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Review



'WILL THIS COUNTRY RUN ON SHARIA?': AMIT SHAH TEARS INTO CONGRESS MANIFESTO



NAWAZ SHARIF SET TO BECOME PRESIDENT OF



16 SRH ENTER IPL RECORD BOOKS FOR MOST SIXES IN SINGLE SEASON

OVER 63% TURNOUT IN PEACEFUL POLLING IN PHASE 2 OF LS POLLS

Tripura records 79.46% polling, Manipur 77.32% and Kerala 65.91%

TDG NETWORK

ver 63 per cent polling was reported in the second phase of Lok Sabha elections covering 88 seats across 13 states amid few complaints of EVM glitches and bogus voting in some states.

Voters in some villages of Uttar Pradesh's Mathura, Rajasthan's Banswara and Maharashtra's Parbhani were boycotting the polls over various issues but were later persuaded by authorities to cast their franchise.

Polling for the second stage of the seven-phase elections started at 7 am and ended at 6 pm. Several states experienced intense heat conditions. The first phase of polling was held on April 19 in 102 seats across 21 states and Union territories.

The Election Commission (EC) said polling remained largely peaceful. The tentative figure at 8 pm of voter turnout was 63.50 per cent. It is likely to go upwards when reports from all

Polling percentage

said, adding voters reaching polling stations till the end of polling hour are allowed to cast their vote.

The National Democratic alliance (NDA) under Prime Minister Modi is seeking a stronger majority for a third consecutive term, while the constituents of the opposition INDIA bloc are hoping for a rebound after facing reverses in the 2014 and 2019 elections.

Election Commission data showed

corded in Tripura which registered 79.46 per cent polling, followed by Manipur at 77.32 while the turnout was in Uttar Pradesh at 54.85 per cent and Bihar 55.08 per cent.

Polling was held in all 20 seats of Kerala, 14 of the 28 seats in Karnataka, 13 seats in Rajasthan, 8 seats each in Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh, 6 seats in Madhya Pradesh, 5 seats each in Assam and Bihar, 3 seats each in





elections. The top court, however, issued two directions to the **Election Commission of** India (ECI). One direction

ASHISH SINHA

observed

is that after the completion of symbol loading process, the Symbol Loading Unit (SLU) should be sealed in containers. The SLU should

'Democracy relies on trust and harmony'

ASHISH SINHA

Justice Dipankar Datta of the Supreme Court, who was a part of the bench that dismissed pleas seeking complete cross-verification of votes cast using EVMs with a Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT), on Friday stated that democracy revolves around fostering harmony and trust among all its pillars through open dialogue, transparent processes, and continuous

have been shattered".

that RJD and Congress alliance in Bihar neither cares about the constitution of India nor about democracy.

"They did not let people exercise their right to vote for decades. Booth capturing was very common... They did not even let the people step out to vote... Now when the poor and honest voters have the strength of EVM, they are trying all they can to get rid of the EVM... Today, the Supreme Court has given a strong verdict saying that

'PM scared, may even

AGENCIES

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Friday took potshots at Prime Minister Narendra Modi over his attack on the grand old party, saying he is scared and may even shed

He called the BJP 'Bharatiya Chombu Party'. Chombu in Kannada means round water pot, which is some-

tiness and deception. "You have heard the

prime minister's

towns of Vijayapura and Ballari.

CBI unearths arms cache in Sandeshkhali, calls in NSG

SUPROTIM MUKHERJEE

Hours after the West Bengal Government approached the Supreme Court against a Calcutta High Court order directing the CBI to probe allegations of extortion, land grab, and sexual assault from Sandeshkhali against suspended Trinamool Congress leader Sheikh Shahjahan and his associates, the CBI moved into the island and unearthed a cache of foreign-made arms, ammunition and unidentified explosives from the house of a close relative of a Sheikh Shahjahan aide.

This prompted the CBI to call in specialists from the elite National Security Guards (NSG). The NSG commandos moved into Sandeshkhali in full gear, sniffer dogs and deployed a remote-controlled robot to defuse suspected explosives. The Election Commission also demanded a report from the Superintendent of Police of Sandeshkhali.

CBI officials said seven



revolvers, including three foreign-made ones, and a .45 Colt revolver used by the police, were recovered along with 350 cartridges and an unspecified number of bombs and explosives. CBI said documents linked to Sheikh Shahjahan were also recovered during the raid. All the items had been buried inside the floor of the house, the CBI said.

The 10-member team of CBI which is also investigating the January 5 attack on an Enforcement Directorate team - was conducting a raid on hideouts linked to suspects in that case.

The Trinamool Congress

brushed off allegations of being complicit with the stockpiling of arms and ammunition. "This is nothing but a drama on a day when the second phase of elections is taking place. The aim is to keep the Sandeshkhali issue alive to extract political mile age in the poll season," said Kunal Ghosh, the party's chief spokesperson.

At about 11 am, a 10-member CBI team raided a house in Sandeshkhali's Sarberia area which belongs to Abu Taleb, the relative of a local Trinamool Congress leader, Hafizul Khan. Hafizul is a close associate of Sheikh Sha-

violation of the election code of conduct and "seeking votes" in the name of the religion. "Case is booked against Tejasvi Surya MP and Candidate of Bengaluru South PC on 25.04.24 at Jayanagar PS u/s 123(3) for post-

ing a video in X handle and soliciting votes on the ground of religion," Chief Electoral Officer, Karnataka posted on X. The case has been filed with Jayanagar

Bharatiya Janata Party leader and Bengaluru

South MP Tejasvi Surya has been booked for

as he is booked by ECI Meanwhile, Vasanth Kumar, Advocate and BJP legal cell Conve nor said that five complaints were lodged with the Election Com

> mission today. "Today 5 complaints

were lodged with the Election Commission. One is canvassing and speaking to workers by CM Siddaramaiah inside a polling booth in Mysuru...another complaint is, in a polling booth in Kolar constituency, one ex-councillor Venkatesh is distributing

Board exams twice a year from 2025-26, CBSE asked to work on logistics

AGENCIES

The Ministry of Education has asked the CBSE to work out logistics for conducting board exams twice a year from the 2025-26 academic session, according to sourc-

The plan for introducing a semester system has been ruled out, they said.

The ministry and the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) will hold consultations with school principals next month for conducting board exams twice a year, the sources said.



The CBSE is currently in the process of working out the modalities of how will the academic calendar be structured to accommodate another set of board exams without impacting the undergraduate admission schedule, they said. "The ministry has asked the CBSE to work on the

police station in Bengaluru.

logistics of how will board exams be conducted twice a year. The board is working out the modalities and a consultation will be organised next month with school principals," a source said. "The idea being explored is

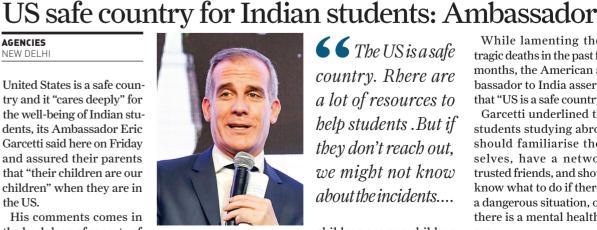
to conduct two editions of the board exams at the end of the year from the 2025-26 academic session but the modalities still need to be worked out. However, there is no plan to implement the semester system," the source

AGENCIES

United States is a safe country and it "cares deeply" for the well-being of Indian students, its Ambassador Eric Garcetti said here on Friday and assured their parents that "their children are our children" when they are in the US.

His comments comes in the backdrop of reports ofnearly half a dozen deaths of Indian and Indian-origin students in the US since January.

While the US remains a preferred destination for higher studies among Indian students, the string of



such cases has raised concern among the Indo-American community as well as the Indian population.

"We care so deeply for the well-being of Indian students in the US. We want parents to know that their **66** The US is a safe country. Rhere are a lot of resources to help students. But if they don't reach out, we might not know about the incidents....

children are our children when they are in United States. And, there is a wealth of resources that can help students prepare...in the US, whether it is mental health... and resources for that being far away for home, parents and families," he said.

While lamenting these tragic deaths in the past few months, the American ambassador to India asserted that "US is a safe country". Garcetti underlined that

students studying abroad should familiarise themselves, have a network, trusted friends, and should know what to do if there is a dangerous situation, or if there is a mental health is-

He said in a new country it could just be an issue of common sense public safety, and students might not know which neighbourhood to go to and not to go to and at what time of night, as also what resources are there.

placed political interest at a higher pedestal TDG NETWORK **NEW DELHI** The Delhi High Court on the Court Said Friday criticised the Delhi

HC to Kejriwal: You

the children studying in MCD schools, saying the continuation of Arvind Keiriwal as the chief minister even after his arrest puts political interest over na-

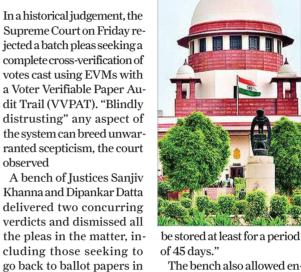
TDG NETWORK

tional interest. The Delhi government was "interested in appropriation of power".

The bench of Acting Chief of non-supply of books to tice Manmeet P S Arora, "I am sorry to say you have placed your interest above the interest of the students, the children that are studying.

Tejasvi Surya in a spot of bother

DETAILS P5



SC junks pleas for paper

trail of votes cast on EVMs

After the completion of

The bench also allowed engineers of the EVM manufacturers to verify the microcontroller of the machines after declaration of the results on the request of candidates who stood second and third.

Request for the verification of the microcontroller can be made within seven days of declaration of the results

should be sealed in containers. The SLU should be stored at least for a period of 45 days." Burnt memory in the micro controller EVM shall be checked by a team of engineers after

symbol loading process, the Symbol Loading Unit

the declaration of results on a request by candidates and such a request for verification to be made within seven days after the declaration of results.

after payment of fees, the court added.

"If EVM is found tampered during verification, fees paid by the candidates will be refunded," it said. "While maintaining a bal-

anced perspective is crucial in evaluating systems or institutions, blindly distrusting any aspect of the system

Oppn should apologise for defaming EVMs: PM Modi

TDG NETWORK

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday attacked the I.N.D.I.A bloc over the Supreme Court decision rejecting the plea for 100 per cent VVPAT verification of EVM votes and said every leader of the opposition grouping has "committed the sin" of creating doubts in minds of people about Electronic Voting Machine and "their dreams

Addressing an election

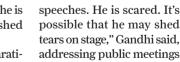
rally here, PM Modi alleged

shed tears on stage'





tears on the stage times used to convey emp-



in the district headquarters

DETAILS P4

INSIDE

POLITICS: SIGNIFICANCE OF PARTY SYMBOLS



Election symbols were introduced in 1951-52 in India mainly to enable illiterate voters identify their candidates

DETAILS ■P9

WILL THIS COUNTRY RUN ON SHARIA?, SHAH TEARS INTO CONGRESS MANIFESTO

nion Home Minister Amit Shah said on Friday that after the Congress manifesto was released, people's inclination towards the Bharatiya Janata Party has increased further because Congress has repeated its old habit of appeasement in its manifesto.

Shah told ANI that Congress' manifesto speaks of taking the personal law forward, which is about dividing the country.

"First of all, I would like to appeal to the voters to elect a party that stands on its words--for a secure and prosperous country and the welfare of the poor. After the Congress manifesto was released, people's inclination towards the BJP further increased because,



Union Home Minister Amit Shah greets the gathering during a public meeting in Guna on Friday. Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav and Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia also seen. ANI

in its manifesto, Congress has repeated its old habit of appeasement. The Congress manifesto speaks of taking personal law forward. I would like to ask Rahul Gandhi, Will this country now work as per Sharia?"

"Our Constitution is secular, laws of the land can't be formed based on religion," Amit Shah emphasised.

Further, the Home Minister said that the BJP has clearly said in its manifesto that it

Shah told ANI that Congress' manifesto speaks of taking the personal law forward, which is about dividing the country.

will bring a Uniform Civil Code (UCC).

"We scrapped Triple Talaq and started UCC and we will take this forward. Rahul Gandhi speaks of personal law, which is about dividing the country. Personal laws can't be implemented in this country. I am confident that we will see Narendra Modi as the Prime Minister of the country for the third time," Shah added.

Minister Yogi Adityanath hit out at Congress, accusing it of planning to implement the 'Sharia law' in the country and redistribute people's property.

The Uttar Pradesh CM, while addressing a public rally in Amroha, claimed that Congress has in its election manifesto expressed its intention to implement the 'Sharia law' in the country, posing a threat to the Constitution.

"Congress has written in its manifesto about bringing personal laws for a particular community. Through this move, Congress aims to impose Sharia law, bringing a Taliban-style rule to India. This clearly indicates that Congress and the I.N.D.I alliance pose a threat to the Constitution crafted by Baba Saheb," he said.

This election will save the Constitution, says Akhilesh

TDG NETWORK KANNAUJ (UTTAR PRADESH)

Amidst the ongoing second phase of Lok Sabha elections, former Uttar Pradesh Chief minister Akhilesh Yadav addressed a public rally in UP's Kannauj and said that the 2024 elections are to save the Constitution.

Speaking at the rally, Akhilesh Yadav said, "The BJP is helping big businessmen while the INDIA alliance and SP will help the poor... This election is also to save the Constitution. You must have seen, the BJP wants to finish the Constitution. Remember, if the Constitution finishes, our right to vote will also end. There will be no right to vote."

He also urged the voters to take an oath to save the Constitution. "Today, take an oath to protect the Constitution that was given to us by Dr BR Ambedkar, the Constitution that gives us rights, the Constitution that protects our



self respect... the Constitution that gives us reservation, we have to work to save the Constitution. 'Agar Samvidhan bachega, to hamara loktantra bachega."

Yadav also said that there are two types of people in the 2024 elections, one that wants to save the Constitution while the other one who wants to finish it.

Taking a jibe at the BJP, the former CM also said, "...Today every corrupt has reached in the godown (warehouse) of BJP...Those who keep saying 'parivarvaad', the truth is these BJP and NDA people are scared of PDA parivaar-'pichre (backward), Dalit and alpasankhyak (minority)."

The second phase has 88 Lok Sabha constituencies across 13 States/Union Territory including 13 in Rajasthan, 20 in Kerala, eight in Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh, five each in Assam and Bihar, six in Madhya Pradesh, three each in Chhattisgarh and West Bengal, and one each in Tripura, Manipur, and Jammu & Kashmir.

With weather conditions predicted to be within normal ranges, voters can cast their vote comfortably. For the convenience of voters, meticulous arrangements have been made at all polling stations including facilities, to deal with hot weather conditions, according to the Election Commission. According to the ECI, over 15.88 crore voters will be voting in the second phase which includes 8.08 crore male electors, 7.8 crore female electors, and 5929 third-gender

'Not an ordinary election this time'

TDG NETWORK BIJAPUR (KARNATAKA)

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Friday took a veiled swipe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi saying that this election is different from previous ones as a party and an individual are trying to abolish India's constitution and democracy for the first time in history.

"This election is not an ordinary election, it's not like the previous elections because, for the first time in the history of India, a party and an individual are trying to abolish the constitution and democracy of India," he said this at a rally in Bijapur.

Rahul Gandhi also claimed that on one hand, Narendra Modi is trying to abolish the constitution, their MPs have clearly said that if they win the election, they will change and abolish the constitution. On the other hand, there is



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi waves to the gathering during a public meeting for the Lok Sabha polls in Bijapur on

the Congress party and the India alliance who are trying to save the constitution. Rahul Gandhi accused PM

Narendra Modi of attempting to abolish the Constitution. while the Congress party and INDIA alliance are working towards protecting it.

