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THE WORLD

LEGISLATION TO BE ENACTED BY END OF MAY

IRELAND TO RESUME SENDING REFUGEES BACK TO UK

IRELAND GOVERNMENT said on Tuesday it planned to enact legislation by the end of May allowing it to resume sending asylum seekers back to the United Kingdom. The Irish High Court ruled last month that Ireland could not send back people who arrive from the UK seeking asylum because the Irish government had not outlined whether they could be at risk on their return. **REUTERS**

TOP OF THE WORLD

King Charles in London, Tuesday. *Reuters*

UNITED KINGDOM

King Charles returns to public duties, visits cancer centre

London: A smiling and healthy-looking King Charles returned to public duties Tuesday for the first time since he was diagnosed in February with cancer, paying a visit to a treatment centre for the disease in London. Buckingham Palace announced on Friday that doctors were sufficiently pleased with the 75-year-old king's response to treatment for the unspecified form of cancer that he would be able to resume some public-facing engagements. The first of these saw the king and his wife Queen Camilla visit the University College Hospital Macmillan Cancer Centre where he met patients and medical specialists. The monarch looked cheerful, waving to those gathered outside on his arrival. **REUTERS**

UNITED STATES

Trump gets $9k fine for gag order breach amid trial

New York: The judge overseeing Donald Trump's criminal hush money trial fined the former U.S. president $9,000 for contempt of court on Tuesday and said he would consider jailing him if he continued to violate a gag order. In a written order, Justice Juan Merchan said the fine may not be enough to serve as a deterrent for the wealthy businessman-turned-politician and lamented he did not have the authority to impose a higher penalty. The gag order was imposed to prevent Trump from criticizing witnesses and others involved in case. **REUTERS**

THE HAGUE

Quito embassy raid was illegal: Mexico at ICJ

The Hague: Mexico told judges at the International Court of Justice Tuesday that an armed raid on its embassy in Quito by Ecuador breached international law. "There is no rule under international law that could nullify the inviolability of the embassy of Mexico, and no standard under which the assault could be deemed as lawful," Alejandro Celorio, a legal adviser to Mexico said. He said the case was important to the global community, with immunity of diplomats a cornerstone of relations. **REUTERS**

BRAZIL

Panel to unlock South America integration plan

Brasilia: Brazil's government will soon create an inter ministerial commission chaired by the Planning Ministry to unlock projects for integration in South America, a top official said on Monday. A decree signed by leftist President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva will establish the commission, which will organise internal activity in the federal government to effectively kick-start the projects. **REUTERS**

WILL ACHIEVE GOALS BEFORE ENDING WAR, SAYS PM

Netanyahu vows to invade Rafah 'with or without a deal' as truce talks continue

Blinken to visit Israel in his latest trip to West Asia

ASSOCIATED PRESS
APRIL 30

ISRAELI PRIME Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed Tuesday to launch an offensive in Rafah in southern Gaza despite calls for restraint. He said Israel will destroy Hamas there "with or without a deal" currently being discussed in talks in Cairo.

Israel and Hamas are negotiating a cease-fire agreement meant to free hostages and bring some relief to the Palestinians in the besieged enclave.

"The idea that we will stop the war before achieving all of its goals is out of the questions. We will enter Rafah and we will eliminate Hamas' battalions there — with or without a deal, to achieve the total victory," Netanyahu said in a meeting with families of hostages held by militants in Gaza.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken is expected to visit Israel on his latest trip to the region, which began Monday in Saudi Arabia. He said Israel needs to do more to allow aid to enter Gaza, but that the best way to alleviate the humanitarian crisis is a truce.

Over 34,535 Palestinians have been killed and 77,704 wounded in Israel's military offensive in Gaza. **WITH REUTERS INPUT**

Students barricade themselves at at Hamilton Hall in Columbia University on Tuesday. *Reuters*

Pro-Gaza protesters take over Columbia building as demonstrations escalate

REUTERS
NEW YORK, APRIL 30

PRO-PALESTINIAN ACTIVISTS occupied a building at Columbia University early on Tuesday, escalating a battle with administrators who have begun suspending students for refusing to dismantle tents set up on the campus.

Protesters entered Hamilton Hall - the site of student protests dating back to the 1960s - and suspended a banner reading "Hind's Hall" from an upper floor. Others outside blocked the doors with outdoor tables and linked arms to form a barricade in front.

"This building is liberated in honour of Hind, a six-year-old Palestinian child murdered in Gaza by the Israeli occupation forces funded by Columbia University," a protester shouted, with those outside repeating.

Minutes after the protesters gained access to the building, NYPD officers arrived outside the school gates, *Columbia Spectator* newspaper reported. It said police would only enter school grounds if someone was injured. Some three hours after the students entered the building, the school sent out a notice saying that access to the Morningside campus has been limited to students residing inside the campus.

U.N. AGENCY SEEKS PROBE INTO ISRAEL'S TREATMENT OF ITS STAFF

Geneva: The head of the U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) called on Tuesday for countries to back an independent investigation into alleged killings and detentions of its staff and damage to its premises once the Israel-Hamas conflict ends. UNRWA has accused Israel of targeting its facilities during more than seven months of conflict in the Gaza Strip, and said 182 of its staff there had been killed and more than 160 of its shelters hit, resulting in the deaths of hundreds of people fleeing Israeli bombardment. **REUTERS**

HAMAS, FATAH EXPRESS WILL TO RECONCILE: CHINA

Beijing: Rival Palestinian groups Hamas and Fatah have expressed the political will to reconcile through dialogue at unity talks in Beijing, China's foreign ministry said Tuesday. The two factions have failed to heal political disputes since Hamas expelled Fatah from Gaza in a short war in 2007. Their teams "arrived in Beijing a few days ago for... candid dialogue," foreign ministry spokesperson said. **REUTERS**

NOT TERROR-RELATED, SAY POLICE

London man with sword kills teen, two officers among 4 injured

ASSOCIATED PRESS
LONDON, APRIL 30

A MAN wielding a sword attacked members of the public and police officers in a east London suburb early Tuesday, killing a 13-year-old boy and injuring four others, authorities said. A 36-year-old man was arrested in a residential area near Hainault underground station, police said. The incident is not being treated as terror-related or a "targeted attack".

Two police officers were in hospital being treated for stab wounds. Two other people were also injured. "I cannot even begin to imagine how those affected must be feeling," Chief Supt. Stuart Bell said outside the homes in east London where the crime happened.

The Metropolitan Police said they were called early Tuesday to reports of a vehicle being driven into a house in a residential street and people being stabbed close to the Hainault underground station. Video on British media showed a man in a yellow hoodie holding a long sword or knife walking near houses in the area.

Site of the stabbing in London on Tuesday. *AP*

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said the incident was "shocking," adding: "Such violence has no place on our streets." King Charles III said his thoughts and prayers were with the family of the young victim, and he saluted the courage of emergency workers, Buckingham Palace said.

Deputy Assistant Commissioner Ade Adelekan said police do not believe there is a threat to the wider community. "We are not looking for more suspects," he said. "This incident does not appear to be terror-related." Deputy Assistant Commissioner Ade Adelekan said police don't believe there was a threat to the wider community.

Kishida says won't quit over party's loss in special polls

Japan Prime Minister Fumio Kishida

ASSOCIATED PRESS
TOKYO, APRIL 30

JAPANESE PRIME Minister Fumio Kishida said Tuesday his governing party's major defeat in last weekend's by-elections was largely due to a political fundraising scandal and that he would not step down or replace party executives to take responsibility.

Instead, Kishida said he will push anti-corruption measures and political reforms. "As I take the results seriously, I believe as president of the governing party we must tackle the challenges we face one by one and achieve results, and this is the way I will take responsibility," Kishida said.

"By doing so, I will regain the people's trust." Kishida said the scandal dealt "a big and heavy hinderance" to the party. The scandal centres on dozens of lawmakers in his Liberal Democratic Party.

Asked if he would take responsibility for the election loss, Kishida denied he would step down or replace top LDP posts, and pledged to pursue party and political reforms, including a revision to the political funds laws.

CHINESE ASTRONAUTS BACK AFTER 6 MONTHS

The capsule of the Shenzhou-17 spaceship as it landed in north China, Tuesday. Three astronauts completed a six-month mission aboard China's space station. China built its own space station after being excluded from the International Space Station. *AP*

China promises reforms at delayed party meet amid challenging economy

REUTERS
BEIJING, APRIL 30

THE CHINESE Communist Party's central committee will gather in July for a key meeting known as a plenum, the third since the body of elite decision makers was elected in 2022, focusing on reforms amid "challenges" at home and complexities broad.

Plenums are important events on China's political calendar that require the attendance of all of the party's central committee, comprising 205 members and 171 alternate members with President Xi Jinping at the helm.

The central committee typically holds seven plenums between party congresses, which are held once every five years. The current central committee members were elected at the last party congress in October 2022.

Further deepening reforms and promoting the modernisation of China will comprise the main agenda of the third plenum, state-run Xinhua news agency reported on Tuesday, citing the party's elite politburo, during a regular meeting.

The economy still faces many challenges, with "effective demand" still lacking, the pressure on enterprises sizable, and risks and hazards in key areas numerous, Xinhua reported, citing the politburo meeting.

"Domestic circulation is also not smooth, and the complexity, severity and uncertainty of the external environment has obviously increased," *Xinhua* reported, adding China's economic foundation remained stable.

Chinese scientist who first wrote on Covid-19 barred from his lab

Shanghai: The first scientist to publish a sequence of the COVID-19 virus in China staged a sit-in protest outside his lab after authorities locked him out of the facility. Zhang Yongzhen wrote in an online post Monday that he and his team had been suddenly notified they were being evicted from their lab. When Zhang tried to go to the lab over the weekend, guards barred him from entering. In protest, he sat outside, pictures from the scene show. **AP**

Russian missile hits law school, kills five in Ukraine's Odesa

REUTERS
ODESA (UKRAINE), APRIL 30

A RUSSIAN missile attack on an educational institution in a popular seafront park in the Ukrainian Black Sea port of Odesa on Monday killed at least five people and injured 32, local officials said.

Regional governor Oleh Kiper, writing on the Telegram messaging app, said that in addition to those killed in the attack, one man died after suffering a stroke attributed to the strike.

Kiper said eight of the injured were in serious condition, including a 4-year-old child. Among the injured were another child and a pregnant woman.

Reuters Television footage showed the roof of the ornate building, a private law academy, all but destroyed after the strike. Firefighters were directing water on small fires still burning.

UKRAINE HIT CRIMEA WITH U.S.-MADE MISSILES: RUSSIA

Moscow: Russian officials said on Tuesday that Ukraine had attacked Crimea with U.S.-produced Army Tactical Missile Systems (ATACMS) in an attempt to pierce Russian air defences of the annexed peninsula but that six had been shot down. **REUTERS**

Video footage, which could not be immediately verified, showed people receiving treatment on the street alongside pools of blood. One photo showed officials examining part of a missile.

Ukrainian navy spokesperson Dmytro Pletenchuk, in a posting on a military Telegram channel, said the strike was conducted by an Iskander-M ballistic missile with a cluster warhead.

The law school after a Russian strike in Odesa, Monday. *Reuters*

THE NUMBERS AREN'T HUGE — THEY NEVER WERE — BUT THERE'S A BUZZ AROUND AFGHAN TOURISM

Taliban work to promote a different side of Afghanistan: Wooing tourists

RIAZAT BUTT
KABUL, APRIL 30

AROUND 30 men are crammed into a Kabul classroom, part of the debut student cohort at a Taliban-run institute training tourism and hospitality professionals.

It's a motley crew. One student is a model. Another is 17 and has no job history.

The students vary in age, education level and professional experience. They're all men — Afghan women are banned from studying beyond sixth grade — and they don't know anything about tourism or hospitality. But they are all eager to promote a different side of Afghanistan. And the Taliban are happy to help.

Afghanistan's rulers are pariahs on the global stage, largely because of their restrictions on women and girls. The economy is struggling, infrastructure is poor, and poverty is rife.

And yet, foreigners are visiting the country, encouraged by the sharp drop in violence, increased flight connections with hubs like Dubai, and the bragging rights that come with vacationing in an unusual destination.

The numbers aren't huge — they never were — but there's a buzz around Afghan tourism.

In 2021, there were 691 foreign tourists. In 2022, that figure rose to 2,300. Last year, there were 7,000.

Mohammad Saeed, the head of the Tourism Directorate in Kabul, said the biggest foreign visitor market is China because of its proximity and large population.

The Hazaras Sakhi Shrine in Kabul, Afghanistan. Between 2021 and 2023, there has been a rise in number of tourists to Afghanistan from 691 to 7,000. *AP File*

Afghanistan also has advantages over some of its neighbors. "They've told me they don't want to go to Pakistan because it's dangerous and they get attacked. The Japanese have said this to me also," Saeed said. "This is good for us."

But there are disadvantages, too.

Visas are difficult and expensive to access. Many countries severed ties with Afghanistan after the Taliban returned to power, and no country recognizes them as the legitimate rulers of the country.

Afghan embassies either closed or suspended their operations. There's an ongoing power struggle between Afghanistan's embassies and consulates staffed by people from the former Western-backed administration, and those under the Taliban administration's full control.

Saeed concedes there are obstacles for Afghan tourism to develop but said he was working with ministries to overcome them. His ultimate aim is to have a visa on arrival for tourists, but that could be years away. There are problems with the road network, which is half-paved or non-existent in some parts of the country, and airlines largely avoid Afghan airspace.

The capital Kabul has the most international flights, but no Afghan airport has direct routes with major tourist markets like China, Europe, or India.

Despite the challenges, Saeed wants Afghanistan to become a tourism powerhouse, an ambition that appears to be backed by the Taliban's top leaders.

"I have been sent to this department on the instructions of the elders (ministers). They must trust me because they've sent me to this important place."

The students also have aspirations. The model, Ahmed Massoud Talash, wants to learn about Afghanistan's picturesque spots for Instagram posts and its history for media appearances.

Business school graduate Samir Ahmadzai wants to open a hotel but thinks he should know more about tourism first. "They hear that Afghanistan is backwards, poverty and all about war," said Ahmadzai. "We have 5,000 years of history. There should be a new page of Afghanistan." **AP**

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DECISION 2024

● 'Surat result very bad... But what can we do if Cong in a shambles?'

THE EXPRESS INTERVIEW

VIJAY RUPANI
FORMER GUJARAT CM

PAGES 6, 7

Turnout figures are in: Under 4 pc point dip in first phase, under 3 pc point in second phase

Why delay in releasing data, asks Opp

HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

THE FINAL voting figures for the first two phases of the Lok Sabha elections are in. Amid criticism from Opposition parties over the delay in releasing turnout data, the Election Commission Tuesday announced 66.14% polling for the first phase and 66.71% for the second phase — a drop of just under 4 percentage points for the first phase and under 3 percentage points for the second phase compared to the 2019 elections.

The 102 seats of the first phase registered roughly 70% turnout in 2019 and 83 of 88 seats that voted in phase two — five seats in Assam went through delimitation and have, therefore, not been factored in the comparison — saw 69.64% voting in the last Parliamentary polls.

The EC announcement came 11 days after the first phase polling on April 19, and four days after the second phase on April 26. The final turnout is a marginal upward revision of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

NEW NAVY CHIEF

Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi with his mother before assuming charge as the 26th Chief of Naval Staff in New Delhi on Tuesday. *ANI*

REPORT, PAGE 12

KARNATAKA SEX ABUSE TAPES

JD(S) suspends Prajwal; Shah hits back at Cong

MP's ex-driver says gave videos only to state BJP leader, not to Congress

AKRAM M & SUKRITA BARUAH
BENGALURU, GUWAHATI, APRIL 30

THE JD(S) on Tuesday suspended its Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna, who is seeking re-election from the constituency, in connection with allegations of sexual abuse that have rocked Karnataka over the past week.

The decision to suspend Prajwal was taken following a meeting of the party's core committee in Hubballi.

JD(S) state president H D Kumaraswamy said the duration of suspension is "until the completion of the probe by the Special Investigation Team. If allegations against him are proved, he will be suspended permanently".

Kumaraswamy was referring to the decision by Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

BUSINESS AS USUAL
BY UNNY

CHARGESHEET

Cops cite links with Lashkar & Shaheen Bagh stir, NewsClick says 'absurd'

MAHENDER SINGH MANRAL
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

STATEMENTS OF five protected witnesses associated with NewsClick form the backbone of the Delhi Police case against the media outlet's founder-editor Prabir Purkayastha, as detailed in its chargesheet filed under sections of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in a Delhi court.

Purkayastha was arrested on October 3 along with NewsClick's HR head Amit Chakraborty on allegations of receiving illegal funding from China, routed through the US.

The allegations detailed in the chargesheet range from funding Lashkar terrorists to inciting violence in Delhi's Shaheen Bagh and Chand Bagh to using reporters to distribute money during the farmers' stir on the national capital's borders.

On Tuesday, the court took cognizance of the supplementary

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

SC to ED: Reply to CM question on timing of arrest... liberty, life important

ANANTHAKRISHNAN G
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

STATING THAT "life and liberty are exceedingly important", the Supreme Court on Tuesday asked the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to respond to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's question regarding the timing of his arrest.

Kejriwal was arrested in the Delhi excise policy case on March 21, days after the 2024 Lok Sabha election schedule was announced.

Hearing Kejriwal's plea challenging his arrest, a bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta posed some questions to Additional Solicitor General S V Raju, who represented the ED.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Tell voters about Cong plan to snatch quota: Modi to BJP candidates

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

IN PERSONALISED letters to BJP candidates in constituencies that will vote in the third phase of the elections on May 7, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has urged them to increase awareness among voters about the "divisive" and "discriminatory" intention of the Congress and its INDIA bloc partners to "snatch" the SC, ST and OBC reservation and give it to "their vote bank" even though granting "reservation on religious grounds

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

EXPLAINED

Raising the poll pitch

THE BJP, Congress war of words over reservation and Muslim quota has sharpened the campaign discourse as the elections progress. The attacks are being led by the star campaigners: PM Modi for the BJP, and Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge for the Congress.

Do only Muslims have more children? I have 5, Kharge targets Modi

JAYPRAKASH S NAIDU
RAIPUR, APRIL 30

ACCUSING PRIME Minister Narendra Modi of targeting only Muslims, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Tuesday said they were not the only ones who have more children. Stating that the poor "always have more children", Kharge said he, too, has five of them.

Kharge was referring to Modi's remarks at a rally in Rajasthan's Banswara on April 21, where he mentioned Muslims and said that the Congress, if voted to power, could distribute the nation's

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge in Janjgir-Champa, Chhattisgarh, Tuesday. *ANI*

Cong's Indore nominee withdrew days after murder bid charge in 2007 case

ANAND MOHAN J
BHOPAL, APRIL 30

THE WITHDRAWAL of Congress candidate Akshay Bam from the Lok Sabha elections for the Indore seat came days after the charge of attempt to murder was framed against him in a 17-year-old case.

Akshay Bam withdrew nomination on Monday

Bam, who filed his nomination as the Congress candidate on April 23, was charged the next day under the IPC section of attempt to murder in an ongoing land dispute case.

On April 29, Madhya Pradesh Cabinet minister and BJP leader Kailash Vijayvargiya announced that Bam had withdrawn his nomination and joined their party.

Indore votes on May 13 in the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Extract of Audited Financial Results (Standalone & Consolidated) for the quarter and year ended 31-03-2024

(₹ in Crores)

Sl. No.	Particulars	Standalone					Consolidated				
		Quarter Ended			Year Ended		Quarter ended			Year Ended	
		31.03.2024	31.12.2023	31.03.2023	31.03.2024	31.03.2023	31.03.2024	31.12.2023	31.03.2023	31.03.2024	31.03.2023
		(Audited)	(Unaudited)	(Audited)	(Audited)	(Audited)	(Audited)	(Unaudited)	(Audited)	(Audited)	(Audited)
1.	Total Income from Operations	12,613.14	11,981.65	10,113.27	47,146.30	39,208.06	12,677.18	12,051.77	10,243.06	47,504.75	39,478.26
2.	Net Profit for the period (before Tax and Exceptional items)	5,147.77	4,114.25	3,811.22	17,780.64	13,738.77	5,229.48	4,171.69	3,901.23	17,959.94	13,897.67
3.	Net Profit for the period before tax (after Exceptional items)	5,147.77	4,114.25	3,811.22	17,780.64	13,738.77	5,229.48	4,171.69	3,901.23	17,959.94	13,897.67
4.	Net Profit for the period after tax (after Exceptional items)	4,016.30	3,269.31	3,000.91	14,019.21	11,054.64	4,079.09	3,308.42	3,065.37	14,145.46	11,166.98
5.	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	5,183.04	2,549.00	3,644.80	15,063.48	10,083.60	5,245.83	2,588.11	3,709.26	15,189.73	10,195.94
6.	Equity Share Capital (Face Value ₹ 10 per share)	2,633.22	2,633.22	2,633.22	2,633.22	2,633.22	2,633.22	2,633.22	2,633.22	2,633.22	2,633.22
7.	Other Equity	66,149.93	62,153.87	55,046.45	66,149.93	55,046.45	66,717.03	62,658.18	55,487.29	66,717.03	55,487.29
8.	Securities Premium Account	1,577.53	1,577.53	1,577.53	1,577.53	1,577.53					
9.	Net Worth	68,783.15	64,787.09	57,679.67	68,783.15	57,679.67					
10.	Paid up Debt Capital/ Outstanding Debt	4,37,943.59	4,32,555.53	3,74,616.42	4,37,943.59	3,74,616.42					
11.	Debt Equity Ratio *	6.37	6.65	6.49	6.37	6.49					
12.	Earnings per Share (of ₹ 10 each) (for continuing and discontinued operations) (in ₹)										
	Basic	15.13	12.42	11.27	53.11	41.85	15.36	12.56	11.51	53.59	42.28
	Diluted	15.13	12.42	11.27	53.11	41.85	15.36	12.56	11.51	53.59	42.28

** Debt/Equity Ratio = Net Debt / Net Worth (Net debt represents principal outstanding less cash and cash equivalents available.)*

Notes:

1. The above financial results of the Company were reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved and taken on record by the Board of Directors at the meeting held on 30th April, 2024. These results have been audited by the Statutory Auditors of the Company.
2. The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly and Year ended Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 & 52 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the financial results is available on the Stock Exchange websites (www.bseindia.com and www.nseindia.com) and also on the Company's website (www.recindia.nic.in).
3. For other applicable disclosure as required under regulation 52(4) of SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, refer detailed format of the financial results filed with the Stock Exchange (www.bseindia.com and www.nseindia.com) and can also be accessed on the Company's website (www.recindia.nic.in).

Place: Mumbai
Date: 30th April 2024

For REC Limited
(Vivek Kumar Dewangan)
Chairman & Managing Director
DIN - 01377212

REC Limited
(A Maharatna Government of India Enterprise)

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Madras HC orders entry of vehicles to Kodaikanal, Ooty through e-passes

KHADIJA KHAN
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

UNDERLINING THAT the "situation is alarming," and to "save" the Nilgiris biosphere, the Madras High Court has ordered that entry of vehicles to tourist hotspots — Ooty and Kodaikanal — be regulated by issuing e-passes.

"The roads are carrying beyond their capacity. It can also be seen that all these routes are meddling/interfering with the elephant corridors and in view of traffic jams, vehicles are stranded on the roads cutting across forests, the animals are worst affected. It causes irreparable damage to the environment," a bench of Justices N Sathish Kumar and D Bharatha Chakravarthy said in an order dated April 29. The order was made public Tuesday.

"…a whopping 20,011 vehicles are entering the Nilgiris every day, which includes 11,509 cars, 1,341 vans, 637 buses, 6,524 two-wheelers on an average during the peak season. It can be seen that the situation is alarming," the bench noted.

On a pilot basis, the court directed the government to ensure that only vehicles with an e-pass enter. However, it noted that for the current year, such passes can be issued "without any restrictions". However, vehicles of local residents, along with commercial vehicles carrying essential commodities and vehicles carrying agricultural products, will be exempted from this rule.

The e-pass system would generate data for a carrying capacity study that will be undertaken by the Indian Institute of Technology, Chennai, and Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore.

"Such system can be developed and implemented with effect from 07.05.2024 and shall be in vogue on a pilot/ test basis up to 30.06.2024," the court said in a directive to district collectors in Didigul and Nilgiris.

"...Needless to say that e-passes either have to be valid for one entry or if it is for multiple entries then, there must be a provision regarding multiple entries/trips for the same vehicles," the court said.

The court also added that this year, due to extreme drought conditions, even providing adequate drinking water to the local residents had become a challenge, leading to an acute shortage.

The HC is also hearing pleas on solid waste disposal in the hill stations. With glass bottles being identified as a ubiquitous pollutant, the court had directed the Tamil Nadu State Marketing Corporation Limited to submit data on the buyback scheme it has for glass bottles in which alcohol is sold.

2 shooters of Bishnoi gang arrested in Nuh

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
GURGAON, APRL 30

TWO SHOOTERS of the Rohit Godara-Lawrence Bishnoi gang were arrested from Haryana's Nuh area after an exchange of fire, said police.

The accused were identified as Ravi Kumar (30), a resident of Delhi, and Vishal (27), a resident of Mahavirpura colony, Gurgaon.

On Monday night, the Special Task Force of the Haryana Police and the Counter Intelligence Unit of the Delhi Police's special cell arrested the accused near Palla Pahadi village on Tawdu-Nuh Road. According to police, the Haryana Police STF was patrolling the Revasan Nuh under the KMP flyover Monday night when it received inputs that two men, accused of murdering a resident of Gurugram in Rohtak a month ago, were in the area with arms.

"The team rushed to arrest the criminals. As the team approached the slope of Palla Pahadi, the two men fired 10 rounds at the police team. The police too opened fire in retaliation and fired around 15 rounds... both criminals were shot in the leg," said Krishna, a spokesperson of Nuh police.

Two pistols and three rounds were recovered from the duo. An FIR was registered against them under relevant sections of the IPC and the Arms Act. "Both of them have been admitted to Nalhar medical college for treatment. They will be interrogated once they are discharged," said a police officer.

FROM PAGE ONE FULL REPORTS ON WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

JD(S) suspends Prajwal; Shah hits back at Cong

constitute an SIT to probe the allegations against Prajwal (33), the grandson of former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda, based on a petition by the head of the State Commission for Women, which took cognizance of several sexually explicit video clips.

Kumaraswamy alleged there was "a conspiracy to spoil our family name using the issue".

"Their objective is not to protect women. Using this case, they are raking H D Deve Gowda's name and Kumaraswamy's name repeatedly... What is the connection with Deve Gowda and me?" he asked.

He also attacked the Karnataka Congress for tagging Prime Minister Narendra Modi on social media platforms: "What is the connection between the PM and this case? What is his role?"

The JD(S) and BJP are fighting the Lok Sabha polls as allies in the state.

In Guwahati, Union Home Minister Amit Shah also targeted the Congress for linking the Prime Minister to the case.

"The news about Shri Revanna in newspapers and channels is shocking; it cannot be tolerated and the BJP's stand is very clear. We stand with the country's 'matrishakti', we stand with the country's 'narishakti'. Narendra Modi has a commitment to the whole country. An insult to 'matrishakti' cannot be tolerated anywhere," he said.

However, he added, "The Congress which wants to accuse us, I want to ask a small thing: whose government is there? It's a Congress government. The videos would have been in your knowledge because it was released at such a time. And till now, why has the Congress party not taken any action? The proceedings do not have to be done by us. Law and order is a state issue."

"Priyanka (Gandhi) ji is asking us questions, I want to ask Priyanka ji: instead of asking questions to me and Narendra Modi ji, please question your Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister on what the government is doing. Why has there not been an investigation? We are in favour of an investigation and our partner JD(S) has also said that it will take action against him," Shah said.

Priyanka had on Monday questioned the Prime Minister's silence on the issue and said that he should not talk about the "mangalsutra" of women till Prajwal is brought back to India. On Tuesday, her party colleague and Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar asked whether the BJP would continue its alliance with the JD(S).

Kumaraswamy, however, insisted that Prajwal was not made a candidate by the BJP, but was fielded by the JD(S), and attacked the Congress for "misusing women for political gain".

On claims that there were more than 2,000 videos, the JD(S) leader asked, "Which factory did you produce these videos? If it was 2,000, for how many years should he have done that? He was an MP only for five years."

He also demanded CM Siddaramaiah to investigate the role of those involved in releasing the pen drive containing the sex videos.

On Monday, a Karnataka BJP leader, G Devaraje Gowda, had claimed that he had flagged the case to the state BJP leadership – as well as to the central leadership – in December. Devaraje had also claimed that the videos were first leaked to Congress leaders, and that he learnt about them from Revanna's former driver, Karthik, who had a falling out with the family.

On Tuesday, Karthik claimed he had shared the videos only with Devaraje. In a video, Karthik claimed that he had approached Devaraje after the Revanna family allegedly harassed him and forcefully transferred a parcel of land he owned to their name.

"I do not know whether he (Devaraje) distributed the pen drive or gave it to someone else for the purpose or whether the BJP people did it. But I did not give the pen drive to anyone else except him. Now, he is blaming me for giving it to Congress leaders. If I were to give it to Congress leaders, why would I approach him for justice?" Karthik said. He said he would submit all documents related to the case to the SIT.

Responding to Karthik's claims, Devaraje said, "I was his lawyer and he gave it to me. But how can we trust his claims that he has given it only to me? Why did he download such videos on a pen drive?"

He also alleged that Karthik was now running around with Congress leaders. "When he is with them, apart from Congress leaders, who else will he share the video with," he said.

• Kharge

wealth among "infiltrators" and "those who have more children".

"We are going to get majority, and because of this, he (Modi) is always talking about mangalsutra and Muslims. He says we will steal your wealth and give it to those who have more children," Kharge said at a rally in Chhattisgarh's Janjgir-Champa district. "*Hamesha gareebo ke bacche jyada hi hote hain... Sirf Musalmano ke hote hai? Ab mereko paanch bacche hain* (Poor people always have more children… Do only Muslims have them? I have five children)," he said.

Mentioning the death of his mother, who was killed when his house was set on fire in 1948, Kharge said: "I was the only son… My house was burnt and everyone died… (My father) said, 'I am alive only to see your children'. So, the poor, who don't have money, have children. Why do you (Modi) target only Muslims? Muslims are in their country... they are Indians. Brothers, do not get misled by them (BJP) and let us build the country together...let us not break this country."

He said the Congress had been in power for 55 years and it had not stolen anyone's mangalsutra. "Did we forcibly apply taxes and misuse the ED and CBI to put people in jail?... (Former Congress president) Sonia (Gandhi) ji showed courage and brought the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act... did they (BJP) take any such measure? We also brought the Food Security Act. We did not say this is our guarantee but we did this to ensure no one goes hungry in the country, and crores benefited," he said.

• Turnout figures are in

less than one percentage point from the provisional figures shared by the EC.

On April 20, a day after the first phase of voting in 102 seats, the Commission had pegged voting at 65.5% and on April 27, sources in EC had indicated a turnout of 66.7% for the second phase comprising 88 seats.

Amongst electors who cast their vote, men registered a marginally better performance. In the first phase, male voter turnout was 66.22% and female 66.07%. In the second phase, 66.99% of the registered male voters came out to vote and 66.42% of the women did the same.

Of the 190 constituencies, which have finished polling in the first two phases, at least 153 registered a drop in voting percentage, of up to 25 percentage points, compared to the 2019 general elections.

Of the 153, Nagaland parliamentary constituency saw a maximum drop of 25.28 percentage points — from 83% in 2019 to 57.72% in 2024. It was followed by Madhya Pradesh's Sidhi that saw a drop of 13 percentage points in turnout over the 2019 figure. Uttar Pradesh's Mathura constituency also saw a sharp drop of 11.67 percentage points over the last general elections.

There were seven constituencies which witnessed over 10 percentage points drop in turnout as compared to their polling percentage in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. Besides, 53 seats saw 5-10 percentage points drop, and 93 seats recorded below 5 percentage points drop in turnout as compared to their 2019 turnout.

The EC has been criticised by the Opposition parties for the delay in releasing voter turnout.

And soon after the EC announcement, CPM general secretary Sitaram Yechury, in a post on X, said, "Finally ECI has put out the final voter turnout figures for the first 2 phases which are substantially, not marginally as is normal, higher than the initial figures."

"But why are the absolute numbers of voters in each Parliamentary constituency not put out? Percentages are meaningless unless this figure is known. Apprehensions of manipulation of results continue as total voter numbers can be altered at the time of counting. Total number of voters in each constituency was always available on ECI website till 2014! ECI must be transparent & put out this data," Yechury said.

Earlier in the day, Congress general secretary (in-charge communications) Jairam Ramesh said, "For the first time, even 11 days after the first phase of the polls and four days after the second phase, the final voter turnout has not been published by the ECI. In the past, ECI used to publish the final voter turnout immediately after voting or within 24 hours. Only approximate polling figures are available on ECI's website. What accounts for this delay?"

TMC leader and Rajya Sabha member Derek O'Brien, in a post on X, said, "Modi got the law changed in Parliament to get his own umpire and destroy the Election Commission. Now, after two phases, the EC yet to disclose final polling data. Why the delay? The first two phases didn't go well, did they! And EC, why no press conference after every phase?"

• Modi letter

is unconstitutional".

In a speech in Banswara, Rajasthan, on April 21, Modi, referring to Muslims, had said that the Congress, if voted to power, could distribute the nation's wealth among "infiltrators" and "those who have more children".

In his letter, Modi maintained that this was not a "usual" election, that it was important for the future of the country and to rid people of the "pains" inflicted by decades of Congress rule.

He said the election was important for the vision of a developed India by 2047, and there was enthusiasm for this among the people.

"I am aware of the problems being faced by people due to the heat. But since this election is important for the future of the country, I appeal to them to cast their vote early in the morning, before the heat rises," he said.

"It is important that our party workers encourage voters to come out and vote in large numbers. They should focus on winning their booths. To win a Parliamentary seat, it is necessary that we should try to win in every booth," the letter stated.

The letter begins by saying something specific about the candidate it is addressed to while the election message in each is identical.

Modi ends the letter by saying "*meri or se sabhi matdataon ko aap guarantee dena ki Modi ka pal pal deshwasiyon ke naam hai*" (On my behalf, give a guarantee to all voters that each moment of Modi's life is dedicated to the people of the country). And just above his signature is a punchline: '*Modi ki guarantee hai 24x7 for 2047*'.

Sources in the BJP said candidates received such messages even in the earlier two phases and the messages will continue to go out as the election progresses.

• Cong's Indore nominee withdrew days after murder bid charge

fourth phase of the Lok Sabha elections.

The Indore district court of Nidhi Nilesh Srivastava, Judicial Magistrate (First Class), has directed Bam and his father to be present in the court on May 10, the next date of hearing.

According to court records, the incident dates back to October 4, 2007 when Bam, his father Kantilal, security agency owner Satveer Singh and two others "entered the agricultural land owned" by one Yunus Khan, "assaulted his servants, and set fire to the soybean crop".

Khan, in his statement to police on October 16, 2007, alleged Kantilal instigated Satveer to open fire on him. Khan's neighbour Usman reiterated the allegation.

The prosecution had submitted to the court that the accused "are very influential, wealthy and resourceful".

"Satveer Singh runs a security agency and was involved in illegal land grabbing activities. Accused Kantilal and his son Akshay, taking advantage of the complainant's ignorance, illiteracy and rural background, got various sale deeds executed in their favour to grab the complainant's land," the prosecutor said.

An FIR was registered under IPC sections including 323 (voluntarily causing hurt), 506 (criminal intimidation), 148 (rioting armed with deadly weapon), 149 (unlawful assembly) and 435 (mischief by fire or explosive substance).

The chargesheet was filed on February 24, 2014. During the trial, Satveer passed away and another accused, Sohan, was declared an absconder.

Bam's family filed a counter-complaint against Yunus under sections of dacoity, but the court dropped the charge due to lack of evidence. In 2022, Yunus filed an application before the court to engage another lawyer to assist the prosecution. Bam's lawyers argued that all these years, the complainant "did not take any action regarding the case" and was pursuing it now for the "purpose of harassment". The court, however, allowed the complainant's plea.

Yunus, in his statement to police, alleged that while returning to his field, Bam, Kantilal, Satveer and other armed men intercepted him. Kantilal, he alleged, said, "This is Yunus, shoot him."

"Satveer Singh opened fire, but my associate grabbed my hand and pulled me, due to which the bullet missed me," Yunus said in his statement.

The police had seized a "12 bore gun and one cartridge (which was fired) from the spot".

In its order this April 24, the court noted that Satveer fired at the complainant and said, "If the gunshot fired by the accused had killed Yunus, a case of murder could have been registered against them. Hence, in the circumstances of the case, the offence under section 307 IPC is prima facie made out against the accused."

In his election affidavit, Bam had disclosed that there were two other cases pending against him.

The first FIR was registered in 2018 in connection with a rash driving case, and Bam was not named in it. Charges have been framed in this case, but the order has not been uploaded.

In the second case, in 2022, a private complaint was registered against Bam in another land dispute case being heard by a court in Indore. Charges have not been framed in this case.

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• Cops cite links to Lashkar, NewsClick says 'absurd'

chargesheet filed by Delhi Police earlier this month. The case is listed for arguments on May 31.

NewsClick called the allegations "bogus, absurd, and concocted", and said it will "contest these statements" in court.

The chargesheet names 207 witnesses, including eight protected witnesses. "Five of the protected witnesses are associated with the Newsclick, and three with the case. Police have also recorded the statement of Amit Chakraborty, who turned approver... He has been granted pardon by the Hon'ble Court... He is now a witness in the case and, therefore, he is not being chargesheeted," it states.

Police have alleged that "during the CAA/NRC protests, Purkayastha… was not only involved in malicious disinformation campaign using NewsClick, but had actually been utilising his employees/partners for the purpose of disbursing cash to the rioters, some of whom have already been arrested in a separate UAPA case".

The chargesheet claims one of the protected witnesses, named 'Gama' to keep the identity a secret, told the police that "during the CAA protest, Purkayastha used to send the employees to take part and incite the Muslim community to do violent acts and rioting. He also used to give cash to employees to distribute among rioters".

When contacted for a response, the media outlet said, "NewsClick completely dismisses this absurd allegation. NewsClick employees reported on the anti-CAA and NRC protests and the riots that took place in Delhi just as reporters of other media houses did. Their work is in the public domain. Purkayastha or NewsClick did not send any employee to take part in any act that 'incited' violence or rioting."

The chargesheet also quotes Gama as saying, "Prabir, Chakraborty and other members had extreme Marxist and Maoist ideologies... I came to know that these people were being funded by the Chinese Communist Party."

Another protected witness, Gama 2, is quoted as saying that during CAA, NRC protests, Purkayastha asked a person "to go to Shaheen Bagh and give money to Sharjeel Imam and his associates so that they could continue their protest over there". "From this money, they should purchase weapons and other equipment to incite violence and rioting," the witness quoted him as saying. Similar allegations are made regarding protests at Chand Bagh and the farmers' stir.

On this, NewsClick said, "Once again, this is a completely unfounded allegation based on no evidence. Our reporters were present at protest sites to cover the protests as journalists and their work is in the public domain. Prabir Purkayastha or NewsClick did not send any employee with money to Sharjeel Imam or anyone else to continue their protests.

The allegation is based on an alleged statement by a protected witness, which has to be proved in court. There is no corroborative material to support these statements, which will be contested by NewsClick in the courts in due course."

The witness further claims that during Covid, Purkayastha commissioned "articles and videos which showed the vaccine developed by India in a poor light and Chinese vaccines to be better".

The chargesheet further quotes Gama 2 as claiming, "I heard Prabir saying that omitting Kashmir from the map of India could help incite Kashmiri youths and I also heard him say that to do this, he was in touch with several terror outfits… I once saw two-three Kashmiris had come to the office and Amit gave them a bag full of money on the directions of Prabir... The money was meant for the terrorists of Lashkar outfits so that they could incite violence and let other terror activities go on."

The media outlet said in response, "This is a completely baseless and farcical allegation. NewsClick has no links with Lashkar or any such group. The allegation that money was supposedly handed over to terrorists in the NewsClick office should be dismissed with the contempt it deserves. The allegation is based on an alleged statement by a protected witness, which has to be proved in court."

The witness further claims that money changed hands "to incite Naxal violence in Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana".

Another witness, Gama 3, is quoted as saying that "funds (received by NewsClick) were used in funding CAA/NRC protest, farmers' agitation, supporting Kashmiri separatists against abrogation of Article 370 and Maoists groups".

The chargesheet claims that "under the garb of a scientific project, US-based businessman Neville Roy Singham and Prabir attempted expanding the map of Pakistan to show certain Indian territories of Jammu & Kashmir as being internationally recognised Pakistani land parcels. Similarly, the Chinese map was altered so as to include Aksai Chin… as a 'disputed territory'".

The chargesheet states that the accused "studiously employed different concepts for mass mobilisation, the underlying objectives always being a weakening and disruption of every aspect of State apparatus as ordained by the Constitution of India, leading to its destabilisation, decimation and disintegration".

The company said in its response, "All of NewsClick's funds were received through the proper channel and used for journalistic activities. These funds have not been used to support any protests or separatist or Maoist activities. Prabir's long term association with the CPI(Marxist) -- he has been a member for over 50 years -- means he would never support, financially or otherwise, either 'Maoists' or any other group or individual with violent or any illegal plans. His political involvement and views are very much in the public realm. All these allegations are completely bogus and concocted. We shall counter all of them in the appropriate judicial forums. We have full faith in the judicial process. NewsClick and Prabir will be vindicated."

• SC to ED: Reply to CM question on timing of arrest

"Life and liberty are exceedingly important. We can't deny that... Last question is with regard to the timing of the arrest which they have pointed out... soon before the general elections," Justice Khanna said.

Hearing the submissions of Senior Advocate A M Singhvi, who represented Kejriwal, for the second day, the court questioned the time gap between the initiation of proceedings and arrest. Another "point which bothers us also is the time gap... between the initiation of proceedings and the repeated complaints being filed after some time," Justice Khanna said.

"This has its consequences because... (the Prevention of Money Laundering Act) gives a period of 365 days (for adjudicatory process). So beyond 365 days, what will happen? Because the adjudicatory process says, if you look at Section 8, it's very clear, (it) is 365 days. And that should be the uppermost limit," he added.

The court also asked whether criminal proceedings can be initiated in terms of what has been held in the 2022 SC ruling in the Vijay Madanlal Choudhary case, which upheld provisions of the PMLA and the ED's powers to arrest under it.

Justice Khanna said if there was any attachment proceedings in Kejriwal's case, the ED would have to show how he was linked to it.

"As far as the Manish Sisodia case is concerned, there are two parts — Part A findings in favour, and Part B findings against Sisodia... So which part does this case fall under, A or B," Justice Khanna asked.

"What they believe is that the threshold of Section 19 (of PMLA, dealing with power to arrest), which casts onus on the prosecution and not on the accused, is fairly high. Therefore, asking them to go for regular bail, they won't get that advantage, because they are confronted with Section 45," he said.

Section 45 requires the court to be satisfied that there are reasonable grounds to believe an accused is not guilty, before he/she can be released on bail.

"The onus then shifts on them. That's why they are repeatedly on Section 19," said Justice Khanna. "Therefore to what extent, how do we interpret it? Do we put the burden much higher as compared with what a court would normally do, on the basis of assuming the allegation is correct, but, at the same time, ensuring that the standard would be the same as to find the person is guilty... which is the benefit of doubt and all things coming in," he said.

"So (on) all these, we will hear you out completely," Justice Khanna told Raju, as the court fixed the next hearing for May 3.

Responding to Kejriwal's question regarding the timing of his arrest, the ED had said in an affidavit to the court earlier that "the arrest of a person, however high he may be, for commission of offence based on material, can never violate the concept of free and fair elections.... (and) if the...argument is accepted, politicians who are criminals would be granted immunity from arrest on the ground that he is required to canvass in the election".

On Tuesday, Singhvi continued to question the timing and necessity of the Delhi CM's arrest, citing witness statements.

Taking the court through the "circumstances in which the statements were given", he said that former YSRCP leader Magunta Srinivasulu Reddy, on whose statement Kejriwal was arrested, had initially said he met the Delhi CM in the capital to discuss charity, not in the context of the liquor policy.

Five months later, Magunta Srinivasulu Reddy gave a new statement implicating Kejriwal, as his son Raghav Reddy had been arrested and he wanted to secure a no-objection for his son's bail, he said. Raghav Reddy got bail the next day, Singhvi contended, as he urged the court to read between the lines.

The bench sought to know when the Delhi excise policy was prepared and implemented, and when the Goa elections were held. Raju said the policy was finalised on July 5, 2021, and the Goa elections were held on February 14, 2022. The ED has alleged that AAP channelled funds generated from the alleged excise policy scam for the Goa elections; the party has denied this.

Singhvi pointed out that AAP's communications in-charge, Vijay Nair, who is alleged to have received kickbacks, was arrested in November 2022. Asking why Kejriwal was then arrested in March 2024, he said there was no explanation for this.

Meanwhile, during the hearing on Tuesday, Justice Khanna observed: "Initially, the thought did come whether I should hear this case because I had decided the Manish Sisodia matter. But then it would be said that I am not taking difficult cases or something…"

23 DAYS WITH UNDER-201 AQI IN APRIL

Delhi breathes cleanest air in 6 yrs, barring 2020

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

Delhi has recorded no heatwave this April. *Express*

THIS APRIL, the Capital recorded the cleanest air in six years, as it recorded more 'good' to 'moderate' air quality index (AQI below 201) days against the same period from 2018 onwards — save for 2020, when Covid-related restrictions were in place, said the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) on Tuesday.

The Capital recorded 23 days with AQI below 201 in April this year, against 17 in April 2023, nil (2022), 18 (2021), 12 (2019), and eight (2018), shows data. Only in 2020, the city recorded better air quality in April, when the AQI was below 201 through the month amidst Covid restrictions in place.

An AQI between zero and 50 ('good') is considered to have a minimal impact on the residents, while AQI between 51 and 100 ('satisfactory') may cause minor breathing discomfort to sensitive people, and AQI between 101 and 200 ('moderate') may cause breathing discomfort to people suffering from asthma, lung and heart diseases, said the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

The Capital recorded seven days of AQI between 'poor' to 'severe' in April 2024 — at 201 or higher; which during April, was 13 in 2023, and 12 in 2021. In 2022, the AQI was recorded in the 'poor' to 'severe' categories through the month, said weather experts. The CAQM has attributed the better AQI this April to "favourable meteorological/ weather conditions coupled with consistent, comprehensive, and concerted efforts" by stakeholders to "control air pollution in the NCR (national capital region)".

Meanwhile, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) data showed that Delhi has recorded no heatwave this April, much like that of April 2023 with similar weather conditions.

