**OPINION 6** 

**WORLD 8** 

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CHHETRI'S LAST DANCE AGAINST **KUWAIT** 

11 SPORTS

# NDA on June 8: Third time is the charm



Prime Minister Narendra Modi, BJP president JP Nadda and other leaders during a meeting of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) at 7, Lok Kalyan Marg, in New Delhi, on Wednesday

RAJESH KUMAR NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and National Democratic Alliance (NDA) partners will stake claim to form the Government on June 7. Modi is likely to take oath on June 8. This is the first time since Jawaharlal Nehru that a Prime Minister will be returning to power for a third consecutive

The National Democratic Alliance (NDA) partners on Wednesday met at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's residence 7 Lok Kalyan Marg

and unanimously elected him for the BJP's allies. "NDA MPs as the alliance leader, paving the way for him to take the oath for a third consecutive the President of India to term, a first for any ruling alliance since 1962. The NDA has won 293 seats in the Lok Sabha election, comfortably above the majority mark of 272 in the 543-member House. Besides, 10 Independents have also extended their support to NDA and its partners, making its tally to 303.

Though, the Government is likely to be different in composition and character with a bigger share

will meet on June 7 and the alliance leaders will then go to submit their letters of support, HAM (Secular) leader and former Bihar Chief Minister Jitan Ram Manjhi said after attending the meeting. How soon the BJP and its allies reach an agreement on matters like the share of Ministries each party may get and other terms of negotiations could also be a factor in deciding the timing of the swearing-in or they could put off the tricky issues for resolution at a later stage.

Sources said the second meeting of the NDA partners' leaders will take place on Friday and on the same day, they will stake the claim to form the Government. Sources said senior BJP leaders JP Nadda, Rajnath Singh, Amit Shah and Piyush Goyal have been assigned to with NDA coordinate partners.

Earlier in the day, Modi tendered his resignation to President Droupadi Murmu along with his Council of Ministers after the Cabinet meeting.

# 'Political loss, moral defeat for Modi'

Struggling for a tally to form a Government at the Centre by dislodging BJP-led NDA claims, the Congress led INDIA Bloc on Wednesday welcomed all parties that share a fundamental commitment to the values enshrined in the Preamble of Constitution towards formation of a government. Indicating "appropriate time", the INDIA Bloc in a statement said it will continue to fight against the fascist rule of the BJP-led by Narendra Modi. "We will take appropriate steps at the appropriate time to realise the people's desire not to be ruled by the BJP Govt. This is our decision that whatever promises we have made to the people, we will keep it up," Congress president Mallikarjun said Kharge while addressing the Opposition leaders who converged at his residence for the first meeting of the Bloc after its impressive gains in Lok Sabha that pulled down the ruling BJPs mark below the majority figure of 273 of the 543 members of Lok Sabha. 'The mandate is decisively against Modi, against him and the substance and style of his politics. It is a huge political loss for him personally apart from being a clear moral defeat as well. However, he is determined



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, Samajwadi Party leader Akhilesh Yadav, DMK supremo and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin amongst other INDIA Bloc partners at a meeting in New Delhi on Wednesday PIONEER PHOTO

people," he said. "The INDIA

alliance welcomes all parties which share its fundamental commitment to the values enshrined in the Preamble to our Constitution and to its many provisions for economic, social and justice," political Congress chief said in his opening remarks.

Thanking the INDIA Bloc partners, he said, "I welcome all INDIA alliance partners. We fought well, fought unitedly, fought resolutely."

The constituents of the INDIA Bloc thanked the to subvert the will of the people of India for the

overwhelming received by our alliance. The people's mandate has given a befitting reply to the BJP and their politics of hate, corruption and said deprivation, resolution.

This is a mandate in defence of the Constitution of India and against price rise, unemployment, and crony capitalism and also to save democracy, it further added. Those present in the meeting were Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, KC Venugopal, NCP's Sharad Pawar NCP, Supriya Sule, DMK chief and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin and his party colleague R Balu, Samajwadi Party supremo Akhilesh Yadav, SP's Ramgopal Yadav, TMC's Abhishek Banerjee, Sanjay Raut and Arvind Sawant from Shiv Sena (UBT), RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav, CPIM's Sitaram Yechury CPI(M), D Raja from CPI JMM leader and Jharkhand CM Champai Soren, jailed IMM leader Hemant Soren's wife Kalpana Soren, Sanjay Singh and Raghav Chadha from AAP and National Conference leader Omar Abdullah amongst other constituents of the INDIA

**World hails Modi** 

on historic third

term in office

A day after NDA scored

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

polls, more than 50

# Fadnavis takes blame, offers to quit as Dy CM

TN RAGHUNATHA MUMBAI

Accepting "full responsibility" for the ruling BJP's dismal show in the Lok Sabha polls in Maharashtra, Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis resign from his post in the State Government so that he could work "full time" for the party to improve its performance in the State Assembly polls scheduled for October this year.

Talking to media persons here, Fadnavis said he would ask the BJP's Central leadership to "relieve" him from all the responsibilities in the Maharashtra Government" so that he could work "full time" for the party ahead of the State Assembly polls.

"I take full responsibility for the dismal performance of the BJP in the Lok Sabha polls in Maharashtra. I accept that I fell short somewhere that contributed to the party's setback in the

polls," Fadnavis said.
"I am going to tell the Central BJP leadership that I want to work full time for the party ahead of the State Assembly polls. I am going to request my party leadership to relieve me from the State Government and give me an opportunity to work for the party," the



senior State BJP leader said. Fadnavis' statement should be seen in the light of the fact that the ruling MahaYuti - comprising BJP, Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena and NCP (Ajit Pawar)collectively won just 17 seats out of total 48 seats as against 30 seats won by the Opposition Maha Vikas (MVA) Aghadi comprising Congress, Shiv Sena (UBT) and Shiv Sena

(Sharad Pawar) At the individual level, the BJP won mere nine seats as against 23 seats it had won in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls. comparison, Opposition Congress
performed very well by winning 13 seats as against just one seat that it had won in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, in which it had put up a miserable performance.

# After 24 years, Patnaik bows out as Odisha CM

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE** ■ NEW waiting journalists and left the

 $M_{
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m arking}$  the end of his 24-year-rule in Odisha, BJD supremo Naveen Patnaik on Wednesday resigned from the post of the Chief Minister after the defeat of his party in the Assembly elections in the State. Patnaik handed over his Raghubar Das at the Raj Bhavan, sources said. Patnaik had for the first time taken oath as the chief minister of Odisha on March 5, 2000.

Though a number of BJD leaders had gathered at Patnaik's residence, he came alone to the Governor's house to tender his resignation. The BJD supremo only waved at premises after submitting his resignation letter.

The BJP stormed to power in Odisha by securing 78 of the 147 Assembly seats, while the BJD managed to win only 51 seats. Congress bagged 14 constituencies and CPI (M) secured one, while three Independent candidates also

Patnaik and BJP and Congress State presidents Manmohan Samal and Sarat Pattanayak respectively, had to suffer defeats in the Odisha Assembly elections.

Although Patnaik won from Hinjili traditional Assembly seat in Ganjam district by a slender margin of 4,636 votes, the five-term



Outgoing Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik meets Governor Raghubar Das to submit his resignation following the defeat of his party in the State Assembly elections at Raj Bhavan in Bhubaneswar on Wednesday

suffer a humiliating defeat to a political novice in Kantabanji constituency in Bolangir. The BJD supremo lost was the first time that Patnaik

former Chief Minister had to Kantabanji to BJP's Laxman Bag by 16,344 votes. While Bag got 90,876 votes, Patnaik received 74,532 votes. This

faced electoral defeat in his political career spanning 26 Odisha Pradesh Congress

Committee president Sarat Pattanayak suffered a worse fate as he finished fourth in Nuapada assembly segment, bagging only 15,501 votes. The seat was bagged by BJD candidate Rajendra Dholakia, ha got 61 822 votes while Independent nominee Ghasiram Majhi came second,

securing 50,941 votes. Amid speculations over who would be the next chief minister of Odisha, state BJP president Manmohan Samal on Wednesday the party's parliamentary board will

Lanka, Seychelles Ministers Bangladesh, take a decision on it in a day

world leaders congratulated Prime Minister Narendra Modi on his thirdterm win. Presidents of Sri Maldives, Iran, Prime and of Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, Mauritius have sent congratulatory greetings. Among G20 countries, Prime

Ministers of Italy, Japan and the President of South Korea have congratulated the Prime Minister. Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu also congratulated Modi. China also lauded the

French President Emmanuel Macron said, "India has concluded the biggest election in the world! Congratulations Narendra Modi, my dear friend. Together we will continue further strengthen the strategic partnership that unites India

victory.

and France.

From Africa, Presidents of Nigeria, Kenya, Comoros

# **Nightmare on D Street ends**

**PTI** ■ MUMBAI

ebounding from their worst single-Aday slide in four years, benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty soared over 3 per cent each on heavy value buying by investors after NDA alliance partners started talks on Government formation.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 2,303.19 points or 3.20 per cent to settle at 74,382.24 on value buying in banking, auto and oil shares. All Sensex shares closed in the green. During the day, it zoomed 2,455.77 points or 3.40 per cent to 74,534.82.

The NSE Nifty climbed 735.85 points or 3.36 per cent to 22,620.35 with all its constituents ending with gains. During

the day, the benchmark soared 785.9 points or 3.59 per cent to 22,670.40. Heavy buying in HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank and Reliance Industries helped benchmark indices log sharp gains. Investors became richer by Rs 13.22 lakh crore on Wednesday with markets making a strong comeback.

Senior leaders of the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance deliberated on the details of government formation at a meeting here on Wednesday, a day after the ruling coalition won a majority in the Lok Sabha election which paved the way for a third term for Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Coalition partner TDP also affirmed that it was with the NDA assuaging investors' concerns over Government

formation and triggering a sharp value buying in recent losers

"Indian market exhibited a spirited recovery driven by broad-based buying across various sectors, as political stability appears assured. However, attention will remain on the formation of the Government and the forthcoming RBI policy meeting," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services.

Among Sensex companies, IndusInd Bank jumped over 7 per cent. Tata Steel, Mahindra & Mahindra, Bajaj Finance, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Hindustan Unilever, HDFC Bank, Axis Bank and JSW Steel also emerged as big gainers.

#### have extended congratulatory messages.

# A novel #Plant4Mother green drive

**ARCHANA JYOTI** ■ NEW DELHI

rising temperatures Aunderscore the threat to Mother Earth, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on World Day Environment Wednesday unveiled a novel campaign named 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' (a tree in the name of mother) aiming to plant millions of

saplings across the country. initiative, highlighting nurturing and life-sustaining role of saplings in our ecosystem and drawing a parallel to the care provided by mothers, aims to plant millions of saplings across the country in the coming months

The Government has also plans to target planting 80 crore saplings by September 2024 and 140 crore saplings by March 2025, following a "whole of Government" and "whole of society" approach. The move aligns with the D day's theme "land restoration, 🌉 desertification, and drought WORLD resilience underscoring the importance of combating land

DAY combating degradation and promoting sustainable land management

practices.
Planting a sapling at Buddha
Jayanti Park in Delhi, Modi urged citizens to share

pictures of saplings planted in

their mothers' names using the hashtag #Plant4Mother. Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav and Delhi Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena were also present at the event.

and Central Government Departments and Local Bodies have been asked to identify public spaces to support the campaign. Earlier, President Droupadi

Murmu addressed the nation, emphasising the urgent need to combat climate change and calling for collective efforts to build a sustainable and greener world. She noted that protecting Mother Earth is a fundamental responsibility.

#### **BISWAJEET BANERJEE** LUCKNOW

Setting aside BJP's disappointing performance in the Lok Sabha elections, Prime Minister Narendra extended heartfelt birthday greetings to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, aiming to uplift his spirits amidst rising speculations about his leadership.

On his social media platform X, Modi highlighted Yogi's significant contributions to the development of Uttar Pradesh and his efforts toward empowering underprivileged, wishing him a long and healthy life. Post-election, Yogi cancelled



engagements on Tuesday but convened a party. crucial meeting with party leaders to dissect the electoral outcomes. Despite the setback, support from Modi Prime and other senior leaders is

Yogi's position within the Yogi expressed his gratitude

Modi lifts b'day boy Yogi's spirits with pep talk

for the birthday wishes, particularly appreciating the Minister's encouragement, which he seen as an effort to solidify described as inspirational in

and prosperous Uttar Pradesh. The BJP insiders attributed the electoral failure to the inability of alliance partners to secure the Other Backward Classes (OBC) votes, despite alliances with various castebased parties like the Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party (SBSP), NISHAD Party, Apna Dal (S), and Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD). Aiming ambitiously to win all 80 seats in Uttar Pradesh to meet its national target of 400 seats, the BJP fell short. "Our allies failed to mobilise the voters. The caste-based leaders did not galvanise their support base to vote for the BJP, lamented a senior BJP leader. Facing competition from the Samajwadi Party's (SP) PDA

working towards a self-reliant

formula, the BJP re-inducted SBSP president Om Prakash Rajbhar into the NDA, hoping to secure Rajbhar votes. Rajbhar had previously left the BJP for SP before the 2022 Assembly elections. Additionally, the BJP enticed OBC leader Dara Singh Chauhan and successfully split RLD from the INDIA alliance in February. Despite allotting seats to all NDA allies-with SBSP

contesting one seat, and Apna Dal (S) and RLD contesting two seats each-the anticipated support failed to materialise. Prayeen Nishad, Sanjay Nishad's son, was allocated the Sant Kabir Nagar seat for a second time.



# Bidyut's landslide victory marks continued BJP dominance in Jamshedpur

n a significant political triumph, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has secured a decisive victory in the Jamshedpur Lok Sabha seat, with Bidyut Baran Mahto emerging as the winner against Jharkhand Mukti Morcha's (JMM) Samir Kumar Mohanty. Mahto clinched the seat with an overwhelming margin of 2,59,782 votes, reflecting the electorate's strong preference for the BJP in this constituency.

As per data received from the administration, Mahto received maximum votes 145482 from Jamshedpur East Assembly, the strong bastion of saffron party. The sitting MP also received 101784 votes from Baharagora assembly seat despite the fact that Samir Mohanty is sitting MLA from here.

The victory marks another chapter in the remarkable political journey of Bidyut Baran Mahto, who has weathered numerous challenges to achieve his current standing. Mahto's political career began with the JMM, where he made his debut as an MLA from Baharagora in 2009. His initial steps into politics were fraught with difficulties, having faced defeats in the 2000 and 2005 assembly elections. However, his perseverance paid off with a win in 2009, which set the stage for his subsequent political ascendance.

In the wake of the nationwide Modi wave, Mahto transitioned from JMM to BJP, a strategic move that proved advantageous. In his first parliamentary election in 2014, he triumphed over Dr. Ajoy Kumar of the Jharkhand Vikas Morcha by a margin of 99,876 votes. Building on



this momentum, Mahto retained the BJP's trust and in 2019, he decisively defeated JMM veteran Champai Soren, further cementing his position in the political landscape.

Bidyut Baran Mahto's educational background reveals a modest academic achievement, with an intermediate in science from Tata College Chaibasa of Ranchi University in 1983. Despite not having advanced formal education, Mahto's political acumen has propelled him to significant heights.

Financially, Mahto is well-established. According to his election affidavit, he owns property worth ?3 crores. His assets include a Fortuner and a Scorpio, while his wife also drives her own Scorpio. The affidavit also lists his possession of firearms, including a revolver and a rifle, with his wife owning a 12 bore

gun, indicating a penchant for firearms.

The recent victory underscores the electorate's continued faith in Mahto's leadership and the BJP's vision for the region. As he embarks on another term, expectations are high for him to address local issues and contribute to the constituency's development. His journey from a struggling politician to a celebrated MP serves as an inspiration and highlights the dynamic nature of Indian politics.

Bidyut Baran Mahto's victory is not just a personal achievement but a testament to the BJP's robust electoral strategy and the resonant appeal of its policies among the people of Jamshedpur. As the political landscape evolves, Mahto's role will be pivotal in shaping the future trajectory of the region.

### 4 get life imprisonment for murder in Palamu

The court of the additional district and sessions judge number 3 of the civil courts Daltonganj today sentenced 4 accused one of them a woman to life imprisonment and fine to the tune of rupees 7,500 to be deposited by each of the four in a murder case lodged with the Chainpur police station way back on 20.12.20 read a note of the prosecution cell of the office of the SP Palamu.

In the event of non compliance with the order of paying fine the 4 will undergo 3 months more imprisonment and fine amount for each of the four will be 5000 rupees more. Among the four sentenced to life imprisonment are the father, two sons and wife of the one son.

The 4 lifers have been identified as Ramawtar Pasee, Guddu Pasee, Mahesh Pasee and Sunita Devi, wife of Guddu

The case in brief is that on the night of 19.12.20 these 4 accused now lifers had murdered Ajay Ram with an axe and

his body was thrown in a water body. Aiav Ram's son Vikas Pasee had lodged the FIR against

these 4 with the Chainpur police station on 20.12.20. Police officer Mukesh Kumar Sao had investigated the

#### **Would become** peoples voice in Parliament: Dhulu Mahto

PNS: DHANBAD

Newly elected Dhanbad MP Dhulu Mahto on Wednesday said that his priority would be to raise issues relating to his constituency on priority basis in parliament.

In his first official press conference after receiving certificate of being elected, Dhallu said issues like disacement, water crisis, issues of livelihood of residents of coal bearing areas, rehabilitation of fire hit persons road, airport and AIIMS all would be placed before the government.

On being asked that two airports in close vicinity be economically viable, Mahto said its different outlook.

Mahto added works started during the period of outgoing MP PN Singh would be given priority.

On shortage of teachers at Biĥari Koylaanchal University, he said, " I would talk with the

Governor on this issue ". He lambuste JMM led state government for delaying financial assistance to piped water supply from Maithon to Dhanbad

He, however, added that BCCL has the responsibility of supplying water to coal bear ing areas of Dhanbad and on this issue he has talked with CMD. BCCL would have to

provide water to people. He also thanked people for supporting him by voting in order to strengthen the hands of the prime minister.

### **Tree Plantation Event Marks World Environment Day**

R SHARMA: BOKARO

ON: in celebration of World Environment Day, the Director-in-Charge of Bokaro Steel Plant, Birendra Kumar Tiwari, led a tree plantation event at City Park in Bokaro. year's World Environment Day campaign, themed "Our Land - Our Future," focuses on land restoration, desertification, and drought resilience. Joining DIC Tiwari at the

event were Executive Director (Projects and additional Material Management) Mohapatra, Executive (Finance Accounts) Suresh Rangani, Executive Director (Personnel and Administration and additional charge Works) Rajan Prasad, along with Chief General Managers and senior



executives. In his address, DIC B.K Tiwari emphasized the shared responsibility of protecting our planet. He remarked, "The Earth is our common home, and its preservation is our collective duty. If we do not make concerted efforts to save our environment now, we will face severe challenges in the future." He urged the community to plant more trees in the plant and township areas, noting that the survival rate of saplings is highest during the monsoon season.

The tree plantation initiative by Bokaro Steel Plant is part of a larger campaign to green and clean the city, with similar activities being conducted in other areas of the plant and township.

### World Environment Day observed at SAIL, RSP

SAIL's Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) observed World Environment Day on 5th June 2023 with a series of events at the Shilpa Konark premis-Atanu Bhowmick, Director In-charge (RSP), led the celebrations by hoisting the Environment Flag. Key figures such as Alok Verma, ED (Mines), A K Behuria, ED (F&A), and B Palai, CGM (Iron), were also present.

A K Behuria, Alok Verma, and B Palai administered the Environment Pledge in Odia, Hindi, and English, respectively. Employees wore environment badges to mark the occasion. DIC Bhowmick emphasized the importance of protecting the environment and urged everyone to contribute to making Rourkela and its surrounding areas cleaner and greener. He highlighted RSP's environment-friendly proj-

ects like TS-1, STP, and ETP, and assured compliance with environmental norms. Prizes were awarded to winners of essay and slogan competitions, and the Sintering Plant-II and Sintering Plant-III departments were recognized for their decarbonization efforts. The event began with a welcome address by P C Dash, GM In-charge (Environment Engineering), and concluded with a vote of thanks from V V R Murty, GM (EED).



# **World Environment Day at Institution of**

PNS: JAMSHEDPUR

The Institution of Engineers (India), Jamshedpur Local Centre, celebrated World Environment Day with great fervor and commitment. The event, held on the morning of 5th June 2024, was graced by B K Das, Past Chairman of the centre and Ex-Vice President of the Iron Making Division at Tata Steel Ltd Jamshedpur, who served as the Chief Guest. The celebration began with a tree plantation ceremony, where dignitaries planted several trees on the institution's campus, symbolizing their commitment to a greener future. The event then proceeded to the conference hall, where Satish



Kumar Tiwary, Chairman of the center and Chief of Mechanical Maintenance at Tata Steel Ltd, extended a warm welcome to the Chief Guest and other members Satish Kumar present. Tiwary highlighted the longstanding tradition of the Institution of Engineers in celebrating World Environment Day, each year aligning with a theme set by the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

This year's theme, "Land Restoration, Desertification, and Drought Resilience," was emphasized by the Chief Guest, B K Das, who discussed its critical importance and the dire consequences of inaction. Das elaborated on the significance of the theme. stressing that land restoration is vital for enhancing biodiversity, improving soil fertility, and increasing water reten-tion. These efforts are crucial

for mitigating the effects of drought and desertification. He also highlighted the importance of managing solid waste and water generation within industries, noting their significant impact on human health. The Chief Guest outlined that land restoration activities often involve reforestation, sustainable agricultural practices, and the revival of natural water sources. He urged the Institution of Engineers, Jamshedpur Local Centre, to actively engage in accelerating land restoration, enhancing drought resilience, and combating desertification as part of their contributions to this year's Environment Day

#### division **Observes World Environment Day** PANKAJ: DHANBAD

**Tata Steel Jharia** 

Tata Steel Jharia Division organised several events to celebrate Environment Day here on Wednesday . All the activities were aligned with the ongoing flagship programme, 'Mission Life', of Ministry Environment Forest and Climate Change. The activities were done in collaboration with the Jharkhand State Pollution Control Board and Tata Steel Foundation.

The celebration started with taking a sustainability pledge by all the officers of Jharia Division. Sanjay Rajoria, General Manager, Jharia Division, Tata Steel, flagged off a rally (Prabhat Pheri) from the General Manager's Office to the TSF Office to promote a sustainable 'Lifestyle for the Environment' (LIFE). General Manager Jharia informed everyone about the sustainability plans of Tata Steel, importance of restoration and advised everyone to take care of nature. Around 60 children and 35 employees wholeheartedly participated in the rally.

The Division organised painting competitions at the NIIT Centre of TSF in Jamadoba and group, Around 55 children took part and produced brilliant work of art on subjects related to the environment, sustainability, nature, and conserva-

A mass plantation drive was also organised in the Kalimela Open Cost Project area to encourage people to plant more trees, increase the green cover and take care of nature. Sanjay Rajoria, General Manager, Tata Steel, was the chief guest of the event. Also present were, Barun Kumar Banerjee, Safety, Kousik Gayen, Head Planning, Pankaj Das, Head HRBP, Aman, Head Engineering Services and other officers and employees of Tata Steel and Tata Steel Foundation, Jharia Division. Around 30 employees participated in the plantation drive.