He also stated that some of the BJP MPs have said that if they win the election, they

will change and abolish the constitution

"The constitution has given rights, voice, and reservation to the people of India. Before the constitution, kings and emperors ruled India. If today the poor, the backward, the Dalits, and the tribals of India have rights, have a voice, then the constitution has given these rights and voice. On one hand, Narendra Modi is trying to abolish the constitution, their MPs have clearly said that if they win the election, they will change and abolish the constitution. On the other hand, there is the Congress party and the India alliance who are trying to save the constitution," he said.

The Congress leader also accused the Prime Minister of depriving the poor people and instead giving India's

wealth to a select few. "Narendra Modi has made 20-25 people billionaires in the last 10 years, he has given all of India's wealth to these individuals.

All the benefits Narendra Modi has given to people like Adani. India's airports, India's ports, India's infrastructure, the defence industry, the solar power industry, the wind power industry, all of it Narendra Modi has handed over to Adani and people like Adani, and the poor have received nothing," he said.

Karnataka is voting on 14 seats today in the second phase of Lok Sabha elections.

The second phase has 88 Lok Sabha constituencies across 13 states and union territories, including 13 in Rajasthan, 20 in Kerala, eight in Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh, five each in Assam and Bihar, six in Madhya Pradesh, three each in Chhattisgarh and West Bengal, and one each in Tripura, Manipur, and Jammu & Kashmir.

PM blasts TMC, Cong in Malda rally

TDG NETWORK MALDA (WEST BENGAL)

Tearing into the ruling Trinamool Congress and the erstwhile Left Front government in the state for putting the brakes on development, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said they wrecked the greatness, global image and the dignity of

Bengal under their rule.

Twisting the knife into the ruling TMC, which is under the spotlight again over alleged irregularities in appointments for teaching posts after the Calcutta High Court recently annulled over 25,753 such recruitments in the state, PM Modi said only 'scams' were flourishing in Bengal under the Mamata government.

Addressing a massive rally in Malda district, which is home to majority Muslim voters, PM Modi said, "There was a time when Bengal was



the engine of the country's development and progress. Be it social reforms, scientific advancements, as well as philosophical and spiritual thinking and awakening, Bengal led the way. However, the Left Front and the present TMC regime robbed Bengal of its greatness on the global stage and lowered its dignity and prestige in the eyes of the world. Only scams worth thousands of crores are flourishing in Bengal under TMC rule." On the Calcutta High Order

cancelling all appointments of teaching and non-teaching staff made by the 2016 School Service Commission (SSC) However, the Left Front and the present TMC regime robbed Bengal of its greatness on the global stage and lowered its dignity and prestige in the eyes of the world.

panel, PM Modi said the TMC played with the future of Bengal's youth.

Laying into the TMC over the verdict, which it has challenged in the Supreme Court, he said, "Not a brick is laid in Bengal without money changing hands. Corruption has become synonymous with the state. They (TMC) did not even spare farmers. They played with the future of the state's youth and have now rendered 26,000 families jobless. They are facing the burden of unpaid loans that they took to pay the

TMC in exchange for these jobs." He said the ruling TMC

and the Congress, which are partners in the INDIA bloc but are contesting the ongoing Lok Sabha separately in the state, are competing with each other in their 'appeasement' politics and attempts to woo a 'certain' community.

"The Congress wants to grab your properties and the TMC hasn't spoken a single word against it. They are competing with each other for appeasement and attempts to win over a certain community or vote bank.

While the TMC government has worked to grant permanent residency to infiltrators from Bangladesh, the Congress is talking about redistributing your assets among a certain vote bank," PM Modi added.

"The only glue that holds the TMC and the Congress

'BIP created paranoia that Constitution will be changed', says Anil Shastri

TDG NETWORK

Taking a swipe at the BJPled NDA amid polling in Phase 2 of the Lok Sabha elections, late former Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri's son and Congress leader, Anil Shastri, said on Friday the people have built in a narrative in their minds that the ruling party at the Centre will change the Constitution if voted for a third term.

Speaking to media persons after casting his vote on Friday, Anil Shastri said it was because of the fear in people's minds that the salient statute book of the country could be up for change if the BJP is voted again, that Prime Minister Narendra Modi was



there is no such thing in the offing.

"The major issues before the people today are unemployment and farmer's woes. The BJP has created this paranoia among the people that the Constitution could be altered if they are elected for a third time. The people have built a narrative in their minds that this will happen. This is what has prompted the PM to go around the country and clarify that no such change is in the offing," the former PM's son said. He added that the present times are markedly different from those of his father, as the esteem that was once associated

has declined significantly. "I can sense a decline in

with politics

enthusiasm among voters this time. The present day and age are markedly different from my father's time. Today, values around politics are on the decline and it is no longer held in the same esteem as it was once was. The level of political discourse has stopped to a level that

now, leaders don't hesitate to bad-mouth or hurl abuses at each other. It makes me sad to see what politics has come to today. However, there is an undercurrent for change. For the first time, I saw the **Election Commission not** issuing voter slips this time. I would want this issue to be

addressed," the PEOPLE'S Congress leader MANDATE added. 2024

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court on Friday

rejected petitions seeking 100 per cent verification of votes cast on Electronic Voting Machines with paper slips generated through the VVPAT method. The apex court also rejected the prayers of petitioners to return to voting by the

In a landmark shift from past practices, Bru refugees settled in Tripura cast their votes

for the Lok Sabha elections, marking the second time they participated in the electoral process without having to return to Mizoram. This development

underscores a progression in the lives of these refugees, who previously had to travel to the Tripura-Mizoram boundary to vote.

The voting process took place at the Bru Reang Refugee camp located under the Ambassa Subdivision town of Tripura. This event is significant as it is the first time the Bru refugees are not participating in elections in Mizoram following their permanent settlement in



Bru refugees vote in Tripura for Lok

Tripura. This was made possible under a central government-sponsored rehabilitation arrangement initiated in January 2020.

The arrangement stemmed from a quadripartite agreement involving the governments of India, Tripura, Mizoram, and representatives of the Bru refugees, signed on January 16, 2020. This agreement marked an end to the longstanding displacement of the Bru community, who fled ethnic violence in Mizoram in October 1997 and spent more than two decades in makeshift camps in North Tripura.

As part of the resettlement plan, the Election Commission of India and local administrative bodies have worked to integrate over 14,000 Bru voters into the electoral rolls of Tripura, following their deletion from

the Mizoram rolls due to their new residency status. The resettlement process is still underway, with 6,959 families being relocated to 12 identified places across Tripura.

A comprehensive financial package of Rs 661 crore has been allocated to aid their resettlement.

Officials overseeing the process confirm that most conditions of the 2020 agreement, including provisions for free ration, financial allowances, and essential commodities. are being met, ensuring a smoother transition for the refugees into their new homes and civic life.

While the majority of the Bru population now resides in Tripura, hundreds remain in Mizoram's Mamit district, where the initial conflict

Karnataka: 'BJP-JDS will win all 14 seats in this phase,' says Ex-PM Deve Gowda

TDG NETWORK HASSAN (KARNATAKA)

Former Prime Minister and Janata Dal (Secular) chief HD Deve Gowda on Friday said that the BJP-JDS alliance will register a victory on all 14 seats of Karnataka where polling in the second phase of Lok Sabha elections is underway.

Karnataka has total of of 28 Lok Sabha seats and the rest 14 constituencies will go to polls on May 7.

"We are going to win (BJP-



JDS) 14 out of 14 seats in this phase," HD Deve Gowda

told reporters. He further slammed that Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi for "misleading" people through their poll advertisements in Karnataka.

"Congress has stooped to this level, having the photo of Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge making promises. This is with the photo of Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi. Is Rahul Gandhi Prime Minister? Is Kharge Chief Minister or Prime Minister? They are only ordinary members of Congress. This is a pamphlet distributed in Karnataka just to mislead and fool the

people," he said.

TDG NETWORK GUWAHAT

Assam Minister and Bharatiya Janata Party leader Pijush Hazarika on Friday questioned the opposition's allegation on electronic voting machines and said that whenever the Congress wins, there is no discussion on EVMs.

Hazarika cast his vote today in the second phase of the Lok Sabha elections in Nagaon.

'Whenever Congress

No discussion on EVMs when Cong wins: Pijush Hazarika wins, then there is no discussion of EVM and VVPAT. When they won in Himachal Pradesh, did they oppose EVMs? Whenever the opposition loses, they blame the EVMs. All these allegations are baseless. It is just their character. I hope we will win more than 400 seats. PM Narendra Modi will be the PM for the 3rd time. The BJP has done the work in the nation. They have increased the number of airports, highways, medical colleges, etc.



That's why people support PM Modi," he said.

Over 77 lakh voters across five parliamentary constituencies in Assam will decide the fate of 61

candidates in the second phase of polls today. In the second phase of

elections, the contest for the Nagaon seat of Assam is considered to be at high stakes.

The equations are such that it cannot be said which way the camel will sit. Senior party leaders had campaigned heavily for the BJP, Congress and AIUDF candidates.

Suresh Bora is in the fray from BJP on the Nagaon seat, while the current MP Pradyut Bordoloi is trying gress. AIUDF has fielded Aminul Islam here. There are more than 18

his luck again from Con-

lakh voters in the Nagaon Lok Sabha constituency, out of which 64 per cent are minority votes. There has been a record of 83 per cent voting here in the past whose figure is also expected to increase this time. Before 2019, Nagaon was called the stronghold

But in 2019, Congress' Pradyut Bordoloi had won.

CONGRESS WILL GIVE AWAY RIGHTS OF SC, ST, OBCs TO MUSLIMS: JP NADDA

haratiya Janata Party national president JP Nadda on Friday claimed that the Congress and I.N.D.I.A bloc have a hidden agenda to snatch away the rights of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes and give it to Muslims for their appeasement.

"The hidden agenda of Congress and INDI Alliance is to snatch away the rights of SC, ST, OBC and give the same to Muslims. Congress says that the first right to resources of the country is that of Muslims. Whereas, PM Narendra Modi says that the first right to resources of the country is that of the poor. Manmohan Singh did



not make that statement mistakenly. He did it deliberately because while answering a question in April 2009 during a press conference in Mumbai - he stood by his statement and said that minorities, especially Muslims, should be given priority and the first right to resources of the country should be theirs," Nadda said.

BJP chief further said that Congress deliberately used the fact findings of the Sachar Committee and falsely

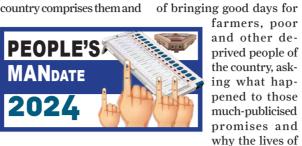
quoted the report claiming that "Muslims were in worse shape than Dalits".

"Through the Sachar Committee Report, false statements were made and it was said that Muslims are in worse shape than Dalits. It means that Congress was already creating a base to declare Muslims SC and provide facilities for SC reservations to them," the BJP chief said.

"Congress hates SC, ST and OBC because the majority of the population in the country comprises them and this is Congress party's manifesto," he added.

Nadda further said that Congress had been creating ground to declare Muslims as SC. "Congress was already creating a base to declare Muslims SC and provide

facilities of SC reservations to them. Congress hates SC, ST and OBC because the majority of the population in the country comprises them and



TDG NETWORK

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP)

president Mayawati target-

ed the BJP over its promise

crores of poor, SC, ST, OBC,

minorities continue to be

In a post on X, Mayawati

said, "In the second phase of

Lok Sabha elections in the

country today, especially the

poor, unemployed, farmers,

women and other deprived

people must think that you

have brought the good days

of BJP but what happened

miserable?

Congress party's manifesto is all about that. This is their only intention," he said.

Earlier today, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said that after the Congress manifesto was released, people's inclination towards the Bharatiya Janata Party has increased further because Congress has repeated its old habit of appeasement in its manifesto.

'Why is life of poor still miserable?':

Mayawati attacks BJP government

to their much-publicized and tempting promise of bringing 'good days' for you? Rather, why is their life so troubled?"

"Like Congress' 'Garibi Hatao', BJP too has broken a big promise, whereas the government's basic duty is to run the country under the sacred humanitarian and welfare objectives of the Constitution and ensure the development of the Dalits. Then why are the lives of crores of poor, SC, ST, OBC, minorities continuously helpless and miserable?" she further said.

The BSP supremo also appealed to people to exercise their universal franchise without any fear and elect a government. "The country's and people's interest lies in voting for bringing poverty and unemployment-free 'good days' for the country and its nearly 125 crore hardworking people rather than for any particular person or party. Come forward to vote for a 'good government' that is pro-Bhaujan in the country. Hence 'first vote, then refreshment'," Mayawati added. On April 25, The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) released a fresh list of three candidates from Uttar Pradesh's Rae

Bahraich. While Thakur Prasad Yaday has been fielded from Rae Bareli, Kamar Hayat Ansari will be contesting from Ambedkar Nagar

Bareli, Ambedkar Nagar and

and Brijesh Kumar Sonker will fight from Bahraich, a Scheduled Caste reserved constituency.

In its first list, the BSP has nominated Mazid Ali from Saharanpur, Shreepal Singh from Kairana, Dara Singh Prajapati from Muzaffarnagar, Vijendra Singh from Bijnor, Surendra Pal Singh from Nagina, Mohammad Irfan Saifi from Moradabad, Zeeshan Khan from Rampur, Shaukat Ali from Sambhal, Mujahid Hussain from Amroha, Devratt Tyagi from Meerut, Praveen Bansal from Baghpat, Rajendra Singh Solanki from Gautam Buddha Nagar, Girish Chandra Jatav from Bulandshahr, Abid Ali from Aonla, Aneesh Ahmed Khan alia Phool Babu from Pilibhit, and Dodram Verma from Shahjahanpur.

BJP will win 25 seats in Rajasthan,

over 400 seats

in the country:

Exuding confidence over

the outcome of Lok Sabha

polls, Union Minister Ga-

jendra Singh Shekhawat on

Friday said that Bharatiya

Janata Party will comfort-

ably register victory in all

25 constituencies in Rajas-

than adding that it will also

cross 400 mark in the Lok

BJP has fielded Gajendra

Shekhawat

TDG NETWORK

Sabha.

Om Birla exudes confidence in BJP's victory, asserts 'will win all 25 seats in Rajasthan'

TDG NETWORK

Dismissing the opposition's rallying call to "Save the Constitution," Lok Sabha Speaker and BJP candidate from Kota in Rajasthan, Om Birla, on Friday asserted that the Constitution is in good hands.

Birla, along with his wife Amita Birla cast his vote at a polling booth in Kota today to cast his vote.

Birla is contesting Prahlad Gunjal, who quit the BJP to join hands with the Congress ahead of this Lok Sabha elections.

While speaking to ANI. Birla said, "This is not a fight to save the constitution, the constitution is in good hands. They (opposition) are just spreading lies. Social structure and social reserva-



tion will remain intact".

On former BJP MLA Gunjal joining Congress ahead of elections, Birla said, "He keeps on defecting here and there. Earlier too he had defected to some other party to contest elections".

Addressing concerns over infrastructure development, particularly the longawaited construction of a greenfield airport in Kota, Birla assured that progress is imminent.

"The airport will definitely

be constructed. The state government had not paid dues for nine months, but as soon as Bhajanlal Sharma became the CM, the Rajasthan government deposited the money within 20 days. Airport construction will begin after a DPR is formed," he said.

Eyeing a third consecutive term in Kota, Birla exuded confidence in the BJP's electoral prospects, expressing certainty in the party's ability to retain all 25 Lok Sabha seats in Rajasthan once again. He said that the BJP will win all 25 seats "one hundred per cent".

