among six killed in knife attack in Sydney mall

A nine-month-old

attacker who was

shot dead

baby was injured by the knife-wielding

person we believe it is.

then... it's not a terrorism

A New South Wales Am-

bulance spokesperson said

eight patients were taken

to various hospitals across

Sydney, including the baby

who was taken to the city's

"They all have traumatic

Security camera footage

showed a man wearing an

injuries," the official said.

incident," she said.

Children's Hospital.

Traumatic injuries

Agence France-Presse SYDNEY

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

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

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

Australian rugby league New South Wales police jersey running around the shopping centre with a commissioner Karen Webb said five women and one large knife. man had died. A baby was Injured people lay lifeundergoing emergency surgery.

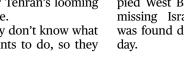
less on the floor, or surrounded by pools of blood. Eyewitnesses described Identity not revealed

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

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

ic" over Tehran's looming "They don't know what

Iran wants to do, so they



Belgium blues

FRANKFURT

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

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

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

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

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



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

Terror attacks leave 11 persons dead in Balochistan province of Pakistan

Press Trust of India ISLAMABAD

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

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

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

YK



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

In a separate incident,

two persons were killed on

the same highway when

gunmen fired at their car

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

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

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

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

Ecuador court calls police raid on Mexico embassy 'illegal'

Agence France-Presse OUITO

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

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

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

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

Mr. Glas, who served as

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

been formally identified.

Ms Webb played down



(CONSTRUCTION ORGANISATION) E-TENDER NOTICE NO. E148-CN-TPJ-TF-040 Dated: 12.04.2024

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

POSTGRADUATE INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL EDUCATION & RESEARCH CHANDIGARH

ADMISSION NOTICE NO.06/2024

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

Courses	Date of Exam	Starting Date for online application	Closing Date for online application		
Ph.D./ MPH/M.Sc. (Nursing) & PGDPHM	23.05.2024 (morning shift)	16.04.2024	06.05.2024		
Fellowship/ PDF, House Job (OHS), M.Sc / M.Sc (MLT)	23.05.2024 (Afternoon Shift)	16.04.2024	06.05.2024		
Mode of payment- Through Debit/Credit Card/Net Banking only (except UPI).					

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

REGISTRAF



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

Vice-President from 2013

•••

to 2017, faces graft charges stemming from his time in office. The raid came hours afcriminal ter Mexico granted a request by Mr. Glas for politi-

cal asylum. Mexico had on Thursday appealed to the International Court of Justice in The Hague to suspend Ecuador from the United Nations unless it apologised for violating international law.



STILL RECOVERING

Fleming virtually rules out Pathirana against Mumbai Indians



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

NOT IMPORTANT Gambhir not stressing on his

switch from LSG to KKR colours



Gautam Gambhir, who earlier served as LSG's mentor, did not give much importance to his switch to the KKR colours, saying performances on the field mattered the most. Gambhir also said KKR needed to perform in all conditions. "To be successful in a competition like this, we have to keep improving."

TIMELY

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



SANDEEP SAXENA

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

HOME-COMING

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

Parag c Rabada b Arshdeep 23

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

Shashank b Harshal 6 (11b),

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

Shimron Hetmyer (not out) 27

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

Keshav Maharaj c Livingstone b

Curran 1 (2b), Trent Boult (not

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

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

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

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

PUNJAB KINGS BOWLING

Arshdeep 3.5-0-45-1, Rabada

Livingstone 3-0-21-1, Harsha

Toss: Rovals. PoM: Hetmver.

RR won by three wickets with

Next assignment

the equation down to 12 off

10 balls. But Curran had

Powell caught behind off a

short ball and Maharaj

holed out to long on in the

last ball of that over.

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

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

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

(Maharaj, 18.6)

one ball to spare.

RR: April 16 vs KKR

PBKS: April 18 vs MI

Mullanpur, 7.30 p.m

Kolkata, 7.30 p.m.

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

FALL OF WICKETS

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

Kuldeep was looking forward to playing in Lucknow, says Amre



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

Hetmyer cameo powers Royals past the finish line

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

IPL-17

S. Prasanna Venkatesan MULLANPUR

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

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

The match surprised even before it began.

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

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



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

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

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

boriously as someone tethered to a rock would, Kings panted and heaved their way to 53 for four in 10 ovparts.

In the next 10 overs, Jitesh Sharma (29, 24b, 1x4, 2x6), Liam Livingstone (21, 14b, 2x4, 1x6), and Ashu-

tosh Sharma (31, 16b, 1x4, 3x6) dazzled like Ninja Turtles in a combat, only in

And there was surprise again when Royals began their chase. Kotian, who often bats at Nos. 8, 9, and 10 for Mumbai in the Ranji

Trophy, opened the batting with Jaiswal.

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

SCOREBOARD

PUNJAB KINGS

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

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

FALL OF WICKETS

1-27 (Taide, 3.4), 2-41 (Prabhsimran, 6.3), 3-47 (Bairstow, 7.6), 4-52 (Curran, 9.3), 5-70 (Shashank, 12.1), 6-103 (Jitesh, 16.1), 7-122 (Livingstone, 17.5), 8-147 (Ashutosh, 19.6).