The average maximum temperature in April 2024 was 36.9 degree Celsius — a little over the normal of 35.3 degree Celsius for the month last year; and lower than the average of 40.2 degree Celsius in April 2022, when the city recorded a heatwave for nine days.

Meanwhile, the Capital has recorded a 54% rainfall deficit this April, having received showers of only 7.5 mm against a normal of 16.3 mm.

Mumps cases spike from 'almost zero' to 5-6 a week, low vaccination due to Covid a factor

ANKITA UPADHYAY
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

FOR THE last two months, hospitals in the city have been witnessing five to six cases of complications due to mumps – a far cry from earlier when negligible cases were reported every year.

According to experts, a drop in vaccination rate due to the Covid pandemic could be a major reason for the spike.

Most of the patients landing in hospitals are 6-7 years of age.

A senior doctor from Lok Nayak hospital said, "Prior to the pandemic, we would hardly see any mumps cases; the whole year would pass before we could see any case. But now we are seeing cases of mumps-related complications every week."

Caused by paramyxovirus, a member of the Rubulavirus family, mumps usually affect the parotid glands, which make saliva, on each side of the face. The disease spreads through infected saliva.

"The Centre provides vaccines to states only for measles and rubella and not for mumps. However, during regular immunisation drives, Delhi has been providing vaccines for mumps as well. But during the pandemic, a major part of the population was left unvaccinated leading to compromised immunity," said a health department official.

Health Secretary SB Deepak remained unavailable for comment.

In a special campaign last year, held between February 6 and March 6, the Centre had instructed the states to provide measles and rubella vaccine.

"However, the officials are now mulling over mumps screening and vaccination as well due to an increasing number of Parotitis – the medical term for a swollen parotid gland," an official said.

Sources at Lok Nayak hospital said the hospital has been seeing 5-6 cases of complications every week when it was zero before the pandemic. "These cases are related to stroke, paralysis, encephalitis, brain damage etc.," said a senior doctor.

"From November-December, the cases started increasing in the paediatric, ENT and regular OPD," said a senior doctor at the hospital, adding that the number has dropped in the last one week.

According to Dr Shalu Gupta, Director Professor at Community Medicine department at Lady Hardinge Medical College and Kalawati Saran Children's Hospital, "Normally, mumps is a mild, self-limiting disease that disappears in 5-6 days."

He said at Kalawati Saran hospital, while the admission rate is not very high, children between the ages of four and eight were visiting the OPD.

A senior doctor at Chacha Nehru Bal Chikitsalaya confirmed that the number of cases has increased in the last two months.

Dr Gupta said while there is no treatment, the care is focused on symptom relief. The disease can be prevented by the MMR vaccine.

According to Dr Karunesh Kumar, Senior Consultant, Paediatric Gastroenterology, Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals, "During Covid, some children missed their vaccination."

He said that in many areas in the country, only Measles and Rubella vaccination was provided. "Until and unless we take steps to protect all our children, we won't be developing herd immunity," he added.

According to Indian Pediatrics, a journal writing on child health, an increasing number of mumps outbreaks has been reported from several parts of the country in the recent past. Calling it a matter of concern, the journal concluded that inclusion of mumps component in MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella) vaccine in the Universal Immunisation Programme along with strengthening of surveillance is required to tackle the situation.

THE ILLNESS

MUMPS is an illness caused by paramyxovirus, a member of the Rubulavirus family. It usually affects the parotid glands on each side of the face. The disease spreads through infected saliva.

SYMPTOMS
These include swollen, painful salivary glands; sore throat; fever; headache; fatigue; and appetite loss

How police nabbed man wanted in 1997 case through a *bhandara*

ARNABJIT SUR
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

FOR 27 years, murder accused Tillu alias Ramdas had been evading the police. After allegedly killing his neighbour, he kept on shifting his location and identity, the latest being that of a seer in Rishikesh, Uttarakhand. Tillu, 77, was finally nabbed after senior officers of the Crime Branch posed as distributors of bhandara (community feast) in the temple town.

In February 1997, Tillu and his brother-in-law were accused of murdering their neighbour Kishan Lal in Tughlakabad. They were soon declared Proclaimed Offenders.

During investigation, police learnt that the accused had become a seer and would visit temples and stay in different dharamshalas across the country.

Said an officer, "Last year, his movement was located in Kanyakumari but he could not be traced as he had moved to Puri Jagannath in Odisha by then."

His current location was found to be in Rishikesh. "The team found that the accused used his mobile phone very rarely and his photograph was not available in police records since 1997. The team conducted a recce in Rishikesh."

Said an officer, "We had received tip-offs that the accused used to frequent some temples and used to survive off the food he received from bhandaras. So, our team of five police personnel decided to be a part of one bhandara and distribute food in a bid to chance upon him."

After three bhandaras, police managed to trace Tillu after he approached them for food.

During interrogation, Tillu told police his sister and brother-in-law wanted to buy a new house but they had some dispute with Kishan Lal. "Ramu called Kishan Lal at his house to discuss the financial dispute," said an officer.

During the discussion, the matter escalated, resulting in the murder of Kishan Lal.

"He got an Aadhaar card made in the name of Ramdas and in order to escape the investigating agency, disguised himself as a seer and started roaming around religious places," said another officer.

Ramu had died a few days after the incident.

DENIES ANTICIPATORY BAIL TO 3 ACCUSED

Sextortion a significant social menace, says HC

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court recently observed that "sextortion" is a "significant social menace" representing a "profound violation of privacy" as it denied anticipatory bail to three men accused in one such case.

A single-judge bench of Justice Amit Mahajan, in its April 24 order, said, "It (sextortion) involves the exploitation of obtained intimate images and videos to extort money or favours from victims, often leading to severe psychological trauma. This cyber-enabled crime not only undermines individual dignity but also poses serious challenges to law enforcement due to its clandestine and cross-jurisdictional nature."

The HC made the observations while denying anticipatory bail to three men accused of extorting Rs 16 lakh from a man in a "sextortion case".

The HC observed that the investigation had "unearthed multiple complaints, revealing habitual engagement of the accused persons in such criminal practices". **ENS**

One seat per course reserved for orphans from this academic year: Ambedkar University

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

AMBEDKAR UNIVERSITY, Delhi, will reserve one seat per course for orphan children in the upcoming academic year, according to Professor Anu Singh Lather, vice chancellor of the Delhi government-run University.

During the brochure launch for undergraduate and postgraduate admissions for the academic year 2024-25, Lather said: "From this time onwards, a provision for the reservation of one seat under the orphan quota has also been made in each programme. The entire fee will be waived for students taking admission under this category."

In 2023, the University of Delhi had started offering two seats for orphan students, one for a male and another for a female in each programme.

This year, a new masters programme in Public Policy and Governance has been launched, which will begin with 60 seats in the current academic session, read an official statement issued by the University.

SUICIDE SUSPECTED

AIIMS nursing student found dead in her room

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

The woman, 21, was a first-year student at the institute

A 21-YEAR-OLD B Sc Nursing student at AIIMS Delhi was found dead in her room on Tuesday. The woman was a first-year student of the institute and belonged to Bihar's Sheikhpura.

AIIMS media cell incharge Dr Reema Dada said soon after the incident came to light, the Delhi Police reached the campus to investigate the case.

According to police sources, the woman died by suicide and a note was found in which she had expressed that she was in depression due to her nursing studies and preparation for the Bihar Public Service Commission (BPSC) exam.

An AIIMS official said that the girl had also recently failed two of her subjects in her final exams.

DCP (South) Ankit Chauhan said the crime team inspected the place and no foul play has been suspected, adding her parents have been informed of the case.

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e-Tender No.: IRCON/ELECT/5037-5038/NCRTC/RSS ERECTION (MODI)/OT/119 dated 29.04.2024
e-Tenders are invited from bidders meeting qualifying requirements for the following works:
"Supply, Erection, Testing and Commissioning of 220KV/33KV/25KV RSS/AMS/TSS at Modipuram RSS for Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut RRTS Corridor of NCRTC (Package-19 Lot-2)".

Estimated cost of the work	Rs. 2,40,56,760/-
Last Date & Time of e-Bid Submission	20.05.2024 upto 15.00 Hrs.

For further details, visit website https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app. Corrigendum, if any, would be hosted only on the website.
Chief General Manager/Electrical,
C-4, District Centre, Saket, New Delhi-110017

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An Institute of National Importance
OFFICE OF THE ACADEMIC
BARJALA, JIRANIA, TRIPURA WEST – 799 046
Email ID:nitadeanacademic@gmail.com
Admission to Ph.D Programmes
(July-December, 2024 session)
Applications are invited from the eligible candidates for admission in Ph.D programmes in the Departments of Engineering, Science and Management, Humanities & Social Sciences at NIT Agartala for July-December, 2024 academic session.
Application for admission may be made **on-line only** on payment of a fee (non-refundable) of Rs. 500/- (for OP/OBC/EWS candidates) and Rs.300/- (for SC/ST/PwD candidates). The detailed notification is available at the institute website **www.nita.ac.in**.
Registrar, NIT Agartala

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CSIR-URDIP invites applications for admission to the Post Graduate Diploma in Patinformatics awarded by the Academy of Scientific and Innovative Research (AcSIR).
Entry-level qualifications: Minimum 60% marks in [M.Sc./B.E./M.Pharm./ M.Tech./B.Tech.] **OR** [LLB/M.Lib.Sci./MBA with graduation in Science]. The minimum percentage at each degree is 55% for OBC/Physically Handicapped and 50% for SC/ST candidates. The final selection of the candidates for the course will be based on the performance in the interview.
Course Duration : One year, Full time, two semesters.
Fee Structure: ₹ 31000/- per semester (For Regular) & ₹ 62000/- per semester (For Sponsored).
The last date for online application : is **June 04, 2024**.The application fee of ₹1000/- (₹ 500/- in case of SC/ST/Physically Handicapped/EWS candidates) is to be paid online in the CSIR-URDIP account. Sponsored candidates from companies are welcome and are required to apply through this admission process.
The course fee will be payable to AcSIR, through the online SBI Portal by using the link **https://www.onlinesbi.com/sbicollect/icollecthome.htm?corpID=931312** For further details and online application, please visit **https://pgdp.urdip.res.in/**; Contact email : **admission@urdip.res.in**
Sd/-
AcSIR Coordinator, CSIR-URDIP

New Okhla Industrial Development Authority
Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida, (U.P.)
Website : www.noidaauthorityonline.in
PUBLIC NOTICE
The general public is informed that land along/nearby Sector 82, 91, 92, 93, 93A, 93B, 101, 102, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 110, 136, 137, 141, 142, 143, 143A, 143B, 144, Village Salarpur Khadar, Hazipur, Bhangel Begampur, Gejha, Garhi and Shadhara which is notified land of Noida Authority, is being sold to general Public by some unknown Bhoomafias by plotting/building construction, which is completely contrary to the rules of the Authority.
Therefore, the general public is warned not to purchase any land without examining the verified documents issued by the authority, so that the general public does not suffer any financial loss.
Note: Main khasras as below -
1. Village Salarpur, Khasra No. 700 to 715, 780, 779, 728, 727
2. Village Hazipur, Khasra No. 412, 514
3. Village Bhangel, Khasra No. 217, 225, 226, 227, 239
Office: Sector - 19
Senior Manager
Work Circle-8, Noida
CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is hereby stated at large that I am Mrs. Ginni Banga W/o Charanjit Singh Banga. All persons are hereby informed that I Mrs Ginni Banga have no role/association with any business/personal/financial/or any other transaction initiated/ongoing/or completed by Mr. Charanjit Singh Banga with any establishment/persons/ company/entity, directly or indirectly. Neither I have kept or given any surety or assurance to any establishment/person/company/etc against any financial or business transaction tendered by Mr. Charanjit Singh Banga. I shall not be held liable or responsible to any such debts, transactions contracted, or for damages to any party private or government, or for overdue salaries or accruals, or non-fulfilment of any contracts, nor shall be liable for any loss or defaults or for anything for which Mr. Charanjit Singh Banga may be responsible or liable. Further, if any establishment/person/company/etc without deliberation carries out any such deal or transaction with Mr. Charanjit Singh Banga, I Mrs. Ginni Banga or children namely Mr. Gurneesh Singh Banga, Master Gurnek Singh Banga, Ms Mehar Banga, shall have no responsibility, obligation or liability whatsoever with respect to their claims either of civil or criminal nature, which they may possess or which may accrue to them in future.
Place: Gurugram (Haryana)
Mrs. Ginni Banga

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Candidates with Ph.D/Masters in Economics/Development Economics with multiyear work experience in multilateral or international institutions would be preferred.
Details may be viewed at: https://www.ris.org.in/opening.
Last date: 13 May 2024

CENTRAL ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION
3rd & 4th Floor, Chanderlok Building, 36 Janpath, New Delhi-110001, Phone 23353503. FAX: 23753923
Website: www.cercind.gov.in
Petition No. 44/TL/2024 Dated: 26.4.2024
NOTICE UNDER CLAUSE (a) OF SUB-SECTION (5) OF SECTION 15 OF THE ELECTRICITY ACT, 2003
An application under Section 14 of the Electricity Act, 2003 (the Act) has been made by POWERGRID Bhuj Transmission System Limited, B-9, Qutab Institutional Area, Katwaria Sarai, New Delhi 110016, for the grant of a separate transmission licence for the implementation of the communication scheme-"Requirement of additional FOTE of STM-16 capacity at Bhuj-II substation to cater to connectivity of RE Gencos" on Regulated Tariff Mechanism mode (hereinafter referred to as the 'transmission scheme/project'). The scope of the project for which a transmission licence has been sought is as follows:

S. No.	Scope of the Transmission Scheme	Implementation timeframe
1.	Supply and installation of 01 no. 5 MSP (1+1) FOTE (STM-16 capacity) at Bhuj-II station	12 months from date of allocation, i.e. by 6.7.2024
	Total Estimated Cost	Rs.0.30 crore

2. The Central Transmission Utility of India Limited vide its letter dated 1.4.2024 has recommended for the grant of transmission licence to the applicant to establish the proposed transmission system.
3. Based on the material available on record, the Commission vide order dated 18.4.2024 in Petition No. 44/TL/2024, has proposed to issue a transmission licence to the applicant for establishment of the transmission scheme as noted in para 1 above.
4. A copy of the application, along with its annexures and enclosures, made by the applicant for the grant of an inter-State transmission licence to POWERGRID Bhuj Transmission System Limited before the Commission can be accessed at the website **www.powergrid.in/subsidiaries** or inspected by any person in the Commission's office by following the laid down procedure.
5. Notice is hereby given in pursuance of clause (a) of sub-section (5) of Section 15 of the Act that suggestions or objections, if any, to the Commission's proposal to grant a transmission licence to the applicant, as aforesaid, be sent to the undersigned by **7.5.2024** at the above noted address. The suggestions or objections received after the specified date shall not be considered.
6. The application shall be taken up for the further hearing by the Commission on **8.5.2024.** Any person who files suggestions or objections may in his/her discretion attend the hearing, for which no TA/DA shall be paid by the Commission.
Sd/-
(Harpreet Singh Pruthi)
Secretary

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157/24	AGM (Marine Structural Engineering) - 01	RITES Office, Gurugram- Date: 07.06.2024

For details regarding how to Apply, Position, remuneration, qualification, age, date & venue, selection process etc., candidates may see the detailed advertisement posted on RITES website **www.rites.com** under Career Section.

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Fax No. 0135-2768867 E-mail ID : cgmupcl@yahoo.com Website:www.upcl.org
No. :- 214/EE(CM)/UPCL/A-2 Dated: 30.04.2024
Public Notice
In terms of the provisions of section 45 of Electricity Act, 2003, the consumers and the general public are hereby informed that the tariff and charges of electricity for different categories of consumers have been approved by the Uttarakhand Electricity Regulatory Commission to be effective from 01-04-2024. The summary of the tariff and charges of electricity for different categories of consumers as well as the approved tariff order dated 28-03-2024 of UERC and Rate Schedule are available on the website of UPCL at **www.upcl.org**
Managing Director
"Save Electricity in the Interest of the Nation" Use LED Bulb to save Electricity.
(Toll Free -1912) "Pay Electricity bill online 24 x 7 from www.upcl.org." (For information on Electricity Theft, informer may report to Toll Free No. 1800 180 4185/Fax : 0135-2760911)

INDO-SWISS TRAINING CENTRE
CSIR-Central Scientific Instruments Organisation
(Council of Scientific & Industrial Research,
Ministry of Science and Technology, Govt. of India)
Sector 30-C, Chandigarh-160 030
ADMISSION NOTICE (Session: 2024-25)
Online applications are invited for the following AICTE approved Diploma Courses: 1) 3-Year Diploma in Mechanical Engineering (Tool & Die); 2) 3-Year Diploma in Electronics Engineering; 3) 4-Year Advanced Diploma in Die & Mould Making; 4) 4-Year Advanced Diploma in Mechatronics & Industrial Automation, being conducted by Indo-Swiss Training Centre (ISTC) at CSIR- CSIO, Chandigarh.
The Entrance test for admission to these courses will be held at Chandigarh on 07th July, 2024.
The detailed information is given in the "Information Brochure-2024" available on the websites www.istc.ac.in and www.csio.res.in w.e.f. 01-05-2024.
The last date for applying is 03.06.2024. For further information, please contact:
Phones: 0172-2672263 / 2672484/ 2672485 / 2672424 / 2657264
Email: principalistc@csio.res.in
Note: Keep visiting url: https://career.csio.res.in/istc2024 for regular updates.
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1. Applications are invited for the post of accounts clerk in Shivalik Army Pre-Primary School, Anarwala.
2. The undermentioned are the QR for the post of accountant:-
(a) Commerce Graduate or Fifteen years service as a Clerk in the Defence Services.
(b) Basic Computer application course of Army/Diploma in Computer applications of not less than one-year duration. Speed -12000 key depression per hour. Knowledge of double entry system of accounting, excel sheet and accounting software.
(c) Minimum 5 years experience as an Accounts clerk in the Defence Services/Reputed organization.
3. Interested candidates may send the hard copy of resume alongwith all supporting academic qualifications and documents to Shivalik Army Pre-Primary School, Anarwala (Dehradun). PIN-248003 and soft copy to **shivalikpreprimary42@gmail.com.** Pay and allowances shall be as per AWES norms.
4. Last date for receipt of applications is **11 May 2024**.
5. Shortlisted candidates shall be called for interview, details of which shall be intimated subsequently.
Chairman
Shivalik Army Pre Primary School
Anarwala Dehradun (UK)
PIN-248003

ANAND VIHAR	ITO	SIRI FORT	ROHINI
Poor	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
205 AQI PM 10	112 AQI PM 10	161 AQI PM 10	199 AQI PM 10
0 – 500	0 – 500	0 – 500	0 – 500

At 11pm

0-50 Good | 51-100 Satisfactory | 101-200 Moderate | 201-300 Poor | 301-400 Very Poor | 401-500 Severe

SKYWATCH

May 1
Mainly clear sky. Strong surface winds (speed 30-40 kmph) during the day.

MAX: 35 (3.9°C below normal) | MIN: 21 (2.8°C below normal)

'Like the sangam of Ganga & Jamuna': AAP, Cong leaders convince voters about alliance

SAMAN HUSAIN
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

"POLLING BOOTH ke andar jaake jhaadu na dhoondhna, INDIA gathbandhan hai, jhaadu nishaan nahi hoga toh haath ka nishan dabana (While voting, do not look for the broom, we are fighting elections together, so make sure that you choose the hand button)," was the rare message of solidarity given by leaders of the Aam Aadmi Party and Congress as they gathered at Shakur Basti earlier this week and met voters.

Adorned with banners featuring the stalwarts of both the Congress and AAP, these gatherings serve a twofold purpose: to "convince" voters as well as "educate" party workers about the significance of voting for their alliance partners as per the seat-sharing arrangement.

In Delhi, the AAP and Congress have entered into a pact, with seats allocated in a four-three arrangement.

Sources said that these joint-meetings will take place across all assembly constituencies, the purpose of which will be to ensure clarity among the supporters of both the parties. "Currently, the Congress is talking about their own developments and the AAP is talking about theirs," a Congress insider said. "To prevent confusion among voters, meetings are planned in each constituency to underscore the importance of supporting alliance candidates."

In Ballimaran assembly constituency alone, three such meetings are planned for Thursday. Additionally, pamphlets will soon be distributed door-to-door by workers to encourage supporters of both parties to vote for the alliance candidates. "Many voters who do not keep in touch with politics might be unaware of the seat-sharing arrangement, this will educate them on how to support the alliance," the source said.

At the first such meeting held Monday at Shakur Basti's Rani Bagh, AAP and Congress leaders were seen to be all praise for each other. "When the Anna andolan took place in this country, we had no intentions to step into politics at that point of time; back then Manmohan Singh Ji was the PM and Sheila Dikshit was the CM and we were not scared of questioning the leadership... there have been so many instances that we have approached her (Dikshit) and talked to her. She had always been willing to listen," Dr Arun Gupta, AAP's in-charge of Shakur Basti, said. "This alliance will go beyond June 5, we will hopefully continue working together," he added.

Stepping atop a podium that boasted both the parties' flags, J P Agarwal, INDIA bloc's candidate from the Chandni Chowk constituency who is fighting against BJPs Praveen Khandelwal, said: "The two parties working together is like the Sangam of Ganga and Jamuna in Allahabad...both the rivers have different colours, but when they meet in Allahabad they become one... this is how the INDIA alliance is."

Agarwal said that in the current scenario, the only way to defeat their common enemy, the Modi-led BJP government, is to support their alliance partners. "Fighting the elections together might not be the ideal scenario, but this is the only way that is left if we have to fight against hate," he said, party workers responded by raising slogans of "Tanashahi Murdabad" and "INDIA gathbandhan zindabad."

"What the BJP has done so far is only the tip of the iceberg, if they get over 400 seats this time then they will definitely change Baba saheb's Constitution," Dr Gupta said, pleading with the AAP workers to ensure that they click on Congress's symbol while voting.

Congress's J P Agarwal, INDIA bloc candidate from Chandni Chowk, with other party leaders at Shakur Basti. *Express*

EXCISE POLICY CASE

'Unrelied upon' papers: Defence awaits decision

APURVA VISHWANATH
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

WILL THE Enforcement Directorate (ED) be required to share with accused all documents it has collected, including those it may not have relied upon to build its case? The Delhi court's decision on this key question is likely to shape the defence in the Delhi excise policy case.

Nudged by the court to do so, the ED on two occasions — on April 18 and April 26 — has sought more time to decide. "During the course of proceedings, a query has been put by the court to the Prosecuting Agency as to why the remaining/ uninspected 'unrelied' upon documents cannot be provided to the accused/ Ld Counsels for the accused in digitised form, in order to save time and with a view to expedite the proceedings," read the order by Special Judge Kaveri Baweja on April 18.

"Ld Special Counsel for the ED has, however, drawn the attention of the court to provision of CrPC Section 91. However, after some arguments, he submits that this proposal, if given effect to, would expedite the matter. He submits that a week's time may be granted to the Prosecuting Agency to explore as to how digitisation of the voluminous record can be done," the court noted in the same order.

However, after a week, on April 26, the Special Counsel again sought time from the court.

It is learnt that the ED is contemplating allowing only scrutiny of all documents, and not sharing them fully with the accused. Sources told *The Indian Express* that privacy concerns is one of the aspects that will weigh in on the decision. "The agency to have digitised records of devices of all accused is one thing, but sharing them with all accused raises questions of privacy, especially because several accused are competing businesses," said those familiar with the developments.

The accused and several witnesses have sought the "unrelied upon documents" in the excise policy 'scam' in digitised form. These could include statements recorded by the ED, complete WhatsApp chats and documents that could have been seized during raids. The case has 31 accused and hundreds of witnesses.

The accused would examine 'unrelied' documents for details that could poke holes in the prosecution theory. "It is clarified for the record that the proposed supply of 'unrelied' upon documents in a digitised form to the accused would be subject to terms and conditions as per relevant law on the subject, including the extent to which they may be relied upon as also the aspect of confidentiality of data," the court noted.

The ED's standard procedure is to provide only a list of 'unrelied' documents to the accused, but not the documents before the court frames charges against the accused. The accused would then under CrPC Section 91 ask the court to issue "summons to produce document." Documents, the probing agencies rely upon, are annexed with documents submitted to the court. Lawyers for the accused visit the ED office to scrutinise these documents. Once charges are framed by the court and trial begins, the documents are given to the accused.

In a ruling in August 2023, the Delhi HC in a case had ruled that the probing agencies — CBI and ED — will have to furnish "statements or objects/ documents seized, but not relied on," before charges are framed and the documents after the charges are framed.

The EC, meanwhile, could not be contacted.

Delhi court denies bail to Sisodia

Manish Sisodia. *Archive*

NIRBHAY THAKUR
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

A DELHI court on Tuesday denied bail to former deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia in the corruption and money laundering cases related to the alleged excise policy scam.

The AAP said Sisodia will approach the Delhi High Court against the lower court's denial of bail. Sisodia filed a bail plea in Delhi's Rouse Avenue Court a few months after his bail plea was rejected by the Supreme Court. The Enforcement Directorate (ED), which is probing the money laundering aspect of the excise policy case, informed the SC that it would complete the trial within six to eight months. However, it has been six months since then, and the charges in the excise policy case have still not been framed.

Sisodia was accused of extra-procedural interference in framing the now-scrapped Delhi excise policy, tweaking it for the benefit of particular liquor entities and causing a loss of several hundred crores to the state exchequer. He was first arrested by the CBI in February 2023, and then by the ED in March that year. In the ED chargesheet, Sisodia was named a "key conspirator", after which he resigned from the Delhi cabinet on February 28, 2023.

"...Sisodia admitted that there was no calculation done to arrive at the figure of 12 per cent," Zoheb Hossain, special counsel of the ED had said earlier. adding that the Delhi excise policy was predetermined to "favour a few players".

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

'BJP is confident': New Delhi candidate Swaraj files papers

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

ACCOMPANIED WITH dhol beats and dance by party workers raising victory slogans while holding flags bearing the images of Lord Ram and Prime Minister Minister Narendra Modi, Bansuri Swaraj, the BJP candidate from New Delhi constituency, filed her nomination for the Lok Sabha polls on Tuesday. The election to the seat is scheduled in the city on May 25.

Swaraj, daughter of former Union minister and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) stalwart, late Sushma Swaraj, was accompanied by Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri and party's Delhi state president Virendra Sachdeva to the office of the district magistrate-cum-returning officer where she filed her nomination.

"This is a national election and the BJP is filled with self-confidence. PM Modi has done a lot of work in the last 10 years. We are going to the public without a report card... but, if we talk about Delhi, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal does politics of hatred... He did not let the Ayushman Bharat scheme be implemented in Delhi...," said Swaraj.

She said if the people elect her, she will ensure that the Ayushman Bharat scheme is implemented in Delhi.

According to her affidavit, Swaraj's highest educational qualification is Master of Studies from Oxford University, UK. No criminal case has been registered against her. As per the Chief Electoral Office (CEO), Delhi, 15 nominations were filed on Tuesday, making the total nominations filed so far 30.

Bansuri Swaraj, BJP candidate from New Delhi constituency, with party leaders at a roadshow on Tuesday. *Abhinav Saha*

I HEREBY DECLARE

BANSURI SWARAJ, BJP's New Delhi candidate

TOTAL ASSETS ₹19.29 CRORE

Movable assets	₹11.27 cr
Immovable assets	₹8.02 cr
Liabilities	Nil
Criminal cases	None
Education	Master of Studies (MSt), University of Oxford

TOTAL ASSETS ₹1.37 CRORE

SAHIRAM PAHALWAN, INDIA Alliance's/ AAP's South Delhi candidate

Movable assets	₹34.8 Lakh
Immovable assets	₹1.03 cr
Liabilities	₹3.2 lakh
Pending criminal cases	Nil
Conviction	3
Education	Class 11

AAP's South Delhi candidate Sahiram Pahalwan with party leader Atishi during a roadshow on Tuesday. *PTI*

S Delhi seat: AAP's Pahalwan files first INDIA nomination

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

AAP MLA Sahiram Pahalwan filed the first nomination from the INDIA bloc on Tuesday. He is contesting from the South Delhi Lok Sabha constituency.

The INDIA candidate started the day by seeking blessings at a temple at Tehkhand village after which he continued his 8-km-long Ashirwad Yatra through Kalkaji and Ravidas Marg before stopping at the District Magistrate's office in Mehrauli. Prominent AAP leaders, including cabinet ministers Saurabh Bharadwaj and Atishi, were present along with numerous party members and workers.

Pahalwan said that he was confident that the people would choose the person who has worked the most for them on ground. "Today, the people of Delhi are standing against 10 years of misrule of the BJP and are standing with the nine years of development of CM Arvind Kejriwal... Delhi will fight, INDIA will win," said Pahalwan.

Highlighting the "grassroots origins" of the AAP, Atishi said it is the people of Delhi who will ultimately make the party win, despite "BJP's assumption that arresting the CM would hamper the AAP's campaign". She further accused BJP MPs of not working for the development of the constituency for the last 10 years. "They had to change their MP candidates. The people of entire South Delhi know very well that BJP MPs do not come to their areas and do not work for them. If anyone works for them, it is Arvind Kejriwal and the AAP," said Atishi. "This time, the people of Delhi will not give even one of the seven seats to the BJP; all will go to INDIA bloc..."

Bharadwaj also said, "Arvind Kejriwal used to be the main strategist of the campaign, he used to decide all the talks, hold rallies, public meetings and roadshows. All that is not there this time. But the anger among the people due to his absence will hand the BJP a significant defeat."

Biased, acts only on complaints of BJP: Atishi after EC meeting

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

AFTER A meeting with the Election Commissioner to discuss the party's campaign song, AAP senior leader Atishi Tuesday said the Election Commission (EC) was "biased", and accused it of acting only on the complaints of the BJP, not the AAP.

Earlier this week, the office of the chief electoral officer (CEO), Delhi, had raised objections to the lyrics and visuals used in the AAP Lok Sabha poll campaign song '*Jail ka jawaab hum vote se denge*'. "The country's EC has not remained neutral and unbiased... We have been requesting the EC for its time, and today, after almost a month, we got an appointment. When the BJP files any complaint, it issues notice to the AAP and other opposition parties immediately," said Atishi while speaking to reporters outside the EC office.

She said that the AAP has been raising objections against the BJP's content for about a month but the election commission did not take any action. "But it issues notice and raises objection when the AAP launches its campaign song... The election commission did not raise objection when ED-CBI arrests CM Arvind Kejriwal just ahead of the polls but they raise objection when we make a song about his arrest...," said Atishi, adding that the AAP wishes the EC was neutral and bipartisan.

BJP had recently filed a complaint with the EC against the AAP's campaign song. "The election commissioner today is a successor of TN Seshan ji... we hope the elections are held the way he conducted them — free and fair... We are concerned that if the election commission today does not conduct free and fair polls, the country would move toward dictatorship," said Atishi, who was part of a delegation comprising leaders Saurabh Bharadwaj, Pankaj Gupta and Dilip Pandey that visited the EC office.

Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva said, "The problem with AAP leaders is that they want all constitutional bodies to work as per their anarchic dictates or be prepared to face their allegation of being biased."

Devender Yadav is Delhi Cong unit's new interim chief

SAMAN HUSAIN
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

FOLLOWING THE resignation of Arvinder Singh Lovely from the Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee (DPCC) presidency, two days later, the All India Congress Committee (AICC) announced Devender Yadav as its interim president. Yadav, also the AICC in-charge in Punjab, steps into the position amidst concerns raised by Lovely regarding the party's alliance with the AAP.

Announcing Yadav's appointment, AICC General Secretary K C Venugopal emphasised on Yadav taking over the interim president's position immediately, while continuing his duties as the AICC in-charge of Punjab. "Hon'ble Congress president has appointed Shri Devender Yadav as the interim president of the Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee, with immediate effect. He will also continue his role as the AICC in-charge of Punjab," AICC told the media on Tuesday.

Some Delhi Congress leaders, meanwhile, expressed confidence that the dual-leadership would not lead to any contradictions, emphasising the different electoral dynamics in Punjab and Delhi. "Polls are different in Punjab, but we still have a unified goal... to defeat BJP... it is a friendly competition between AAP and Congress in Punjab," said a Delhi Congress insider.

A party source said: "He (Yadav) is a young party leader, and will manage the two leaderships with ease... In Delhi, the AICC in-charge for the state, Deepak Babaria, will give directions based on which he will manage DPCC... he has to serve as the face of the Delhi wing till the elections take place."

Devender Yadav. *PTI*

East Delhi turns into political hotbed ahead of LS polls

GAYATHRI MANI
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

THE EAST Delhi constituency, most parts of which fall under the area popularly called 'Jamnapaar', has turned into a hotbed of political activity ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, with several rallies and roadshows being held there over the past two weeks.

While the AAP has fielded 30-year-old Dalit leader Kuldeep Kumar, its former councillor and present MLA from Kondli from an unreserved seat, BJP's candidate is Harsh Malhotra (58), former mayor of the erstwhile East Delhi Municipal Corporation, who was chosen over incumbent MP Gautam Gambhir.

The AAP has deployed a bevy of leaders in the area — from Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh, who held his first *padyatra* here, to Sunita Kejriwal, wife of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, who held her maiden roadshow in Kalyanpuri on Saturday.

Kumar has risen through the ranks sharply over the past few years and is believed to have the ear and confidence of the top AAP leadership. In 2023, AAP fielded Atishi from the constituency. Out of the eight Assembly seats that BJP won in the 2020 elections, three are in the East Delhi Lok Sabha constituency — giving it an edge. Even though the AAP won seven out of the 10 Assembly segments that year, the winning margins were low. In Patparganj, former deputy CM Manish Sisodia won the Assembly polls with a margin of just over 3,000 votes, Krishna Nagar MLA S K Bagga won by 3,995 votes, and Delhi Assembly Speaker R N Goel won Shahdara by 5,294 votes.

Divided by the Delhi-Meerut-Expressway — constructed by the Central government for better connectivity between Delhi-NCR — and sharing a border with Uttar Pradesh, the constituency has a concentration of gated colonies and apartment complexes alongside unauthorised colonies and slum clusters. It is also home to two big markets — Gandhi Nagar wholesale readymade cloth market, and Laxmi Nagar, which is known for cellphone repair shops and coaching centres.

The AAP's main focus is on the Kalyanpuri, Trilokpuri, Kondli, and Okhla Assembly segments — all have been party strongholds since 2013. In the 2015 and 2020 Assembly polls, the party got over 50 per cent of the vote share in Kalyanpuri and Trilokpuri.

The BJP, meanwhile, has placed its bets on upscale localities and areas. According to a senior BJP leader, East Delhi has about 32 per cent Dalit and Muslim population alongside a sizable *baniya* hold.

From roadshows and corner meetings, Kumar has pulled out all the stops to woo voters, especially those in slums and JJ clusters. Kumar starts his day at 6:30 am, with neighbourhood meetings in parks, and concludes at around 11 pm. He has, so far, conducted over 200 meetings on ward and mandal levels as well as held several padyatras.

"Starting May 1, he will be visiting and expanding the campaigning extensively in apartments and gated colonies," said an AAP functionary who closely manages Kumar's daily schedule.

"Outsiders come here, fight elections, and then go on to become MPs — but they do not work. This time, you should choose a local person, who you know will come to your aid when needed," said Kumar during a recent roadshow in Kalyanpuri. This largely sums up the main theme of his campaign: 'Outsider versus Local'.

Going by his *X* feed, Kumar has actively been participating in several religious festivals such as Hanuman Jayanti and Mahavir Jayanti, apart from *kirtans* and *bhajans* as well as visiting temples.

For Malhotra, the election is centred around the leadership of and development work done by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"Modi ji gave us free vaccines to save us from Covid... From good education to gas cylinders, infrastructure and self-employment... Modi ji has done a lot for you...," said Malhotra during a campaign in Shakarpur in East Delhi. While he is largely focusing on upscale areas, he has visited traditional AAP bastions too, in a bid to make a dent.

A senior BJP leader said: "AAP may have the upper hand in four Assembly seats — Trilokpuri, Kalyanpuri, Kondli and Okhla — and the delay by the BJP in announcing the East Delhi candidate could also work in their favour. But the BJP has a stronghold in upscale areas as AAP's freebies don't affect them."

Malhotra has also been conducting daily meetings at the booth and ward levels, besides meeting residents' welfare associations (RWAs), market associations, and traders. "(He is on a) silent campaign — it may seem like the candidate is not visible, but the leader goes around quietly connecting with the public... like a friend and neighbour... to understand their problems," said a BJP official.

The BJP is also banking on Malhotra's Punjabi identity to woo a good number of Punjabis in East Delhi. "About 70-80 per cent of areas have been covered... Slum clusters are the next step. We will start roadshows soon and each candidate will have one star campaigner with them," said a senior BJP leader.

Uttarakhand CM Pushkar Singh Dhami will also be holding a roadshow with Malhotra near Patparganj as he files his nomination papers on Wednesday, in an apparent attempt to woo residents who come from Uttarakhand.

AAP's Kuldeep Kumar; (right) BJP's Harsh Malhotra. *Archive*

DELHI CONFIDENTIAL

FAME IN A FRAME

BESIDES PRIME Minister Narendra Modi's popularity, reminding voters about the consecration of Ram Temple in Ayodhya is what some BJP candidates are banking on. Senior BJP leader and party's candidate from Karimnagar Lok Sabha seat in Telangana, Bandi Sanjay Kumar, is distributing a framed photo of Ram Temple with an illustration of Lord Ram in the backdrop. On the margins are small images of Modi and Kumar himself. Kumar has already distributed around 5-lakh such photos among the voters, it is learnt.

YADAV FACTOR

MADHYA PRADESH Chief Minister Mohan Yadav on Monday attended a roadshow in Amethi in Uttar Pradesh with BJP candidate and Union Minister Smriti Irani, who is seeking another term from there. Yadav may also address a rally in Sambhal Lok Sabha constituency with Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on May 3. Sources in the BJP said the party is taking Madhya Pradesh CM through the Yadav-dominated constituencies to dent the Samajwadi Party vote bank. In Sambhal there are around 1.35 lakh Yadav voters. In Amethi, where Congress is contesting in alliance with the SP, there are over 1.5 lakh votes from the Yadav community.

KARNATAKA SEX VIDEOS

BJP on Prajwal: Have no power over ally, what did Cong govt do

LIZ MATHEW
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

DISTANCING ITSELF from the sexual abuse allegations against Janata Dal (Secular) MP Prajwal Revanna, the BJP on Tuesday said it does not have any control over its alliance partner in Karnataka. The BJP also targeted the Congress saying it could have taken action against Prajwal as the state government led by it had "all the information".

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday said the accusations against Prajwal, the BJP-led NDA candidate in Hassan and former PM H D Deve Gowda's grandson, involve alleged incidents that "cannot be tolerated". The BJP general secretary in charge of Karnataka, Radha Mohan Das Agrawal, said his party would "extend all the support to the state government for a neutral probe".

However, both Shah and Agrawal blamed the Congress for delaying a probe and "letting him (Prajwal) leave the country". The JD(S) on Tuesday suspended Prajwal from the party.

"The Congress which wants to accuse us, I want to ask a small thing: whose government is there? It is a Congress government. The videos would have been in your knowledge because it was released at such a time. And till now, why has the Congress party not taken any action? The proceedings do not have to be done by us. Law and order is a state issue."

Agrawal, meanwhile, told *The Indian Express*, "The BJP has nothing to do with this episode. We have an alliance with the JD(S) for the election. The BJP cannot intervene in the internal affairs of the JD(S) to select its candidate. We neither hold ourselves responsible for what happened nor will we going to protect the accused. Law will take its course."

In the past few months, the BJP has targeted the Congress over the comments of its ally DMK over a variety of issues — from Santan Dharma and India to Hindu deity Ram.

Agrawal said it was the Congress government's responsibility to conduct a fair probe.

"They have an FIR against him. It is their responsibility to find out the facts. We are with them as far as a neutral investigation is concerned. But if the government had information, why was it silent? Why did it allow him to go abroad?... when one is moving out, if the person is accused of any criminal activities, the government concerned should issue a notice to stop him. The state government has not in-

Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna

formed the central government or agencies," he said.

In Delhi, Union Minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar said the BJP had zero tolerance towards crimes against women and accused the Congress of double standards and selective outrage.

"If the Congress government in Karnataka was aware of the case for weeks and months, then why did it not act so far against the accused?" he asked.

The BJP has faced criticism after local party leader G Devaraje Gowda, an advocate, on Monday claimed that he had written to state BJP chief B Y Vijayendra about not renominating Prajwal from Hassan. Gowda, whose plea in the Karnataka HC led to Prajwal's disqualification as an MP in 2023 (but the Supreme Court stayed it), raised the issue in public in January. In December, Deveraje Gowda wrote to the BJP central leadership alleging Prajwal had been indulging in "illegal activities involving women". He warned that the Congress could use these videos during the Lok Sabha elections.

Party insiders said though the central leadership had been kept in the loop about the allegations, they came from a leader known for his rivalry with Prajwal and his father H D Revanna, also an accused in the case.

"The information came from a person known for his proximity to H D Kumaraswamy, with whom Prajwal's family has been having an internal feud," said a BJP leader on the condition of anonymity. While both Kumaraswamy and his elder brother Revanna wanted their sons to be elected to the Lok Sabha, only Prajwal was elected in 2019 while Kumaraswamy's son Nikhil lost from Mandya.

"It was natural for the party to take it as part of their infighting. When a candidate is to be finalised, party leadership gets several 'inputs' from different sources. Those from the rivals or the contenders for the same seat have to be dismissed," said a BJP source.

But Agrawal said he never received any such information about the Hassan MP.

"I was never told about Prajwal Revanna. He was a sitting MP and the JD(S) gave the seat to him. We have no authority on it."

In the Deve Gowda family feud, Prajwal an agent provocateur

KIRAN PARASHAR
BENGALURU, APRIL 30

THE MAN at the centre of one of the biggest political scandals of Karnataka politics has never been known to mind his words – or his party JD(S).

Denied a ticket to contest from Hunsur in the Karnataka Assembly elections in 2018, Prajwal Revanna, the grandson of JD(S) founder H D Deve Gowda, had said he would abide by the party's decision, but lashed out, saying: "The party is promoting suitcase (or money) culture."

As the JD(S) now tries to survive the damage arising from hundreds of videos allegedly showing him abusing many women, Prajwal is himself said to be in Germany — having flown out just a day after polling was over for the Hassan Lok Sabha seat from where he is re-contesting, and days before the allegations broke.

While rebelliousness and outspokenness are hardly characteristics desirous in a politician, Prajwal, 33, has picked enough tricks of the trade. In that, he is said to have had the guiding hand of his mother Bhavani Revanna, who comes from a political family of Krishnaranagar and is, by all accounts, the main driving force behind the ambitions of this side of the Deve Gowda family tree.

An engineering graduate, Prajwal, the son of Deve Gowda's elder son H D Revanna, studied MTech in Australia. However, just before the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, he came home and plunged straight into politics. Just 24 at the time, he was soon a prominent presence by Deve Gowda's side in the old Mysuru region, which is a JD(S) bastion, mingling easily with people.

The competing branch of the family tree, led by H D Revanna's younger brother and former CM H D Kumaraswamy, didn't miss the signs. And a rivalry was born, that has continued to dog the JD(S).

A former JD(S) worker rues "the sense of insecurity within the family". "Kumaraswamy wants his son Nikhil to be the political heir of the Deve Gowda name, and Bhavani wants her son Prajwal. H D Revanna has little say in these things..."

In 2019, after Nikhil got the Lok Sabha ticket from Mandya, pressure bore down on Deve Gowda to accommodate Prajwal too. Finally, torn between the demands by his sons' families, Deve Gowda gave up his own stronghold of Hassan for Prajwal.

While Prajwal won, Nikhil was defeated in Mandya.

In the fight for supremacy between the Revanna and Kumaraswamy sides, that defeat stung.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

Khurshid, his niece booked over 'vote jihad' appeal at rally

MANISH SAHU
LUCKNOW, APRIL 30

A CASE was registered against senior Congress leader Salman Khurshid and his niece Maria Alam Khan, a Samajwadi Party leader, over an appeal she made at a public meeting on Monday for "vote jihad" in support of the INDIA bloc candidate from the Farrukhabad Lok Sabha constituency, police said on Tuesday.

The meeting, attended by Khurshid and his wife Louise Khurshid, was called for Naval Kishore Shakya, the INDIA bloc nominee and an SP leader.

Farrukhabad SP Vikas Kumar said that Maria violated the Model Code of Conduct by trying to seek votes on the basis of religion.

The FIR was filed under Sections 295-A (deliberate and malicious acts to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs.) and 188 (disobedience to order duly promulgated by a public servant) of the IPC and Section 125 of the Representation of People's Act at the Kaiyamganj police station.

In a video doing rounds on social media, Maria is purportedly heard saying "*Agar ab bhi hum ek nahi hue to yeh samajh lena yahan sey hamara namon naksh mitaney key liye yeh Sanghi sarkar jo koshish kar rahi hai usko tum kamyab karney ka kaam karogey. Uskey mansubo ko kamyab karney ka kaam karogey. Isliye bahut akalmandi ke saath bahut jaldbaazi main na hokey bahut khamoshi key saath ek saath hokey vote ka jihad karo. Kyonki hum sirf voton ka jihad kar saktey hai aur is Sanghi sarkar ko haraney ka kaam kar saktey hai* (First, one

Congress's Salman Khurshid, SP's Maria Alam Khan

must understand their position because we are only left with helping in a victory or a defeat. If we don't unite now, our identity will be erased, which the Sanghi (BJP) government is attempting to do. You will end up help them win. Now only do jihad through votes and working towards defeating this Sanghi government)."

BJP's Farrukhabad district president, Rupesh Gupta, remarked, "Maria Alam Khan's speech reflects the mentality of the Congress and Samajwadi Party. Such words are reminiscent of our neighboring country, Pakistan."

He further stated that they are filing a complaint about the matter with the Election Commission.

When contacted, Maria Alam clarified that she used the Urdu word "Jihad," which means struggle, in her speech to encourage members of her community who were showing little interest in voting to become more engaged in the electoral process. "My family includes individuals from diverse castes and religions, so there is no reason for me to make any objectionable remarks."

SP district president Chandra Pal Singh Yadav backed her, saying, "Maria Alam used the term 'vote jihad' to encourage Muslim women to participate in polling."

Three days after arrest, ex-Bikaner BJP leader Usman Gani gets bail

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
JAIPUR, APRIL 30

THREE DAYS after he was arrested for alleged "breach of peace", former BJP leader Usman Gani, who was expelled from the party for criticising the remarks of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, was given bail on Tuesday.

Gani's brother Moin Khan confirmed that Gani was given bail on Tuesday. However, Khan or Gani refused to comment on the circumstances around his detention and his subsequent arrest by Bikaner police.