In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, Om Birla defeated Congress candidate Ramnarain Meena by a significant margin of 279,677 votes. Birla got 59.1 per cent of the

Inheritance tax could nullify India's decade of progress: Nirmala Sitharaman

TDG NETWORK

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday cast her vote at a polling booth in Bengaluru's BEs college.

Speaking after casting her

vote the Finance Minister said that the people wanted PM Modi to continue in office. "I want more and more people to come out and vote...I think it is clear that people want a stable government, they want good policies, progress and development and that is why they are coming out. They want to see PM Modi continue his term." Sitharaman also criticized the Congress for advocating an inheritance tax like law, stating that it could nullify India's progress over the last decade.

"I remember earlier in 1968 there was a compulsory deposit scheme where people's deposits were all



Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman poses for a selfie with voters during the second phase of the Lok Sabha elections at a polling booth in Bengaluru on Friday

18 per cent, 20 per cent. Something was taken away. There was no justification given at that time... If such wealth creators are going to be punished purely because they have some money kept behind, India's progress in the last ten years would just go for a zero. And we'll probably be going back to that era when Congress imposed a 90 per cent tax. You'll probably not believe that the current generation, wouldn't

even remember or know anything about it. There was India where under the Congress rule we paid 90% of all that was earned by us as tax. That's the socialist model which the Congress party is comfortable with...'

Sitharaman also said that the inheritance tax directly impacts the middle class and aspirational class.

"It (the inheritance tax) directly hits the middle class. It directly hits the aspirational class. They work hard, sweat and toil of theirs are saved in small savings here and there, or they buy a house, a dream house, and keep some fixed deposits. All this is going to be exposed to the so-called property tax," she told ANI.

Sitharaman also accused the Congress party of targeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi as they have no positive agendas to speak about. "Because they have no issue on their own in order to say 'this is what we will do for the people of India, take India forward, bring opportunities for the youth, take India in a global leadership role', they have none of these positive agendas to speak about. So they are constantly hitting at the Prime Minister, they are doing personal attacks, and even worse, they are bringing in things that they can-

Singh Shekhawat from the Jodhpur constituency. He is facing Congress leader Karan Singh Uchiyarda. Speaking to reporters, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat

said, "Voter turnout will be high today. People are impressed with the schemes laid down by PM Modi. We will win the Jodhpur seat, and also comfortably win all 25 seats in Rajasthan and over 400 seats in the coun-

Meanwhile former Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot and his family also cast their vote in Jodhpur. Speaking to reporters Gehlot took on PM Modi claiming that the PM had deliberately dragged the

polls into non-issues.

"It is just sad that where is democracy heading? What the Prime Minister has said...he analysed and he himself was mocked...I don't want to get into what fered a blow. People came to know that he lies," he said

Election has to be fought on unemployment, inflation: Ashok Gehlot

TDG NETWORK

Amid voting for the second phase of Lok sabha elections on Friday, Congress leader and former Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said that he don't want to talk about the 'mangalsutra' issue, as election has to be fought on the "issues of the country, like unemployment and inflation." Gehlot also claimed that the

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is deliberately talking about the 'mangalsutra' issue. "It is just sad that where is democracy heading? What the Prime Minister has said...he himself was mocked...I don't want to get into what he said about 'mangalsutra', election has to be fought on the basis of development--on the issues of unemployment, inflation,



Former Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot with his son and Congress candidate from Jalore Lok Sabha seat Vaibhav Gehlot ahead of voting during the second phase of the Lok Sabha Poll in Jodhpur

and the rich," Gehlot told ANI here. "He (PM Modi) is deliberately dragging it to 'mangalsutra'. What has that to do with the manifesto?...With the kind of language he is using. I think for the first time, the credibility of the Prime Minister has suffered a blow. People came to know that he lies..."

A few days ago, Prime Minister Modi had alleged

widening gap between poor that the Congress party has set its eyes on people's hard-earned wealth, property and 'mangalsutra' of women, and plans to seize and redistribute it. While addressing a public meeting in Aligarh, the PM had said, "Our mothers and sisters have gold. This is not just for wearing on occasions, this is 'stree-dhan', it is considered sacred, even the law also protects it. Now, they are eyeing to change the law and seize the property of our mothers and sisters. (Congress kin azar aapki sampatti aur mangalsutra par hai.) They have their eyes on 'mangalsutra' of women. Their intention is to steal the gold of mothers and sisters.'

Speaking of the opposition, the former Rajasthan CM said that the atmosphere is in favour of the Congress party and just like the first phase, the second phase of elections will be good too. "The situation of the BJP is very bad. The atmosphere is in favour of Congress, of the INDIA alliance... Results in the first phase of elections were good. Today too, it will be in our favour. This is the situation not just in Rajasthan but across the country..."

This time BJP will cross 400: BJP Meerut candidate Arun Govil the immensely popular "Ra-

TDG NETWORK

Bharatiya Janata Party candidate from Meerut and popular 'Ramayana' actor Arun Govil said on Friday that he has full hope that the BIP will cross 400 seats in Lok Sabha polls 2024.

The Bharatiya Janata Party has replaced three-term MP Rajendra Agarwal and pitted Ramayana actor Arun Govil against Samajwadi Party's Sunita Verma and BSP's Devratt Kumar.

"I want to tell people to cast their vote. We must exercise our vote. We have full hope that this time the BJP will cross 400," he said as the voting is underway in the constituency.

Further, responding to the opposition's allegations that he is an outsider contest-



ing from the Meerut seat, Govil said, "I was born and brought up and even did my studies here, so how am I an outsider?

The Meerut Lok Sabha seat is likely to see a triangular contest among the BJP, the opposition INDIA bloc and the Bahujan Samaj Party.

The BJP is relying on Arun Govil's popularity as the actor who portrayed Ram in mayana" serial on Doordarshan in mid 1980's. Along with Meerut, voting is underway at Amroha, Baghpat, Ghaziabad, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Bulandshahr, Aligarh, and Mathura

Sabha elections. Earlier, voting began at 7am on Friday in 88 constituencies spread across 13 states and Union Territories in the second phase of the

constituencies in the state in

the second phase of the Lok

18th Lok Sabha elections. Prime Minister Narendra Modi today called on people to participate in voting in large numbers and emphasised that every vote counts. The PM especially encouraged young and female voters to participate in the second phase of the Lok Sabha he said about 'mangalsutra', election has to be fought on the basis of development - on the issues of unemployment, inflation, widening gap between poor and the rich...He is deliberately dragging it to 'mangalsutra'. What has that to do with manifesto?... With the kind of language he is using. I think for the first time, the credibility of the Prime Minister has suf-

Forest-themed polling booth set up to promote environmental awareness

TDG NETWORK

KANAKPURA (KARNATAKA)

A special polling booth with a forest theme is set up at the Kanakpura polling station to attract voters in the second phase of the Lok Sabha election 2024.

In a bid to enhance voter engagement and raise awareness about forest conservation, the Kanakapura Forest Department has unveiled a unique initiative for the ongoing elections. The establishment of a special polling station, aptly named 'Adavi' (meaning forest),

aims to immerse voters in a natural ambiance while casting their ballots.

Situated at the GTTC Polling Station No-79 in Kanakapura, Adavi offers voters an unparalleled experience akin to being amidst lush greenery. The traditional polling booth has been transformed into a serene forest setting, complete with indigenous flora and the matic decorations.

"We have set up this booth on the theme of the forest here in Kanakapura as climate change is a big issue... we need to create awareness

among voters to save forests and water," Kanakapura Municipality Commissioner

Mahadev Swamy told ANI.

distributing saplings to vot-

ers who participate in the voting process as part of an awareness program to conserve forests and water. The officers are also here

Upon entering the polling

station, voters are greeted

with the sight of a 'chappar,' a special flower native to the forest, adorning the entrance. A variety of 'torans' (decorative door hangings) and strategically placed plants further enhance the forest-like atmosphere, creating a tranquil environment for voters.

The initiative goes beyond aesthetic appeal, as the Forest Department aims to leverage the unique setting to educate voters about the importance of forest conservation. Through engaging displays and informational materials, voters are encouraged to understand and contribute to the preservation of natural habitats.

In a gesture of appreciation for participating in the democratic process, Forest Department staff members are distributing plants to voters upon casting their ballots. This not only fosters a sense of environmental responsibility but also serves as a tangible reminder of the connection between democracy and environmental stewardship.

Speaking about the initiative, a representative from the Kanakapura Forest De-

partment highlighted the importance of innovative approaches to civic engagement. "By blending nature with democracy, we hope to inspire citizens to become advocates for environmental conservation while exercising their democratic rights," they remarked.

The establishment of the Adavi polling station underscores the commitment of the Kanakapura Forest Department to promote sustainable practices and community involvement. As voters flock to this unique polling station, it serves as a creativity in fostering civic participation and environmental consciousness. Karnataka is voting on 14

testament to the power of

seats today in the second phase of Lok Sabha elections. The second phase has 88 Lok Sabha constituencies across 13 States/Union Territory, including 13 in Rajasthan, 20 in Kerala, eight in Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh, five each in Assam and Bihar, six in Madhya Pradesh, three each in Chhattisgarh and West Bengal, and one each in Tripura, Manipur, and Jammu

Kharge's remark on Buddhism sparks row

TDG NETWORK

Congress national president Mallikarjun Kharge launched a fresh attack against Prime Minister Narendra Modi questioning his stance on Buddhism during an interview with News 24 on Friday.

In the interview, Kharge, who is a follower of Buddhism, delved into the inauguration ceremony of Buddha Vihar in Karnataka's Gulbarga in 2009, which was established by the Siddharth Vihar Trust of which he is the founder-chairman.

He said that the inauguration was attended by then President Prathiba Patil while drawing parallels with the inauguration of the Ram

Temple in Ayodhya on January 22 this year which drew criticism for allegedly not inviting President Droupadi Murmu.

"What did you do, whom

did you invite for the Pran Pratishtha? Did you give invitations to the leaders of every opposition party? You are doing everything as per your wish, and yet that temple is not even one-third complete. Now there has been some improvement as far as the construction is concerned. Who should have inaugurated it? As per the Hindu customs, who should have carried out the Pran Pratishtha?" Kharge questioned PM Modi for doing Pran Prathistha of Ram

"For example, I established



Buddha Vihar in Gulbarga, then who was called for it? Buddha is considered the 9th incarnation of Lord Vishnu but they (BJP) don't come near Buddha. You know in Uttarakhand it has been imposed that if someone wants to adopt Buddhism they should approach the District Magistrate. That is a religion of this country, that was established in this country, which has been accepted all over the world, but you (PM Modi) do not

can breed unwarranted

scepticism...," Justice Datta

Association for Democratic

Reforms, one of the petition-

CONTINUED FROM P1

said.

SC junks pleas...

believe in it. Now they are attacking us. But what did I do at that time, I witnessed it from a distance while the 'pratishtha' was done by Dalai Lama and then presi-

dent of India Prathibha Patil

was also present there," he

added. He further alleged that Lord Ram's name was used by the Bharatiya Janata Party to "garner votes".

"Everyone has different

ers, had sought reversal of

the poll panel's 2017 deci-

sion to replace the trans-

parent glass on VVPAT ma-

chines with an opaque glass

through which a voter can

faith, but you (PM Modi) repeatedly say that we are against Ram.

66 What did you do, whom did you invite for

the Pran Pratishtha? Did you give invitations

to the leaders of every opposition party? You

are doing everything as per your wish, and yet

that temple is not even one-third complete.

What is the purpose of being against Ram? What will we achieve? In the name of Lord Ram, they are garnering votes and not propagating Lord Ram. Always saying the wrong things.

And will say it a thousand times so that all lies look like truth. And Modi ji is the expert in it," Kharge said

see the slip only when the

light is on for seven seconds.

The petitioners have also

sought the court's direction

to revert to the old system of

'PM scared, may even shed tears on stage': Rahul's jibe at Modi

AGENCIES

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Friday took potshots at Prime Minister Narendra Modi over his attack on the grand old party, saying he is scared and may even shed tears on the stage.

He called the BJP 'Bharatiya Chombu Party'. Chombu in Kannada means round water pot, which is sometimes used to convey emptiness and deception.

"You have heard the prime minister's speeches. He is scared. It's possible that he may shed tears on stage," Gandhi said, addressing public meetings in the district headquarters towns of Vijayapura and Ballari in the party-governed state.

Modi has targeted the Congress on a variety of issues in recent campaign rallies, including "mangalsutra", "redistribution of wealth" and "inheritance tax" charges.

The former Congress chief accused Modi of 'diverting public attention' through various means. "Sometimes he talks about China and Pakistan, and sometimes he will make you beat plates

and ask you to switch on the torch light of your mobile phones.'

He pointed out that there are three to four core issues in India including poverty, unemployment and price rise, and claimed that only Congress can eradicate unemployment, contain price rise and give people their due share.

"Modi has only snatched money from poor people. He has made some billionaires. There are 22 people who have wealth equivalent to the 70 crore people of the country. Just one per cent people are controlling 40 per cent of the wealth of

the nation," Gandhi alleged. The Congress leader said in the present scheme of things, there is "no scope" for Dalits, OBCs, tribals, minorities and poor general category people.

"I will just tell you a clear thing in a simple one line. The wealth Modi has given to those billionaires, the same money we are going to give to the poor people of the country," he said.

Gandhi also promised the youth that his party will scrap the 'Agniveer' scheme if it is voted to power.

Oppn should apologise: PM

the old system of ballot paper voting will not come back," PM Modi said.

He said opposition parties should apologise to the people for creating doubts about the Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs).

"Today, the whole world praises India for its democracy, for its election process, and its use of technology in the election process and these people for their own self-interest were defaming the EVMs. These people have continuously tried to betray democracy," he said.

Targeting RJD and INDIA bloc parties, he alleged they are the people who for decades snatched the rights of the poor through the excuse of ballot paper.

"Polling booths were looted, paper ballots

empowered, those who indulged in loot on election day, tried to snatch, they are also uneasy, they have one task day and night that EVM should not be there," he said.

"See the power of democracy and constitution of Dr Ambedkar. The Supreme Court has given such a shock to those who had the intention to loot ballot boxes that all their dreams have been shattered. The Supreme Court has made it clear that the old system of ballot paper will not return,"

The Supreme Court of India on Friday rejected all the petitions seeking 100 per cent verification of EVMs votes with their Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT)

PM Modi said that the love from the peo-

were looted. Today when voters have been ple is a big source of energy for him.

'Democracy relies on trust'

CONTINUED FROM P1

improvement of the system through active participation in democratic practices.

Justice Datta, cautioned against measures such as reverting to paper ballots or any alternative to EVMs that fails to adequately safeguard the interests of Indian citizens

Expressing his views in a separate judgment while concurring with the opinion of Justice Sanjiv Khanna, about striving to build harwho headed the bench, Justice Datta highlighted the recurring issue of doubting the efficacy of electronic voting machines (EVMs) before the top court. He stressed the importance of definitively resolving such issues now.

"Going forward, unless substantial evidence is presented against the EVMs, the current system will have to persist with enhancements,'

he stated. Justice Datta emphasized the importance of maintaining a balanced perspective when evaluating systems or institutions, noting that "blindly distrusting any as-

pect of the system can breed unwarranted skepticism and impede progress."

He advocated for a critical yet constructive approach, guided by evidence and reason, to facilitate meaningful improvements and ensure the credibility and effectiveness of the system.