# Jamshedpur students shine in NEET Exam

PNS: JAMSHEDPUR

The city witnessed a remarkable feat in the medical entrance examination as eight students from Narayana IIT/NEET Academy achieved a perfect score of 720 out of 720 in NEET (UG)-2024. The renowned coaching institute located in Sakchi has once again demonstrated its prowess in guiding students towards academic excellence, as announced by Shyam Director Bhushan, Narayana's Jamshedpur Highlighting the excep-

tional performance of the stu-Shyam Bhushan expressed his pride in Narayana's consistent track record of success, citing the outstanding achievements in both JEE (Main) and NEET examinations. Among the notable achievers from Narayana's Jamshedpur center Nishant Kumar (669), Sairam Shamim (623), Mansoor (618), and Nishant Kumar (614), alongside a host of other successful candidates. The success story doesn't end here, with the tally of successful candidates still being counted, raising hopes for additional triumphs. Shyam Bhushan extended his



future ahead, and expressed confidence that Narayana's students would also dominate the upcoming JEE (Advanced) - 2024 results. Attributing Narayana's

success to its exceptional faculty, well-structured courses, and disciplined academic environment, Bhushan emphasized the institute's commitment to providing tailored guidance to students, ensuring their holistic development and success. He highlighted Narayana's rigorous academic calendar, supplemented by weekly tests conducted at the all India level, enabling students to gauge their performance on a national scale. Narayana

Academy stands out for its dedication to providing high-



needs. With a vast network of over 750 schools, colleges, coaching centers, and professional institutes across 23 Indian states, Narayana Educational Institutions has established itself as one of Asia's largest and most respected education groups. Backed by a team of over 50,000 experienced teachers and subject matter experts, Narayana annually guides more than 6,00,000 students towards achieving their aca-

Through comprehensive educational programs and resources, Narayana empowers students to pursue diverse professional goals in engineering, medicine, and civil services, thereby shaping a brighter future for career-oriented individuals.

demic aspirations.

## SAIL, Ranchi celebrates World Environment Day -2024

PNS: RANCHI

Like every year, UN has chosen a specific theme for world environment day 2024- "Land restoration, desertification and drought resilience" RDCIS SAIL also celebrated world environment day on 5th June, 2024. As precursor to this celebration, earlier an Essay-cum-presentation contest was held for all employees of SAIL units of Ranchi in the thematic direction relevant in the context of Steel Industry. Besides, a drawing competition was also held among children of SAIL employees and also children

of some local schools. On 5th June 2024 morning, a tree plantation ceremony was organized near football ground in SAIL Satellite colony, where S. K. Verma, ED (CET) & S. K. Kar, ED (RDCIS) along with other Chief General managers and General managers of SAIL units of Ranchi planted saplings and vowed to protect



the environment.

In the afternoon, a programme was organized in RDCIS lecture hall to celebrate the day in a befitting manner. In his welcome address, I. N. P. Gupta , GM (E & E) elaborated on efforts of RDCIS in celebrating the day. In his inaugural address, P. Banerjee, GM (C-C & E-E) highlighted various dimensions of the looming challenges related to the theme. In his theme address, ED (RDCIS) highlighted that the theme itself is recognition of the wide scale nature of environmental effects which is threatening human existence.

He specifically discussed the dimensions of the challenges in the context of steel industry and the specific efforts required to mitigate the same. In the programme, a number of very short films on the theme were also shown. At the end, prizes were distributed among all winning employees and children who had participated in various competitions. The celebration-cum-prize distribution function was chaired by ED (RDCIS), Shri Sandip Kumar Kar. Other General Managers and senior officials of RDCIS, SAIL were also

### World Environment Day celebrated in Garhwa



NITYANAND DUBEY: GARHWA

As per the instructions of Jhalsa, on the occasion of World Environment Day, on Wednesday, Principal District and Sessions Judge - Co-Chairman, District Legal Services Authority Garhwa, Rajesh Sharan Singh, along with judicial officers, District Forest Officers, members of District Bar Association and court staffs planted trees collectively in Civil Court premis-

On this occasion, the Principal District and

Sessions Judge, while giving information about the importance of World Environment Day, said that today trees were planted at all places in Civil Court, Garhwa, Judge Colony and Judge Residence premises and an attempt was made to give the message to the society that environment is life, if we plant trees and protect them, then our environment will remain clean and our human life will be safe. He also said that every person here should plant five trees and protect them. Because the environment can be kept safe and protected only with the participation of all the people. On this occasion, Pradhan Nayaydhish of

Family Court, Ram Bachchan Singh, Additional District Judge Fifth, Dinesh Kumar, Additional District Judge First Santosh Anand Prasad, Additional Judicial Magistrate Mis Sangeeta, Civil Judge Senior Division-IV Veena Kumari, Secretary District Legal Services Authority, Ravi Choudhary, Judicial Magistrate Anulika Kumar, S.D.J.M. Monica Prasad, Judicial Magistrate Abhinav Kumar, Shakia Kaushar along with District Forest Officer, North Dilip Yadav, District Forest Officer, South Shashi Kumar, President of District Bar Association G.K. Sinha and other advocates were present and they also planted saplings.

#### **TSF organises Summer Camp** for Children

PNS: DHANBAD

every day.

Tata Steel Foundation, Jharia Division, is organising a Summer Camp for school children, over a duration of ten days, starting from Wednesday that would end June 14, at the Tata Feeder Centre, Digwadih. The Camp was inaugurated today by Pankaj Das, Head (HRBP), Jharia Division, Tata Steel. The objective is to promote sports-related activities among going/young children in the company's leasehold area. A total of 500 children from the age group of 7 to 16 years, from 15 schools in and around the Jamadoba area, will be participating in the Camp. The children will be trained under experienced coaches, in the disciplines of archery, football, and athletics, between 6 am and 8 am

### Will fight for the rights of poor workers even if It means going to jail: Dhulu Mahto

PNS: BOKARO

On Wednesday, the residence of the Bokaro MLA was abuzz with celebrations following the announcement of the results on Tuesday. The atmosphere was jubilant, with drum beats, fireworks, and sweets shared among the leaders and workers of the Bokaro Assembly. The newly elected MP from Dhanbad, Dhullu Mahto, was the chief guest at the celebration. Bokaro MLA Biranchi Narayan welcomed Mahto with a bouquet, a traditional scarf, and sweets, congratulating him on his victory. The event resonated with chants of "Jai Shri Ram" as party workers greeted and honored Mahto. The victory in the

Dhanbad Lok Sabha con-

enthusiasm among the

stituency has instilled great

workers. Mahto set a record

for winning by the highest margin in Bihar and Jharkhand. In his address, Dhulu Mahto declared the victory as a triumph of the people, attributing it to the tireless efforts of the Bokaro Assembly workers. He pledged to meet the expectations of Bokaro's citizens, solving problems both in villages and cities. Mahto expressed his delight in being chosen by the Dhanbad Lok Sabha electorate to represent them in Delhi. He stated that the



ed. Bokaro MLA Biranchi Narayan thanked the voters of the Bokaro Assembly for securing the highest number of votes and ensuring the victory. He attributed this success to the relentless hard work of the BJP workers. Several BJP leaders,

including Bokaro District President Jaydev Rai, Lok Sabha Co-Convenor Rohitlal Singh, Birbhadra Singh, Kamlesh Rai, Mukul Ojha Sanjay Tyagi, Kamlesh Rai Dilip Srivastava, Mukesh Rai, Mathur Mandal, Mahendra Rai, Sunil Goswami, Tinku Tapadia, Pannalal Kandu, Manoj Singh, Baidhnath Lalu, Sanatan Singh, Harish Singh, Vinay Kishore, Braj Dubey, and Jitendra Goswami, congratulated the newly elected MP.



**RANCHI I THURSDAY I JUNE 6, 2024** 

# Annapurna Devi sets highest victory margin record in Jharkhand

The BJP has won all three seats- Ranchi, Jamshedpur and Dhanbad with sizeable urban pockets

ormer Union Minister of State Annapurna Devi retained the Koderma seat by defeating Vinod Singh (CPI-ML) with the highest margin in Jharkhand i.e. 3,76,240. The victory of Annapurna Devi was not easy as against her was CPI (ML) candidate and Bagodar MLA Vinod Singh.

The sitting MLA from the Bagodar Assembly constituency in Kodarma, Singh has cultivated a reputation for "raising the issues of the poor and marginalised classin the Jharkhand Assembly. Before his win in the Bagodar poll in 2019, he lost in 2014, with his previous wins here coming in

But despite Opposition unity, Annapurna proved herself by defeating Singh with the highest margin.

Followed by Annapurna the highest margin was of Dhullu Mahto who won the Dhanbad seat by 3,30,065 votes in a straight contest. The BJP maintained its winning track on the Dhanbad Lok Sabha seat for the 4th successive term as its candidate Dhulu Mahto defeated Anupama Singh of the Congress by 3,30,065 votes in a straight contest.

Dhulu Mahto 7,82,423 votes candidate Congress Anupama Singh got 4,52,358 votes. There were 25 candi-



**Newly elected MLA from Gandey Assembly Kalpana Soren** greets Koderma Lok Sabha MP Annaprna Devi after election results were announced on Tuesday. PNS

Sabha seat in which the other 23 candidates lost their

Baghmara MLA Dhulu Mahto was this time (2024 election) given a ticket in place of three-time sitting MP (2009, 2014, 2019) PN Singh and he (Dhulu Mahto) stood on the faith of the party by retaining the seat.

The BJP has won all three seats- Ranchi, Jamshedpur and Dhanbad with sizable urban pockets. Sanjay Seth retained the Ranchi seat defeating Yasashwani Sahay of the Congress by a margin of 1,20,512 while Bidyut Baran Mahto retained the Jamshedpur constituency by

the third consecutive time. Vidyut Varan Mahto has been continuously winning the Lok Sabha elections on BJP ticket since 2014. He defeated his nearest rival JMM candidate Sameer Mohanty by 2 lakh 59 thousand 894 votes.

Sitting BJP MP Nishikant Dubey won the Godda Lok Sabha seat in Jharkhand by a margin of 1.01 lakh votes, defeating his nearest rival Congress's Pradeep Yadav, Election Commission said. Dubey has been winning the seat since 2009. In 2019, he retained the seat by defeating Yadav, who had then contested as a JVM-P candidate, by a margin of over 1.84 lakh votes.

Palamu Lok Sabha seat on Tuesday. In all the rounds, BJP candidate Vishnudayal Ram got more votes than the RJD candidate. Vishnudayal Ram also got the most votes in the counting of postal ballots. BJP got more votes in all

Bhuiyan from India Alliance

by 2 lakh 88 thousand 622

votes on Palamu Lok Sabha

seat. Ram got 7 lakh 62 thou-

sand 290 votes, while Mamta

Bhuiyan got 4 lakh 73 thousand 668 votes. RJD had lost

the election from Palamu Lok

Sabha seat in 2014 and 2019

Counting of votes was done in 22 rounds on the

Lok Sabha elections.

the assembly constituencies under Palamu Lok Sabha Vishnu Dayal Ram defeat-

# **CONGRESS FELICITATES KALICHARAN**

Newly elected Khunti and Lohardaga Congress Lok Sabha MPs Kalicharan Munda and Sukhdev Bhagat were felicitated at the Congress headquarters under Jharkhand Pradesh Congress Committee (JPCC) Chief, Rajesh Thakur on Wednesday.

The State Congress In-Charge, Ghulam Ahmed Mir was present as the chief guest on this occasion. On this occasion, both the MPs were welcomed by giving them bouquets, garlands and a copy of the Constitution.

In his address on this occasion. Mir said that the issue of India Alliance in this election was for the common man, it was a fight to save their rights, a fight to protect the Constitution, it fought well on all the seats with people's support, it had high expecta-tions but fell short. "We will study the fewer seats than the target in detail so that those shortcomings can be removed in the future. He said that a



State Congress incharge Ghulam Ahmed Mir felicitates newly elected Congress MPs Sukhdev Bhagat and Kalicharan Munda in the presence of JPCC chief Rajesh Thakur and working president BandhuTirkey at Congress office in Ranchi on Wednesday. PNS

complete review of the responsibilities given to those in this election will be done and cognizance will also be taken of those who were not successful in discharging their responsibilities," he added.

Mir also said that those who have done good work in

the elections will be identified and given due respect and those who showed indifference even after getting the position from the party will be identified. On the occasion Thakur said that the people of Jharkhand have given us respect. "They have chosen

representatives Congress to raise their voice in the country's parliament and by strengthening the concept of Sarva Samaj, they will become the voice of the people of not only a particular region but the entire Jharkhand. We got a little less numbers than we expected but whatever we got was very strong. The India alliance will continue to raise the voice of the rights of the people with strength and will raise its voice for Jharkhand in the country's house through them," he added.

Lohardaga MP Sukhdev Bhagat said that this victory is the victory of the people, the victory of Rahul Gandhi's efforts. Elections are like a war and with everyone's collective efforts and under the guidance of the state leadership, we have achieved success in this election, he added. Expressing gratitude to everyone, he said that the bigger the victory, the bigger the responsibility and I will discharge my responsibility very

On the occasion Khunti MP Kalicharan Munda said, "I am Congressman and the Congress party has given me a lot. I cannot forget the honor given by the Congress and now I will leave no stone unturned in fulfilling the responsibility that I have been given. I express my gratitude to the people of Khunti, social organizations, leaders and workers of Khunti and the colleagues of India Alliance, this is not my victory but State Congress theirs." Working President Bandhu Tirkey, Shahzada Anwar, Minister Dr. Rameshwar Oraon, MLA Shilpi Neha Tirkey, Irfan Ansari, Rajesh Kachhap, General Secretary Amulya Neeraj Khalko, Rakesh Singh, Satish Paul Mujni, Rajiv Ranjan Prasad Manas Sinha, Sonal Shanti Sanjay Lal Paswan, Kamal Thakur, Niranjan Paswan, Kumar Raja, Rakesh Kiran Mahato, Abhilash Sahu, Jagdish Sahu and many oth-

### Zero naxal incidents in 2024 general election in State

CEO thanks all sections of society, govt machinery, media for peaceful polls

Chief Election Commissioner K. Ravi Kumar has said that the election process has been completed. As soon as the Election Commission of India's direction is received, the Model Code of Conduct will be declared ineffective in Jharkhand

He said that compared to the last two Lok Sabha elections, this time the least number of Model Code of Conduct violation cases have been registered. In the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, 318 cases of Model Code of Conduct violations were registered. At the same time, this number was 193 in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, this number has been only 101.

He said that all this has been possible due to awareness campaigns and the positive role of the media. He said that in future elections. efforts will be made to keep the cases of Model Code of Conduct violations to a minimum. He was interacting with media representatives after the completion of the election process at Nirvachan Sadan, Dhurva on Wednesday.

He expressed satisfaction that the elections were conducted in a fair, fear-free and peaceful manner. He also thanked all the officials. workers, policemen, security forces from outside, voters, all political parties, candidates



Chief Electoral Officer K Ravi Kumar during a press conference in Ranchi on Wednesday. PNS

and media persons involved in the election work who were involved in making it a success. He said that the media has been very helpful in taking every message of the Election Commission to each house.

He said that the assembly wise voting data has been made public under Form 20. He said that during the entire election no violent incident took place anywhere in the state. The most satisfying thing was that even the Naxalite incidents were zero in this election.

'World Environment Day' was celebrated at Ranchi Railway Division and tree plantation programs were organized at various places of the division. Divisional Railway Manager Jasmeet Singh Bindra administered oath to the railway officers and employees to protect the environment in the premises of the divisional After this, the DRM, branch officers of the

division, other officers and employees planted trees in the parade ground in front of the divisional office Along with this, environmental protection

oath was taken and tree plantation was done in various offices of the division, Divisional Railway Hospital, Coaching Depot at Hatia, various stations of the division, Railway Protection Force posts and outposts, running room and other offices. On the occasion of World Environment Day, more than 300 saplings were planted by Ranchi Railway Division today.

On the occasion of World Environment Day, Mission Life (Lifestyle For Environment) campaign was started in Ranchi Railway Division



from today, this campaign will run till 30 June 2024, in which various programs like tree plantation, water conservation, energy conservation, shramdaan etc. will be organized by railway personnel for the purpose of environmental protection in all the stations and offices of Ranchi Railway Division.

Chief Project Manager Gati Shakti Girish Kumar, Senior Divisional Commercial Manager cum Chief Public Relations Officer Nishant Kumar, Chief Medical Superintendent Dr. Raju Tirkey, Senior Divisional Mechanical Engineer Balram Prasad Sahu, branch officers of the division, other officers and employees were present in the program organized today on the occasion of World Environment Day.

ers were present.

The District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) organized a programme on World Environment Day and Drug Eradication International Library and Centre (ILCC), Cultural Ranchi. On this occasion, CID Rajkumar Yadav. Inspector Suresh Prasad, founder of Life Savers NGO, Atul Gera, expert mediator, P.N Singh, LADCS advocate, Raiesh Kumar Sinha, law students, Ayushi Kumari, Nikki Kumari, Chanda Chaudhary, Roshni Kumari, Sneha, Asmit Patel. Ashutosh Kumar. PLV. Bhupratap Mahto and Raja Verma were present.

While addressing the programme held under the guidance of JHALSA Executive Chairman Justice

Narayan Prasad, Atul Gera of Life Savers, an NGO, gave information about the importance of Environment Day. Then, focusing on drug eradication, he said that many villages in Jharkhand are in the grip of drugs. "We aim to get the students who are addicted to drugs rid of their habit. Drug addiction will slowly hollow out the body of a person, after which the whole family will be ruined," he said. Gera said a Google form has been given in all the colleges so that drug addicts can be identified and we and the administration are working together on this. "At this time, we youth have to be aware, because despite not being addicted to drugs, we can be trapped in this work and sent to jail," he said. He asked students not to carry bags etc. anywhere on

someone's behest, it may contain ganja, hashish etc. CID Inspector Suresh Prasad stressed that more and more awareness programmes should be organised in villages and towns regarding drug eradication so that the drug trade can be uprooted. Expert mediator PN Singh said that Ranchi, Chatra etc. areas of Jharkhand have become drug cultivation areas. "Opium is being produced in large quantities in Khunti etc. It is also supplied to colleges. Both society and the administration have to jointly stop this," he added. Advocate Rajesh Kumar Sinha, while addressing the programme, explained in detail about the penal procedure under the NDPS Act, and what punishment the accused can get from the

#### 'Wall Mural Painting' dedicated to coal workers inaugurated at CCL Hqrs

On the occasion of World Environment Day, on Wednesday, an attractive 'Wall Mural Painting' was inaugurated at CCL Headquarters, Darbhanga House, Ranchi, This 'Wall Mural Painting' dedicated to coal workers was inaugurated

The painting was inaugurated by Narayan Mahato of JSSPS, who won the silver medal in the men's junior category at the international level of Asian Cycling Track Championship, and the students of CCL's shining stars that is CCL's Lal-Ladli, with the blessings of CMD CCL, Nilendu Kumar Singh. Director (Finance), Pawan Kumar Mishra, Director (Personnel),. Harsh Nath Mishra, Director Technical (Planning and Project), Satish Jha, Director Technical (Operation), Harish Duhan, CVO,. Pankaj Kumar, General Managers of various departments, Heads of Departments.

#### **CMPDI celebrates World Environment Day**



CMD, CMPDI, Manoj Kumar, on the occasion of World Environment Day-2024, Environment CMPDI(HQ), Ranchi. Šhankar Nagachari, Director (T/CRD);

Kumar,

(T/P&D), Jayant Chakraborty, RD, RI-III, other GMs/HoDs and employees of Hqs and RI-III were present on this occasion. Kumar then administered the Environmental pledge to the employees. Chairman, CIL, P.M. Prasad's message was read on this occasion. Kumar in his address said that Coal India is focusing on strengthening reclamation practices in its mining areas for ecological restoration, development of carbon sinks, Eco Parks, Mine Tourism sites, mining sumps as water sources for community use. These practices will help in preventing land degradation and desertification in the long run. On this occasion, prizes were distributed to the winners of the various competitions like Extempore, Painting and Poster designing competitions organised as a prelude to World Environment Day 2024. Thereafter, a plantation drive was organised

### SBPS students qualify NEET (UG)-2024

As per the information received so far, Bhumi Keshri, Nivedita Raj, Kritika and Dipshikha Banerjee brought laurels to the school by qualifying NEET (UG)-2024. Principal Paramjit Kaur congratulated the successful candidates and said that the best preparation for tomorrow is

to do the best today. It is sheer hard work that has borne such sweet fruit for the students

#### **World Environment Day at FMPS**



Environment Day was celebrated in First Mark Public School Wednesday. On this occasion, tree plantation was done in the school prem-

ises. The purpose of celebrating Environment Day is that pollution is continuously increasing in the world, with the aim of stopping which Environment Day was started so that people can be made aware of the environment and inspired to avoid polluting nature. School administration Pramod Kumar said that a healthy environment is our identity. Environment means the entire natural surroundings in which we live. It includes living and non-living elements around us. For example, air, trees, plants, animals. The components of the environment combine with each other to form a holistic ecosystem.

### NTPC Coal Mining HQ celebrates World Environment Day with Mass Saplings Plantation at CIPET, Ranchi

World Environment Day was celebrated at NTPC Coal Mining Headquarters/NML, Ranchi with mass fruit bearing saplings at the new campus of Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering & Technology (CIPET), Ranchi.

The Mass Tree Plantation was conducted on World Environment Day on June 5,2024 in association with Swayamsiddha Ladies Club.

As part of commitment to environment protection and conservation, Rekha Jain, President , Swayamsiddha Ladies Club initiated fruit bearing sapling plantation which was followed by Shika Rastogi, Vice President, Sunita Pandey, Senior Member, General Secretary, Mansa Verma, Joint Secretary, Deepa Kumari, Treasurer, Snigdha Rani Manjhi and Sapna Pareek & other dignitaries were present on the occasion.

Mass plantation drive was participated by students cum Project Affected persons (PAPs) in large numbers from NTPC Coal Mining projects of Pakri Barwadih, Chattibariatu Kerendari Badam, Banardih,Dulanga and Talaipalli Coal, Mining Projects.

These students are currently undergoing skill development training on plastic processing courses at CIPET which is sponsored by NTPC under its corporate social responsibility.



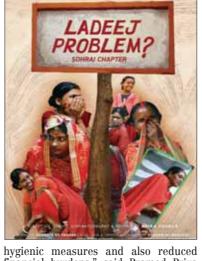
### 'Ladeej Problem?' a documentary around Menstruation to release soon onwards. Selective private screenings

DIVYA MODI: RANCHI

Breaking stereotypes, tackling social issues and creating awareness around menstruation is an upcoming documentary called 'Ladeej Problem?'. The 40minute documentary has been produced by Ranchi based startup Onpery, an organisation that aims to enable communities in rural and urban areas to adopt sustainable menstruation practices. The organisation released the poster for their upcoming film in Ranchi on June 3.

The short film revolves around reducing period poverty and creating awareness about environment friendly menstrual practices like using menstrual cups and menstrual underwear. Based in Oriya, a village located on the outskirts of Hazaribagh, Jharkhand, the film a highlights the journey of a community practicing the indigenous Sohrai and Khovar art where the women in this village are shown to have adapted sustainable menpractices through an NGO has made the products available to them on a monthly basis at subsidized prices.

"The film communicates the diverse set of problems regarding menstruation, period cycle and period poverty for different age group of menstruators in rural areas. It showcases a set of solutions through interventions and outreach programs on how period poverty can effectively be reduced. It also features beneficiaries making a Sohrai painting mural with reusable period underwear as its primary theme. The mural depicts how this product has helped them adopt



financial burdens," said Pramod Priya Ranjan (27), Director and Co- Founder

Onpery organised the first private screening of the film for the art, cultural and social communities of Ranchi on May 30 at the Union Club and Library, Ranchi The chief guest for the occasion Meghanath an activist and national awardee filmmaker appreciated the creative use of the film making process to show the urban people about the problems and solutions around menstruation prevailing in rural areas.

"We plan to screen Ladeej Problem? at various film festivals in India and also internationally September

"Onpery is a wellness brand that enables communities to adopt sustainable well- being practices. At Onpery we aim to enable menstruators to easily adapt reusable menstrual products. reduce period poverty and create wellbeing literacy through strategically developed programs, self- designed menstrual products, graphics, novels and films," added the young entrepreneur.

over the next one year are also in the pipeline. The team is keen to release the film to the public in 2025," said Ranjan.

by Arika Shukla- a communication

design student as a part of her gradua-

tion project at the National Institute of

Dhananjay Bansode has been an assis-

tant in the project. The poster has been

designed by Sapna Najeeb while the

music has been composed by Tathagat

Aacharya, Toshi Priya and Pranjal

Tiwari. The production for the film con-

cluded in November 2023 and it is slated

to release on YouTube on the occasion of

International Women's day- March 8,

Madhya

The documentary has been directed

Pradesh while

Born and brought up in Ranchi, Ranjan has completed his schooling from Delhi Public School and holds a postgraduate degree in Masters in Design from IIT Delhi. A resident of New Pundag, his father Vinod Ranjan is HOD Fine Arts at DPS Ranchi while his mother Tapasi Ranjan teaches Hindi and Political Science at Vivekanand Vidva Mandir,

# 73 WOMEN ELECTED TO LOK SABHA, LOWER THAN 2019

total of 73 women have won the Lok Sabha Aelections, a slight dip from 78 elected in 2019.