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

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

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

With 20 runs needed off 12 balls, Rovman Powell hit back-to-back fours to bring

Challenge is how bowlers can even the game: Fleming

<u>Amol Karhadkar</u> MUMBAI

Chennai Super Kings head coach Stephen Fleming hopes the bowlers are given more leeway in the IPL to ensure balance is maintained and the league continues its reputation.

"Batting, in particular, has evolved at a huge rate of knots over the last five years. The challenge of the IPL, from a skill point of view, is how the bowlers can even the game up a little bit," Fleming said on the eve of CSK's high-profile match against Mumbai Indians.

"The two bouncers is one, and maybe we need to keep looking at other ways to do that. But I think from an entertainment package, it's right up there.

Fleming admitted that the CSK players also look forward to the competitive rivalry between the boys in yellow and blues. "We love it, to be honest. Over the years it has developed into a really competitive rivalry, and it's based on two good teams playing successful brand of cricket."

15

MI, CSK seek consistency and rhythm in titanic clash

Amol Karhadkar MUMBAI

It is often billed as El Clasico of the Indian Premier League.

Instead, it should just be referred to as IPL Personified. Not just the Gen Z and the millennials, but even Gen X and boomers are equally excited about it, much like the India-Pakistan game.

The feature match perhaps the most soughtafter match at the time of the announcement of IPL schedule every year - of the franchise extravaganza is here yet again.

With 10 of the 16 IPL titles having been equally shared between them, Mumbai Indians and Chennai Super Kings will lock horns against each other at the Wankhede Stadium on Sunday.

Just like the fans, the teams, as admitted by CSK head coach Stephen Fleming, "look forward" to the fixture. Beyond the arch rivalry, however, both the teams will be hoping to get into a rhythm after a shaky three weeks at the start.

While Super Kings have three wins out of five, Mumbai Indians enters the game on the back of consecutive wins at home in its last two games.

Add to the fact that Super Kings' shaky record away from home this season and it lends Mumbai

YK



Eternal star: CSK fans will be hoping for more than just a glimpse of Dhoni's prowess at the crease. EMMANUAL YOGINI

Points table

	м	w	L	PTS	NRR
Rajasthan Royals	6	5	1	10	0.767
Kolkata Knight Riders	4	3	1	6	1.528
Chennai Super Kings	5	3	2	6	0.666
Lucknow Super Giants	5	3	2	6	0.436
Sunrisers Hyderabad	5	3	2	6	0.344
Gujarat Titans	6	3	3	6	-0.637
Mumbai Indians	5	2	3	4	-0.073
Punjab Kings	6	2	4	4	-0.218
Delhi Capitals	6	2	4	4	-0.975
Royal Challengers	6	1	5	2	-1.124
After the PBKS-RR match on April 13					

will bank on its three Mum-

baikars to set the stage on

fire. If Ajinkya Rahane, Shi-

vam Dube and Tushar

Deshpande deliver the

goods against the likes of

Bumrah, Rohit Sharma

and Suryakumar Yadav,

CSK will hope to improve

its away home record.

Indians a slender edge. With dew making a huge impact on Thursday, the toss will be critical come Sunday. Irrespective of the toss, however, Super Kings will hope to combat a relentless Jasprit Bumrah.

Besides hoping for the best against Bumrah, CSK

Knight Riders will hold edge over Super Giants

<u>Y.B. Sarangi</u> KOLKATA

As Kolkata Knight Riders and Lucknow Super Giants intend to return to winning ways, the host will hold an edge during the Indian Premier League duel at the Eden Gardens here on Saturday.

Having crossed 200plus scores twice, KKR, which has benefitted from Sunil Narine, Andre Russell, and Phil Salt's fine contributions, will rely on its foreign batters to outbat its opponent.

The Indians, including captain Shreyas Iyer, Venkatesh Iyer, Angkrish Raghuvanshi, and Rinku Singh, are capable of moulding their game as per necessity. Vaibhav Arora, replac-



Bracing up: Raghuvanshi, Venkatesh will have a big role to play. PTI

ing an injured Harshit Rato-head, will depend on its na, has done well, while prominent scorers, Nichostar pacer Mitchell Starc is las Pooran, K.L. Rahul and yet to impress. Russell and Quinton de Kock. Ayush Narine have also contribut-Badoni's half-century was ed with the ball and the latter may shoulder the spin Delhi Capitals. responsibility with Varun Chakaravarthy.

LSG, ahead 3-0 on head-

Today's matches Kolkata, 3.30 p.m. Mumbai, 7.30 p.m. HEAD-TO-HEAD HEAD-TO-HEAD Played: 3 Played: 36 KKR 🕕 | LSG 🔁 MI 20 | CSK 16 **PREVIOUS MEETING PREVIOUS MEETING** LSG won by one run, 2023 CSK won by six wickets, 2023

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD) & JIO CINEMA

will showcase their best. Seamers Yash Thakur, who recorded a five-for, and Naveen-ul-Haq can check any side.

a bright spot in its loss to Ravi Bishnoi and Krunal Pandya are the leading The tourists will hope spin options. In a battle of Devdutt Padikkal and allequals, LSG may have to work hard to stop KKR, rounder Marcus Stoinis

The results: Premier League:

Newcastle 4 (Isak 30, 51, Gordon

Onyeka 90+3) bt Sheffield United

32. Schar 87) bt Tottenham 0:

Brentford 2 (Arblaster 63-og,

Man City eases to the top

which is keen to regain momentum in the first of its five straight home matches after the loss to CSK. Eden, which produced

400-plus runs three weeks ago, may have regained some freshness but the hot afternoon should make the conditions batter-friendly.