On Saturday, Bikaner police said it had "detained" BJP's former Bikaner minority cell president for "breach of peace," days after he criticised the remarks made by Prime Minister

Gani was expelled from party for criticising PM's remarks

Narendra Modi at a rally in Rajasthan's Banswara.

Speaking to *News24*, Gani had said that being a Muslim, he was disappointed at what the Prime Minister had said. Gani had said that when he "goes to Muslims to seek votes" for the BJP, the people of the community ask him for answers on the remarks of the PM.

While Gani was expelled from the BJP for six years over his remarks against the PM, his arrest has sent a chilling effect among his relatives and party functionaries.

Mamata, Abhishek skipped Ram temple event due to fear of losing infiltrators' support: Shah

SANTANU CHOWDHURY
KOLKATA, APRIL 30

TMC CHAIRPERSON Mamata Banerjee and her nephew Abhishek Banerjee did not attend the Ram Temple consecration ceremony in Ayodhya due to fear of losing support of "infiltrators" in West Bengal, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Tuesday.

Addressing a rally in Paschim Bardhaman, Shah appealed to the people to once again elect Narendra Modi as Prime Minister so that the Centre could take "bold decisions such as the

Amit Shah in Paschim Bardhaman district. X

abrogation of Article 370."

"For the past 70 years, Congress, Left and TMC didn't resolve the Ram Mandir issue. You gave Modi ji 18 seats from Bengal (in 2019), and in the last five years he not only won the Ram Mandir case but did the bhoomi pujan and also built the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya. Invitation was sent to Mamata didi and bhatija (nephew) to attend the consecration ceremony in Ayodhya. However, they didn't go in fear of infiltrators here," said Shah, claiming that "infiltrators" are the TMC's votebank in Bengal.

Shah said that in this Lok Sabha election, the people would have to decide whether they want "dynastic politics or Ram Rajya". "In this election, you have to decide whether you want parivarvaad in the country or Ram Rajya. Do you want to elect bhatija (nephew) as Chief Minister of Bengal? You have to elect Modi ji as the Prime Minister again... So that free medical treatment worth Rs 5 lakh (under Ayushman yojana) be available to the people," said Shah.

He also criticised Mamata Banerjee for opposing CAA and assured that once a BJP government is voted to power in Bengal, it would "stop infiltration like it did in Assam."

Meanwhile, Abhishek challenged Shah to contest against him from Diamond Harbour Lok Sabha constituency and said that if the BJP leader wins, he would retire from active politics.

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1. Open E-Tender (Two Bid System) for provision of offboard services tobelow tour packages: (A) "Char Dham & Do Dham Yatra Ex Delhi & Ex Haridwar (B) "Leh-Ladakh Air Packages" (C) "Kashmir Air Packages" Pre-bid Meeting for (A) 02.05.2024 at 11:00 hrs., for (B) at 13:00 hrs. and for (C) at 15:00 hrs. Last date of submission is 08.05.2024 at 15:00 hrs. E-Mail: monika.shankar@irctc.com

2. Open E-Tender for the work of Supply, installation, commissioning and connection of compact secondary substation 11/0.433 kV, 500 kVA at Rail Neer Plant, NTPC premises, Simhadri, near Vishakhapatnam (A.P). Last date of submission is 08.05.2024 upto 15:00 hrs.

3. Open E-tender CO/NIT/FP-FFU/2024/02 for Setting up, Operation and Management of Food Plazas and Fast Food Units. Last date for submission of tender is 22.05.2024 upto 15:00 hrs. and same shall be opened on 22.05.2024 at 15:15 hrs. E-Mail: mobilecatg.tend@irctc.com

For details visit www.irctc.com, www.tenderwizard.com/IRCTC and www.eprocure.gov.in/cppp. Document downloading and participation can be done on www.tenderwizard.com/IRCTC.

Corrigendum/ addendum if any, shall be published only on www.irctc.com, www.tenderwizard.com/IRCTC and www.eprocure.gov.in/cppp.

ecatering.irctc.co.in

Office Address: IRCTC 11th Floor, Statesman House, B-148, Barakhamba Road, Connaught Place, New Delhi-110 001, Tel.: 011-23311263-64, Fax: 011-23311259

STATE POLUTION CONTROL BOARD-SIKKIM
DEPARTMENT OF FOREST & ENVIRONMENT
GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM
DEORALI, GANGTOK -737102
Email:spcbsikkim@gmail.com

F.No. SPCB/95 Dated 29/04/2024

NOTICE

EXTENSION OF LAST DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF IMPANELMENT APPLICATION

In view of the decision taken by higher authority, the State Pollution Control Board –Sikkim (SPCB-Sikkim) hereby extends the time till 15.05.2024 for the interested NABL accredited & MoEF&CC certified laboratories to apply for impanelment with SPCB –Sikkim for carrying out Environmental Monitoring of Industrial units established in the State of Sikkim.

Application with all the details addressed to the Member Secretary, SPCB –Sikkim should reach the office of the State Pollution Control Board –Sikkim, Parivesh Bhawan, Forest Secretariat, Forest & Environment Department, Deorali, Gangtok District -737102 on or before 15.05.2024 through registered post/speed post. Application received after 15.05.2024 shall not be entertained/ accepted.

R.O. No.:11/IPR/Pub/Classi/2024
Date:30/04/2024

S/d, Member Secretary,
State Pollution Control Board –Sikkim

TATA STEEL TATA

PUBLIC INFORMATION

This is to inform that Tata Main Hospital, Jamshedpur is going to destroy its medical records from July-2018 to Sept-2018 (General Discharges) and Jan 2012 - Dec 2012 (All MLC Cases/Death). Anybody requiring a copy of these records may contact Medical records section before 30.05.2024

Registered Office: Bombay House,
24, Homi ModyStreet, Fort, Mumbai 400 001, India
Tel.: 022 66658282 Fax: 022 66657724
(CIN) – L27100MH1907PLC000260
Website: www.tatasteel.com

केनरा बैंक Canara Bank
भारत सरकार का उपक्रम A Government of India Undertaking
सिंडिकेट Syndicate

Asset Recovery Management Branch (D.P.-17415), Ground floor, Luv Kush Tower, Exhibition Road, PATNA - 800001
Ph: 8102916048, Email: cb17415@canarabank.com

PROPERTY FOR E-AUCTION NOTICE

15 days E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of immovable assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/hypothecated/Pledged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive Possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Patna South Gandhi Maidan Branch of the Canara Bank, will be sold on **"As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is"** on **29.05.2024.** Details are as under:

Sl. No.	Name/Address/ Contact No./ A/c No. & IFSC Code of the Branch	Name and Address of the Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s)/ Mortgagor(s)	Outstanding in Rs.	Details of Property	Reserve Price (in Rs) / EMD / Bid Multiplier
1.	**ARM Branch Patna Contact No. 8102916048 A/c No. 209272434 IFSC Code: CNRB0017415**	1) M/s Jai Maa Bhawani Construction Pvt. Ltd. (Borrower), Address-Registered Office at Village-Deodha, P.O-Mahanandpur, P.S –Dipnagar, Biharsharif, Dist-Nalanda, Bihar-803101, 2) Lalit Kumar Singh (Director/ Guarantor) S/o Sri Bhism Narayan Singh residing at Address - Village-Deodha, P.O- Mahanandpur, P.S –Dipnagar, Biharsharif, Dist-Nalanda, Bihar-803101, 3) Smt. Indu Devi (Director/ Guarantor) W/o Lalit Kumar Singh, 4) Sri Shambhu Sharan Singh (Guarantor) S/o Sri Bhism Narayan Singh, 5) Sri. Awadh Kishore Singh (Guarantor) S/o Sri Bhism Narayan Singh, 6) Smt. Manju Devi (Guarantor) W/o Late Parshuram Singh all four (i.e .sl.no.3, 4, 5, 6) residing at Village- Deodha, P.O-Mahanandpur, P.S-Dipnagar, Biharsharif, Nalanda, Near-Pawapuri station, Bihar-803101.	₹4,29,37,878.58 (Rupees Four Crore Twenty Nine Lakh Thirty Seven Thousand Eight Hundred Seventy Eight & Fifty Eight Paisa Only) together with future interest and charges from 01.11.2023 till clearance of entire liability	**Property no.1):-** EMT of three Properties (a), (b) & (c) are jointly in the name of as follows:- A) Sri. Shambhu Sharan Singh, B) Sri. Prashuram Singh, C) Sri. Awadh Kishore Singh (All name mentioned A,B,C are sons of Late Bhishm Narayan Singh), D) Smt. Indu Devi W/o Sri. Lalit Kumar Singh. **(a)** All that part and parcel of land situated at Mauza- Kamarpur Paharpur, Thana Dipnagar, Thana No.-97 Tauzi No. 17507, 11091 and 11013 Khata No 548,522,510. Khesra (Plot) No-2365, 2366, 2367. Total area Of Land 34 and 3/4 decimal as per deed no.7580 dated 07.07.2000 and Bounded by:- North- Rajendra Yadav and Ram Pravesh Yadav, South- Alang and Nathun Sao, East- Gita Devi, West- Dayamanti Devi (Vendor no.2) **(b)** All that part and parcel of land situated at Mauza- Kamarpur Paharpur, Thana Dipnagar, Thana No.-97 Tauzi No. 17507, 11091 and 11013 Khata No 548,522,510. Khesra (Plot) No-2365, 2366, 2367. Total area Of Land 34 and 3/4 decimal as per deed no.7580 dated 07.07.2000 and Bounded by:- North- Nawal Yadav, South- Alang and Nathun Sao, East- Awadesh Prasad Verma (Vendor no.1), West- Shakuntla Devi (Vendor no.3). **(c)** All that part and parcel of land situated at Mauza- Kamarpur Paharpur, Thana Dipnagar, Thana No.-97 Tauzi No. 17507, 11091 and 11013 Khata No 548,522,510. Khesra (Plot) No-2365, 2366, 2367. Total area Of Land 33 and 3/4 decimal as per deed no.7580 dated 07.07.2000 and Bounded by:- North- Nawal Yadav, South- Alang and Nathun Sao, East- Dayamanti Devi (Vendor no.2), West- Demarcation Line (Siman) of village Dewdha. Thus total area of land is 103.25 Decimal as per deed no.7580 dated 07.07.2000 (Actual Area as per site-102.32 decimal is only on sale)		₹3,22,30,000/- ₹32,23,000/- ₹10,000/-
				Property no.2):- All that part and parcel of the Land situated at Mauza- Manaurpur Devdha, Thana Dipnagar, Tauzi No-11703, Thana No- 318,Khata No.- 390 Khesra No.- 520, Area of land 11 decimal (5 ½+ 5 ½)decimal as per deed no.6973 and 6974 both dated 01.07.1992, District & Sub- Registry–Nalanda, (Biharsharif) owned by Lalit Kumar Singh S/o Sri Bhism Narayan Singh. Bounded by:- North-Railway Quarter, South-Kailash Singh, East- Plot No 520, Pratap Narayan Singh, West – Railway Hunder.		₹19,80,000/- ₹1,98,000/- ₹10,000/-
				Property no.3):- All that part and parcel of land situated at Mauza- Kamarpur Paharpur Thana- Dipnagar Thana No.-97, Tauzi No-17507 ,Khata No. 581 and 574 , Khesra No.- 2379,2380, Total area of land is 14 ½ decimal (2 ¾+ 2+ 2 ¾+ 4+3) as per deed no.13925,13926,13927,13928,13929 all dated 03.08.1987 (Actual Area as per site-10.50 Decimal is only on sale) Distt and Sub Registery office , Nalanda (Biharsharif) Owned by Lalit Kumar Singh S/o Sri Bhism Narayan Singh. Bounded by :- North-Paen, South-Mangaru Yadav, East-Ranchi Road NH 31, West- Plot no.2379.		₹37,80,000/- ₹3,78,000/- ₹10,000/-

Last Date of EMD 27.05.2024 by 4.00 P.M.
For Detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in www.canarabank.com

Date : 29.04.2024
Place : Patna

Authorized Officer (Canara Bank)

I HEREBY DECLARE

NAVEEN PATNAIK, 77
Odisha CM and BJD's Hinjili MLA

TOTAL ASSETS
₹71.08 CR (2024)
₹63.87 CR (2018)

Movable assets	₹14.06 cr
Immovable assets	₹57.02 cr
Liabilities	None
Pending criminal cases	None
Education	BA, Delhi University

Y S JAGAN MOHAN REDDY, 51
Andhra Pradesh CM and YSRCP's Pulivendla MLA

TOTAL ASSETS
₹757.65 CR (2024)
₹510.38 CR (2018)

Movable assets	₹650.67 cr
Immovable assets	₹106.98 cr
Liabilities	₹26.57cr
Pending criminal:	26 FIRs for IPC offences
Education	BCom, Osmania University, Hyderabad

BATTLEGROUND GUJARAT

'Surat uncontested result very bad ... But what can we do if Cong in a mess?'

'Indira Gandhi, Vajpayee, now Narendrabhai … Supreme leader has to be supreme in true sense'

LEENA MISRA & GOPAL KATESHIYA
RAJKOT, APRIL 30

ABRUPTLY REMOVED as chief minister a year ahead of the Gujarat Assembly elections of 2022, Vijay Rupani is now among the leaders the BJP has turned to for help for its embattled Rajkot candidate Parshottam Rupala, who is facing protests from the Rajputs following his contentious remarks against the community. Rupani speaks about growing caste consciousness, the troubles facing the Congress, and what the BJP needs to be careful about. *Excerpts*:

Former Gujarat CM Rupani says 400-plus target reflects BJP's confidence, inspired by Modi government's performance. *X*

THE EXPRESS INTERVIEW
VIJAY RUPANI
FORMER GUJARAT CM

What do you see as the challenge facing the BJP?

Avar navar hun kahu chhu ke overconfidence ek challenge moto rehse. Etla maate karyakartao overconfidence ma na rahe. Ane thodu ghanu jaati vaad. E challenge chhe. Jaativaad ne karane pan kyanyey mato ma aaghu paachhu na thaay (I have been saying often that overconfidence is one big challenge. Karyakartas should not become overconfident. And to an extent, casteism, that will be a big challenge. Because of casteism, we hope some votes don't go this way or that ... Casteism has worsened over the past two decades.

Does casteism exist because our politics feeds on it?

Casteism is gaining ground and this cannot be ignored in politics. So, we keep doing some balancing work and social engineering. That said, it is a cause of worry for all political parties and the country as a whole, and the only solution to lift people out of it is to promote the spirit of nationalism.

How do you view the shrinking space of the Opposition?

That is for Opposition leaders to worry about and to find ways to survive ... Take the Congress. It doesn't have any leader. The party is in the grip of nepotism. Its policy keeps lurching from one side to the other ... Eventually, it is votes which count and they have to win votes in a manner that people trust them and by exploiting our shortcomings. But it is their responsibility, not ours.

The Opposition accuses the BJP government of cornering them using Central agencies.

Do you recall 1975 when you (the Congress government) had imposed the Emergency, made mass arrests... So who endangered democracy? Today, we may be making arrests, but people can go to court.

The Opposition says the BJP's target of winning 400-plus seats is an attempt to change the Constitution.

Not at all. This merely reflects the confidence of the BJP, inspired by the performance of Narendra Modi and the way the BJP's reach has expanded ...

How do you see the BJP winning Surat uncontested?

The Congress candidate there has gone underground. What can we do about that? It is all the Congress's doing.

Were others in the fray persuaded to withdraw their candidature?

That is not true at all. If that were possible, we might have done the same in all constituencies. The fact of the matter is that the Congress candidate in Surat had issues with his party.

Does this bode well for democracy?

It is very bad. I will say, this is certainly bad. But what can we do about it when the Congress is in shambles? There was a time when we were in the Opposition and we could hardly save our deposits... But we never quit ... The Congress of today, on the other hand, is completely demoralised.

BJP's critics accuse its governments of persecuting minorities, especially Muslims.

Our slogan is 'Appeasement of None, Justice for All'. Till date, the Congress indulges in appeasement. This leads to debates centered around minority, majority ... This is the reason we are talking about a common civil code ... It is not appropriate to extend all benefits to a person just because one belongs to a minority community. This disturbs the balance and creates problems. We have broken this dichotomy completely. Minorities are safe.

Has the BJP transformed, in the sense that it has come to depend on one individual?

A party depends on the image of its main leader. For years, the Congress powered ahead due to the image of Indira Gandhi. The leadership void created after her persists even today (in the Congress). The BJP grew due to the image of Atal (Bihari Vajpayee) and is now marching ahead due to the image of Narendrabhai (Modi).

But what happens if a leader becomes larger than the party?

That is unlikely. As per the internal arrangements of our party, Narendrabhai cares as much about the party, its structure systems etc. But eventually, there can be only one *vadil* (figuratively, leader) ... The supreme leader of a party has to be supreme in the true sense of the term.

FULL INTERVIEW ON
www.indianexpress.com

FOR MORE LOG ON TO
INDIANEXPRESS.COM/ELECTIONS

● ANALYSIS
HOW PM MODI HAS REFRAMED BJP'S '400 PAAR' POLL SLOGAN

Jailed candidate creates a stir in Baramulla, may dent Lone base

Ex-MLA Engineer Rashid is currently lodged in Tihar in terror funding case

BASHAARAT MASOOD
SRINAGAR, APRIL 30

WHEN JAILED Kashmir leader Sheikh Abdul Rashid filed his Lok Sabha poll nomination from Baramulla in North Kashmir Monday, he became the third leader from Kupwara district to join the fray there after Jammu and Kashmir Peoples Conference (JKPC) chief Sajad Lone and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) candidate Fayaz Ahmad Mir.

The National Conference (NC)'s vice-president and former chief minister Omar Abdullah is also contesting from Baramulla, which votes on May 20.

The support bases of Sajad, Fayaz and Rashid, who is popularly known as Engineer Rashid, are mainly centred on Kupwara district, where they would be vying from the same vote pie. This may give an edge to Omar not only on account of his appeal as an ex-CM but also due to the point that the NC has a cadre base spread across the Valley.

Although Rashid, 58, is the founder of the Awami-e-Ittihad Party (AIP), he would fight the polls as an Independent as his party is not registered with the Election Commission.

A two-time MLA from Langate, Rashid has been a maverick leader, who has often landed in rows because of his politics that survived on his controversial or extreme political position.

Observers say Rashid may get "sympathy votes" as he will be contesting the election from the Tihar Jail in Delhi, where he has been lodged since 2019 following his arrest by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in an alleged money laundering case related to terror funding in the Valley. However, his protracted absence from his constituency and lack of contact with his workers and supporters is likely to damage his vote bank.

In the 2019 polls, Rashid emerged as a strong candidate in Baramulla. He came third by securing over a lakh votes, finishing ahead of the PDP and the Congress's candidates. The NC's Mohammad Akbar Lone had won the seat by defeating the JKPC by about 30,000 votes.

This time, the Baramulla contest will be essentially between Omar and Sajad, with the decision of the Congress to support the NC, its INDIA ally, further boosting the ex-CM's chances.

Rashid is known for his controversial or extreme political positions

Sajad is getting support from the non-INDIA parties like the Syed Altaf Bukhari-led J&K Apni Party, which are perceived to be close to the BJP.

A close confidant of slain Hurriyat leader and JKPC founder Abdul Gani Lone, Rashid's journey from a separatist to a legislator started when he launched a civil liberties movement in Mawar – a cluster of remote hamlets in the Kupwara region. He came under the spotlight in 2000, when he stood up against the "begar (forced labour)" system.

After the assassination of Gani Lone and the split of the People's Conference into the factions led by his sons Bilal and Sajad, Rashid put his weight behind the latter. Rashid left separatist politics and entered the poll arena in 2008 as an Independent from Langate in Kupwara. Springing a surprise, Rashid won. In the 2014 Assembly polls, he won again.

Rashid's political career was fuelled by various controversies. In 2015, he was assaulted inside the J&K Assembly by the BJP legislators for throwing a beef party at Srinagar's MLA hostel. In the same year, he hoisted the J&K flag at Srinagar's Pratap Park and demanded that June 7 be observed as the state flag day, protesting against the BJP's slogan of "ek *vidhan*, ek *pradhan* aur ek *nishan*".

POLL DISPATCH

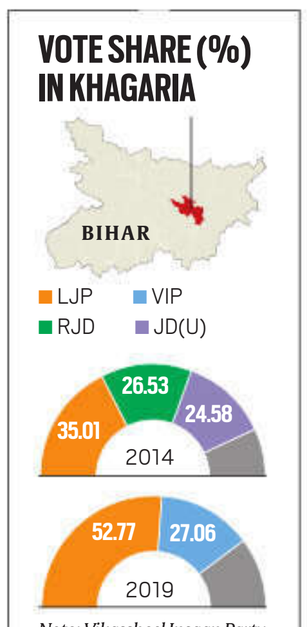
In Bihar's 'Red land', CPM in race after 30 yrs; NDA's lone Muslim MP with it

SANTOSH SINGH
KHAGARIA, APRIL 30

AS ONE enters the market in Khagaria in Bihar, a sea of red flags immediately catches the eye. Though the Left, part of the RJD-led Mahagathbandhan, is a marginal player in Bihar politics, it is making its presence felt this Lok Sabha election in the Khagaria-Begusarai belt.

The CPI(M) is in the fray in Khagaria, contesting a parliamentary election in the state for the first time since 1991 and the CPI is attempting to win neighbouring Begusarai that was once referred to as the "Leningrad of Bihar" because of its active Communist movement from the late 1950s to the late 1990s. The CPI (ML), meanwhile, is contesting from the Nalanda, Ara, and Karakat constituencies.

In Khagaria, which goes to polls on May 7 in the third phase, the battle is between the CPI(M)'s Sanjay Kumar and the Chirag Paswan-led Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) candidate Rajesh Verma. Apart from local issues, Kumar, who is from the OBC Kushwaha community, is banking on support from the Muslims and Yadavs, the RJD's traditional M-Y vote bank. The aim of the Mahagathbandhan here is to get a major chunk of the votes of Kushwahas, the third-most populous group in the constituency. If the CPI(M) receives 50-60% of the community's support, the formidable M-Y-K social coalition will be enough to push Kumar past the finish line. Of Khagaria's approximately 18 lakh voters, an estimated three lakh are Muslims, followed by 2.5 lakh Yadav voters, and a lakh each from the Kushwaha and Mallah communities. Mallahs are categorised as an Extremely Backward Class (EBC).



Note: Vikassheel Insaan Party (VIP) is now in the Mahagathbandhan
Source: Election Commission

VOTING ON MAY 7

Fighting in Kumar's corner and expected to bring in the Muslim vote is incumbent MP Choudhary Mehboob Ali Kaiser, the BJP-led NDA lone Muslim parliamentarian in Bihar who joined the RJD last week after the LJP (Ram Vilas) denied him the ticket. "There is a sense of hurt among fellow Muslims over the ticket being denied to me, defeating the NDA is the only motto now," said the two-time Khagaria MP.

Another factor that could work in Kumar's favour is Vikassheel Insaan Party (VIP) leader Mukesh Sahani who is now part of the Mahagathbandhan. Sahani is a Mallah leader.

But what could work for the LJP is the counter-polarisation of the NDA's EBC and non-Yadav and non-Kushwaha OBC votes along with the support of Dalits, the LJP's traditional support base. The Narendra Modi government's free ration scheme is popular among poor people in the region and may end up tilting the contest in the favour of Verma, a former mayor of Bhagalpur who is from the OBC Vaishya community.

5 QUESTIONS
MD SALIM, CPI(M) WEST BENGAL STATE SECRETARY

'My battery remains charged when I am meeting people'

What is a campaign day like for you?

I get to meet people and I enjoy that. I am asking them to vote and people are saying, "You will get our vote."

What do you pack in your bag when you go out to campaign?

I don't carry anything. Some people offer lemon water, ORS, coconut water, and I am enjoying that.

How are you and your party workers managing to look after yourselves in this scorching heat?

We are activists for all the 365 days. Throughout the year, we are used to staying on the road. My battery remains charged when I am with the people. During the election, more people are there, so I am more charged.

My comrades are trained and equipped. They have faced the police, fake cases, communal violence, goons, wrath of the TMC government, and have survived.

Md Salim is contesting from Murshidabad

How do you unwind at the end of each day?

We do not need to.

How often do you check your social media on the campaign trail?

I check WhatsApp frequently to communicate with other state-level leaders. I talk with them during lunch and dinner breaks.

POLL ISSUES

As mining resumes in North Goa, Cong says BJP 'dangled a carrot'

Six years after the ban, one of the nine auctioned mines, owned by Vedanta, has started operations. However, locals are unhappy over jobs going to 'outsiders'

PAVNEET SINGH CHADHA
BICHOLIM (GOA), APRIL 30

AT HIS house in Mulgao village in North Goa's Bicholim taluka, Madan Kauthankar, a former electrician at a mine, is switching channels on the television. About a kilometre away, several trucks traverse a dusty road adjacent to a lake, leading to a newly operational mine atop a hillock.

Madan lost his job after mining came to a halt in Goa following a 2018 Supreme Court order that quashed 88 mining leases following a petition challenging their legality. Now, a month into the resumption of operations at Vedanta Sesa Goa, one of the biggest iron-ore producers in India, he says nothing has changed for him.

"The gold (iron ore) is being mined from our village and exported to foreign countries, but we are not getting jobs. Labourers are being hired on contract, that too from other states, constituencies," he says.

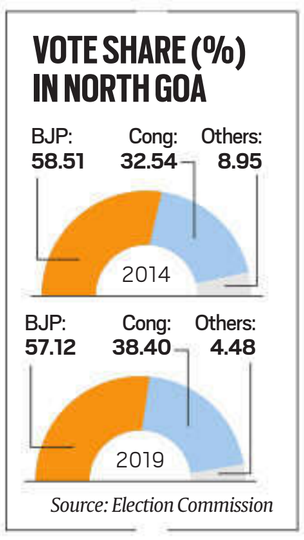
Vedanta Sesa Goa announced in early April that it had commenced operations at the Bicholim Mineral Block, becoming the first auctioned mine to become operational since 2018. The Union Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change granted environmental clearance to the auction block of Vedanta Limited for a mine spread over 478.5 hectares across six villages in Bicholim – Mulgao, Sirigao, Lamgao, Bordem, Bicholim and Mayem.

There are nine auctioned blocks in the state, of which only the Bicholim block is operational at present.

Calling the reopening of the mines a "historic" move, Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant had said, "Due to the ban, Goa faced many hardships. With this, many stakeholders shall benefit, as well as the state."

With the coastal state scheduled to vote in the Lok Sabha polls on May 7, many in Bicholim have pinned their hopes of employment flowing from the resumption of mining. In the lead-up to the 2022 Assembly polls, parties across the spectrum had promised to revive mining. The BJP, which returned to power, is hoping to consolidate votes in the five talukas of the "mining belt" – Sattari, Quepem, Sanguem, Dharbandora and Bicholim – and which account for 20% of the voters in the North Goa constituency.

Bicholim is the site of the first operational iron-ore mine since the Supreme Court halted mining in 2018. *Express*



Source: Election Commission

According to a 2022 NITI Aayog report, Goa had an unemployment rate of 10.5% in 2020-21, putting the number of jobless in the state at 1.1 lakh. Mining revenue was estimated to have contributed 20% of the state's GDP before it was halted.

In Sirigao village, Mahesh Gaonkar, 42, points to a rusting truck parked across the road from his house. He borrowed money from a friend to purchase it in 2011. For a year, he transported ore from mining pits to jetty points and ports, and when the mines shut, he took odd jobs to pay the loan. "The truck is of no use now. The youth in the village will get jobs, contractors will get business," he says.

VOTING ON MAY 7

Manasi Kauthankar, a panchayat member in Mulgao, says, "The men are sitting idle in their houses. Why are the mining jobs being outsourced? We are going to make this an election issue. If the politicians want votes, they must promise jobs for locals."

Earlier this month, when North Goa MP and Union Minister Shripad Naik, who is hoping to win a sixth term from the seat on the BJP ticket, visited Mulgao, he was cornered by villagers. Naik promised to raise the matter with the CM and ensure that people who lost their jobs are hired again.

Ramakant Khalap, a former Union Law Minister and the Congress's North Goa candidate, says the BJP government has "dangled a carrot" by promising jobs and claiming to revive mining just ahead of the elections. "It was the BJP government that first shut down mining, which affected the livelihood of over 2 lakh people in the constituency. How will the loss to the state exchequer and to the affected families be compensated?" says Khalap.

For several in Bicholim though, mining is fraught with concern after decades of indiscriminate mining adversely impacted the local ecology.

Vasant Gaad, a Mulgao resident, talks about increasingly saline groundwater. But, Ramesh Gauns, an environmental activist, says environmental issues are not on the minds of Goa's voters. "People are not conscious about the long-term and adverse effects of mining. It remains confined to the area around mining leases," he says.

RALLIES IN MAHARASHTRA'S MADHA & LATUR

It's time to punish him: PM attacks Pawar again, says he did nothing for farmers as agri minister

Modi says Congress reaps benefits from problems, doesn't want solutions

MANOJ MORE & PARTHA SARATHI BISWAS
PUNE, APRIL 30

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi once again launched a blistering attack on NCP (SP) chief Sharad Pawar on Tuesday, accusing him of doing little to alleviate the miseries of farmers when he was the Union agriculture minister or for his constituency people when he was the Madha MP.

On Monday, during his first election rally in the Pawar bastion since the NCP's split, the Prime Minister had hit out at Pawar indirectly, calling him "*bhatakti aatma*" (a wandering soul), who he said tried to destabilise the BJP-Shiv Sena government in 1995.

Addressing an election rally for BJP candidate Ranjitnaik Nimbalkar in the Malshiras area under the Madha constituency, without naming Pawar, the Prime Minister said, "A heavyweight leader from Maharashtra was the agriculture minister in Congress government at the Centre. During his time, the FRP (fair and remunerative price) for sugarcane was Rs 200 per quintal. Now during the Modi rule, the sugarcane FRP is Rs 340 per quintal."

Speaking at another rally in Latur, Modi said the opposition Congress reaped benefits from problems and thus did not want to solve them. Addressing a public rally here, he urged people to ensure the voting percentage increases and said Latur can play an important part in 'Viksit Bharat'.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Maharashtra Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis at a rally in Dharashiv on Tuesday. *PTI*

In Madha, PM Modi said sugarcane farmers had to make rounds of the Sugar Commissionerate to get their payment when Pawar was the agriculture minister. He said from the 1990s, sugar mills were hassled by income tax department. "This leader used to be the agriculture minister. I as chief minister of Gujarat used to urge him to do something to resolve the income tax problems of sugar mills. I wrote several letters to him and also met him. But he did nothing. When the NDA government came to power, we gave Rs 10,000 crore relief to the sugar mills... We waived off old income tax demands and resolved legal issues as well. This benefitted our sugarcane farmers... From March 2023, we have made a Rs 10,000 crore special loan provision so that they can make faster payments to sugarcane farmers and ensure good production," he said.

When Pawar was the agriculture minister, Modi said, the then Congress government purchased agricultural produce worth Rs 7 lakh crore from the farmers. "But in the last 10 years, we have purchased agricultural produce worth Rs 20 lakh crore. There cannot be any comparison between these purchases," he said.

The PM said as Madha MP, Pawar had promised to resolve the water crisis of the constituency. "Fifteen years ago, one top leader had come to contest from here... Then he had taken an oath that he would ensure water to the drought-hit area. But did he ensure water for you? No. He did nothing to resolve your problem. He did not have the guts to again contest the election from here… Isn't it time to punish him?"

Modi said in the last 60 years, Congress PMs kept parroting the line "garibi hatao". "Other than repeating the line, the Congress did nothing. When my government came to power, in the last 10 years we have pulled 25 crore people out of poverty," he said.

He said when the government in Delhi used to release funds for farmers, the Congress "hand" used to gobble it up. "Now, this son of yours is sitting in Delhi...The amount released from Delhi goes directly to your account."

At his rally in Latur, Modi said, "Be it the government of Devendra Fadnavis or Eknath Shinde, we have always worked to solve problems. Projects like Jalyukta Shivar, Marathwada Water Grid project are meant to solve the water woes of Latur. Congress never wanted to solve problems in fact they reaped political benefits from them so they linger over them." He said the Congress and INDIA bloc had tried to oppose these schemes.

On PM's 'bhatakti aatma' jibe, Pawar says his soul restless for common man

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, APRIL 30

A DAY after Prime Minister Narendra Modi attacked Sharad Pawar terming him "bhatakti aatma" (wandering soul), the Nationalist Congress Party (SP) chief Tuesday hit back saying that his soul is "restless" thinking of ways to present the plight of farmers and common man.

Speaking at an election campaign rally of party's Shirur candidate Amol Kolhe, Pawar said, "This soul is restless. It is restless not for selfish goals but thinking of ways to present the plight of farmers," Pawar said.

"Common citizens are fed up of inflation and facing problems in everyday life and I cannot rest until I voice that unease," said Pawar, without naming Modi.

"But that restlessness is because of people's plight. Maharashtra cannot be helpless. It will never compromise on pride," Pawar added.

In an election campaign rally in Pune on Monday, targeting Pawar, Modi had said, "There is a 'bhatakti atma' (wandering soul) in Maharashtra. If it does not manage to success it spoils others' good work. Maharashtra has been a victim of it."

NCP-SP reacted sharply saying Pawar is the soul of the state

The NCP-SP had reacted sharply saying Pawar is the soul of Maharashtra . "He (Modi) does not understand that Sharad Pawar is the soul of Maharashtra. The more he speaks against him, the greater will be the support to him (Pawar)," said NCP-SP state president Jayant Patil.

Former minister and senior party leader Anil Deshmukh, referring to Modi, said, 'The restless soul from Gujarat is moving from pillar to post in this summer for the sake of votes because of him (Pawar)."

The PM's attack comes at a time when Pawar's moves of bringing leaders who had quit NCP and joined BJP back to its fold have cornered the BJP on key seats in western Maharashtra — Madha, Solapur, Ahmadnagar and Satara.

Rahul Gandhi at a public meeting in Bhind on Tuesday. *PTI*

Constitution, soul of poor, will be thrown away if BJP returns: Rahul

'Only rich people and celebrities were present during Ram temple event'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BHIND (MP), APRIL 30

CONGRESS LEADER Rahul Gandhi Tuesday warned that if the BJP returns to power at the Centre, it will "tear apart" and "throw away" the Constitution which granted rights to the poor, Dalits, scheduled tribes and other backward classes.

Addressing an election rally in Madhya Pradesh's Bhind district, Gandhi, while holding a copy of the Constitution, said the ongoing Lok Sabha poll is not a normal political event, but a fight between two ideologies.

The Congress's star campaigner noted that only rich people and celebrities, and not poor labourers or farmers, were present during the January 22 idol consecration ceremony at the Ram temple in Ayodhya.

The opposition MP said his party and its INDIA bloc allies are fighting to save the Constitution.

Before Independence and drafting of the Constitution, the poor, Dalits, tribals, backwards and farmers did not have any rights and they were bestowed on them when the statute book came into force in 1950, he pointed out.

Gandhi cautioned that if the BJP is elected to power again, the rights enjoyed by the poor, tribals and Dalits will no longer be in force and schemes like MGNREGA, land rights, reservation, pension and other welfare measures, too, will disappear.

"Now, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and their MPs have made up their mind that if they get elected, they will tear apart and throw this (Constitution) book. The BJP wants this book to be thrown away and only 20 to 25 billionaires should run the country," the MP claimed.

He pointed out that the Constitution gave voice to Dalits, tribals, backward sections and the poor people belonging to other castes.

Top BJP leaders have already openly declared that if their party wins the elections, they will change the revered document, he charged.

"This (Constitution) is the soul of the poor and no one can touch it. The Congress, along with B R Ambedkar and the countrymen, fought against the British and drafted the Constitution, which is the voice of India," he noted.

Pensions, allowances, free LPG cylinders in NDA Andhra manifesto

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD, APRIL 30

THE NATIONAL Democratic Alliance (NDA) in Andhra Pradesh has promised creation of 20 lakh jobs for youth and Rs 3,000 per month as unemployment allowance in its election manifesto released on Tuesday.

The manifesto, jointly prepared by the BJP, the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) and the Jana Sena Party, does not feature photos of any BJP leaders.

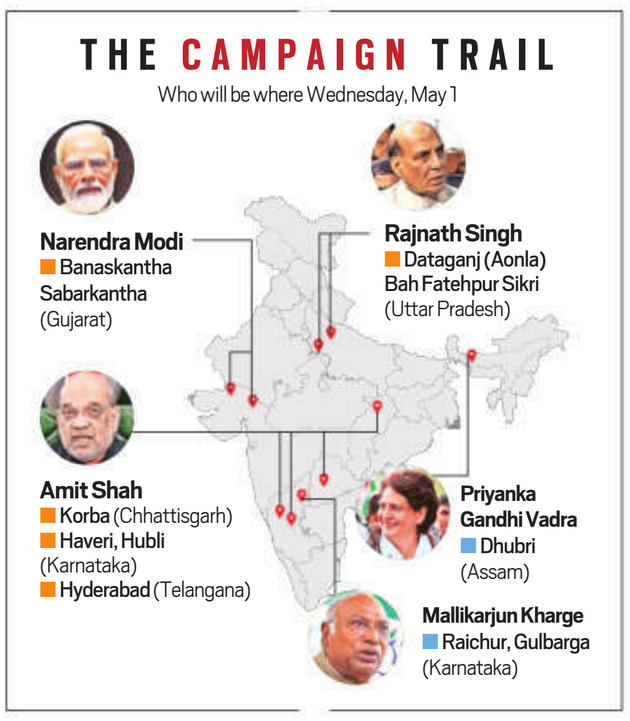
TDP supremo N Chandrababu Naidu and Jana Sena chief K Pawan Kalyan released the manifesto in the presence of BJP's state in-charge Siddharth Nath Singh. The manifesto promises 'super six' guarantees — creation of 20 lakh jobs for youth, Rs 3,000 per month as unemployment allowance, Rs 15,000 per year to eligible school-going children, Rs 20,000 financial assistance per year to farmers, 3 free LPG cylinders to eligible beneficiaries and free bus travel for women.

Social security pensions, ranging between Rs 3,000 and Rs 4,000; Rs 6,000 per month to partially handicapped; Rs 15,000 to fully handicapped and Rs 10,000 per month for kidney patients have also been promised.

The manifesto lays emphasis on providing drinking water connections to each household, launch welfare schemes under public, private and people's partnership under 'Poor to Rich' programme, conduct skill census and create jobs accordingly, and give a subsidy of Rs 10 lakh to small and medium enterprises.

For the Backward Classes, the manifesto promises pension of Rs 4,000 per month to eligible beneficiaries will start at the age of 50 years, a new law for the protection of BCs and 34% reservation in local bodies.

Naidu said the NDA government would pass a resolution regarding BC reservation in local bodies in the Assembly and send it to the Centre. He also said that the NDA will start the pension schemes with retrospective effect from April 1. Sheep distribution scheme for Yadavas will be implemented. The NDA manifesto promises 96 square yards land to poor, landless families.



Union Minister Piyush Goyal after filing his nomination as BJP's candidate for Mumbai North seat on Tuesday. He was accompanied by (from left) sitting MP Gopal Shetty, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla and BJP MLA Yogesh Sagar. *Sankhadeep Banerjee*

Goyal files nomination: 'Clean sweep for BJP in Maharashtra'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, APRIL 30

UNION MINISTER Piyush Goyal, who is the BJP candidate for the Mumbai North seat, filed his nomination at the Mumbai (suburban) district collector's office Tuesday afternoon.

Goyal said he was confident about not just his victory but also BJP winning at all the 48 seats in Maharashtra. "Whether the Opposition declares any candidate or not, it makes no difference any more. It is not just my constituency that we are winning. There is an easy contest for BJP in all the seats in Maharashtra and there will be a clean sweep. We will work towards the transformation of Mumbai, so that Uttar Mumbai can be transformed into Uttam Mumbai in the coming days," he said.

After visiting the Borivali Ganpati temple, Goyal also held a show of strength with a rally, before reaching the collector's office around 1 pm. He was accompanied by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, Union Minister and Republican Party of India president Ramdas Athawale, Mumbai BJP president Ashish Shelar and sitting BJP MP from Mumbai North Gopal Shetty.

The Union minister, who has been an MP in the Rajya Sabha since 2010, is contesting a Lok Sabha election for the first time and political observers feel that it will be a cake-walk for Goyal as Mumbai North is a BJP bastion with a significant presence of Gujarati and Marwadi population.

In the 2019 elections, BJP candidate Gopal Shetty had won the seat with a margin of over 4.65 lakh votes.

At the Tuesday rally, Goyal was accompanied by members from the local Koli community. "During my campaigning, I developed a bond with the members from the Koli community and I believe they will bless me by electing me as their representative," Goyal said.

After starting his rally from his new Kandivali residence, where he has been staying since the announcement of his candidature last month, Goyal held a roadshow and went to the Borivali Ganpati temple to seek blessings, from where he headed towards the collector's office.

Anantnag-Rajouri voting postponed, Mehbooba says bid to help BJP 'proxies'

BASHAARAT MASOOD
SRINAGAR, APRIL 30

THE ELECTION Commission Tuesday postponed voting in the Anantnag-Rajouri constituency in J&K to May 25. It was previously scheduled for May 7.

The EC said it had received representations from different political parties to move the date of polling due to logistical issues and "natural barrier of connectivity" that hindered campaigning, which is "tantamount to lack of fair opportunities for the contesting candidates". However, two major parties — the PDP and the NC — had opposed the move.

The BJP, the Kashmir Apni Party, and the People's Conference were among the parties that petitioned the EC to postpone the voting day. They had pointed out that Mughal Road, the only road link between the constituency's two parts – South Kashmir in the Valley and Pir Panjal in Jammu – was closed for traffic for several days due to incessant rain.

Former J&K chief minister Mehbooba Mufti of the PDP, who is contesting from the Anantnag-Rajouri Lok Sabha seat, said the decision was part of an attempt by the BJP to prevent her from winning and to "help the proxies" of the BJP.

While the BJP has not fielded any candidate from the seat, it has hinted that it would support the Apni Party candidate, Zafar Iqbal Manhas.

However, the main contest in the constituency is expected to be between PDP's Mufti and NC candidate Mian Altaf. There are a total of 21 candidates in the fray.

Criticising the EC decision, Mehbooba said, "They (BJP) are frustrated after seeing the response of people in my roadshows and meetings, and have thus ganged up against me. They don't want Mehbooba Mufti in Parliament as she will speak truth to power there."

PARTY HOPPERS

MP: Six-time MLA quits Congress, joins BJP

Bhopal: In a major setback to the Congress, its former minister and six-time MLA from Madhya Pradesh Ramniwas Rawat joined the BJP at a time when senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi is campaigning in the state.

Rawat (64) is the sitting MLA from Vijaypur and one of the prominent Congress leaders in the Gwalior-Chambal region.

Rawat joined the BJP in the presence of Chief Minister Mohan Yadav, Madhya Pradesh party president VD Sharma and former home minister Narottam Mishra.

Ramniwas Rawat

Rawat is the second sitting Congress MLA to join the BJP since the elections were announced. On March 29, Kamlesh Shah, MLA from the Amarwada assembly segment in Chhindwara, considered close to former CM Kamal Nath, joined the BJP. **ENS**

MASS CONNECT

Homemakers, farmers, tailor among YSRCP 'star campaigners'

PUSHKAR BANAKAR
VISAKHAPATNAM, APRIL 30

IN WHAT seemed to be Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) supremo Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy's bid to walk the talk, the YSRCP on Tuesday named 12 "common voters" in its list of 37 "star campaigners" for the simultaneous Lok Sabha and Assembly elections in the state.

During one of his Siddham campaign meetings held across four districts last month, Jagan had told a rally that voters would be his party's star campaigners in the upcoming polls. "My true star campaigners are the people of Andhra Pradesh, and I don't want anyone else," he had said at the launch of the Siddham campaign.

The YSRCP said these 12 star campaigners represented every section of the nearly 5 crore people of Andhra Pradesh. "It is the YSRCP's belief that every person of the state is their star campaigner. These individuals, hailing from humble backgrounds, will campaign for the party on the ground and help propagate Jagan's message till the last mile," the party said.

Most of the 12 voters-turned-YSRCP star campaigners are village-level or ward-based party volunteers in their respective areas. A common factor among them is that they had expressed interest in campaigning for the ruling party.

Challa Eshwari, a homemaker from Mylavaram in the NTR district, said she was "pleasantly surprised" when she received a call on Sunday asking her to be present in Vijayawada at the YSRCP's camp office. "I am very grateful I have been given the opportunity to help the YSRCP in the election. I am a beneficiary of the Jagan government's schemes and my life has vastly improved since the TDP was voted out," she said.

Of the 12 star campaigners, eight are party volunteers – including four homemakers, two farmers, one auto driver and one tailor – while the remaining four are former government volunteers. They are a part of a list that include party bigwigs like Jagan, state education minister Botsa Satyanarayana and Rajya Sabha MP V Vijayasai Reddy, among others.

Five of the 12 'common voters' among the YSRCP's star campaigners at the party office in Vijayawada, Tuesday. *Express*

Terming the move as "historic", the YSRCP's Visakhapatnam candidate and ex-MP Botsa Jhansi Lakshmi said, "People are the foundation of a democracy. So it is natural that common citizens be made star campaigners. Like Jagan said, we do not need anyone else other than the people."

A ward volunteer from Nellore, Syed Anwar was unaware till Monday that he was picked as one of the YSRCP's star campaigners. "I was asked to come to Vijayawada. I had no idea about it. I had always wanted to contribute to the YSRCP's electioneering as I saw first-hand the development in our town. The drains and infrastructure has improved over the past five years," he said.

However, none of these star campaigners has been assigned any specific tasks so far. The YSRCP has asked them to accompany local and state party leaders when they campaign in their constituencies. "I have been asked to be present during the rallies of MPs, MLAs and ministers. Apart from that, I have not been assigned any specific tasks. I think our vocal support to the party during our volunteering activities has landed us this role," said Anantha Lakshmi, a homemaker from Rajahmundry.

The YSRCP suffered a setback last month over the volunteer system after the Election Commission directed the state government to stop all political activity of village- and ward-level volunteers.

AstraZeneca admits rare side effect of vaccine; benefits outweighed the risk, say Indian experts

ANONNA DUTT
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

GLOBAL PHARMACEUTICAL manufacturer AstraZeneca has admitted that its Covid-19 vaccine, developed by researchers from Oxford University, can cause a rare side effect of blood clotting and low platelet count.

This admission, which has been made in British courts, is likely to open doors for settlements worth millions of pounds for the petitioners. "It is admitted that the AZ vaccine can, in very rare cases, cause Thrombosis with Thrombocytopenia Syndrome (TTS)," according to a report in the UK-based The Telegraph.