Of the total women MPs elected to the Lower House from across the country, West Bengal is leading with 11 female MPs.

A total of 797 women candidates had contested the elections with the BJP fielding the maximum at 69 followed by the Congress at 41.

This is the first election since the passage of the women's reservation bill in the Parliament to reserve onethird of seats in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies for women. The law is yet to come into effect.

According to an analysis of the Election Commission data, BJP's 30 women candidates won the polls this time, Congress' 14, TMC's 11, four of the Samajwadi Party's, three of the DMK, and two each of the JDU and LJP(R)

With over 13.44 per cent female MPs, the 18th Lok Sabha will have one of the highest number of women

The 17th Lok Sabha had the highest number of women parliamentarians constituting over 14 per cent of the total strength. In the 16th Lok Sabha, 64

women were its members, while 52 women were elected to the 15th Lok Sabha.

BJP's Hema Malini, TMC's Mahua Moitra, NCP's Supriya Sule, and SP's Dimple Yadav retained their seats in the Lok Sabha polls, but candidates like Kangna Ranaut and Misha Bharati stole the show with their victories.

Samajwadi Party's 25-year-old candidate for Machhlishahr, Priya Saroj, and 29-year-old Iqra Choudhary of Kairana seat, were among the youngest nominees to secure a victory. Notably, the parties like Naam Tamilar Katchi has achieved equal gender representation with 50 per cent women candidates

Other parties with significant female representation included Lok Janshakti Party (Ram and Nationalist Congress Party, each with 40 per cent women candidates. The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) and Biju Janata Dal



female representation, while the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) had 29 per cent. The Samajwadi Party had 20 per cent, and the Trinamool Congress (TMC) 25 per cent. A total of 8,360 candidates were in the fray in the

parliamentary polls. Three transgender candidates contested the elections independently. But all of them lost in the polls. There were 24 women MPs each in the first and the second Lok Sabha. Meanwhile, four candidates are

set to become the youngest members of parliament (MPs) after scoring victory in the Lok Sabha polls. All of them are 25 years old. Pushpendra Saroj and Priya Saroj fought on Samajwadi Party's ticket, while Shambhavi Choudhary and Sanjana Jatav were fielded by the Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) and the Congress respectively. Shambhavi Choudhary is the daughter of Ashok Choudhary, a minister in the Nitish Kumar cabinet in Bihar. She won from the Samastipur constituency after defeating her nearest rival
— Sunny Hazari of Congress by a comfortable margin. Sunny Hazari is the son of

Hazari. Prime Minister Narendra

Modi had earlier praised Shambhavi as the youngest candidate NDA addressing a campaign rally. Sanjana Jatav won from the Bharatpur constituency in Rajasthan. The 25-year-old defeated BJP's Ramswaroop Koli by a margin of 51,983 votes. She had also fought the 2023 assemby elections but lost to BJP's Ramesh Khedi by just

409 votes. Sanjana is married

to Kaptan Singh — a Rajasthan

police constable. Pushpendra Saroj entered the political battlefield as a SP candidate from the Kaushambi parliamentary seat - previously held by the BJP. He won by defeating sitting BJP MP Vinod Kumar Sonkar by a margin of 103,944 votes. Pushpendra is the son of fivetime MLA and former Uttar Pradesh Minister Inderjit Saroj.

Priya Saroj won from the Machhlishahr seat by a margin of 35,850 votes. She had been pitted against sitting BJP MP Bholanath. Priya is the daughter of three-time MP Toofani Saroj



# Two jailed on terror charges win Lok Sabha polls

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

wo candidates currently Two candidates The lodged in prison on terror in the lodged charges emerged winners in the just-concluded parliamentary election, giving rise to an unusual situation for the 18th Lok Sabha to be formed in the coming days.

attending proceedings of the new House, they do have the constitutional right to take oath as Members of Parliament.

While the law will keep them

The Election Commission declared the results of the Lok radical Sikh preacher Amritpal Singh won Punjab's Khadoor Sahib seat, terror financing accused Sheikh Abdul Rashid, also known as Engineer Rashid, emerged victorious on Kashmir's Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla seat. Engineer Rashid has been lodged in Tihar jail since August 9, 2019, on charges of terror financing. Singh was arrested in April 2023 under the National Security Act and sent to the Dibrugarh prison in Assam.

The question now arises if these jailed newly elected MPs will be allowed to take the oath, and if yes, how. Explaining the legalities involved, Constitution expert and former Lok Sabha secretary general PDT Achari emphasised the importance of following the constitutional provisions in such cases. Being sworn in as a Member of Parliament is a constitutional

right, he said.

But because they are currently in prison, Engineer Rashid and Singh must seek permission from authorities to be escorted to Parliament for the oathtaking ceremony. Once they have taken the oath, they will have to return to prison.

To further explain the legalities, Achari cited Article 101(4) of the Constitution which deals with the absence of members from both Houses of Parliament without prior sanction of the Chair.

He said after they have taken oath, they will write to the Speaker, informing him or her the House. The Speaker will then refer their requests to the House Committee on Absence of Members. committee

recommend whether the member should be allowed to remain absent from House proceedings or not. The recommendation is then put to vote in the House by the Speaker.

If Engineer Rashid or Singh are to be convicted and jailed for a minimum of two years, they would lose their seats in the Lok Sabha immediately as per the Supreme Court judgment of 2013, which holds that MPs MLAs would disqualified in such cases.

This decision struck down section 8(4) of the Representation of the People Act, which earlier allowed convicted MPs and MLAs three months to appeal against their convictions.

# MoU signed to set up dedicated Tele MANAS cell for Armed forces

rmed forces beneficiaries Awill have direct access to mental health care with the Union Health Ministry inking an MoU with the Ministry of Defence for operating a special cell of the national telemental helpline at the Armed Forces Medical College in Pune. The special Tele-MANAS cell will operate on a pilot basis for two operate on a pilot basis for two years at the medical college in the unique

Recognising stressors faced by the Indian military, the need for telemental health services in the armed forces has become evident, the health ministry said in a statement on Wednesday. "The operational environment,

cultural challenges, and specific stressors related to regional conflicts necessitate a specialised approach to mental Lt General Daljit Singh, health care in armed forces. Director General of Armed



dedicated Tele MANAS cell for Armed forces in presence of Aradhna Patnaik, AS &

With the signing of the MoU, the mental health and wellbeing of armed forces personnel and their families will be addressed and the armed forces beneficiaries will direct access to specialised care, ensuring their unique mental health needs are addressed promptly and effectively," the statement said.

Forces Medical Services, said there has been a long-standing need for mental health counselling for armed forces personnel, and now, with the dedicated Tele MANAS cell, armed forces personnel and their families will receive crucial mental health assistance 24x7, addressing their mental health concerns more effectively. armore effectively. Tele MANAS is the digital said.

extension of the District Mental Health Programme (DMHP), offering comprehensive, integrated, and inclusive 24x7 tele-mental health services. The initiative provides toll-free number, 14416, in each State and Union Territory for easy access to mental health

support. Currently, there are 51 operational Tele MANAS cells

functioning across all 36 states and UTs, offering services in 20 different languages. Since its launch in October 2022, it has received over 10 lakh calls and is managing more than 3,500 calls daily. The data indicate a significant

importance of addressing health mental issues comprehensively inclusively, particularly in specialised contexts like the armed forces, the statement

demand for mental health

services and underscores the



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI** 

Army Chief General Manoj Pande visited the site of construction of the upcoming Thal Sena Bhawan — the new building of the Army headquarters at Delhi cantonment on Wednesday to oversee the progress of the complex scheduled to be completed by June 2025. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh laid the foundation stone of the complex in February

Thal Sena Bhawan, a cornerstone project aimed at modernising infrastructure for the construction since March 2023, officials said.

The Army chief was updated on the state of the construction which is "progressing as per schedule and in adherence to the highest engineering standards",

a senior official said. Various green initiatives and the best engineering practices which have been adopted in the project were highlighted during the visit. These include transplanta-tion of 476 fully grown trees, compensatory plantation of 5,790 trees to increase green cover, and use of environmentfriendly construction material such as fly ash bricks, ashcrete cement, recycled wood, and peri formwork, the officials said. The Thal Sena Bhawan aims to be a net-zero building as it will have its own compost plant, sewage treatment plant, solar panels and electric vehicle charging facilities to promote clean energy, they said

The Army chief also inaugurated a state-of-the-art living barrack for troops at the Army HQ Camp at Delhi Cantonment. The barrack has a capacity of 400 beds and was constructed with the latest light gauge steel frame technology through which speedy and sturdy construction has been undertaken. The building was completed in "record time of one year".

It has state-of-the-art amenities for all weather conditions, including a central cooling system, and is equipped with modern technologies such as CCTV cameras and biometric attendance systems. General Pande d satisfaction with both projects.

These endeavours underscore the Indian Army's unwavering resolve to modernise infrastruc ture, prioritise sustainability and improve the quality of life for its personnel, the officials said.

The eight-storey state-of-the-art structure of the Army headquarters' new building will "complement" the overall Central Vista redevelopment project, and its architectural design draws inspiration from the official emblem of the Army, senior officials said in April 2023. The work is due to finish in 27 months at an approximate cost of Rs 760 crore, a top Army official had earlier said.

The starting of the construction work got delayed after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, sources had said, adding the building will be a green structure and fully quake-resistant and "will be built to last 100 years".

# Two-day Varshik Niti Samvad Shivir held

A two-day 'Varshik Niti Samvad Shivir' (annual meet) of the National Cadet Corps (NCC) took place in New Delhi on June 04-05, Defence Ministry said here. The conference's primary focus was to review the progress of the ongoing expansion plan of NCC as per the government directives to meet the aspirations of the

Giving details of the meet, officials said it was inaugurated by Director General NCC Lt General Gurbirpal Singh and attended by Additional Directors General and Deputy Directors General representing NCC Directorates from across the country.

During the meeting, DG NCC highlighted the substantial efforts made in the last one year to enhance training, infrastructure and logistics functions of the NCC. He emphasised on the need for institutionalised training to be the raison de'etre(reason for being) of all directorates in order to meaningfully contribute towards nation building, social awareness and community

Gandhi's visit to Manipur on

June 29 and 30, 2023, and to

the launch of the Bharat Jodo

Nyay Yatra on January 14, 2024

from Thoubal, when the state

permission for it to start from

refused

government

Imphal, Ramesh said.



DG NCC Lt Gen Gurbirpal Singh attends two-day 'Varshik Niti Samvad Shivir' of NCC in New Delhi

development programmes. He reiterated NCC's unwavering

commitment to motivate young Indians and transform them into responsible citizens, in sync with the government policies towards making the country Viksit Bharat' by 2047.

The conference was held at the newly-renovated Pratap Conference Hall, DG

NCC Camp, Cariappa Parade Ground in New Delhi. The hall is named after Cadet Sergeant Pratap Singh of the 10th Punjab Battalion NCC, Gurdaspur who was awarded the Ashok Chakra Class III for his gallantry and selfless devotion to duty during firefighting operations at Gurdaspur Railway Station on September 13, 1965 during the war.

# Manipur sent powerful signal by electing Congress MPs: Jairam

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Congress Wednesday said the longsuffering people of Manipur have sent a "very powerful signal" by electing its leaders as MPs in both constituencies of the State, and asserted that this was a tribute to Rahul Gandhi's visits to the violence-hit State. The Congress won both the Lok Sabha seats in strife-torn Manipur on Tuesday. Alfred Kanngam S Arthur won the Outer Manipur seat by 85,418 votes, defeating his nearest rival Kachui Timothy Zimik of the NPF.

In the Inner Manipur seat, Angomcha Bimol Akoijam defeated his nearest rival Thounaojam Basantakumar of the BJP by 1,09,801 votes. In a post on X, Congress



general secretary Jairam Ramesh said, "The long-suffering people of Manipur, whose resilience and strength has been under major strain since the state began burning on the night of May 3rd 2023, have sent a very powerful signal by electing Congress MPs in both Inner and Outer

for a few hours," the Congress leader said. The two Congress MPs have a huge responsibility, and with their election, hopefully, the

process of reconciliation will get a big boost, Ramedh added. Manipur has been strife-torn since May last year when ethnic violence broke out after a march by Kuki tribals in the hill districts to protest against the valley-dominant Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribes status.

"It is also a tight slap on the face of Mr. Narendra Modi,

who simply refused to reach

out to the people of Manipur and did not visit the state even

Since then, over 220 people belonging to both including communities, security personnel, have been killed in the continuing violence.

# Army to provide skill opportunities to families of personnel

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

The Army has joined hands with a Sikkim-based university to provide educational and skilling opportunities to the families of Army personnel by earmarking seats in its skill-based academic programmes and offering fee concessions, according to an official statement.

An MoU was signed between the Indian Army with the Medhavi Skills University (MSU), Sikkim, during a ceremony held at the South Block here. This pact is to "provide educational and skilling opportunities to the families of army personnel by reserving seats and offering fee concessions", the statement

Under the MoU, the university will earmark seats and offer special fee concessions in its skill-based undergraduate and postgraduate degree

programmes for the wards and spouses of serving, deceased and retired Army personnel, it added.

MSU will provide a cut in tuition fees and hostel accommodation fees for these beneficiaries with additional concessions based on their scores in the national entrance examinations, the statement

The MoU was signed by Major General Ravindra Singh in the presence of Adjutant General of the Indian Army Lt

General C B Ponnappa and Kuldip Sarma, co-founder and pro-chancellor of MSU. MSU has become India's first skills university to collaborate with the Indian Army, it added. "MSÚ views the defence forces as a

significant partner in its journey of upskilling India. We are dedicated to enhancing the learning, development and employability for the families of those who serve our nation so bravely. This initiative

stands as a testament to our unwavering support for India's guardians and their families," Sarma was quoted as saying in the statement.

Singh highlighted the importance of the MoU. "This partnership with Medhavi Skills University is a commendable step towards empowering the families of our Army personnel. It is our duty to support the educational and professional aspirations of the families who sacrifice so much for the nation's security," he said.

# **Congress vote share dips in Madhya** Pradesh, that of BJP, NOTA rises marginally

The vote share of the Congress in the Lok Sabha elections in Madhya Pradesh went down by more than two per cent while that of the BJP increased marginally by over one per cent as compared to the figures in the previous parliamentary elections, a top official said on Wednesday.

In the results of the Lok Sabha polls declared on Tuesday, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) clinched all 29 seats, including the Congress bastion Chhindwara, in Madhya Pradesh.

A total of 5,33,705 voters pressed the NOTA (none of the above) option, with the highest number of 2,18,674 such votes being registered in Indore seat alone, Madhya Pradesh Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Anupam Rajan said in a Press

conference. A total of 369 candidates were in the fray from the 29 seats, including 343 men, 25 women and one transgender (in Damoh). Rajan said the Indian National Congress (INC) had got 34.50 per cent



elections. But this time, its vote share stood at 32.44 per cent, down by 2.06 per cent. The BJP bagged 59.28 per cent votes this time as compared to 58 per cent it had received in 2019, he said. The vote share of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) also went up to 3.28 per cent from 2.38 per cent it registered in the last general elections, he

vote share in the 2019 According to Rajan, the vote elections. But this time, its share of NOTA also went up from 0.92 per cent to 1.40 per cent. "Of the 5,33,705 NOTA votes received across 29 constituencies in Madhya Pradesh, 2,18,674 votes were polled in Indore Lok Sabha seat alone," he said.

Of the total NOTA votes in Indore Lok Sabha seat, 2,18,355 votes were polled on EVMs and 319 through postal ballots, he said.

He said Indore's BJP candidate Shankar Lalwani, who won by the highest margin of 11.75 lakh votes, got 78.54 per cent of the total votes polled. In the Vidisha seat, former state chief minister Shivraj Chouhan won by a margin of 8.21 lakh votes. He received 76.70 per cent of the total votes

On the third place in this list, BJP's Lata Wankhede got 68.49 of total votes in the constituency, he said. BJP's Jyotiraditya Scindia (Guna) and the party' state unit president V D Sharma (Khajuraho) received 67.21 per cent and 67.75 per cent of total votes respectively, the official said.

Across all 29 seats, the lowest victory margin was recorded in the Morena Lok Sabha constituency, where BJP candidate Shivmangal Singh Tomar won by a margin of votes, he said. Responding to a question, Rajan said EVMs were foolproof and there was no scope of tampering due to procedural checks. model code of conduct will come to an end on Thursday,

# BJP-led Mahayuti clinches seven out of 12 seats in Mumbai-Konkan belt

The Mumbai-Konkan coastal belt in Maharashtra stood firmly by the BJP-led Mahayuti alliance even as results in the rest of the state jolted the ruling allies. The coastal region, comprising 12 parliamentary seats,

Mahayuti bagging seven.
The BJP triumphed in Palghar,
Ratnagiri-Sindhudurg, and
Mumbai North, while the NCP,
led by Ajit Pawar, had a face-saver in Raigad where its leader Sunil Tatkare retained his seat.

Chief Minister Eknath Shinde won Mumbai North West seat and retained his hold over Thane and Kalvan constituencies in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region

On the other hand, Uddhav Thackeray's Shiv Sena maintained its hold in Mumbai, winning three of the four seats it contested but lost its former bastions of and Ratnagiri-Sindhudurg in Konkan.

Out of six Lok Sabha seats in Mumbai, Shiv Sena (UBT) won three, while the rest three were bagged by Shiv Sena led by Shinde, BJP, and the Congress. Shiv Sena (UBT) candidates Arvind Sawant, Anil Desai, and Sanjay Dina Patil, clinched Mumbai South, Mumbai South Central, and Mumbai North-East



constituencies, respectively.

The three other seats, namely, Mumbai North West, Mumbai North, and Mumbai North Central were won by the Shindeled Shiv Sena, the BJP, and

Congress, respectively.
The see-sawing battle for Mumbai North West seat was won by Ravindra Waikar who defeated his Shiv Sena (UBT) rival Amol Kirtikar by a wafer-thin margin of 48 votes

The Congress opened its account in Mumbai after a decade with city unit chief Varsha Gaikwad defeating renowned advocate Ujjwal Nikam, who contested on a BIP ticket, from Mumbai North

Out of the four seats in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), Bhiwandi, while Thane and Kalyan were bagged by Shiv Sena led by Shinde. The BJP won Palghar constituency.

The BJP contested the Ratnagiri-Sindhudurg constituency for the first time and will look to consolidate its presence here for the upcoming state polls, while Shiv Sena, led by Shinde, will focus on strengthening its hold in Thane-Kalvan

competing with Shiv Sena (UBT). Union minister Narayan Rane defeated his Shiv Sena (UBT) rival Vinayak Geete from Ratnagiri-Sindhudurg constituency.

Since 2014, BJP and the undivided Shiv Sena dominated the Lok Sabha and assembly constituencies in Maharashtra

Sena and NCP, the political landscape has become a level playing field for all parties.

urbanisation, industrialisation, pollution, traffic congestion, and the need for affordable housing are some of the issues dominating these

constituencies. The Congress faces an uphill task of revitalising itself in Mumbai to ensure it does not cede more ground to Shiv Sena (UBT) in the metropolis without harming the alliance. In 2019, the Congress

won only four assembly seats in Mumbai. The region, with its 72 assembly segments, remains crucial as state

polls are scheduled later this year. Out of the 72 assembly seats, BIF holds 26, Shiv Sena 28, NCP 6, Samajwadi Party 2, Bahujan Vikas Aghadi (BVA) 3, CPM and MNS 1 each, with an independent supporting Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena. Since the splits in Shiv Sena and NCP, the majority of MLAs are with Eknath Shinde and Ajit Pawar. Of 48 Lok Sabha seats in Maharashtra, the Maha Vikas

Aghadi of Shiv Sena (UBT), NCP (Sharadchandra Pawar) and Congress, won 30 seats, while the Mahayuti of BJP, Shiv Sena, and Ajit Pawar-led NCP was restricted

# JD(S) leader HDK eyes Agriculture portfolio in new NDA Government

**PTI** ■ BENGALURU

**T**D(S) leader and former Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy on Wednesday hinted that his party was interested in the Agriculture portfolio in the new NDA Government. JD(S), headed by his father and

former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda, joined the NDA last year.

BJP and JD(S) fought the Lok Sabha elections together in Karnataka, which has a total of 28 seats. BJP won 17 seats and ID(S) two Asked about JD(S)' "demands"

ahead of government formation, he said: "we don't have any such demand. Our priority is resolution of issues concerning Karnataka that have been there for long from the Centre. About giving representation (Cabinet berth) to Karnataka at the Centre,

On his Ministerial aspirations, Kumaraswamy said the NDA leadership will decide. "Let's speak about it when the time comes. Delhi leaders know what is the appropriate decision that needs to be taken for the situation there (in Karnataka). They will decide,"

Regarding speculation in some quarters that he will be the Agriculture Minister, with similar desire being expressed by several other ID(S) leaders, he acknowledged that his party's interest is in the Agriculture department, "Let's see what decisions will happen."

"Our party's interest is in the Agriculture department. Our fight since the beginning has been towards doing good for the farming community," Kumaraswamy, who arrived in New Delhi to attend today's

# Success eludes TN richest candidate, AIADMK's Ashok

**PTI** CHENNAI

Aatral Ashok Kumar, the AIADMK's Erode candidate was said to be the richest of the 950 MP aspirants who contested the April 19 Lok Sabha polls in Tamil Nadu and he had declared assets worth over Rs 500 crore.

Despite putting up a good fight, the debutant was swept away in the DMK wave, with the ruling party-led coalition netting all 39 Lok Sabha seats in the state.

According to the results published by the Election Commission, DMK's KE Prakash trumped Kumar by 2,36,566 votes and emerged victorious from the western constituency.

Kumar received 3,25,773 votes out of the 10,93,423 votes polled.

earlier declared net assets worth Rs 583.48 crore while filing nomination.

The 53-year-old resident of Erode had then shown movable assets valued at Rs 526.53 crore while the immovable assets — both acquired and inherited were worth Rs 56.95 crore. Kumar is the founding

member and director of The Indian Public School (TIPS) and Amex Alloys Private Limited. He is also the founder of TIPS School of Architecture, TIPS School of Management, TIPS College of Arts and Science and the TIPS Global Institute.

After his graduation in electrical engineering in Coimbatore, he completed a Master's from the University of Louisville, Kentucky, USA, and obtained an MBA from University olis Indiana

# Of 12 MLAs in fray, two each from BJP, JMM make it to Lok Sabha from Jharkhand

Four of 12 legislators, who contested the Lok Sabha polls in Jharkhand, emerged victorious, according to the election results.

The INDIA bloc had nominated seven sitting legislators — four by JMM, two by Congress and one by CPI (ML), while the BJP chose three MLAs as its Lok Sabha poll candidates. Two rebel JMM legislators

also fought the elections Independent candidates.

According to election declared results Tuesday, two — Joba Majhi legislators and Nalin Soren — and two BJP MLAs— Dulu Mahto and Manish Jaiswal registered victory in the Lok Sabha polls. JMM's Manoharpur MLA



margin of 1.68 lakh votes. defeating her nearest rival Geeta Kora of the BJP in Singhbhum.

Kora, wife of former Jharkhand chief minister Madhu Koda, joined the BJP just ahead of Lok Sabha polls. She was the lone Congress MP in the state in 2019. In Dumka, JMM's seven-time MLA from the Shikaripara assembly seat Nalin Soren defeated BJP's Sita Soren by 22,527 votes. Sita Soren is the

Iharkhand chief minister Hemant Soren. three-time

Sita, three-time JMM MLA from Jama, joined the BJP in New Delhi on March 20, citing "isolation" and "neglect" by the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha since the death of her husband Durga Soren in 2009. On BJP's side, Dhanbad-Baghmara legislator Dulu Mahto won legislator Dulu Mahto won the Dhanbad Lok Sabha seat by 3.31 lakh votes against Congress Anupama Singh.