Gambhir backs Starc to come good

Y.B. Sarangi KOLKATA

Kolkata Knight Riders' mentor Gautam Gambhir backed his team's costliest buy, Mitchell Starc, hoping that the Australian pacer would make an impact later in the Indian Premier League.

Bowling with an economy of 11.00, Starc has claimed only two wickets in four matches.

"We all know how big a threat Starc is. Four matches won't make him a bad bowler. I know what im-

Gambhir on the eve of

KKR's home match against

Lucknow Super Giants.

pact he can create. "In a team sport, it's the victories that matter... I feel Starc has done reasonably okay. He has bowled some tough overs. He will make an impact, what he has been picked for," said

Manchester City moved to the top of the Premier League asLuton was eased aside 5-1, while Newcastle thrashed Tottenham 4-0 on Saturday.

MANCHESTER

Bayern Munich beat Cologne 2-0, delaying Bayer Leverkusen's Bundesliga title party to Sunday at the earliest. In LaLiga, Real Madrid beat Mallorca

•••

EURO LEAGUES

Agence France-Presse

45+6) bt Girona 1 (Dovbyk 4); Mallorca 0 lost to Real Madrid 1 (Tchouameni 48).

Bundesliga: Bayern Munich 2 (Guerreiro 65, Muller 90+3) bt Cologne 0; RB Leipzig 3 (Olmo 13, Sesko 68, Openda 81) bt Wolfsburg 0. Borussia M'Gladbach 1 (Woeber 36) lost to Borussia Dortmund 2 (Sabitzer 22, 28-pen); Bochum 1 (Schlotterbeck 90) drew with Heidenheim 1 (Schlotterbeck 81-og).

Serie A: Torino 0 drew with Juventus 0 On Friday: LaLiga: Real Betis 2

LaLiga: Atletico Madrid 3 (Miranda 53, Fekir 84) bt Celta (Griezmann 34-pen, 50, Correa Vigo 1 (Strand Larsen 90+1).

A ND-NDE

0; Burnley 1 (Brownhill 74) drew with Brighton 1 (Muric 79-og); Manchester City 5 (Hashioka 2-og, Kovacic 64, Haaland 76-pen Doku 87, Gvardiol 90+3) bt Luton 1 (Barkley 81); Nottingham Forest 2 (Gibbs-White 45+1, Danilo 57) drew with Wolves 2 (Cunha 40, 62); Bournemouth 2 (Solanke 16,

Kluivert 36) drew with Manchester United 2 (Fernandes 31, 65-pen)

16



Gill finishes in top-three on the first day of Otago Rally

Gaurav Gill of JK Tyre put himself in contention for a podium finish after grabbing a top-three spot at the end of the opening day of the Otago Rally in New Zealand. Gill and New Zealand-based co-driver Jared Hudson were third on the timesheets, a little over 30 seconds behind overall leader Jack Hawkeswood and 11 seconds adrift of second-placed Robbie Stokes. Gill and Hudson were piloting 2022 APRC champion and 10-time Otago Rally winner Haydon Paddon's Hyundai i20 N Rally2 machine.

Hockey: Indian men go down to Australia again

The Indian men's hockey team failed to avoid a 0-5 series whitewash after going down 2-3 in the fifth Test against Australia here on Saturday. Skipper Harmanpreet Singh (fourth) and Boby Singh Dhami (53rd) were the goal scorers for India, while Australia sounded the board through Jeremy Hayward (20th), Ky Willott (38th) and Tim Brand (39th).

Silver for Radhika while Shivanee takes bronze

Indian women managed a silver and a bronze medal in the Asian wrestling championships at Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, on Saturday. Radhika Jaglan, a 2022 silver medallist in 65kg, bagged another silver in 68kg, while Shivanee Pawar secured a bronze in 50kg. Fighting the final against Japan's Nonoka Ozaki – a 65kg World champion who went up in weight class to beat Asian champion compatriot Ami Ishi in a playoff to take Japan's 68kg slot in the Paris Olympics – Radhika was convincingly beaten 15-2 with 1:31 minutes left on the clock. Shivanee defeated Mongolian Otgonjargal Dolgorjav 9-7 to win the bronze.

Arjun and Jeevan make the doubles final in Mexico

Arjun Kadhe and Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan defeated top seeds Luke Johnson and Skander Mansouri 4-6, 7-6(5), [10-8] to set up a title clash with second ranked Piotr Matuszewski and

A roller-coaster ride for leader Nepo; Pragg and Tan very impressive

Gukesh will have to put the disappointment of the Firouzja game aside; experienced players are more relaxed when things are not going their way

Passant

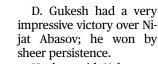
Viswanathan Anand

an Nepomniachtchi, the sole leader at the Candidates tournament after seven rounds, had a roller-coaster ride over the last three days.

Against R. Praggnanandhaa, he faced a very difficult opening test, did not solve it, and managed to stumble into a lost position where the winning move was incredibly difficult to find. Praggnanadhaa tried but only man-

aged a draw. The next day, Nepomniachtchi did not try hard against Fabiano Caruana. In the seventh round,

Hikaru Nakamura also put him through a test of fire. Once again, he came very close to losing, but he managed to create practical problems and when Nakamura went wrong, he got a draw.