"Be it the citizens, the judiciary, the elected representatives, or even the electoral machinery, democracy is all mony and trust between all its pillars through open dialogue, transparency in processes, and continuous improvement of the system by active participation in democratic practices," he said. Justice Datta emphasized that our approach should be guided by evidence and reason to create room for meaningful improvements.

"By nurturing a culture of trust and collaboration, we can strengthen the foundations of our democracy and ensure that the voices and choices of all citizens are valued and respected. With

each pillar fortified, our de-

mocracy stands robust and resilient," the Apex Court Judge stated.

"I conclude with the hope and trust that the system in vogue shall not fail the electorate and the mandate of the voting public shall be truly reflected in the votes cast and counted," he added.

The top court delivered its verdict on a batch of petitions, including one filed by the NGO Association for Democratic Reforms, which also requested a direction to revert to the paper ballot system in elections.

The pleas alleged that the polling devices could be tampered with to manipulate the

The NGO sought the reversal of the Election Commission's 2017 decision to replace the transparent glass on VVPAT machines with an opaque glass, allowing a voter to see the slip only when the light is on for seven seconds. The 7-phase Lok Sabha polls commenced on April 19 and will culminate with the announcement of results on Iune 4, 2024

WHAT JUSTICE SANJIV KHANNA SAID IN HIS JUDGEMENT 1 We must reject as foible and unsound the submission to return to the ballot paper system. The weakness of the ballot are able to see slip along with the serial paper system is well known and docuthe symbol for whom they have voted.

2. In the Indian context, keeping in view the vast size of the Indian electorate of nearly 97 crore, the number of candidates who contest the elections, the number of polling booths where voting is held, and the problems faced with ballot papers, we would be undoing the electoral reforms by directing reintroduction of the ballot papers. EVMs offer significant advantages. They have effectively eliminated booth capturing by restricting the rate of vote casting to 4 votes per minute, thereby prolonging the time needed and thus check insertion of bogus votes.

3. EVMs have eliminated invalid votes, which were a major issue with paper ballots and had often sparked disputes during the counting process. Furthermore, EVMs reduce paper usage and alleviate logistical challenges. Finally, they provide administrative convenience by expediting the counting process and minimizing

4.ECI has been categorical that the glass window on the WPAT has not undergone any change. The term used in Rule 49M is 'transparent window'. The tinted glass used on the WPAT printer is to maintain secrecy and prevent anyone else from viewing the WPAT slips.

5. The voter in the voting compartment who is viewing the glass from the top can have clear view of the slip for 7 seconds. Marginal tint on the VVPAT glass window, or the fact that the cutting and dropping of the slip from the roll in to the drop box of the printer is not visible, does not violate Rule 49M. The words 'before such slips get cut' in the proviso to Rule 49M(3) indicate and require that the slip should be cut from the roll after the elector has seen the print through the glass window. Use of glass window prevents damage, smudg-

ing, attempt to deface or physically access the WPAT slip. The rule ensures voters number with name of the candidate and

ballot papers.

6. Similarly, we would reject the submission that any elector should be liberally permitted as a routine to ask for verification of vote. Rule 49MA permits the elector to raise a complaint if she/he is of the view that the WPAT paper slip did not depict the correct candidate/political party she/he voted. 7. Nevertheless, not because we have any

doubt, but to only further strengthen the integrity of the election process, we are inclined to issue the following directions: (a) On completion of the symbol loading process in the WPATS undertaken on or after 01.05.2024, the symbol loading units shall be sealed and secured in a container. The candidates or their representatives shall sign the seal. The sealed containers, containing the symbol loading units, shall be kept in the strong room along with the EVMs at least for a period of 45 days post the declaration of results. They shall be opened, examined and dealt with as in the case of EVMs.

5% of the EVMs, that is, the control unit, ballot unit and the VVPAT, per assembly constituency/assembly segment of a parliamentary constituency shall be checked and verified by the team of engineers from the manufacturers of the EVMs, post the announcement of the results, for any tampering or modification, on a written request made by candidates who are at Sl.No.2 or Sl.No.3, behind the highest polled candidate. Such candidates or their representatives shall identify the EVMs by the polling station or serial number. C.All candidates and their representatives shall have an option to remain present at the time of verification. Such a request should be made within a period of 7 days. from the date of declaration of the result.

Over 63% turnout in peaceful polling process, held amid tight se-

CONTINUED FROM P1

Chhattisgarh and West Bengal, and 1 seat each in Manipur, Tripura and Jammu and Kashmir.

Congress leader Shashi Tharoor, Union minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar and actor-turned-politician Arun Govil, Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar's brother DK Suresh (Cong), and former Karnataka chief minister HD Kumaraswamy (IDS) are among the key candidates while BJP's Hema Malini, Om Birla and Gajendra Singh Shekhawat seeking a hat-trick of wins from their respective constituencies

Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the morning urged people to cast their votes in record numbers and said a high voter turnout strengthens democracy.

Stressing on the importance of each vote, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and party leader Rahul Gandhi issued impassioned appeals asking people to step out and exercise their franchise in the second phase of the Lok Sabha election.

After the end of polling, Modi in a tweet said, "Phase Two has been too good!

Gratitude to the people across India who have voted today. The unparalleled support for NDA is going to disappoint the Opposition even more. Voters want NDA's good governance. Youth and women voters are powering the strong NDA support."

In Kerala, the turnout was 65.91 per cent. The election curity arrangements, was primarily incident free except for instances of bogus voting and breakdowns of electronic voting machines (EVMs) being reported in some booths of the state. Such incidents resulted in delaying the polling process in the affected booths.

One person each reportedly died at Palakkad, Alappuzha and Malappuram after casting their vote and a polling agent died after collapsing at a booth in Kozhikode.

Tripura East Lok Sabha constituency recorded a turnout of 79.46 per cent. Election officials said there were some complaints from a few booths but those were "promptly addressed".

A jawan of the Madhya Pradesh Special Armed Force deployed on poll duty allegedly committed suicide by shooting himself with his service rifle at a government school where he was stationed in Gariaband district under the Mahasamund seat in Chhattisgarh, where a voter turnout of 73.62 per cent was recorded.

A polling booth at Sivni village in Balod district (Kanker seat) was decorated like a wedding 'mandap', with a display of rituals of traditional weddings. Several brides and grooms, dressed in their wedding finery, cast their votes at several polling booths.

The EC said people from 46 villages in Bastar and Kanker seats cast their votes in a polling booth set up in their own village for the first time in a Lok Sabha election.

CBI unearths arms cache

CONTINUED FROM P1

jahan. Shahjahan, who was earlier being investigated by the ED for money laundering in the ration and land scams that have rocked Bengal politics - was eventually arrested on February 29, 2004.

Sources said the CBI team escorted by Central security forces, recovered arms and ammunition, as well as several bombs stored inside the house, prompting them to call in the National Security Guards. The arms and ammunition were dug out from the floor of the house of Abu Taleb, who is a three-wheeler

The leader of the Opposition in the West Bengal Assembly, Suvendu Adhikari, slammed the Trinamool Congress Government over the raids and asked which security force would arrive next in Sandeshkhali. "ED, CBI, NIA, NSG. What next in Sandeshkhali? Army?" asked Adhikari.

He slammed the Chief Minister and said: "Mamata Banerjee has lost the moral authority to continue as the Chief Minister of West Bengal after fostering terrorists like Shahjahan Sheikh." The BJP's IT cell head who

is also the party's co-minder in West Bengal said: "The CBI, during a raid in connection with the attack on ED officials, recovered a huge amount of arms and ammunition from Sariberia. in Sandeshkhali. Mamata Banerjee, as Home Minister of West Bengal, must explain why the State is seeing a huge stockpile of illegal weapons? It is dangerous. The NSG has been deployed but the WB Govt has approached the Supreme Court to preclude the CBI from investigating the matter. The arms haul is nothing but an act of terror,

waging war against the na-

tion. But the question is - why is Mamata Banerjee trying to protect terrorists who have stocked firearms in such large quantities?"

The raids come a day after the CBI - tasked with probing allegations of extortion, land grab, and sexual assault against suspended Trinamool leader Sheikh Shahjahan and his associates - carried out raids on hideouts linked to those who attacked the Enforcement Directorate team on January 5.

That attack - believed to have been carried out by supporters of Shahjahan, on the run immediately after for nearly two months before his arrest - led to an avalanche of complaints against him, and triggered a ferocious political war between Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's Government and the Opposition, which included the I.N.D.I.A.

Tejasvi Surya in a spot of bother

plaint is AICC Youth President Srinivas is protesting... today is polling day so he is violating Model Code of Conduct," Vasanth Kumar said.

cash to voters, another com-

Earlier today, BJP candidate from Bengaluru South constituency, Tejasvi Surva. cast his vote in Bengaluru and predicted that the Congress party may not win

more than 30 seats in the Lok Sabha polls.

Karnataka is voting on 14 seats today in the second phase of Lok Sabha elections. The second phase has 88 Lok Sabha constituencies across 13 States/Union Territory, including 13 in Rajasthan, 20 in Kerala, eight in Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh, five each in Assam and Bihar, six in Madhya Pradesh, three each in Chhattisgarh and West Bengal, and one each in Tripura, Manipur, and J&K.

34.8 lakh first-time voters are registered to cast their votes. Additionally, there are 3.28 crore young voters in the age group of 20-29 years. 1202 candidates (males: 1098; females: 102; third gender: O2) are in the

Board exams twice a year from 2025-26

CONTINUED FROM P1 added.

The ministry's initial plan was to introduce biannual board exams from the 2024-25 academic session, however, it has been pushed back by a year.

The new national curriculum framework (NCF), prepared by the Union government-appointed national

steering company which was led by former ISRO chairman K Kasturirangan in line with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, proposed a semester system for students of classes 11 and 12. The framework, which

was released by the ministry in August last year, also proposed that the students be given the option to write

their board exams twice a vear. "The CBSE right now is

brainstorming on the schedule so students can get maximum benefit and the goal of making board exams stress-free can be achieved. However, logistics is a challenge which needs to be addressed, conducting exams is tiresome so the plan has to be flawless," the source said. **Union Education Minister** Dharmendra Pradhan had last October told PTI in an interview that appearing for board exams twice a year won't be mandatory for students.

"The students will have the option of appearing for the (class 10 and 12 board) exams twice a year just like the engineering entrance exam JEE. They can choose the best score... but it will be completely optional, no compulsion," he had said. However, this is not the

first attempt at reforming board exams. The Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (was introduced for Class 10 in 2009 but was revoked in 2017.

DELHI HC'S SCATHING COMMENT ON KEJRIWAL: Sunita Kejriwal to lead YOU PUT POLITICAL INTEREST ABOVE NATION

TDG NETWORK

he Delhi High Court on Friday criticised the Delhi government over the issue of non-supply of books to the children studying in MCD schools, saying the continuation of Arvind Kejriwal as the chief minister even after his arrest puts political interest over national interest. The Delhi government was "interested in appropriation of power", the Court Said

The bench of Acting Chief Justice Manmohan and Justice Manmeet PS Arora, "I am sorry to say you have placed your interest above the interest of the students, the children that are studying. That is very clear and we are going to give that finding that you have placed your political interest at a higher pedestal, the Court said

The court's observations came after the Delhi government counsel told the matter requires certain approvals from Kejriwal who is in custody in the alleged money laundering case in connection with the 2021 excise policy.

The court stated that



The bench further stated that choice is yours that the chief minster will continue despite being in jail. "We will have to say this. This is your administration's will. You are asking us to go down that track and we will come with full vigour"

till now it has "politely" emphasised that national interest is "supreme" but the present case has highlighted what was "wrong" and it would pass an order in the matter on Monday.

that you have done this. It

"It is very unfortunate

matter," the bench added The court further told the Delhi government lawyer that his client is "just interested in appropriation of power". "I don't know how much

is wrong and that is what

has got highlighted in this

power you want. The problem is because you are trying to appropriate power, which is why you are not getting power," it

It is the personal call of the chief minister if he wants the administration to be "paralysed", the court remarked.

The bench further said the persons who lead have to "carry everyone along" as it cannot be a case of "one man upmanship".

The Delhi government counsel said he was not appearing for the chief minister and assured the court that the issue of non-supply of educational material would be resolved if the Municipal Corporation of Delhi

(MCD) commissioner makes a formal request for financial approvals even in the absence of the civic body's standing com-

The court noted that the Delhi government counsel was appearing on instructions from the Urban Development Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj and stated, "We will record your statement that it is because the chief minister is in custody that I cannot do anything. If that's his personal call, good luck to him."

The bench further stated that"Choice is yours that the chief minster will continue despite being in jail. We will have to say this. This is your administration's will. You are asking us to go down that track and we will come with full vigour," the court added

The court was dealing with a PIL by NGO Social Jurist, represented by advocate Ashok Agarwal, highlighting the nonsupply of educational material and other statutory benefits to students in the MCD schools even after the commencement of the new academic session.

AAP central campaign

RAHUL GAHLAWAT NEW DELHI

In a bold move, Aam Admi Party has announced Sunita Kejriwal to Lead the campaign in absence of AAP

National Convenor Arvind

Kejriwal. The campaign will commence with a grand roadshow in the East Delhi Lok Sabha constituency, followed by another in West Delhi. Beyond the capital, Sunita Kejriwal's itinerary extends to Punjab, Gujarat, and Haryana, showcasing a nationwide appeal for support for the AAP and its leader, Arvind Kejriwal.

Senior AAP Leader and Cabinet Minister, Atishi, in press conference highlighted the significance of Sunita Kejriwal's campaign, particularly in light of recent events.

Atishi highlighted the BJP's attempt to arrest Arvind Kejriwal, asserting that it has backfired as people nationwide rally in support of the embattled Chief Minister. The arrest, seen as a bid to stifle Kejriwal's political momentum, has instead galvanized public support, with citizens vehemently opposing what they perceive as an attack

on democracy. "Atishi underscored that

Atishi highlighted the BJP's attempt to arrest Arvind Kejriwal, asserting that it has backfired as people nationwide rally in support of the embattled Chief Minister. The arrest, seen as a bid to stifle Kejriwal's political momentum, has instead galvanized public support, with citizens vehemently opposing what they perceive as an attack on democracy.

the people of Delhi, Punjab, and the entire country stand united in solidarity with Arvind Kejriwal, vehemently opposing his arrest and vowing to respond with votes in the upcoming elections," the statement read.

Furthermore, Atishi pointed out the strategic timing of

Kejriwal's arrest, occurring just before the announcement of elections and amidst the imposition of the model code of conduct. This move, according to Atishi, reflects BJP's fear of Kejriwal's political prowess and their desire to sideline him from the electoral arena.

Two arrested for robbing Ugandan woman in Delhi's Chhattarpur

TDG NETWORK

Two men were arrested for allegedly robbing a woman from Uganda in Delhi's Chhattarpur area, police said on Friday.

The incident occurred

when the 27-year-old foreign national was walking on her way to Chhattarpur Pahari from Phool Mandi at 100 Feet Road around 10:45 PM on Thursday. While attempting to loot her, the accused thrashed her and tore her clothes before fleeing from the spot. According to Delhi police, last night around midnight, a PCR call regarding a lady who was injured on the road was received at Police Station Mehrauli. On reaching the spot, a 27-year-old Ugandan national was found injured, and she was taken



to the hospital by PCR. In her complaint, she stated, "At around 10:45 PM, she was going from Phool Mandi at 100 Feet Road, Chhattarpur Pahari, and walking on the footpath when suddenly two boys who had a dog were walking behind her. She was scared of dogs, so she tried to keep away from them. However, the boys grabbed her from behind and dragged her to the other side of the wall." "There was an altercation. and they robbed her purse, which contained Rs 800 in cash and one silver ring. They also tore her clothes and hit her head with a stone before fleeing from the spot," she added in her statement. Later, an FIR was filed under Mehrauli police station, and based on the CCTV

'Spiderman' couple nabbed for motorbike stunt

TDG NETWORK

A couple in Delhi was apprehended on Friday for performing dangerous stunts on the streets of the national capital dressed up in body-con costumes of comic characters Spiderman and Spiderwom-

While Marvel Comics' anarchid abilities give the fictional characters superpowers making it possible for them to swing across skyscraper buildings, the nabbed couple seemed to want to imitate the characters on their motorbike on the city's roads.