The saffron party's MLA Manish Jaiswal defeated Congress' JP Patel by 2.76 lakh votes in Hazaribagh. Patel, a BJP legislator from the Mandu assembly seat, switched to Congress just before the Lok Sabha With four MLAs making it

to Parliament, the total strength of the 81-member Assembly is set

to reduce to 76 from its current position of 80. Since Kalpana Soren, wife of jailed former chief minister Hemant Soren, won the Gandey by-poll,

the total strength of the House will rise to 77. Kalpana won the Gandey by-poll by 27,149 votes over her nearest BJP rival Dilip Kumar Verma.

Re-election to the four seats, which would fall vacant, is unlikely, as the state will go to assembly polls this winter. Currently, the ruling alliance, led by JMM, has 47

MLAs in the 81-member state assembly, while the BJP has 26 legislators and the AJSU Party has three. The NCP and CPI(ML) have one lawmaker each, alongside two Independents and a nominated member. Within the ruling alliance, the JMM has 29 MLAs, the Congress has 17, and the

# Four women candidates win LS polls in Gujarat as compared to six in 2019

**PTI** ■ AHMEDABAD

In the Lok Sabha elections held this year, four women candidates have emerged victorious in Gujarat as compared to six in 2019. Results of the parliamentary elections were declared on Tuesday. Of the total 26 seats in Gujarat, the BIP won 25, while the Congress could bag one seat. Of the four women who won the elections, three belong to the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) while one is from the Congress, the Election Commission of India's data showed.

women 2019, six had won candidates

elections and all of them were only seat where women from the BJP that had clinched all the 26 seats in the

As per the results, four out of five women candidates from the BJP won the Lok Sabha elections this time. Rekha Chaudhari, who was fielded by the ruling party in Banaskantha defeated by seat, was Congress' Geniben Thakor.

Thakor became the only non-BJP candidate to emerge victorious from Gujarat this year. With her victory, the Congress has registered its first win in the Lok Sabha elections in Gujarat in a decade. Banaskantha was the

candidates of two prominent parties faced each other in a contest that turned out to be close and nail-biting. She defeated BJP's Rekha BJP's Chaudhari by a margin of 30,406 votes, the ECI data showed. Congress had fielded three women candidates, two of whom — Prabhaben Taviyad and Sonal Patel were defeated in Dahod and respectively. Apart from Thakor, BJP's Nimuhen Bambhaniya defeated Aam Aadmi Party's Umesh Makwana to win the Bhavnagar seat by a margin of over 4.55 lakh votes

BJP's Poonam Maadam managed to retain the Jamnagar seat for the third consecutive term as she defeated Congress candidate J P Maraviya by a margin of 2.38 lakh votes. Baraiya Shobhanaben defeated Congress' Tushar Chaudhary by a margin of 1.55 lakh votes in Sabarkantha, a seat reserved for the Scheduled Tribes (ST) community.

victory, After her Bambhaniya said that people rime Minister trust Narendra Modi's leadership. "Under Modi's leadership, women have been given priority. Women are emerging

leaders in all fields, and he has worked to empower women in political representation as well. My priority will certainly be to address the issues faced the women in my constituency," she said.
Congress leader Thakor
thanked the people of her constituency for treating her as their sister and helping her out in every way possible to contest and win the election. "I thank them for coining the slogan 'Banas ni be Geniben' (Geniben, the sister of Bansasnaktha), and promise to serve them as long as I live," said Thakor, who is a Congress MLA from Vav seat. She said she will try to fulfil

the promises made to the people and work together with them. In the 2019 elections, Shardaben Patel (Mehsana seat), Poonamben Maadam (Jamnagar), Bharti (Bhavnagar) Shival Ranjanben Bhatt (Vadodara), Gitaben Rathva (Chhota Udepur) and Darshana Jardosh (Surat) had emerged victorious.

Of them, only one candidate — Maadam — was fielded by the BJP this time. The then BJP MP Ranjan Bhatt from Vadodara was offered a ticket to contest the election, which she later declined and pulled out of the race after which the party fielded Hemang Joshi.

Party presidents suffer defeat

in Odisha Assembly polls

# woman from Himachal to be elected to Lok Sabha

PTI ■ SHIMLA

Bollywood actor Kangana Ranaut has become only the fourth woman ever to be elected to Lok Sabha from Himachal Pradesh, and the first woman who is not from

BJP's Kangana defeated her Congress rival Vikramaditya Singh, scion of Rampur state and the incumbent state public works minister, by a margin of 74.755 votes from the Mandi

Kaur, the first health minister of the country and hailing from the erstwhile royal family of Kapurthala, was elected to Lok Sabha from the Mandi constituency in 1952.

Chandresh Kumari from the

State Congress chief Pratibha Singh, who belongs to the erstwhile royal family of

princely states have won from

contest and win elections in the state. One out of three women in the fray for the Lok Sabha seats have won this time. The women voter turnout



The BJP won all the four Lok Sabha seats, including Shimla, in the state. The total number of electorates in the state is 57,11, 969 including 29,13,075 males, 27,98,859 females and 35 third gender voters. The

A total of three women candidates contested the Lok (Independent) from Mandi

election campaigns of the two major political parties, the BJP and the Congress, in the run up to the Lok Sabha polls and while the Congress promised

### Lok Sabha polls mark rise of Bharat Adivasi Party in Rajasthan's tribal belt The BAP made its presence felt in the 2023 Rajasthan Assembly election by winning The just-ended elections marked the rise of the Bharat Adivasi Party (BAP) in

party making its debut in the Lok Sabha and also winning the Bagidora assembly by election. Rajkumar Roat, the BAP MLA from the Chaurasi seat,

parliamentary

Prime

secured a decisive win in the Banswara-Dungarpur Lok Sabha constituency, defeating BJP nominee Mahendrajeet Singh Malviya by 2.47 lakh Roat's victory highlights the party's growing appeal among tribal voters. It was the Banswara-

where

Minister Narendra Modi

suggested that if the Congress

Dungarpur

segment

Rajasthan's tribal belt with the



came to power, it would ahead of the elections.



resources

'This urban-naxal mindset, my mothers and sisters, they will not even leave your 'Mangalsutra'. They can go to that level," Modi had said, addressing a rally in Banswara

three seats, indicating its significant potential to shape regional politics.

Its origins can be traced back to the Bharatiya Tribal Party (BTP), established by Chhotubhai Vasava in Gujarat in 2017. Roat and Ramprasad Dindor, formerly BTP MLAs, broke away to form the BAP in September 2023.

BAP candidate Jaikrishn Patel won the recent Bagidora assembly by-election with a significant margin of 51,434 votes, cementing its presence Rajasthan's political

landscape. According to the Election Commission, Patel polled 1,22,573 votes, while BJP candidate Subhash Tambolia secured 71,139 votes. The

Congress extended support to the BAP in this contest.

The Bagidora seat fell vacant following the resignation of Congress MLA Mahendrajeet Malviya, who joined the BJP and contested the Lok Sabha election from the Banswara

The BAP's rise reflects the increasing political mobilisation and aspirations Rajasthan's tribal communities. With this by-election victory, the number of BAP MLAs in

the Rajasthan Assembly has now increased to four. The BJP has 115 MLAs in the state Assembly, Congress 69, Bahujan Samaj Party two and

the Rashtriya Lontantrik

Party and Rashtriya Lok Dal

one each. There are eight

independent MLAs in the

district by a slender margin of 4,636 votes, the five-term former chief minister had to suffer a humiliating defeat to political novice in Kantabanji constituency in Bolangir. The BJD supremo lost

PTI BHUBANESWAR

assembly elections.

BJP supremo Naveen BJP and BJP and

Congress state presidents

Manmohan Samal and Sarat

Pattanayak respectively, had

to suffer defeats in the Odisha

Although Patnaik won from

assembly seat in Ganjam

traditional Hinjili

Bag by 16,344 votes. While Bag got 90,876 votes, Patnaik received 74,532 votes. This was the first time that Patnaik faced electoral defeat

in his political career spanning 26 years. While the BJP stormed to

power in Odisha by securing 78 seats in the assembly, the party's state unit president Manmohan Samal suffered defeat in Chandbali segment to BJD's Byomakesh Ray by a margin of 1,916 votes.

While Ray secured 83,063 votes, Samal could manage to get 81,147 votes.

Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee president Sarat Pattanayak suffered a worse fate as he finished fourth in Nuapada assembly segment, bagging only 15,501 votes. The seat was bagged by BJD candidate Rajendra Dholakia,

Kantabanji to BJP's Laxman who got 61,822 votes, while Independent nominee Ghasiram Majhi second, securing 50,941

# Kangana only fourth

an erstwhile royal family.

Lok Sabha constituency. Earlier, Raj Kumari Amrit

erstwhile royal family of Jodhpur, who was married in Himachal, won from Kangra seat in 1984.

Rampur, won from the Mandi seat in 2004, 2013 and 2021. Kangana is only the third woman to be elected from the Mandi seat. The scions of the erstwhile

Mandi 13 out of 19 times but this time the people voted for Bollywood 'Queen' film fame actor Kangana, who also became the first celebrity to

exceeded the men in three out of the four Parliament

election was held simultaneously on June 1 and results were declared on June 4. Sabha elections. Besides Kangana of the BJP, they included Rakhee Gupta Parliament seat and Rekha Chaudhary (BSP) from the Kangra seat. Women were the focus of

Rs 8,500 per month, the BJP asked about the status of Rs 1,500 per month to women in Himachal as promised by the Congress in last assembly

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

# The enigma

The BJP 'loss' amid victory and Congress 'win' in defeat is a perplexing question

Predicting the course Indian politics will take is akin to forecasting monsoon or betting on the next World Cup winner — notoriously unpredictable. Election results routinely buck conventional wisdom, leaving even the most astute political pundits perplexed and scratching their heads. This time round, these pundits may want to hang their boots as well; they have no clue as to what happened, or what will happen, for that matter. Intriguing is also the fact that no one knows for sure which side won and who lost; and if there was a clear winner. The latest results present a paradoxical landscape where victories feel like defeats and losses masquerade as triumphs. The BJP seemingly tasted defeat despite emerging the single largest party, while the Congress celebrated a moral victory despite just about touching the 100-mark. This electoral paradox underscores the nuanced dynamics at play beyond mere seat counts, reflecting the intricate interplay of factors such as voter sentiment, strategic alliances and the



evolving political narrative. The BJP, known for its formidable electoral machinery and strategic acumen, found itself grappling with an unexpected conundrum: It falls short of reaching the coveted '300 ke paar,' let alone Narendra Modi's ambitious target of '400 ke

Despite securing the most seats in Parliament, the party failed to meet its lofty expectations. This phenomenon can be attributed to several factors, including antiincumbency sentiment, regional variations in voting patterns and the emergence of INDIA bloc, economic hardships of people, disgruntled elements in the party and many more. One crucial aspect contribut-

ing to the BJP's "loss despite victory" narrative is the erosion of its traditional vote base in certain constituencies. Issues such as agrarian distress, unemployment and socioeconomic inequalities have fuelled disenchantment among segments of the electorate, leading to a dent in the BJP's support base. Additionally, the party's religious undertones, emphasis on the construction of the Ram temple and attempts at polarisation along religious and caste lines failed to resonate with the electorate. Lastly, what we observe is a noticeable decline in the appeal of 'Brand Modi'. For the first time under his leadership, the party must rely on its allies to form a Government, thereby subjecting it to the whims of these allies. At the other end, the Congress is desperately gasping for an oxygen mask. Despite facing a decline in its traditional support base, the Congress has pulled off a moral victory from the jaws of defeat. This paradoxical triumph stems from the party's ability to exceed dismal expectations, mount a credible challenge to the ruling dispensation and portray itself as a resilient Opposition force, though it needs to work more on it. In every conflict, perception often outweighs tangible triumphs. The NDA lost the battle of public perception, while the Congress ascended to the moral high ground, validating its political approach and ideology.



A pedestrian walks past a mural, made to create awareness on the environment and reforestation, in Mumba

# Agenda for the Modi Government 3.0



If Modi gets his next term, he might bring about transformative changes and ambitious plans to navigate India's diverse challenges and opportunities

lections have resulted in surprises and upsets before. India's stability lies in its ability to transition power smoothly. The verdict is out now and the winner is announced. To fortify its democracy, India requires a stable government and strong Opposition.

After the seven-phase elections, the June 4 results indicate that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will likely be the next prime minister. The INDIA block, a coalition of regional parties, also competed, but its chances were slim. Election results often surprise. 2004, the U.P.A. formed the government even though the B.J.P.'s "India Shining" campaign did not click. Regardless of the outcome, the winning party and the Opposition bloc will face challenges. Modi has claimed that his last ten years in office have been the appetizer, and the main meal will come in his third term. Modi stated, "Wait for bigger decisions in the third term. I'm already working on a roadmap that will be completed soon.'

Modi's aspiration for a third term is not just about securing his legacy across all sectors. It's a daring attempt to surpass Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's three-term record. However, this ambitious pursuit has challenges, including public opinion and internal party dynamics that could significantly influence the political landscape.
While Modi's previous terms

have seen significant achievements, his 'Modi 3.0' government will not be without its challenges. These include navigating the post-pandemic recovery, addressing social unrest, managing foreign policy issues, and meeting the diverse expectations of the electorate.

Modi has an unfinished agenda of BJP's core issues. This means implementing a Uniform Civil Code,' one nation-one poll ', propelling India to become the third largest economy and continuing to make essential changes to land and labour policies. Over the past three months, the Modi government has been working on a '125-day plan' for the next phase of governance. Initially, the plan was for 100 days, but it was cations, especially for the

extended by another 25 days, with a focus on the youth. The agenda is expected to cover 50 to 70 key objectives and will set out the direction and priorities of the new government.t. Modi might discredit his

opponents and potentially break up the Indian coalition, which could significantly change India's political landscape. Modi wants to simultaneously hold all elections in the country, from local to national, which he calls 'one nation, one poll.' This change could make the electoral system more efficient and organized, but it could also concentrate power in the hands of the ruling party and reduce the frequency of elections. Modi has already laid the groundwork for this proposal. A committee under former president Ramnath Kovind's leadership has suggested holding Lok Sabha and all state elections together.

However, the delimitation exercise involves redrawing the boundaries of parliamentary and assembly constituencies. The decennial must be completed before that. The delimitation could have significant political impli-



CLAIM "MY KURTA IS WHITER THAN HIS" EXTENDS TO POLITICS. BUT IT SHOULD NOT LEAD TO AN EXERCISE OF ABUSING AND **BELITTLING THE** RIVALS. THE **SPEECHES DELIVERED BY SOME** OF THE LEADING LIGHTS OF THE MAIN **POLITICAL PARTIES** WERE DEPLORABLE

AND DESPICABLE

Southern states. An affidavit submitted to the Supreme Court stated that the delimitation is expected to increase the number of Lok Sabha seats from 543 to 888 and Rajya Sabha seats from 250 to 384. Modi has ensured that there will be enough seating in the new Parliament building.

The South's population control policy has led to a decrease in its population, potentially resulting in a loss of at least 100 seats for Southern states in the delimitation process. This could create a North-South divide, causing contention among regional parties in the South.

The BJP is pushing for a Uniform Civil Code applicable to all citizens of India, regardless of religion. Uttarakhand, governed by the BJP, is taking steps to implement it, and other BJP-ruled states will soon follow. However, this raises concerns about potential social disruption and backlash from religious communities. During the campaign, the Opposition expressed concerns that the B.J.P. might change the Constitution to remove the word 'secular.' A Modi government with a subPreamble and eliminate the terms' socialist' and 'secular' added by the 42nd Amendment but that did not happen.

Modi aims to make India the world's third-largest economy through 'Viksit Bharat', prioritizing manufacturing, technology, infrastructure, and clean energy. However, funding, implementation, and public acceptance challenges could impact its success and the Indian political landscape. Despite being hamstrung by arrests and other crackdowns, the Opposition mustered its most united front in years. Still, exit polls indicated it could not cut into the BJP 's parliamentary majority. Congress leader Jairam Ramesh claims that the Opposition bloc will get more than 272 seats and will choose the PM candidate in 48

If the Indian coalition manages to form a government despite the odds, it could herald a significant shift in India's political landscape. It would face challenges, such as selecting a Prime Minister and executing its ambitious plans.

(The writer is a popular columnist views are personal)

### THE EDITOR

# Virtual communication over spoken words



Each one of us needs appreciation, or validation, through a kind or loving word, and sometimes through a touch or even an occasional hug

re were fond of a nursery rhyme during our hostel days, One for sorrow, two for joy, three for letter, four for toy... I realised much later that we had tweaked the rhyme to suit us, to help us cope with separation. The original did not have any reference to letters. Most of us had come out of the sheltered life of our familiar surroundings for the first

Emails and mobiles were not even on the horizon in 1974. Many homes did not have landline telephones. We were homesick and eagerly looked forward to handwritten letters from home. Each day, we anxiously crowded around the table outside the mess where the postman dumped all the posts. A few would gleefully pull out theirs, while others walked into the dining hall dejected.

A few years later, I was engaged to be married to a young girl within the next five months. It was a long-distance courtship. I was posted in a government job in Calcutta, she was in the final year of her graduation in Delhi. I did not have the benefit of telephone facilities either at the office or at home.

I did the next best thing – write her a letter every day. She also responded, with almost the same frequency. Almost four decades later, I do not recall the contents of our letters; but I am sure they would have served the same purpose that today's practice of youngsters going out several times over months serves. We have begun to rationalise and accept the change in the younger generation for a better understanding before committing to a future relationship; while we did it after we had been engaged in an arranged relationship by our

The traditional has given way to the new to suit the changing times. Age and familiarity bring inevitable changes in life. As years rolled on, we also

got busier in our daily lives jobs, raising children, and many other things, which some may call mundane, but which I call as the flow of life. There would be bickering between the two of us, interspersed with silences, which we had not even envisaged through the rose-tinted glasses that we wore while writing those long letters during our

courtship. Now in our sixties – my wife is short of that magical number by less than a year – we even communicate through these silences. We are more like the couple of birds that I recently spotted sitting a little apart from each other on an electric wire looking in different directions, contemplating life, and probably in silent communication with

each other.

Technology has also changed our lives in many ways. Virtual communication is the new order over the verbal or the written word. There are more messages of greetings on social media from and to family members living under the same roof. In the earlier days, when we did not have social media at our beck and call, a written note was something to be preserved and

One might argue that it is better than not communicating at all. My counterpoint is that not all communication should be silent or on the net. Each one of us needs appreciation, or validation, through a kind or loving word, and sometimes through a touch or even an occasional hug.

Lord Tennyson said almost two centuries back, "The old order changeth, yielding place to new." Change is inevitable and needs to be welcomed with open hearts. To not change is to stagnate. It is within us to differentiate and embrace the good.

(The writer conducts workshops on creative writing for young adults and corporate executives. Views are

#### **SAFEGUARDING GANGETIC DOLPHINS** Madam — Regarding the news story

"Small is beautiful for Gangetic dolphin," published on June 4, here are my thoughts. As a daily newspaper reader, it's heartening to see smaller rivers in the Ganga basin finally getting the attention they deserve for their crucial role in preserving the endangered Gangetic dolphin. The joint study by the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) and the National Mission for Clean Ganga highlights the often-overlooked importance of these smaller rivers. Despite covering 1,290 kilometers of tributaries and identifying 620 kilometers of critical habitats, it's clear that these smaller water bodies need more focused conservation

The dwindling range of the Gangetic dolphin in various rivers, now extirpated from several key areas, is alarming. These smaller rivers harbour significant portions of the dolphin population and contribute to the overall biodiversity and health of the Ganga river system. The study emphasises engaging local communities, addressing their concerns and linking them to broader conservation initiatives. This holistic approach is essential for the long-term survival of these majestic aquatic mammals.

Meera Kakkar | Mumbai

**ADDRESSING ROOT CAUSES OF CRIME** Madam — Regarding the news story "Crime and Conscience," published on June 4, here are my thoughts. The tragic hit-and-run involving a teenager and two IT professionals is a stark reminder of the complex nature of crime. Criminal psychologists argue that crimes often occur in moments of high tension or uncontrollable passion. This suggests that if individuals could resist these

Our legal system punishes criminal actions, but it seldom addresses the psychological state preceding these actions.

impulses, many crimes could be prevent-

#### **Market volatility amid elections** ing slightly lower growth rates. This cautious

stantial majority could alter the



propos the news story "Uncertainties Adwindle investors' confidence," published on June 4, this is my response. The recent stock market plunge from 76,010 to 73,866 highlights the market's sensitivity to political and economic uncertainties. Despite the RBI's 7 per cent growth forecast, investor confidence remains shaky, with major institutions predict-

only increase administrative costs but also disrupt economic activities. Shortening the election duration could help stabilise the market and restore investor confidence. Meanwhile, the RBI's actions, such as targeting 4.5 per cent inflation and addressing banking risks, are steps towards economic stability. However, the ongoing volatility and heavy foreign fund outflows underline the need for innovative financial policies. The new government faces the challenge of navigating these uncertainties to rejuvenate the market and economy, balancing political and economic priorities effectively

sentiment is compounded by rising US bond

Investor anxiety is further aggravated by the pro-

longed election period. The extended phases,

particularly in northern and eastern India, not

yields and global market pressures.

Isha Joshi | Pune

people to commit crimes. To truly reduce crime, society must focus on eradicating these negative emotions through spiritual education and meditation. Such measures could enhance individuals' resilience against stress and temptation, ultimately preventing criminal behavior. The cost of implementing widespread psychological and spiritual education is significantly less than maintaining the legal and penal systems. By addressing the root causes of crime, we could create a more harmonious society, reducing the burden on our judicial and penal systems.

Aryan Nair | Ranchi

**WE ARE EXPLOITING OUR PLANET** Madam — Apropos the news story "Is it possible to restore the lost vigour of our planet?" published on June 4, this is my response. Humans often only consider our planet during celebrations or catastrophes. In normal times, we exploit it mercilessly, forgetting that resources are finite and meant for Anger, jealousy, greed and fear drive future generations too. Historically, we

have always harmed the environment, but the last two centuries have seen unprecedented destruction due to advances in science and technology. We have abandoned the sustainable practices our ancestors valued for short-term gains. As a daily newspaper reader, it's evident that this neglect is leading us toward a bleak future for our children. We must ask ourselves: What good is wealth if our descendants inherit a degraded planet?

Efforts to restore our environment, such as reforestation and wetland restoration, show promise. Successful examples like China's Loess Plateau and Srinagar's Khushal Sar Lake illustrate the potential of coordinated, largescale environmental rehabilitation. This year's World Environment Day, focusing on land restoration, reminds us of the urgent need to act and reverse the damage for a sustainable future.

Arjun Desai | Chandigarh

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# **FIRST COLUMN**

### **MINIMISE E-WASTE FOR** A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Forge a greener future by maximising resources and minimising waste



Living in the so-called globalised world, the term electronic waste/E-waste is a time bomb for it comprises electronic devices that are unwanted, not working or have reached the end of their "useful life". However, it is not just a technology-based problem but everyone's problem. Around 80 to 85 per cent of electronic products are discarded in landfills. While it's good to recycle, at the same time it is crucial to prioritise safety and proper practices when handling such waste. No doubt that recycling does aim to reduce pollution, but it should not contribute to environmental harm just because of human irresponsible practices.

However, the serious environmental risks associated with e-waste are significant and multifaceted, affecting ecosystems, wildlife as well as

As per several research studies, the fastest increase in e-waste output is people's insatiable need to own technological devices. With the growing age and generation, the rapid technological innovation has led to frequent releases of new models of electronic devices. Moreover, human greed too has encouraged consumers to upgrade to the latest versions. resulting in the disposal of older but still functional devices. Frequent disposal of small equipment such as microwaves, toasters, mobiles, laptops, computers, printers, and televisions followed by large equipment such as washing machines, dishwashers, refrigerators and many more just to maintain the status quo makes Asia generate the most e-waste by the America, Europe, Africa and Oceania with a recycling rate of just 17.4%. Not only this, according to the World Health Organization(WHO), several adverse health effects are also caused by exposure to e-waste like negative birth outcomes such as premature birth, changes in lung



lenges are emerging day by day.