While this may be the first admission in the court, TTS has been well-documented and accepted in scientific literature. It is a condition that leads to blood clots, combined with low platelet count, after immunisation with vaccines that use an adenovirus platform such as AstraZeneca's Vaxzevria and Johnson & Johnson's Janssen. The first cases came to light within months of the vaccination drives in Europe, with some countries halting the use of the AstraZeneca vaccine for a while.

In India, the same vaccine, called Covishield and manufactured by Pune-based Serum Institute, has been administered through 175 crore doses. As per the Indian government committee on Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFI), at least 36 cases of TTS (from across several government reports) have been vetted and confirmed to have been caused due to Covishield.

The last report of the committee, which was made public in June last year, showed 18 deaths among the 36 cases. Almost all of these TTS cases pertain to 2021 — the first year of Covid-19 vaccination in India.

The submission made by AstraZeneca is significant. However, it is unlikely that any affected Indian patient can join the British petition as there are legal hurdles such as approvals from different regulators and the product being manufactured by an Indian company, which is subject to Indian jurisdiction and local laws. According to a senior Health Ministry official, who was part of the discussions on the country's vaccination drive, "TTS is a very rare side effect, rarer still in Indians and South Asians as compared to Europeans. But there is enough evidence to show that vaccination saved lives — the benefits outweighed the risks."

Besides, the package insert for Covishield came with a warning about the rare condition. "A very rare and serious (side effect)... has been observed following vaccination with ChAdOx1 nCoV-19 Corona Virus Vaccine (Recombinant) during post-authorisation use… Cases have occurred in patients with a previous history of thrombosis, as well as in patients with autoimmune disorders. The benefits and risks of vaccination should be considered in these patients."

The World Health Organization (WHO) puts the figure of TTS at 0.5 to 6.8 cases per 100,000 doses administered. Most instances happen within a month of receiving the shot. Younger women under the age of 60 years are at highest risk. The risk of TTS is also higher with the first dose, according to data.

In May 2021, The Indian Express had first reported that 26 potential thromboembolic events — formation of blood clots in vessels — had been reported in the country. The Health Ministry had then said that one clotting event per million doses was "minuscule" and that Covishield "continues to have a definite positive benefit-risk profile" with "tremendous potential to prevent infections and reduce deaths".

A 2022 study published in Lancet Global Health said an AstraZeneca standard safety monitoring then showed reporting rates of 8.1 TTS cases per million receiving the first dose and 2.3 TTS cases per million receiving the second dose. The study also showed that there was a geographic variation in the reporting of TTS, with the highest cases coming from Nordic countries and the lowest from Asian countries. TTS cases in the Nordic countries stood at 17.6 per million doses and 0.2 in Asian countries, according to the study.

"It is surprising that people are surprised about this now. The rare side effect was well documented and scientifically accepted even when the vaccination drives were going on. The benefit of vaccination at the height of the pandemic outweighed the risk," said virologist Dr Anurag Agarwal, dean of biosciences and health research at Trivedi School of Biosciences of Ashoka University. He said a case could be made for using other vaccines for younger women who were at a lower risk of severe disease at the time.

As to whether Indians need immunisation now, he said, "The antibody levels in the Indian population are very high at the moment — the virus has been circulating. There is no need for vaccination, unless someone is extremely immunocompromised. And, even then they should take the newer vaccines that can protect against subsequent variants like Omicron."

Gandhis for Amethi, Raebareli? Congress suspense continues

The Congress leadership wants both Rahul and Priyanka to contest the upcoming polls. *File*

MANOJ C G
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

THE UNUSUALLY long time the Congress is taking to name its candidates for the traditional Nehru-Gandhi family seats of Amethi and Raebareli is baffling party leaders and workers alike. Adding to the intrigue, sources claimed that both Rahul Gandhi and his sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra appear reluctant to contest, and last-minute efforts are said to be on to convince the two – or at least one of them – to enter the fray.

The Congress leadership wants both Rahul and Priyanka to contest and has not shortlisted any other name for the two seats, for which the window for filing nomination ends on May 3. Both constituencies vote on May 20.

A large section of the leadership believes that the Gandhis not contesting from the Hindi heartland would send a bad political message and so one of them will surely contest. Priyanka, if she contests, will be the eighth member of the Nehru-Gandhi family to enter electoral politics from the Congress. And three members of the Gandhi family will be in Parliament for the first time if she – in case she contests – and Rahul win their respective electoral battles. Their mother and Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi recently became Rajya Sabha member.

Sources say the perception about three members of the family being in Parliament is one aspect, which is said to be discussed. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP had been attacking the opposition INDIA bloc over dynasty politics, often arguing that almost all the parties in the alliance are controlled by families. Congress leaders who are in favour of the Gandhi siblings entering the fray argue that the BJP's line of attack would not change irrespective of them contesting or not.

But the concern is that the BJP's dynasty line of attack could sharpen if both Rahul and Priyanka contest. The other question which Rahul is said to be confronted with is the possibility of him winning both Amethi and Wayanad, which will force him to choose one seat and relinquish the other – one which sent him to Parliament for the first time in 2004 and he has represented thrice and another which ensured that he remains an MP in 2019.

Congress leaders play down such talk. "Indira Gandhi had won perhaps the most crucial election of her life from Chikkamagaluru in 1978. But she decided to contest from Medak and Raebareli in 1980 and after winning both she vacated Raebareli. Sonia Gandhi won from both Bellary and Amethi in 1999 but she left Bellary," one leader said. Sources said the party is hopeful of convincing Rahul, if not Priyanka.

A section of the party believes Priyanka should contest from Amethi against sitting MP and Union minister Smriti Irani and Rahul should move to Raebareli. At least one leader said the proposal continues to be on the discussion table. "Every seat is important. Amethi and Raebareli are no exception. We need the best candidates there," a leader said. Winning back Amethi and retaining Raebareli – seats which were held by Feroze, Indira, Rajiv and Sonia in the past — has more than symbolic value for Gandhi family.

The Congress had been winning Amethi and Raebareli on the trot since 1999 but suffered a huge setback in 2019 when Rahul, who won the Amethi seat thrice between 2004 and 2014, lost the seat by over 55,000 votes. While Sonia retained Raebareli, the lone Congress candidate who managed to win in Uttar Pradesh, her margin came down to 1.69 lakh votes from 3.52 lakh in 2014. Sonia had been winning the seat since 2004.

The Gandhi family has a long association with both Amethi and Raebareli. Feroze Gandhi represented Raebareli way back in 1952 and 1957. Although Indira entered Parliament as a Rajya Sabha member in 1964, her Lok Sabha debut was from Raebareli in 1967. She won the seat again in 1971 before losing to Raj Narain in 1977 in the elections post Emergency. In 1980, Indira contested from Raebareli and Medak in undivided Andhra Pradesh, won both and chose to retain the Medak seat.

The family's association with Amethi began in 1980 when Sanjay Gandhi entered Parliament from the seat on his electoral debut. After his death, Rajiv made his electoral debut from Amethi in 1981 and held onto the seat till his death in 1991. In 1991, Sonia's electoral debut too was from Amethi. In 2004, she shifted to Raebareli, making way for her son Rahul to make his electoral debut from the seat.

DECISION 2024

HC refuses urgent hearing of plea challenging BJP's Surat victory

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
AHMEDABAD, APRIL 30

THE GUJARAT High Court on Tuesday refused to grant an urgent hearing of a public interest litigation (PIL) challenging the declaration of BJP candidate Mukesh Dalal's unopposed election win from Surat. Chief Justice Sunita Agarwal pointed out that the grounds on which the petitioner is agitating would fall in the ambit of an election petition and not a PIL. "There is no urgency, according to us... you've approached the wrong forum," she underlined.

BJP nominee Dalal was declared as the winner on April 22, weeks before the May 7 Lok Sabha election in the state. While the nomination of the Congress candidate Nilesh Kumbhani, who has now been suspended by the party, was rejected; eight Independents contesting from the seat withdrew their nomination forms.

On Tuesday, an advocate appearing for the petitioner informed the court that the petitioner, Bhaveshbhai Patel, is a voter from Surat and the Election Commission of India -- the respondent -- has already given the winning certificate to the BJP candidate even before the polls were conducted. "There is always an option of negative voting to the voters which is not being given in this instance," the advocate said.

To this, Chief Justice Agarwal responded, "The law is that if you're making any dispute with regard to the election of any candidate for any reason, you've to file an election petition. You're highlighting a flaw in the process or procedure by which a candidate has been declared a winning candidate."

"So this argument falls within the jurisdiction of an election petition. When there's a statutory remedy, a PIL cannot be entertained. If a candidate is elected uncontested, he is also in the same position as a winning candidate who has been declared a winning candidate after the process of polling and counting of votes, he doesn't fall in any other different criteria and there is no provision in the Representation of the People Act to treat him differently, so don't make it a PIL issue....There is no urgency according to us, you've approached the wrong forum," the Chief Justice further said.

'EDUCATION IS GREATEST WEALTH'

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar inaugurated a school in Jaipur on Tuesday where he said education is the greatest gift for the society and the most effective medium to bring about a change. *PTI*

196 LMT wheat procured so far for central pool

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

THE GOVERNMENT has procured 196 lakh metric tonnes (LMT) of wheat for the Central Pool so far during the ongoing 2024-25 rabi marketing season, 10 LMT higher than the annual requirement under the National Food Security Act and other welfare schemes, a top official said Tuesday.

This comes as the Government expects to procure 310-320 LMT of wheat during the ongoing rabi marketing season. Officials said that while the current level of procurement is sufficient to meet the annual requirement and maintain buffer norms, the additional stocks can help the Centre hold open-market sales to cool down retail prices should there be a spike.

As on April 1, 2024 the wheat stock in the Central Pool stood at 75.03 LMT. As per the buffer norms, a stock of 74.6 LMT of wheat is required to be maintained as on April 1 every year. Then on July 1, the buffer requirement is set at 275 LMT.

"The wheat procurement is going on smoothly. Till April 30 evening, 196 LMT wheat procurement has been made, whereas the total requirement of PMGKAY [Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana] and all other welfare schemes of the government of India is just 186 LMT," Food Corporation of India (FCI) chairman Ashok K K Meena said. FCI is the Centre's nodal procurement agency. Of the 196 LMT wheat procured till April 30, Punjab accounted for the highest — 93 LMT. Haryana was next at about 60 LMT, likely to touch 68 LMT by the end of the procurement season.

Cong fields G-23 leaders Anand Sharma from Kangra, Raj Babbar from Gurgaon

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, GURGAON, APRIL 30

Anand Sharma and Raj Babbar.

THE CONGRESS on Tuesday fielded former Union minister Anand Sharma from Kangra in Himachal Pradesh and actor-turned-politician Raj Babbar from the Gurgaon Lok Sabha seat in Haryana.

Satpal Raizada, a former Congress MLA from Himachal Pradesh's Una, has been fielded from the Hamirpur Lok Sabha seat in the state and will contest the general elections against BJP candidate and Union minister Anurag Thakur. The Congress has also fielded Bhushan Patil from the Mumbai North constituency in Maharashtra.

This is the first Lok Sabha election that Sharma will be contesting. He was elected to the Rajya Sabha for the first time in April 1984 and has been a member of the Upper House of Parliament for four terms.

The decision to field Sharma, a prominent member of the G-23 group of Congress leaders, comes a month after he wrote to party president Mallikarjun Kharge questioning the party's aggressive campaign pitch for holding a caste census. He had been upset with the leadership for not fielding him from Himachal Pradesh in the recent Rajya Sabha elections. According to Congress insiders, most of the party MLAs from Vidhan Sabha Assemblies falling in Kangra parliamentary seat are close to Anand Sharma. They suggested his name to CM Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, who further conveyed it to the high command. His Brahmin background also played a role in him being chosen as the Kangra candidate as the BJP has fielded a Brahmin face, Rajiv Bhardwaj, ignoring the sitting MP Kishan Kapoor.

Raj Babbar, who has been fielded from Gurgaon, was also a signatory to the letter written by the G-23 leaders group to then Congress president Sonia Gandhi in 2020 seeking organisational reforms. Hailing from Uttar Pradesh, Babbar, an established actor who has starred in several Bollywood and Punjabi films, is a five-time MP (three-time member of Lok Sabha and a two-time member of Rajya Sabha). He is also a former chief of Congress' UP unit.

Hamirpur candidate Raizada won the 2017 Assembly elections and became an MLA for the first time. Congress's Mumbai vice-president Patil will take on BJP candidate and Union Minister Piyush Goyal from Mumbai North Lok Sabha seat, which is considered one of the strongholds of the BJP with a sizeable Gujarati population.

Residents' plight didn't change, so hasn't their decision to boycott polls

300-odd households in the village boycotted 2019 Lok Sabha and 2020 Bihar polls over lack of government initiative to mitigate their sorrows from Kosi river

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY
KOSI (SUPAUL), APRIL 30

FOR THE past two elections, residents of Khokhanaha village in Supaul's Kosi region have not voted. The 300-odd households in the village strategically boycotted the 2019 Lok Sabha polls and the 2020 Bihar Assembly polls in anger against all political parties for their apathy towards their plight.

A few years ago, a rampaging Kosi River cut through the village, sweeping away many households and farms. A year ago, it also cut off the village, along with four others, from Supaul. These villages now exist on an island between two streams of the Kosi. Though the Supaul town is just five kilometres away on the map, it can take an entire day to make a visit to the town for even basic necessities.

"Our state is worse than nomads… they also stay in one place for a couple of years. We become homeless every year. After the government did not do anything to help us, we decided to boycott polls, but nothing happened even after that," says Mukesh Kumar Yadav, 26, a resident of the village.

Supaul will go to polls on May 7 and decide the fate of incumbent MP from JDU, Dileshwar Kamait, and his challenger from RJD Chandrahas Chaupal.

Residents of Khokhanaha and adjacent villages of Belagot, Begumganj, Panchagachhiya and Siswa complain that the government has not only been apathetic towards arranging proper compensation for loss of land and livelihood, but has also done nothing to rein in the river's fury. The Kosi belt suffers floods every year with lakhs living in the region losing their crops, fields, houses and even land when the river changes course. To make matters worse, basic amenities such as electricity, primary healthcare and high schools are missing from these villages.

The women tend to be the worst sufferers. "It is very difficult to live here. When the floods hit, there is water till above our knees in the village. It is difficult to cook as I have no gas cylinder. We spread a tin sheet on a wooden plank and then place the chulha. Schools also remain closed for three months during the rains and it becomes difficult to manage children. Neta log bas vote maangne aate hain," says Ramo Devi, 60, who belongs to the Kurmi cast.

Sushila Devi, 20, holding a newborn in her lap, says, "There are no doctors in the entire area. We have to carry children in this unforgiving heat and cross two streams, one after the other, on boats before we can reach the road that leads to Supaul. It takes the entire day as boats are not readily available and one has to walk several kilometres."

Another farmer Radhanand Yadav narrates an incident where a family in the village was made to run from pillar to post to get a birth certificate because their child was born in the village and not in the Supaul hospital. "Can a woman even reach the hospital from here after she develops labour pain," he asks.

Anita Devi, mother of a school goer in Khokhanaha, says, "The school that runs here is only till class five. There also, the teacher comes only occasionally. After class five, children have to cross the river to go to school."

The result is that many children drop out of school. Frequent floods also mean that farming in the belt is unpredictable.

"Last year, I sowed paddy and standing crops were swept away by the river. I got no compensation. In any case, for three months, you can't do any farming as everything gets submerged. That is why half the year, I work in Punjab as a farm labour," says Shivkumar Rishidev, a Dalit in Khokhanaha, underlining the all-pervasive migration from the region.

Almost every home has a young man working outside the state as a daily wager.

The tough conditions in the area have also meant that men find it difficult to get brides from outside and parents of women have to pay higher dowry for grooms that are not from the belt.

Villagers claim that the area even gave two MLAs, Yaduvansh Yadav and Aniruddha Yadav, but they too did not bring any relief.

"Nobody has done anything for the Kosi region. Modiji har jagah pul banwa diye lekin yahan ke liye kuchh nahin kiya," says Tribhuvan Kumar, 25, a Kurmi from Belagot village.

Bansidhar Yadav from Khokhanaha adds, "This time, too, we will take a call if we must boycott the polls again."

(Left) A boat taking villagers to the mainland; Khokhanaha village in Supaul's Kosi region in Bihar. *Express*

Days before 3rd NEET attempt, student dies by suicide in Kota

Jaipur: A 21-year-old preparing for the national medical entrance exam in Rajasthan's coaching hub, Kota, was found hanging in his room Tuesday. A suicide note saying, "I am sorry Papa. Me iss saal bhi nahi kar paya (I couldn't do it this year, either)" was recovered from the room, police said.

This comes just a two days after another student preparing for the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) died by suicide in Kota. The 2024 NEET-undergraduate exam is scheduled to be held on May 5.

The NEET coaching student who died Tuesday was identified as Bharat Rajput from Rajasthan's Dholpur district. Jawahar Nagar police station SI Gopal Singh said this year's exam would have been Bharat's third attempt, and that he had seemed "quite stressed out".

This year, nine coaching students have died by suicide in Kota. Last year, it was 29 – highest for the city in 10 years. **ENS**

Surpassing China, Indians now largest group of foreign students in Germany

DIVYA A
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

INDIA HAS surpassed China as the largest source of international students in Germany, with nearly 43,000 Indian nationals currently enrolled in various colleges and universities in the country.

The number has doubled in the past five years, with 42,578 Indian students registered in Germany in 2023, according to data shared by officials of the German Embassy in New Delhi. Comparatively, the number of Chinese students was 39,137, followed by Syria (15,563), Austria (14,762) and Turkey (14,732).

German Embassy officials believe the number of Indian students in the country will go up to 45,000 in 2024, though official data will be compiled only towards the year-end.

Georg Enzweiler, Deputy Head of Mission at the German Embassy, attributed this surge to the "low cost of education" in Germany as compared to other countries in the West. "Higher education in Germany is mostly public-funded, so the only cost that students have to bear is the living expenses," he said, adding that there has been a gradual change in the perception among Indian students who would avoid pursuing education in Germany, a 'non-English speaking' country.

While engineering programmes remain the most sought-after, there was also "a huge interest" among Indian students in other streams such as law, management, social sciences and mathematics, Enzweiler said.

With over 4.58 lakh students from abroad, Germany became the third most popular country for international students globally, and the first among non-English speaking countries, last year. For Indians, the country ranks eighth in the list of top 10 foreign study destinations, with the US, Canada, the UK and Australia retaining the top four spots.

Last year, India surpassed China to become the largest source of international graduate students in the US for the first time since 2009-10, with nearly 2.7 lakh Indian students in American institutions during the 2022-23 academic year, according to an Open Doors report. This was more than 25 per cent of the over one million foreign students in the US.

In Delhi, US Embassy officials have projected the number of Indian students in the US to reach a million by 2030. It said it had issued "a record high number" of student visas during June-August 2023.

Enzweiler said Germany was also issuing more visas, including Schengen and national visas, to Indians. Last year, he added, the German Embassy and its Consulates issued 1.72 lakh visas, an increase of 52,000 over the previous year. Visa appointment waiting times, which ran into a few weeks till last year, were also brought down to few days, he said.

Meanwhile, at a press briefing Tuesday, Romit Theophilus, India Director at German National Tourist Office, said Germany had also seen a significant increase in the number of Indian tourists in recent years.

The growth — of 32.6 per cent as compared to 2022 reflected the "rising interest among Indian travellers in exploring Germany's culture, landscapes and culinary experiences," he added.

The European Union recently announced that frequent travellers from India will now be able to apply for five-year multiple-entry Schengen visas, which puts them on par with "visa-free nationals".

Meanwhile, German Embassy officials said that the country's new Skilled Immigration Act will also offer Indian students a smoother pathway into the German labour market.

'CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS HAVE EVOLUTION'

SC: Art 39(b) shouldn't be read like there is no protection for pvt rights

ANANTHAKRISHNAN G
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

A NINE-JUDGE Constitution bench of the Supreme Court, which is examining the question whether private property would constitute material resources of the community as appearing in Article 39(b), on Tuesday said that the provision should not be interpreted in such a wide sense that there is no protection for private rights at all.

"We will be sending a message across because what we write will send a message of what India is and what India aspires to be...We do not want to dilute the constitutional social significance of 39 (b) and (c). It's there for us, given to us. At the same time, we should not be sending a message by interpreting 39(b) in such a wide sense that there is no protection of private rights in the society at all," Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud, presiding over the bench, said, adding "how will we attract private investment if we say that there is no protection of private rights".

Agreeing, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Maharashtra government, said that such an interpretation may be counter productive and "may not be in national interest".

The bench, also comprising Justices Hrishikesh Roy, B V Nagarathna, Sudhanshu Dhulia, J B Pardiwala, Manoj Misra, Rajesh Bindal, Satish Chandra Sharma and Augustine George Masih, is answering a reference whether the phrase "material resources of the community" in Article 39(b) of the Constitution includes what is privately owned.

The reference to the nine-judges had arisen in the context of the two views emerging in the 1978 decision in 'State of Karnataka And Anr Etc vs Shri Ranganatha Reddy & Anr'. The case dealt with the nationalisation of road transport services. One of the opinions by Justice V R Krishna Iyer was that material resources of the community would include both natural and man-made, publicly and privately owned resources.

Tuesday, the CJI said "the formulation by Justice Krishna Iyer is a little too extreme. What that says (is) since the community consists of individuals and therefore every individual is a part of the community, the material resources of the community would therefore also mean resources of the individual".

"That may be a little extreme. Also, we must now be cognisant of the fact that all these constitutional provisions have an evolution. We are now interpreting them not in the context of the India of the 1950s," the CJI pointed out.

"Nationalisation to disinvestment. That is the transition," Mehta was quick to add.

"Therefore, adopt an interpretation, which is in keeping with the changing nature of the times. At the same time, we must also have an enduring interpretation. So, it may be that certain resources which are invested in private individuals may still have some general bearing of public interest or welfare of the broad community, which requires regulation by the state," the CJI said.

The CJI added that "you can't attribute 39(b), at least in today's times as sort of a definition, which gives expression to an unbridled agenda of communism or socialism. That's not our Constitution today. We still protect private property, we still protect the right to carry on business... Therefore, our interpretation must also be nuanced to take care of what India is today and India is moving towards tomorrow".

Mehta said that "investment in the private sector is now boosting the common good than what was in 1949".

Washington Post made unwarranted imputations on serious matter: MEA

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

A DAY after US daily The Washington Post named an Indian official and claimed he was involved in the alleged assassination plot of Khalistan separatist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, India on Tuesday said that the report in question has made "unwarranted and unsubstantiated imputations on a serious matter".

In response to media queries on the report, MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said, "The report in question makes unwarranted and unsubstantiated imputations on a serious matter."

"There is an ongoing investigation of the High Level Committee set up by the Government of India to look into the security concerns shared by the US government on networks of organised criminals, terrorists and others. Speculative and irresponsible comments on it are not helpful," the MEA spokesperson said.

Pannun is one of the main leaders of the Khalistan movement and the legal adviser and spokesperson for Sikhs for Justice (SFJ), which aims to promote the idea of a separate Sikh state. The Indian government has declared Pannun a terrorist.

In Washington DC, while replying to questions on the report by The Washington Post, White House spokesperson Karine Jean-Pierre said an investigation is underway and the Department of Justice (DOJ) is running a criminal investigation.

"So anything specific to that I would have to refer you to the DOJ," she said.

The White House press secretary asserted that India is an important strategic partner of the United States and "we are pursuing an ambitious agenda to expand our cooperation in several areas".

About the investigative report on the alleged assassination plot, Jean-Pierre said, "We've been really consistent about that and have laid that out multiple times, whether it's a meeting here with the prime minister or a meeting abroad." "This is a serious matter and we're taking that very very seriously. The Government of India has been very clear with us that they are taking this seriously and will investigate," Jean-Pierre said.

"We expect accountability from the government based on that. But we are going to continue to raise our concerns. That's not going to stop. We're going to continue to raise our concerns directly, with the Indian government," the White House press secretary said.

ON HOME TURF

Samajwadi Party candidate Dimple Yadav with party candidate Shivpal Singh Yadav during a rally for Lok Sabha elections, in Uttar Pradesh's Mainpuri on Tuesday. *Express*

Mevani aide, Gujarat AAP leader held for sharing Shah's fake video

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
AHMEDABAD, APRIL 30

AN AIDE of Congress MLA Jignesh Mevani and an AAP leader were on Tuesday arrested by the Ahmedabad cyber crime branch for allegedly uploading edited videos of Union Home Minister Amit Shah on various social media platforms with an intention to create caste conflict between reserved and unreserved caste groups.

Those arrested have been identified as Satish Vansola, a Congress worker and personal assistant to Mevani, and AAP's Dahod district head Rameshbhai Baria.

Vansola and Baria, who were produced before a magistrate, have been remanded for four days police custody, said Ahmedabad cyber crime ACP Hardik Makadiya. "We are sending their devices for forensic investigation. Prima facie, it appears that the accused received the edited video on certain WhatsApp groups and without verifying the contents of the video, they uploaded the same on social media. It may happen that the video was edited in some other part of India," Makadiya added.

According to the police, Palanpur resident Vansola (36) allegedly shared the edited video on Facebook on April 29 "with the intention of creating caste conflict between Scheduled Castes and unreserved castes with a view to affect the upcoming Lok Sabha elections". Dahod resident Baria (35) uploaded the video on April 27 on Facebook with similar alleged intentions, the police said.

Notably, multiple FIRs have been registered in various parts of the country over the alleged fake video of Shah.

The Delhi Police had on Monday summoned Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy in connection with the allegedly doctored video that was shared on social media handles of the Telangana Congress. Further, a Congress worker was arrested in Guwahati after he had posted the video on X.

In the said doctored video, which was widely circulated on various social media platforms, Shah is seen addressing a Telangana rally and saying that if the BJP forms a government, then they will end the SC, ST and OBC reservation.

In the original speech he had said that if the BJP comes to power, then they will end unconstitutional reservation given to Muslims as it's the rights of Telangana SC, ST and OBC, Karpe had said in his statement to the police complaint.

An FIR was lodged on April 29 based on the complaint of a police official of the cyber crime's social media monitoring cell for offences under various sections of the IPC and the IT act.

Meanwhile, the Congress and AAP issued statements Tuesday raising questions over the arrests. **WITH PTI INPUT**

Patanjali misleading ads: SC quizzes Uttarakhand body for acting only after its intervention

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

THE SUPREME Court on Tuesday questioned the Uttarakhand State Licencing Authority (SLA) over its response to allegations of misleading claims by Patanjali Ayurved Ltd and said it had woken up only after the court's intervention in the matter.

A bench of Justices Hima Kohli and Ahsanuddin Amanullah also took serious note of the submissions of the firm's counsel---senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi---that the president of the Indian Medical Association (IMA) R V Asokan had given an interview criticising the Supreme Court for seeking answers from the association about the action it had taken against its members, who allegedly endorsed medicines to patients for valuable considerations.

Appearing for the state government, senior advocate Dhruv Mehta referred to the SLA's affidavit which said the authority had "suspended… with immediate effect...manufacturing licences for 14… products" of Patanjali Ayurved Ltd and Divya Pharmacy "for repeated violations" under the Drugs and Cosmetic Rules, 1945.

Justice Kohli said, "long and short of it is when you want to move, you move like lightning, if you don't want to move, you drag your feet forever and ever."

"What you should have done in routine, and we didn't say three days in accordance with law, You should have done that much earlier," Justice Kohli added.

Hearing a plea by the IMA accusing Patanjali and Divya Pharmacy of making misleading claims regarding treatments, the bench had on April 10 asked the SLA to explain what action it had taken in the matter.

On Tuesday, Rohatgi told the bench that he had come across a "very disturbing interview given by the President of the IMA" to the Economic Times newspaper.

"He says why has the court turned its fingers at us... We have done a great job...," said the senior counsel adding , "this is direct interference in the course of proceedings in the case," said Rohatgi.

The bench asked him to bring the interview on record. "This is more serious... be prepared for more serious consequences," Justice Amanullah told the IMA counsel who said he wasn't aware of the interview.

The SC also noted that only the newspaper cuttings of the public apologies were filed and said it wanted to see the entire page to know the size of the public notice. The court listed the matter for hearing on May 7.

Meitei women vigilantes clash with security forces, 'snatch' 11 detainees: Police

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
GUWAHATI, APRIL 30

THE DETENTION of armed miscreants and the seizure of weapons from them in Manipur's Bishnupur led to a confrontation between Meira Paibis (Meitei women vigilantes) and security forces early Tuesday morning. The security personnel had to open fire to disperse the crowd but the men detained by the security forces were "snatched" by the agitators.

According to a statement by the Manipur police, a column of the Army's Mahar Regiment intercepted and detained 11 "armed miscreants" dressed in police fatigues and recovered several guns, grenades and ammunitions from them. The agitating women demanded the release of the detained men and the return of the seized arms, saying that they oppose the seizure of arms till the end of the conflict. According to a security source, the Army column was blocked by the women in Kumbi in Bishnupur, with some women lying on the road and with a vehicle placed on the road.

The crowd later dispersed after additional reinforcements – including the RAF – were brought in and a team led by Bishnupur SP Ravikumar and Thanga MLA T Robindro arrived at the spot.

CPM's Jayarajan sends legal notice against Kerala BJP, Cong leaders

Thiruvananthapuram: LDF convener and CPI(M) central committee member EP Jayarajan sent a legal notice on Tuesday against BJP leader Sobha Surendran, KPCC president K Sudhakaran, and a middleman T G Nandakumar, alleging they have carried out false propaganda after hatching a conspiracy to insult him and his party.

Jayarajan in his notice refuted Surendran's assertion that he expressed interest in joining the BJP and demanded an apology, in the absence of which civil and criminal actions will be initiated, and a ₹2 crore compensation will be sought from them. **PTI**

South Asia to receive 'above normal' rain this year : SASCOF

ANJALI MARAR
BENGALURU, APRIL 30

ABOVE NORMAL rainfall is predicted along most of the South Asian countries during the upcoming monsoon season, commencement of which is little over a month away.

The forecast was shared at the 28th South Asian Climate Outlook Forum (SASCOF) meet which is underway in Pune.

"Except some northern and north, east and northeastern-parts, above-normal rainfall is expected over South Asia during June to September season this year. The seasonal rainfall is most likely to be normal," the SASCOF rainfall outlook 2024 consensus stated.

This year's southwest monsoon outlook consensus statement was jointly prepared by weather scientists representing nine national meteorological and hydrological services in this region.

The SASCOF rainfall forecast is in line with the first stage southwest monsoon rainfall forecast released by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) a fortnight ago.

Most of Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh and central Bhutan will receive normal or above rainfall during the southwest monsoon season.

Normal rainfall is predicted along Afghanistan, remaining areas of Bhutan and large parts of Myanmar, except its southwest coast, the experts who participated in SASCOF-28, said.

Aiding good rainfall in the upcoming season, the SASCOF forum said, were multiple favourable ocean-atmospheric factors. The ongoing El Nino conditions, which commenced in June last year, was weakening.

"Currently, moderate El Nino conditions are prevailing along the equatorial Pacific Ocean. The conditions are likely to weaken further and El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO) neutral conditions shall develop during the early part of the monsoon season. Thereafter, La Nina conditions are likely to develop during the second-half of the monsoon season," SASCOF statement said.

Silt outside a house after flood water receded at Chogal Handwar in Kupwara district of North Kashmir Tuesday. *PTI*

El Nino is the warmer than normal sea conditions prevailing along the equatorial Pacific Ocean and is known to suppress the summer monsoon rainfall over India.

On the contrary, La Nina is the cooler sea conditions over the same region and is associated with normal or above rainfall during the southwest monsoon season.

There is a strong likelihood that the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) — the counterpart of the Pacific Ocean's ENSO in the Indian Ocean — would enter a positive phase, which positively influences the southwest monsoon over the region.

At present, IOD is in its neutral phase.

The sea surface temperatures naturally swing from El nino, ENSO neutral and La Nina from time-to-time.

Along with India and Bangladesh, many South Asian countries are experiencing extreme heat.

The SASCOF forecast on temperatures suggested that during the ongoing summer season, above normal day temperatures will be recorded over most regions.

West Afghanistan, northern and eastern Pakistan and adjoining Gujarat-Rajasthan, northern Maharashtra, coastal Karnataka and Kerala, Lakshadweep, southwest Sri Lanka,Nepal, Bhutan along with central and southern Myanmar will be among the worst affected areas.

Along with officials from IMD, other participants in the Pune meet included experts from the World Meteorological Organization, Japan Meteorological Agency, Korean Meteorological Agency, Meteorology Office, UK,International Research Institute for Climate and Society, Regional Integrated Multi-hazard Early-warning System, Lead Centre of LRFMME and the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology.

Bombay HC rejects bail plea of man accused of raping minor for years

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, APRIL 30

OBSERVING THAT granting bail to a man booked for repeatedly sexually raping a minor girl since she was about 10 years old would 'tantamount to further aggravate and fester wounds' of victim, which are still fresh in her mind, body and soul," the Bombay High Court rejected relief to him.

"The crime alleged to have been committed by the applicant is not only shocking to the conscience of any prudent man, but it is also obnoxious. Due to such a horrendous crime, the victim has turned into a nymphomaniac," the bench noted. The father of the victim reported the crime after the victim allegedly eloped with a boy in 2021, when she was 17 years old. While trying to search for her, the family found in her bedroom a handwritten notebook with 27 foolscap pages.

They were shocked to read in the notebook how when she was only in class 4, she was repeatedly subjected to forcible sexual intercourse by the bail applicant who also threatened her with death if she disclosed to anyone about the continuous rape. The bench noted that the accused was a former neighbour of victim's family, and observed that abusers are persons who are well known to the child.

While the accused's wife was granted bail by a special court, relief to the applicant was rejected, prompting him to approach the HC. The bench held that the "role of applicant's wife was quite apparent as she had abetted and intentionally aided illegal acts".

THE EDITORIAL PAGE

WORDLY WISE

THE GREATEST DECEPTION MEN SUFFER IS FROM THEIR OWN OPINIONS.

— LEONARDO DA VINCI

The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM

Indian economy has fared better than expected, momentum is expected to continue. Concerns, especially over jobs, remain

LAST YEAR, THE Indian economy fared better than expected. The National Statistical Office's second advance estimates have pegged growth for the full year at 7.6 per cent. As per the International Monetary Fund's Regional Economic Outlook report, India has been a "source of repeated positive growth surprises". There are expectations of the growth momentum continuing this year as well. In its most recent World Economic Outlook, the IMF has upped its growth projections for the country. The Fund now expects the Indian economy to grow at 6.8 per cent in 2024-25, up from its earlier projection of 6.5 per cent. The Reserve Bank of India is more optimistic. In the last monetary policy committee meeting, the central bank had projected growth at 7 per cent. The Asian Development Bank has also upped its estimate of growth this year to 7 per cent. The World Bank has pegged the economy to grow at a marginally lower rate of 6.6 per cent in its recent South Asia Development update. Rating agency Crisil expects growth at 6.8 per cent, while ICRA is less optimistic at around 6.5 per cent. This range of GDP growth estimates from 6.5 to 7 per cent does suggest that the Indian economy is likely to remain the fastest growing large economy in the world.

There are several reasons to be optimistic about the country's growth prospects. As per the India Meteorological Department, the southwest monsoon this year is "most likely to be above normal". There is a 60 per cent chance of La Nina conditions developing by June-August as per the most recent update from the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. A good monsoon would bode well for food production, and, as a consequence, possibly provide a fillip to rural demand. There are also expectations of a firm pickup in private investment activity as capacity utilisation rates rise. Both bank and corporate balance sheets are healthy — bank non-performing loans fell to 3.2 per cent in September 2023, while the corporate debt-to-equity ratio has fallen from 1.16 in 2014-15 to 0.85 in 2022-23 as per a report from Nomura. However, there is a possibility of government capex slowing down in the first few months of the year due to the elections. On the trade front, while the IMF does expect world trade volume in both goods and services to pick up, uneven global growth and geopolitical conflicts do create uncertainty.

There are, however, several sources of concern. As per the IMF, growth in the global workforce will be driven by India and sub-Saharan Africa, with these regions accounting for "nearly two in every three entrants over the medium term". Creating more productive forms of employment opportunities for the millions entering the labour force each year should be a top priority for the next government. Alongside, it must also commit to the path of fiscal consolidation and bring down its debt.

SELECTED TO OFFICE

No contest in Surat and walkover in Indore raise questions. Election Commission should ask some hard questions

IN THE 2019 general election, a total of 5,67,636 electors voted for the first runners-up in the Surat and Indore Lok Sabha constituencies. While BJP candidates won both seats by massive margins (74.5 per cent of the vote in Surat and 65 per cent in Indore), they did so through the competitive, often adversarial, process that is an Indian election. Five years on, it could be argued that the BJP candidate from Surat, Mukesh Dalal, has beaten his predecessor's record: Congress candidate Nilesh Kumbhani's nomination form was rejected by the District Election Officer after three proposers submitted affidavits saying the signatures on the form were not theirs. Other candidates too withdrew, making Dalal the first MP-elect this election cycle. The lack of an electoral contest has robbed lakhs of voters in Surat of their franchise. Now, a similar saga is unfolding in Indore with Congress candidate Akshay Kanti Bam withdrawing his nomination. The developments in the two constituencies run counter to democratic principles and procedure.

The Congress has, predictably, accused the BJP of intimidating candidates and promising them inducements. It has said that it will contest the Surat election in court after June 4. In Indore, the fact that Akshay Kanti Bam has been photographed with BJP leader and state minister Kailash Vijayvargiya, who has also welcomed him to the party in a post on X, casts a shadow over the nomination and poll process. The potential erosion of faith in the electoral process is something that should worry the ruling party as much as the Opposition. A Member of Parliament who gains office unopposed — in practice or in effect — especially when there is no broader political consensus behind such an outcome, is in essence selected, not elected.

It is important to underline that Surat and Indore are anomalies. This general election, like all the ones before it, is being fought robustly across the length and breadth of India, with the Election Commission overseeing what is arguably the most challenging poll in the world. The EC must now live up to its well-deserved reputation as a watchdog. It needs to thoroughly investigate the dropping out of candidates in the two constituencies and put to rest any doubts about the sanctity of the nomination and poll process. In India's constitutional scheme, the voter is the ultimate source from which the entire edifice of the state derives authority and legitimacy. The fundamental right of every citizen to exercise their franchise should not be abridged.

AGONY AND THE ECSTACY

Paris's Louvre museum wants to shift the Mona Lisa to a room of its own. Will it solve its peculiar challenge?

THERE COULD BE an idea here for a museum edition of the popular board game Guess Who, if only product designers would take note. From across the museums of the world, pick out its most distinguished showcase. Now, do a picture gallery of its neighbours. Guess which artwork abuts Picasso's 1937 masterpiece *Guernica* in room number 205.10 of Madrid's Reina Sofia museum? Who flanks Vermeer's *Girl with a Pearl Earring* in Hague's Mauritshuis? As for the dour Lisa Gherardini in Louvre's Salle des États, known to the world as the mysterious *Mona Lisa*, is she touched by the miracle and festivities in Veronese's canvas that hangs opposite? *The Wedding Feast* at Cana is, after all, one of the finest representations of late Renaissance painting.

As things stand though, only the first among equals seems to have recall value. The rest of the artwork — a wealth of them really — stand forgotten in the mad rush to catch a glimpse of the celebrity among them. It's one of the reasons Paris's Louvre has announced its decision to shift the *Mona Lisa* from its present location to an exclusive subterranean room of its own. Museum authorities are in consultation with France's culture ministry for a potential solution that gives both Leonardo da Vinci's masterpiece and those of other Renaissance masters currently sharing space with it, maximum display. According to the museum's estimate, about 80 per cent of its daily footfalls are for the *Mona Lisa*. In 2023, the museum had close to 8.9 million visitors.

A large part of contemporary museum experience involves a negotiation with new, participatory modes of cultural consumption. In 2023, for instance, after three decades, the Reina Sofia allowed for the *Guernica* to be photographed. From selfie-taking hordes to environmentalists hurling soup as protest, to the fleeting, underwhelming glimpse of the painting, wondering why the prima donna of the art world is such a letdown, the *Mona Lisa*'s particular challenge has been multi-pronged. A room of its own might allow more elbow room for such deliberations.

The new productive force

Modernising technological foundation of economy and national security must be a priority for next government

RAJA MANDALA

BY C RAJA MOHAN

TECHNOLOGY POLICY IS arguably too esoteric to figure in India's election discourse this season. But the next government in Delhi will have its hands full in dealing with the impact of the rapidly unfolding technological changes on the major economies, the geopolitical rivalry between them, and the global governance of artificial intelligence, space industrialisation, and the bioeconomy. Above all, the next government will have to focus on a wide range of internal reforms to make India ready to gain command over emerging technologies.

The rest of the world is not waiting. Consider the massive new campaign in China on mastering the "new productive forces". The Chinese Communist Party's new campaign is quite central to Beijing's current ambition to overtake Washington in the production of advanced science and technology and rise to the top of the global power hierarchy. The notion of productive forces — or technological means of production — and how they drive social and political transformations is central to classical communist theory.

President Xi launched the current usage of the term last September during a visit to China's old industrial heartland in the northeast of the country. The location chosen for the speech was about turning the north-eastern rust belt into a shining tech belt. Since then, the term has acquired a near-mystical quality and has found its way into the canon of "Xi Jinping Thought".

In a work report presented in March to the National People's Council, Prime Minister Li Qiang promised a "new leap forward" by supporting advanced technology sectors, including electric vehicles, new materials, commercial spaceflight, quantum technology and life sciences.

The idea that China should move from the labour-intensive production of the last century to a more technology-intensive economy has been around for a while. President Xi's predecessor, Hu Jintao, talked about the importance of "scientific development", stressing the importance of technology and innovation in moving to a higher stage of development and the building of a "harmonious society".

> In India, science and technology have long been a major part of its developmental strategy. Over the last decade, we have seen Prime Minister Narendra Modi leverage digital technologies for the delivery of services, emphasise investments in renewable energy, focus on a mission mode to put India back on the map of semiconductor production, and develop a strategy for the acceleration of India's AI capabilities. Technology has also figured prominently in the Modi government's foreign policy — especially in making it a key element of building strategic partnerships with the US and Europe.

As Xi stokes up China's nationalism and seeks to reduce reliance on foreign technologies, full control over the new productive forces has become a major strategic objective for Beijing. China has made impressive advances under Xi and has acquired dominance over some sectors like solar panels and battery storage. It also lags well behind the US in several other areas including semiconductor production and the innovations in generative AI.

The new obsession with technology policy is not limited to China; the question of mastering the technological revolution animates all major economies. In the last few years, President Joe Biden has focused intensely on regaining its leadership in the advanced technology sectors.

The Biden administration successfully mobilised bipartisan support in the US Congress to pass three pieces of legislation — the Infrastructure Investment Act, the CHIPS Act, and the Inflation Reduction Act. Together, they form a muscular industrial policy — long taboo in the US economic discourse — aimed at renewing American leadership in advanced technologies.

It has also sought to limit the support of US capital to Chinese technological development and restrict advanced technology exports from the US and its allies to Beijing. The US is also trying to develop new global technology coalitions with its friends and partners, including the Quadrilateral forum with Australia, India, and Japan, and the so-called Chip-4 alliance between the US and three leading semiconductor producers — Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. It is also building deep bilateral partnerships in critical and emerging technologies with India (the iCET).

In a major speech at the Sorbonne University in Paris last week, French President Emmanuel Macron talked of the urgent need for Europe to reclaim a major spot in the distribution of global technological power. Calling for strengthening of Europe's "industrial and technological sovereignty" and closing the gap with the US and China that are boosting their technological sectors with massive subsidies, Macron demanded big investments in AI, quantum computing, space, biotechnology, and such new energy technologies as green hydrogen and nuclear fusion.

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The BJP election manifesto has a section on technology and innovation that promises, among other things, to make India a leading space power, promote a robust national research and development (R&D) infrastructure, set up a research fund, and launch a new mission for quantum computing.

To keep pace with the new global race for mastery over the "new productive forces", though, Delhi needs to undertake a sweeping overhaul of its technology departments, significantly raise the national expenditure on R&D, and encourage greater participation of the private sector in the research, development, and production of modern technologies.

The entrenched S&T monopolies under the government created in the early years after Independence are out of sync with the imperatives of building a large technology-driven economy that India now aims for. Modernising the technological foundation of the Indian economy and national security must necessarily be at the top of the agenda for the next government if Delhi wants to be a part of the global map of "new and high-quality forces of production".

The writer is a contributing editor on international affairs for The Indian Express *and a visiting professor at the Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore*

THE REPUBLIC AND ITS PEOPLE

Saving the Constitution has become an electoral issue. This is heartening

D RAJA

FOR THE FIRST time in India's electoral history, saving the Constitution from the onslaught of the BJP and RSS has become as much an election issue as a core agenda of the people. The opening words of the Preamble — "We the People of India" — transmit unequivocally the idea that the people are united, regardless of religion, language and caste, and are resolved to constitute India into a "Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic".

People across the country are anxious because some BJP candidates contesting the Lok Sabha elections have reportedly hinted that their party's target of winning 400-plus seats is aimed at changing the Constitution. Dalits and other communities that have suffered due to the caste system fear that altering the Constitution would mean, among other things, removing reservation and affirmative action. Muslims too fear that the architecture of equality, liberty, and fraternity enshrined in the Constitution would be dismantled.

On November 30, 1949, four days after the Constituent Assembly adopted the Constitution, the RSS opposed it in an editorial in *Organiser*. It wrote, "The worst thing about the new Constitution of Bharat is that there is nothing Bharatiya about it... there is no trace of ancient Bharatiya constitutional laws, institutions, nomenclature, and phraseology in our Constitution; there is no mention of the unique constitutional development in ancient Bharat. Manu's Laws were written long before Lycurgus of Sparta or Solon of Persia. To this day, his laws enunciated in the Manusmriti excite the world's admiration and elicit spontaneous obedience and conformity. But to our constitutional pundits, that means nothing."

> In 1999, Atal Bihari Vajpayee's government proposed that the Constitution be reviewed. Many sections of society opposed this, and K R Narayanan, who was the President of India at the time, in a historic speech delivered on the occasion of our Republic's golden jubilee in 2000, said, 'Let us examine if the Constitution has failed us or we have failed the Constitution.'

In 1999, Atal Bihari Vajpayee's government proposed that the Constitution be reviewed. Many opposed this, and K R Narayanan, who was the President of India at the time, in a historic speech delivered on the occasion of our Republic's golden jubilee in 2000, said, "Let us examine if the Constitution has failed us or we have failed the Constitution." The Vajpayee government was forced to abandon the decision to review the Constitution and instead appointed a commission to review the workings of the Constitution.

After Modi became Prime Minister, he described the Constitution as a holy book. Yet, in 2017, one of his ministers, Anantkumar Hegde, said that the Constitution would be changed. He later apologised for his remarks. Last month, he said again that if the Modi regime returns to office after winning 400 plus seats, it would change the Constitution.