After a video of the duo's stunts in Dwarka on a bike without a number plate went viral on social media, Delhi Police apprehended them and booked them under the Motor Vehicle Act for various offenses including dangerous driving and riding without helmets among

Following an inquiry, the identity of the daring rider was revealed as 20-year-old Aditya and his 19-vear-old friend. both residents of Najafgarh. Both of them are quite popular on social media.

The rider has been booked under sections 5/180, 194D, 3/181, 177, 125(2) CMVR/177, 184 MV Act, 50,51 CMVR/39/192 MV Act and 209 MV Act.

Meanwhile, earlier this month, a 20-year-old man was arrested by Delhi Police for indulging in reckless driving and dangerous stunts in Subhash Nagar in West Delhi.

He had also posted videos of the act on social media to garner followers and misguiding impressionable youth, the Delhi Police said.

Court directs Centre to decide plea challenging exclusion of women in CDS exams

TDG NETWORK

The Delhi High Court on Friday directed the Centre through the Ministry of Defence and others, to decide the plea challenging a notification recently issued for the recruitment which excludes females from appearing in the examination to be conducted for IMA, INA and IAF solely on the grounds of their gender. Petitioner Kush Kalra, through a plea, stated that the notification issued for the recruitment unjustifiably excludes females from appearing in the examination to be conducted for IMA, INA and IAF solely on the grounds of their Gender.

The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) has invited applications related to the Ministry of Defence on December 20, 2023, for graduates. Notification is for



Ugandan national robbed,

molested in Chhattarpur

Military Academy (IMA), tion demanding that women Indian Naval Academy should be allowed to join the (INA), Air Force Academy of the Indian Armed Forces (IAF) and Officers Training Academy (OTA) through the Combined Defence Services (CDS). The examination was held on April 21, 2024.

The bench of Justice Manmohan and Justice Manmeet Pritam Singh Arora, after noting the submissions, directed the Ministry of De-

A 27-year-old Ugan-

dan national was robbed

and her clothes torn by

two men in south Delhi's

Indian Army, Navy and Air Force through CDS exams within 8 weeks.

Kush Kalra through a plea, stated that the notification for the CDS exam dated December 20, 2023 explicitly states, "government strives to have a workforce which reflects gender balance and women candidates are encouraged to apply."

Man posing as Singapore Airlines pilot detained booked for forgery

TDG NETWORK

A 24-year-old person was booked for posing as a pilot with Singapore Airlines in front of CISF personnel, who are in charge of airport security across the country.

The person, who was caught for an act of forgery, was spotted wandering in the Metro Skywalk area of the Delhi airport in the uniform of a Singapore Airlines pilot, with a fake ID around his neck. Upon being intercepted and quizzed, the imposter was identified as Sangeet Singh from Gautam Buddha Nagar in Uttar Pradesh

He was found to be in possession of a Singapore Airlines ID for in-flight operations, which was subsequently confirmed to be fake upon checking.

According to the police, the 24-year-old forged the ID us-



tal. Further probe revealed that the imposter pursued and completed a one-year Aviation Hospitality course in Mumbai in 2020.

However, he tricked his family and acquaintances into believing that he had landed a job as a pilot for Singapore Airlines, according to the probe.

A case under IPC sec-

The person, who was caught for an act offorgery, was spotted wandering in the Metro Skywalk area of the Delhi airport in the uniform of a Singapore Airlines pilot, with a fake ID around his neck.

ing an online app, Business Card Maker, and purchased the uniform and accessories from Pilot 18, Sector 9, Dwarka, in the national capitions 420, 468 and 471 was registered against the accused, who has been apprehended.

Further inputs are awaited.

Three held for stabbing man to death in Delhi

TDG NETWORK

Three persons have been arrested for allegedly stabbing a person to death at a reception party in the National Capital, police said on Friday. One person was also injured during the incident.

The accused have been identifed as Abdul Sammi alias Kallu (19), a resident of Bhalswa Dairy, age 19 yrs. He is a Swiggy delivery boy. Vikas Age (20) and Arshlan (20) alias Monti, resident of Rajeev Nagar Bhalswa.

The injured was identified as Sameer, a resident of Rajeev Nagar Bhalswa Dairy. He is undergoing treatment at BJRM hospital and was later referred to LNJP hospital for further treatment. Doctors declared him unfit to record his statement, police said.

Police identifed the victim as Fardeen (22), a rickshaw driver who died on the spot. A case under sec-



tions 302/307/34 IPC has been registered at Bhalswa Dairy police station based on the statement of witness Mubin

According to Delhi Police a Police Control Room call was received at mid night regarding stabbing at Bhalswa Dairy Police station.

He stated that there was a Valima (reception) party of his cousin Rizwan in Gali No-2 Rajeev Nagar and apart from their relatives, Fardeen, their neighbour also invited, as per police.

"At around midnight, Sameer, a relative and Fardeen went out side together and after some time Sameer came running back with three persons chasing him with a knife in their hands,"

police said.

Injured Sameer was immediately shifted to the hospital in a motor cycle where he was declared brought dead by the doctors, police said.

"It has also come to knowledge from local enquiry that the victim may have relieved themselves on the road near the one of the house of the accused, which could have triggered the quarrel and started to stab the other party," police said.

"In this case all three alleged accused persons have been arrested," as per police. The CCTV footage where the accused are seen chasing

trived, police said.

the victim have also been re-

The woman was found on a road in an injured state when police reached the spot responding to a PCR call.

TDG NETWORK

"On Thursday around 12 am, a PCR call regarding a woman who was injured on road was received at Police Station Mehrauli. On reaching the spot a Ugandan national woman was found injured," a police officer said. Two men, Manoj, 24, and Rinku Kashyap, 26, both labourers, have been arrested in connection with the assault, the officer said.

Chhattarpur Pahari area, According to the victim's police on Friday said. complaint, around 10.45 pm, she was passing from the 'phool mandi' on the 100 Feet Road in Chhattarpur Pahari, when she found herself being stalked by two men who had a dog with them, police said.

She got scared and tried to get away from the dog, but the two grabbed her and dragged her behind a wall.

Delhi Cong urges LG him to hold mayoral election

TDG NETWORK

Delhi Congress leader Jitender Kumar Kochar has written to Lt Governor VK Saxena, appealing him to allow the mayoral election to take place without any further delay by clearing the file, the party said on Friday. Kochar, the party's MCD

in-charge, in his letter appealed to the LG to appoint the presiding officer and said several works of the MCD have been stalled since the last one year in the absence of Standing Committee and Ward Committees. He said new Mayor and Deputy Mayor will get less than ten months in these posts.

Services increase their weight in foreign direct

Percentage of cross-border greenfield projects per sector

21%

2008-2011

Low income Lower-middle income Upper-middle income High income

2012-2015

Percentage of cross-border greenfield projects by income level of recipient countries,

2016-2019

2020-2023

investment

100

80

60

40

20

44%

2004-2007

developing countries

Manufacturing Other non-services Services

'FOREIGN INVESTMENT NO LONGER ALIGNED WITH GDP GROWTH'

NIVEDITA MUKHERJEE

significant shift has taken place in the global economy with the growth of foreign direct investment (FDI) and global value chains (GVCs) no longer aligned with GDP and trade growth and even amidst rising trade tensions, global GDP and trade, since 2010, have continued to expand at an annual average of 3.4 per cent and 4.2 per cent respectively. In stark contrast, FDI growth has stagnated near zero per cent

in the midst of rising pro-

tectionism, growing geopo-

litical tensions and increased

investor caution, says the

latest UN Trade and Devel-

opment (UNCTAD) report

"Global economic fractur-

ing and shifting investment

patterns" launched on 23rd

April. The report examines the complex landscape of global FDI and sheds light on how over the past two decades, transformative shifts driven by technological advances, policy developments and sustainability demands have reshaped globalisation, compelling FDI patterns to adapt in three key aspects. It emphasises the necessity of integrating sustainability and development into investment strategies and calls for innovative investment strategies to foster inclusive and sustainable economic growth. Here are some key

findings. Second, notes UNTAD, there is a widening gap in investment trends between manufacturing and services sectors with investments increasingly leaning towards services. From 2004 to 2023, the share of cross-border greenfield projects in the services sector grew from 66 per cent to 81 per cent and services-related investment within manufacturing industries nearly doubled to about 70 per cent, driven by technological advances. Simultaneously, FDI in manufacturing was stagnating for in the three years after the outbreak of the Covid-19

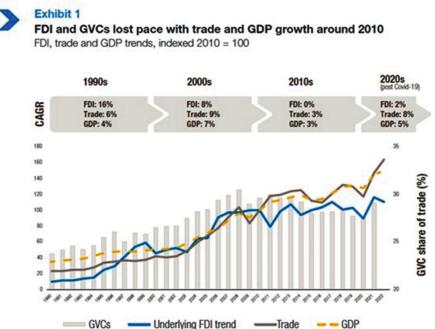
The decline in manufacturing has severely impacted smaller economies, hindering their ability to participate in global production, upgrade production methods and adopt new technologies. On the other hand, expansion of the services sector mainly benefits larger developing economies that can effectively compete, creating an imbalance that leaves smaller ones at a disadvantage, accentuating disparities and underscoring the need for policies that provide all developing countries equal opportunities. The decline severely hinders developing economies' efforts to leverage participation in GVCs for economic development and industrial transformation.

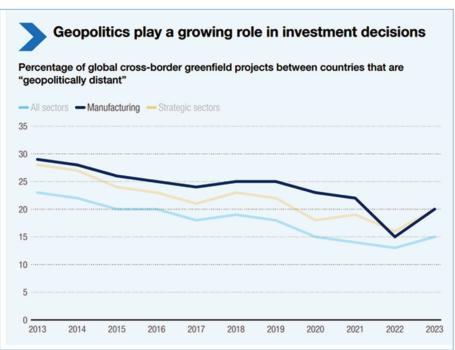
The share of cross-border greenfield projects in the services sector rose from about 65% two decades ago to over 80%. And services-related investment within manufacturing industries nearly doubled to about 70%, driven by technological advances.

Meanwhile, FDI in manufacturing has seen a significant downturn, with a compound annual growth rate of -12% in the three years following the outbreak of the pandemic. The decline severely hinders developing economies' efforts to leverage participation in GVCs for economic development and industrial transformation.

A key finding of the report is that investment patterns in China have delinked from the rest of the world with the geography of global FDI being significantly re-shaped by China's reduced role as a recipient country, a process that accelerated after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the past three years, the number of greenfield projects to China has hovered at a level around one third the same figure a decade ago. Multinational corporations have shown diminishing enthusiasm for launching new investments

pandemic.





and trade, suggesting that its "global factory" mode has not downsized but instead transitioned from globally integrated production networks to more domestically focused ones.

The UNCTAD report flags concern over the transition from divergence to fracturing in global investment patterns amidst recent global conflicts and crises which have disrupted usual investment patterns, leading to unstable investment relationships and limited chances to benefit from strategic diversification. The report factors, at times overriding economic determinants, complicating standard approaches to investment promotion and hindering FDI-based development. Investments between geopolitically distant countries - those with divergent political interests or foreign policies - decreased from 23 pr cent in 2013 to 13 pr cent in 2022. This trend particularly affected the manufacturing sector as trade tensions began to escalate in 2019.

The transition from divergence to fracturing and sectoral shifts and geographic a small group of developing economies. Most others face declining manufacturing investment and a shrinking pool of efficiency-seeking, lower value-added projects to leverage for GVC participation. Heightened uncertainty and fracturing are eroding the predictable and open global investment environment upon which they rely to support their development objectives.

The other cause for worry, says UNCTAD is that despite progress toward sustainability and the sustainable development goals (SDGs), impact on developing nations are mixed. The sus- economies. Investtainability imperative and

the drive to stimulate investment in the SDGs have opened new opportunities for investment-driven industrial development, particularly in environmental technologies. However, these new opportunities can only compensate in part for the lack of FDI growth in other industrial sectors. The growing trend of FDI

to environmental technologies offers new opportunities but fails to fully address the slowdown in other industries, specially affecting developing and least developed countries increasing the vulnerability of their

technologies like wind and solar energy have surged. Their share of total greenfield projects in non-services sectors jumped from 1 per cent in the early 2000s to 20 per cent by 2023. Likewise, FDI in the manufacturing of electric vehicles and batteries has seen 27% annual growth over the past decade.

However, this growth only partially offsets the decline in other manufacturing sectors. It also primarily benefits developed countries, while least developed countries (LDCs) continue to struggle with reduced FDI in traditional sectors.

ments in environmental bridge investment dispari-

ties across sectors and regions, UNCTAD has called for immediate action to ensure that the benefits of investment are distributed more equitably and aligned with overarching developmental objectives. The key policy recommendations from UN Trade and Development underline the need for developing countries to revise their economic development strategies and calls on global policymakers, business leaders, and development agencies to enhance collaboration at global and regional level and work towards a more open and Given the imperitive to fairer global investment en-

vironment.

31%

**	GVC share of
".	20
GVCs — Underlying FDI trend — Trade ——	GDP
Seopolitics play a growing role in investmen	nt decisions
Percentage of global cross-border greenfield projects between countri "geopolitically distant"	ries that are
— All sectors — Manufacturing — Strategic sectors	
35	
30	
25	
20	
15	

two decades before going down significantly, with a negative compound annual	in China. However, China continues to play a dominant role in global manufacturing	cautions that FDI decisions are now more frequently influenced by geopolitical	rebalancing of FDI offer po- tential benefits but these are likely to be available only to	
	EWS SURVEY Singh Statement	Male	95%	
Date: 26th April 2024		Female	5%	
Q-1 Muslims have the first r han Singh's statement?	right on the country's resource	s, what will be the impact of the	e controversy over Manmo-	
A- BJP benefits		48	3.00%	
B- Benefit to Congress		16	.00%	
C- There will be no effect		34	.00%	
D-Can't say	D-Can't say		00%	
Grand Total		1	00%	
Q-2 Were Muslim appeaser	ment policies made during the	tenure of Congress?		
A-Yes		64.00%		
B-No		34.00%		
C-Can't say		2.00%		
Grand Total		100%		
Q-3 Who is benefiting in the	elections from Owaisi's stater	nents like eliminating the devi	ls?	
A-AIMIM		4.00%		
B-BJP		52.00%		
C-Congress		20.00%		
D- Regional party		12	12.00%	
E-Can't say		12.00%		
Grand Total		1	00%	
Q-4 What action should the	Election Commission take on H	lindu-Muslim political statemo	ents?	
A- Stop the publicity campaig	gn	14.00%		
B- Stopped from contesting e	elections	13.00%		
C- Take legal action		65.00%		
D-Can't say		8.00%		
Grand Total		100%		

INDIA NEWS SURVEY DEROGATORY LANGUAGE OF LEADERS	Male	95 %	
Date: 26th April 2024	Female	5%	
Q-1 What is your opinion on the abusive language of big leaders	n election rallies?		
A- Very shameful	35.00%		
B- Attempt to polarize	9.00%		
C- Provocative agenda	50.00%		
D-Can't say	6	.00%	
Grand Total	1	00%	
Q-2 Which leader needs to control his language more on election	n platforms?		
A- BJP leader	21.00%		
B- Congress leader	28	28.00%	
C-TMC leader	5.00%		
D- AIMIM leader	6.00%		
E- Leaders of all parties	40.00%		
F-can't say	0.00%		
Q-3 On whom should action be taken to control the bad words of	leaders?		
A- Action on the leader	50.00%		
B- Action on party president	21.00%		
C- Action against election officer	26.00%		
D-Can't say	3.00%		
Grand Total	100%		
Q-4 Does the Election Commission seem capable of controlling b	ad speech?		
A-Yes	36.00%		
B-No	50.00%		
C- Delay in action	11.00%		
D-Can't say	3.00%		
Q-5 Which type of speech from election platforms has the greate	est impact on voters?		
A- Aggressive speech	19.00%		
B- Passionate speech	30.00%		
C- Factual speech	17.00%		
D- Religious speech	20.00%		
E- Cannot say Grand Total	14.00%		
Grand Total	100%		

PUNJAB POLICE ARRESTS 11 MEMBERS OF CHARANJIT SINGH GANG

TDG NETWORK

he Anti-Gangster Task Force (AGTF) of the Punjab police, in a joint operation with Central agencies and J&K police, arrested 11 members of an organized criminal gang operated by Charanjit Singh alias Raju shooter.