With recycling and dumping issues emerging, today many electronic products are often designed with shorter lifecycles due to planned obsolescence, where manufacturers intentionally limit the lifespan of a product to encourage repeat purchases, but improper e-waste disposal leads to habitat destruction. For example, when e-waste is dumped in natural areas, it can disrupt local wildlife habitats, leading to a loss of biodiversity. In some countries, regulations governing e-waste management are either lacking or not effectively enforced, leading to improper disposal and recycling practices. In regions without Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) policies, manufacturers are not held accountable for the end-of-life management of their products, contributing to the accumulation of e-waste. By addressing these underlying factors through comprehensive policies, public awareness campaigns and improvements in recycling infrastructure, it is possible to mitigate the growing e-waste problem and promote more sustainable practices in electronic consumption and disposal. Also, by addressing the environmental risks of e-waste, one can work towards more sustainable and safer management practices that protect both the environment and public health. While recycling e-waste is generally better for the environment than disposing of it in landfills, some recycling processes are energy-intensive and contribute to greenhouse gas emissions. Improving the efficiency of recycling technologies and processes can help mitigate this impact.

It is time to embrace the power of circular thinking as one transforms waste into opportunity, by taking one step at a time. It's time to break free from the linear mindset and forge a path towards a greener future, where resources are maximised and waste is minimized.

(The writer is an educator; views are personal)

# Fight to preserve our fragile ecosystems



It is crucial to adopt sustainable practices to protect our environment and ensure a secure future for the coming generations, or it may be too late before we realise it

he planet is grappling with unprecedented environmental challenges. According to media reports on May 29, 2024, Delhi recorded the highest temperature of over 50 degrees Celsius, a recordbreaking event in 80 years. Then, there is the impending water crises, looming large in the Capital City – between politics and their blame game. Meanwhile, forest fires ravage the hills amidst the political fire ignited by the biggest dance of democracy, the Lok Sabha Elections which has finally ended and a new government will soon join the league of service within this 'democratic' panorama.

Not only this, according to media reports, a massive fire broke out in Kashmir's Ramnagar forest division early Sunday, June 2, 2024, causing immense damage and an estimated loss of crores of rupees in timber and other natural resources. Another major fire has been raging for three days in Daya Dhar of Ghordi Block, Udhampur District, intensifying, despite continuous firefighting efforts. The Daya Dhar forest, home to a significant population of peacocks, has suffered extensive harm, impacting these birds and other wildlife. The forest fires in Udhampur pose severe threats to the environment, wildlife, and local communities, with the destruction of vegetation and the release of harmful pollutants having far-reaching consequences.

Not just this, the social media 'Instagram' is upbeat with a heart-wrenching visual display of hundreds of people of all age groups raising their solidarity in preventing the authorities from felling over 2000 trees of the Khalanga forest, prominently the Sal trees in the hill state of Dehradun. The reason for felling the trees – to address the water crises faced by the City.

This proposal has sparked significant opposition from local activists and citizens, who are protesting, pleading, and urging officials, including authorities - from the Chief Minister to the bureaucrats - to reconsider this move. They highlight that the Khalanga Forest, a vital green lung for the city, contains century-old trees and diverse species, crucial for maintaining ecological balance. Activists suggest constructing the reservoir in Dwara village, which has barren land and suffers from water scarcity, as a more sustainable alter-

According to a report, dated May 9, 2024, ubiisnea at https://grounareport.in/iat est/dehradun-2000-trees-will-be-cut-inkhalanga-forest-to-make-a-reservoir-4550484, activists are voicing strong opposition, citing the ongoing climate challenges like wildfires, etc. Citizens believe that the plan to cut 2,000 trees from the reserve forest requires serious rethinking. Further, residents of Doon, led by Colonel Vikram Thapa (retd), president of Bal Bhadra Khalanga Vikas Samiti, suggest using barren land instead of encroaching on lush green forests. Initially proposed for the Kulhan Mansingh area, the site was shifted to Khalanga. Demonstrators, including Nature Buddies', 'Citizens for Green Doon', 'Balbhadra Vikas Samiti', 'Toy Foundation', 'Proud Pahadi', and 'Pahadi Peddlers', symbolically tied "Rakshasutra" (see Instagram video) on marked trees.

Not only this, in another such incident, the Delhi-Dehradun Expressway construction, aimed at improving connectivity, resulted in the felling of over 7,500 trees, along a 16-km section. Approximately 4,983 trees were in Uttarakhand, while



DESPITE COMMITMENTS TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 13 BY 2030, CLIMATE CHANGE PERSISTS WITH ESCALATING DEVASTATION. **GLOBAL** 

**TEMPERATURES** ARE RISING, **FUELLING CATASTROPHIC EVENTS LIKE** EUROPE'S 2019 **HEATWAVE AND** AUSTRALIA'S 2019-2020 **BUSHFIRE SEASON**  2,592 were in Uttar Pradesh. To compensate, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) proposes to plant 1.76 lakh trees.

Welcome to the celebrations thatmarked the 2024 World Environment Day on June 5. Amidst these glaring adversities and threats to the environment, the World Environment Day 2024 celebrations - whose underlying theme this year is "Our land. Our We future #GenerationRestoration," calls for global action for protecting the environment and rethinking the decisions, that could be detrimental to Mother Nature and her inhabitants. No doubt, this year's World Environment Day (WED) campaign, focused on land restoration, desertification and drought resilience. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia hosted the 2024 World Environment Day global celebra-

Despite commitments Sustainable Development Goal 13 by 2030, climate change persists with escalating devastation. Global temperatures are rising, fuelling catastrophic events like Europe's 2019 heatwave and Australia's 2019-2020 bushfire season. Melting ice caps imperil coastal regions and islands like the Maldives, Miami, and Venice. Extreme weather events, including record-breaking hurricanes and deadly typhoons, wreak havoc, exacerbating water scarcity through prolonged droughts and shifting precipitation patterns.

Addressing climate change requires a comprehensive approach: reducing greenhouse gas emissions, adapting to changing conditions,

and promoting sustainable development. Transitioning to renewable energy sources like solar, wind, and geothermal is crucial, with countries like Germany and Denmark leading in adoption. Enhancing energy efficiency in buildings, transportation, and industries can further reduce emissions.

Sustainable agricultural practices, like agroforestry and organic farming, help lower emissions and enhance food security, while urban farming and vertical agriculture offer innovative solutions. Protecting and restoring natural ecosystems, which act as carbon sinks, is vital. Efforts like the Bonn Challenge and Costa Rica's reforestation initiatives demonstrate the benefits of increasing forest cover and blodiversity

Promoting a circular economy can reduce resource consumption and greenhouse gas emissions by minimizing waste and reusing materi-

The European Union's Circular Economy Action Plan exemplifies this approach, aiming to transition from a linear "take-make-dispose" model. Sustainable urban development, focused on creating resilient, low-carbon cities, emphasizes public transportation, green building practices, and smart city technolo-

Education and awareness are also critical, as schools, universities, and community organizations play essential roles in fostering environmental stewardship. Through environmental education programmes and campaigns, individuals can be empowered to make informed decisions and take action to protect

In this context, Mahatma Gandhi's poignant reflection on our connection to the Earth resonates profoundly in these times: "If Earth is not we are not. I feel nearer to God by feeling Him through the Earth. In bowing to the Earth, I at once realise my indebtedness to Him, and, if I am a worthy child of that Mother, I shall at once reduce myself to dust and rejoice in establishing kinship with not only the lowliest of human beings, but also with the lowest forms of creation whose fate-reduction to dust I have to share with them." This profound statement encapsulates the essence of environmental stewardship and the need for sustainable development.

James Lovelock, a British scientist, roposed the Gaia hypothesis, which views the Earth as a self-regulating system. This idea aligns with Mahatma Gandhi's view of the Earth as a living entity with which we share a deep connection. Lovelock's work emphasizes the interdependence of all living and non-living components of the Earth, suggesting that harming one part affects the whole system. As we face the pressing issue of climate change, it is imperative to adopt sustainable practices to protect our environment and secure the future for coming generations. Individual actions, combined with collective efforts, can pave the way for a sustainable world, ensuring that future generations inherit a healthy and thriving planet. It is now or never.

(The writer is Programme Executive, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samit; views are

# Reshaping film festivals and cinemas with OTT platforms

By embracing a hybrid approach that combines virtual access with in-person screenings, festivals have the opportunity to broaden their audience reach

n the age of instant communication and paradigm **⊥**shifts, transformative changes are progressively taking place in the content domain as it is being collated, consumed and distributed across media platforms. The communication landscape is witnessing a sea of opportunities, being available to access content in a form suitable to viewers, audiences and stakeholders. Cinema also is witnessing an innovation & disruption bringing, forth a change in the status quo of viewing on the silver screen.

The exponential growth of OTT platforms has redefined the mode & matrix of cinema viewing globally. Apart from promoting binge-watching, and accessible viewing, OTT



has become a convenient pastime for home viewing. Today the OTT domain is a witness to a recalibration of distribution channels, new revenue models, focus on artistic merit and reconfiguration of the content with outreach mechanisms. India has also been seeing a rise in the OTT domain with quality content being produced in huge num-

The global film festival circuit is also witnessing winds of change giving rise to new collaborative partnerships, renewed style of storytelling, narration, participation and branding of cinematic appeal. As a consequence, film festivals have repositioned themselves as platforms with broadened appeal, wider audiences and a variety of diverse themes related to storytelling. Cannes Film Festival 2024, is responding to these changes by forging new collaborative partnerships and adopting fresh storytelling techniques. This dynamic is evident as film festivals broaden their thematic scopes and embrace diverse cinematic expressions, integrating OTT content that resonates with global audiences. Notable examples include Alfonso Cuarón's "Roma" and PawelPawlikowski's "Cold War," both of which received significant accolades at major international festivals, underscoring the increasing acceptance and influence of OTTproduced content within the mainstream cinema landscape. This is evident in the case of Indian OTT content representation as well, with many bigname international film festivals accepting its nomina-

India's representation at Cannes 2024 exemplifies this trend, showcasing films that bridge traditional Indian narratives with contemporary global themes, thus appealing to a wide array of audiences. The increasing inclusion of Indian OTT content at Cannes

towards embracing digital storytelling platforms, reflecting a broader trend of film festivals adapting to the digital age.

This evolution is mirrored in the increased recognition of web series and digital features, which are now celebrated for their creative quality and innovation at such internation-

al platforms. Indian presence at Cannes 2024 has been a testament of diversity, talent and unique identity; which was showcased by the multiple nominations in various categories and innumerable wins that Indian creators and films have bagged this year.

Since 2023, there has been an increase in the inclusion of OTT content in film festivals showing a shift influenced by highlights a strategic shift the popularity of direct-to-

consumer streaming platforms. Major film festivals are integrating digital content into their programs, recognising the potential of OTT to bring innovative storytelling and diversity. Some have even introduced awards for web series to highlight the creative quality of OTT productions. Over the years IFFI, Goa has created unique templates for integrating the festival with the OTT narrative, reinforcing storytelling with fresh perspective, imagination participation & collaboration. The 51st edition of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) made history by introducing a hybrid format in

This innovative approach allowed attendees to participate both in person and virtu-

ally showcasing the benefits of blending digital components. The pioneering move not only tackled the challenges posed by the pandemic but also set a new gold standard for Film Festivals worldwide. The success of IFFI in 2021 as a hybrid model inspired other prestigious festivals like TIFF to adopt similar formats in subsequent years ensuring ongoing engagement and inclusivity.

The 52nd IFFI kept up the momentum. More than 50 films were screened simultaneously on OTT platforms. 10 Masterclasses. For the 54th edition, IFFI introduced the Best Web Series (OTT) Award and honoured "Panchayat Season 2", from Amazon Prime Video, for its authentic depiction of rural Indian life.

This move has fostered bridging the gap between traditional and digital film realms. By embracing a hybrid

approach that combines virtual access with in-person screenings, festivals have the opportunity to broaden their audience reach and promote inclusivity.

Collaboration between festivals and streaming services could encompass sponsorships, premieres, acquisitions or joint projects with filmmakers enriching the festival experience and aligning with audience preferences for personalised viewing options.

(The writer is a Former Addl. DG DFF & Festival Director IFFI, Views are personal. Inputs provided by Zova Ahmad, and Vaishnavie Srinivasan)

# 'Over 1 mn in Gaza at risk of starvation by mid-July'

United Nations agencies warned Wednesday that over 1 million Palestinians in Gaza could experience the highest level of starvation by the middle of next month if hostilities continue. The World Food Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organisation said in a joint report that hunger is worsening because of heavy restrictions on humanitarian access and the collapse of the local food system in the nearly eight-month Israel-Hamas war. It says the situation remains dire in northern Gaza, which has been surrounded and largely isolated by Israeli troops for months. Israel recently opened land crossings in the north but they are only able to facilitate truck loads in the dozens each day for hundreds of thousands of people. Israel's incursion into Rafah has meanwhile severely disrupted aid operations in the south. Egypt has refused to open its Rafah crossing with Gaza since Israeli forces seized the Gaza side of it nearly a month ago,

The Israeli military says it has allowed hundreds of trucks to enter through Kerem Shalom in recent weeks, but the UN says it is often unable to retrieve the aid because of the security situation. It says distribution within Gaza is also severely hampered by ongoing fighting, the breakdown of law and order, and other Israeli restrictions

The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, the world authority on determining the extent of hunger crises, said in March that around 677,000 people in Gaza were experiencing Phase 5 hunger, the highest level and

the equivalent of famine.

The two UN agencies said in their report Wednesday that that figure could climb to more than 1 million — or nearly half of Gaza's total population of 2.3 million — by the middle of next month.

"In the absence of a cessation of hostilities and increased access, the impact on mortali-

instead diverting aid to Israel's
Kerem Shalom crossing nearby. \_\_\_\_ ty and the lives of the
Palestinians now, and in future
generations, will increase markedly with every day, even if famine is avoided in the near term," it said.

On Tuesday, a separate group of experts said it's possible that famine is underway in northern Gaza but that the war, and restrictions on humanitarian access, have impeded the data collection to

"It is possible, if not likely," the group known as the Famine Early Warning Systems Network, or FEWS NET, which is funded by the US Agency for International Development, said about famine in Gaza. Last month, the head of the World Food Program, Cindy McCain, said northern Gaza had already entered "full-blown famine," but experts at the UN agency later said she was expressing a personal opinion.

An area is considered to be in famine when three things occur: Twenty percent of households have an extreme lack of food, or are essentially starving; at least 30 per cent of

### Rights group claims Israel has hit residential buildings with white phosphorous in Lebanon

**Beirut(AP):** A global human rights group claimed that Israel has used white phosphorus incendiary shells on residential buildings in at least five towns and villages in conflict-hit southern Lebanon, possibly harming civilians and violating international law, in a report published on Wednesday

Human Rights Watch said in its report that there was no evidence of burn injuries due to white phosphorus in Lebanon, but that researchers had "heard accounts indicating possible respiratory damage". Human rights advocates sav it's a crime under international law to fire the controversial munitions into populated areas. Israel maintains it uses the white

the children suffer from acute malnutrition or wasting, meaning they're too thin for their height; and two adults or four children per every 10,000 peo-ple are dying daily of hunger and its complications.

phosphorus only as a smokescreen and not to target civilians. The white-hot chemical substance can set buildings on fire and burn human flesh down to the bone. Survivors are at risk of infections and organ or respiratory failure, even if their burns are

The HRW report includes interviews with eight residents in conflict-hit southern Lebanon, and the group says it has verified and geolocated images from almost 47 photos and videos that show white phosphorus shells landing on residential buildings in five Lebanese border towns and

The Lebanese Health Ministry says at least 173 people have

The war began when Hamas and other militants stormed across the border into Israel on October 7, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and taking around 250 hostage. Israel's retaliatory

sure to white phosphorus. The researchers found that the controversial incendiaries were used in residential areas in Kfar Kila, Mays al-Jabal, Boustan. Markaba, and Aita al-Shaab, towns that are among the hardest-hit in eight months of fighting. The New York-based rights group alongside Amnesty International also accused Israel of using white phosphorus in residential areas in October 2023, less than a month after clashes began between the Israeli military and the powerful Hezbollah group along the southern Lebanon-Israel border, a day after the

required medical care after expo-

offensive has killed over 36,000 Palestinians, according to local health officials. Most of Gaza's population have fled their homes, often multiple times, and the offensive has caused widespread destruction.

Israel-Hamas war broke out on

# Israeli nationalist march through Palestinian area despite tensions

**AP** JERUSALEM

Thousands of mostly ultra-nationalist Israelis were expected to take part in an annual march through a dense Palestinian neighbourhood in Jerusalem's Old City on Wednesday in an event that often sees racist chants and brawls.

Jerusalem, the epicentre of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, has been mostly calm throughout the Israel-Hamas war, but the march could ignite widespread tensions, as it did three years ago, when it helped set off an 11-day war

The current war began with Hamas' October 7 attack into southern Israel, in which militants killed some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducted around 250 hostages. Israel responded with a massive offensive that has killed over 36,000 Palestinians, according to local health officials, displaced most of the territory's population and caused widespread destruction.

The United States has thrown its weight behind a phased cease-fire and hostage release outlined by President Joe Biden last week. But Israel says it won't end the war without destroying Hamas, while the militant group is demanding a lasting cease-fire and the full withdrawal of Israeli forces. The annual march commemorates "Jerusalem Day," which marks Israel's capture of east Jerusalem, including the Old City and its holy sites sacred to Jews, Christians and Muslims, in the 1967 Mideast war. Israel considers all of Jerusalem to be its capital, but its annexation of east

ally recognised. The Palestinians, who seek east Jerusalem as the capital of a future state, see the march as a provocation.

In past years, police have forcibly cleared Palestinians from the parade route, and large crowds of mostly ultranationalist youth have chanted "Death to Arabs," "May your village burn" and other offensive slogans. The police say they are deploying 3,000 security personnel to ensure

At the insistence of Israel's farright National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, the march will follow its traditional route, entering the Muslim Quarter through Damascus Gate and ending at the Western Wall, the holiest place where Jews can pray.

As buses bringing young Jewish men in for the march thronged around the Old City's centuries-old walls, Palestinian shopkeepers closed down in the Muslim Quarter in preparation.

The police stressed that the march would not enter the sprawling Al-Aqsa mosque compound, the third holiest site in Islam. The hilltop on which it stands is the holiest site for Jews, who refer to it as the Temple Mount because it was the location of the Jewish temples in antiquity.
Perceived encroachments on

the site have set off wide spread violence on a number of occasions going back decades. Counterprotests were planned throughout the day. An Israeli group, Tag Meir, sent volunteers through the emptying city streets ahead of the march to distribute flowers to Christian and Muslim residents of the Old City.

# Biden and Trump win key 2024 primary contests

Biden and former President Trump

Democratic and Republican primaries in a handful of states on Tuesday, among some of the last contests on the 2024 primary calendar. Trump, appearing on the ballot for the first time since his historic conviction for felony crimes, won primaries in New Mexico, where voters could opt for his rivals who have since dropped out, and Montana and New Jersey, where he was unopposed.

Biden won Democratic primaries in New Mexico, South Dakota, New Jersey, Montana and Washington, DC.

Trump and Biden were both expected to easily prevail in all

New York (AP): President Joe of Tuesday's contests as the last Haley, but she was running major candidates still running. But with many Americans saving in polls that they don't want a rematch of the 2020 election, Tuesday's results were watched for voter concerns about their choices as November's election barrels closer. Trump's domination during the GOP primary season has also been shadowed by support from a minority of GOP voters for former United Nations Ambassador Nikki Haley, who dropped out in March. Tuesday's contests were the first since Haley said two weeks ago that she would vote for Trump in November.

In New Mexico, where she was still on the ballot, several thousand voters cast ballots for

below 10 per cent of the vote late Tuesday

Biden has faced his own protest vote in recent contests as Democratic voters unhappy with his handling of Israel's war with Hamas seek to register their disapproval.

There are organised campaigns in several states Tuesday to vote for "uncommitted" in the Democratic contests.

In New Jersey's primary, 'uncommitted" was on the ballot in many counties above the phrase, "Justice For Palestine, Permanent Ceasefire Now!

More than 35,000 people voted "uncommitted' in New Jersey



Palestinian woman mourns relatives killed in the Israeli bombardment of the Gaza Strip outside a hospital in Deir al Balah on

# Hunter's ex-wife is expected to take stand in his gun trial, as First Lady again attends

AP WILMINGTON

 $F_{\text{Hunter Biden's gun trial}}^{\text{ederal prosecutors in}}$ have spent hours showing jurors evidence of his drug problem, seeking to reveal through his own words and writing the depth of his addicon when, they say, he lied on a form to buy a firearm. First lady Jill Biden went to court for the third day to support her son, ahead of her trip to France to meet President Joe Biden, who was in Europe to mark the anniversary of D-Day. Testimony was to continue Wednesday, with Hunter Biden's ex-wife, Kathleen Buhle, expected to take the stand. She was married to the president's son for roughly 20 vears. They have three children, divorcing in 2016 after his infidelity and drug abuse became too much to overcome, according to her memoir, "If We Break," about the dissolution of their marriage. Buhle is among several Biden family and friends expected to testify in a trial has quickly



Hunter Biden, accompanied by his wife, Melissa Cohen Biden, departs from federa court, Tuesday, June 4, 2024, in Wilmington.

become a highly personal and detailed tour of Hunter Biden's mistakes and drug usage as the 2024 presidential election looms and allies worry about the toll it will take on the pressustained sobriety of his only accused of lying to a federal-

living son. Prosecutors argue the testimony is necessary to show Hunter Biden's state of mind when he bought the gun. Hunter Biden has been charged with three felonies ident, who is deeply concerned about the health and of a gun in October 2018, stemming from the purchase

ly licensed gun dealer, making a false claim on the application by saying he was not a drug user and illegally having the gun for 11 days. "No one is allowed to lie on a

federal form like that, even Hunter Biden," prosecutor Derek Hines told jurors on when he chose to buy a gun and lied about a federal background check...the defendant's choice to buy a gun is why we are here?

"When the defendant filled out that form, he knew he was a drug addict," and prosecutors don't have to prove he was using the day he purchased the firearm, Hines said.

Hunter Biden's attorney argued that his client did not believe he was in the throes of addiction when he stated in the paperwork that he did not have a drug problem.

In the short time that he had the gun, he did nothing with it, and the weapon was never even loaded, attorney Abbe Lowell said in his opening statement. "You will see that he is not guilty," Lowell said.

# US conducts first B-1B precision bombing drill in 7 years amid North Korea tensions

The United States flew a The United States new long-range B-1B bomber over the Korean Peninsula on Wednesday for its first precision-guided bombing drill with South Korea in seven years, the South said Wednesday. The drill — seen North Korea — comes as tensions are rising over the North's recent launches of rubbish-carrying balloons toward South Korea and other provocations. Wednesday's training involved other advanced US and South Korean fighter jets as well as the B-1B aircraft, the second US bomber temporarily deployed over the Korean Peninsula this year. The exercise was meant to demonstrate the US security commitment to South Korea and strengthen the allies' joint defense posture, according to the South Korean Defense Ministry. During the training, the B-1B dropped Joint Direct Attack Munitions while being escorted by South Korean jets, the first such bombing drill for

a US bomber since 2017, a ministry statement said. It said South Korean fighter jets also conducted live-firing exercises to demonstrate the country's readiness to punish North Korea if provoked, it

conventional unguided, bombs into more precise, GPS-guided weapons. All US fighter jets, bombers and drones can use JDAMs, and the munitions are among the weapons systems the United States has been providing to Ukraine to help it fight Russia's invasion.North Korea is extremely sensitive to drills using bunker-buster bombs, which could threaten its leadership and complex web of underground military tunnels and structures. North Korea has previously responded to the flights of powerful US aircraft in South Korea with its own missile tests.A B-1B is capable of carrying a large conventional weapons payload. North Korean has previously called the bomber's

deployment proof of US hostility. In the past week, North Korea

floated hundreds of huge balloons to drop manure, cigarette butts, scraps of cloth and waste batteries across South said. Korea. In response, South
The JDAM bombs include Korea vowed "unbearable" "bunker-busters." JDAM is a retaliatory steps and suspendmilitary deal with North Korea, restoring its front-line military activities.