Even before this, last year, the Vice President of India, Jagdeep Dhankar repeatedly criticised the Basic Structure of the Constitution, held by the Supreme Court to be beyond the amending power of the Parliament. Even the Chairman of the Economic Advisory Council, Bibek Debroy, in an article published last year, gave a mischievous interpretation to a Chicago Law School study, which stated that the "mean life span" of written constitutions worldwide since 1789 is 17 years. He wanted our Constitution to be replaced by a new one, writing, "We should go back to the drawing board and start from first principles, asking what these words in the Preamble mean now: Socialist, secular, democratic, justice, liberty and equality."

It is against this background that we must see recent statements by BJP leaders like Anantkumar Hegde, Arun Govil, Lallu Singh, and Jyoti Mirdha regarding changes to the Constitution. In the face of this threat, people have come forward to make saving the Constitution an electoral issue. This is truly refreshing. We have seen how President Narayanan defended the Constitution from the BJP's assault. Now, the INDIA bloc has come together to do so. In the face of such resistance, the Prime Minister's statement that even Ambedkar himself cannot alter the Constitution sounds hollow. The Home Minister too expressed his newfound love for secularism when he said that the BJP would never change the Constitution and even the word "secular" would not be removed from the Preamble. Union Minister Nitin Gadkari was also forced to reiterate this.

Now that "We the People" are at the forefront of the movement to save the Constitution, the BJP and its leadership, which assails the Constitution, must be defeated in the elections.

The writer is general secretary, CPI

MAY 1, 1984, FORTY YEARS AGO

INDIAN EXPRESS

EX-PUNJAB COP KILLED

IN A SHOOT-OUT, terrorists killed Bachan Singh, retired deputy superintendent of police, and others in Amritsar. In another incident, unidentified persons hurled a hand grenade at a Central Reserve Police Force picket at Ferozepur, injuring three CRPF personnel. Bachan Singh was on the hitlist after he interrogated Bhai Amrik Singh, the right-hand man of Sikh leader J S Bhindranwale.

NO SIKH PERSONAL LAW

HOME MINISTER P C Sethi said that the government had been having "closed door" meetings with the Akalis to find a solution to the Punjab problem, but ruled out a separate personal law for the Sikhs. Sethi's assertion on the personal law issue came in his reply at the end of the debate in the Rajya Sabha on the National Security (Amendment) Bill, 1984.

BJP WALKOUT

NEW LT-GOVERNOR P G Gavai's maiden address at the opening session of the Delhi Metropolitan Council was marked by a walkout by the entire opposition. Leader of the opposition Madan Lal Khurana (BJP), said that the opposition was staging a walkout to protest against the Delhi Administration's failure in dealing with the extremist activities. Khurana said that the opposition's action was not aimed at insulting the new governor.

MIZORAM CM TUSSLE

ONCE IMPRISONED FOR being with the banned Mizo National Front, Lalthanhawla, on being elected leader of the Mizoram Congress (I) legislature party, staked his claim for being the next chief minister of the Union territory before the Lt-Governor HS Dubey. Brig T Sallo, who submitted his resignation, has been asked to continue till an alternative arrangement is made. His party, the Peoples Conference, was mauled in the elections.

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

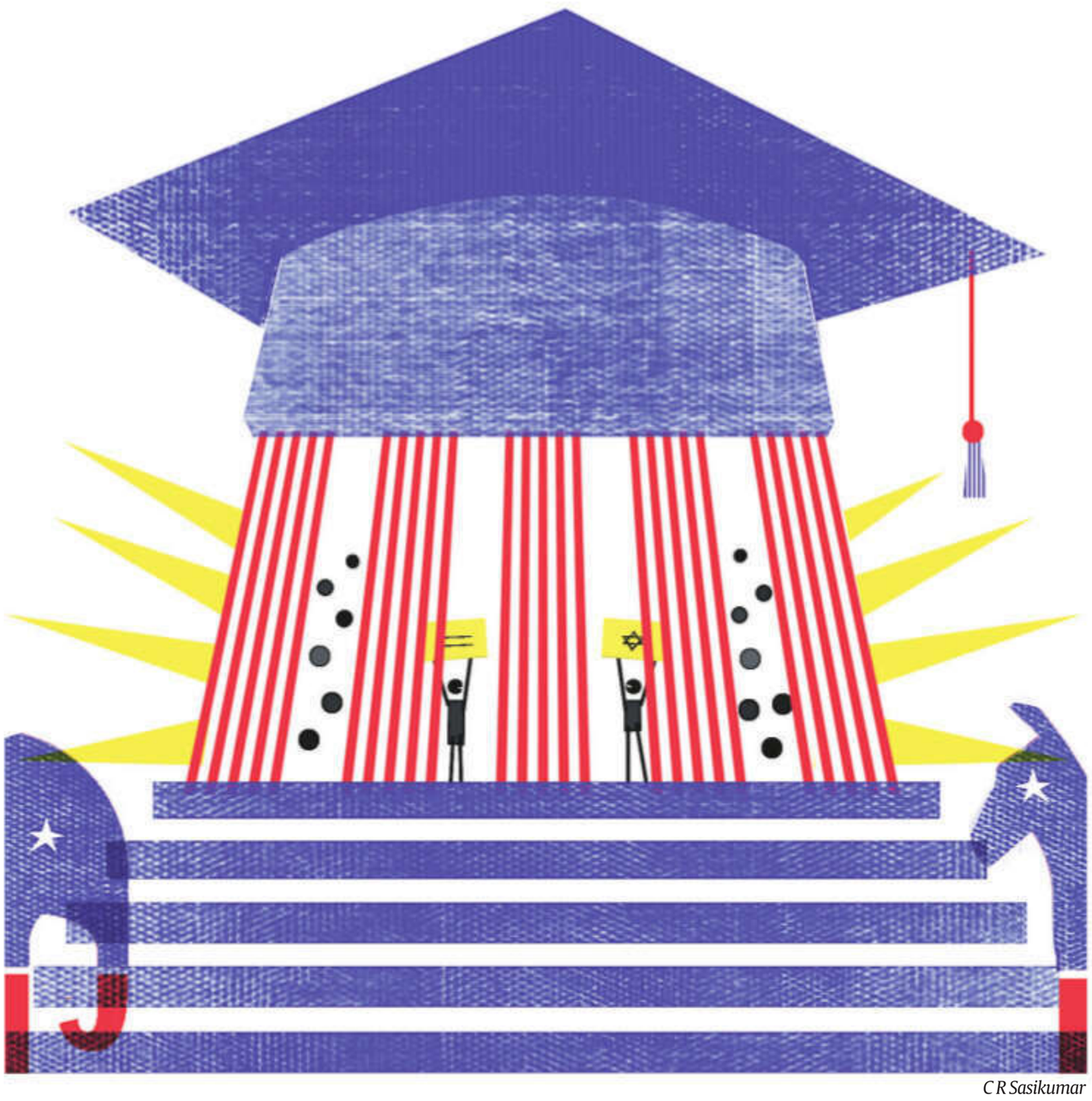
"The Conservatives' rightward journey on asylum, like that of hard-right governments elsewhere, risks taking the country to a dark place. In making the Rwanda policy so central, Mr Sunak has chosen an ugly straw to clutch at."

— THE GUARDIAN

Don't write off US campuses

US universities are better equipped to withstand opposing worldviews than most other institutions. But divisions beyond them have created breeding ground for political bottom-feeders

BHASKAR CHAKRAVORTI



C R Sasikumar

ARE AMERICA'S ENVIABLE institutions of higher learning coming apart? Viral videos of duelling student groups, police handcuffing protestors across campus quads and a parade of university presidents laid low by a single combative Republican legislator suggest a crisis of monumental proportions.

Before we write them off, remember, we have been on these troubled quads before. Consider April 23, 1968. The United States was still reeling from the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. and many parts of the country — especially Harlem, the neighbourhood around Columbia University — was a tinderbox. The campus, normally an island of calm with the madness of Manhattan just outside its wrought-iron gates, was anything but calm. Community activists opposing the building of a racially segregated university gym in Morningside Park abutting the campus joined hands with a student group that had taken issue with Columbia's connections with a think tank conducting weapons research for the Vietnam War. They ended up occupying five campus buildings and taking a dean hostage. On April 30, New York City police moved in to clear the occupied buildings. Arrests, violence, and suspensions followed, and the university closed for the balance of the academic year. Columbia inspired protests elsewhere, on and off campuses. Robert F Kennedy, the leading candidate for president from the Democratic party was assassinated in June, followed by anti-war riots at the Democratic National Convention in August. The cumulative effect was a backlash against chaos. The "law and order" Republican candidate, Richard Nixon, was elected president later that year.

Now, here we are in April 2024. Columbia's South Lawn looks about the same as it did 56 years ago, with students parked on it once again. And once again, the New York City police moved in, and arrested and removed students. The students were protesting the flattening of Gaza by Israel and the deaths of over 34,000 people, mostly innocent civilians. Israel was responding to the brutal attack by Hamas on its citizens on October 7, last year. Jewish students on campus were feeling threatened by the protests and feared a return of anti-Semitism. Pro-Palestinian students felt their voices were shut down more often by the administration. Just the day before, Columbia's president, Minouche Shafik, had committed to countering acts of anti-Semitism on campus; a swift invitation to the police to clear the grounds seemed like her way of showing she meant it. Now, protests in solidarity with Columbia students have broken out on campuses across the country, including my own.

While we can legitimately worry about the state of American universities, I have confidence in their resilience. Of all places, they are better equipped to withstand the collision of ideas, clashing groups, and opposing worldviews than most other institutions; and this is despite the evidence of groupthink and "cancel culture" at far too many top universities. In the aftermath of 1968, Columbia suffered a decline in applications and funding, but today many kids would sell their parents to attend the school and the university makes enough to build a $600 million campus for its business school. US universities are still places where breakthrough discoveries happen and there are instructors who are legends in the classroom. I am far less sanguine about the larger story unfolding beyond the quad and the wrought-iron gates.

For one, anger is rising over the cascading events in the Middle East within and beyond the university. Acts of hate have spiked: Complaints over both anti-Semitic acts and anti-Muslim incidents have gone up dramatically. The American Left has splintered. In a country that religiously upholds the right to freedom of speech many are self-censoring or speaking in hushed whispers for fear of offending others or being called out by one group or another.

This atmosphere offers a perfect breeding ground for political bottom-feeders. There are many of these, as America is gearing up for a presidential election in November. The ghosts of the 1968 elections sit at this year's electoral table as well. Of course, 1968 was an exceptional year in the US. Amidst a sense of chaos, far too many in the Democratic base chose not to turn up to vote and Nixon won with the clarity of his message. Also, Hubert Humphrey, the Democratic candidate and supporter of the Vietnam war alienated the Democratic base, especially the campus protestors.

We find ourselves, again, in an exceptional year. Donald Trump, the presumptive Republican candidate is juggling a criminal trial and 91 felony counts. He is looking to unseat the incumbent Joe Biden, who can point to more legislative accomplishments than most other presidents in recent memory, but is also the recipient of the lowest approval rating of any other first-term president besides Jimmy Carter. Once again, Trump's message is so clear he can wear it on a hat and its four-letter acronym, MAGA, is his entire vision for America. Biden's message cannot fit on a hat. His age turns off young voters. His support of the war in Gaza has alienated many in the Democratic base. And yes, that includes those campus protestors.

> instead of fretting over whether America's celebrated institutions of higher learning are coming apart, we ought to ask a more critical question: Are America and an already fragile world order at risk of coming apart? Imagine a Trump presidency 2.0 alongside the famine and flattening of Gaza, the fanning of flames across the Middle East, with war raging in Ukraine and a sword dangling over Taiwan. The world may not be resilient enough to survive two rounds of Trump. If Nixon left a permanent scar, Trump will leave a perpetually open wound.

So, instead of fretting over whether America's celebrated institutions of higher learning are coming apart, we ought to ask a more critical question: Are America and an already fragile world order at risk of coming apart? Imagine a Trump presidency 2.0 alongside the famine and flattening of Gaza, the fanning of flames across the Middle East, with war raging in Ukraine and a sword dangling over Taiwan. The world may not be resilient enough to survive two rounds of Trump. If Nixon left a permanent scar, Trump will leave a perpetually open wound.

We need to find a resolution to the crisis in Gaza and Israel not so much to save America's universities but to prevent further loss of innocent lives, to save America itself and the global order that hinges on the country not being led by an unhinged man. With a Trump return, campus protestors will have much more to protest about.

The writer is Dean of Global Business at The Fletcher School at Tufts University

A defector's rebellion

Arvinder Singh Lovely's resignation is symptomatic of all that is wrong with Congress party. It should invest in new faces

ASHUTOSH

DELHI CONGRESS PRESIDENT Arvinder Singh Lovely's resignation is symptomatic of all that is wrong with the party. Resignation of the state president is no ordinary event within the organisational scheme of things. In a democracy, elections are nothing less than war. Nothing could be a more serious betrayal than one of the senior lieutenants of the party leaving the battlefield when the party is engaged in an existential fight. This shows that the party in the state was led by people who had no commitment. For them, personal interest was paramount; they were not in the party for any cause, all they had was hunger for power and post. Opportunism was their only virtue and once that was denied, they were left with no choice but to resign.

When the Congress party ruled Delhi and Sheila Dixit was the chief minister for three consecutive terms, Lovely and Rajkumar Chauhan were given important portfolios in the cabinet. But once Congress was decimated by the Arvind Kejriwal-led AAP in 2013, they started looking for greener pastures. Lovely had left Congress and joined the BJP with much fanfare. But when he realised that the BJP would not oblige him with any plum post unless he proved his loyalty, he went back to Congress. It was wrong of the Congress high command to give him such an important responsibility during an election year. In my opinion, a defector is always a defector and, under no circumstances, should he be relied upon to deliver for the party, especially at a time of crisis.

The 2024 parliamentary elections are no ordinary elections — constitutionalism, democracy and the future of the country are at stake. It is said, and also believed by a section of society, that if Narendra Modi comes back as prime minister with a substantial majority then the Constitution can be changed. When every political party and leader in the Opposition is under the radar of investigating agencies, when the Enforcement Directorate (ED) can arrest one of the tallest leaders of the country — Arvind Kejriwal — and no Opposition leader is safe from its clutches, when the Congress bank account has been frozen, then circumstances demand politicians of steel who can face the crisis and fight like gladiators.

India is going through exceptional times and it has no need for chicken-hearted leaders. In Delhi, the Congress has been in dire straits since 2013 because of such leaders, who have neither mass appeal nor the appetite to fight for the party; who are, at best, self-seekers and opportunists. In contrast, AAP, despite its supreme leader Kejriwal being in jail, is fighting with a vengeance, unafraid, and with commitment to their leader. One can disagree with their unorthodox style of firefighting, but one can't discount the fact that, up to a large extent, they have succeeded in turning the crisis into an opportunity. Today, if there is sympathy for the AAP at the grassroots, credit should be given to its fighting spirit. Congress, in contrast, after losing to AAP in the 2013 assembly elections, made no effort to fight back. Rahul Gandhi should realise that a war is never won by paper tigers. Battle-hardened soldiers who are not scared to take the fight to the enemy are the need of the hour.

The last two parliamentary elections have proved that, on their own, AAP and Congress are no match for the BJP's might. No doubt, AAP won the assembly elections in 2015 and 2020 with unprecedented mandates. It also defeated the BJP in the last MCD elections. But in parliamentary elections, the Modi magic had no parallel. In the 2019 elections, the BJP not only won all seven seats but also received an unassailable 54 per cent vote share. On the other hand, not only did Congress draw a blank in both parliamentary elections (2014 and 2019), it failed to win a single seat in the two assembly elections as well. The party's performance in the MCD elections has also been pathetic. In this context, it would be naïve to think that Congress could work wonders if it contested the Lok Sabha elections on its own. The reality is that Congress is in a hopeless situation. The local unit has neither a leader of stature nor any imagination as to who could be relied upon to resurrect the party. The alliance with the AAP was a way out. Together, these two parties can offer a good fight to the BJP.

Today, the BJP is facing 10 years of anti-incumbency. Unemployment and price rise are huge issues. If the BJP thought that the consecration of the Ram Mandir would help the party sail through the election in the national capital, then it appears to be mistaken. The Hindu-Muslim binary is slowly but definitely losing its sheen. Mundane issues are dominating the daily discourse. Local BJP leaders have no appeal, their Lok Sabha candidates are rootless wonders. Without the Modi magic, they will struggle to win. Like in other parts of north and central India, candidates are not important — either people will vote for or against Modi.

My sympathies are with those who think and believe that Lovely and Chauhan's resignations will make or mar the elections. If they were so good, Congress would not have been in such a sorry state. If Congress is to grow in Delhi, then sooner rather than later, it should bid adieu to such leaders. It should learn from AAP, which invested in new leaders. The time for old faces and ideas, and party hoppers, is over.

The writer, a former member of AAP, is co-founder and editor of SatyaHindi and author of Hindu Rashtra

Look beyond the sexual abuse clips

Why blind eye to Prajwal Revanna? Is dignity of women of no relevance to them?

NAYANA MOTAMMA

IN A WORLD where he could have been anything, why did Prajwal Revanna, an incumbent Member of Parliament from Hassan in Karnataka, and the grandson of a former Prime Minister of India, become an alleged sexual predator? With his perverse acts, India is probably facing one of the biggest sexual abuse cases in its recent history. I must admit that I saw some of the videos and photos and my immediate reaction was one of horror.

Before I venture to express my opinion about Prajwal, let me reiterate that I am disturbed by the plight of all the women in the videos. I cannot fathom what they must be going through — the shame, their mental agony and that of their families and friends. These are women of different ages, professions and backgrounds caught in an unspeakable situation. Permanent damage has been inflicted on them. I, as a woman, a legislator (not just a woman legislator), first want to seek justice for these women in a manner that will give strength to them and their families. I do not want my words to sound hollow but our primary concern should be to find ways for these women to live with dignity after this incident. I lay stress on this because our politics and a section of our media will only end up chasing Prajwal for political mileage and headline-making material, forgetting the plight of the hundreds of women who became victims of an individual's perversion. We will have to raise our voices to ensure speedy justice to all.

Prajwal used his political position and influential family background to allegedly lure some of these women and, in some cases, coerce them. I leave the criminality of his offences to be determined by the Special Investigation Team set up by the Karnataka government. But I must point out that it is a crime to use a democratically elected position to abuse women in the manner that he did. He was elected to make the lives of the public better. Furthermore, if the allegations that Prajwal himself recorded these videos are correct, he is guilty of a double violation.

What needs to be also discussed is the moral bankruptcy of political parties. It appears that while Prajwal was seeking a Lok Sabha ticket for the second term to represent the BJP- JD(S) alliance, the top brass of both parties were aware of the recordings. However, they chose to ignore them despite a BJP leader from his district writing a letter to the party's state and national presidents expressing his dissent against Prajwal's candidature. Many were aware that Prajwal had sought the court's intervention months ago against the publication of the videos. This is where I seek answers from these political parties: Are their slogans of nari shakti, "Beti Bachao Beti Padao," empty political posturing? Is the dignity of the women in the videos of no relevance before an alliance partner perceived to be politically beneficial? I shudder to attempt an answer because I already know the answer.

Prajwal has reportedly fled the country. His family — it comprises a former prime minister, a former chief minister and a former minister — has reportedly distanced itself from him. But they are not addressing the real issue. What is also distressing is the fact that none of the leaders from the BJP, including its women leaders, have spoken up. The "elephant in the room" is not being addressed by the Prime Minister or the Union Minister of Women and Child Development.

Even though I represent the Congress and am currently an elected legislator under the party symbol, I urge every political party to not show selective outrage in cases of abuse against women involving a member of your party, especially when such a person is in a democratically-elected post. The moral onus on an elected representative is much more than that of an average citizen. It's upon us to ask why the former wrestling federation head still remains unpunished and to ensure that the women of Sandeshkhali get justice.

I wait to raise my voice in the Assembly which may soon go into session after the Lok Sabha elections. That's my platform to speak up, to question the political parties and their leadership, who turned a blind eye towards Prajwal's heinous acts. But you, as a citizen of this country, need to be outraged as your elected Member of Parliament has blatantly misused all the powers you entrusted him with. You need to outrage for all the women who have been left vulnerable due to one man's perversion. Speak up, India, before it's too late. Speak up for your women — I am here to speak up with you.

The writer is a Congress MLA from Karnataka

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Short on safety' (IE, April 30). The renewed spotlight on significantly high sugar, salt, and fat content in food in India has sparked a debate about public health and transparency. Some major business houses including Nestlé find themselves at the forefront of this debate. This allows all stakeholders to reaffirm their commitment to consumer well-being. Consumer awareness is pivotal in shaping food choices and driving industry practices. The food industry must reassess its practices and the food regulators strengthen their enforcement strategies. This need is particularly significant in India, where the burden of nutrition-related non-communicable diseases, such as diabetes, obesity and cardiovascular ailments, is rapidly escalating.

Khokan Das, *Kolkata*

GEN Z FOR RETRO

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Boring and fine' (IE, April 30). Change is cyclical; so is fashion. Simplicity was the way of life for previous generations and now it seems that newer generations are also fed up with overabundance and lightning-fast speeds. Innumerable distractions create an unsettling environment. No wonder the youth of today yearn for things for "relaxing" times. The word "newtro" defines Gen Z.

Devendra Awasthi, *Lucknow*

HARMFUL APPROACH

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Cries for help' (IE, April 29). The alleged death by suicide of at least seven students in Telengana is proof of the high-stress level that students are experiencing — in Telengana and beyond. Young students are highly impressionable and susceptible to heightened emotions due to hormonal and environmental changes. For their all-round development, all stakeholders such as parents, peers, teachers, activists and counselors must focus on providing conducive learning environments. Worrying solely about grades and not the child burdened with scoring them is an unhealthy approach that will yield unhealthy results.

Shantanu Bhadra, *New Delhi*

DANGER OF HEAT

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Health on a hot planet' (IE, April 26). With each year, global average temperature levels witness a new high. Apart from catalysing infectious diseases, heat stress also takes a sizable toll on human and animal lives. In 2023, the states of UP and Bihar alone accounted for more than 100 heat stroke-related deaths. Hitherto cooler places like Pune, Bangalore and the Northeast are nowadays subjected to IMD-indexed heatwave alerts. Soaring mercury levels dry up water reserves resulting in scarcity of potable water and associated health risks like dehydration and waterborne illnesses. No less is the risk of revival and reintroduction of deadly viruses and bacteria for the people.

Sagar Borade, *Mumbai*

Repolling to be held at booth in Ajmer on May 2

Jaipur: Repolling will be held at one voting booth in the Ajmer Lok Sabha constituency on May 2 as a register got misplaced, Rajasthan CEO Praveen Gupta said Tuesday. Voting in the constituency was held on April 26 in the second round of the seven-phase general elections.

Giving the reason for the repolling, he said the 17-A register (of voters) got misplaced by the presiding officer. **PTI**

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tenders are invited for execution of the following works by Divisional Railway Manager (Engg.) E.C. Railway, Dhanbad: **Sl. No.:** 1, **E-Tender No.:** 19-DHN-2024-25, **Name of the work with its location & completion period:** Supply of welding portion and other consumables under the jurisdiction of ADEN/2/GMO & ADEN/BRKA. **12 (Twelve) Months, Approx. cost of work (In Rs.) :** Rs. 1,21,48,122.04, **Sl. No.:** 2, **E-Tender No.:** 20-DHN-2024-25, **Name of the work with its location & completion period:** Replacement of pressure filter plant 1x15000 GPH capacity & 2x5000 GPH capacity at GMO & GJD and Provision of pressure filter plant 1x5000 GPH capacity at PNME for improving water supply arrangement at GMO, PNME & GJD station under Sr.DEN/2/DHN. **06 (six) Months, Approx. cost of work (In Rs.) :** Rs. 43,98,818.23, **Sl. No.:** 3, **E-Tender No.:** 21-DHN-2024-25, **Name of the work with its location & completion period:** Ballasting of Track including 300 mm Deep screening with BCM-17.088 Km and 250 mm Deep screening -13.608 Km & TBR (Tumouts)-48 Sets (1 in 8.5) and 11 Sets (1 in 12) under Sr. DEN/2/DHN. **12 (Twelve) Months, Approx. cost of work (In Rs.) :** Rs. 96,19,328.79, **Sl. No.:** 4, **E-Tender No.:** 22-DHN-2024-25, **Name of the work with its location & completion period:** Providing and erecting Metal beam crash barrier along the track to prevent CRO in GC Section (PKA-MPO) UP & DN Line of East Central Railway, Dhanbad Division. **04 (Four) Months, Approx. cost of work (In Rs.) :** Rs. 35,20,21,609.73, **Sl. No.:** 5, **E-Tender No.:** 23-DHN-2024-25, **Name of the work with its location & completion period:** DHN-Balance portion of "Construction of camp office cum ORH at Dhanbad" **04 (Four) Months, Approx. cost of work (In Rs.) :** Rs. 18,56,359.54, **All E-Tender Earnest Money (In Rs.):** Earnest Money is applicable as shown in **http://www.ireps.gov.in.** portal, **All E-Tender Date & Time for closing and opening of e-tender:** Date of closing of e-tender at **12:00 hours on 23.05.2024.**, Date of opening of e-tender from **12:30 hrs. on 23.05.2024**, **Website particulars:** http://www.ireps.gov.in No manual tender will be accepted against e-tendering.

Divisional Railway Manager (Engineering)/Dhanbad

PR/00188/DHN/ENGG/T/24-25/72

CISF takes over Parliament security from Delhi Police

150 Delhi Police personnel withdrawn

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

FROM MONDAY, the CISF personnel replaced the 150 personnel of the Delhi Police, including 54 women personnel, who were deployed for the security of Parliament complex following a security breach on December 13 last year.

The move was initiated on the request of the Lok Sabha Secretariat who asked the Security unit of the Delhi Police to withdraw its 150 personnel from the Parliament premises.

In an internal communication on April 26, Joint-Director (security ops) of Parliament asked the Delhi Police to withdraw their staff deployed at Parliament House Complex. It also said the CISF will take over as well as man the security points of Parliament from 8am from April 29 as per existing SOPs/security norms.

An official said around 75 personnel of Delhi Police are still working in Parliament and currently, they have asked all the 150 police personnel to report to the main security line in Bapudham for further deployment.

The move comes months after the Centre asked the CISF to carry out a survey of Parliament premises for regular deployment on a comprehensive pattern in the wake of a security breach by a few people, who entered Parliament Hall and threw smoke canisters on December 13 last year.

After conducting a detailed survey, a preliminary probe by a committee headed by CRPF DG Anish Dayal Singh found security lapses during frisking of visitors at the entry point. Eight security personnel of the Delhi Police were suspended for the breach. The CISF then sent a contingent of 140 CISF personnel, headed by an Assistant Commandant-rank officer, for training on Parliament premises before the Budget Session and they, along with Delhi Police, started frisking visitors.

NORTHERN RAILWAY

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Name of work and its location	30-Elect-14-T-2024-25-E3 Electrical work in connection with construction of new staff quarters in lieu of old quarters no. 421 (A, B, C & D), 422 (A, B, C & D) at GZN in the section of SSE/W/E/GZB under ADEN/GZB.		
Approximate Cost of work	₹39.05 lakh	Bid Security	₹78,100/-
Address of the office	Sr. Divl. Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi		
Date and Time of submission of Tender	27.05.2024 at 12:00 hrs.		
Opening of Tender	27.05.2024 at 12:00 hrs.	Website & Notice Board	www.ireps.gov.in & Sr. Divl. Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 1303/2024

NORTHERN RAILWAY

OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

No. 128-W/280/e Tender Notice/NIT-06-24-25-W-II **Dated :- 30.04.2024**

The Sr. Divisional Engineer-II, Northern Railway, Delhi Division invites E-Tender for the following work.

1	Name of work	Extension of tower Wagon shed at EMU Car shade GZB toward HWH End under ADEN/GZB jurisdiction of Sr. DEN-II
2	Approx cost of work	As per NIT on IREPS
3	Earnest Money to be Deposited	As per NIT on IREPS
4	Cost of tender document	Rs. 0.00/-
5	Date & Time of submission of tender bid and opening of tender	24.05.2024 at 15:00 Hrs.
6	Website particulars where complete details of tender documents can be seen	www.ireps.gov.in

• The tenderer/s must be registered on the Indian Railway E-Procurement system (IREPS) site i.e. **www.ireps.gov.in** for participating in the e-tender system. • For all terms and conditions please refer tender document. • No manual offers are acceptable. • Cost of tender document and Earnest money will be acceptable through net banking or payment gateway only. 1294/24

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Admiral Dinesh Tripathi takes charge as Chief of Naval Staff

Says Navy should remain ops-ready to deter adversaries

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

SHORTLY AFTER assuming charge as the 26th Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi on Tuesday said the Navy should remain operationally ready at all times to deter potential adversaries in view of the emerging challenges in the maritime domain.

Admiral Tripathi, regarded as a communication and electronic warfare specialist, took the reins of the force following the retirement of incumbent R Hari Kumar after a career spanning four decades.

An alumnus of the Sainik School Rewa, Admiral Tripathi was serving as the Vice Chief of the Naval Staff.

The admiral took charge of the Navy at a time when various strategic waterways, including the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, were witnessing security challenges, especially with Houthi militants targeting merchant ships in the region.

"Over the years, our Navy has evolved into a combat-ready, cohesive, credible, and future-proof force, for which I want to thank all the esteemed former Chiefs of the Navy," he told reporters.

"The existing and emerging challenges in the maritime domain mandate the Indian Navy to remain operationally ready to deter potential adversities at sea in peace and to win the war at sea when asked to do so," he said. "That will remain my singular focus and endeavour," the new Navy Chief said.

Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi (right) with outgoing Navy Chief Adm R Hari Kumar at South Block , Tuesday. *PTI*

Besides the situation in the Red Sea, there have been growing concerns in India's security establishment over China's increasing forays into the Indian Ocean Region.

"I will also strengthen the ongoing efforts of the Indian Navy towards 'Aatmanirbharta' (self-reliance), towards new technologies and becoming an important pillar of the nation's development towards our collective quest for 'Viksit Bharat'," he said.

Admiral Tripathi said he will also focus on issues relating to the force's human resources.

"My priority will be to upskill our human resource that is the men and women of our Navy and provide them with the best armament, training, professional environment and administrative support," Admiral Tripathi said.

Before taking charge, Admiral Tripathi paid tributes to the fallen heroes at the National War Memorial. He was accorded a ceremonial guard of honour at the lawns of the South Block at the Raisina Hills.

He also took blessings from his mother Rajni Tripathi, who was present at the South Block complex.

A communication and electronic warfare specialist, Admiral Tripathi has had a long and distinguished service spanning nearly 39 years.

NIT Durgapur director says 'forced to quit' after student's 'suicide'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, APRIL 30

FOLLOWING THE alleged suicide of a second-year mechanical engineering student, National Institute of Technology (NIT) Durgapur, Director, Arvind Choubey, has claimed that he was allegedly forced to resign from his post by protesting students on Monday.

Arpan Ghosh, 21, was found hanging in his hostel room on Sunday afternoon. Some students from the institute have alleged that when they took Ghosh to the health centre on the campus, the on-duty staff were late in attending to him. Ghosh was then taken to a private hospital, where doctors declared him dead on arrival.

Later, a large number of students staged a protest outside Choubey's office, alleging that Ghosh died because of "medical negligence".

Facing pressure from the protesting students, Choubey signed a 'resignation letter' that was then sent to the Union Ministry of Education. However, it is not yet clear whether the ministry has accepted his resignation. "I did not resign by choice. It is not my official resignation. I did it out of fear as nearly 2,000 students gathered around, shouting slogans. They ransacked my room and removed my name plate from the door. I was forced to sign the letter, written by them (students) and it was sent to the ministry," said Choubey.

The post-mortem of Ghosh was done at Asansol district hospital on Monday in the presence of his parents and relatives and staff and officials of NIT, Durgapur. The report is awaited, sources said.

Sri Sarada Math president Anandaprana dies at 98

Kolkata: Pravrajika Anandaprana Mataji, president of Sri Sarada Math and Ramakrishna Sarada Mission, died in Kolkata on Monday. She was 98.

Anandaprana had been suffering from age-related ailments and was discharged from RKM-run Ramakrishna Seva Pratisthan hospital some days back, a Math official said.

PM Narendra Modi said on X that Anandaprana will be remembered for her monumental service to society and inculcating values of spirituality among people. West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee condoled with Anandaprana's devotees across the world. **PTI**

IIMC Delhi to offer MA in Media Business, Strategic Comm

DIVYA A
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

THE INDIAN Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC), which was declared a deemed-to-be university earlier this year, will start offering postgraduate degree courses from the 2024-25 academic session.

As of now, IIMC only offers PG diploma courses in journalism and mass communication-related fields.

Two Master of Arts (MA) programmes — in Media Business Studies, and Strategic Communication — are set to be rolled out in August, IIMC Additional Director-General Nimish Rustagi told The Indian Express.

According to officials, these two MA courses will be offered with 40 seats each at IIMC's New Delhi campus. IMC, an autonomous body under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, has five regional centres.

Besides the designated 40 seats in each of the two courses, special quotas for experienced professionals and defence forces will also be offered, while the course fee will be set around Rs 2.4 lakh for one academic year, officials said.

These two MA courses will have 40 seats each

The Masters programme in Media Business Studies (MA-MBS) aims to meet the demand for professional managers in the media industry, they said. Over the years, media organisations have become complex and a need was felt for professionals who understand the industry amid fast-paced technology developments, the officials added.

On the other hand, the MA in Strategic Communication will prepare professionals to manage communications that aids in the fulfilment of strategic objectives of nations and organisations, the officials said.

This programme aims to churn out trained StratCom professionals who can serve across governments, public and private sectors, think tanks, and global companies in the domain.

NORTHERN RAILWAY

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE

The Sr. Divisional Engineer-II, Northern Railway, Delhi Division invites E-Tender for the following work.

1.	Name of Work	Provision of Anti-Crash Barrier on ROB in Railway portion in the section of SSE/W/MUT & SSE/W/MOZ under ADEN-MUT under SR. DEN-II
2.	Approx. Cost of work	As per NIT on IREPS
3.	Earnest Money to be Deposited	As per NIT on IREPS
4.	Cost of tender document	Rs. 0.00/-
5.	Date & Time of submission of tender bid and opening of tender.	24.05.2024 at 15:00 Hrs.
6.	Website particulars where complete details of tender documents can be seen.	www.ireps.gov.in

• The tenderer/s must be registered on the Indian Railway E-Procurement system (IREPS) site i.e. **www.ireps.gov.in** for participating in the e-tender system. • For all terms and conditions please refer tender document. • No manual offers are acceptable. • Cost of tender document and Earnest money will be acceptable through net banking or payment gateway only. **No. 128-W/280/e Tender Notice/NIT-07-24-25-W-II Dated: 30.04.2024**

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 1293/24

E-AUCTION LEASING FOR PARCEL SPACE

E-Auction contract for leasing out of VP & SLR. **Description:** Parcel Space in SLR coach (Single Compartment). **Rate Unit:** Per Trip Licensing Fee.

Auction Catalogue No. SLR-Leasing-041

Seq No.	Lot No./Category	Trips/Days
AA/1	15967-SLR-F1-RNY-LEDO-22-2 (Parcel-SLR)	313
AA/2	05861-SLR-R1-RNY-DKGN-22-3 (Parcel-SLR)	730
AA/3	05894-SLR-F2-RPAN-RNY-23-1 (Parcel-SLR)	730
AA/4	15818-SLR-F1-NHLN-SKHV-22-1 (Parcel-SLR)	730
AA/5	15816-SLR-F1-DKGN-GHY-22-3 (Parcel-SLR)	730
AA/6	22411-SLR-F1-NHLN-ANVT-22-2 (Parcel-SLR)	209
AA/7	15927-SLR-R1-RNY-NTSK-22-2 (Parcel-SLR)	417
AA/8	15927-SLR-F2-RNY-NTSK-22-2 (Parcel-SLR)	417
AA/9	15816-SLR-F2-DKGN-GHY-22-3 (Parcel-SLR)	730
AA/10	05862-SLR-F2-DKGN-RNY-22-2 (Parcel-SLR)	730
AA/11	15895-SLR-F2-RNY-MZS-22-3 (Parcel-SLR)	730
AA/12	15813-SLR-R1-DKGN-MZS-22-3 (Parcel-SLR)	730
AA/13	05801-SLR-F1-NBQ-GHY-23-1 (Parcel-SLR)	730
AA/14	05894-SLR-F1-RPAN-RNY-23-1 (Parcel-SLR)	730
AA/15	05893-SLR-R1-RNY-RPAN-23-1 (Parcel-SLR)	730
AA/16	15967-SLR-R1-RNY-LEDO-22-2 (Parcel-SLR)	313
AA/17	15895-SLR-R1-RNY-MZS-22-3 (Parcel-SLR)	730
AA/18	15813-SLR-F2-DKGN-MZS-22-2 (Parcel-SLR)	730
AA/19	05861-SLR-F2-RNY-DKGN-22-3 (Parcel-SLR)	730
AA/20	05801-SLR-R1-NBQ-GHY-23-1 (Parcel-SLR)	730
AA/21	05893-SLR-F2-RNY-RPAN-23-1 (Parcel-SLR)	730
AA/22	05862-SLR-F1-DKGN-RNY-22-2 (Parcel-SLR)	730
AA/23	05801-SLR-F2-NBQ-GHY-23-1 (Parcel-SLR)	730
AA/24	05894-SLR-R1-RPAN-RNY-23-1 (Parcel-SLR)	730
AA/25	05893-SLR-F1-RNY-RPAN-23-1 (Parcel-SLR)	730
AA/26	15895-SLR-F1-RNY-MZS-22-3 (Parcel-SLR)	730
AA/27	15813-SLR-F1-DKGN-MZS-22-3 (Parcel-SLR)	730
AA/28	15927-SLR-F1-RNY-NTSK-22-2 (Parcel-SLR)	417
AA/29	15908-SLR-F1-NHLN-TSK-22-2 (Parcel-SLR)	521
AA/30	15816-SLR-R1-DKGN-GHY-22-3 (Parcel-SLR)	730
AA/31	05861-SLR-F1-RNY-DKGN-22-2 (Parcel-SLR)	730
AA/32	05862-SLR-R1-DKGN-RNY-22-2 (Parcel-SLR)	730

Auction Start Date & Time: **11.00** hrs. of **17-05-2024**. **Auction Close Date & Time**: **16.40** hrs. of **17-05-2024**. Prospective bidders are requested to visit E-Auction Leasing Module on IREPS website **www.ireps.gov.in**

Divisional Railway Manager (C), Rangiya

NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

Serving Customers With A Smile

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

(SECTION 82 Cr.P.C.)

Whereas complaint has been made before me that the accused **Sameer**, S/o Mohd Farukh, R/o Flat no. 408, Main Road, Kardampuri, PS West Jyoti Nagar, Delhi, has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in **e-FIR No. 36468/2018, U/s 411/34 IPC,** registered at **P.S. Jagatpuri, Delhi**, and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest there upon issued that the said accused **Sameer**, cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Sameer**, has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Sameer**, of case **e-FIR No. 36468/2018, U/s 411/34 IPC, P.S. Jagatpuri, Delhi**, is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before **31.05.2024**.

By order
Aayushi Saxena,
Metropolitan Magistrate - 05,
Room no. 07,
Karkardooma Court, Delhi

DP/5150/SHD/2024
(Court Matter)

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

(See Section 82 Cr. P.C.)

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person namely **Sonu @ Mohd. Islam** S/o Irfan R/o B-368, Gokalpuri, Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in a case vide **FIR No. 2308/15 U/s 379/411 IPC** registered at P.S. Shahdara, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued stating that the said **Sonu @ Mohd. Islam** could not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the accused **Sonu @ Mohd. Islam** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Sonu @ Mohd. Islam** is required to appear before the court to answer the said complaint on or before **01.07.2024.**

By Order
Ms. Vidhi Gupta Anand,
Chief Metropolitan Magistrate,
Room No. 59, Third Floor,
Shahdara, Karkardooma Court, Delhi

DP/4954/SHD/2024
(Court Notice)

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED

See Section U/S 82 & 83 Cr. P.C.

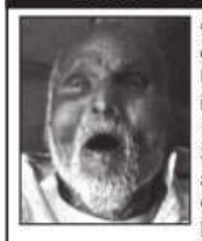
Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused **Hira Lal** S/o **Durga Prashad** R/o **K-39, Krishan Vihar, Delhi** has Committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **FIR No. 662/2007 U/s 279/337/304A IPC, P.S. Sultanpuri, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said **Hira Lal** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said **Hira Lal** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Hira Lal** of case **FIR No. 662/2007 U/s 279/337/304A IPC, P.S. Sultanpuri, Delhi** is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint/case on or before **10.07.2024.**

By Order
Ms. Sanya Dalal
Metropolitan Magistrate-01
Room No. 102, First Floor
Rohini Court, Delhi

DP/4360/OD/2024(Court Matter)

UNIDENTIFIED DEAD BODY



General Public is hereby informed that one person **Namely: Unknown S/o: Unknown, Address: Unknown** was found in unconscious condition at Platform No. 14, Nizamuddin End, New Delhi Railway Station, Delhi on **28.04.2024** at 09:55 am and admitted to Lady Hardinge Medical College, Delhi. During the treatment Doctors declared brought dead. The body has been preserved in Lady Hardinge Medical College's Mortuary, Delhi for 72 hours. In this regard a case has been lodged vide **DD No. 14A, U/s 174 Cr.P.C. dated 28.04.2024** at P.S. New Delhi Railway Station, Delhi. The description of the dead male is as under:- **Age:** About 80 years, **Sex:** Male, **Height:** 5'7", **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Face:** Long, **Hair:** White colour beard and mustache, **Built:** Normal, **Wearing:** White colour kurta-paijama, white colour baniyan, checked underwear and bare feet. If any one having any information about this dead person please inform undersigned.

SHO
P.S. New Delhi Railway Station, Delhi
Ph.: 011-23744073, 8750871305

DP/5121/RLY/2024

UNIDENTIFIED DEAD BODY

General Public is hereby informed that one male person was found dead on Gandhi Park, Town Hall, Chandni Chowk, Delhi dated 29.04.2024. In this regard a **DD No. 55A dated 29.04.2024** has been lodged at **P.S. Kotwali, Delhi.** The description of the dead body is given as under **Name:** Rocky, **S/o:** Unknown, **R/o-** Unknown, **Age:** about 30-32 years, **Height:** 5'3", **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Wearing:** Black colour Vest and Black colour Lower.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the dead person but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about this dead person please inform undersigned.

SHO
P.S. Kotwali, Delhi
Ph. : 011-23977100, 23953442, 9716081965

DP/5176/N/2024

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr. P.C.

Where as complaint has been made before me that accused **Kishan Sharma S/o Sh. Priyatosh Sharma, R/o- N-149, Krishan Vihar, Sultanpuri, Delhi** has committed (or suspected to have committed) the offence in case registered vide **FIR No. 604/20 U/s 12 POCSO Act P.S. Aman Vihar, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest there upon issued that the said accused **Kishan Sharma** can not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said **Kishan Sharma** has absconded (or is concealing myself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Kishan Sharma** of case **FIR No. 604/20 U/s 12 POCSO Act P.S. Aman Vihar, Delhi** is required to appear before this court (or before me) to answer the complaint on or before the day of **30.05.2024**

By Order,
Ms. Jasjeet Kaur
Additional Session Judge-04
(POCSO), North West,
Room No. 203, 3rd Floor,
Rohini Court, Delhi

DP/5163/RD/2024 (Court Matter)

NORTHERN RAILWAY

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

TENDER NOTICE

Invitation of Tenders through E-Procurement system

Principal Chief Materials Manager, Northern Railway, New Delhi-110001, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites e-tenders through e-procurement system for supply of the following items:-

S. No.	Tender No.	Brief Description	Qty.	Closing Date
1	83245023A	Endoscopic Spine System as per pdf attached	1	27.05.2024

NOTE-1. Vendors may visit the **IREPS** website i.e.**www.ireps.gov.in** for details. **2.** No Manual offer will be entertained.

Tender Notice No.: 83245023A/Med/Part-II Date: 30.04.2024 1291/24

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Govt. of India - Ministry of Railways

Indian Railways Institute of Signal Engineering and Telecommunications, Tarnaka Road, Secunderabad-500017 (INDIA)

EoI reference No. CoE/IRISET/01/24
Dated 27-04-2024

PUB/0398

Center of Excellence (CoE/IRISET working under Ministry of Railways seeks response from Professional firms for "Empanelment of Agencies for Tower Design, Fabrication and Installation in the field of LTE Technology or Kavach Technology or any other S&T works on Indian Railways with related Tools and Infrastructure".

Interested parties are advised to see and keep watching all the updates on the following websites in connection with the aforesaid EOI notice.

Websites : https://iriset.indianrailways.gov.in/ and https://iriset.railnet.gov.in/

A0505 **ED/Tele Dev/CoE/IRISET**

NORTHERN RAILWAY

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

E-Tender Notice

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/Traction Distribution, DRM's Office, State Entry Road, New Delhi for & on behalf of President of India, invites open e-tender for the under noted work:

Name of work with its location	Extension of existing EMU Line no 1 & 2 at HNZM Station & RPC facility at ANVT and SSB yard.
Approx. Cost of work	Rs.56,92,887.69/-
Earnest Money Deposit	Rs.1,13,900/-
E-Tender Bid Online Submission period	10.05.2024 (00.00 Hrs.) to 24.05.2024 (15.00 Hrs.)
E-Tender Bid Submission End Date & E-Tender Open Date & Time	24.05.2024 (15.00 hrs)
Fund Allocation	Capital (20167103)
Website particulars where complete details of tender documents can be seen	www.ireps.gov.in

E-Tender No.: 16-TRD-NDLS-2024-25 Dated : 29.04.2024 1302/2024

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APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified person **Namely** : Unknown, **S/o:** Unknown, **R/o:** Unknown, **Age:** about 35-45 years, **Height** : 5'6", **Complexion** : Dark, **Face** : Round, **Built** : Thin, **Wearing** : Grey colour shirt and brown colour payjama was found in ill condition at near EE Block, Jahangirpuri, Delhi on 04.03.2024. He was admitted in LNJP Hospital, Delhi, where during treatment doctor declared him dead on 17.04.2024. In this regard a case vide DD No. 22A dated 17.04.2024 has been lodged at P.S. Jahangirpuri, Delhi.