He drew with Nakamura in the sixth round and then tragedy occurred in the seventh.

His position against Alireza Firouzja, who had lost three games, looked better than it might have been.

Dangerous opponent

Even in the shakiest of forms, Firouzja is a dangerous opponent. As the time pressure increased, Gukesh suddenly collapsed and lost. Though he is playing very, very well, he will have to put this disappointment aside.

Caruana escaped against Vidit Gujrathi in the fifth round. After drawing with Nepomniachtchi, he pressed against Praggnanandhaa but was matched completely.

So he has had three quiet draws. It is noticeable that the experienced players are more relaxed when things are not going their way.



In control: Tan is ahead by half-a-point going into the second half and looks the favourite. FIDE

black.

second half.

Praggnanandhaa's play is very impressive. He managed to give himself a chance to beat Nepomniachtchi and then proceeded to defeat Abasov.

He effortlessly held against pre-tournament faIt has allowed him to comeback with a 50% score, but he is well off the pace. He will have his chances.

Vidit was extremely impressive. He missed an excellent chance to beat Caruana.

He defeated Alireza for the second time this year and came close to winning his seventh round game against Abasov. Though he is only on a 50% score, he is able to create chances every day.

In the women's tournament, Tan Zhongyi is looking very impressive. There was a wobble or two in her victory over Anna Muzychuk but she played that game very well until that point.

She takes a half-a-point lead into the second half and I think she is now the favourite.

Aleksandra Goryachkina, the highest-rated player, won one more game to keep up with Zhongyi and was unable to beat her main rival in the seventh round. She trails the leader by half-a-point.

At the moment, only Goryachkina and Tan are fighting for the top prize.

Lei Tingjie is also very highly rated and seems to be playing herself back to strength, saving difficult positions, as against Kateryna Lagno, and then

raising her game to beat two strugglers – Koneru Humpy and R. Vaishali. I feel because of the momentum, she still has hopes.

Out of shape Humpy is now struggling. In the two games she made big efforts, she ended up losing. She seems to be out of shape in this tournament. Hopefully she will be able to show her

strength. Vaishali was in a good situation but lost her last two games and is clearly suffering from a crisis of form. She will need to pull

herself together. Lagno had three consecutive winning games but only managed to beat Vaishali. Lei has showm momentum.

Airee smashes 36 in an over against Qatar

CRICKET

Press Trust of India AL AMERAT (QATAR)

Nepal's Dipendra Singh Airee became the third batter to smash six sixes in an over in T20Is here on Saturday. Airee achieved the feat against host Qatar during the ACC Men's Premier Cup T20I.

Airee joined Yuvraj Singh (against Stuart Broad during the T20 World Cup in 2007) and Kieron Pol-

Three-way tie after two rounds; Woods claims another Major record

vourite Caruana with

switched his openings and

is very well poised for the

win against Firouzja more

or less by sheer will power.

Nakamura managed to

He constantly

GOLF

Reuters AUGUSTA

Bryson DeChambeau, Max Homa, and Scottie Scheffler weathered a wild windy day seldom seen at Augusta National to share the Masters second round lead on Friday while Tiger Woods targeted a sixth Green Jacket after claiming

another Major record. First round leader De-

Small setback: First-round leader DeChambeau, after a bogey at the 18th, shares the top spot with Homa and Scheffler. AFP

> the move with birdies at the second and fourth. pite a triple bogey after the Masters debutant Nicosecond round. lai Hojgaard of Denmark Leading scores, second round: battled to a one-over 73 to **138:** Max Homa (USA, 67, 71). sit alone in fourth at four-Scottie Scheffler (USA, 66, 72), under with Australian Cam Bryson DeChambeau (USA, 65, Davis (72) and Collin Mori-73) kawa (70) one further

had never experienced before at Augusta National.

As always the spotlight was on Woods as he scrapped his way to an even par 72 securing him a record 24th consecutive cut at Augusta National.

Meanwhile, Indian-Americans Akshay Bhatia and Sahith Theegala made the 36-hole cut. Bhatia, 22, who won the Valero Texas Open last week, shot (72, 75) to be T-30, while Theegala (74, 74) was T-35, des-



Airee... in familiar territory. CRICKET NEPAL

Matthew Romios in the \$82,000 Challenger tennis tournament at Cuernavaca, Mexico.

Other result: Doubles, semifinals: Piotr Matuszewski (Pol) & Matthew Romios (Aus) bt Rithvik Bollipalli & Niki Poonacha 6-4, 3-6, [10-7].



NorthEast United FC eases past Odisha FC in the ISL

NorthEast United FC breezed past Odisha FC 3-0 in an Indian Super League match at the Indira Gandhi Athletic Stadium in Guwahati on Saturday. Parthib Gogoi, Nestor Albiach, and Konsam Phalguni Singh found the net for Juan Benali's side. NEUFC finished its season with 26 points from 22 outings while Odisha goes into the playoff clash against Kerala Blasters after finishing the league stage with 39 points from 22 matches.

The result: NorthEast United FC 3 (Gogoi 12, Albiach 16, Phalguni 45+3) bt Odisha FC 0.