The suspension of the 2018 inter-Korean deal allows South Korea to resume live-fire drills or anti-North Korean propaganda broadcasts via loudspeakers in border areas. Such steps will likely prompt North Korea to take provocative steps in response.

Recently, North Korea launched a rocket in an attempt to place a second spy satellite into orbit in violation of UN resolutions, but it blew up shortly after liftoff. It also test-fired nuclear-capable weapons for a drill simulating a pre-emptive strike on South Korea, and allegedly jammed GPS navigation signals in

### S Africa's ANC in early coalition talks with five other parties

Johannesbur (AP): Top officials in South Africa's African National Congress have had initial talks with representatives of five other parties over a coalition or other agreement to form a government. but no decision has been made the ANC said Wednesday.

South Africa faced an election

deadlock after the long-ruling ANC lost its 30-year majority in an election last week but no party managed to overtake it. The ANC remained the biggest party. ANC spokesperson Mahlengi Bhengu-Motsiri told reporters that there had been "exploratory" talks with the main opposition Democratic Alliance, the far-left Economic Freedom Fighters and three other smaller parties. She said the ANC had "repeatedly" reached out to the new MK Party of former President Jacob Zuma for talks. but there had been "no positive

response." Zuma is a former

ANC leader who has turned his

back on the party and become

fiercely critical of current

President Cyril Ramaphosa.

# Will Biden's new border measures be enough to change voters' minds?

**AP** WASHINGTON

 $P^{\text{resident Joe Biden tried to}}_{\text{address a major liability for}}$ his reelection campaign by taking executive action to significantly restrict asylum at the US-Mexico border.

But it's unclear whether his efforts will be enough to change the minds of voters who have increasingly voiced alarm over the record influx of migrants on his watch. Polls have found immigration and border security to be a top issue this election year and one that has been seized on by former President Donald Trump and his cam-

paign.
Biden has shifted far to the right on immigration since his winning campaign four years ago, when he criticised Trump's immigration priorities and promised he would restore asylum protections. Many Democrats acknowledge Biden now faces a wholly different political reality, even as key parts of his base push him to repudiate border restrictions and compare his move to

Trump's policies as president. Sue-Ann DiVito, a 61-year-old realtor from the Philadelphia suburb of Jenkintown who became an immigration advocate during the Trump administration, says Republicans have been successful at spreading anti-immigrant messages in communities like hers, making some of her friends who are Democrat worry about the high number of people arriving in the "I think that's why we see peo-

ple who would normally support immigrants are now more quiet," DiVito said.

Ā challenge for Biden among Democrats and Latinos The border has been a top

issue for voters throughout the presidential campaign so far. According to Gallup's monthly data, Americans named immigration as the top issue facing the country in February, March, and April, surpassing even the share who cited the economy despite persistently higher prices. Immigration came up less frequently as a top issue in Gallup's May poll as attention

turned to Trump's criminal trial and as the number of illegal crossings ebbed. The issue was still tied with the government and the economy as what voters saw as the nation's most important problem. Most Americans, 56 per cent,

say Biden's presidency has hurt the country on the issue of immigration and border security, according to an AP-NORC poll conducted in April. That's far higher than the number – 37 per cent — who said the same about Trump's time in office.

Even among Democrats, only about 3 in 10 say that Biden's presidency has done more to help the country on immigration and border security, while about the same share say it has hurt. Nearly 9 in 10 Republicans say Trump's presidency helped on this issue.

Hispanic adults are also more likely to think Trump's presidency helped the country with immigration and border security, compared to Biden's. About half of Hispanic adults in March said that Biden's presidency had

done more to hurt the country on immigration and border security — a potentially alarming number as Trump's campaign works to chip away at Democrats' advantage with Hispanic voters. "President Biden had no choice.

He saw what was going on at the border. The numbers were higher than ever in terms of people trying to come here to seek asylum, and he knew he had to do something," said Maria Cardona, a Democratic strate-

Frank Luntz, a longtime pollster who has previously worked for Republicans, said immigration seemed to be especially resonating earlier this spring across the political spectrum in a way it never had before. He said he believes Biden is

especially vulnerable with African American men under 40 who are worried about newentering illegally.

comers competing for jobs and Latinos who may resent those "The reason why immigration matters so much to so many is that it is a living, breathing illustration of the failure of Washington to solve what everyone else in America sees as a crisis," he said on Tuesday. "Bidens decision seems too little and too late. The public doesn't think he cares, and therefore thinks he doesn't get it."

Trump's record includes family

separation Trump has been campaigning on the border and immigration since he launched his 2016 bid with a speech in which he cast migrants from Mexico as criminals and rapists and vowed to build a southern border wall.

While in office, his administration separated immigrant parents and children to try to deter families from illegally crossing the border, a measure that drew widespread condem-

Border crossings hit record highs — albeit far below the marks they've reached under Biden — until falling sharply as the COVID-19 pandemic

As he runs to return to the White House again this year, Trump has escalated his already

alarmist rhetoric, accusing Biden of orchestrating a "border bloodbath" and highlighting cases of women and children killed by people who entered the US illegally. He's vowed to carry out the largest deportation operation in US history if elected

His campaign quickly tried to cast Biden's effort as ineffective and one that would permit thousands of migrant crossings each week. "This executive order from Biden can only be understood as a pro-invasion, pro-illegal migration executive order," said former Trump senior adviser Stephen Miller, who orchestrated some of Trump's most hard-line immigration policies, during a call with reporters organised by the campaign ahead of Biden's announcement.

Trump pollster John McLaughlin said the campaign believes the issue resonates especially among a group he calls "safety moms" — suburban, college-educated women who are worried about crime and the safety of their families.

"There's a sense of insecurity," he said. "It's not just the border communities, it's all over the country."Trump has always turned to alarmist rhetoric on the border in election years. The difference now, according to Trump campaign aides and pollsters, is the reality voters are seeing day to day. Crime overall is down and

immigrants — even those who entered the country illegally commit fewer crimes than those born in the US, according to studies of available data. But in Democratic-led cities like New York, local news reports were flooded earlier this year with images of migrants clashing with police and alarm over strained city budgets and resources to care for an influx of people coming from the border. Conservative media and Trump's campaign also seized on high-profile incidents like the killing of nursing student Laken Riley. A Venezuelan man in the US illegally has pleaded not guilty to charges in her

death. Splits in the Democratic

Biden's announcement laid bare lasting divisions among Democrats, with some leftleaning lawmakers and immigration advocates that form a ey part of his coalition criticizing Biden's actions as a return to the measures that marked Trump's tenure. Rep. Pramila Jayapal, the chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, said she was "profoundly disappointed".

During a news conference with immigration advocates outside the Capitol, Jayapal pushed the administration to take action that would provide relief for immigrants already in the US. Jayapal, D-Wash., said Tuesday's order "means that we have people, desperate people seeking asylum who should be able to apply, and yet they will not be able to". Sen. Alex Padilla, a California Democrat who has been involved in the Biden campaign's outreach to Latino communities, cast the order as a revival of "Trump's asylum ban" in a release on Tuesday. "You can build a wall as high as

# **Sunak and Starmer clash over** tax, health in televised debate

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and opposition Labour Party leader Keir Starmer sparred Tuesday over tax, the cost of living and the country's creaking health system in an inconclusive televised debate ahead of a July 4 election expected to make one of them the country's next

Sunak tried to boost his center-right party's dismal outlook by urging voters to back the stability of continued Conservative government. Starmer hoped to cement his status as favorite by arguing that Britain desperately needs change. Both acknowledged the country's many problems, from fraying public services to a broken immigration system. But neither could say outright, when asked, where the money would come from to fix

Sunak stressed his stewardship of the economy, which has seen inflation fall to just over 2% from a peak of more than 11% in late 2022. He said should



stick with him because his "clear plan" for the economy was working

Starmer said the election was a choice between more "chaos and division" with the Conservatives and "turning the page and rebuilding with

Polls currently give center-left Labour a double-digit lead. To win, Starmer must persuade Both stuck to familiar themes Sunak argued Labour would raise taxes because "it's in their

Sunak said he would stop people making dangerous journeys to the U.K. in small boats by sending asylum-seekers on a one-way trip to Rwanda, and suggested he'd be willing to take the U.K. out of the European Convention on Human Rights if its court blocked the deportations. Starmer dwelled on the

Conservatives' record during 14 years in power, especially the chaotic last few years, which saw Prime Minister Boris Johnson ousted amid money and ethics scandals. Successor Liz Truss, elected by party members, rocked the economy with her uncosted tax-cutting plans and quit after 49 days. Sunak took over, without a national election, in October 2022.

'This government has lost control. Liz Truss crashed the economy," Starmer said. "We cannot have five more years of

# Sharif guarantees fool-proof security of Chinese personnel from terror attacks

PTI ■ BEIJING/ SHENZEN

On a mission to seek investments from China to revive Pakistan's cash-strapped economy, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday assured full security to the Chinese personnel from the recurring terrorist attacks targeting them. Sharif reached the high-tech southern city of Shenzhen on Tuesday on the first leg of his five-day official visit to China. The 72-year-old leader embarked on his first visit to China after he took over as prime minister for the second term after his Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party-led coalition government assumed power in March.

Addressing the Pakistan-China Business Forum, Sharif assured all-out facilitation to Chinese investors and security of Chinese individuals, projects, and investments in Pakistan, state-run Associated Press Pakistan reported.

He said his government had ensure fool-proof security to and semi-finished goods for

protect the lives of Chinese workers in Pakistan.

"I will spare no effort to protect the lives of Chinese workers and assure and guarantee that we will provide them security more than our children. This will never happen again," he said.

Referring to the March terrorist attack in Besham in Pakistan, in which five Chinese personnel and their Pakistani driver were killed, he said it was "one of the saddest" days of his life when the whole nation felt saddened. The latest was the March suicide attack in Dasu in which five Chinese nationals and a Pakistan driver were killed. Pakistan paid USD 2.58 million as compensation to the families of those killed in the attack.

He told the forum that Pakistan had mineral deposits of around USD 10 trillion while the country's exports stood at only USD 30 billion. The mineral deposits offer huge potential to dig out and taken various measures to convert them into finished

UAE leader meets 'wanted' Taliban official

exports, he said, inviting them to invest in mining.

Sharif drew comparisons of development economic between Shenzhen city of 13 million people which has a GDP of USD 500 billion, and Pakistan with 250 million people which has a GDP of USD 380 billion.

Sharif reached Beijing on Wednesday for talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping and other officials in the next two days to seek more investments and aid to shore up Pakistan's deteriorating economic situation

Cash-strapped Pakistan's economy is facing severe headwinds, and it has formally requested the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for the next bailout package between USD 6 and USD 8 billion with the possibility of augmentation through climate financing.

Ahead of his visit to China, Sharif, on Tuesday said he is visiting Beijing with "serious plans" to deepen the all-weather ties amid China's concerns over deadly terror attacks on its nationals in Pakistan and deep-

ening political and economic crisis undermining its stability.Sharif's visit also coincides with the end of the general elections in India, which both view as a strategic rival and the advent of the new govern-ment in New Delhi.

Pakistan considers China one of the most trusted friends around the globe, Sharif told the Chinese state-run Xinhua news agency in an interview, stating that besides being iron brothers, unshakable friendship, "our hearts beat together". Ahead of his visit, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said that during the trip, both Xi and Sharif would jointly draw a blueprint, without providing any details. China, which according to reports, has spent about USD 28 billion on the estimated USD 62 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CEPC) since it was started in 2013, is increasingly wary of committing itself to more investments in much talked about its second phase in view of the deteriorating

security, political and eco-

nomic crisis in Pakistan.

## Court halts execution of five ex-navy officers in Dockyard attack case

top court in Islamabad has Astayed the execution of five former Pakistan Navy officers previously sentenced to death by a military court in connection with the 2014 Navy Dockvard attack case.

Islamabad High Court (IHC) Judge Babar Sattar on Tuesday issued the written order for the hearing held a day earlier on the request of Navy officers who said they were not provided legal assistance during the general court-martial order, Dawn News reported.

The Navy Tribunal had sentenced the five Navy officers after they were arrested in 2016 in connection with the Navy Dockvard attack case.

They were found guilty of the attack and conspiracy against

the Navy leadership. The Navy Dockyard in Karachi was attacked in September 2014. The responsibility for the attack was claimed by the banned militant outfit Tehreeke-Taliban Pakistan

According to the statement issued by the Pakistan Navy at that time, two militants and one

Navy personnel were killed in the attack. It also said that four attackers were also arrested.

the above rule, the naval chief had formed an opinion in the The counsels for the petitioncases that sharing details of the proceedings, including the finders argued the documents permissible to be shared with their ings recorded by the general clients, including the abstract of court-martial and the order passed in appeal upholding the evidence and court of inquiry, death penalty, "would be detriwere also not shared with them. mental to the safety or the inter-The lawvers asserted that an appeal was filed against the ests of the state". When asked as to whether the death sentence without access to these documents and was naval chief's opinion was placed dismissed, adding that the reaon file, the AAG replied in the negative and Deputy Judge Advocate General Hamid Hayat sons for the appeal court upholding the sentence were not shared with the petitioners. said that it would be available The lawyers also said they were with the Pakistan Navy head quarters. The Islamabad High given limited access to docu-Court directed that "given that ments despite a court order and this prevented the petitioners the fundamental question of from defending their rights. Meanwhile, Assistant Attorney

protection of the right to life and due process is in question, General (AAG) Akeel Akhtar the petitioners shall not be Raia said that Chief of the executed till the disposal of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed petition". Ashraf had the authority to The order instructed the access the documents and, according to rule 193 of the Pakistan Navy Rules, 1961, disrespondents to file the naval chief's opinion within three weeks, along with the reasoncretion was vested with him to ing about why he formed the form "an opinion that supply of opinion that sharing the proany proceedings may be prejudicial to the safety or interests ceedings about the petitioners

the Tories that Labour can be

trusted with the U.K.'s econo-

Speaking in front of a live audi-

ence on a sleek, futuristic set at

the studios of broadcaster ITV

in Salford, northwest England,

both Starmer and Sunak

appeared nervous. Voters may

have got the impression their

choice is between two cautious

The AAG said that in terms of

my, borders and security.

The leader of the United Arab Emirates met on Tuesday with an official in the Taliban government still wanted by the United States on an up-to USD 10 million bounty over his involvement in an attack that killed an American

citizen and other assaults. The meeting highlights the growing divide internationally on how to deal with the Taliban, who seized control of Afghanistan in 2021 and since have barred girls from attending school beyond the sixth grade and otherwise restricted women's role in public life. While the West still doesn't recognise the Taliban as Kabul's government, nations in the Mideast and elsewhere have reached out to them.

Sheikh Mohammed bin Zaved Al Nahyan, the ruler of Abu Dhabi, met Sirajuddin Haqqani at the Oasr Al Shati palace in the Emirati capital, the staterun WAM news agency reported. It published an image of Sheikh Mohammed shaking hands with Haqqani, the Taliban's interior minister who also heads the Haqqani network, a powerful network within the group blamed for some



of the bloodiest attacks against Afghanistan's former Westernbacked government. 'The two sides discussed

strengthening the bonds of cooperation between the two countries and ways to enhance ties to serve mutual interests and contribute to regional stability," WAM said. "The discussions focused on economic and development fields, as well as support for reconstruction development Afghanistan," For their part, the Taliban described the two men as discussed "matter of mutual interests", without elaborating. It added that the Taliban's spy chief, Abdul Haq Wasiq, also took part in the meeting. Wasiq had been held for years put in motion the US with-

at the US military's prison at Guantanamo Bay and released in 2014 in a swap that saw US Army Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl, captured after leaving his post in

2009, released. Haqqani, believed to be in his 50s, has been on the US radar even after the Taliban takeover. In 2022, a US drone strike in Kabul killed al-Qaida leader Ayman al-Zawahri, who had called for striking the United States for years after taking over from Osama bin Laden. The house in which al-Zawahri was killed was a home for Haqqani, according to US officials. While the Taliban argued the strike violated the terms of the 2020 Doha Agreement that drawal from Afghanistan, the accord also included a promise by the Taliban not harbor al-Oaida members or others seeking to attack America.

The Haqqani network grew into one of the deadliest arms of the Taliban after the US-led 2001 invasion of Afghanistan following the September 11 attacks. The group employed roadside bombs, suicide bombings and other attacks, including on the Indian and US embassies, the Afghan presidency and other major targets. They also have been linked to extortion, kidnapping and other criminal activity. Haqqani himself specifically acknowledged planning a January 2008 attack against the Serena Hotel in Kabul, which killed six people, including US citizen Thor David

The US State Department did not immediately respond to a request for comment over Haqqani's visit. The US Embassy in Abu Dhabi is about 5 kilometers (3 miles) from the palace where the meeting took place. The US long has been a security guarantor for the UAE, a federation of seven hereditarily ruled sheikhdoms also

home to Dubai, and has thousands of troops working out Al Dhafra Air Base and other locations in the country Since the Taliban takeover, China is the most-prominent country to accept a diplomat from the group. Other countries have accepted de facto Taliban representatives, like Qatar, which has been a key mediator between the US and the group. American envoys have met multiple times with the Taliban as well.

UAE, which hosted a Taliban

diplomatic mission during the Taliban's first rule in Afghanistan, has been trying to solidify ties to the group even as it sent troops to back the Western coalition that fought for decades in the country. The low-cost carrier FlyDubai has begun flying into Kabul International Airport again, while an Emirati company won a security contract for airfields in Afghanistan. Meanwhile, the international community led by the United Nations has tried to provide aid to Afghanistan, as millions struggle to have enough to eat, natural disasters kill those in rural areas and the country's economy has drastically contracted.

# In France, D-Day evokes joys of liberation

would be detrimental to the

state's interests.

**AP** CARENTEN-LES-MARAIS

Shortly after D-Day in 1944, the American soldiers heading out to more fighting against Adolf Hitler's forces couldn't help but notice the hungry French boy by the side of the road, hoping for handouts.One by one, the men fished fragrant, brightly-coloured spheres from their pockets and deposited them in Yves Marchais' hands. The 6-year-old boy had never seen the strange fruits before, growing up in Nazi-occupied France, where food was rationed terror

everywhere.Thrilled with his bounty, the young Marchais counted them all — 35 — and dashed home for his first taste of oranges.But also seared into survivors' memories in Normandy are massive Allied bombing raids that pulverized towns, vil-

lages and the cities of Caen, Rouen and Le Havre, burying victims and turning skies firered. The 80th anniversary this week of the June 6, 1944, Allied invasion on D-Day that punched through Hitler's western defences and helped precipitate Nazi Germany's surrender 11 months later brings mixed emotions for French survivors of the Battle of Normandy. They remain eternally grateful for their liberation but cannot forget its steep cost in French lives.Marchais remembers his family's house in Carentan, Normandy, shaking during bombardments that sounded "like thunder" and how his mother stunned him by gulping down a bottle of strong Normandy cider when they were sheltering in their basement, declaring as she finished it: "That's another one that the

of the state".



Germans won't drink!" "The Americans, for us, were gods, Marchais, now 86, recalled 'Whatever they do in the world they will always be gods to me." Some 20,000 Normandy civilians were killed in the invasion and

as Allied forces fought their way inland, sometimes field-by-field through the leafy Normandy countryside that helped conceal German defenders. Only in late August of 1944 did they reach

Allied casualties in the Normandy campaign were also appalling, with 73,000 troops killed and 153,000 wounded. Allied bombing was aimed at stopping Hitler from sending reinforcements and at prying his troops out of the "Atlantic Wall" of coastal defences and other strongpoints that German occupation forces had built with forced labour. The list of Normandy towns left ruined and counting their dead grew with the Allied advances: Argentan, Aunay-sur-Odon, Condé-sur-Noireau, Coutances, Falaise, Flers, Lisieux, Vimoutiers, Vire and others. Leaflets scattered by Allied planes urged civilians to "LEAVE IMMEDIATELY! YOU DON'T HAVE A MINUTE TO LOSE!" but often missed their

# Russian cyber gang thought to be behind ransomware attack that hit London hospitals

London (AP): A Russian cyber gang is believed to be behind a ransomware attack that disrupted London hospitals and led to operations and appointments being cancelled, the former head of British cybersecurity said Wednesday. A group known as Qilin is most likely behind the attack on Synnovis, which provides pathology lab services for several hospitals run by the National Health Service, said Ciaran Martin, former chief executive of the National Cyber Security Centre. Martin said it was one of the

more serious ransomware attacks in the UK because it disabled operations. "It's the more serious type of ran-

somware where the system just doesn't work," Martin told BBC Radio 4. "If you're working in healthcare in this trust, you're just not getting those results so it's actually seriously disruptive." The incident Monday affected King's College and Guy's and St Thomas' hospital trusts, which run several south London hospitals, as well as clinics and doctors' practices across a swath of the city, the NHS

A memo to staff called it a 'critical incident" and said it had a "major impact" on services, particularly blood transfusions. Procedures and operations were cancelled or redirected elsewhere. The incident

was reported to police. Synnovis Chief Executive Mark Dollar said Tuesday that it was still trying to understand what happened. The company offered no further comment Wednesday. Ransomware involves crimi nals paralysing computer systems with malware, then demanding money to release

Ransomware is the costliest and most disruptive form of cybercrime, affecting local governments, court systems, hospitals and schools as well as businesses. It is difficult to combat as most gangs are based in former Soviet states and out of reach of Western

# Italian premier Giorgia Meloni visits Albania

**AP** TIRANA

Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni is travelling to Albania to thank the country for its willingness to host thousands of asy lum seekers and tour the sites of two migrant detention centres, a visit coming just days before local and European Parliament elections, where migration is a top campaign issue

In November, Meloni and Albania's Prime Minister Edi Rama signed a 5-year deal in which Albania agreed to shelter up to 3,000 migrants rescued from international waters each month while Italy processes their asylum claims. With asylum requests expected to take around a month to process, the number of asylum seekers sent to Albania could reach up to

36,000 in a year. Meloni has defended the controversial plan as a necessary component of her crackdown on migration, aiming to deter would-be refugees from paying smugglers to make the dangerous Mediterranean crossing. Human rights groups and opposition lawmakers have warned that refugee protections could be compromised. Meloni will kick off her visit to

the tiny Western Balkan nation at Gjader, a former military airport, 80 kilometers (50 miles) north of the capital, Tirana, and where work for one of the two migrant centres has started. Then she moves to the port of

Shengjin, 20 kilometers (12 miles) southwest of Gjader, where an accommodation center is set in a rectangular area covering 4,000 square meters (4,800 square yards). Shengjin's migrant reception centre is

ready to host migrants. Meloni's visit comes a day before the June 6-9 European elections in which migration has been a key campaign issue. Meloni and her right-wing allies have to read the far-right Brothers of Italy party, has also championed her so-called

long demanded European countries share more of the migration burden, and have held up the Albania agreement as an innovative solution to a problem that has vexed the EU for years. Meloni, of the far-right Brothers of Italy party, has also

Mattei Plan to fund projects in African countries along migrant routes in exchange for better

controls, while pressing ahead with plans to run migrant centres in Albania. The two processing centres in Albania will cost Italy more than

600 million euros (about USD

650 million) over 5 years. The facilities would be fully run by Italy while it fast-tracks migrants' asylum requests. They are expected to become fully operational later this year. Both centres are under Italian

jurisdiction while Albanian guards will provide outside security.

Italy would welcome the migrants if they are granted international protection or organise their deportation from Albania if refused. Those picked up within Italy's torritorial up within Italy's territorial waters, or by rescue ships operated by nongovernmental organisations, would retain their right under international and EU law to apply for asylum in Italy and have their claims

processed there. Data from the Italian Interior Ministry show the number of migrants arriving in Italy is way down compared to the same period last year: As of Tuesday,

21,574 people had arrived in Italy via boat so far this year, compared to 51,628 during the same period in 2023.