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

SHO :
P.S. Jahangirpuri, Delhi
North West Distt., Delhi
Tel. No. 011-27631600,
8750870228, 8607333730

DP/5170/NW/2024

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#ExpressExplained
If there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to **explained@indianexpress.com**

Why banks can't seek LOCs to stop debtors from going abroad

OMKAR GOKHALE
MUMBAI, APRIL 30

THE BOMBAY High Court has held that public sector banks (PSBs) cannot recommend or request the issuance of Look Out Circulars (LOCs) against loan defaulters and has set aside the provisions of the central government's Office Memoranda (OM) that empowered PSBs to do so.

On April 23, a division Bench of Justice Gautam S Patel (who has since retired) and Justice Madhav J Jamdar quashed LOCs issued to restrain PSB debtors from travelling abroad, saying they are "strong-arm tactics" used to get around legal processes, and violative of fundamental rights guaranteed under Articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution.

The legal challenge

The LOCs under challenge were issued by the Bureau of Immigration of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), and allowed the authorities at any port of departure to prevent a debtor to a PSB from leaving India. The LOCs were based on OMs issued by the Ministry from October 27, 2010 onward.

In September 2018, a ground was introduced to issue an LOC to restrain a person from going abroad if their departure was detrimental to the "economic interest" of the country. The following month, a new clause was introduced empowering the chairperson of the State Bank of India (SBI) and the managing director and chief executive officers of all other PSBs to request immigration authorities to issue LOCs against default borrowers.

The default borrowers included not only the borrowers but also the guarantors for repayment of loans, and the principal officers or directors of corporate entities in debt.

Petitioners' argument

The aggrieved petitioners contested the portion of OMs that allowed PSBs to request an LOC against a "defaulting borrower".

Senior advocate Birendra Saraf (who is now Advocate General for Maharashtra) argued that the OMs infringed upon the petitioners' fundamental rights, including the right to life with dignity under Article 21.

The petitioners argued that the "economic interest of India" cannot be the same as "financial interests" of a PSB, and that the government's action was a "classic case" of "improper and impermissible" classification between public sector and private banks, both of which are regulated by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

EXPLAINED LAW

Centre's submission

Senior advocate Anil Singh, who was Additional Solicitor General at the time, argued for the MHA that deprivation of life or personal liberty can be done only through procedure established by law, and the impugned circulars contained such "checks and balances".

Singh argued that the steps were taken after a surge in the number of wilful defaulters and economic offenders, some of whom had fled the country after "usurping" public money.

What the court said

The court observed that the government had failed to show that debt had been recovered because the person had been denied permission to travel abroad. "...The LOCs boil down to nothing but a strong-arm tactic to bypass or leapfrog what public sector banks clearly see as inconveniences and irritants — the courts of law," it said. (*Viraj Chetan Shah v Union Of India & Anr*)

The court held that the fundamental right to travel abroad cannot be curtailed by executive action without any government statute or controlling statutory provision:

"The fact that the public sector bank is directly concerned with the recovery of debt and is yet armed with this unilateral power only makes matters worse... The right to Article 21 cannot be abrogated in this fashion. Here, the public sector bank becomes judge and executioner at once.

"...In effect, the Chairpersons, MDs and CEOs have been elevated to the same status as high-ranking police officers. This is simply incomprehensible," the court said.

The court noted that except SBI, there is no PSB among India's top five banking companies. It noted that "If a borrower arranges its or her or his affairs so that the dealings are only with non-public sector banks, no LOC can ever be issued against the borrower... But if there is even one public sector bank, then there is a risk of an LOC being issued."

It is not that *only* PSBs were affected, the court said. The entities that Nirav Modi and Vijay Mallya, whom the Centre had mentioned in its written submissions, controlled "also had exposure to other banks", it said. The court disagreed with the "wholly artificial distinction between those who borrow from one or more public sector banks and those who borrow only from private sector banks".

Thus, the "inclusion of only PSBs is ultra vires Article 14 as being an impermissible and invalid classification, and being manifestly arbitrary", the court held.

What happens now

The court clarified that its order would not affect any existing restraint order issued by a competent authority, court, Debt Recovery Tribunal, or investigative or enforcement agency. "The invalidation of the present LOCs cannot and will not affect such orders," it said.

The court said banks were "always at liberty" to apply to any court or tribunal for an order against an individual borrower, guarantor, or indebted person, restraining them from travelling overseas. Banks can also invoke their powers under the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018, where applicable.

The Bench turned down the Centre's request to stay the operation of the verdict, but the Centre has the option of challenging the judgment in the Supreme Court.

The HC also clarified that its judgment will not prevent the central government from framing an appropriate law and establishing procedure consistent with Article 21 of the Constitution.

EXPLAINED HEALTH

COVID VACCINE LINK TO BLOOD CLOTS: THE LAWSUIT IN UK ON COVISHIELD

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

PHARMACEUTICAL GIANT AstraZeneca has said its AZD1222 vaccine, which was made under licence in India as Covishield, could cause low platelet counts and cause the formation of blood clots in "very rare" cases. These characteristics are linked to Thrombosis with Thrombocytopenia Syndrome (TTS). For the first time, AstraZeneca has accepted a link between its vaccine and TTS.

Based on its formula, the Serum Institute of India manufactured Covishield during the coronavirus pandemic. More than 175 crore Covishield dose have been administered in India.

What has AstraZeneca said?

AstraZeneca spoke about TTS in court documents following a suit against it in the United Kingdom. The company is being sued over health claims related to the vaccine, which was developed along with the University of Oxford in 2020.

The UK's *The Telegraph* reported that with more than 51 cases filed, damages "worth up to £100 million" have been sought. In court documents, AstraZeneca denied that "TTS is caused by the vaccine at a generic level". However, it admitted to the possibility of TTS in "very rare cases".

What are the symptoms of TTS?

TTS is linked to a range of symptoms, including breathlessness, pain in the chest or limbs, pinhead-size red spots or bruising of the skin in an area beyond the injection site, headaches, etc.

The website of Johns Hopkins Medicine says, "Thrombosis can block the blood flow in both veins and arteries. Complications depend on where the thrombosis is located. The most serious problems include stroke, heart attack, and serious breathing problems."

What have earlier reports said?

Before the vaccine rollout in 2021, the Indian government had said in a fact sheet that Covishield should be given with "caution" to people having low platelet counts. In March 2021, many European countries temporarily paused the use of AstraZeneca's vaccine, after a few cases of blood clotting were reported.

The WHO acknowledged the cases and said: "Based on latest available data, the risk of TTS with... Covishield vaccines appears to be very low. Data from the UK suggest the risk is approximately four cases per million adults (1 case per 250,000)... while the rate is estimated to be approximately 1 per 100,000 in the European Union (EU)."

What about cases in India?

The Indian government said in May 2021 that based on the total doses administered, the incidence of TTS-like events was 0.61 cases per million doses.

The Ministry of Health had termed this as "minuscule" and said Covishield "continues to have a definite positive benefit-risk profile".

More recently, the government's committee on Adverse Events Following Immunization said at least 36 TTS cases have been confirmed due to Covishield. Its last report, made public in June 2023, showed 18 deaths were reported from these cases.

For Covaxin, no potential thromboembolic events had been reported.

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EXPLAINED TECHNOLOGY

Cars that drive themselves

Tesla's Full Self-Driving may launch in China. That will help the company — however, it is clear that building autonomous vehicles is much more difficult than what carmakers, including Tesla, initially thought

ANIL SASI
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

ELON MUSK is reported to have won tentative approval for Tesla's Full Self-Driving (FSD) software in China after meeting with top government officials in Beijing. Musk arrived in China on a surprise visit on Sunday, barely a week after he cited Tesla-related "obligations" to defer his much-anticipated visit to India.

FSD, China, and the US

Beijing's preliminary blessings for the launch of FSD, reported by *The Wall Street Journal* on Monday, will boost Tesla, which is struggling with slowing electric vehicle (EV) demand and growing apprehensions about FSD in the United States. Its sales are also sliding in China, where homegrown competitors are matching up to Tesla in most respects.

Premier Li Qiang, whom Musk met on Sunday, said Tesla's growth in China is "a successful example of Sino-US economic and trade cooperation". Tesla will likely continue teaming up with Baidu, which licences mapping data and its lane-level navigation service for FSD. Tesla has been using the Chinese Internet technology services company for in-car mapping and navigation since 2020.

How Autopilot works

Tesla's FSD is the most autonomous version of the advanced driver assistance system or ADAS, a feature that enhances safety and convenience behind the wheel, and which is now a standard offering in premium models of most vehicles.

Each new Tesla vehicle is equipped with multiple external cameras and vision processing software to deliver its 'Autopilot' features — essentially a Tesla-trademarked ADAS suite. Owners who took delivery of their vehicles without this feature can buy a suitable package from multiple available options.

Autopilot includes "Traffic-Aware Cruise Control", which matches the speed of the vehicle to that of surrounding traffic, and "Autosteer", which assists in steering within a clearly marked lane. FSD, which was released in 2020, is an upgrade on Autopilot that aims at minimal driver intervention.

The FSD capability includes navigating on Autopilot, which actively guides the vehicle from a highway's on-ramp to off-ramp, including suggesting lane changes, navigating interchanges, automatically engaging the turn signal, and taking the correct exit; "Auto Lane Change", which assists in moving to an adjacent lane on the highway when "Autosteer" is engaged; "Autopark", which helps in automatic parallel or perpendicular parking of the vehicle with a single touch; a "Summon" feature that moves the vehicle in and out of a tight space using the mobile app or key; and "Stop Sign Control", which identifies stop signs and traffic lights and automatically slows the vehicle to a stop on approach.

A Waymo self-driving car in San Francisco in August 2023. *The New York Times*

Tesla vehicles are continuously upgraded on these features through over-the-air software updates. Rolling out FSD in China will allow Tesla to better compete with Chinese rivals in the world's largest auto market, where driver assistance is offered as a premium feature, and could help the company regain some lost ground.

No driver, but many issues

Every year since 2014, Musk has promised to get Tesla's self-driving technology road-ready within a definite time-frame. But as these 10 years have passed, it has become increasingly evident that passenger cars moving around with no one behind the wheel remains elusive — as much for Tesla as for the other carmakers attempting to make this technological leap.

Problems have ranged from jumping red lights and not recognising pedestrians to situational problems such as identifying a cyclist who briefly disappears behind a parked vehicle. Others such as Google's Waymo and General Motors' Cruise, who had predicted they would have full self-driving cars by 2020, too have had limited success — in ring-fenced, geotagged areas. In June 2023, 13 Cruise Robo taxis stopped simultaneously on a major arterial road in San Francisco, bringing traffic to a standstill.

Tesla could begin beta testing its full self-driving system only in 2020. Regular people drove their Tesla cars on public roads, with each of these drivers having forked out $12,000 for the privilege of doing the beta testing. The FSD clearance in China could mean that the majority of more than 1.7 million Tesla car owners in that country will deploy a variant of the ADAS technology, yielding revenues and a trove of driver data.

Situation report, upshot

Clearly, developing full self-driving cars is harder than what carmakers initially thought. Also, there is the continuing debate on the right technology: cameras vs a combination of technologies that include lidar, radar, sensors, and camera. While Tesla is relying primarily on cameras, most other carmakers depend on multiple sensors to feed information to onboard computers, which require huge processing power to map what's going on, and to forecast what might happen next.

What is easy for a situationally aware human to predict can present a complex problem for computers — say, anticipating what can happen when someone steps off the pavement and disappears behind a parked bus for a minute, or distinguishing between a red sign on a wall from an actual stop sign.

In 2022, Musk highlighted the fact that to achieve full self-driving, it is essential to have mastery over real world AI, which remains a work-in-progress. The rapid advances made in large language models (LLMs) is a positive sign — but for all the data aggregated by sensors or cameras to be fed into the car's computer, and for it to learn from it, is possible only with increased autonomous driving miles.

Indeed, car hiring majors Uber and Lyft are offloading their self-driving divisions. And the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, a US-based, industry-funded group that prods automakers to make safer vehicles, said in survey findings released in October that regular users of Super Cruise, Nissan/ Infiniti's ProPILOT Assist, and Tesla's Autopilot "said they were more likely to perform non-driving-related activities like eating or texting while using their partial automation systems than while driving unassisted".

Tesla has been sued for failing to deliver on Musk's long-standing promise to develop a fully self-driving car. The company underlines that while Autopilot and FSD are designed to become more capable over time, they do not as of now make the vehicle autonomous. The fact that these names give the impression of superior capabilities than what they actually have is part of a broader regulatory review in the US.

Last week, the US federal National Highway Transportation Safety Administration said it was opening an investigation into whether Tesla's recall in December of more than 2 million vehicles to install new Autopilot safeguards was adequate following a number of crashes.

El Niño, anti-cyclone systems : Why large parts of India experienced heatwaves in April

ANJALI MARAR
BENGALURU, APRIL 30

FOR 26 DAYS this April, either a small pocket or a considerably large geographical area in India experienced heatwave conditions, according to data provided by the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

While the southern peninsular and the southeastern coastal areas have been the worst affected, the northern plains are yet to experience heatwave conditions this season.

On Tuesday, parts of Gangetic West Bengal, Jharkhand, and Odisha witnessed severe heatwaves and high temperatures. For instance, temperatures touched 47.2 degree Celsius — 10.4 degree Celsius more than the normal temperature — in Kalaikunda in West Bengal's Paschim Medinipur district.

Which areas are prone to heatwaves?

Heatwave conditions are generally experienced over north, north-west, central and east India, and northeast Peninsula — together called the core heatwave zone (CHZ) — during the summer season of March to June, and occasionally in July.

Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, West Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Vidarbha in Maharashtra, parts of Gangetic West Bengal, coastal Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana are the most heatwave-prone states or regions.

When does IMD declare a heatwave?

IMD declares a heatwave when maximum temperature at a station in the plains reaches 40 degree Celsius or more, 37 degree Celsius or more in the coast, and 30 degree Celsius or more in the hills.

The severity of a heatwave is determined by its departure from normal temperature. 'Normal' heatwave is declared if the departure is 4.5-6.4 degree Celsius; a 'severe' heatwave is when the departure is more than 6.4 degree Celsius.

A heatwave could also be declared based on actual maximum temperature. If it is more than 45 degree Celsius, a heatwave is declared. If it is more than 47 degree Celsius, a 'severe' heatwave is declared.

What led to the heatwaves this April?

Large parts of India have witnessed heatwaves and high temperatures for two reasons.

One, 2024 is a year that began in an El Niño state. The El Niño weather pattern refers to an abnormal warming of surface waters in the equatorial Pacific Ocean, which leads to extreme heat in many parts of the world and the ocean. It developed in June 2023 and generally, the years which follow an El Niño event experience extreme temperatures, harsh, multiple and extended heatwave spells, and lack of pre-monsoon rainfall.

Two, the persistent presence of anticyclone systems over the southern peninsular and southeastern coastal areas is also partly responsible for a very warm April. These high-pressure systems, which exist at an altitude of about 3 km in the lower atmosphere and extend between 1,000 and 2,000 km in size, push the air underneath them towards the Earth, in a process called air subsidence. As a result, the forcefully sunk air generates more heat on the surface closer to the Earth.

The presence of anticyclonic air flow also favours wind flow from land towards the sea, and prevents the incoming cooler sea breeze, which is otherwise responsible for cooling the land from time to time.

AREAS AFFECTED BY HEATWAVES DURING APRIL 2024

Apr 2: Parts of Telangana, north and south interior Karnataka, coastal Andhra Pradesh (AP), northern Tamil Nadu (TN), and northern Kerala

Apr 3-4: Northern TN, Karnataka and Kerala, coastal AP, Odisha, and Gangetic West Bengal (WB)

Apr 5 - 6: Northern Karnataka, coastal AP, Telangana, northern TN and Kerala, Maharashtra, Odisha, Bihar, Jharkhand, and Gangetic WB

Apr 7-8: Puducherry, Karaikal, north TN, Telangana, and coastal AP

Apr 9: North Karnataka and Saurashtra-Kutch

Apr13: North TN, Kerala, coastal AP, and Odisha

Apr 15 – 18: Coastal Maharashtra, AP, TN, Telangana, and Saurashtra-Kutch

Apr 19: Telangana and TN

Apr 20: Bihar, Chhattisgarh, and Jharkhand

Apr 21: Jharkhand and Bihar

April 22: Karnataka and TN

Apr 23: Jharkhand and Bihar

Apr 24: Sikkim, Rayalaseema (AP), and north and south interior Karnataka

Apr 25: Coastal AP and Yanam (Puducherry), Rayalaseema (AP), interior Karnataka, and Bihar

Apr 26: Bihar, Jharkhand, interior Karnataka, coastal AP, and Yanam

Apr 27: Bihar, Jharkhand, Rayalaseema (AP), interior Karnataka, AP, Kerala, and Mahe (Puducherry)

Apr 28: Bihar, Rayalaseema (AP), coastal Maharashtra, interior Karnataka, and Kerala

Apr 29: Bihar, WB, AP, Telangana, Karnataka, and Kerala

Apr30: Sikkim, Bihar, AP, Jharkhand, Saurashtra-Kutch, Kerala, Karnataka, and Goa

April 15 – ongoing: Odisha

April 17 – ongoing: Gangetic West Bengal

Source : India Meteorological Department

What has been the extent of heatwaves?

Except for four days (April 1, 10, 11 and 12), a small pocket or a considerably large geographical area of the country experienced either heatwave or severe heatwave conditions, according to the IMD.

The worst affected have been southern peninsular India and the southeastern coast areas, including Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu along with large areas of Karnataka, Kerala, Sikkim, Bihar, Jharkhand, and Gangetic West Bengal.

Odisha and Gangetic West Bengal have remained under heatwave to severe heatwave conditions since April 15 and April 17 respectively. Climatologically, a heatwave spell can last anywhere between 3 to 7 days, but the ongoing spell in Odisha and Gangetic West Bengal has continued for more than 14 days.

The inclusion of Kerala and Sikkim in the list of heatwave-affected areas indicates that the temperatures are rapidly rising during summer over regions outside the CHZ as well.

M Rajeevan, former Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, told *The Indian Express*: "The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports and analysis…indicate that heatwaves in India shall no longer remain contained over only those regions traditionally believed to be prone."

Classifieds

PERSONAL

I,Preeti D/o Shri Rakesh Kumar,R/o-G1/1071,Mansarover-Park,Shahdara,Delhi-110032,have changed my name from Preeti Sharma to Preeti that Preeti Sharma and Preeti both are same and one person. 0040726247-1

It is for general information that I,NIKKI D/O Avdhesh Paswan,R/o H.no-749,Shanti Samiti Leprosy Colony Tahirpur-Jhilmil,East Delhi-110095,Declare that name of my-father has been wrongly written as Awadesh Paswan in my class-10th and class-12th marksheet and certificate educational documents.The actual name of my father is Avdhesh Paswan,which may be amended accordingly. 0040726305-10

I.S Kalu Singh,S/o Chandan Singh,R/O House.no-339 T.Huts Road.no-3,Andrews Ganj,New Delhi-110049,Have changed my Name to Kalu Singh,Permanently. 0040726279-2

I,Yogendra Kumar,S/o Maya Ram,R/o B-76 FF Ganesh-Nagar Tilak-Nagar,Delhi-110018,Changed my name to Yogendra Prshad Misra. 0040726301-5

I,YOGESH MAVI S/O HATAM SINGH R/o 9/22,Sector-3,Rajendra Nagar, Sahibabad, Ghaziabad,(UP) have changed my name to YOGESH KUMAR. 0040726304-7

I,Varsha Agarwal,D/o-Anil Kumar,R/o-C-105,Express Greens,Near Mahagun Metro Mall,Sector-1,Vaishali, Ghaziabad,U.P.-201010,inform that Varsha Agarwal & Varsha Aggarwal both are one & the same person. 0040726303-4

I,Umesh Kumar S/O Amba Prasad Gupta Resident-33/15,first floor,Shakti Nagar,Delhi-110007 have changed my name to Umesh Kumar Gupta. 0040726298-3

I,Tarun Rajkumar,S/o Sh.Rajender Kumar R/o.H.No.M-49, LGF,Chitranjan-Park,South Delhi,Delhi-110019,have changed my name to Tarun Chauhan,for all future purposes. 0040726290-1

I,TIPU CHANDRA BISWAS,S/O BINAY CHANDRA BISWAS,R/o RC-46,Adarsh Nagar,Khora-Colony, Ghaziabad(UP)have changed my name to TIPU BISWAS,for all purposes. 0040726304-3

I,Sumita Devi,W/o Tasvir Singh,R/o B-9/341- 342, Block-B-9,Sector-5,Rohini, Delhi-110085,have Changed my name to Sunita,for all future purposes. 0040726305-7

I,Simmi Arora,Mother of,Bhavi,R/o-A-42A,Lower Ground-Floor,Flat.No-2,Gali.No-1,Freedom-Fighter Enclave,New Delhi-110068,have changed my daughter Name Bhavi to Bhavi Arora,for all purposes. 0040726305-1

I,Shaheen Sultana,W/O Mr.Ejaz Ahmad Mallick,R/O House,No.197,Street.No.14,Third-Floor,Mannat Apartment,Ghaffar Manzil,Jamia-Nagar, Okhla,New Delhi-110025,declare that my name before marriage was Shaheen Sultana and I am Shaheen Ejaz after marriage. Thus both the names Shaheen Sultana and Shaheen Ejaz belong to me only. 0040726305-9

I,Madhulika,W/o Sharin Parick,R/o P-110130,Tower-P, 11th-Floor,14th Avenue,Gaur City-2,Greater Noida West,Gautam Budh-Nagar,Uttar-Pradesh-201301,have changed my name,from Madhulika to Madhulika Parick,for all,future purpose. 0040726301-4

I,Satnam Kaur,W/o S. Jatinder Singh,R/o 8/43,Ramesh-Nagar,Delhi-110015,hereby declared that my son Jaswant Singh, S. Jaswant Singh and Jaswant Singh Sachdeva all name are one and same person and his DOB is-23.07.2008 and correct name is S. Jaswant Singh, for all purposes. 0040726304-10

I,Satindra@Satinder Yadav, S/o Chiranji Lal,R/o-D-33, First-Floor,Vipul World,D-Block, Sector-48,South City-II, Gurgaon, Haryana have changed my name to Satender Yadav. 0040726326-3

I,Saloni Kirandeepak Saluja,W/o-Ankit Kumar Sablok,R/o-TC-9/10,3rd Floor,New Moti Nagar,Delhi-110015 have changed my name to Saloni Saluja Sablok 0040726302-5

I,Sakshi W/O Dushyant Shokeen R/O.30/22/23,Panna Mohalla Mangol Pur Kalan Delhi-110085,changed my name to Sakshi Chhillar Shokeen,permanently 0040726306-2

I,SHEEBA D/O VINOD BHATIA R/o-C-304, Fakhruddin Apartment, CGHS Plot No.18,Sec-10,Dwarka,Delhi-110075,have changed my name to SHEEBA BHATIA. 0040726301-2

Be known to all that I, Jagmohan, S/o Chandi Das, R/o 6B/14, Ramesh Nagar, New Delhi, is also known as Jagmohan Kalia, S/o C.D. Kalia 0070901064-1

I,SHAKTI W/O RISHI BHALLA R/O 297,2ND-FLOOR,SAINIK VIHAR, PITAMPURA,DELHI-110034.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SHAKTI BHALLA. 0040726305-5

I,SAURBH SUBHASH CHANDER KATYAL,S/O SHRI SUBHASH CHANDER KATYAL(AADHAAR.No. 386734264095),R/o A-2/206,MANBHAVAN APARTMENTS,PLOT No.26,SECTOR-10, DWARKA, NEW DELHI-110075,have changed my,name from SAURBH KATYAL to SAURBH SUBHASH CHANDER KATYAL,for all,future purposes. 0040726298-9

I,SARUP VERMA S/O.BABU RAM,H.NO-62,RADHA-NAGAR,DAYALBAGH AGRA,UTTAR PRADESH, 282005,Changed my name to RAM SARUP VERMA,for all,future purposes 0040726305-3

I,SAFINA BEGUM,W/O ABDUL SHAREEF,R/O-1525 GALI KOTANA SUIWALAN DARYA GANJ DELHI-110002 have changed my name to SAFEENA BEGUM 0040726298-2

I,Riya D/o Krishan Kumar R/o MOHALLA JATAN B-4, BIJNOR, UTTAR PRADESH-246701,have changed my name to RIYA SHARMA 0040726279-10

I,Reena Rani,W/O Lalit Sharma,R/O House no-321A,near Park Plaza Hotel Sector-21C Faridabad-121001,Have changed my Name to Reena Sharma, Permanently. 0040726279-3

I,Rakhi Agarwal,W/o-Anil Kumar,R/o-C-105, Express Greens,Near Mahagun Metro Mall,Sector-1,Vaishali, Ghaziabad,U.P.-201010, inform that Rakhi Agarwal & Rakhi Aggarwal both are one & the same person. 0040726303-3

AI,Rajeev Jain alias Aditya Bharillya alias Aditya R Bharillya S/o Sh.Chandra Kumar Jain,R/o Tower-1, Flat 401, 4th Floor Golf Avenue 2, Sec-75,Noida-201301,Uttar Pradesh have changed my name to Rajeev Jain for all future purposes. 0040726221-1

I,RAINA KUMARI,W/O JAIPAL SINGH R/O-154/3,BADLI ROAD,NEAR MAHENDER AATA MILL, WARD-5, JHAJJAR,HARYANA-124103, have changed my name to RENU. 0040726304-9

I,Maya Devi W/o-late Raju Bairwa,R/o-B-129,Janta-Flats Madipur,Delhi-63,changed my minor Son's name,from Tanish to Tanish Kumar Singh S/o-late Raju Bairwa. 0040726290-7

I,PIYUSH, S/O DINESH,R/O 38-B,BLOCK-B2,SAI APARTMENT,SECTOR-71, NOIDA,GAUTAM BUDH-NAGAR, UTTAR PRADESH-201301 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO PIYUSH DINESH,FOR ALL,FUTURE PURPOSE. 0040726304-2

I,PAWAN KUMAR SAREEN,S/O.VED PRAKASH SAREEN,ADD-A-1/343-A ,T/F BACK SIDE,HASTSAL ROAD UTTAM-NAGAR,WEST DELHI-110059,changed my name to PAWAN SAREEN, for all future purposes. 0040726326-1

I,No-9087185N,Ex NK Nazir Ahmed ,R/O- Karnah, Tehsil-Karnah, District-Kupwara. In my service records name and D o B of my son has been wrongly mentioned as Vaseem Ahmed(D o B- 20-05-2001) instead of Waseem Ahmad (D o B- 10-03-2004).It needs corrections. Objections be filled to concerned authorities within seven days. 0020475404-1

I,Nitoo kumar singh S/o Rajbir Singh VPO.Lula ahir Tehsil-Kosli,district-Rewari (Haryana)-123302, have changed my name to Nittu Kumar. 0040726290-3

I,Neelu Vatnani,W/o Mahesh Vatnani R/o-A-282 Prashant,Vihar Sector-14,Rohini Delhi-110085, changed my name to Neelam Vatnani 0040726279-6

I,Mukesh S/O Jagdish Chander,R/o-D-301, Sector-32-33,Sohna Post Sohna Dist-Gurgaon Haryana 122103,have change my name to Mukesh Khulbe 0040726302-3

I,Monur Hossain Molla,S/o Isha Haque Molla,Resident of,B-125-123/2,Third-Floor,Garhi,East of kailash,New Delhi-110065,have changed my-minor son name,from Mostakin Molla aged about 11-years to Mostakim Molla,for all,future purposes. 0040726301-6

I ASHOK KUMAR S/O CHETAN LAL JAIN,R/O A-99 SURAJMAL-VIHAR,DELHI-110092,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO ASHOK KUMAR JAIN,FOR ALL PURPOSES. 0040726290-5

I,Sandhya Kar,W/o No.13874390K Hav Late Swayam Siddhakar, Flat.No.102,(First-Floor),F-1/100/2,Gali.No-2,Mahavir-Enclave,Delhi-110045, hereby declare that my correct Date-of-Birth is 01.Jul.1964, Whereas the Date-of-Birth recorded in service-records of my husband is 25.Jan.1966.My correct Date-of-Birth is 01st.Jul.1964 be used,for all future purposes and same be changed in service records of my husband.The change affirmed vide-Affidavit Dated-12.Apr.2024 before-Notary(S P Singh, Advocate), Government of India, Delhi. 0040726306-3

I,Mohd Subhan,S/o Mohd Sabreen,R/o-F-559,Gali.No-19,near-Taj Hotel khajoori khas Karawal-Nagar,North-East Delhi-110094,have changed my name Subhan to Mohd Subhan,for all,future purposes. 0040726290-10

I,MUKESH KUMAR S/O BALBIR SINGH GUPTA R/O 35,Lakeview Apartments, Sector-9,Rohini,Delhi -110085,have changed my name to MUKESH GUPTA 0040726303-2

I,LOVELY SAINI,W/O ANSHOO SAINI, ADD-4929/40,REGHARPURA KAROL-BAGH,CENTRAL-DELHI 110005 changed my minor child name NAIJA SAINI TO PUSHTI SAINI,for all future purposes. 0040726305-4

I,LIPEKA RANI BISWAS W/O TIPU BISWAS R/o 46,Adarsha Nagar,Khoda Colony, Ghaziabad(UP)have changed my name to LIPIKA BISWAS for all purposes. 0040726304-4

I,Kumari Sunita Bai R/o Surender Yadav,R/o Fatehpuri Tappa,Dahina,Rewari (Haryana),have changed my name to Sunita devi,for all Purposes. 0040726290-2

I,Khalid Zafar Rafi,S/o Late Tamizuddin,R/o-2739/2,Gali Nanhe Kha,Kucha Challan,Daryaganj,Delhi-110002,my Father Name Tamizuddin Qureshi, Tamizuddin and Tamiz uddin all names are one and the same person,For all,future purposes. 0040726305-8

I,Jitendra Kumar,S/O Ramveer Singh,R/O-20/117,Gali.No-3,Ke Samne Subhash-Nagar, Baraut,Baghpat,Uttar Pradesh-250611,have changed the name of my minor Daughter Avni aged 13 years and she shall hereafter be known as Avni Sharma. 0040726290-11

I,Jasneet Kaur alias Jasneet Dua W/o Jaspreet Singh Dhingra R/o-M-13 Pratap,Nagar Gulabi Bagh North Delhi-110007 have changed my name to Jasneet Dua 0040726279-8

I,Lal Chahd Lall,S/o Bhagat Ram Address-F-18,2nd-floor block-F Sarita-vihar Delhi 110076,changed my name to Lal Chand Lall. 0040726279-4

I,JAFRUDDIN alias JAFRUDDIN KHAN S/o KARIMUDDIN R/o Q-7/71,Mangol Puri S-Block Delhi-110083,have changed my Name and shall hereafter be known as JAFRUDDIN KHAN. 0040726279-9

I,Himalaya Singh,S/O Tejpratap Singh, Add: F.1805,Antriksh Golf View 1 sec.78, Gautam Budh-Nagar,Uttar Pradesh 201301,changed my name to Himalay Singh. 0040726306-1

I,Harpreet Singh Gakher.R/O.A-66,Fateh Nagar,Jail-Road,New Delhi-110018,have changed my-minor daughter's name,from Mannat Kaur to Mannat Kaur Gakher,for all Purposes. 0040726290-9

I,HITHERTO KNOWN AS RAJESH KUMAR,S/O LATE RAMESHWAR PRASAD,R/O-SRA 4D SHIPRA-RIVERIA INDIRAPURAM,GHAZIABAD,UP -201014,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME AND SHALL HEREAFTER BE KNOWN AS RAJESH KUMAR DOVHAL. 0040726298-4

I,Gopal, Gopal Ram & Gopal Ram Mangal,S/o-Late Shyam Lal,R/o-H.No.115, Kh.No.93/15, Gali No.25A, Swatantra Nagar,Narela, Delhi-110040,have changed my name to Gopal Ram,for all purposes. 0040726302-1

I,Girish/Girish Ralhan/Girish Kr.Ralhan,S/O.Late Bhim Sain Ralhan, R/O.27/2A, Double Storey,Ashok-Nagar,Tilak Nagar,New-Delhi-110018 have changed my name to Girish Kumar Ralhan,for all Purposes. 0040726290-8

I,Devki Nandan Aggarwal S/o Madan Chand Agarwal R/o GP-115, 2nd-Floor Pitampura Delhi-110034,have changed my name to Devki Nandan Agarwal 0040726279-7

I,DINESH KUMAR S/O KIRORI MAL R/o-109, A-2 Block Dharampura Extn, Najafgarh Delhi-110043,have changed my name to DINESH KUMAR PALIWAL. 0040726301-3

I,DEERAJ NANGIA,S/O SHRI NARAIN DASS,R/O-H.NO-W-254, GALI.NO-6A,CHANDER-SHEKHAR GALI, BABARPUR, DELLHI-32.MY SON HAVE CHANGED HIS NAME DEEPESH NANGIA TO DEEPESH NAGIYA,FOR FUTURE. 0040726298-7

I,CHINTA MANI DEVI W/O TARKESHWAR PRASAD R/O NEAR GHANTI DUKAN,SHANTI-BHAWAN,SAKET NAGAR,DORANDA-HINOO,RANCHI-834002.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO CHINTA MANI. 0040726298-6

I Manisha Gill D/o Vijay Raj Sharma R/o P-411, Jalavayu Vihar Sector-21 Noida Uttar Pradesh. Has Been Changed My Name To Manisha Sharma For All Future Purposes. 0070901086-1

I HAVE CHANGED MY NAME FROM RAKESH GUPTA TO RAKESH KUMAR GUPTA AS PER DOCUMENT. 0070901030-1

I, Anurag Srivastava S/o Ram Bihari Srivastava R/o Flat No.-22064, Tower-H, 14th Avenue, Gaur City-2, Greater Noida West, UP-201009 have changed my minor daughter's name from AAKRITI SRIVASTAVA to VISHAKA SRIVASTAVA for all future purposes. 0070901095-1

I,Birender Singh S/o Bhoop Singh Yadav,R/o H.No.23,Block-H,South City-1,Gurgaon,Haryana-122001,have changed my name to Birender Singh Yadav. 0040726279-1

I,Bhupesh Bhardwaj,S/o-Anant Ram,R/O-H.No.1559,Pana Mamoor Pur,Narela Delhi-110040,inform that Bhupesh Bhardwaj,and Bhupesh,both name of one person 0040726302-4

I,Awadhesh Mishra S/o Sundar Lal Mishra R/o C-172, Salarpur Shiv-Nagar, Noida G.B.Nagar(U.P) have changed my name to Awadhesh Kumar Mishra for all future purposes. 0040726225-1

I,Ashok Gupta,S/o Lt. Rangi Lal,R/o-Plot No.407,1st Floor,Deepali Enclave, Pitampura, Delhi-110034,have changed my name,from Ashok Gupta,to Ashok Kumar,for all purposes. 0040726302-2

I,Ashish Rawat,S/O-Brijraj Singh,R/O Flat.No.E-4-502,Supertech Eco Village-1,Bisrakh,PO: ia,Surajpur,Greater-Noida West, District-Gautam Buddha-Nagar,Uttar Pradesh-201306,have changed my name,from Ashish Rawat to Ashish Choudhary vide-affidavit dated-15-April-2024,for all,future documents purpose. 0040726298-8

I,Aruneel Kshitij Minz,S/o-Arun shekhar, Address-Qtr.no-995, sector-4 R.k puram New Delhi-110022,changed my name to Aruneel Minz. 0040726279-5

I,Anil Lal,S/o-Subhash Chand,R/o-92,93,94,Gali.No.6,Near-Idgah Road,Bhola Nath-Nagar,Shahdara,Delhi-110032,have changed the name of my-minor son Om Lal Aged-15Years and he shall hereafter be known as Omkar Singh. 0040726298-10

I,Anil Agarwal,S/o-Jai Prakash,R/o-C-105,Express Greens,Near Mahagun Metro Mall,Sector-1,Vaishali, Ghaziabad, U.P.-201010, inform that Anil Agarwal & Anil Aggarwal both are one & the same person. 0040726303-5

I,ASHI SHARMA,W/o-AMIT SHARMA,R/o-Plot no.-B-23/F1, B-Block,Dilshad garden,Jhilmil,Delhi - 110095,Change My Name to ASHOO ARORA (New Name) Permanently. 0040726303-1

I,ARSHAD AMEEN ANSARI S/O QUTUBUDDIN AHMAD ANSARI,R/o 1804,Tower-24,Lotus Boulevard, Noida,Sector-100,Gautambudh Nagar(UP)have changed my name to ARSHAD AMIN ANSARI. 0040726304-5

I,ANKIT NIJHAWAN R/O J-105,KIRTI NAGAR,DELHI-110015.HAVE CHANGED MY CHILD NAME SAIBHN NIJHAWAN TO SAIBHAN NIJHAWAN. 0040726298-5

I,ABDUL SHARIEF S/O ABDUL SALAM,R/O 1525,GALI KOTANA SUIWALAN DARYA GANJ DELHI-110002,have changed my name to ABDUL SHAREEF. 0040726298-1

I, Vikas Sharma S/o Subhash Sharma,R/o-G-23,Radhey Puri,Krishna Nagar,Delhi-110051,inform that Vikash Sharma and Vikas Sharma both are one and same person. 0040726214-1

I, VED PRAKASH KAUSHIK S/O SHER SINGH R/O-600/16,CIVIL LINES, GURGAON HARYANA-122001 have Changed my name to VED PARKASH 0040726304-8

I, Thangdaia R/o A-10, Vidya Vihar, Hastsal, Uttam Nagar, Delhi-59 have changed my name to Thang Za Dai. 0070901098-1

I, Tabraiz S/o Abdul Ghaffar R/o 589, Gali Jutey Wali, Choori Walan, Jama Masjid, Delhi-110006, have changed my name to Mohammad Tabrez, for all future purposes. 0040726217-1

I, Sunil Kumar S/O Shyam Lal Gupta, R/o 22/75, Nav Karanti Apartments, 75, I.P. Extension, Patparganj, East Delhi, Delhi-110092, have changed my name and shall hereafter be Known as Sunil Gupta. 0070901067-1

I, Someshwar Kakar S/O Ganesh Ram Kakar, R/o 45-Karni Nagar, Kuri-Bhagtasni Housing Board, Jodhpur, Rajasthan-342005, have changed my name and shall hereafter be Known as Neil Kakar. 0070901058-1

I, Shefali Tiwari D/o Krishnakant Tiwari W/o Pankaj Sharma R/o 205, T9, Purvanchal Silver City, Sec 93 A, Noida-201304, have changed my name to Shefali Krishnakant Tiwari 0070901066-1

I, Anju W/o Naresh Kumar R/o H.No.V-36, Sector-12, Noida Gautam Budh Nagar, UP-201301, have Changed my name to Anju Rani for all future purposes. 0070901103-1

I Arushi Bansal w/o Prateek Mittal r/o LU-104, Pitampura, Delhi-110034 have changed My Name to Arushi MITTAL. 0040726269-1

I, Jitender, W/o-Jatinder Singh, R/o:WZ-65B, Gali.No-8, 9, Sant Garh, Tilak Nagar, New Delhi-110018 Have Changed My Name to Jatinder Kaur for all Purposes. 0070901088-1

I, Satishkumar Rajnarayan Pandey S/o Rajnarayan Pandey R/o Flat No.543, Tower-F, 7th Avenue, Gaur City-1, Sector-4, Greater Noida West, UP-201318 have changed my name to SATISH RAJNARAYAN PANDEY for all purposes. 0070901087-1

I, Randhir Kumar Keshari, S/o Deo Narayan Prasad,R/o Avenue-16, Second-Floor, BPTP Park-81, Sector-81, Faridabad,Haryana, PIN-121007,have changed my name to RANDHIR KUMAR KESHRI,for all purposes. 0040726212-1

I, Rahul Singh S/o Balaraj R/o House.No.118, Dabara Mapcha, Greater Noida U.P. have changed my name to Rahul for all future Purpsoes. 0070901050-1

I, RAGHUVINDER SINGH S/O RAM LALLAN SINGH R/O D-316 GALI NO.12 LUXMI NAGAR DELHI-92 THAT BOTH NAMES RAGHUVINDER SINGH AND RAGHUBENDRA SINGH OF THE DEPONENT IS THE SAME FOR ONE MALE PERSON FOR. That the my correct name is RAGHUVINDER SINGH. 0070901090-1

I, QUTBUDIN AHMAD ANSARI S/O GULAM RASOOL R/o Gaus Ganj, Hardoi(UP)-241305 have changed my name to QUTUBUDDIN AHMAD ANSARI. 0040726304-6

I, Pankaj Kumar Chauhan S/O Mahaveer Prasad Chauhan, R/o Nayabas Road Krishi Upaj Mandi Ke Pass Neem Ka Thana, Town Sikar Rajasthan-332713. Declare that Name of Mine and My Father has been wrongly written as Pankaj Chauhan and Mahveer Prasad Chauhan in my All Diploma Certificates. The actual name of Mine and My Father is Pankaj Kumar Chauhan and Mahaveer Prasad Chauhan, which may be amended accordingly. 0070901060-1

I, Nittukandi Thundi Kandi Suma W/o Damodaran Parambnath,R/o-J-5/30, Rajouri Garden,Delhi-110027,have changed my name to Nittukandi Thundi Kandi Suma Damodaran, Permanently. 0040726300-1

I, Nginkhandova S/o Thang Za Dai R/o A-10, Vidya Vihar, Hastsal, Uttam Nagar, Delhi-59 have changed my name to Ngin Khan Do. 0070901099-1

I, Mohammad Tabrez R/o 589, Gali Jutey Wali, Choori Walan, Jama Masjid, Delhi-110006, have changed my minor daughter's name from Aisha Tabrez to Ayesha Tabrez, for all future purposes. 0040726217-2

I, Mohammad Farid S/o Mohd Waseem, A-305, GaliNo.5, Chauhan-Banger, Delhi-110053 Have changed my name to Mohd Fareed. 0040726226-1

I, Manoj S/O Ashok Nagar, R/o O-33, Krishan Vihar, MCD Primary School, Nithari, North West Delhi, Delhi-110086, have changed my name and shall hereafter be Known as Manoj Nagar. 0070901012-1

I, Km Vanya D/o Naresh Kumar R/o House No.:V-36, Sector-12, Noida Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P-201301, have changed my Name to Vanya Raj for all future purposes. 0070901110-1

I, KRATIKA D GUPTA D/O SH. DEVESH KUMAR GUPTA R/O FLAT NO-292, BATUKJI APARTMENTS, PLOT NO-5B, SECTOR-3, DWARKA, NEW DELHI-110078, have changed my name from KRATIKA GUPTA to KRATIKA D GUPTA for all future purposes. 0070901083-1

I, Jasvir Singh S/o Ramphal Singh,R/o B-9/341-342,Block-B-9,Sector-5,Rohini,Delhi-110085,have Changed my name to Tasvir Singh,for all,future purposes. 0040726305-6

I, JYOTISHIKHA W/O JAIBIR ,R/O CG6,406, SUPERTECH CAPETOWN,NOIDA SEC-74, GAUTAM BUDH NAGAR,UTTAR PRADESH-201301,have changed my name to JYOTISHIKHA KATIYAR. 0040726304-1

I, HEENA,D/O.DALIP,ADD-C-329 GALI NO,9 MAJLIS PARK,ADARSH NAGAR NORTH WEST-DELHI 110033,Changed my name to HEENA ARORA,for all future purposes. 0040726305-2

I, Balraj Singh S/o Sahamal Singh R/o House.No.118, Dabara Mapcha, Greater Noida U.P. have changed my name to Balaraj for all future Purposes. 0070901057-1

I Ananya Khurana D/o Late Sh. Ashu Khurana R/o A-792-793, Block A, J.J. Colony, Chaukhandi, Tilak Nagar, West Delhi, Delhi-110018 have changed my name to Yadavi Khurana for all purposes. 0040726209-1

I PRATAP SINGH S/O JAIPAL SINGH R/O QTR NO-76 POLICE COLONY SHAKARPUR THANA LAXMI NAGAR DELHI-110092,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO PARTAP SINGH FOR ALL PURPOSES. 0040726290-6

I Meenu Garg D/o Ram Niwas and W/o Surender Kumar R/o 884, Sec 25 Part 2, Huda, Panipat, Panipat, Haryana-132103, have changed my name to Meenaxi Garg 0070901107-1

I, Asheesh Malhotra, S/o Narendra Kumar Malhotra, R/o Flat No L2-022, AssotechSpringfield, Sector Zeta 1, Sakipur, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh-201306.have changed my name to Ashish Malhotra for all future purposes. 0070901055-1

I, Anirudh S/o Satender Yaadv R/o D-33, First-Floor,Vipul World,D-Block,Sector-48,South City-II, Gurgaon,Haryana,have changed my name to Anirudh Yadav. 0040726326-2

I hitherto known as Parag Bharadwaj son of Sh. Shanker Saran Bharadwaj residing at A-705, Lotus Pond, 2A, Vaibhav Khand, Indirapuram, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh-201014 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as "Parag Bhardwaj" vide Affidavit No. IN-UP22532168256274W dated 12-Apr-2024. 0040726216-1

I VIjay kumar Garg S/O Sh. Shiv Narayan Garg Residing at-702 Second Floor Golf Course Road Sec-43 Sikanderpur Ghosi (68), po:DLF QE, Dist. Gurgaon, Haryana have changed my Name Vijay kumar to Vijay kumar Garg for all future purposes. 0070901048-1

I Sumeet Maan S/o Sh. Surjit Singh Maan R/o E-86, 2nd Floor, Greater Kailash Enclave-1, Delhi-110048 have changed the name of my minor son from Aadvik Maan to Aadvvik Maan for all purposes. 0040726209-2

I Shruti Kumar D/o Ajay Kumar R/o E-9/10, 1St Floor, Vasant Vihar, Vasant Vihar-1, South West Delhi, Delhi-110057, have changed my name to Namrata Kumar 0070901094-1

I Sham Chugh S/o Swami Ram chugh R/o 17, Welcome Vihar, Near Dhan Mandi Gate, PO-Sriganganagar, Dist-Ganganagar, Rajasthan-335001, have changed my name to Sham Lal Chugh 0070901073-1

I Rinku S/O Jaibir Singh R/O Ward NO-03,Sita Ram Gate,Jhajjar Haryana-124103,Have Changed my Name to Rinkesh Saini. 0040726301-1

I Ravi Raj S/O Sh. Sudhisht Ranjan R/O TA-55 TA Block Om Vihar Extn. Ram Nagar Road Uttam Nagar Delhi-110059 have changed my Minor daughter's name from Maira Raj to Gaura Raj for all future purposes. 0040726046-1

I Priyanka Nirban D/o Ramjan and W/o Mohd Sajid R/o Vidur Ji Ka Mandir, Ward No.-23, Ratangarh, Ratangarh, Churu, Rajasthan-331022, have changed my name to Shehreen 0070901101-1

I Prem Sagar S/o Bahal Ram Sahu R/o Bahal Ram Sahu, Jeora, Bemetara, Chhattisgarh-491335, have changed my name to Prem Lal Sahu 0070901104-1

I Pramod Kumar R/o A-39, Raj Pur Khurd, Delhi-110068 have changed my name to Pramod Kumar Sharma. 0070901102-1

AI AMIT KUMAR,S/O ASHOK KUMAR JAIN R/O A-99 SURAJMAL VIHAR DELHI-110092,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO AMIT JAIN,FOR ALL PURPOSES. 0040726290-4

CHANGE OF NAME

I, VIJAY KUMAR GUPTA S/O LATE SH NARENDER PAL AZAD R/O 1209-1210, SECTOR-15, FARIDABAD - 121007; DO HEREBY SOLEMNLY AFFIRM, STATE AND DECLARE THAT WITH EFFECT FROM 01-APRIL-2024 I HAVE CHANGED MY NAME FROM VIJAY KUMAR GUPTA TO **VIJAY FARIDABAD CAFIRST GUPTA** FOR ALL PURPOSES.