LIVE TELECAST

IPL: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 3.30 & 7.30

Serie A: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 4, 6.30, 9.30 p.m. & 12.15 a.m. (Monday)

LaLiga: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 5.30, 7.45, 10 & 12.30 a.m. (Monday)

Premier League: SS Select 1, 2 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 6.30 & 9 p.m.

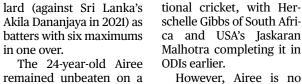
Bundesliga: Sony Sports Ten 2 (SD & HD) & LIV, 7 & 9 p.m. ISL: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 7.30 p.m.

On Monday

IPL: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 7.30 p.m. Serie A: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 12.15 a.m. (Tuesday)

LaLiga: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 12.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

YK



21-ball 64 that included stranger to hitting six sixes. three fours and seven sixes During Nepal's Hangzhou at a monstrous strike rate Asian Games T20I clash against Mongolia in Sep-The Nepal man became tember last year, he had

the fifth batter to achieve pummelled six consecuthis rare feat in internative sixes across two overs.

Chambeau had looked poised to spend another night alone atop until a bogey at the 18th left the 2020 U.S. Open champion with a one-over 73 and a two day total of six-under 138.

Scheffler also had a chance to take solo possession of top spot, the World No. 1 cruising along with a one shot lead until running into trouble where so ma-

ny have at par five 13th Landing his approach in Rae's Creek Scheffler did well to escape with bogey then playing error free to the finish signing for an even par 72.

Homa, who had never broken 70 at Augusta until wrapping up his weatherdelayed first round on Friday morning with a fiveunder 67, was quickly back out on the course and on

back. 73). Only eight players managed to break par on a sunkissed day of devilish winds that most said they

141: Cameron Davis (Aus, 69, 72); Collin Morikawa (USA, 71, 70) 142: Ludvig Aberg (Swe 73, 69).

140: Nicolai Hoejgaard (Den, 67,

Deorukhakar 7-6(8), 6-1.

Osaka keen to play

at the Olympics

Nadal to make ATP return in Barcelona

TENNIS

of 304.76.

Agence France-Presse PARIS

Rafael Nadal will make his return to ATP competition for the first time since January when he plays Flavio Cobolli in the Barcelona Open next week.

The 22-time Grand Slam champion has featured just once, in an exhibition match, since he felt a hip injury flare-up during his quarterfinal defeat by Jordan Thompson in the Brisbane Open.

The tournament has also been boosted by the return of Nadal's compatriot Carlos Alcaraz, the World No. 3, who withdrew from this week's Monte Carlo Masters due to a right arm injury.

Nadal, 37, missed virtually all of the 2023 season through injury and has only played at the Brisbane In-

ternational this season. The injury in Brisbane prompted the record 14time French Open winner's withdrawal from the Aus-French Open title.

NZ dashes India's qualification hopes

Sports Bureau

New Zealand scotched India's hopes with a 2-1 victory in the last league match of the Asia-Oceania group-1 Billie Jean King Cup women's tennis tournament

sha, China, on Saturday. Rutuja Bhosale once again gave a bright start for India, winning the opening rubber against Monique Barry 6-2, 7-6(5). Ankita

Raina lost the second singles 2-6, 0-6 to Lulu Sun. In the decisive doubles,

Paige Hourigan and Erin Routliffe led 6-1, 5-1 before Ankita and Prarthana Thombare made a fight of it to be 5-5 in the second set.

However, the Kiwi pair was far too experienced as the world No.5 doubles player Erin Routliffe had made the Australian Open semifinals this year and had won the women's doubles title in the US Open to let the Indian team stretch the fight any further.

There was a three-way

tie for the second qualification spot between Korea, India and New Zealand, behind the all-conquering Chinese.

Korea took the second qualification berth as it had won 11 individual matches from five ties, to eight by India and seven by New Zealand. Had India won the tie against New Zealand, it would have qualified with four wins.

After such fighting victories against Taiwan and Korea, it was a heart break for the Indian team.

While China and Korea qualify for the World group play-off, Taiwan and Pacific Oceania got relegated to Asia-Oceania group-2.

India and New Zealand will continue to stay in group-1 for next season.

The results (league):

New Zealand bt India 2-1 (Monique Barry lost to Rutuja Bhosale 2-6, 6-7(5); Lulu Sun bt Ankita Raina 6-2, 6-0; Paige Hourigan & Erin Routliffe bt Ankita & Prarthana Thombare 6-1, 7-5).

SNAPSHOTS

Karnataka girls shock defender Maharashtra

Karnataka shocked defending champion Maharashtra 50-48 while Kerala got past Gujarat 67-54 in the girls' quarterfinals of the 38th youth National basketball championships in Puducherry on Saturday. In the boys' section, Haryana defeated Uttar Pradesh 75-65 while Punjab saw off Telangana's challenge 84-77.

The results: Quarterfinals: Boys: Rajasthan 65 bt Kerala 60; Haryana 75 bt Uttar Pradesh 65; Punjab 84 bt Telangana 77. Girls: Karnataka 50 bt Maharashtra 48; Kerala 67 bt Gujarat 54; Rajasthan 69 bt Madhya Pradesh 64; Tamil Nadu 75 bt Punjab 42.