Albania is not a European Union member, and the idea of sending asylum seekers outside the bloc is controversial. The deal was endorsed by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen as an example of "out-of-the-box thinking", but has been widely criticised by

rights groups.
Rama, of Albania's left-wing governing Socialist Party, has said the deal is a sign of gratitude on behalf of Albanians who found refuge in Italy and "escaped hell and imagined a better life" following the collapse of communism in the 1990s Albania. Tirana has refused other countries' requests for deals similar to that of Italy, according to Rama. Italy's centre-left opposition has called the deal an expensive exercise in

propaganda ahead of European elections and a shameful bid to turn Albania into Italy's "Guantanamo". A group of 30 Albanian opposition conservative lawmakers took the case to the Constitutional Court in an unsuccessful effort to block the Italy-Albania deal on the grounds of human rights.

PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION (M) e-TENDER CALL NOTICE No.-(E/PHD(M)/A(CTS-21/23/237 Dt.29/5/202 Name of the Work: "Construction of Reservoir Intake Well and Pump House and Ancillary Structures, Supply, Delivery, Erection, Testing and Commissioning of related Elctro Mechinical & Piping works including 1 Month Trial Run and Two year Operation & Maintenance" Estimated cost: Rs. 21,63,80,074.91. The last date & time of ubmission: 13.07.2024 upto 17:30 Hrs. Refer our website for details:

PARADIP PORT AUTHORITY ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app Executive Engineer, P.H Division, (M) Paradip Port Authority



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# India's service sector growth softens to five months low: PMI

# New export orders at 10 years high, says PMI

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's service sector growth eased to a five-month low in May amid fierce competition, price pressures and a severe heatwave, even as new orders from international markets expanded at the steepest pace in a decade, according to a monthly survey released on Wednesday. The seasonally adjusted HSBC India Services Business Activity Index fell to 60.2 in May from 60.8 a month earlier, its lowest mark since last December.

Survey participants attributed the figures to domestic new orders easing slightly while remaining robust, implying strong demand conditions and successful advertising.

In the Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) parlance, a print above 50 means expansion, while a score below 50 denotes contraction. May data showed that robust increases in new business intakes continued to underpin output growth India's service economy. As per the survey, another positive takeaway was a rebound in business confidence to its strongest in eight months.

reportedly supported by rising sales, productivity gains, demand strength. The upturn was somewhat hampered by competitive and



strong

Global Economist at HSBC, said: "India's service activity rose at a slightly softer pace in May, with domestic new orders easing slightly, but remaining implying strong conditions and successful advertising.

"On the price front, cost pressures ticked up in May led by higher raw material and labour costs. Firms were only able to transfer a part of the price rise to customers."

Like for output, new orders rose at a substantial pace, but were the slowest in the calendar year-to-date, even as competition and extreme heat across the country dampened growth. area that improved substantially in May was new export orders, with growth climbing to the fastest seen since the inception of the series in September 2014. Survey participants noted

growth of demand

from Asia, Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and the US. Cost pressures intensified in May. According to panel members, outlays on materials and labour rose — while some companies suggested that additional labour costs stemmed from overtime payments and upward salary revisions due to demand strength and productivity gains, several firms indicated having taken on extra staff. Not only did employment rise markedly, but also to the

2022, the survey said. Outstanding business Outstanding volumes rose at the quickest pace in nearly three-and-a-half years, it said, adding that the overall level of positive sentiment climbed to an eight-month high.

Meanwhile, the HSBC India Composite Output Index slipped to 60.5 in May from 61.5 in April, highlighting the slowest rate of expansion since last December.

There were softer increases in both factory production and services activity and aggregate sales rose at the weakest pace in the calendar year-to-date, albeit one that was historically sharp. Goods producers outperformed providers, though growth

softened in both cases. "Good news is the level of optimism about the year-ahead outlook rose at the fastest pace in eight months, leading service firms to increase their staffing levels. Overall composite output rose at a slightly slower pace, led by slower rises in both factory production and activity," Das added.

Composite PMI indices are weighted averages comparable manufacturing and services PMI indices Weights reflect the relative size of the manufacturing and service sectors according to

# Government looking to develop more airstrips, calibrate airport regulations

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The civil aviation ministry is looking at developing more airstrips as well as calibrating regulations for major and small airports to boost air connectivity, a senior official said on Wednesday.

India is one of the fastest growing civil aviation markets in the world, with domestic air traffic on the rise and airlines expanding their fleet as well as operations.

Civil Aviation Secretary Vumlunmang Vualnam said the number of airports in the country has increased to 157 from 74 in the last ten years. The ministry has reviewed



the full list of 453 airstrips in the country and around 157 of them are operational, he said and added that more airstrips would be developed as brownfield projects.

Also, efforts will be made to jointly develop more defence airfields for civil aircraft operations.

Speaking at the CAPA India Aviation Summit 2024 in the national capital, the secretary said the ministry would look at calibrating regulations for major and small airports.

These are steps aimed at further boosting connectivity, especially to Tier 2 and 3 cities.

IndiGo and Air India have placed huge aircraft orders, including for wide-body

The ministry would ensure a conducive ecosystem for airlines and their expansion. Among others, the ministry is working to ensure that "taxation would not be a bottle neck" for the MRO (Maintenance, Repair and

Overhaul) organisations, the secretary said.

With efforts on globally to reduce carbon emissions. Vualnam said the government is committed to ensure the use of Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) to keep pace with the requirements.

With respect to the Cape Town Convention (CTC) that pertains to leasing of aircraft, he said the paper work is ready for enacting the legislation in order for India to ratify it.

In its outlook for FY2024-25, Capa India said domestic air traffic is projected to rise 6-8 per cent to 161-164 million and international traffic by 9-11 per cent to 75-78 million.

### Sebi makes process of securities payout directly to client account mandatory PTI NEW DELHI Further, a facility of direct of positions between Further, a facility of direct of positions between clients"

To enhance operational efficiency and reduce the risk to clients' securities, markets regulator Sebi on Wednesday decided to make the process of direct payout of such securities to the client's account mandatory.

This will become effective from October 14, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said in a circular.

Currently, the clearing corporation credits the payout of securities in the pool account of the broker, who then credits the same to the respective client's demat

delivery to investors was introduced in February 2001. After extensive deliberations with the stock exchanges, clearing corporations (CCs) and depositories, Sebi has decided that "the securities for pay-out shall be credited directly to the respective client's demat account by the

clearing Moreover, corporations should provide a mechanism for trading member(TM) or clearing members (CM) to identify the unpaid securities and funded stocks under the margin trading facility.

In case of any shortages "arising due to inter se netting

 internal shortages — Sebi suggested TM or CM should such shortages handle through the process of auction.

Moreover, in such cases, the brokers should not levy any charges on the client over and above the charges levied by the clearing corporations. In May 2023, Sebi specified various processes for handling of clients' securities

with regard to pay-in and pay-out of securities. This was to protect clients' securities and to ensure that the stock broker segregates securities of the client or clients so that they are not vulnerable to

### Rupee rebounds 14 paise to **83.37** against **US** dollar

**PTI** MUMBAI

The rupee recovered 14 paise to close at 83.37 (provisional) against the US dollar on Wednesday, tracking strong buying in domestic equities and lower prices international markets.

However, a surging greenback against major crosses overseas and fresh foreign fund outflows restricted gains in the local currency, forex traders said.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.50 and touched the intra-day peak of 83.28 against the domestic unit during the session. It finally settled at 83.37 (provisional) against the dollar, registering a gain of 14 paise from its previous close. On Tuesday, the domestic currency plunged 37 paise to settle at 83.51 against the

Anuj Choudhary, Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas, said the rupee appreciated as domestic markets recovered some losses of the previous day and reports of intervention by the

"...A recovery in the US dollar disappointing macroeconomic data capped sharp gains," he said, adding that the rupee is expected to trade with a slight negative dollar and selling pressure

from foreign investors. India's service sector growth eased to a five-month low in May amid fierce competition, price pressures and a severe heatwave, even as new orders from international markets expanded at the steepest pace in a decade, according to a monthly survey released on

Wednesday. seasonally adjusted **HSBC India Services Business** Activity Index fell to 60.2 in May from 60.8 a month earlier, its lowest mark since

last December. According to analysts, a weak tone in global crude oil prices and further intervention by

the RBI may support the rupee. Also, investors are likely to move cautiously ahead of the RBI's monetary policy later this week. Meanwhile, the dollar index,

which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.23 per cent higher at 104.29. Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, inched

up 0.06 per cent to USD 77.57 per barrel. ...OPEC+ decision has

somewhat darkened the outlook for crude oil demand ahead, triggering sharp sell-off in WTI and Brent counters, which are down 4 per cent in last two sessions and fallen 9 per cent in last seven days," said Mohammed Imran, Research Analyst,

Sharekhan by BNP Paribas.

On the domestic equity

market, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 2,303.19 points, or 3.20 per cent, to close at 74,382.24. The broader NSE Nifty soared 735.85 points or 3.36 per cent to 22,620.35. Foreign investors were net

sellers of Indian equities on Monday as they offloaded shares worth Rs 12,436.22 crore on a net basis. FIIs bought shares worth Rs 26,776.17 crore and sold equities worth Rs 39,212.39 crore in the cash segment.

# Suraksha Group takes control of bankrupt Jaypee Infratech

In a big relief to over 20,000 homebuyers, Suraksha Group has taken control of the debt-ridden realty firm Infratech constituting a three-member board and will soon infuse Rs 125 crore equity fund to start construction of stalled housing projects Delhi-NCR.

takeover insolvency appellate tribunal NCLAT decision on May 24, upholding Suraksha Realty's bid to acquire Jaypee Infratech while directing it to pay an additional Rs 1,334

filing by Jaypee Infratech on Wednesday, Suraksha Group informed the (Implementation and Monitoring Committee) that May 24, 2024, i.E., the date of the NCLAT order should be treated as the 'Approval Date' as defined in the approved

According to a regulatory

The IMC in its meeting held on Tuesday approved the appointment of Sudhir V Valia, who is promoter of Suraksha Group, as a Non-Executive Director. It approved the appointment Champak Dave as Executive Director and Usha Anil Kadam as independent director. Dave has also been appointed as Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer.

According to the filing, Valia was an Executive Director in Pharmaceuticals Industries Ltd. He is a cofounder one of the leading and world's fifth largest generic pharmaceutical

company. Valia is a member of the Institute of Accountants of India and has more than three decades of experience in taxation and finance. He has experience of more than a decade in

development activity and infrastructure through Suraksha Realty and associates having activity in real estate.

According Suraksha Group will infuse an equity fund of Rs 125 crore in Jaypee Infratech by June 15 and will soon start the construction process. It will also start making payment to YEIDA as per the schedule.

Upholding the National Company Law Tribunal's (NCLT) decision of March 2023, the NCLAT on May 24 Sun had said the decision was Pharmaceutical Industries, made to avoid any further delay in the implementation to take care of the interests of all stakeholders, including home buyers and claim of Yamuna Express development Chartered authority YEIDA additional compensation of the farmers.

The Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP) against Jaypee Infratech Ltd



(JIL) was started in August In its 99-page order, the IDBI consortium.

On March 7 last year, the NCLT approved the bid of the Suraksha Mumbai-based group to buy JIL. However, parties, including YEIDA, filed a petition in the NCLAT TO challenge the NCLT order.

impugned order passed by the adjudicating authority (NCLT) insofar as it deals with the claim of the appellant (YEIDA) of Rs 1,689 crore of additional farmers compensation is set aside and the rest of the order approving the resolution plan is upheld'

is directed to make payment to the appellant of its secured operational debt of Rs 1,689 crore in the ratio of 79 per cent, which has been paid to other secured creditors, which amount comes to Rs 1,334.31 crore. In its final resolution plan, the

Applicant (Suraksha Group)

Suraksha group offered to bankers more than 2,500 acres of land and nearly Rs 1,300 crore by way of issuing non-convertible debentures. It also proposed to complete all pending flats over the next four years. Lenders of Jaypee Infratech had submitted a claim of Rs 9,783 crore.

bidding process to find a buyer for Jaypee Infratech in 2021, the Suraksha group won the bid with 98.66 per cent votes. As many as 12 banks and more than 20,000 homebuyers had voting rights in the Committee of Creditors

The company had got 0.12 Suraksha Group only.

per cent more votes than state-owned NBCC, which was also in the fray. In the first round of insolvency proceedings in

2018, the Rs 7,350 crore bid of Lakshadweep, part of the Suraksha group, was rejected by the lenders.
The CoC had rejected the

bids of Suraksha and NBCC in the second round held in May-June 2019. In November 2019,

Supreme Court directed that the revised bids be invited only from NBCC and Suraksha. Then, in December 2019, the CoC approved the resolution plan of NBCC during the third round of the

In March 2020, NBCC got approval from the NCLT to acquire JIL. However, the order was challenged before the NCLAT and later in the Supreme Court. On March 21, 2021, the apex court ordered a fresh round of bidding between NBCC and

# **RBI** rate-setting panel starts deliberations on monetary policy, decision on Friday

PTI MUMBAI

The rate-setting panel of RBI Wednesday on its three-day deliberations to decide the next monetary policy amid expectations of continuation of the current interest rate. Reserve Bank Governor

Das Shaktikanta announce the decisions taken by the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) on Friday Experts are of the view that the central bank is unlikely to cut the benchmark interest rate (repo) as inflation still remains a matter of concern. The MPC may also refrain from rate cut as economic growth is picking up, notwithstanding the elevated repo rate of 6.5 per cent prevailing since February

The central bank last hiked repo rate to 6.5 per cent in February 2023 and since then it has maintained status quo 7 times in a row. According to a SBI research

paper, the central bank needs to continue the current stance withdrawal accommodation

The report titled 'Prelude to MPC Meeting' expects RBI to cut repo rate in third quarter of the current fiscal and "such rate cut cycle is likely to be

It also said CPI-based retail

inflation is expected to remain close to 5 per cent in May (data to be released later this month) and decline thereafter to 3 per cent in

July. Inflation is expected to stay below 5 per cent beginning October till the end of 2024-25 fiscal, it added.

On expectations from RBI, Agarwala, Group CEO, Housing.Com & Proptiger.Com said India's economy continued its robust performance, achieving an impressive growth rate of 8.2 per cent in 2023-24, up from per cent in 2022-23.

"In light of this, it is expected that the RBI MPC will maintain its current policy amid ongoing inflationary pressures, with a rate cut looking increasingly unlikely this year," he said.

Anantharam Varayur, cofounder, Manasum Senior Living, too expects status quo or reduction in interest rate by the cental bank in the upcoming bi-monthly policy. We hope for measures that ease liquidity constraints in market and boost consumer confidence, which can positively impact real estate sales," Varayur added. The government has mandated Reserve Bank to ensure retail inflation at 4 per cent with a margin of 2 per cent on either side. Retail inflation was 4.83 per cent in April this year. Saurabh Rai, CEO Arahas has

RBI needs to focus on monetary policy to facilitate funding and incentives for geospatial technology, sustainability solutions.

'Such initiatives will not only drive innovation but also significantly contribute to our national goals of sustainable development and economic resilience. A favourable monetary policy

can accelerate the adoption of green technologies, fostering a more sustainable future for India," Rai said. The MPC consists of three

external members and three officials of RBI. External members of the rate-setting panel are Shashanka Bhide, Ashima Goyal, and Jayanth R

# Gold slips ₹80; silver plunges ₹1,200 will lower interest rates soon,"

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

old prices slipped Rs 80 to GRs 72,820 per 10 grams in the national capital on Wednesday in line with weak trends globally, according to HDFC Securities.

The precious metal had closed at Rs 72,900 per 10 grams in the previous session. Silver prices also plunged Rs 1,200 to Rs 91,900 per kg. In the previous session, it had

Gobind Singh Indraprastha

University has been awarded

with the 'Rising Star' award by the QS World Ranking for

improvement among Indian

institutions in the last 12

months after debuting in the

QS rankings in the previous

Ben Sowter, the Senior Vice President of the QS, presented

the honor to the University at

the QS EduData Summit 2024

in Washington D.C., where the

Rankings 2025 were released

World

on June 4, 2024

showing

edition.

the

highest

University

settled at Rs 93,100 per kg. In the international markets, spot gold at Comex was trading at USD 2,332 per ounce, down USD 3 from the previous close.

Gold prices dropped due to a

firm US dollar and technical selling pressure, even though there were indications of a weakening US labour market. has further strengthened the expectations that the US Federal Reserve

Saumil Gandhi, Analyst of Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

In addition, silver also dropped to USD 29.75 per Moving forward, traders will

focus on macroeconomic data, including ADP nonfarm employment and ISM non-manufacturing data, which will be released later on Wednesday, Gandhi

According to Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst of Commodity and Currency at LKP Securities, nonfarm payroll and unemployment data are also due later this

"...The primary focus remains on the US Federal Reserve's policy decision on June 12th which will further provide more direction on the bullion prices," Trivedi said.

#### Novelis postpones US IPO IP University bags Rising due to market conditions Star award PTI ■ NEW DELHI According to sources, the sole

New Delhi: Delhi's Guru

Hindalco Industries on Wednesday announced that its US arm Novelis Inc has postponed its initial public offering (IPO) due to market conditions.

Novelis will continue to In the proposed public issue, evaluate the timing of the offering in the future, Hindalco said in a filing to Few days back, Novelis Inc

had said it would launch an IPO to raise up to USD 945 million, with an estimated equity valuation of up to USD 12.6 billion. It had also filed papers with the US securities regulator, the Securities and Exchange Commission.



around 45 million shares would be sold by Novelis Inc's shareholder Minerals (Netherlands) NV, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Hindalco. The company will not receive any proceeds. At present, Hindalco owns

100 per cent of Novelis through A V Minerals. Post-IPO, Hindalco will own around 92 per cent stake in Novelis.

shareholder of Novelis would receive proceeds of USD 810-945 million. If the greenshoe option is exercised, proceeds are estimated at USD 931.5 million to USD 1.08 billion. This will be the second company from the Aditya

> North America, Europe and Asia, posted a turnover of USD 16.2 billion in FY24.

Birla group to go for listing overseas after Birla Carbon (Thailand). Novelis, which operates an integrated network of technically advanced rolling and recycling facilities across America, South

Hindalco's turnover stood at Rs 2,15,962 crore in 2023-24.

# CHHETRI'S LAST DANCE IN INDIA'S MUST WIN MATCH AGAINST KUW

motions will run high when the talismanic Sunil Chhetri leads India out one last time in a crucial FIFA World Cup qualifying match against Kuwait here on Thursday, hoping to propel his team into the next round as a parting gift after dominating national football landscape for 19 years.

The 39-year-old Chhetri will hang his boots at the end of this match and would like to ensure that the team enters the final-18 stage of the World Cup qualifiers for the first time.

The top two teams from nine groups of four teams each will go on to make the third stage. This round will decide FIFA's increased allocation of eight World Cup berths for Asia.

It will be a little far-fetched to imagine India in the 2026 World Cup in North America, but a win over Kuwait will take the team into the unchartered territory of being up against the best of Asia in at least 10 matches. That would also translate into some quality friendly games.

Occupying the second spot behind Qatar (12 points) in Group A with four points from four games, India are ahead of Afghanistan on goal difference and Kuwait, who have three points.

A victory here will put India firmly ahead of Afghanistan, who face Qatar in a tough fixture later on Thursday.

Afghanistan have a sevengoal deficit against India and a win against Kuwait will virtually keep the equation out of their reach.

India face Qatar, while Afghanistan take on Kuwait in the final round fixtures on



Tuesday.
For 19 years, Chhetri has carried the footballing hopes of a nation labelled as the 'sleeping giant' of world

With 94 goals from 150 appearances and a dozen trophies in his cabinet, the diminutive Indian captain is a bonafide legend of the game. And it will be an evening of high emotions at venue where his professional football career took shape with Mohun Bagan in early 2000s. A packed crowd is expected

at the Salt Lake Stadium to celebrate Chhetri's last dance.

Chhetri has happy memories Kuwait, having against played a key role in the equaliser by Sahal Abdul Samad that forced a penalty shootout and eventually a 5-4 triumph for India in the 2023 SAFF Championship in Bengaluru.

That India had defeated Kuwait by a solitary goal from Manvir Singh in their group league opener in the away fixture in November vear will also be a

morale-booster for Igor Stimac's side, who then suffered a slip-up by going down to Qatar 0-3.

Then came the Asian Cup shock where the team drew a blank, losing all its three matches and failing to score even a single goal. It went from bad to worse for

India, who resumed their World Cup qualifiers against Afghanistan, and failed to score in a goalless draw. More misery was in store in

home match in Guwahati where the Blue Tigers suffered a 1-2 defeat,

conceding a late goal to the South Asian neighbours. against The struggles

Afghanistan reveal deeper

issues plaguing the national team. Despite opportunities, India's inability to finish crucial chances will be a significant

concern. The shortcoming was quite pronounced Afghanistan as the team managed just one shot on compared to Afghanistan's five in their

shock 1-2 defeat in Guwahati

Midfielders Anirudh Thapa and Lallianzuala Chhangte also failed to make an impact, exacerbating the problem. Their lack of creativity and precision, made worse by ineffective ball control and passing, contributed to misery

In between the sticks, Gurpreet Singh Sandhu, who against at 71 matches is the next most experienced after Chhetri, will also have to step up. His penalty concession due

resulted in Afghanistan scoring the winner in March. But India will be coming in with solid preparation for this match.

They have made some

interesting additions in I-League forwards Edmund Lalrindika (Inter Kashi) and David Lalhlansanga (Mohammedan Sporting) who will be aiming to become the first players in five years to make national debuts from the second tier league.

The defence, however, will have to cope with the

who has been sidelined due to an injury from the Asian Cup in January.

It remains to be seen if the likes of Rahul Bheke, Anwar Ali and Subhasish Bose will be able to compensate for his absence, especially the aerial strength he has provided

over the years. Focus will also be on Lallianzuala Chhangte, who had a strong 2023-24 ISL season, scoring 10 goals and providing six assists for Mumbai City FC.

He will look to carry this form against Kuwait, who

will have the firepower of Hassan Al-Enezi in the defense. Kuwait are coming to the

game after routing Afghanistan 4-0 with their key forward duo of Shabaib Al Khaldi and Mohammed Daham scoring three goals between them. The duo will once again be a big threat to the Indians.

Kuwait will also have Mohsen Ghareeb who performed well in their previous encounter, will be tasked with stopping Chhangte if he starts in the left-back position.

SQUADS: INDIA: Gurpreet Singh Candhu (GK); Nikhil Subhasish Bose, Poojary, Anwar Ali, Jay Gupta; Jeakson Singh, Anirudh Thapa; Naorem Mahesh Singh, Brandon Fernandes, Lallianzuala Chhangte; Sunil Chhetri.

**KUWAIT:** Abdulghafour (GK); Rashed Al-Dosary, Khalid El Ebrahim, Hassan Al-Enezi, Khalid El Salman Bormeya; Eid Al-Rasheedi; Hamad Al-Harbi, Faisal Zaved, Azbi Shehab Mohammad Daham; Yousef



# Real Madrid back in the galacticos business with signing of Kylian Mbappé

2013, Madrid had signed Gareth Bale, and Luka

Cristiano Ronaldo's reign up

front in 2018, left last year to

accept a lucrative deal in

Saudi Arabia. He was replaced by Joselu, an

unflashy striker whose goals

played a key role in Madrid

reaching the Champions

Mbappé, who posed for a photo with Ronaldo when

he visited Madrid as a 14-

year-old, said he received

welcome messages from

current and former Madrid

players, including Ronaldo.

After Ronaldo left and the

club took a chance with Hazard, club president

Florentino Pérez mostly

stuck with players already

in the squad and bet on

untested youngsters such as Vinícius and Rodrygo.

They were signed at early ages and slowly got

incorporated into the main

squad. Endrick, the latest

Brazilian sensation, is

arriving from Palmeiras for the new season and is expected to travel the same

Madrid's "galacticos" had been assembled by Pérez in

the early 2000s with the

League final this season.