The police recovered four weapons, including three pistols and a double barrel gun, and 26 live cartridges from their procession.

In a post on X, Punjab Director General of police (DGP) Gaurav Yadav said, "In a major breakthrough, AGTF Punjab in a joint operation with Central agencies & J&K Police, has arrested 11 members of an organised criminal gang operated by Charanjit Singh alais Raju Shooter."

"In September 2023 the gang was involved in a failed attempt to loot a bank at Vil-



DGP further said. "The arrested accused were involved in organised criminal activities

April 16, associates of Raju

shooter had orchestrated

his escape from Civil Hospi-

tal, Tarn Taran where he was

admitted for treatment," the

a double barrel gun) and 26 live cartridges have been recovered. Punjab police is fully committed to eradicate organised crime in the

state," he added. Earlier on April 22, Punjab Police apprehended two arms cartel operatives and recovered various arms and

ammunition from them. The accused were identi-

In a post on X, DGP Punjab Police said, "SAS Nagar Police apprehends Malkeet Singh Nawab operating an interstate arms cartel along with Gamdoor Singh Vicky and recovers 6 pistols, 10 live cartridges and 10 pistol magazines from them.'

Assam: Students collect fodder plant seeds to restore elephant habitats

TDG NETWORK

Aaranyak, a leading research-driven biodiversity conservation organisation. has partnered with local schools and community groups to launch a seed collection drive throughout the Udalguri and Baksa districts of Assam as part of its larger goal of restoration of degraded elephant habitats in the region. "Based on field surveys and literature review, we gained insights on elephant fodder plants in the wild. Accordingly, we have been conducting seed collection drives seasonally engaging local communities and students from the villages to raise them in our nursery, and consequently plant the saplings at the habitat revival site in the appropriate season," said Aaranyak's conservation biologist Dr Alolika Sinha explaining the spirit of the initiative.



In the recent initiative in Udalguri and Baksa districts, the NGO engaged 60 students from Rajiv Gandhi Memorial High School, Sapangaon and 50 students from Saint Paul School, Bhairabkunda in Udalguri and community members from Madhupur and Subankhata in Baksa and Kundarbil in Udalguri.

As part of the effort, the research-driven conservation non-profit worked with the students and community

TDG NETWORK

tion and cruelty.

transport rules, in 1978.

The Orissa High Court has taken cognizance

of the plea against giving the custody of cattle

to the owner who was found blatantly violat-

The court was hearing the plea by Dhy-

an Foundation led by Senior Advocate

Siddhartha Luthra, challenging the order

of the revisional court which released the

seized cattle to the accused owner despite

evidence of fake ownership documenta-

Dhyan Foundation had rescued cattle

that were being illegally transported and

in the most inhumane manner, merciless-

ly tied and stuffed without any provision

of food and water, flouting all the rule of

Justice Sibo Shankar Mishra reversed

the trial court's decision of November 1.

the same court, stating that the revisional

court failed to take into account the crime

committed by the owner in faking the

ing all animal transportation rules.

members to raise awareness about biodiversity conservation by actively contributing to ecosystem restoration.

Together the groups collected seeds of native species such as Bel (Aegle marmelos), Odal (Sterculia villosa), Arjun (Terminalia arjuna) and Thekera tenga (Garcinia pedunculata), for raising on Aaranyak's nursery and eventually planting them at the habitat restoration site in Udalguri. Aaranyak, for instance, is actively involved in

Orissa High Court

passes a landmark

order to protect cattle

from animal cruelty

restoring the degraded habitat of elephants in Udalguri with support from the SBI Foundation to reduce conflict between the indigenous communities and threatened Asian elephants.

A guided nature walk around Rajiv Gandhi Memorial High School and a plantation drive with Saint Paul School students provided students with educational opportunities, fostering a better understanding of the natural environment.

ownership of the cattle and meting out

The Court set aside the order of the Dis-

trict and Sessions Judge and remanded

back the matter to the same Court to de-

Looking at the miserable condition of

the cattle, the local police handed them

over to DF for their immediate care, pro-

However, no health inspection and

The owner's plea was rejected by the

Judicial Magistrate which he had taken

from the District and Sessions Judge, Ma-

yurbhanj Baripada, who passed the deci-

sion in his favour, blatantly ignoring the

fake documents and cruelty to animals.

High Court criticised the decision of the

Revisional Court and directed the case

Senior Advocate Siddharth Luthra left

the facts and the law by his side succeed-

ed in preventing the cattle from going to

back to them for petition revision.

marking of cattle were conducted.

cide the revision petition afresh.

cruelty towards animal.

tection and maintenance.

Vice President urges greater industry-academia collaboration in research

TDG NETWORK

Vice President of India Jagdeep Dhankhar on Friday visited Bharat Biotech's facilities at Genome Valley, Hyderabad, which focused on innovation, research and development, and largescale manufacturing facilities for vaccines.

Admiring the Biotech Company's "dedication and resilience" during challenges Dhankhar urged greater collaboration between industry. and academia in research.

"I am at a place where people are driven with a passion for research, development and concern for society, Bharat Biotech has not only helped the nation fight the pandemic by developing indigenous vaccines but also contributed immensely to digital penetration," he said. The vice president also urged greater collaboration between industry, academia and support to back more research in all sectors," he said.

The Vice-President's visit reaffirmed the vital contribution and role of Bharat Biotech in the nation's ongoing immunisation programs and it is ready to combat the pandemic, said the company



in a press release.

The Vice President was accompanied by Telangana Governor CP Radhakrish-

The visit commenced with a welcome from Krishna Ella, Executive Chairman of Bharat Biotech and Suchitra Ella, Co-Founder and Managing Director of Bharat Biotech, who expressed gratitude for the Vice-President's interest in the company's

Soon after reaching the facility, Dhankar was briefed in detail about the manufacturing facility, the intricate processes involved in vaccine production, and the company's initiatives to develop new molecules and vaccine candidates to fight neglected diseases that affect the developing world, specifically focused on malaria, cholera, tuberculosis, and chikungunya.

In his address, Krishna M Ella, Executive Chairman of

Bharat Biotech, thanked the Vice-President for recognising Bharat Biotech's dedication and reaffirmed the company's continued commitment to developing novel vaccines, contributing to national self-reliance goals, and shaping a healthier future.

He said that it was a momentous occasion for the company to have the Vice President visit and grace them on World Intellectual Property Day. He highlighted Bharat Biotech's continued focus on IPs which resulted in 400 patents".

Suchitra Ella, MD of Bharat Biotech, highlighted the company's commitment to public health and its over 25vear journey, as well as the efforts of its workforce. "At Bharat Biotech, we believe that every vaccine produced brings us one step closer to overcoming infectious diseases that affect public health and prevent crises,"

arrested with heroin worth

Myanmar national

TDG NETWORK

on Friday.

"Assam Rifles, along

with Special Narcotics Po-

lice Station, CID (Crime),

Aizawl, Mizoram recov-

ered 110 soap cases (1.206

kg) Heroin No. 04, with

an approximate value of

Rs 8,44,20,000 and one

Honda car in General Area

Tuikual North, Aizawl and

apprehended one Myan-

mar's National on April 25,"

said a statement from head-

quarters Inspector General

Assam Rifles (East).

BSF recovers Chinamade drone in Punjab's Tarn Taran

TDG NETWORK

The Border Security Force (BSF) along with the Punjab Police recovered a drone in the border area of Tarn Taran district, officials said on Friday.

According to an official BSF release, "Based on information on April 25, 2024, BSF intelligence set up about the presence of a drone in the border area of Tarn Taran district, a joint search operation by BSF troops with Punjab Police was conducted in the suspected area.'

The recovered drone has been identified as a China-made

DJI Matrice 300 RTK. "During the search operation, at about 10.15 pm, troops successfully recovered one drone in broken condition from a farming field adjacent to village Khemkaran in Tarn Taran District," said the release.

The statement further stated that reliable information and coordinated efforts of BSF and Punjab police successfully recovered vet another illicit drone from across the border.

Earlier on Wednesday, the BSF along with the Punjab Police recovered a drone from a farming field adjacent to village Khemkaran in the border area of Punjab's Tarn Taran

The recovered drone was identified as a China-made DJI Mavic 3 Classic.

SC asks ASI to file its response on vision document for preserving Taj Mahal

2023, and remanded the matter back to no stone unturned to prove his point with

the accused.

TDG NETWORK

The Supreme Court has asked the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to file its response on the vision document and plan prepared for the protection of the Taj Mahal.

A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Ujjal Bhuyan directed the Uttar Pradesh government to produce a copy of the vision document and instructed the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to submit its response to the vision document within two

"We direct the State of Uttar Pradesh to produce a copy of the vision plan on record and provide soft copies thereof to the learned counsel appearing for the parties," the apex court stated in its order.

"We direct the ASI to look into the vision plan and submit its response to the vision plan in the form of an affidavit before this Court within a period of two months from today. The issue of implementation of the vision plan and the suggestions of ASI will be considered by this

a "We direct the State of Uttar Pradesh to produce a copy of the vision plan on record and provide soft copies thereof to the learned counsel appearing for the parties," the apex court stated in its order.

Court on July 11, 2024," it added.

The vision document was prepared by the School of Planning and Architecture (SPA) along with the State.

The bench noted that on December 8, 2017, it directed the preparation of the vision plan for the protection of the Taj Mahal. The apex court was hearing a plea seeking the implementation of a vision document to preserve the Taj Mahal and environmental issues in the Taj Trapezium Zone.

It has now posted the matter for further consideration on July 11, 2024, to discuss the implementation of the vision document along with the comments of the Archaeological Survey of India.

The top court is seized of the matter filed in 1984 related to the protection and preservation of the Taj Mahal, built by Mughal emperor Shah Jahan in the memory of his wife Mumtaz Mahal in 1631, and its surroundings.

Environmentalist MC Mehta had filed the plea about the protection of the Taj Mahal, the fragile ecosystem surrounding it, and construction in the Taj Trapezium Zone (TTZ), an "ecosensitive area" having four world heritage sites including the Taj Mahal. The mausoleum is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The TTZ, established on December 30, 1996, to protect the Taj Mahal from pollution through an order of the Supreme Court, is a 10,400 sq km area spread across the districts of Agra, Firozabad, Mathura, Hathras and Etah in Uttar Pradesh and Bharatpur district of Rajasthan.

Court rejects plea seeking DNA test of BJP candidate Ravi Kishan

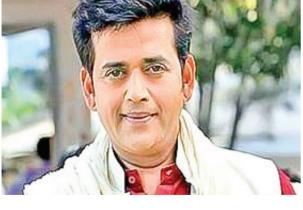
TDG NETWORK

A Mumbai Court has rejected the plea of a 25-year-old actress seeking a DNA test of Bhojpuri film star and BJP candidate from Uttar Pradesh's Gorakhpur, Ravi Kishan, claiming that the latter was her father. Earlier, the actress, Shino-

va Soni had filed an application in the Dindoshi Sessions Court in Mumbai seeking recognition of her rights as actor Ravi Kishan's daughter. She had requested permission to conduct a DNA test of the actor. The Court heard this matter and had reserved its decision

However, during Thursday's court hearing, Ravi Kishan's lawyer refused to acknowledge Shinova as Ravi Kishan's daughter and instead discussed providing financial assistance to her mother, Arpana (Thakur)

Soni while addressing a press conference in Uttar Pradesh's Lucknow on April



However, during Thursday's court hearing, Ravi Kishan's lawyer refused to acknowledge Shinova as Ravi Kishan's daughter and instead discussed providing financial assistance to her mother, Arpana (Thakur) Soni.

16, claimed that Ravi Kishan is Shinova's biological father. She had also alleged that the actor had denied her rights as his daughter.

Following this, a complaint was filed by Ravi Kishan's wife, and a case was registered against Soni and oth-

The Bhojpuri film star Ravi Kishan, a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP from Gorakhpur, has been once again nominated by his party from the same constituency.



heroin worth over Rs 8 crores, said Assam Rifles The recovered consignment and apprehended The operation was carried out by a combined team of Assam Rifles and Special Narcotics Police Station, CID (Crime), Aizawl, based on specific information.

> of concern for the state of Mizoram and India. Due to drug, respectively. Assam Rifles, rightly christened as the 'Sentinels of Northeast', has continued their efforts against illegal drug trafficking and has also doubled its efforts to nab the kingpins of the drug racket in Mizoram, according to the statement from

Rs 8 crore by Assam Rifles

individual were handed over to Special Narcotics Police Station, CID (Crime), Mizoram, Aizawl on April 25, 2024, for further legal proceedings. Ongoing smuggling of illegal drugs is a major cause

Assam Rifles.

COMMENT & ANALYSIS

IRAN-ISRAEL MISSILE STRIKES: AT THE EDGE OF A PRECIPICE

OPINION

MAJ GEN JAGATBIR SINGH VSM (RETD)



n 14 April, Iran launched its first direct military offensive against Israel. The attack consisted of over 300 Shahed drones, cruise missiles and ballistic missiles. The launch was detected immediately, and the Israeli forces on high alert had approximately two hours of response time before the drones reached Israeli airspace.

The strike was then taken apart as it moved across the Middle East by members of the US-led Middle East Air Defence Alliance, which included jets from the RAF, the Jordanian Air Forces and the US Air Force. Most of the surviving munitions were then intercepted by Israel's Air Defence Systems which include the Iron Dome, Davids Sling and Arrow 2 & 3. At least five penetrated through these defences and struck targets in and around an Nevatim Air Base in the Negev Desert. These five hits resulted in no casualties and caused only structural damage.

The world was on edge

and there was danger that a threatened Israeli retaliation would result in a regional if not wider conflict. Crude Prices spiked, markets dropped across the globe and gold reached new heights.

dangers of escalation was the blocking of the Straits of Hormuz as it would result in disruption of both crude and

For India one of the major

Israeli Response

natural gas.