Now my First Name is – VIJAY Middle Name – FARIDABAD CA FIRST & SURNAME / LAST NAME - GUPTA

LOST & FOUND

Lost original Home map of H.No.26/7 Gali.No.13 Vishwas Nagar Shahdara Delhi-110032,Founder May Inform Anita mehta W/O Ashok mehta 0040726298-11

We, Neeraj Maheshwari & Kanika Maheshwari lost our original allotment letter property bearing No. Flat.No. H-1007, 10th Floor, Type HIG, Ajnara Pride, Sec-4B, GH2, Vasundhara, Ghaziabad-201012, issued by the builder "Ajnara India Ltd" Finder Contact:-9811332327 0070901096-1

PUBLIC NOTICE

My clients **SH. DEVKI NANDAN KHANNA, S/O LATE SHIV NATH KHANNA, DOLLY KHANNA W/O SH. DEVKI NANDAN KHANNA, SUBHASH KHANNA, DEEPAK KHANNA, BOTH SONS OF SH. DEVKI NANDAN KHANNA, ALL ARE R/O H.NO.727, 3RD FLOOR, STREET NO.22, JOSHI ROAD, KAROL BAGH, NEW DELHI-110005** have severed all the relations with their **DAUGHTER & SISTER RESPECITVELY i.e. MRS. BHAKTI NAGPAL W/O SH. ABHISHEK NAGPAL, R/O FLAT NO.TF-5, RUDRA APARTMENTS, SHAKTI KHAND-II, INDIRAPURAM, GHAZIABAD [UP].** My clients have also debarred her from all their movable & immovable properties due to her misbehaviour, disobedient and dominating/ adamant nature. She shall have no right, title or interest in the properties of my clients. If anybody deals with her in any manner whatsoever, he/she/they shall do so at their own risks and consequences for which my clients shall not be responsible for the acts, conduct and omission done by them in any manner whatsoever. My clients shall not allow her entry into their residence or shop.

Sd/-
Yogesh Chhabra
Advocate
Seat No. 100, Civil Side, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi-54

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is brought to the notice of the public at large through this Public Notice, that my client Sh. Aditya Anand S/o Sh. Arun Anand R/o K-26, Jangpura Extension, New Delhi-110014 have lost the Original registration particular pages of both (1) Perpetual Lease Deed dated 15.02.1974 executed by the President of India in favour of Sh. Vinod Krishna Choudhry and Sh. Vijay Krishna Chaudhry both S/o Sh. Hari Krishna Chaudhry which is duly registered as Document No. 1000, in Addl. Book No. I, Volume No. 3295, on pages 71 to 76, on 21.02.1974 in the office of Sub-Registrar, New Delhi and (2) Conveyance Deed dated 21.08.2003 executed by the President of India in favour of Sh. Vinod Krishna Choudhry and Sh. Vijay Krishna Chaudhry both S/o Sh. Hari Krishna Chaudhry which is duly registered as Document No. 3731, in Addl. Book No. I, Volume No. 970, on pages 58 to 61, on 21.08.2003, in the office of Sub-Registrar, New Delhi pertaining to Property No. G-37, measuring 800 sq. yards, East of Kailash, New Delhi-110065, on 17.04.2024, in the area of Jangpura Extension, New Delhi in this regard a NCR has been lodged with P.S. Crime Branch, Delhi, vide LR No. 1678998/2024, dated 27.04.2024.

It is hereby notified that any person or entity, firm/ company, Bank, financial institution having claim any charge, interest or lien or claim on the basis of documents mentioned above or otherwise and/or objection thereof, he/she/ they may lodge/ notify the same to the undersigned with documentary proof within 15 days from the day of publication, failing which the title shall be deemed to be clear and marketable without any defect, encumbrance, flaw and impediment.Founder May Contact Mobile No. 9810582888

AMIT ANAND, Advocate
Enrol. No. D-1452/2003

PUBLIC NOTICE

All public is put to the Notice that I, Daulat Ram Inder Nath & Sons HUF through its Karta Sh. Inder Nath had lost and missing the title papers for property bearing no. 1301, Padma Tower-1, 5, Rajindra Place, New Delhi-110008. Title papers included Builder Buyer Agreement with further endorsements, Agreements to sale, receipts, GPA and Will executed between S.N. Bhatia & Co. Pvt. Ltd. to K.S. Mehta & Ajit Kaur to Lokmat Newspaper Ltd. to Kapil Mendiratta to Daulat Ram Inder Nath & Sons HUF. We are the exclusive owner of the said property and in possession of the property since last more than 20 yrs. An FIR no.1683623/2024 dt. 29.04.2024 at PS Crime Branch, Delhi has been lodged for missing documents.

If any one found said documents same shall be informed and delivered to me at my address or mobile no. (Daulat Ram Inder Nath & Sons) B-104, Jhule Lal Apartment, Pitam Pura, Delhi-110034 Mobile no. 9810261134

PUBLIC NOTICE

Ms. Premwati Bhardwaj W/o Lt. Sh. Roopchand R/o B-59, Harkesh Nagar, South Delhi -20, have severed all family as well as business relation with her son **Sh. Vishal Bhardwaj.** As **Sh. Vishal Bhardwaj** is not in control and in favour of my client **Ms. Premwati Bhardwaj.** Since then my client disowned him from all his existing & future movable and immovable properties. My client is not liable for the act/ omission/ behavior/ debts of **Sh. Vishal Bhardwaj.**

Sd/-
PUNIT JAIN
Advocate
Enrl. No. D-1970-A/06

सार्वजनिक सूचना

सर्वसाधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि मेरे मुवक्किल (1) मो. इल्यास पुत्र अब्दुल रहमान (2) जायदा बेगम पत्नी मो. इल्यास दोनो निवासी कि-35 इंदर एन्क्लेव 2 ब्लॉक-C, किरारी सुलेमान नगर दिल्ली-110086 ने अपनी पुत्री अंजुम खातून को उसके गलत आचरण और घर से भागने के कारण अपनी समस्त चल-अचल संपत्ति मकान व जमीन जायदाद से बेदखल कर सारे पारिवारिक संबंध विच्छेद कर लिए हैं। भविष्य में यदि कोई इससे किसी प्रकार की लेन देन आदि कुछ भी करता है तो उसका जिम्मेदार वह खुद होगा, मेरे मुवक्किल जिम्मेदार नही होंगे।

हस्ता/-
KAMAL SINGH
(Advocate)
Enrl. No. D/748/2014

PUBLIC NOTICE

My clients SH. PARMOD KUMAR SOOD S/O SH. SHYAM LAL SOOD R/O T-3612, RAJA PARK, SHAKUR BASTI, NORTH WEST DELHI, DELHI-110034 have disowned/debarred his son ASHWANI SOOD & SANJEEV SOOD his from all his movable and immovable properties due to their disrespectful and irresponsible, ill-mannered behavior and out of his control and have severed all his relations with them. If anybody deals with them in any manner in future he/she shall do so at his/her own risk, cost and consequences. My Client shall not be liable and responsible in any manner for the same in future. **SUKHWINDER SINGH ADVOCATE CH. NO. T-14, TIS HAZARI COURTS, NEAR TEHSIL BUILDING, DELHI-110054**

PUBLIC NOTICE

BE KNOWN TO ALL that my client "Nanak Chand aged around 79 years Son Of Late Shri Gayarsi Lal, Resident Of H. NO. 910 MAHAVAR NAGAR, KOTLA MUBARAK PUR, New Delhi-110003" due to some unavoidable circumstances has severed all his relations with his son "Ashok Kumar" and his family. Henceforth, my client hereby debarred/disown him from all his movable and immovable properties. In future my client shall have no relation with his above said son and his family. **GAURAV GOGIA Advocate Chamber No.269, Lawyers Chamber Block 1, Delhi High Courts, Delhi-110003**

PUBLIC NOTICE

Please take notice that my clients (1) Shri Ramesh Chand Aggarwal, S/o Late Shri Jagdish Parsad Aggarwal, and (2) Smt. Manju Aggarwal, W/o Shri Ramesh Chand Aggarwal, both R/o C-161 A, IIIrd Floor, Mahendru Enclave, G.T. Karnal Road, (opp. Model Town), Delhi-110009, has disowned their son Ashish Aggarwal @ Ashu and his wife Smt. Prema Aggarwal @ Peru and their daugher baby Aashvi Aggarwal @ Guddu, from all their moveable and immoveable properties and also severed all their relations with them, if any body deals with said Ashish Aggarwal @ Ashu and his wife Smt. Prema Aggarwal @ Peru and their daugher baby Aashvi Aggarwal @ Guddu, in any manner whatsoever, shall do so at his/her/their own risk and my clients shall not be responsible of any acts and deeds of the abovesaid persons.

HIMANSHU (ADVOCATE) DELHI HIGH COURT ENROLLMENT NO (D/715/2021) MOBILE 9873343801

PUBLIC NOTICE

MY CLIENT SANTOSH RANI W/O Late PRAVEEN Goyal R/O B-830, SECTOR-1, ROHINI, DELHI-110085 DO HEREBY REINSTATE ALL THE RELATIONS WITH HER SON RAHUL GOYAL AND GIVE ALL RIGHTS IN ENTIRE MOVEABLE/ IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES AND ASSETS.

Sd/-
MANISH MISHRA
Advocate
ENRL NO. D/12167/21
Office At:- Shop No. 5, Near Mother Dairy, DDA Market, Sector-14, Rohini, Delhi

PUBLIC NOTICE

BE IT KNOWN TO ALL THE CONCERNS THAT MY CLIENT **SHRI DEVENDRA KUMAR SON OF SHRI R.C. PRASAD** RESIDENT OF H.NO. 15/16, GALI NO.2 VIPIN GARDEN EXTN., UTTAM NAGAR NEW DELHI HAS SEVERED ALL OF HIS RELATIONS FROM AND DEBARRED HIS SON RAHUL KUMAR, HIS WIFE SMT. MEERA AND HIS LEGAL HEIRS FROM HIS MOVEABLE AND IMMOVE-ABLE PROPERTIES. ANYBODY DEALING WITH HIM SHALL BE AT HIS OWN RISKS AND CONSEQUENCES AND MY CLIENT SHALL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR ACTS AND ACTIVITIES IN FUTURE.

MISS PALAK SHARMA (Advocate)
Ch. No. D-418, Lawyers Chamber Complex, Karkardooma Court, Delhi

PUBLIC NOTICE

Informed that my client/s Mr. Lakshay Kohli, Mr. Yogeshwar Kohli & Ms. Puja are the owners of Prop. No. B-22, Old No. 118 & F-240-A, built on Plot No. 8 Situated at Rishi Nagar, Delhi. Said prop. was the name of Ms. Dinesh Khanna. Later on Ms. Dinesh Khanna died. Surviving Member Certificate of Late Ms. Dinesh Khanna was not obtained. Any person having any claim above said prop. thereof by way of inheritance, transfer, mortgage or otherwise, whatsoever, are requested to inform the same in writing with documentary evidence to the undersigned on below mentioned address within 7 days from the date of publication hereof together with copies of all documents on the basis which claims area made, filing which any such right, title, interest, or claim, if any will be deemed to have been waived and not binding on my clients.

Manoj Kumar, Advocate
Ch. No. 192, Tis Hazari Courts, (Civil Side) Delhi-110054
Mobile No. 9868581889

PUBLIC NOTICE

Be it known to the public at large that my client namely Mr. Manjit Dayal, aged 79 years, S/o Late Sh. Krishan Dayal R/o 430/1 Forest Lane, Cross Lane No. 10, Sainik Farm, New Delhi-110068, hereby states that he and his wife Mrs. Bridget Dayal, who is an Irish citizen is living separately since 2012. There are no matrimonial ties between them as on date and she is no more a legal heir of my client Mr. Manjit Dayal. Anybody dealing with Mrs. Bridget Dayal will do so at their own risk and consequences, henceforth, from today onwards my client Mr. Manjit Dayal shall not be held responsible for any of her actions.

29th April 2024

Megha Singh (Advocate)
B-34, Basement,
Rear Lane Nizamuddin East,
New Delhi-110013

PUBLIC NOTICE

To be known to all that I, S C Balasubramanyam S/o S K Chandrashekharan R/o 1430, Sector D, Pocket 1, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi 110070, have applied for Leasehold to Freehold conversion of 1430, Sector D, Pocket 1, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi 110070 having file no F/125(6594)1983/SFS/VK. The original documents viz Electricity and Water NOC for the above flat have been lost. An FIR to this effect has been lodged in Police Station: Crime Branch Delhi LR No. 1686555/2024 dated 30/04/2024. Any persons claiming any right of interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents may wite/contact with the above-named person at above address/phone no. 8792824638 within 15 days. The person claiming any right, interest, objections with respect to this property can personally inform or write to Asst/Dy Director, LAB (Housing), Vikas Sadan, INA, New Delhi

PUBLIC NOTICE

KNOW ALL MEN that my clients Sh. Rajesh Kumar Gupta S/o Sh. Shiv Kumar Gupta and his wife Smt. Rekha Gupta both R/o C-9/283 Yamuna Vihar Delhi-110053 have severed all their relations with their son Sh. Mayank Gupta and his wife Smt. Shivangi Gupta D/o Sh. Anil Kumar Sharma and their grandsons Master Chaitanya Gupta and Swastik Gupta both S/o Sh. Mayank Gupta due to their unjustifiable behavior and uncalled for attitude and have debarred them both from all of their movables and immovable properties and business. Anyone dealing with them in any way or manner whatsoever shall be doing on his own risks and consequences. My client has no responsibility whatsoever in any case.

SAURABH KUMAR (Advocate)
C-6/146, Yamuna Vihar, Delhi-53

सार्वजनिक सूचना

सर्वसाधारण को सूचित किया जाता है। कि मेरे मुवक्किल विरमा देवी गुप्ता पत्नी स्व: श्री जगदीश प्रसाद गुप्ता निवासी B-459 हरी एन्क्लेव पार्ट-।। किरारी सुलेमान नगर दिल्ली-110086 ने अपने बेटे दीपक गुप्ता व उसकी पत्नी किरन गुप्ता एवम पोत्र यस गुप्ता, लक्की गुप्ता, और दूसरा पुत्र किशन गोपाल और उसकी पत्नी पूजा और उनकी बेटी चेष्ठा और बेटा वियांश गुप्ता को अपनी चल अचल संपत्ति से बेदखल कर दिया है और अपने सभी संबंध तोड़ दिए हैं। भविष्य मे यदि कोई इनसे किसी भी प्रकार का लेन देन आदि कुछ भी करता है तो उसका जिम्मेदार वाद खुद होगा मेरे मुवक्किल जिम्मेदार नहीं होंगे।

Sd/-
KAMAL SINGH
(Advocate)
Enrl. No. D/748/2014

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Client Sardarni Gurmeet Kaur W/o Late Manjit Singh R/o WZ-303 Gali No-2 Guru Nanak Nagar Tilak Nagar New Delhi-110018, has severed all relations with his son Hardeep Singh and his wife Gursharan Kaur. Also disowned them from her all movable and immovable properties due to their misconduct/misbehavior towards my client. My client shall not be responsible for any acts/deeds of their in future.

AJAY KUMAR SHARMA (Advocate)
10-C DCM Building Barakhamba Road New Delhi-110001
M.No. 9818582452

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to notify the general public notice that my clients of Mr. Juginder Pal Chakarvati S/o Baldev Raj Chakervati & Mrs. Veena Chakarvati W/o Juginder Pal Chakarvati both R/o A-3, Flat No. 112, J.K Apartment, Paschim Vihar, New Delhi-110063 has debarred their son namely Dewanshu Chakarwati S/o Juginder Pal Chakarvati & Daughter-in-Law Aakanksha Chakarwati W/o Dewanshu Chakarwati & Grand Daughter Virayesha Chakarvati from all their movable and immovable properties with immediate effect. Anybody dealing with him in any manner shall do so at his/her own cost, risk & responsibility. My clients shall be in no way responsible for any acts, deeds & things done by him.

Bharti Digwal & Associates
D/80918/2020, Madipur, Delhi-63

"IMPORTANT"

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GOLD	USD RATE	OIL	SILVER
₹72,600	₹83.41	$88.88	₹83,750

Note: Gold, silver rates at Delhi spot market, gold per 10g, silver per 1 kg; Crude oil (Indian basket) as of April 29

SENSEX: 74,482.78 ▼ 188.50 (0.25%) **NIFTY:** 22,604.85 ▼ 38.55 (0.17%) **NIKKEI:** 38,405.66 ▲ 470.90 **HANG SENG:** 17,763.03 ▲ 16.12 **FTSE:** 8,188.48 ▲ 41.45 **DAX:** 18,045.52 ▼ 72.80

International market data till 1900 IST

BRIEFLY

Key infra sectors grow 5.2% in March

New Delhi: The growth of eight key infrastructure sectors rose to 5.2 per cent year-on-year in March due to improvement in the output of crude oil, cement and electricity, according to official data. It was 7.1 per cent in the preceding month. **PTI**

Kotak Mahindra Bank Joint MD steps down

New Delhi: Kotak Mahindra Bank on Tuesday announced that its joint managing director K V S Manian has stepped down with immediate effect. Manian, who had been with the lender for nearly three decades, was elevated in a management rejig in January. The news of the departure comes days after the RBI put business restrictions on the lender, including stopping it from selling new credit cards for shortcomings in its tech architecture. **PTI**

UCO Bank aims to cut govt stake in FY25

Kolkata: UCO Bank on Tuesday said it aims to reduce the government's stake in the bank from the current 95.39 per cent to 75 per cent in several tranches by fiscal 2024-25, to comply with the minimum public shareholding norms set by Sebi. **PTI**

DFS, I4C conduct half-day workshop

New Delhi: The Department of Financial Services (DFS) and Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) jointly organised a half-day workshop with law enforcement agencies and start-ups and fintech ecosystem partners, in New Delhi, on Tuesday. **ENS**

India slashes windfall tax on petroleum crude

Bengaluru: India has cut its windfall tax on petroleum crude to Rs 8,400 a metric tonne from Rs 9,600 with effect from May 1, the government said on Tuesday. The tax, which is revised every fortnight, was left unchanged at zero for diesel and aviation turbine fuel. **REUTERS**

FACE VALUE OF NCDs VIA PRIVATE PLACEMENT CUT TO ₹10,000

Place mechanism to curb frauds: Sebi to fund houses

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, APRIL 30

THE BOARD of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) on Tuesday decided to amend norms governing mutual funds mandating asset management companies (AMCs) to put in place an "institutional mechanism" for identification and deterrence of potential market abuse, including front-running and fraudulent transactions in securities. The board also decided to slash the face value of non-convertible debentures through private placement to Rs 10,000.

The AMC mechanism should consist of enhanced surveillance systems, internal control procedures, and escalation processes to identify, monitor and address specific types of misconduct, including front running, insider trading, and misuse of sensitive information, Sebi said in a statement after the board meeting. Further, with respect to the requirement of recording of all communication by dealers and fund managers, the board approved exemption from the requirement of recording face to face communication, including out of office interactions, during market hours. This will be made effective after implementation of the institutional mechanism by AMCs, the market regulator said.

The Sebi Board has approved a proposal to provide an option to VCFs to migrate into AIF Regulations. *Reuters File*

To enhance participation of non-institutional investors in the bond market while safeguarding the interest of such investors, the board approved the proposal to provide an option to the issuers to issue NCDs or NCRPS through private placement mode at a reduced face value of Rs 10,000 along with the requirement to appoint a merchant banker. This move is expected to draw more investors to the bond market, said a merchant banker. Further, in order to reduce the size of the offer document, the board approved the proposal that issuers which have listed outstanding non-convertible securities as on the date of the offer document may be allowed to disclose audited financials for the last three years through insertion of a weblink and QR code in the offer document or the placement memorandum. In another decision, the Sebi Board approved a regulatory framework for providing flexibility for increased contribution by NRIs, OCIs and RI individuals, in the corpus of certain FPIs based out of IFSCs in India and regulated by IFSCA.

The flexibility for such increased participation will be subject to certain conditions to manage regulatory risk. "100 per cent contribution limits should be available subject to the FPI submitting copies of PAN cards of all their NRI/OCI/RI individual constituents, along with their economic interest in the FPI, to the DDP," it said.

If a constituent does not have a PAN, the FPI should submit a suitable declaration along with copies of prescribed Identity documents such as Indian passport, OCI Card, Aadhaar, etc. Similar disclosure shall also be required in case of indirect holding in the FPI through non-individual constituents that are majority contributed to/owned/controlled by NRI/OCI/RI individuals on a look through basis.

In a bid to streamline and create a level playing field for all AMCs, the board approved amendment to SEBI (Mutual Funds) Regulations, 1996 to allow equity passive schemes, on indices to be specified by SEBI, to take exposure up to the weightage of the constituents in the underlying index. This exposure would, however, be subject to an overall cap of 35 per cent investment in the group companies of sponsor.

With a view to address the issues faced by venture capital funds (VCFs) registered under the erstwhile VCF Regulations with respect to their inability to fully liquidate the investments of their schemes within the tenure of the scheme, the Sebi Board has approved a proposal to provide an option to such VCFs to migrate into AIF Regulations and avail the facilities available for AIFs to deal with unliquidated investments.

'DIFFICULT TO QUANTIFY COSTS, BENEFITS'

CAG's ₹1.76 lakh crore 2G spectrum 'presumptive loss' contestable: Subbarao

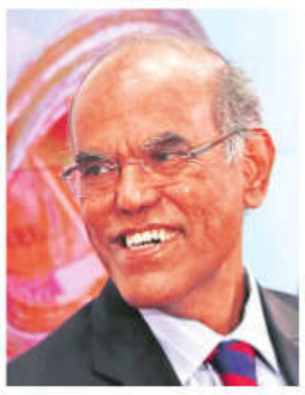
GEORGE MATHEW
MUMBAI, APRIL 30

THE 2G spectrum pricing became a hot issue before the 2014 Lok Sabha elections with the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) estimating Rs 1.76 lakh crore 'presumptive loss' for the government. Opposition parties led by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) then made it a major election issue, among other scams, which eventually led to the exit of the UPA government headed by Manmohan Singh in the elections.

Ten years later, former Union Finance Secretary and Reserve Bank of India governor Duvvuri Subbarao said the assumptions underlying CAG's estimate of Rs 1.76 lakh crore presumptive loss in the 2G telecom scam are contestable on several grounds. "CAG did not reckon with the significant spin off benefits of low spectrum pricing," Subbarao said in an interview to *The Indian Express*.

"Arguably, it's possible to come out with a study that would, in fact, show a 'presumptive gain' to the government—that the overall benefits to the government far exceed the revenue foregone—by making assumptions that would be no less robust than those underlying the CAG methodology," Subbarao said ahead of the release of his book "*Just a Mercenary?*"

"The sacrifice of upfront revenue would be neutralised by recurring revenue the government would earn via larger spectrum usage. Also, the CAG did not take into account the substantial equity and efficiency gains that would accrue to the economy via deeper telecom penetration," said Subbarao. He said the reality is that it's difficult to quantify the costs and benefits of decisions like this without making heroic assumptions.



As finance secretary, Subbarao contested the proposal of Department of Telecom (DoT), then headed by DMK Minister A Raja, to give away these second-round spectrum licences in 2007/08 at the same price as that set in 2001. "I argued that we must rediscover the price through a fresh auction since experience in India and around the world during the intervening years showed that spectrum was a scarcer commodity than originally believed. It's only fair that a part of the scarcity premium must accrue to the government," he said.

The DoT pushed back against this proposal. Later, at a meeting with the prime minister, it was decided that this round of spectrum would be given at the 2001 price but all future spectrum would be allocated only through an auction, he said.

The 2G pricing issue assumed crisis proportions when it later turned out that some of the licensees were making windfall profits. The government came in for severe criticism, among other things, for ignoring the advice of its own finance secretary. "I was made to look like a hero. But when I appeared before the JPC, they grilled me on just one question: why didn't I pursue my suggestion and why did I give in? The JPC was not satisfied with my response that there were limits to the extent to which a civil servant could push his advice. They made it look like I gave up on the interest of the government and made me feel like a villain," he said.

"In the course of my evidence in the CBI court, the judge asked me if I believed it was right for the government to incur such a huge loss of revenue," he said.

"I replied that it was misleading to call it 'a loss of revenue' when it was actually 'a sacrifice of revenue' and added that it was very much open to a democratically elected government to sacrifice revenue if it believed that the resultant gains, both tangible and intangible, exceeded the forgone revenue," he said. In his judgement, the CBI court said that Subbarao displayed the quality of a "sterling witness" by remaining reasonable and objective in his deposition.

On the advice given by PM Manmohan Singh when he was appointed the RBI governor, Subbarao said, "I related to the prime minister's advice particularly during my long fight against high and stubborn inflation for over two years during my RBI tenure. Inflation hurts everyone but it hurts the poor disproportionately."

"I remembered how my parents used to struggle to manage our household budget on a low middle-class income when we were growing up," Subbarao said. "Your mind will become so cluttered with numbers like inflation, interest rate, money supply and credit growth that you will forget that there are real people behind those numbers. Please be watchful of that possible blind spot," Singh had told him. As a joint secretary in the finance ministry, he signed off on the pledge of gold during the balance of payments crisis in 1991, he said, "as a director in the finance ministry, I was handling balance of payments (BoP).

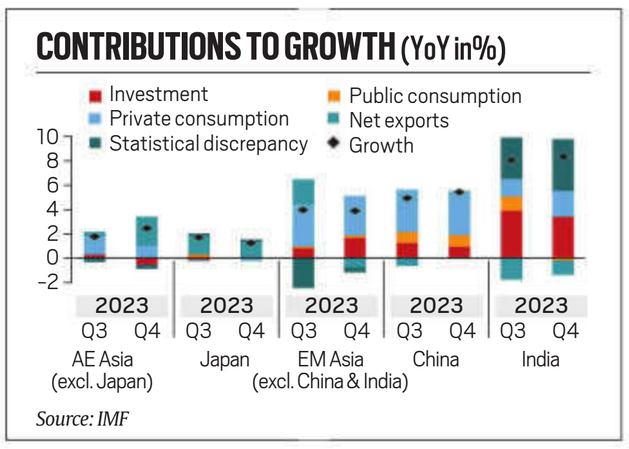
FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

Public investment remains an important driver for India's growth, says IMF

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

PUBLIC INVESTMENT remains an important driver for India, making it the world's fastest growing major economy, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said in its latest remarks on the Regional Economic Outlook for Asia and Pacific released Tuesday. The IMF also said that headline inflation may see further reductions due to lower energy prices in several economies in the Asia and Pacific region, but food price pressures - especially for rice - may slow headline disinflation in India.

The IMF had earlier this month raised India's growth forecast for the financial year 2024-25 to 6.8 per cent from 6.5 per cent earlier and retained the growth forecast for 2025-26 at 6.5 per cent. India and the Philippines have been the source of repeated positive growth surprises, supported by resilient domestic demand, the IMF said. The IMF has also raised the regional growth forecast for Asia and Pacific to 4.5 per cent, up 0.3 percentage point from six months earlier, reflecting upgrades for China, where policy stimulus is expected to provide support. But the growth forecast for the region is slower than 5 per cent growth in 2023.



Source: IMF

Global disinflation and the prospect of lower central bank interest rates have made a soft landing more likely, hence risks to the near-term outlook are now broadly balanced, Krishna Srinivasan, Director, Asia and Pacific Department said in a blog post. Asian central banks should continue to focus firmly on domestic price stability and "avoid making policy decisions overly dependent" on anticipated interest rate moves by the US Federal Reserve, Srinivasan added.

In a still subdued external environment, robust private consumption will remain the main growth driver in Asia's other emerging market economies, he added. For inflation, the IMF said it is already at or close to target in emerging markets and there is heterogeneity in inflation drivers going forward. "Core inflation is largely expected to remain contained. As for headline inflation, several economies may experience further reductions due to lower energy prices while in others (for example, India), food price pressures — especially for rice — may slow headline disinflation," the IMF said.

Asian countries are better placed than before to cope with exchange rate movements, with fewer financial frictions and better macro-fundamentals and institutional frameworks and should continue to allow the exchange rate to act as a buffer against shocks, he said. Advancing fiscal consolidation is an urgent priority both to lessen the burden of higher debt levels and interest costs and to rebuild the fiscal space needed to address medium-term structural challenges. **FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com**

Charging of interest rates: RBI detects overcharging by banks, asks them to refund borrowers

GEORGE MATHEW
MUMBAI, APRIL 30

THE RESERVE Bank of India (RBI) has come across instances of lenders resorting to certain unfair practices in charging of excess interest from borrowers. The RBI, through its supervisory teams, has advised banks to refund such excess interest and other charges to customers.

The RBI has advised banks to refund such excess interest and other charges to customers. *File*

What are unfair practices followed by banks?

During the course of the on-site examination of banks and NBFCs for the period ended March 31, 2023, the RBI found that banks were charging of interest from the date of sanction of loan or date of execution of loan agreement and not from the date of actual disbursement of the funds to the customer. Similarly, in the case of loans being disbursed by cheque, instances were observed where interest was charged from the date of the cheque whereas the cheque was handed over to the customer several days later, the RBI said.

In the case of disbursal or repayment of loans during the course of the month, some banks were charging interest for the entire month, rather than charging interest only for the period for which the loan was outstanding. It was also observed that banks were collecting one or more instalments in advance but reckoning the full loan amount for charging interest.

What is latest RBI directive?

In a circular issued on Monday, the RBI directed banks and NBFCs to review their practices regarding mode of disbursal of loans, application of interest and other charges and take corrective action, including system level changes, as may be necessary, to address the issues highlighted by the RBI. This is in the interest of fairness and transparency, the RBI said. The RBI through its supervisory teams has advised banks to refund such excess interest and other charges to customers, it said.

What is the RBI policy on interest rate?

EXPLAINED

The guidelines on Fair Practices Code issued to various regulated entities (REs) like banks and NBFCs since 2003 advocate fairness and transparency in charging of interest by the lenders, while providing adequate freedom to banks as regards their loan pricing policy.

Non-standard practices of charging interest are not in consonance with the spirit of fairness and transparency while dealing with customers. "These are matters of serious concern to the Reserve Bank. Wherever such practices have come to light, the RBI through its supervisory teams has advised banks to refund such excess interest and other charges to customers. Banks are also being encouraged to use online account transfers in lieu of cheques being issued in a few cases for loan disbursal," it said.

Do banks inform borrowers about changes?

A major complaint of borrowers is that banks don't inform them properly about the change in interest rates. At the time of sanction, banks are supposed to clearly communicate to the borrowers about the possible impact of change in benchmark interest rate on the loan leading to changes in EMI and/or tenor or both. Subsequently, any increase in the EMI/ tenor or both on account of the above should be communicated to the borrower immediately through appropriate channels.

At the time of reset of interest rates, REs should provide the option to the borrowers to switch over to a fixed rate as per their Board approved policy. The policy may also specify the number of times a borrower will be allowed to switch during the tenor of the loan. However, these norms are not often practised by banks, according to a banking source.

CEO PIETER ELBERS ON AIRLINE'S WIDE-BODY AIRCRAFT ORDER

'IndiGo's global ambition to help make India aviation hub'

SUKALP SHARMA
NEW DELHI, APRIL 30

INDIGO'S RECENT order of 30 Airbus A350-900 wide-body aircraft is geared towards transforming India into a global aviation hub and the airline's focus on "internationalisation" envisions offering direct international flights from multiple points in India, the carrier's chief executive officer Pieter Elbers said Tuesday.

Indian airlines do not command a dominant share of international traffic to and from India, especially in the medium and long-haul segments, where foreign carriers account for a bulk of the market share. For years now, large aviation hubs in West Asia and Southeast Asia have been dominant connection points for Indian travellers flying long-haul.

File

According to Elbers, IndiGo with its dominant position in India's large and growing domestic aviation market is in a position to naturally evolve into a global aviation player and contribute in making India a global aviation hub with multiple options for international-to-domestic and international-to-international connections. Turning India into a major aviation hub is also part of the government's civil aviation vision.

"If you were to make a differentiation between international markets in the, let's say, four-hour range, and what is beyond the six-hour range, you see an almost linear decline in the market share of Indian carriers. Against that backdrop, for us it is natural evolution to bring that market share back to levels which are more common in other parts of the world, where carriers from countries where there's a large market have a significant share (in international traffic)," Elbers said in a conference call. On April 25, IndiGo had announced a firm order for 30 Airbus A350-900 aircraft, along with purchase options for another 70 planes of the A350 family. These aircraft, which can operate long-haul international flights, will start joining the carrier's fleet starting 2027. Elbers declined to comment on the potential routes on which the A350s will be deployed, and whether IndiGo plans to offer a dual-class configuration on its wide-body product with more passenger amenities. He said that all options are open and the decisions will be taken in due course based on the evolving requirements of the Indian flyers and the country's aviation landscape. The airline currently offers an all-economy cabin on almost all its flights.

IndiGo's current fleet of nearly 350 planes mostly comprises narrow-body Airbus A320 family planes. In terms of wide-body aircraft, it has just two Boeing 777 planes on damp lease that are used exclusively to operate flights to and from Istanbul. The A350 aircraft order is IndiGo's first wide-body plane order.

Prior to the A350s, as part of its strategy of internationalisation, IndiGo will start inducting the narrow-body A321XLR aircraft starting 2025. Although the XLRs—short for extra-long range—are single-aisle planes, their extended range enables them to operate on medium-haul international routes that IndiGo is currently not able to service with its current fleet. "Clearly XLRs will help us to solidify our network in some markets...My favourite example is Nairobi. We operate today out of Mumbai...with the XLR, we could start combining it also with Bangalore or Delhi, or other places in India," Elbers said.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

Credit offtake grows 16.3% in Mar

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, APRIL 30

THE BANKING sector reported a higher credit offtake in March amid a pickup in demand from agriculture and industry segments while personal segment growth moderated.

On a year-on-year (y-o-y) basis, non-food bank credit registered a growth of 16.3 per cent in March 2024 as compared with 15.4 per cent a year ago, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said on Tuesday.

"Personal loans growth moderated to 17.7 per cent (y-o-y) in March 2024 (21.0 per cent a year ago) due to decelerated growth in vehicle loans and other personal loans," the RBI said. Credit growth to agriculture and allied activities was robust at 20.1 per cent (y-o-y) in March 2024 (15.4 per cent a year ago). Credit to industry grew by 8.5 per cent (y-o-y) in March 2024 as compared with 5.6 per cent in March 2023. Among major industries, growth in credit (y-o-y) to chemicals & chemical products, food processing and infrastructure accelerated in March 2024 as compared with the corresponding month of the previous year, while that to basic metal & metal products moderated.

The RBI said credit growth to services sector improved to 20.2 per cent (y-o-y) in March 2024 (from 19.6 per cent a year ago).

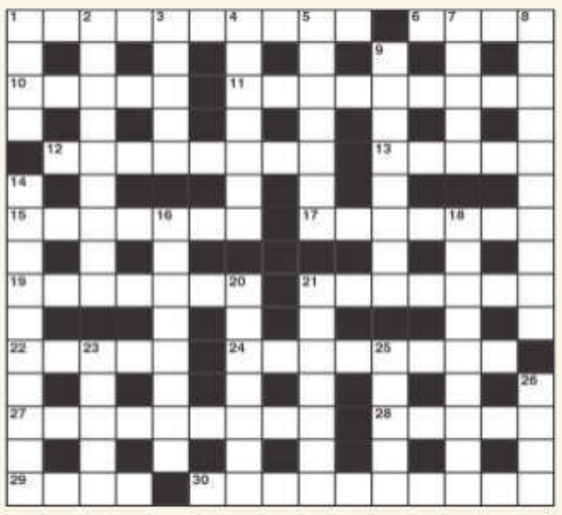
RBI updates guidance note for banks, NBFCs

MUMBAI: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has updated its "guidance note" on operational risk management for the financial sector, and also extended it to the non-banking financial companies (NBFCs), including housing finance companies. The 2005 'Guidance Note on Management of Operational Risk' covered only commercial banks.

The RBI said all regulated entities (REs) in India should implement a robust information and communication technology risk management programme in alignment with their operational risk management framework.

"REs should manage their dependencies on relationships, including those of, but not limited to, third parties (which include intra-group entities), for delivery of critical operations," the RBI said. **ENS**

CROSSWORD 5352



ACROSS

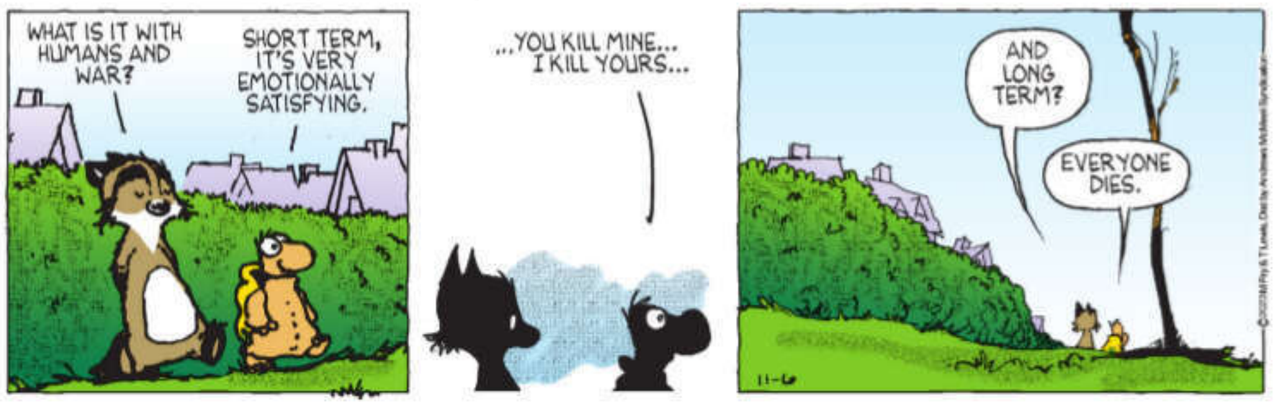
1 Leaders of fashion have a sort of advantage, right? (5-5)
6 We hear he has left some clothes (4)
10 Country involved in formal talks (5)
11 Ring tuner about paying another visit (9)
12 Extremely difficult and not properly finished (8)
13 Aside given to an actor to speak? (5)
15 Hanger-on employed by key man in security work (7)
17 Rest of the wood comes on Saturday or Sunday (7)
19 Wrongly presume it's the highest (7)
21 Folds when credit becomes derestricted (7)
22 A revolting subject (5)
24 Particular mixture of ale and spice (8)
27 No maid of the mountains is homely (5,4)
28 Device that's defective for example is rejected (5)
29 It was heaven on earth while it lasted (4)
30 Unlucky enough to be badly cast as a leading actor (3-7)

DOWN

1 Prepares to meet an invasion from Mars (4)
2 Everyone bound to be properly arranged (3,4,2)
3 Direct transport (5)
4 Highly upset? (7)
5 Abandons lands in the sea (7)
7 Boy gets a girl, name of Heather (5)
8 Correct attire for Army manoeuvre (5,5)
9 Rate modified by undoubted wealth (8)
14 Sign for a missing letter (10)
16 Islanders cannot make such journeys abroad (8)
18 One who only watches will make a bad sentry (9)
20 Watch the dance in which one has a pupil (7)
21 Policemen make very little money (7)
23 A verb wrongly used to describe daring (5)
25 Hooded killer has firm support of ladies (5)
26 Crazy about energy-packed drink (4)

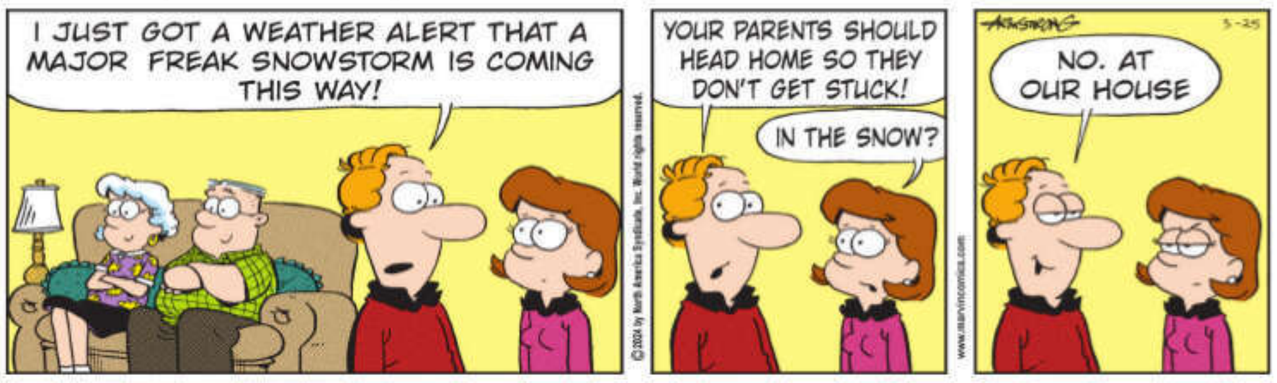
Solutions Crossword 5351 Across: 1 Tear gas, 5 Pedal, 8 Medallist, 9 Pit, 10 Orbs, 12 Novelist, 14 Arrive, 15 Scraps, 17 Duty call, 18 Zeus, 21 Nun, 22 Irritated, 24 Arson, 25 Capstan **Down:** 1 Tempo, 2 Add, 3 Gilt, 4 Suitor, 5 Patience, 6 Duplicate, 7 Litotes, 11 Baritones, 13 Eviction, 14 Addenda, 16 Cleric, 19 Sedan, 20 Stop, 23 Tot

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBES by Bill Watterson

MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)
Erratic and argumentative alignments are replaced by greater certainty, represented by the restraining grip of Saturn, the celestial school master. You may therefore be subject to a major dose of reality.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)
Travel plans should now move along a little more easily. Perhaps it is thanks to Mercury's changing location that you now appear able to make your voice heard above the general din that seems to surround you. You might even come across a cache of secret cash.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)
Money matters are still to the fore, but now is the time to recognise that enough is enough. Get a grip on your affairs and realise that tradition is more important than strange modern ways of doing things. Also, necessities are a better buy than luxuries.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)
In many ways it's still a stable, sensible sort of a time. Everything that is most conservative about your character should stand you in good stead today. Emphasise practical solutions and don't give way to anger or resentment over any recent hurts or slights.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)
The Sun is still in an intense mood, and could encourage an indication of simmering family tensions. But your first step is to get on and finish worthwhile activities, rather than complaining about why nothing ever seems to work out. Optimistic Leos should set about domestic repairs without delay.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)
Social contacts should again be emphasised today, but with a difference. The significant relationships will be those with people who are older, more experienced or more secure than you. Wild spending and extravagance will solve nothing, unless you dislike too much money.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)
The costs of a recent responsibility, perhaps a social obligation, may have alarmed you. However, it looks as if you may have very little alternative but to smile and settle up. But perhaps what's really important is the emotional cost, and all that's needed are a few words.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)
Even though your life recently has been all about maintaining balance and following the middle way, you may now feel able to swing to extremes. If you take a risk and abandon your normal belief in harmony, then you'll soon see what happens to your plans.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22)
Today's intriguing developments favour a solution to your business cares and financial woes. The answer lies in long-term investments and savings, not in making a fast buck, going for a quick fix or indulging in any risky enterprise.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)
Even those of you whose life is moving at break-neck speed should slow down today, or at least consolidate the gains you've made so far. Anything that is not secure may be swept away by the long-running dispute between macho Mars and electrifying Uranus.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)
Risk a confrontation only if you are perfectly happy to incur certain losses. These may be financial or professional but are more likely to relate to a family partnership. Otherwise keep your head down and avoid trouble, while people around you calm down.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)
You're in exactly the right mood to take up the cudgels on behalf of some noble or idealistic cause. I have two words of advice, though: get your facts straight and don't go behind anybody's back. If you jump in without due consideration, you'll risk massive embarrassment.

JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip.

I was taught that the _____ was neither swift nor easy. - Marie Curie (3,2,8)

TERRA

IRSPSY

PROOS

AFUFGW

SOLUTION: RATER, SPOOR, PRISSY, CUFFAW
Answer: I was taught that the **way of progress** was neither swift nor easy. - Marie Curie

SUDOKU 5548

Difficulty Level 3s
Instructions
To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Difficulty Level
1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy;
3s = Medium; 4s = Hard;
5s = Very Hard;
6s = Genius

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

SOLUTION SUDOKU 5547

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

RDSO

Govt. of India
Ministry of Railways
Research Designs & Standards Organisation
Lucknow-226011

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Ministry of Railways, Research Designs and Standards Organisation (RDSO), Lucknow, India is interested in developing firms for item **'Centralized Intelligent Kavach Monitoring System'.** Firms interested in developing and supply of said items are requested to see the details on RDSO website **www.rdso.indianrailways.gov.in** at HOME PAGE under link of 'EOI' appearing in RED.

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr.P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused **Ram Kishan @ Bhola** S/o Niranjan Lal R/o H.No. 67-A, DDA Flats, Shastri Park, Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence FIR No. 1302/14 u/s 448/451/355/357/506/509/34 IPC P.S. Gokalpuri, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused person **Ram Kishan @ Bhola** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said **Ram Kishan @ Bhola** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrants). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused person **Ram Kishan @ Bhola** of FIR No. 1302/14 u/s 448/451/355/357/506/509/34 IPC P.S. Gokalpuri, Delhi is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **05.06.2024.**

By Order: Sh. Sukhjeet Singh
Metropolitan Magistrate-03
(North East Distt.), Room No. 22,
Karkardooma Court, Delhi

DP/5004/NE/24

WESTERN RAILWAY - VADODARA DIVISION

CORRIGENDUM 2

Tender Notice No. EL-TRD-2023-24-EPC-01 (Open Tender)
Closing Date : 16/05/2024 at 15:00 hrs.