Mahika Khanna, Rian Sharma clinch titles

Qualifier Mahika Khanna defeated Danica Fernando 6-2, 7-5 in the girls' final of the AITA National series junior tennis tournament at the CLTA Complex in Chandigarh on Sunday. Top seed Rian Sharma won the boys' title, beating Parth

Former World No.1 Naomi Osaka said on Saturday that she "would love to play" at this year's Paris Olympics if she is granted a spot by tennis chiefs. The four-time Grand Slam champion may need to go through an appeals process to claim a place after failing to make a mandatory two appearances for Japan in the Billie Jean King Cup during the current Olympic cycle. She told reporters in Tokyo after helping Japan qualify for the BJK Cup finals that she will play in Paris "if they let me". "Growing up watching the Olympics on TV, I felt that it was a celebration of sport," she said. "I thought it brought everyone together and just to be able to be an athlete there and interact with other athletes is one of the finest things that I've ever done." The 26-year-old said she "would hope that I get to play" at the Games. A ND-NDE



Nadal. AFP

tralian Open as well as Doha and Indian Wells, where he had first intended to make his comeback.

His one appearance since Brisbane came in an exhibition match against Alcaraz in Las Vegas in March where observers noted some discomfort in his back.

With this potentially Nadal's last year on tour, he will be desperate not to miss any more clay court preparation time as he seeks to win a record 15th

on the clay courts of Chang-



•••

News in Frames



To the rescue: Two men deliver food on boats in a flooded area in Orenburg, Russia on April 11. The Ural river had burst through embankment dams. AP



Quick shift: The settlement of Zarechny in northern Kazakhstan, from where thousands of people were evacuated after floods on April 10. AFP



Danger zone: A firefighter walks by train tracks near a paper factory affected by a forest fire in Veracruz, Mexico on March 26. GETTY IMAGES

Uncertain times

<u>Global monitors have warned that 2024 is shaping up to be the hottest year on record,</u> marked by climate extremes; the vulnerable population is the most affected

n a world where global warming and climate change have become buzzwords, everything seems to be in a flux. There's either a deluge or a drought. Disasters like forest fires and floods seem to be increasing in frequency, pushing vulnerable people to the edge.

This month, extensive flooding impacted the Central Asian regions of Kazakhstan and Russia, specifically in the Ural Mountains and Siberia. The Ural river, which rises in the Ural mountains and flows through Kazakhstan into the Caspian Sea, burst through embankment dams in the Urals city of Orsk on April 5 and flooded parts of the city of Orenburg.

At least 12,000 people in Russia are recorded as having been evacuated. In Kazakhstan, more than 97,000 people have been evacuated. The worst hit areas mostly border Russia and are crossed by rivers flowing from or to Russia.

In a 2009 research commissioned by the U.S. National Intelligence Council on the impact of climate change on Russia to 2030, the authors said the rise in temperatures would lead to a series of complex issues for Russia.

Among them were the increased frequency of extreme climatic events including heavy rain, fires in Siberian peatlands and more frequent flooding of Russia's Arctic rivers due to heavy rain and earlier break-up of river ice.

The European Union's climate change

monitoring service recently said that March 2024 was the warmest on record. Each of the last 10 months ranked as the world's hottest on record, compared with the corresponding month in previous years, the EU's Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) said in a monthly bulletin. The 12 months ending with March also ranked as the planet's hottest ever recorded 12-month period, C3S said.

Extreme weather and exceptional temperatures have wreaked havoc this year. Wildfires affecting Mexico have destroyed over 3,000 hectares of forested areas. Heatwaves in Vietnam have caused severe drought in central Ninh Thuan province, badly affecting vegetation and lifestock.

Closer home, the India Meteorological Department has said the country will see more than the average number of heatwave days this year between April and June. Heat waves can be lethal as they affect the ability to breathe, making the old and young particularly vulnerable.

Benjamin Horton, director of the Earth Observatory of Singapore where natural phenomena such as climate change are studied, said three factors determine heat waves; El Nino, a natural, temporary and occasional warming of part of the Pacific, an increase in global temperatures and human-induced climate change.



•••

Land at risk: A

farmer walks along a field abandoned due to saline intrusion after a drought in Vietnam's southern Ben Tre province on March 19. AFP

Drop by drop: A woman collects water from a storage tanker outside her home in Haripura village in Rajasthanon March 31. India, too, is experiencing heatwaves. GETTY IMAGES