Benzema, who

Modric in 2012.

eventually took

Karim

**AP** MADRID

Anew "galactico" era could be in the making at Real Madrid.

After years without high-profile signings, Madrid went after one of the biggest names in soccer and added Kylian Mbappé to the long list of top players who have been part of the Spanish powerhouse's history. The France great is joining a

squad that already includes younger stars Vinícius Júnior and Jude Bellingham, putting Madrid on the path to achieve even further success - potentially for years to come.

Madrid on Saturday won a record-extending Champions League title and sixth in 10 years. Two days later, it announced it was finally signing Mbappé after a few failed attempts to lure in the playmaker.
"Finally, it's official, I am

going to be a Real Madrid player for the next five years. It's an immense pleasure, a dream coming true, a lot of emotions," Mbappé said Tuesday in Metz on the eve of France's home friendly against Luxembourg. "I'm very, very happy (and) relieved, very proud to be joining a club where I've always dreamed of being." Madrid hadn't been involved in a blockbuster deal since it signed Eden Hazard from Chelsea in

the market to bring a top star before that was in 2014-

15, when it signed Colombia

playmaker James Rodríguez

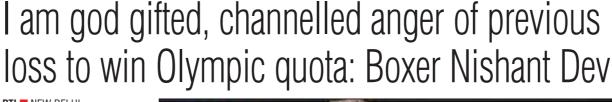
and Toni Kroos, who retired

at the end of this season. In

signings of Luis Figo, Zinedine Zidane, Brazil great Ronaldo and David Beckham, who all helped the club win one Champions 2019, but the Belgian playmaker never fully lived League and two Spanish league titles. up to expectations. The last time Madrid had gone into

By not overspending in recent transfer windows and by signing Mbappé only

after he became a free agent - Madrid saved money and moved into position to add even more top players if



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

He claims to have the perfect blend of speed, timing, and power that define a world-beating boxer and that's why the Olympic-bound Nishant Dev (71kg) says he has no qualms in calling himself "god-gifted".

His assertion might sound conceited to some but perhaps, this confidence is hat earned him a place at the Paris Olympics. The 23-yearold prodigal talent burst into the scene in 2021 when he reached the light middleweight (71kg) quarterfinal in maiden world

championship appearance. Two years later, he had a world championship bronze medal around his neck and now he is one of two Indian male boxers who will fly to Paris for the Olympics.

"I am god-gifted, I have everything in me," Dev replied when asked to elaborate on his strengths. "I have power, speed and

timing. But the main (thing) is skills. If you have that you can win against any kind of boxer," Dev said in an interaction with select media on Wednesday. Dev, who struggled with a shoulder niggle for years, booked his place in the Paris Games with a dominant show at the final qualifying event in Bangkok last week. He had previous qualifiers after a



the Paris cut no matter what it

(There were) shortcomings that I had, like low stamina in third round, my body balance and also the fact that my body function had become a little weak. I didn't have the body language that one should have in round three. I worked on all of this," he revealed.

The southpaw lost out in the closing seconds of the bout against Jones after both boxers went toe-to-toe in the first two rounds. Dev said the defeat left him with a lot of pent up

"I have done a lot of work for narrowly missed out at the the competition, I have changed my strategy a bit, like heartbreaking loss to Omari in the first round, I (usually) start calmly. (But) this time I Confident in his abilities, Dev put in the effort from the very

first second of the very first round and continued till the last second of the bout.

"I took out my anger from America (the bout against Jones). I had a lot of confidence, that I will win this

Gifted he might consider himself but Dev acknowledged that talent alone is not enough and one has to work hard as well like he did for his triumph in Bangkok. "I used my skills, I hit more

body shots to completely exhaust my opponent, drain him of his energy. I have a lot of power inside me, but you cannot win a boxing match on the basis of just power.

You will have to add small things in it, like speed, timing, power, boxing mind as well. So I mixed up all these things."

After no male boxer from the country made the cut in the first world qualifier, Indian boxing went through a coaching crisis with High Performance Director Bernard Dunne tendering resignation from Italy itself.

While Dunne's departure

somewhat hampered their training, Indian boxers soon found a silver lining in the crisis. They were now allowed to train on their own beyond the time table set by Dunne. "Extra training helped because a boxer should be able to use his mind. Even if you are giving 30 minutes extra time, that allows the boxer to think.

"Strategy and all is there but at the end of the day, a boxer has to apply his brain during a

# Defending Euro champ Italy draws 0-0 against Turkey, which loses Kabak to injury. Portugal wins 4-2

Ttaly stuttered to a 0-0 draw Lat home to Turkey in the first of two warmup matches before it begins the defense of its European Championship title next week.

Tuesday's match overshadowed by a seriouslooking injury to Turkey defender Ozan Kabak, who ppears more than lik miss Euro 2024 in Germany where he plays his club soccer.

who plays Kabak, Hoffenheim Bundesliga, was applauded by both teams and the whole of the stadium in Bologna when he was stretchered off shortly before halftime after injuring his right knee.

The 24-year-old player fell awkwardly following a challenge with Italy forward Mateo Retegui.

Turkey plays its first Euro 2024 match against Georgia on June 18 before facing Portugal and the Czech Republic.

There were few real goalscoring opportunities and Italy's best chance of the match came with the last piece of action of the first half as Bryan Cristante headed a corner onto the near post. Retegui wasted a good opportunity in the 59th minute when he opted for an acrobatic overhead kick that went far over the bar.

Juventus midfielder Nicolò Fagioli was brought on



comeback after recently returning from a sevenmonth ban from soccer for betting violations.

Bologna defender Riccardo Calafiori was warmly applauded when he came on in the 85th minute for his Italy debut at his home stadium.

Italy has another friendly against Bosnia-Herzegovina on Sunday before kicking off its title defense against Albania on June 15. Spain and Creatia are also in Creat P. Croatia are also in Group B. R O N A L D O - L E S S PORTUGAL

Without Cristiano Ronaldo, Portugal eased to a 4-2 win over Finland.

Portugal coach Roberto Martinez had already said that Ronaldo would miss his country's first two friendlies against Finland and Croatia as he was being given a rest and allowed to go on a minibreak with his family as the season only recently ended in Saudi Arabia

# De Bruyne open to lucrative Saudi Arabia move when his Manchester City contract expires

**AP** ■ BRUSSELS,(AP)

Jones of USA.

evin De Bruyne is talking with This family about possibly moving to Saudi Arabia as a free agent next year, the Manchester City playmaker said Tuesday.

The Belgium star will have just turned 34 and completed 10 seasons at the English Premier League champion when his contract expires next June.

"You're talking about incredible sums of money during what might well be the twilight of my career," De Bruyne told Belgian daily Het Laatste Nieuws when asked if he would consider moving to a Soudi would consider moving to a Saudi

"We are increasingly having such

conversations as a family," he said, noting that his 8-year-old son "only knows England. He is also asking how long I will play for City." Saudi league clubs backed by the kingdom's soveraign wealth found

kingdom's sovereign wealth fund have spent hundreds of millions of dollars paying salaries and transfer fees to lure top players since Cristiano Ronaldo moved nearly 18 months ago.

Karim Benzema and Neymar later followed, though Lionel Messi and Kylian Mbappé resisted their offers

Saudi officials have said they want to focus on signing more young players at the peak of their careers, but an exception would surely be made for a generational talent like De Bruyne.



His visionary passing, reading of the game and shooting has helped Man City win six Premier League titles in his nine years there so far.

"At my age you have to be open to everything," De Bruyne said about his future.

He also could attract offers to start

playing in Major League Soccer one year ahead of the United States cohosting the 2026 World Cup with Canada and Mexico. De Bruyne never won a tournament

title with Belgium despite being part of its so-called golden generation over the past decade. He spoke to the Belgian news outlet

while in the Belgium camp ahead of the European Championship that starts June 14 in Germany.

# AUSTRALIA CHASE HISTORY, PAKISTAN OPEN CAMPAIGN AGAINST USA

ith the World Test Championship mace and the 50-over World Cup trophy already in their bag, Australia will look to hit the ground running in their quest to become the first team to simultaneously hold all three world titles when they take on Oman in their T20 World Cup opener here.

To accomplish the feat, the former champions will rely on their wealth of experience, with several of Australia's greatest modern-era players, preparing for their final in international farewell colours.

The T20 trophy evaded Australia for the longest time but the maiden title in 2021 changed that. However, a year later, they failed to progress from the league stage on home

However, Australia have no dearth of match-winners in their squad, starting from newly-appointed skipper Mitchell Marsh. The all-rounder will be a key factor batting at No.3. Travis Head has been in red-hot form and

was the side's star performer in the WTC final and ODI World Cup final.

Australia might experiment in the group stage to find their best XI. Leg-spinner Adam Zampa will play a crucial role while left-arm spinner Ashton Agar is also expected to be in the mix the mix.

The ever-reliable trio of Mitchell Starc, Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood will run the pace unit.

Oman lost their opening game after against Namibia. While they did a commendable job with the ball by taking the match into the Super Over, the batters will have to be more responsible if they want to pull off an upset win over the mighty Australians.

**SQUADS:** 

Australia: Mitch Marsh (c), Ashton Agar, Pat Cummins, Tim David, Nathan Ellis, Cameron Green, Josh Hazlewood, Travis Head, Josh Inglis, Glenn Maxwell, Mitchell Starc, Marcus Stoinis, Matthew Wade, David Warner, Adam Zampa.

Oman: Aqib Ilyas (c), Zeeshan Maqsood, Áyaan Kashyap Prajapati, Khan, Shoaib

Pratik Athavale, Khushi, Khalid Kail, Mehran Khan, Bilal Khan, Knan, Bilal Knan, Kaleemullah, Fayyaz Butt, Shakeel Ahmad, Rafiullah. Reserves: Jatinder Singh, Samay Shrivastava, Sufyan Mehmood, Jay Odedra. Match starts 6am IST.

PAKISTAN LOOK TO PUT BEHIND OFF FIELD FIELD edition's DRAMA: Last runners up Pakistan will take on co-hosts USA in the day's

other match. While on paper, the Babar Azam-led side looks the outright favourite to win the clash, Pakistan's recent form suggests that it might not be a cake walk. Pakistan lost

International in Ireland and then suffered a 0-2 defeat in England this week, not the ideal result before a global event. Before that, they drew 2 2 at home with a New Zealand side that was missing many of its World Cup squad members. The run-up to the marquee event has been chaotic to say the least with change in captaincy, shuffling of the toporder and players coming out



of retirement.

Babar was reinstated as skipper after Shaheen Afridi was handed the T20 captaincy for a short time. The pacer was offered vice-captaincy later but he refused to take it.

and Mohammad Rizwan are Pakistan's most consistent T20 performers but their strike rate has been a cause of concern as the duo has struggled to accelerate.

or implode any time. But if Pakistan is known to

unpredictability.

They will bank heavily on their fiery pace department that features Shaheen Afridi,

excel in something, it is their

surprise their opponents and

Mohammad Amir, who has come out of retirement. USA will be high on

confidence after their seven wicket win in the tournament opener against Canada. SQUADS:

**Pakistan:** Babar Azam, Mohammad Rizwan, Saim Ayub, Fakhar Zaman, Usman Khan, Azam Khan, Iftikhar Ahmed, Imad Wasim, Shadab Khan, Mohammad Amir, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Naseem Shah, Abbas Afridi, Haris

Rauf, Abrar Ahmed. USA: Monak Patel, Shayan Jahangir, Andries Gous, Nitish Kumar, Steven Taylor, Singh, Harmeet Corey Anderson, Milind Kumar, Nisarg Patel, Shadley van Schalkwyk, Ali Khan, Jessy Singh, Saurabh Netravalkar, Nosthush Kenjige. **Match Starts** 9pm IST.

PNG TAKE ON UGANDA: The third match of the day fetaures Papua New Guinea and Uganda.

PNG put up a strong show against the West Indies. The two-time champions were put under extreme pressure by

Even though the Assad Valalled side lost, it will fancy its chances in the clash.

Meanwhile, debutants Uganda crashed to a 125-run loss to Afghanistan in their opener. While their bowlers led by skipper Brian Masaba showed stomach for fight, the batters completely surrendered and

their fielding was also found

lacking. The African nation would hope to improve on these to aspects and register its firstever T20 World Cup win.

SQUAD:

Papua New Guinea: Assadollah Vala, CJ Amini, Alei Nao, Chad Soper, Hila Vare, Hiri Hiri, Jack Gardner, John Kariko, Kabua Vagi Morea, Kipling Doriga, Lega Siaka, Norman Vanua, Sema Kamea, Sese Bau, Tony Ura. **Uganda:** Brian Masaba, Simon Mukasa, Roger

Kvewuta, Dinesh Cosmas Fred Achelam, Nakrani, Waiswa, Alpesh Kenneth Frank Nsubuga, Ssenyondo, Bilal Robinson Obuya, Ramjani, Henry Hassun, Riazat Ali Shah (vc), Juma Miyaji, Ronak Patel

# Scotland, England share point each as rain abandons T20 World Cup match

PTI BRIDGETOWN (BARBADOS)

Intermittent rain forced abandonment of the TZ0 World Cup clash between England and Scotland here on Tuesday with both teams sharing a point each.

Rain arrived right at the innings break once again after having already truncated the game to a 10-overs-per-side affair, with Scotland reaching 90 for no loss in the first half.

England's target was revised to 109 runs needed off 10 overs via the Duckworth-Lewis-Stern method as Ireland kept the opposition bowlers under the pump for the majority of the contest. Michael Jones made a 30-ball 45 not out with two sixes and four fours while George Munsey hit an unbeaten 41 not out off 31 balls with as many boundaries to lead the charge for their

Munsey was also lucky when Mark Wood, who had bounced him out on the third ball of the fifth over, was found to have overstepped the crease with skipper Jos Buttler taking a fine catch running behind.

Both the Scottish batters displayed attractive array of strokes to put their team in a strong The contest witnessed multiple rain

interruptions starting with a delay in start of the

A passing shower right after the toss left a wet



spot on the pitch which forced a delay of 20 minutes, while the longest break came right after the powerplay

Scotland were on charge reaching 51 for no loss in 6.2 overs when a heavy shower forced players into the shed and the long interruption forced the officials to cut short the game by 10 overs

each in the two innings.
For the defending champions England, both Chris Jordan (0/24) and Adil Rashid (0/26) lacked control with the ball in the team's first outing in this World Cup and the bowling overall could not really trouble the Scottish

Scotland will now prepare for the next clash against Namibia to be played here at the Kensington Oval on Friday, whereas England will gear up for a contest against arch-rivals Australia at the same venue on Saturday.

# Afridi looking forward to cricket's Super Bowl on June 9, says it will be battle of nerves

PTI ■ NEW YORK

Chahid Afridi sees the India-Pakistan contest as an equivalent to the hugely popular 'Super Bowl' in USA and reckons whichever team handles nerves better will come out on top in the T20 World Cup contest in New York on June 9.

The last time the two teams played at the T20 World Cup, it turned out to be a game for the ages with Virat Kohli pulling off a special win for India.

Cricket's biggest game will take place on American shores for the first time and former Pakistan captain Afridi too will be keenly following it from the stands.

those Americans discovering the tournament, they should know that Pakistan's game against India is like our Super Bowl," Afridi, who is the T20 World Cup

ambassador, told ICC.
"I used to absolutely love

playing India and I really believe it is the biggest rivalry in sport. When I played in those games, I got a lot of love and respect from the Indian fans and it means so much to both sides.

"Against India, it is about handling the pressure of the occasion. There is so much talent in both teams, they just need to put it together on the day. That will be the case in that game and in the tournament overall. The team that can hold its nerve will come out on top."

The event is being co-hosted by the USA and Caribbean, where the Super 8 stage and knock-outs will be held. Afridi said it is hard to pick a favourite in the shortest

cricket is so unpredictable, and teams can bat so deep now. You can have a batter coming in at No.8 and smashing the ball at a strike rate of 150 to win a game. I



hope that will be Pakistan this time around, but it is hard to pick a favourite," said the former all-rounder.

Pakistan have not had the best of build ups for the tournament, having lost the series in England. They lost a game to Ireland in the preceding rubber.

Even though their form has been inconsistent in 2024, I believe they have all the ingredients to put it all together in the West Indies and USA.

"The conditions in the Caribbean will definitely suit them. There is so much talent in the side, particularly when you look at the bowling attack which should thrive over there. "The fast bowlers are as good as any team in the world and

Cummins joins MLC, signs four year

there is so much depth as well. That class is much more important than recent form," he said referring to the 2022 T20 World Cup finalists. He is also confident the

American public will warm up to the sport.

"This is also a huge tournament for American cricket. I have always had a great time when playing in the USA and for those who have not experienced it, the conditions are similar to playing in the West Indies. "People are going to love the

support in the States. There is a great expat community over there which absolutely loves cricket. And the Americans absolutely love their sport, whether it is American football, basketball or baseball. "I really believe that cricket will hit the mainstream over there in the next few years, which is very exciting for up-and-coming cricketers," Afridi

### Ashwin returns to CSK family, will take charge of their High Performance Centre and academies

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's premier off-spinner R Ashwin is set to take charge of the Chennai Super Kings High Performance Centre, potentially paving the way for his return to the franchise that propelled him into national reckoning. CSK CEO Kasi Viswanathan

told PTI that Ashwin will oversee the centre as well as the team's various academies in India and abroad.

"Ashwin is one of the greats of India and Tamil Nadu and his presence will be a big boost to the high performance centre and our academies," he said. The centre is located on the outskirts of Chennai.

The 37-year-old, who recently became the second Indian bowler to take 500 Test wickets after Anil Kumble, got to play for India following his exploits at CSK. He was part of the storied franchise from 2008 to

With the mega auction lined up, Ashwin could be back in

the market and CSK would be more than happy to bring him into the fold. He played for Rajashtan Royals in the recently-concluded season. When asked if CSK would look to buy him at the auction, Viswanathan said: "We can't control what happens at the auctions. We will see what happens."

Back in the India Cements family, Ashwin will also be eligible to play for its team in the TNCA first division.

The great Mahendra Singh Dhoni looked at his dangerous best in the season that went by. He is 42 and his future at CSK remains a subject of constant speculation.

"Only MS can decide for himself. We and his fans would wish for him play but it will ultimately it will be his call and we will respect that," Viswanathan added.

Dhoni stepped down from the team's captaincy at the beginning of this season, handing over the leadership role to Ruturaj Gaikwad.

# Netherlands open Twenty20 World Cup campaign with six wicket win over Nepal

Netherlands beat Nepal by six wickets with eight balls remaining in a tight contest that was delayed by rain at the Grand Prairie here.
The Dutch opted to bowl first

and dismissed Nepal for 106 in 19.2 overs, led by captain Rohit Paudel's 37-ball 35.

Tim Pringle (3-20 in four overs) and Logan van Beek (3-18 in 3.2 overs) did the damage as Nepal lost wickets at regular intervals on a surface suited for fast bowlers. Dutch opener Max O'Dowd led the successful chase, hitting 54 not out in 48 balls as his team finished on 109-4 in 18.4 overs. Sompal Kami, Dipendra Singh Airee and Abinash Bohara took a wicket apiece. Nepal's hopes were briefly raised when



Netherlands dropped to 80-4 in the 16th over after Bohara bowled Netherlands captain Scott Edwards (5).

But O'Dowd and Bas de Leede (11 not out) shared an undefeated 29-run partnership

India and Ireland meet in New York in the first of Wednesday's three games. Australia takes on Oman at Bridgetown, Barbados and Papua New Guinea is against Uganda in Providence,

# contract with San Francisco Unicorns Pacer Pat Cummins has signed a four-year

four-year contract with San Francisco Unicorns, becoming the latest Australian to join USA' Major

League Cricket. The second season of the USA franchise T20 league, which has acquired List A status from the global governing body ICC, is slated from to be played from July 6

"MLC is developing at a rapid rate, and the US market potential is huge for cricket," Cummins said in a video post on the franchise's X handle. The Australian Test and ODI skipper has so far played only in one overseas league -- the IPL. He has also not play

Australia's Big Bash League since the 2018-19 season. "While cricket is integral to my involvement, the global network and long-term possibilities offered by the owners specifically, and Silicon Valley more broadly,

presented a unique opportunity for me and my life beyond cricket." With Australia scheduled to tour the West Indies for a full series in June-July next year, it remains to be seen if the frontline pacer is available for the T20 league.

Cummins will have explosive Aussie batter Jake Fraser McGurk as his teammate at the franchise. Glenn Maxwell, Travis Head

and Steve Smith have inked deals with Washington

Freedom, who have also signed New Zealand allrounder Rachin Ravindra.

### **AFFIDAVIT**

I, Karma Bhagat, S/o Late Laxman Bahgat, R/o Village - Murpa, P.O. -Korambe, P.S. - Senha, District - Lohardaga (Jharkhand). I am Army No. 4281129N, my wifes name is mentioned as Shashi Tara Bhagat, D.O.B. 02.08.1989, which is wrong. Affidavit No. 6698, Dated 05.06.2024, my wife's actual and correct name is Anupriya Kujur and D.O.B 04.8.1989 for all official purposes.

# Praggnanandhaa loses to Carlsen; Vaishali beats Muzychuk

PTI ■ STAVANGER (NORWAY)

Indian Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa went down fighting against top seed Magnus Carlsen of Norway while his elder sister defeated overnight sole leader Anna Muzychuk of Ukraine in the eighth round of Norway chess tournament here. With the win, Carlsen stretched his lead to a full point over Hikaru Nakamura of United States, who lost to Firouzja Alireza of France.

Meanwhile, World champion Ding Liren of China's dismal run continued as he lost to Fabiano Caruana of United States. With just two rounds to go in the

six-player double round-robin

tournament, Carlsen has 14.5

points ahead of Nakamura on

13.5. Praggnanandhaa on 12 is in third spot, a full point clear of Alireza. Caruana is on nine occupying the fifth spot while Liren seemed to have resigned to his fate in this event being distant last on 4.5 points.

In the women's section, world champion Wenjun Ju of China scored over Pia Cramling of Sweden to surge ahead of the field on 14.5 points benefitting from Muzychuk's loss against The Ukrainian remained in the

second spot on 13 points, 1.5 points ahead of Vaishali and Tingjie Lei of China who accounted for Koneru Humpy in the other game of the day. Humpy on eight points remained fifth in the standings, 3.5 points more than Cramling



in the USD 161000 prize money tournament in both the sections. All the three games in the in the men's category ended in draws in the Classical leading to Armageddon game as per tournament rules.

Carlsen could not really dent Praggnanandhaa's solid play in the Classical and with a laboured

effort the world number one won a pawn but only ended up reaching a theoretically drawn rooks and pawns endgame. However, in the return game, Praggnanandhaa could not match the guile of Carlsen and lost a handful of pawns while

reaching the endgame wherein the Indian had two minor pieces against a rook. Eventually white's extra material had the final say. In the Armageddon, the white player has ten minutes compared to black's seven but white needs to win the game. For each win under Classical time control the players are awarded three points while in the Armageddon the winner gets 1.5 points com-

pared to losers' one. Nakamura remained within striking distance of Carlsen

despite losing to Firouzja Alireza in an exciting contest. For Alireza, it was a good comeback and the Frenchman might fancy his chances in the last two rounds now. Vaishali defeated Muzychuk for the second time in the event in the Armageddon. It was a finely played Classical game wherein neither players could reach an advantage but in the Armageddon Vaishali took advantage of her better placed rooks to call the shots.

Both players ran very short of time and Muzychuk was the one to falter. Humpy's aspirations to make a comeback suffered a setback as she lost to Tingjie Lei. Humpy, known for bouncing back from difficult situations, now needs two wins to have a good finish in the event.

**AFFIDAVIT** 



P.K.J. Chidra, R/o House No.-9, Telipara, Simaldih, P.O.+P.S.-Dhanbad, Dist. Dhanbad, Jharkhand-826001. That as in my voter id (BZQ1315307) my name appeared as Pódda Chidra. That as in my Aadhar card (7176 2553 7375) my name mentioned Prabha Devi. That Podda Chidra and Prabha Devi is same and one person's name i.e. myself. Vide Affidavit no.-37, dated- 03 June 2024.

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