Tender Notice No. **EL-TRD-2023-24-EPC-01** for the work of **"Design, Supply, Erection, Testing & Commissioning of 220/132/55 kV Traction Sub-station, Sectioning Post (SPs) and Sub-sectioning Post (SSPs) (2 x 25 kV System Scott Connected Transformer) of Mumbai - Ratlam and Vadodara - Ahmedabad Sections of Western Railway on EPC mode".**
New Documents attached on IREPS website :

Sr. No.	Document description	File Name
1	RDSO DRG TSS 1	CABLETRENCHANDFOUNDATIONTSS.pdf
2	RDSO DRG TSS 2	GADTSS.pdf
3	LOCATION PLAN 3	GDATSS2X25KV.pdf
4	RDSO DRG SP 1	CABLETRENCHANDFOUNDATIONOFSP.pdf
5	LOCATION PLAN 11	BRCCSSP.pdf
6	LOCATION PLAN 4	GERBSP. pdf
7	LOCATION PLAN 2	BLTRD5SSP.pdf
8	LOCATION PLAN 5	ITOLASSDrg.pdf
9	RDSO DRG SSP 1	CABLETRENCHFOUNDATIONOFSSP.pdf
10	LOCATION PLAN 1	2X25BORDISSP.pdf
11	LOCATION PLAN 6	MYGSSP2X25KV.pdf
12	LOCATION PLAN 9	VTA-SP.pdf
13	LOCATION PLAN 8	VSSSP2X25KV.pdf
14	LOCATION PLAN 7	RNOSSP2X25KV.pdf
15	LOCATION PLAN 10	BRCYDSSP.pdf
16	RDSO DRG SSP 2	GADOFSSP.pdf
17	RDSO DRG SP 2	GADOFSP.pdf

BRC-023

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WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY

Open E-Tender Notice
No. BPL/TRD/DRG/WC426
Dated: 29.04.2024

Sr. DEE/TRD/WCR, Bhopal acting for and on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders against following works, upto 11.00 hours on the dates mentioned against each tender. The complete tender documents and details information regarding tender, is available on the website **http://www.ireps.gov.in**. Manual offers are not allowed against these tenders. For any correction, in this tender. if necessary, corrigendum will be uploaded on website prior to tender opening date which may be seen up to the date of tender opening. **Tender No.:** BPL/TRD/DRG/WC426, **Description of work:** 1) OHE work due to improvement of goods shed facilities at Pachor goods shed. 2) RKMP- Yard remodeling to isolate platform 4&5 increase CSR and provision of one cross over at Itarsi end., **Completion perion:** 06 month, **Estimated Cost (Rs.):** 17693588.46, **EMD (Rs.):** 238500.00, **Closing Date and Time for submission of Tender:** 22.05.2024 at 11.00 Hrs.

Sr. DEE, TRD, WCR, Bhopal

स्वच्छ भारत अभियान
एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-TENDER NOTICE

e-Tender Notice No. ECR-CAO-C-N-03-24-25, E-Tender is invited on behalf of the president of India for the under mentioned work. **Particulars, S.N. 1. Name of work with it's location:** Supply, stacking and spreading of stone ballast, linking of permanent way including transportation of P-Way materials like Rail, Sleeper, fittings etc and other associated work as per Railway's specifications and standards in connection with in connection with New Bypass Line at Saraigarh in between New Jhahja to Baijnathpur Andauli station in Samastipur Division of E.C. Railway, **2. Approx, cost of the work of:** Rs. 6,60,76,330.92, **3. Bid Security Amount:** Rs.4,80,400.00, **4. Date and time for closing of tender:** 17.05.2024 at 14.30 hrs., **5. Website particular, Notice board location where complete details of tender can be seen and addressed of the office from where the tender form be purchased etc.:** The above E-Tender, E-Tendering document alongwith full information is available on website i.e. **http://www.ireps.gov.in.**
Note: In case of any descripencies found in tender notice, English version will be final. Tenderers are requested to visit the website **http://www.ireps.gov.in** atleast 15 days before last date of closing for latest corrigendum/corrections etc in response to this E-tender.

CAO/Con/North
EC Rly, MHX,Patna

PR/00184/CONN/ENGG/T/24-25/56

Appeal for Identification

General public is hereby informed that one person **Namely:** Unknown, **S/o:** Unknown, **R/o:** Unknown, **Age:** About 35-36 Yrs., **Height:** 5'10", **Sex:** Male, **Complexion:** Shallow, **Built:** Thin, **Face:** Round, **Wearing:** Black Colour Linedar Shirt, Black & White Colour Lower, Barefoot and Light Beard on Face, **ID Mark:** Snake (Nag) Tattoo Mark on Right Hand Wrist, **Place of Recovery:** Found dead in Meena Bazar, General Shanabad Mazar, Delhi. The dead body of deceased preserved for 72 hours in Maulana Azad Medical College, Delhi Mortuary for identification.
In this regard **DD No. 28A, Dated 28.04.2024** has been lodged at **Police Station: Jama Masjid, Delhi**. Any clue come to notice please inform undersigned.

SHO
P.S.: Jama Masjid, Delhi
Ph.: 011-23261625, 23269777, 8750870422

DP/5126/CD/2024

SEARCH FOR MISSING FEMALE

Kajal

General Public is hereby informed that one female (depicted in the photo) namely Kajal with her daughter namely Astha **W/o** Sh. Ramesh **R/o** Balle Ka Makan, Village Rajapur, Sector-09, Rohini, Delhi, **Aged**-24 Years has been reported missing since 02.04.2024 at about 2:30 PM from her residence vide **DD No.102A Dated 03.04.2024** registered at Police Station Prashant Vihar, Delhi. Her physical description is as under:-
Complexion: Wheatish, **Height:** 5', **Face:** Round, **Built:** Thin, **Clothing:** Red coloured suit, Salwar, Green coloured Slipper in feet.
Any person having any information/Clue about this missing female and her daughter, may inform SHO, Prashant Vihar, Delhi at E-mail: **cic@cbi.gov.in** or website: **http://cbi.nic.in**

Sd/-
SHO, Prashant Vihar, Delhi
Tel.: 011-27557184, 27561877
Mob.: 8750870325

Tele No. : 011-24368638 or 24368641
FAX No. : 011-24368639
DP/4074/RD/2024

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

OPEN TENDER NOTICE
(Through e-Tender)
E-tender Notice No.33245012 Date: 25.04.24

On the behalf of President of India e-Tenders are invited by the Sr. DMM/DSD/ NWR, Jodhpur. **1.Name of item:** Supply of 5 watt VHF Digital Walkie Talkie Set without Keypad and without Display. Specn. No. RDSO/SPN/TC/107/2018 Ver. (2.0) or latest, Sl. No. 2.3(b). Each set will consist of:- (1) One [1] VHF Set with Compatible Battery + Battery Charger + Antenna + suitable Belt Clip in complete Box packing. (2) One [1] spare Battery compatible to the VHF Set as per Specn. No. RDSO/SPN/ TC/ 107/2018 Ver (2.0) or latest. **2. Approximate Cost of items:** Rs. 3159142.8 (Rs. Thirty one Lakh Fifty nine thousand one hundred forty two Only) **3. Earnest Money to be deposited:** Rs. 63180.00 (Rs. Sixty three thousand one hundred eighty only.); **4. Last date and time for Submission of e-tender and Opening of e-tender:** 20.05.2024 before 14:25 Hrs. **5. Web site from e-tender forms can be obtained: www.ireps.gov.in; 6. Address of NIT issuing Office:** Office of the Sr. DMM/ DSD, NWR,Jodhpur-342001 (Rajasthan); **Note: 1.** Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be summarily rejected. **2.** Cost of tender document & EMD online through e-transfers i.e. through payment gateway facility on the IREPS website

503-AD/24

Please join us on /NWRailways

PROVISION OF AC IN MALIGAON

E-Tender Notice No. Dy.CEE/PS/MLG/HQ/19/24-25 Dated: 26-04-2024. E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works: **Name of work:** NFR-HQ complex: Provision of AC in PFA 1st floor, CCM/Claims, Rates, Audit office, PF, Stock Verifying & Record Section (Phase-IV). **Tender Value:** ₹2,03,13,072.64. **Earnest Money:** ₹2,51,600/-. **Date & Time of closing of tender: 15.00** hrs. of **17-05-2024**. For details please visit **www.ireps.gov.in**

Dy.CEE/PS/Maligaon

NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Serving Customers With A Smile

PROVISION OF ROOFTOP SOLAR POWER PLANT

E-Tender Notice No. RT-RNY-EL-T-29-2023-24. E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works: **Name of work:** At Rangiya Division - Provision of 490 KWp Grid connected rooftop Solar Power plant at Rangiya station PP shed under SSE/ELECT/Rangiya including 5 years AMC/CAMC. **Tender Value:** ₹2,45,00,000/-. **Earnest Money:** ₹2,72,500/-. **Date & Time of closing of tender: 13.00** hrs. of **17-05-2024**. For details please visit **www.ireps.gov.in**

Sr. DEE, Rangiya

NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Serving Customers With A Smile

"IMPORTANT"

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PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr. P. C.

Whereas a complaint has been made before me that accused person namely **Joved S/o Sheikh Usman** R/o H.No. E-44/A-65, New Seemapuri, Delhi, have committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence under **FIR. No. 147/23 U/s 392/397/34 IPC.,** has been registered at **P.S. Seemapuri, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest there upon issued that the said, **Joved** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said, **Joved** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).
Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Joved of FIR.No. 147/23 U/s 392/397/34 IPC., registered at P.S. Seemapuri, Delhi** is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before **03.06.2024.**

By Order
Ms. Aishwarya Singh Kashyap, Ld. MM,
Karkardooma Courts, Delhi

DP/5083/SHD/2024

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr. P. C.

Whereas a complaint has been made before me that accused person namely **Sh. Pankaj Sharma S/o Sh. Manohar Lal** R/o H.No.207, Bakhtawarpur Delhi have committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence under **CC. No. 369/18 U/s 138 NI Act.,** has been registered at **P.S. North Rohini, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest there upon issued that the said, **Sh. Pankaj Sharma** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said, **Sh. Pankaj Sharma** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).
Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Sh. Pankaj Sharma of CC. No. 369/18 U/s 138 NI Act.registered at P.S. North Rohini, Delhi** is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before **03.06.2024.**

By Order
Ms. Ebbani Aggarwal, MM,
Room No.107, 1st floor Rohini Courts, Delhi

DP/4897/RD/2024

North Eastern Railway

E-Tendering Tender Notice No. 25/2024
Divisional Railway Manager (Engg.), N.E. Railways, Izatnagar for and behalf of President of India invites **"OPEN"** e-tender through online (E-Tendering) for the following work :
S. N. : 1, Description of Works : Carrying out Zone works for period ending 30.06.2025 on **Zone No-12** Kasganj (Inclu.) to MHA (Excl.) upto km 253/0 KSJ (Incl.) upto km 417/0 and Jafari, Malgodam colony KSJ., **Approx. Value :** Rs. 1,42,14,718.63, **E.M.D. Money :** Rs. 2,21,100/-, **Cost of Tender Forms :** Rs. NIL, **Completion time/period from the date of issue of acceptance letter :** 30.06.2025. **S. N. : 2, Description of Works :** Carrying out Zone works for period ending 30.06.2025 on **Zone No-13** Kasganj LC NO. 310 to PTI (Incl.) upto km 204/0, **Approx. Value :** Rs. 79,62,641.46, **E.M.D. Money :** Rs. 1,59,300/-, **Cost of Tender Forms :** Rs. NIL, **Completion time/period from the date of issue of acceptance letter :** 30.06.2025. **S. N. : 3, Description of Works :** Carrying out Zone works for period ending 30.06.2025 on **Zone No-14** PTI (Ex.) to FGR (Ex), **Approx. Value :** Rs. 1,24,60,440.50, **E.M.D. Money :** Rs. 2,12,300/-, **Cost of Tender Forms :** Rs. NIL, **Completion time/period from the date of issue of acceptance letter :** 30.06.2025. **S.N. : 4, Description of Works :** Carrying out Zone works for period ending 30.06.2025 on **Zone No-15** FGR (Inc.) to KLJ (Ex.) upto Km. 132/0, **Approx. Value :** Rs. 1,40,66,716.38, **E.M.D. Money :** Rs. 2,20,300/-, **Cost of Tender Forms :** Rs. NIL, **Completion time/period from the date of issue of acceptance letter :** 30.06.2025. **S.N. : 5, Description of Works :** Carrying out Zone works for period ending 30.06.2025 on **Zone No-16** FGR (Ex.) Km.132/0 to ARL (Ex.), **Approx. Value :** Rs. 1,20,45,464.13, **E.M.D. Money :** Rs. 2,10,200/-, **Cost of Tender Forms :** Rs. NIL, **Completion time/period from the date of issue of acceptance letter :** 30.06.2025. **S.N. : 6, Description of Works :** Carrying out Zone works for period ending 30.06.2025 on **Zone No-17** CPA (Ex) up to Km 2/2 and BRT branch line to ARL(inc) Km 65/0, **Approx. Value :** Rs. 1,42,90,716.13, **E.M.D. Money :** Rs. 2,21,500/-, **Cost of Tender Forms :** Rs. NIL, **Completion time/period from the date of issue of acceptance letter :** 30.06.2025. **S.N. : 7, Description of Works :** Carrying out Zone works for period ending 30.06.2025 on **Zone No-18** MHA (Inc) KM 253/0 to MSN(Ex), **Approx. Value :** Rs. 1,39,26,296.11, **E.M.D. Money :** Rs. 2,19,600/-, **Cost of Tender Forms :** Rs. NIL, **Completion time/period from the date of issue of acceptance letter :** 30.06.2025. **S.N. : 8, Description of Works :** Carrying out Zone works for period ending 30.06.2025 on **Zone No-19** from MSN (inc) to MRT up to L-xing no.357(inc), **Approx. Value :** Rs. 1,21,92,321.39, **E.M.D. Money :** Rs. 2,11,000/-, **Cost of Tender Forms :** Rs. NIL, **Completion time/period from the date of issue of acceptance letter :** 30.06.2025. **S.N. : 9, Description of Works :** Carrying out Zone works for period ending 30.06.2025 on **Zone No-20** from L-xing no.357(Ex) to MTJ (Ex) including RE colony and Delhi Lajpat Nagar officers rest house, **Approx. Value :** Rs. 1,22,35,321.39, **E.M.D. Money :** Rs. 2,11,200/-, **Cost of Tender Forms :** Rs. NIL, **Completion time/period from the date of issue of acceptance letter :** 30.06.2025.
1. On line e-tender can be submitted upto 15.00 hrs. of dated 24.05.2024. **2.** For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways **IREPS** website **www.ireps.gov.in**.

Divisional Railway Manager (Engg.)
CPRO/W-42 **Izatnagar**

Do not travel with inflammable article in train

PLAYING TODAY

IPL: CSK vs PBKS, 7.30pm;
Live on: Star Sports Network & streaming on Jio Cinema

Old wine in an old bottle

As many as 8 players who have featured in the 2022 edition will travel for the T20 WC as selectors stick to tried and tested formula

VENKATA KRISHNA B
CHENNAI, APRIL 30

AFTER INDIA'S semi-final exit in the 2022 World Cup in Australia, there were talks of an overhaul, steps in sync with the changing landscape of the format. Yet, two years later, the selectors decided to stick with the nucleus of the 2022 side when they announced the squad on Tuesday. As many as eight who were in the squad Down Under would travel to the United States and West Indies. Among others, Jasprit Bumrah was forced out of the previous edition due to an injury while it is Mohammed Shami's fate this time to nurse an injury. Barring Yashasvi Jaiswal and Shivam Dube, the rest were in contention for the Australia event to. And apart from Kl Rahul, then the vice-captain, none of the prominent players from the 2022 group have missed out. Much of the playing eleven too would potentially be the same, except an odd tweak here or there. Effectively, it is old wine in an old bottle itself.

How it came to this is another fascinating story. Having spent a good part of 12 months building a team in tune with the demands of T20 cricket for the World Cup, it was in January that India took a U-turn. By bringing back Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli for the T20Is against Afghanistan – the last international series before the T20 World Cup – it was evident which way India were heading. Two out of India's top three in the batting line-up, considered a problematic area in past editions, are on the flight to the US and Caribbean as well. Word is that if the team management had its way, there was a strong chance that Rahul too would have found a seat.

Plan, U-turn

But here we are, with two elephants in the room. In essence, India are hoping to end their ICC title drought by pinning their hopes on more or less a similar blueprint that didn't yield them success in the UAE and Australia. It is the reason the selectors tried the likes of Ishan Kishan, Shubman Gill, Jaiswal, Ruturaj Gaikwad and Rishabh Pant as openers. In the middle-order, where they didn't have fire-power in their ranks, they chose to invest in Tilak Verma, Rinku Singh, Sanju Samson, Jitesh Sharma, Axar Patel, Shivam Dube with Suryakumar Yadav being the bridge between top and middle orders.

A 360-degree player sandwiched between power-packed openers and the fire-power of middle-order. After 17 seasons of the IPL, it seemed as if India were finally close to cracking the T20 formula.

It wasn't just picking these players. In 2023, despite all their attention firmly on the 50-over World Cup at home, plenty of planning went behind the scenes for the T20 World Cup as well.

They studied the success formula of top T20 teams across the globe, prompting them to invest in as many left-handers as possible in the batting line-up because modern-day bowlers (pacers and spinners) struggle against southpaws.

Between August to November, for the T20Is against Ireland and Australia and at the Asian Games, India's top seven had at least five left-handed batsmen.

With just two right-handed batsmen sandwiched between them, the selectors' assertion was accurate as opposition bowlers struggled to keep the Indian batting quiet. With teams mostly relying on left-arm spinners and leg-spinners, left-handers offered favourable match-ups.

Even when pacers operated – with the majority being right-arm — a left-handed batsman had a better reach and opened up different angles to score. But in the current side, there are five left-handed batsmen and given the team balances, there is a possibility of just two making the XI, with just one in the top four. Shockingly, Rinku Singh, who aced in his role as a finisher, doesn't even find a spot in the 15, four months after being the talk of the town.

Throughout those 12 months, India showed the maturity to not mix formats. They went with players who fitted seamlessly into the format – Kishan, Jaiswal, Rinku, Verma, Jitesh, Axar. But their run to the final in the 50-over World Cup, which saw a different Rohit at the top and a run-hungry Kohli in at No. 3 successfully convinced the power centres at the BCCI to go back to the two.

By mid-March, it was confirmed that Rohit would captain the team at the T20 World Cup.

While concerns around Hardik Pandya – who had led the T20 team since the last T20 World Cup – prompted the decision, one cannot ignore that India still had time to look at Suryakumar and Jasprit Bumrah.

Now, they head to the World Cup with a captain who hasn't tallied even 400 runs in the last four seasons. He has 311 runs in 9 matches this season, but it also includes an unbeaten 105, which showed his limitations as a T20 batsman. Of course, Rohit has improved his biggest weakness in the format – the strike-rate. Having batted with a strike-rate of 120.18 to 132.80 in the last five seasons, it has shot to 160.31 this IPL. But the command he showed in the World Cup last year has been missing.

Similarly, with 500 runs to his name already this IPL, there are no concerns about Kohli's form.

Like Rohit, his strike-rate has been the biggest issue in T20s. For a player who has featured in all editions of the IPL, his strike-rate of 147.49 this season is his best ever. They do so, playing different roles in two entirely different teams, where they have other flamboyant batsmen around them.

Leap of faith

With India, they will make the top three. In a worst-case scenario, their top two. It is a huge leap of faith that India's selectors and the team management have taken. They know very well that opposition teams will not be sweating over the sight of Rohit and Kohli in the powerplay.

If they end up lasting beyond the powerplay overs, they won't offer favourable match-ups against spinners. In the middle overs, bowlers would prefer bowling to them rather than Suryakumar, Samson or Dube.

At the IPL, both Rohit and Kohli have shown the intent that is needed in T20s. It hasn't looked entirely convincing, but it can't be brushed aside too.

But amidst all of this, there is one question that remains unanswered. Did Rohit and Kohli earn their spots for the T20 World Cup?

June will throw answers to that question.

India's run to the final of the 50-over World Cup saw a different Rohit Sharma at the top and a run-hungry Virat Kohli at No. 3. *Sportzpics/BCCI*

INDIA T20 WC SQUAD

Rohit Sharma (Captain), Hardik Pandya (Vice Captain), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Virat Kohli, Suryakumar Yadav, Rishabh Pant (WK), Sanju Samson (WK), Shivam Dube, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav, Yuzvendra Chahal, Arshdeep Singh, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohd. Siraj.

A core from the batch of 2022, seven changes

After the semifinal exit in 2022, the selectors experimented with younger players but have retained 8 from the last edition of the T20 World Cup in Australia.

2024 2022

ROHIT SHARMA

HARDIK PANDYA

VIRAT KOHLI

SURYA KUMAR

RISHABH PANT

AXAR PATEL

ARSHDEEP SINGH

YUZVENDRA CHAHAL

IN AND OUT

JAISWAL

KL RAHUL

KL Rahul's stodgy approach at the top of the order was contrary to the demands of the format. Yashasvi Jaiswal is expected to provide the required impetus.

SAMSON

KARTHIK

Dinesh Karthik was selected after a stellar IPL season but disappointed at the World Cup. Sanju Samson will hope to carry his IPL form into the ICC event.

DUBE

HOODA

Deepak Hooda made a duck in his only appearance. Shivam Dube is expected to take spinners down in the middle overs.

BUMRAH

SHAMI

Shami had a decent T20 World Cup but is out injured now. Jasprit Bumrah seems to be at the top of his game at the moment.

SIRAJ

HARSHAL

Harshal Patel didn't get a game in Australia. Mohammed Siraj is expected to be a key bowler for India in the Americas.

KULDEEP

ASHWIN

R Ashwin was not effective against the bigger teams at the 2022 World Cup. Kuldeep Yadav's control and variations have been top-class this IPL.

JADEJA

BHUVI

Bhuvneshwar Kumar was the specialist new-ball bowler last time. India is spin-heavy this time and Ravindra Jadeja makes a comeback.

INDIA'S FIXTURES (GROUP A)

Date	Vs	Venue
June 5	Ireland	New York
June 9	Pakistan	New York
June 12	USA	New York
June 15	Canada	Lauderhill

Finisher, anchor, accumulator: Sanju breaks the World Cup door

SANDIP G
APRIL 30

SANJU SAMSON'S proverbial breaking the selectors' door moment arrived on Tuesday when he was picked for the T20 World Cup in the USA and West Indies. The 29-year-old has been knocking on the door feebly, standing shyly behind it, waiting quietly for his turn to come, only to be repeatedly snubbed, but this IPL he just stormed in, elevating his game by several notches. The selectors had no other alternative, or knew no better alternative, than Sanju, whose childhood dream to play a World Cup for his country is a step away from realization.

In the past, despite his glowing stroke-making gifts, there could have been logical arguments lined up against him. Like his tendency to plateau as a series unfolds, like his proclivity to vanish in big games, like his proneness to squander starts. He was a fits-and-sparks cricketer, who was too easy for selectors to find a fault or two with, and discard. There were rough edges between the silk. He did not quite make his limited chances count either—377 runs in 22 T20I outings. But this time, all arguments would cease to exist.

This has been an IPL season wherein Sanju has emphatically upgraded his game, both as batsman and captain. He sits sixth on the IPL run-getters' chart—385 runs at an average of 77 and strike rate of 161.08. Of those above him, only Phil Salt brags a better hitting rate than him (180). Only Salt (every 3.2 balls) has a better boundary-finding frequency than him in the list either. Both Rishabh Pant and he have fetched a boundary every 4.5 balls they had faced. Fellow competitor, KL Rahul, sat a rung beneath him (when the squad was announced) in the stats column, though his average (42), strike rate (144) and boundary-rate (5.4) are inferior to Sanju. In that sense, it was a no-contest, despite the vast experience and favourable track record of Rahul (72 games, 37 average, 139 strike rate) and his rich vein of form in Tests and ODIs. But the selectors went with recent form.

'Sweat-spun clothes' posted Sanju Samson on *Instagram*, which form part of the lyrics of a song from the 2024 release *Manjummel Boys*.

His influence, though, is beyond the numbers. He has prospered in all climes. He has been a finisher when chasing totals (the 71 not out versus LSG and 38 not out versus Mumbai Indians are timely exhibits); he has orchestrated final flourishes (82 not out against LSG, 68 not out versus Gujarat Titans) when setting a total; he has anchored chases (69 vs RCB). His knack and finesse in putting on various roles is grossly understated. And more layers of his game emerged this edition.

His unique selling point, though, is his six-hitting ability against spinners, a dimension of his game that he has diligently enhanced. From 2013 to 2019, his strike rate was a middling 122. In years since, he has elevated it to 155. Subsequently, his overall six-hitting count too had leapt. Since 2020, no batsman has struck as many maximums as Sanju in the league (110). On sluggish wickets of the Caribbean, a natural hitter like Sanju could prove invaluable.

There has been a sense of purpose too, a desire to bend the script to his will, an urgency that if he cannot break into the team now perhaps it could remain shut forever. A clear mind and clearer decision making, allied with minor technical tweaks like a higher back-lift and a more pronounced front-foot stride.

If recent form were a yard-stick, he could have arguably pipped Pant too, but even as a squad-player, he brings considerable depth and utility, a luxury most teams would grab with both hands. If any of the top three got injured, or if Yashasvi Jaiswal struggled for form, he could be a fit-to-size replacement. Not just as a wicket-keeper batsman, but as a pure batsman too. He could open, bat at No 3 (only Raina has more runs than him in IPL at this position), 4, 5 or even down the order. The selectors would have weighed in all these aspects and homed in on Sanju.

There were two other challengers—Jitesh Sharma and Dhruv Jurel. Both could bat down the order, but neither could open or bat at one drop, unless commissioned as a pinch-hitter. Jurel has impressed in Tests, but his T20 career has not quite taken off. In six innings, he has mustered only 102 runs. Jitesh's case is baffling. He has done precious little this season—128 runs at 125.49 in nine innings, neither piling up runs nor quick cameos. Unlike Jurel, the 30-year-old is not too young a talent to be groomed for the future either. Though he had displaced Sanju last year as the backup of Ishan Kishan, Sanju was to race past him this season. In Sanju, they have a proven leader too, whose team sits top of the league table, having dropped just a game. Selectors tend to get swayed by results too.

The estrangement of Ishan too benefitted Sanju. The Mumbai Indians wicketkeeper had made the spot his own in the absence of Pant, but for alleged falling out with the team management and his own middling numbers this IPL (212 at 23.55). But more than the stars aligning for Sanju, he made his own luck. He finally barged open the selectors' doors.

Why hard-hitting Rinku missed out on a spot

VENKATA KRISHNA B
APRIL 30

AS THE selectors announced the 15-member squad and three travelling reserves, a few decisions came in as a surprise. Leg-spinner Yuzvedra Chahal, who seemed to have fallen out of favour, made a return. He is now part of a four-prone spin attack, which raises eyebrows as it meant Rinku Singh was pushed to the reserves. Here is a look at what led to these decisions…

Rinku Singh

Why did Rinku miss out?

Ever since Rinku announced his arrival in the IPL last year, the left-hander has been an integral member of India's white-ball squads. Be it his ability to absorb pressure and launch a counter-attack in case of the team losing early wickets or acing the role of finisher, Rinku has done it all. He has a wide range and a game that is equally good against pacers and spinners, and can tee off immediately unlike a few who like to take a few balls before opening up. All of it should have won him a spot, but with India tilting towards having more all-rounders, it is understood that for the final spot there was three-way competition between Rinku Singh, Axar Patel and Washington Sundar. In the end they went in with Axar because of his all-round capabilities and form.

It remains to be seen who will don the finisher's role at the World Cup as Hardik Pandya, Ravindra Jadeja have all struggled in recent times. One of the wicketkeepers, Sanju Samson or Rishabh Pant will have to do it. There is one unanswered question: When Ravindra Jadeja is already part of the team, was it necessary to have Axar, who offers the same, as the chances of playing both in the XI is highly unlikely.

Why four spinners?

It was a googly that not many expected. Going for Chahal ahead of Ravi Bishnoi – who was ranked No 1 ranked T20 bowler five months ago and is currently in 6th spot – came with a bit of surprise. But it is a decision they have taken with form in mind, with Chahal among the leading wicket-takers in the IPL. At the last T20 World Cup, where all the teams played a leg-spinner, Chahal warmed the bench every single match. What is in store for him in the US and Caribbean is hard to predict as Kuldeep Yadav is higher in pecking order. And given how badly they need batting depth, one among Jadeja and Axar will make the XI.

There is also a possibility of both making it as well if India believe having depth in batting is the way to go. That would mean, instead of being offensive with the ball, they will go defensive with both Jadeja and Axar fitting in the model. At the IPL, it has become a batsmen vs batsmen contest, and India seem to anticipate the same at the World Cup too.

Was there a surprise pick?

According to reliable sources, there was discussion on including Washington Sundar in the 15 as there are no off-spinners. However, it is understood that the house was divided on his inclusion because he has just played two IPL matches this season. And moreover, questions were also raised as to why he hasn't been groomed for the role, particularly because he can also bowl in the powerplay overs. Instead, the unanimous pick happened to be Axar.

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Hemalatha, Radha star as India win rain-curtailed second T20I

Hemalatha Dayalan (R)'s cameo ensured victory for India. *X/BCCI Women*

VINAYAKK MOHANARANGAN
APRIL 30

HEMALATHA DAYALAN is no stranger to a comeback. She might not have made it to India's squad if Jemimah Rodrigues was fit. She might not have been in the playing XI in Sylhet if Yastika Bhatia had not picked up a niggle. But, given a chance to play for India again for the first time in a year and a half, her cameo earned her the Player of the Match award on Tuesday.

Another player on the comeback trail is Radha Yadav. Much like Hemalatha, the left-arm spinner had fallen out of favour and last played for India more than a year ago. Seen as a T20 specialist for most of her career, the wickets dried up for the once prolific Radha (she once had a streak of 27 straight T20Is where she picked up at least one wicket). But back on the weight of her domestic returns and a solid WPL season for finalists Delhi Capitals, she finished with figures of 3/19 to peg Bangladesh back after a decent start.

It's easy to get bogged down by the pressure of a comeback, some even consider it tougher than a debut. It augurs well for India though that Hemalatha and Radha have embraced this challenge. After a convincing win in the opener, Harmanpreet Kaur and Co won by 19 runs (DLS method) to take a 2-0 lead.

Asked to bowl first, India saw Bangladesh batters come out with much better intent than their timid display in the opener. Going at nearly run-a-ball at the halfway stage, they were then halted on their tracks by a game-changing over by Radha. First, was the wicket of Nigar Sultana, Bangladesh's mainstay. India were perhaps a bit fortunate to receive LBW in their favour. Next ball, she trapped Fahima Khatun plumb to setup a hat-trick ball. In the 19th over, she deceived Rabeya Khan with her flight and had her stumped. For good measure, Radha also effected a run out of her own bowling.

Chasing 120, India lost Shafali Verma for a first-ball duck. With rain around, they had to ensure they didn't get bogged down early on... and Hemalatha came out all guns blazing to play a statement knock at No 3. With Bangladesh going to spin early to test Smriti Mandhana, but it is bread and butter for Hemalatha who has piled on runs in the domestic circuit for Railways. She stepped out and slammed a six over midwicket. She then hit the pacers for good measure too, peppering the offside boundary. Nahida wasn't spared, with a six and four to start the 5th over.

With rain returning just after enough overs were bowled for having a result, Hemalatha's knock ensured India were well ahead. "Hemalatha is one who has done really well in domestic cricket and has won crucial games for Railways. We wanted to give her the opportunities, and let her play with freedom. She has worked really hard and today, she played freely and it was great to see," Harmanpreet said post-match.

Hemalatha's ability to attack spin, and play lower down the order, could be a useful asset for India at the World Cup. It adds to the options they have. "I always wanted this kind of headache," the captain said with a chuckle.

BRIEF SCORES: Bangladesh Women 119 all out (Khatun 46, Radha 3/19) lost to India Women 47/1 in 19.2 overs (Hemalatha 41, Akter 1/11) by 19 runs (DLS method).

Outplayed by mighty China

After creditably reaching Uber Cup quarters, young Indian women's team thrashed 0-5

SHIVANI NAIK
APRIL 30

Tanvi Sharma, 15, lost 7-21, 16-21 to Wang Zhi Yi as China strolled past India 5-0 on Tuesday. *BWF Badminton Photo*

THERE WERE myriad technical shortcomings of hers that Isharani Baruah candidly reflected on after being shot out 21-12, 21-10 by Olympic champion Chen Yufei playing the Uber Cup group match. The pace of the rallies she could cope with, but Yufei's lengths, her drops, variations, and all strokes going to the backcourt, mightily awed the 20-year-old. "And it was not comfortable. It was tough. I have to improve my strokes and variations," she would state.

Then wide-eyed, guilelessly she would get to the crux of the only thing she could control: "..and she doesn't make silly mistakes like me." It was taking responsibility after being fielded as the No 1 singles player and being as realistic as someone thrown into the deep end could be.

India's very young squad were blanked 5-0 by China, who fielded all seven players who are in the Top 8 of the world rankings. Baruah is No 83, Anmol Kharb is No 258 and Tanvi Sharma is No 589. Tanvi was also the youngest at the Uber Cup, at age 15. India's doubles pairings Priya Konjengbam and Shruti Mishra are No 67, and Simran Singhi and Ritika Thakker are No 64. As second strings go, just making the Uber Cup quarterfinals ought to be creditable, but each of the players had gratitude for this chance while rushing to add, "We could have done better."

The scores were pretty accurate in pointing to the gulf in class. Essentially, strolls in the park for all the Chinese.

The scores were pretty accurate in pointing to the gulf in class. Essentially, strolls in the park for all the Chinese. Additionally, the rug pulled from under Anmol Kharb's feet when her side stretch chasing down a flank shuttle, gave her a nasty ankle sprain and left her in tears on the court. For India's most exciting talent from the Asian team triumph, it was heartbreaking.

Playing Han Yue, the early scratchy points were ominous when she twice broke her strings amidst laboured movements. Trailing 21-9 4-1, the ankle rolled and she had to leave sobbing. Tough lessons of a public injury at 17, after being schooled by a top Chinese. Indians accustomed to watching Saina Nehwal and PV Sindhu beating the Chinese will have to recalibrate their expectations and be patient with the new bunch.

Tanvi Sharma, 15, playing on the big stage, was all over the place in her opening set against Wang Zhi Yi which she lost 21-7. Her net play is immediately striking, as is the delicious audacity to keep going for the lines even if she sprayed a dozen wide in unforced errors.

She wouldn't grant skeptics enough time to scribble a line writing her off though. In the second, Tanvi continued to remain adventurous at the net, and lifted the curtains on a few more strokes, snapping at Wang's heels till 15-14. They aren't as well-built as Sindhu, but all of Isharani, Anmol and Tanvi have inherited the Indian badminton gene to not be afraid of the Chinese.

Baruah's self-appraisal was honest, but nowhere daunted by having to do this going head-to-head business against the Chinese day in and day out. The highly rated player has a nice collection of drops and checkshots to the forecourt. She premeditates a tad too much and can stay rooted too long, and has only a modest read on the opponent's game.

She slumped her shoulders too and grimaced like idol Akane Yamaguchi, as Yufei began to run away with the match. But, some of her overhead deception is wickedly effective, and she can construct a mean point. Strength and stamina are nowhere top tier, but she has a good head on her shoulders.

"I'm disappointed with my game because I made too many errors. I thought I was playing well with her but unfortunately, it was an easy win for her. It's OK. I ll work hard next time. Some points when I was rallying, I was getting a chance and hitting well.

"But as I said, I made too many 1-2 strokes mistakes. If I would have played longer rally, I would've done better," she would explain.

Most hearteningly, she wasn't scarred by the scoreline. "I was really excited to play with Chen Yufei. It was a good experience to play Olympic gold medallist. If I get a chance to play her again, I'll definitely do well next time," she assured.

For the doubles pairings, battling the current world's best Chen Qing Chen-Jia Yi Fan and the dangerously brilliant future of world badminton in Liu Sheng Shu-Tan Ning, the lessons were straightforward. Shruti Mishra would say, "Main thing was court was really fast. We were not able to lift the shuttle properly. Drift was there. But main problem was defense." Yet, they have learned a useful trick from Satwik-Chirag about embracing the big occasion. "Obviously crowd was amazing. Doesn't matter they were cheering for them. We were also getting motivated," Priya would happily say.

For Simran and Ritika, who went down 21-9, 21-10, losing steam pretty fast, a few fundamentals were burnished as points to work on in the future. "We have to be consistent because there are no easy points at this level. We need to get into big rallies, have to be fit for that. We should be more patient. Should get used to conditions with one side very fast, one very slow. We should know how to control the shuttle."

The 5-0 thrashing wasn't entirely unexpected. But the spotlight will remain brightly and at times abrasively on this bunch as they stutter, slip, resurface, get swatted, snatch a few points defiantly, and generally pursue success, knowing it can get as tough as a 5-0 drubbing by China, before the wins fetch up.

BWF Jr World C'ship returns to India in 2025

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
APRIL 30

GUWAHATI HAS been announced as the host city of the BWF World Junior Championships in 2025, the Badminton World Federation announced on Tuesday.

The Junior Worlds usually features a team event first, followed by individual events across the five categories, and the BWF said that both will be held at the Badminton Association of India's (BAI) National Centre of Excellence in the northeastern region of India. The hosting rights were confirmed at the BWF Council meeting on April 28. The World Juniors were last held in India in Pune in 2008. India's only gold medal in the junior major came that year when Saina Nehwal defeated Sayaka Sato to become world champion. The NCOE boasts 14 badminton courts, an international standard gymnasium and seating capacity of around 4,000 spectators. "The allotment of the BWF World Juniors to Guwahati is vindication of India's growing reputation as a badminton powerhouse which can not only produce champion players but also host mega international events. During the Guwahati Masters, BWF officials had also visited the National Centre of Excellence to check out the facilities and other arrangements," said BAI secretary general Sanjay Mishra.

In July 2021, it was announced by the BWF that India will host the World Championships in 2026. Originally, the 2023 Sudirman Cup was to be held in India but it was awarded to Suzhou in China, with India accepting to host the marquee senior event in 2026. Tuesday's announcement means that India will be hosting a BWF major event in back-to-back years. The host city for the 2026 marquee tournament hasn't been officially announced yet. BWF President Poul-Erik Hoyer said it was exciting to see a BWF Major Championship return to India. "India's production line of elite badminton talent is booming, and it is of great significance for the BWF to bring our World Juniors to India for just the second time," Hoyer said in a statement. "BAI's brand new National Centre of Excellence is a state-of-the-art facility for badminton and will be the perfect arena for our next generation talent to battle it out for team and individual glory."

The NCOE, with top-notch facilities, came up in Guwahati last year. It promised personalised attention, with top coaches to help those who show the hunger to succeed. The base fitness standards are expected to go up, and fundamentals drilled in.

MI flounder and fizzle out in shadow of World Cup selection

SYNOPSIS

Lucknow hold their nerve in a slugfest to push Mumbai to the brink of a league-stage exit.

LALITH KALIDAS
APRIL 30

Lucknow prevail in a slug-fest

In a stark throwback to the early days of the IPL, Lucknow Super Giants were forced to drag their 145-run chase right down to the wire by the Mumbai Indians.

Fresh from his blistering century last week in Chennai, Marcus Stoinis' foresighted charge in the PowerPlay helped LSG negate a nagging middle-overs spell from Hardik Pandya.

Stoinis maintained a brisk inflow of boundaries early on before his partner KL Rahul made up for an iffy start with three fours and a six in the fifth over.

While Hardik kept MI afloat with the wickets of Rahul and Deepak Hooda before the spinners darted in some miserly overs, Stoinis reeled in 62 off 45 deliveries. Having rendered Jasprit Bumrah wicketless and fended off a few probing overs at the death, LSG's lower-order then took another 27 balls to erase the remaining 30 runs, enforcing a nervy last-over finish of another kind.

The mighty crumble

The death knell may have been sounded on Mumbai's bid for the playoffs much earlier than the usual norm for the 'comeback men'. After struggling to achieve parity in their combinations on high-scoring decks in better conditions through the season, the knockout punch was dealt on a sticky Lucknow pitch.

In a game that renewed the bowlers' spirits and chiselled the manic willow-wielding, Mumbai were subdued within the Powerplay after Lucknow opted to bowl, and their straightforward plans bore fruit.

Glittered with central figures from the national T20I side, the MI top order would have wanted to avoid an ignominious blip, hours after India unveiled their T20 World Cup squad to a mixed public reception.

Having fallen on scores of one and two over his last two birthdays during the IPL, Rohit Sharma's ominous streak continued with another damp squib.

Turning 37 on Tuesday, the Indian captain teased with a cheeky ramp for four before mistiming left-armer Mohsin Khan's fuller delivery straight to cover, perishing on four off five deliveries. Suryakumar Yadav was next in the firing line despite stepping off the blocks with a feisty six against Marcus Stoinis.

Marcus Stoinis scored a 45-ball 62 to lead LSG to a win. *PTI*

Utilised in a fresh role up front in the Powerplay with three overs, the sturdy Aussie cramped up Suryakumar, finding a tame feather to the keeper down the leg-side.

Mumbai's crisis man Tilak Varma was then tied down before a rearguard counter as a brain-fade charge from the crease ended with Ravi Bishnoi's sharpshooting throw from backward point, leaving the left-hander inches short at the striker's end.

With his team in tatters, Hardik failed to click with the bat yet again. Hardik fell off the first ball to fresh bait tossed in on the fuller length by Naveen-ul-Haq, pushing hard and offering a regulation catch to Rahul off the thick outside edge.

Leaving the PowerPlay at 27 for four, the second-lowest of the season, MI were always playing catch up to reach a fighting total.

STANDINGS

	M	W	L	T	Pts	NRR
RR	9	8	1	0	16	0.694
KKR	9	6	3	0	12	1.096
LSG	10	6	4	0	12	0.094
CSK	9	5	4	0	10	0.810
SRH	9	5	4	0	10	0.075
DC	11	5	6	0	10	-0.442
GT	10	4	6	0	8	-1.113
PK	9	3	6	0	6	-0.187
MI	10	3	7	0	6	-0.272
RCB	10	3	7	0	6	-0.415

Mayank's wavering return

Returning to the side after seven games, Rahul unleashed speedster Mayank Yadav in the seventh over to force the stranglehold on the left-handed pair of Nehal Wadhera and Ishan Kishan. While he failed to crank it up into the high 150s, Mayank startled a crouching Wadhera with a firm bumper that rose just enough to crash into the helmet.

Mayank set up Ishan Kishan with another rising delivery in his second over -- chequered reflex pull nearly undid Kishan but Ashton Turner failed to latch onto the ball at deep mid-wicket.

Kishan and Wadhera then battled through a sluggish 53-run partnership that consumed 52 deliveries. While Kishan fell before the guile of Ravi Bishnoi's googly, Wadhera took Mayank head-on, parrying him for two streaky sixes in his third over.

Mayank would have felt like he had hit the top of his stride after castling Mohammad Nabi with a skiddy delivery. However, a resurfacing niggle forced him off the field on a night of mixed returns before his teammates rallied up to restrict Mumbai to 144.

BRIEF SCORES: Mumbai Indians 144/7 in 20 overs (Nehal Wadhera 46, Mohsin Khan 2/36) lost to Lucknow Super Giants 145/6 in 19.2 overs (Marcus Stoinis 62, Hardik Pandya 2/26) by four wickets.

Carlsen praises Gukesh... 'didn't expect him to do this well at Candidates'

AMIT KAMATH
MUMBAI, APRIL 30

A WEEK after D Gukesh won the Candidates tournament to become the youngest-ever World Chess Championship challenger, Magnus Carlsen has heaped praise on 17-year-old Indian prodigy. The World No.1 called Gukesh a "wonderful guy who was very quiet and humble and had a great curiosity when it comes to everything about chess".

"I didn't expect him to do this well at the Candidates. It's usually a staple of some of the greatest players ever that they show promise at an early age but then they sort of succeed at the highest level a little bit before people generally expect them to. It's been an amazing story," Carlsen said on the Norwegian podcast Sjakksnakk (Chess Chat), run by his friends Askild Bryn and Odin Blikra Vea.

Carlsen pointed out how unflappable the Chennai boy looked as he emerged victorious from an eight-man field that had some very experienced veterans.

While Gukesh showed no signs of being under pressure at the Candidates, his opponent in the upcoming World Championship, Ding Liren, has not been himself since he won the title last year.

He's had shaky performances at the Tata Steel Masters event in Wijk aan Zee and at the Freestyle Chess G.O.A.T. Challenge recently, the rare tournament he played in after becoming world champion.

"(Who wins the World Championship) is going to be a very open question. It's going to be about who's going to have the best nerves in that World Championship match. Gukesh hasn't shown that many nerves so far. He's so young that he doesn't know any better.

"He doesn't understand that you should be nervous (at an event like the Candidates). I think that could be a positive thing for him to play a World Championship match this early," Carlsen said.

While talking about the world champion from China, the World No.1 said: "Ding has not looked himself at tournaments he has played since he won the World Championship. Question is whether Ding Liren is sort of permanently broken from the last World Championship that he played.

"I'm not sure, but I think there's a possibility that he could be. I really hope that he will come back, not only in the World Chess Championship, but also in other tournaments.

D Gukesh, 17, won the Candidates chess tournament last week. *FIDE*

"I hope we'll see him at a much higher level. But I'm not quite sure about that. If he can show the level he has in the past, he's probably going to be the favourite (at the World Championship). What happens in World Championship matches is that you have these months of preparation. So people can play a bit different opening lines to try and be solid at the start but as the match progresses people usually show their true colours. Their weaknesses are amplified and they end up being pretty much the same player that they were recently. If Ding continues to play really poorly leading up to the World Championship match, I don't think we should necessarily expect him to be at a much higher level when the moment comes."

It's usually a staple of some of the greatest players ever that they show promise at an early age but then they sort of succeed at the highest level a little bit before people generally expect them to. It (Gukesh's win) has been an amazing story."

--MAGNUS CARLSEN
WORLD NO. 1

Carlsen said that in the coming months Ding needed to fix his psychological issues before he started working on his tournament prep in training camps.

"I'm hoping that we see something before the World Championship game that Ding could be at least 90 percent of what he was when he was at his best in 2019. I think the level that he showed in the 2023 World Championship was still quite far from his best. It just happened to be enough, because he was playing someone who was also a nervous wreck (Ian Nepomniachtchi).

"There is a chance that he's not going to come back to the same level that he was at his peak around 2018-2019. Taking time off after the World Championship match has done him some good. But it's not quite enough.

"Hope he'll come back. But it's not a foregone conclusion that we'll see him at that level again. I think what has happened to Ding after the World Championship match should make people, general chess fans, as well as other professionals, realise how tough these events actually are. Because we're now a year removed from his World Championship title and there aren't a lot of signs that he's recovered from that."