Text: Agencies

₩ ₩

S ND-NDE

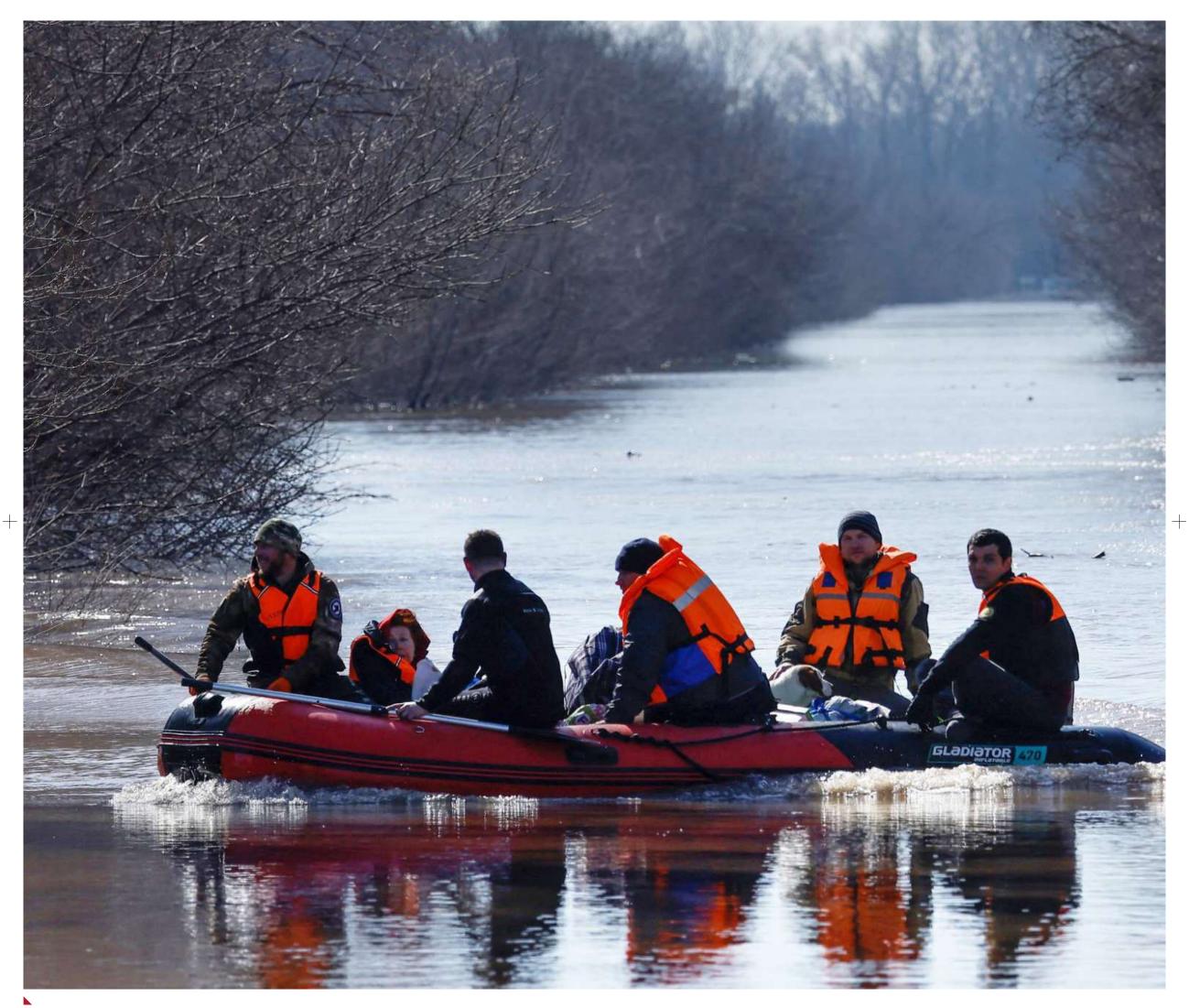
Sunday, April 14, 2024 DELHI



Greenery lost: Trees affected by a forest fire in an avocado plantation in Cerro del Aguila, recognised as a protected area in Mexico on March 26. AFP



To safety: People wait to cross a flooded area in Spin Boldak district of Kandahar province in Afghanistan on April 13 after a flash flood. AFP



Seeking high ground: Rescuers from the Russian Emergencies Ministry evacuate people from a flooded residential area in Orenburg on April 11. REUTERS





A wet world: Residents ride boats in a flooded street in Orenburg. AP 📰 🐥 F'REMIUM NEWSPAPERS 🐥 📰

👉 IF YOU WANT TO GET EARLY MORNING FAST UPDATE OF NEWSPAPERS JOIN OUR TELEGRAM CHANNEL. 🎈 ENGLISH NEWSPAPER 棸

The Hindu, Business Line, Times of India, The Economic Times, Economic Times Wealth, Mirror, Maharashtra Times, Hindustan Times, Mint, Indian Express,

Financial Express, New IndianExpress, Business Standard(Hindi English), Mid-Day(English Gujarati), Deccan Chronicle, The Tribune, Brill Express, The Asian Age, The Telegraph, Hans India, The Gaon, The Statesman, Employment News, English Editorial

🎈 JOIN TELEGRAM CHANNEL 🎈

https://t.me/MagzNewspaper

🎈 INTERNATIONAL NEWSPAPER 🎈

Gulf of Times,The New York Times, Financial Times, The Washington Post,New York Post, Los Angeles Times, USA Today,The Wall Street Journal, The Guardian,The Times,The New Yorker, Youth Ink

🖣 JOIN TELEGRAM CHANNEL 🌳

<u>https://t.me/PaperMagzine</u>

🐥 राष्ट्रीय हिन्दी न्यूजपेपर🐥

दैनिक जागरण, दैनिक भास्कर ,दिव्य भास्कर,हिंदुस्तान ,नवभारत टाइम्स,अमर उजाला,पजाब केसरी,लोकमत,जनसत्ता, लोकसत्ता,दैनिक ट्रिब्यून,राष्ट्रीय सहारा,इंडिया न्यूज,दिल्ली राजस्थान पत्रिका,रोजगार समाचार, हिंदी एडिटोरियल