The Israeli reaction took place within the week. On 19 April, they struck a military airbase near the city of Isfahan and Iranian officials also claimed to have shot down small drones near the Northern city of Tabriz but this was downplayed. Isfahan Province in the centre of Iran is home to significant Iranian military infrastructure, including a large air base, a major missile production complex and nuclear facilities. As per reports in the Jerusalem Post, the Israelis were targeting an air defence radar site near Isfahan that's part of the protection of the Natanz nuclear facility.

The choreography of missile strikes once again ensured that there were no casualties and moreover no targeting of Iranian Nuclear facilities. Iranian media and officials described a small number of explosions, which they said resulted from air defences hitting three drones over Isfahan. They referred to the incident as an attack by "infiltrators", rather than by

Israel, obviating the need for retaliation.

The Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian downplaying the attack said "They're ... more like toys that our children play with, not drones." He also added ;"As long as there is no new adventurism by Israel against our interests, we are not going to have any new reactions'.

With Israel remaining deadlocked in Gaza, where around 130 Israeli hostages remain but have inflicted more than 34,000 civilian casualties including women and children, the Iranian strikes must have seemed as a welcome relief as the narrative shifted from the humanitarian crisis Isael is causing in Gaza. Further, in a timing that cannot be a mere coincidence, the US House of Representatives quickly passed an aid package of \$26.38bn

for Israel.

With no hostage deal or ceasefire mechanisms apparent, the risk of miscalculation remains high. The region remains in a uniquely dangerous position in which Prime Minister Netanyahu may feel that he has little choice but to escalate with Iran in order to maintain public support.

But responses to the strike within Israel have exposed the country's political fissures. Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir described the strike on Iran as "feeble" or "lame". In response, Israeli Opposition Leader Yair Lapid called for him to be sacked, and said his remark had ridiculed and embarrassed Israel. Things Were Going Iran's

Since the 1979 revolution, Iran has taken an anti-Israeli posture and as part of its deterrence strategy has cultivated and financed support for the 'axis of resistance' network in Lebanon, Syria,

of persons and objects since

Iraq, Yemen and Palestine, surrounding Israel's borders.

The Hamas attack on O7 October suited Iran's agenda. Israel had suffered an unprecedented and humiliating setback, its much-lauded intelligence and defences had failed. Its subsequent actions in Gaza had received widespread condemnation and aligned the Middle Eastern countries against Israel. Israel's war was steadily harming its image, simultaneously exposing the hypocrisy of its Western backers. Israel was getting increasingly isolated

The Palestinian cause in the region and around the world had been resurrected. Sympathy for Palestinians, particularly in the West, was more voluble.

internationally due to its di-

sastrous war in Gaza.

Iran did not need to intervene, its proxies acted on its behalf. Hezbollah had been routinely shelling Northern Israel, and the Houthis in Yemen have launched numerous unsuccessful missile and drone strikes against Israel and disrupting global shipping.

But Israel's attack against the IRGC in Damascus forced Iranian officials to make a more difficult choice. Iran had two choices it could refrain from overt retaliation and continue to benefit from the present situation. The spotlight would remain on the atrocities in Gaza. Retaliation with force would discourage Israel from crossing the boundaries the two countries had established by their shadow war. Both options carried their own risks and benefits. Iranian Compulsions

Iran felt it had to act post the Israeli strike on its Consulate in Damascus and framed its strike within international law writing to the UNSC quoting Article 51 regarding

its legitimate self defence. It decided it had to violate a Napoleonic dictum 'never interrupt your enemy when he is making a mistake'.

Its primary aim was restoring the balance of deterrence by its 'sub-threshold response strategy' a type of response that was meticulously crafted above deterrence but below escalation.

Surprisingly, Iran even went against a key military principle of war, 'the element of surprise'. It telegraphed its intentions to Washington and several Arab and European capitals assuring them that its strike would be relatively limited.

The use of its array of weapons to inflict the damage was more than mere symbolism as it was aimed at reflecting Iranian capabilities. Iranian Armed Forces' Chief of Staff, Maj Gen Mohammad Bagheri stated that; "our response will be much larger than tonight's military action if Israel retaliates against Iran" is indicative of weapons in their arsenal which were not used and could be used in future. It also marks a shift in Iranian policy from 'strategic patience' to 'active deterrence'.

Iran's current strategy in the region was working well due to its proxies which gave them strategic depth, operational flexibility and plausible deniability. But its recent action as been driven by few aims; it has tried to demonstrate that it has the ability to alter the prevailing situation and that its missiles have the capability of reaching Israel and penetrating their air defence systems. The next is that the attack was directed at both Israel and the US thereby conveying that they would not submit to a Western political vision out of a sense of fear and finally it has also conveyed a mes-

Punjab and East Bengal. As

sage to those countries in the region that were moving towards normalisation of relations with Israel.

The attack showcased Iran's growing might and its willingness to strike at its adversaries to quote the Commander in Chief of the IRGC, Hossein Salami;" We have decided to establish a new dynamic with Israel".

Conclusion

Itamar Rabinovich, a former Israeli Ambassador to the US said; "Israel tried to calibrate between the need to respond and a desire not to enterinto a cycle of action and counter reaction that would just escalate endlessly."

While the Israeli 'limited response' seems to have averted the storm. But unfortunately, while a crisis has been abated the tensions continue to endure. The fact remains that while any nation can start a war, its duration and intensity become indeterminate in the long run. The engagements have upended the uneasy status quo and broken the decades of precedent. Hence the implications of crossing of this red line during this cycle of violence will remain. Firing of missiles primarily to signal resolve rather than cause damage are difficult to design while ensuring the conflict goes no

further.

Rewriting the rules of engagement is challenging but undoubtedly both sides have made a symbolic statement and managed the escalation cycle wherein they have played to the gallery as far as their domestic audience is concerned. They have responded while at the same time ensured that a retaliatory strike will remain below escalatory threshold.

Fortunately, both refrained from taking the plunge from the edge of the precipice.

group but it doesn't pro-

hibit Muslim migrants such

PERSPECTIVE TRYING TIMES

KEJRIWAL FEELING INSECURE WITH POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

With the Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal still in jail in connection with the Liquor scam, reports are surfacing which indicate that all was not well within the Aam Aadmi Party. These unconfirmed reports suggest that despite the sympathy factor working at the grass-roots level in favour of the organization, there were some leaders who seem to have become ambitious, and perhaps see an opportunity waiting for them. The BJP on its part would always be interested that the AAP gets weakened, and Kejriwal's hold over his outfit is reduced to some degree. The first indicator of the insecurity in the top echelons was when Sunita Kejriwal, the Chief Minister's wife contacted some INDIA bloc leaders. She is understood to have informed one former CM that if he ever had the need to know something about her party, he should only contact her and nobody else, and after she speaks to her husband, she would let him know how to go about it. This sense of insecurity stems from the fact that several AAP leaders seem to be nursing ideas on how things would be unfolding if Kejriwal remains in prison, and does not get any reprieve from the court of law. The Lt. Governor has already made it clear that he shall not allow the government to be run from the jail, and there is pressure on the leadership to take a call on whether someone else should be made the CM, in case, Kejriwal is compelled to resign. Earlier reports had suggested that Sunita Kejriwal could take her husband's place, but the BJP could pre-empt this by sacking the government or creating a split in the party. If the elected government is dismissed, it would suit the Delhi Chief Minister, who would then try to exploit the development to his advantage.

However, the BJP has been in touch with several AAP leaders, and is trying to assess the ground situation to ascertain if the party can be divided, and some leaders can be weaned away on the promise of being given positions and posts. Unfortunately, for the Kejriwals, though Arvind was always the face of the party and was immensely popular amongst the people, his MLAs and other elected representatives were controlled, not by him, but by other functionaries. For instance, Sanjay Singh, Rajya Sabha MP, who was released recently, has been the nuts and bolts man, and has a lot of influence over the MLAs and party workers. He has so far not shown any inclination to fulfill his greater ambitions and has been completely loval to his Boss. But certain activists close to the CM continue to view him as a possible threat in the future. What they need to understand is that they have no option but to trust Sanjay Singh, who after coming out has energized the cadres. There is also a minister, who nurses ambitions but is perhaps pondering over the feelers he has received from the Saffron Brigade. He is still unsure that if he gravitates towards the BJP, how many MLAs would agree to accompany him to his new party.

It should be recalled here that in both 2015 and 2020, the AAP had won the Delhi Assembly polls with an overwhelming majority and the vote each time was for Arvind Keiriwal, who was projected for the position of Chief Minister. Therefore, if anyone attempts to break the party or go elsewhere, he would be acting against the mandate of the people. But then politics is a strange game, where ambition often overrules, the ethical correctness. Such things have happened in the past and can happen in the future in the political sphere. The famous dialogue from "The Godfather" is very relevant which states that the saddest thing of betrayal is that it never comes from your enemies. The good news for the AAP is that along with its alliance partner, the Congress, it is doing quite well in the run up to the Lok Sabha elections. Yes, it is true that perception wise the BJP is ahead but it does not take time for the perception to alter, if the ground reality starts experiencing a change. That is why the BJP is keen to somehow, split the party as early as possible. Within the AAP also several battles are being fought and the discord is reflected in the delay in finalizing the municipal corporation placements. Many in the party are wondering why Raghav Chadha, Rajya Sabha MP from Punjab and a close confidant of the Chief Minister is missing from action when his presence was needed. He is reportedly abroad in connection with his eye surgery and may return only after that.

In political circles, it is being said that his ailment was curable but his absence was perhaps because of other reasons. This is a matter which he alone or the party can officially clarify. Similarly, Swati Maliwal, who was sent to the upper House recently and heads the Delhi Commission for Women, is keeping a low profile. There were reports that she too was abroad and was now every much in the city but is maintaining silence. In fact, Kejriwal being in jail has certainly affected his party even though Sanjay Singh and some others are trying to keep the flag flying. It is extremely important that the AAP maintains unity since its chances both in Delhi and Punjab remain alive, and it could bag some seats. Moreover, the true character of its leaders would be tested during these difficult times.

PANKAJ VOHRA

From annus horribilis to annus mirabilis: Debate on CAAs

OPINION

PROF. SATISH KUMAR



There are many lapses since the partition of the country, some are rectified and a few are still unresolved. The CAA is one of the initiatives which restored the long pending sins of the subcontinent. The notification of rules for implementation of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) 2019 on Monday had once again stirred the hornet's nest. While the critics lament it as the final nail in the coffin of Indian secularism, proponents of CAA call its implementation as fulfillment of a long-forgotten commitment. However apart from these polarizing

reactions, this whole debate

around CAA raises some very pertinent questions regarding citizenship, civic rights, and the nature of the Indian state, thus needing a through probing. Critics of CAA cloak their argument in a three-fold manner; first, they argue that CAA is violative of article 14 of the constitution which guarantees the right to equality by excluding Muslims from its purview. Another criticism of CAA is that it is arbitrary in the sense that it covers only selected refugees from Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh while excluding other prominent ethnic groups in India's neighborhood like Tamils, Rohingyas, and Tibetans. Finally, critics argue that CAA alters the fundamental precepts of the Indian state by linking citizenship with religion thus shaking the secular foundation of the Indian republic.

Article 14 of the constitution while prohibiting class legislations doesn't prohibit the state from making a "reasonable classification"

article 14 lies on the dictum that "only likes should be treated alike". Supreme Court held that a reasonable classification test must satisfy the twin condition of "intelligible differentia" and its rational nexus with the object of the legislation. In plain terms, parliament is competent to distinguish between Muslims and non-Muslims but such a classification must be reasonable hence much of the opposition to CAA is based on the erroneous notion of Article 14 granting absolute equality. As stated in the statement of objects and reasons of CAA 2019 the basis of classification is the religious persecution of non-Muslims since Islam is the official state religion of the three countries covered in CAA. In the case of Pakistan constitution explicitly discriminates against non-Muslims by forbidding them from occupying key positions such as head of state. Apart from the dejure discrimination, the situation of non-Muslims especially Hindus in Pakistan are horrendous through state-enabled force conversion of young girls.

Hence it is a logical corollary in this case is that if the ground for persecution is religion then the basis of classification automatically became religious. The

second criticism of CAA regarding its limited territorial scope ignores the historical context of this debate. Partition of India along religious lines grants a de facto recognition to the "Two-nation theory" thus putting the religious minorities in areas which eventually become Pakistan in a state of perpetual peril. Soon after the partition, the Nehru government tried to ameliorate the situation by signing the Nehru-Liaqat pact which guaranteed the protection of religious minorities in both countries. The work of scholars like Ali Usman Qasmi in Pakistan shows how Pakistan>s bureaucracy actively stifled any attempts by non-Muslims to return to Pakistan putting remaining religious minorities within Pakistan in a hostage situation. Hence, Pakistan>s disingenuity regarding its implementation has put a historical burden on the Indian state which is now been lifted by implementing CAA.

The responsibility of the Indian state vis-a-vis the religious minorities in areas that become Pakistan is prominently reflected in the constituent assembly debates. Members like Jaspat Roy Kapoor, and Bhopinder Singh Man raised the point of favourable treatment of Hindus and Sikhs returning from then West

far as the exclusion of other neighbors like Sri Lanka or Myanmar is concerned, the thing to keep in mind is that the Indian state has no historical culpability regarding those countries. Further, a nuanced reading of the situation in Sri Lanka or Myanmar shows that they are in a case of ethnic conflict where minorities are demanding their fair share in state resources and power arrangement through various methods including armed resistance for example LTTE in the case of Sri Lanka and Arakan Rohingya Salvation army in case of Myanmar. As a responsible neighbor, India has constantly prodded these countries to accommodate their ethnic minority through a fair distribution of power as exhibited by India's steadfast support of 13 amendments in Sri Lanka. This is entirely different from the case of countries covered under CAA where there is an incipient state-enabled persecution of a tiny helpless minority of Hindus and Sikhs who lack any political representation. Finally, the criticism of CAA fundamentally altering the secular nature of the Indian republic is superfluous since it ignores the simple fact that CAA only fast-tracked the acquisition of citizenship for a selected

as Ahmadiyya or Hazaras from availing of the conventional route for acquiring citizenship via naturalization. Also, just like Indian secularism differs from its Western counterpart due to the unique circumstances of India, similarly state relations with its potential citizens can't be completely divorced from the historical reality. India has since millennia has been a beacon of hope for those who are persecuted in the name of race or religion be it Parsis or Jews, hence it cannot turn a blind eye to its own who are left behind as a consequence of a historical tragedy. Partition of the Indian subcontinent is the failure of the Indian freedom movement to effectively counter the divisive politics of the Muslim league and the machinations of Britishers, but the consequence of this failure shouldn't be boar by those who are the margins. It was a grave injustice that the fate of Hindus and Sikhs from Sindh to Sylhet was decided by those sitting in the Viceroy palace in Delhi. Nothing can compensate for the suffering and trauma suffered by generations of those left behind but CAA is the step in the right direction.

Prof. Satish Kumar, IGNOU New Delhi

POLITICS: SIGNIFICANCE OF PARTY SYMBOLS

Election symbols were introduced in 1951-52 in India mainly to enable illiterate voters identify their candidates. They have gone through several changes, leading to monumental shift in Indian politics.

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The history of Indian election symbols is intertwined with the evolution of democracy in the country. Election symbols are a critical component of elections. They are a party's identity, and help voters recognise candidates. When parties split, a battle is fought for its election symbol. During the initial years of Indian elections post-independence, candidates and political parties often used a variety of symbols, including animals, objects, and religious symbols, to represent themselves on the ballot.