🎈 JOIN TELEGRAM CHANNEL 🎈

<u>https://t.me/HuB_Newss</u>

兽 राजस्थान न्यूजपेपर 🐥

सच कहूं,सीमा संदेश,पंजाब केसरी,इंडिया न्यूज़,

🐥 ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਪੇਪਰ 👇

ਸੱਚ ਕਹੂੰ;'ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਟ੍ਰਿਬਿਊਨ

兽 हरियाणा न्यूजपेपर 🎈

🞈 हरियाणा मुख्य 🖣

ट्रिब्यून,सच कहूं,उत्तम हिंदू,एक्शन इंडिया,पायनियर,देश रोजाना,जागरण,भास्कर,पंजाब केसरी,हरिभूमि,जगत क्रांति,दैनिक सवेरा, हिन्दुस्तान,हरियाणा वाटिका,आज समाज,Hindustan Times,The Tribune,Vatika Times

🌳 JOIN TELEGRAM CHANNEL 🌳

<u>https://t.me/MagzNewspaper</u>

鵫 हरियाणा लोकल 鵫

अमर उजाला,भास्कर,जागरण,हरिभूमि,पंजाब केसरी,दैनिक सवेरा

👇 TAMIL & TELUGU NEWSPAPER 🞈

Eenadu ap ts Telangana Today Hyderabad Telangana ts prajaskthi ts ts Sakshi ts Surya ts Jyoti ts vaartha dinamani tiruchy madurai coimbatore chennai Ap Surya vaartha Sakshi Jyothi andhraprabha Janmabhumi Kottayam Kochi Kannur Bangalore Kozhikode Thrissur Deshabhimani Thrissur palakkad Kannur Kottayam ernakulam Kozhikode

🎈 JOIN BACKUP CHANNEL 🎈

https://t.me/BackUPTeleg

SEARCH ON TELEGRAM TO JOIN PREMIUM GROUP

👉 <u>@\/B25000</u>

CONTACT <u>https://t.me/ 919024825000</u>

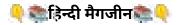




👉 GET ALL FAST UPDATE OF ALL HINDI ENGLISH MAGAZINE JOIN OUR TELEGRAM CHANNEL.

Frontline,SportStar,Business India,Banking Finance,Cricket Today,Mutual Fund Insight,Wealth insight,Indian Economy & Market,The Insurance Times,Electronics For You,Open Source For You,Mathematics Today,Biology Today,Chemistry Today,Physics For You,Business Today,Woman Fitness India,Grazia India,Filmfare India,Femina India,India Legal,Rolling Stone India,Bombay Filmfame,Outlook,Outlook Money,Careers 360,Outlook Traveller,India Strategic,Entertainment Updates,Outlook Business,Open,Investors India,Law Teller,Global Movie,The Week India,Indian Management,Fortune India,Dalal Street Investmemt Journal,Scientfic India,India Today,HT Brunch,Yoga and Total Health,BW BusinessWorld,Leisure India Today,Down To Earth,Pratiyogita Darpan,Marwar India,Champak,Woman's Era,The Caravan,Travel Liesure India,Eiusiness Traveller,Rishi Prasad,Smart investment,Economic and political weekly,Forbes india,Health The Week, Josh Government JOBS,Josh Current Affairs,Josh General Knowledge,Electronic For You Express,Josh Banking And SSC,Highlights Genius,Highlights Champ,Global Spa,Bio Spectrum,Uday India,Spice India Today,India Business Journal,Conde Nast Traveller,AD Architectural Digest,Man's world,Smart Photography India,Eianking Frontiers,Hashtag,India Book Of Records,ET Wealth,Vogue india,Yojana,Kurukshetra

JOIN TELEGRAM CHANNEL https://t.me/MagzNewspaper



समय पत्रिका,साधना पथ,गृहलक्ष्मी,उदय इंडिया,निरोगधाम,मॉडर्न खेती ,इंडिया टुडे,देवपुत्र,क्रिकेट टुडे,गृहशोभा,अनोखी हिन्दुस्तान,मुक्ता,सरिता,चंपक,प्रतियोगिता दर्पण,सक्सेस मिरर,सामान्य ज्ञान दर्पण,फार्म एवं फूड,मनोहर कहानियां,सत्यकथा,सरस सलिल,ख़्ततंत्र वार्ता लाजवाब,आउटलुक,सच्ची शिक्षा,वनिता,मायापुरी,इंडिया हेल्थ,रूपायन उजाला,ऋषि प्रसाद,जोश रोजगार समाचार,जोश करेंट अफेयर्स,जोश सामान्य ज्ञान,जोश बैंकिंग और एसएससी,इंडिया बुक ऑफ रिकॉर्ड्स,राजस्थान रोजगार संदेश,राजस्थान सूजस,सखी जागरण,अहा! जिंदगी,बाल भास्कर,योजना,कुरूक्षेत्र,हिन्दुस्तान जॉब्स

JOIN TELEGRAM CHANNEL TELEGRAM CHANNEL TELEGRAM CHANNEL TELEGRAM CHANNEL TELEGRAM CHANNEL TELEGRAM CHANNEL

Like other groups, this list is not just written, we will make these magazine available to you with 100% guarantee.

JOIN TELEGRAM CHANNEL TELEGRAM CHANNEL TELEGRAM CHANNEL

You will get the updates of all these magazines first in the premium group.

JOIN BACKUP CHANNEL
https://t.me/BackUPTeleg

SEARCH ON TELEGRAM TO JOIN PREMIUM GROUP (a)/B25000 Contact (b)/https://t.me/ 919024825000