The choice of symbols was often arbitrary and varied widely, leading to confusion among voters and challenges in ensuring fair representa-

Today, we will provide insights on the introduction and journey of political parties' symbols that play a pivotal role in the successful functioning of the elections in the country. Here's a chronological overview

Introduction of Election **Symbols:** Before the first Lok Sabha election of 1951-52, the Election Commission of India realised that election symbols were critical in a country where the literacy rate was less than 20%. It made the the Commission to introduce the concept of election symbols to streamline the electoral process and make it more accessible to voters.

The Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968, established a formal system for the allotment of symbols to recognized political parties and independent candidates.

Recognition of Political Par-

ties: Political parties seeking recognition from the **Election Commission were** required to register unique symbols that would represent them in elections.

Recognized national and state-level parties were allotted permanent symbols, while other registered parties were allotted temporary symbols for each election cycle.

The Role of Symbols in Indian Politics: Election symbols became an integral part of Indian political culture, serving as visual identifiers for candidates and parties on the ballot.

Symbols played a crucial role in enhancing voter awareness and facilitating the participation of illiterate voters who could identify candidates by their symbols. **Symbol Allotment Process:** The Election Commission developed a comprehensive system for the allotment of symbols, ensuring fairness and transparency in the

process Symbols were allotted based on the preferences of recognized political parties, with the Election Commission maintaining a registry of available symbols and their corresponding parties.

Election symbols in India serve as potent symbols of identity and ideology for political parties and candidates. They encapsulate the values, beliefs, and aspirations of the

parties they represent. Symbols often carry cultural, historical, or regional significance, resonating with specific segments of the elec-

torate. Symbolic Significance: Many election symbols in India carry symbolic significance and resonate with vot-



hances a party's brand iden-

tity and helps build a loval

Legal Protections: Election

Changing Symbols

parties have changed their symbols thrice

Since the first general elections, the two largest national

voter base over time.

Congress's symbol

Election symbol of

Congress since 1977

symbols enjoy legal protec-

tions under Indian electoral

law. Unauthorized use or

tion symbols is prohibited

and can result in legal con-

The Election Commission

closely monitors the use of

symbols during elections

to ensure compliance with

regulations and prevent elec-

Symbolism and Regional Di-

versity: India's diverse cul-

tural landscape is reflected

in the wide array of election

symbols representing vari-

ous regions, communities,

Symbols often draw in-

spiration from local flora,

fauna, folklore, and histori-

cal landmarks, fostering a

sense of regional pride and

Evolving Symbolism: The

symbolism associated with

election symbols can evolve

over time in response to

changing social, political,

Parties may reinterpret

or rebrand their symbols to

resonate with contemporary

issues and appeal to new

Symbolic Controversies:

and cultural dynamics.

generations of voters.

belonging among voters.

toral malpractice.

and identities.

ers on a cultural or regional

For example, the Indian National Congress party's symbol, the hand, symbolizes strength and unity, while the BharatiyaJanata Party's symbol, the lotus, represents purity and prosperity.

Legal Framework: The allocation and use of election symbols are governed by the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968, which provides guidelines for the reservation and allotment of symbols to political parties and candidates.

Contemporary Developments: In recent years, the **Election Commission has** introduced measures to modernize the symbol allotment process, including the use of technology for symbol registration and allocation.

The Commission also periodically reviews the list of reserved symbols to accommodate new parties and ensure equitable representation.

The history of Indian election symbols reflects the country's commitment to democracy and inclusivity, providing a visual language that transcends linguistic and cultural barriers to facilitate the electoral process.

Role in Political Messaging: Election symbols play a crucial role in political messaging and branding. Parties and candidates strategically choose symbols that align with their political message

and target audience. Symbols are used extensively in campaign materials, posters, banners, and other promotional materials to reinforce party identity and

attract voter attention. **Empowerment of Illiterate Voters:** In a country with a significant illiterate population, election symbols serve as powerful tools for voter

empowerment. Illiterate voters can easily recognize and differentiate between candidates and parties by their symbols, enabling them to participate meaningfully in the electoral

Unique Symbols and Identity: Each political party strives to secure a unique and recognizable election symbol that sets it apart from

ties engaging in disputes over symbol allocation and infringement.

in controversies, with par-

Symbol disputes can lead to legal battles and even impact election outcomes in some cases

Regional and National Sym**bols:** While some election symbols have nationwide recognition, others are specific to certain regions or communities. This diversity reflects India's pluralistic society and ensures representation for various identities

in the political arena. For example, the "two leaves" symbol is associated with the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) party in Tamil Nadu, while the "cycle" symbol represents the Samajwadi Party in Uttar Pradesh.

Impact on Voter Behavior: Research suggests that elec-

> Election symbol of Bharatiya Jana Sangh (now

The BJS merged with Janta

Party in 1977 and had a symbol

In 1980, symbol of BJP after

former Jana Sangh members

split with Janata Party to form BJI

tion symbols can influence

voter behavior and decision-

making. Voters may develop

certain symbols or associate

them with particular parties

Candidates often strategi-

cally choose symbols that

evoke positive emotions or

resonate with the cultural

and social context of their

constituency to garner sup-

Dynamic Symbol Allotment:

The Election Commission

periodically reviews and

updates the list of reserved

symbols to accommodate

new parties and changing

Symbols may be retired, re-

placed, or re-allocated based

on requests from parties and

Role in Coalition Politics:

In coalition politics, the al-

location of symbols can be

a contentious issue among

alliance partners. Parties

negotiate symbol-sharing

agreements to maintain their

individual identities while

contesting elections together.

Symbol-sharing arrange-

ments often involve compro-

mises and strategic consid-

erations to ensure equitable

emerging electoral trends.

political dynamics.

or leaders.

Satirical Use of Symbols: In some instances, political parties and candidates use election symbols creatively for satirical or humorous purposes. Satirical symbols and campaign slogans are employed to critique opponents or highlight social issues in a lighthearted manner.

Satirical symbolism adds an element of wit and irony to the electoral discourse, engaging voters and sparking conversations about political

Innovation and Modernization: With advancements in technology and communication, political parties are increasingly leveraging digital platforms and multimedia channels to amplify their symbols and reach voters.

Parties use animated logos, social media filters, and interactive campaigns to modernize their symbol representation and connect with tech-savvy voters.

International Comparisons: The concept of election symbols is not unique to India and exists in various forms in democracies around the world. However, the cultural and historical contexts of symbols differ across countries, reflecting their respective political landscapes and traditions.

Comparative studies of election symbols offer insights into the role of visual communication in electoral politics and the dynamics of political branding on a global scale.

In essence, Indian election symbols are dynamic and multifaceted elements of the country's electoral process, influencing voter perceptions, shaping political identities, and reflecting the rich diversity of Indian democracy

Changing Symbols: The Congress' first election symbol was a pair of yoked bulls. The pair of bullocks was a representation of the agrarian economy inspired Indira Gandhi when she set up her own rival faction in 1969.

After being expelled from the party in 1969 by then Congress president S. Nijalingappa, Gandhi formed the **Indian National Congress** (Requisitionists). As dispute over the symbol (yoked pair of bullocks) arose, Indira Gandhi's faction was allotted the symbol of a 'cow nursing her calf'. As the Indira Gandhi faction contested elections under this new symbol, its rival faction and other Opposition parties raised objection claiming that the image of cow was being used to appeal to the Hindu reli-

gious sentiments. Post Emergency, as Gandhi sought to regain electoral power in the ensuing elections, after facing defeat at the hands of the Janata Party led by Morarji Desai. Declaring the party under her command as the "real Congress", Indira Gandhi announced the formation of Congress (Indira). With her 'calf and cow' symbol frozen following a 1979 split, Indira Gandhi was on the lookout for a new symbol, and was given the choice between several symbols by Election Commission, one of which was the hand.

As per the political experts, it was the story of the Kaipathy temple or hand temple at Kallekulangara that inspired Indira Gandhi to settle on the 'Hand' symbol.

The election symbol of the BJP, too, has changed over the years. From 1951 to 1977, the BJP (erstwhile) had oil lamp as its election symbol.

on the ballot but integral components of the country's democratic fabric. They embody the rich tapestry of India's political landscape, serving as symbols of identity, empowerment, and representation for millions of voters across the nation.

Indian election symbols are not just visual markers



In 1977, when it merged with other political parties

ment and the party's focus on the common people. **Indian National Congress** (INC) - Hand: The open hand

symbol of the Congress par-

ty has historical roots dating

while the star symbolizes the party's goal of achieving a socialist society.

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) - Lotus: The lotus holds significant cultural and religious symbolism in India, often associated with purity, enlightenment, and prosperity. The BJP adopted the lotus as its symbol to signify its commitment to cultural nationalism and Hindu

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) -**Broom:** The AAP's choice of a broom as its symbol is rooted in its anti-corruption stance. The broom symbolizes the party's mission to clean up politics and sweep away corruption from the Indian political landscape.

Shiv Sena - Bow and Arrow: The bow and arrow symbolize Shiv Sena's aggressive stance in defending the rights and interests of the Marathi-speaking people of



to form Janata Party, it chose a farmer and plough symbol to represent it. Three years later, when the Janata party

dissolved and the BJP was formed, lotus was adopted

as its election symbol. AtalBihari Vajpayee at a rally in Bombay in 1980 made the following prediction, "Andhera chhatega, sooraj niklega, kamal khilega" (The darkness will give way to light, the sun will come up, and the lotus will bloom). He was of course referring to the formation of the Bharatiya Janata Party on Apri 6, 1980. Vajpayee's choice of the lotus matched the new party's nationalist ideologies.

INTERESTING FACTS

Indian political parties often choose symbols that resonate with their ideologies or regional identities. Here are some interesting facts about some of these symbols:

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) - Elephant: The BSP's choice of an elephant as its symbol is inspired by the significance of elephants in Indian culture and mythology. Elephants are revered for their strength, wisdom, and loyalty, qualities that the party aspires to embody.

All India Trinamool Congress (TMC) - Flowers and **Grass:** TMC's symbol represents the unity of rural and urban interests. The flowers symbolize beauty and prosperity, while the grass signifies the grassroots move-

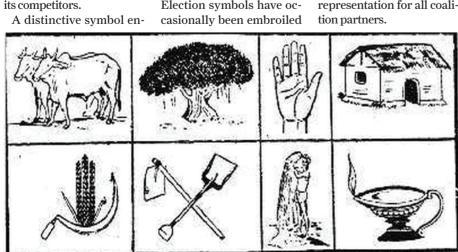
back to the Indian independence movement.

It was initially chosen to represent the party's commitment to serving the people and fighting for their

rights. **Communist Party of India** (CPI) - Sickle and Star: The CPI's symbol reflects its socialist ideology and its alignment with the interests of farmers and workers. The sickle represents agriculture,

Maharashtra. It reflects the party's militant origins and its commitment to regional identity politics.

These symbols play a crucial role in Indian elections, especially in rural areas where literacy rates may be low. They help voters identify their preferred parties on the ballot paper and serve as a powerful visual representation of political ideologies and agendas.





SUPREME COURT: 'EGG SHELL SKULL' RULE CAN BE APPLIED ONLY WHEN PATIENT HAD PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS | MEDICAL NEGLIGENCE

TDG NETWORK

The Supreme Court in the case Jyoti Devi Versus Suket Hospital And Ors observed that the compensation was wrongly reduced by applying 'Eggshell Skull Rule', the court enhanced the compensation amount is to be paid to a patient from Rs. 2 Lakhs to Rs. 5 Lakhs after recording that she was suffering persistently post-surgery due to deficiency in service by the

The bench comprising of Justice Sanjay Karol and Justice Aravind Kumar in the case observed and has stated that how could such compensation which amount to an amount of Rs 2 lakhs be justified, after observations hav-

ing been made with regards to the service rendered by the Hospital, being deficient,

and the continuous pain and suffering on the part of the claimant-appellant, is something we fail to comprehend. Therefore, compensation by its very nature, has to be just. Thus, for suffering, no part of which was the claimantappellant's own fault, she has been awarded a sum which can, at best, be described as 'paltry'.

The present case relates to the claim of compensation from the doctor on the grounds of deficiency of service whereby post-surgery, the appellant or patient suffered continuous pain near the surgical site and was being discharged the next day with the assurance that no further pain would be suf-

The in the case court stated that since there being no improvement in her condition, the patient eventually landed up for treatment at the Post Graduate Institute of Medical Science, Chandigarh, where after diagnosis it was being found that a 2.5 cm needle was near the surgical site which required immediate removal.

However, the appellant lodged a consumer complaint for a claim of compensation which amounts to Rs. 19,80,000/- whereby it has been directed by the District Forum that the respondent or Suket Hospital to award compensation for an amount of Rs. 5 Lakhs to the patient.

The State Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission reduced the compensation

which amount to Rs. 1 Lakhs only, when the appeal was being preferred by the Hospital.

The patient approached the Supreme Court, aggrieved with the decision of the NC-DRC.

The Compensation Amount Was Wrongly Reduced By Applying the Eggshell Skull Rule

The Judgment authored by the bench of Justice Sanjay Karol in the case questioned the reasoning which is provided by the State Commission and National Commission in reducing the compensation amount which is to be payable to patient by applying the Eggshell Skull

Therefore, the Eggshell Skull Rule holds the injurer liable for damages that ex-

ceed the amount that would normally be expected to occur. Thus, it is the common law doctrine that makes a defendant liable for the plaintiff's unforeseeable and uncommon reactions to the defendant's negligent or intentional tort.

The court in the case clarified that the Rule would be applied when the condition of the patient falls in either of the four conditions, such as:

Firstly, when a latent condition of the plaintiff has been unearthed;

Secondly, when the negligence which being on the part of the wrongdoer re-activates a plaintiff's pre-existing condition that had subsided due to the treatment;

Thirdly, the wrongdoer's actions aggravate known, pre-existing conditions, that

have not yet received the medical attention; and

Fourthly, when the wrongdoer's actions accelerate an inevitable disability or loss of life due to a condition possessed by the plaintiff, even when the eventuality would have occurred with time, in the absence of the wrongdoer's actions.

The court in the case also explained that for the 'egg shell skull rule' to be applied, the person must have a preexisting condition falling into either of the four categories described above.

Further, the court stated that the original compensation amount was being reduced by the State Commission and National Commission by applying the Eggshell Skull Rule and the reason provided by them

was that due to pre-existing vulnerability or medical condition of the patient, he might have suffered 'unusual dam-

The court in the case stated

that the Opposite Party cannot take a plea that; patient took treatment from few other hospitals which might have caused the retention of needle in the abdominal wall. In this context, this court apply the 'Egg Skull Rule' in the said case, wherein the liability exists for damages stemming from aggravation of prior injuries or conditions. The court holds an individual liable for all consequences resulting from their activities leading to an injury, even if the victim suffers unusual damage due to pre-existing vulnerability or medical condition.

The court while considering the facts and circumstances of the case observed and has set aside the Awards of the NCDRC as also the State Commission and restored the Award as passed by the District Forum, meaning thereby that a sum of Rs.5 lakhs ought to be paid expeditiously by the respondents to the appellant for being medically negligent and providing services deficient in nature.

The counsel, Mr. Subhash Chandran K. R., Adv. Ms. Krishna L. R., Adv. Mr. Biju P Raman, AOR (Not Present) appeared for the Petitioner(s).

The counsel, Mr. Mritunjay Kumar Sinha, AOR Mrs. Vimal Sinha, Adv. Mr. J. P. N. Shahi, Adv. Mr. Rameshwar Prasad Goyal, AOR represented the Respondent(s).

Delhi High Court: PIL To Allow Arrested Politicians To Campaign Through VC For Lok Sabha Polls 2024

TDG NETWORK

The Delhi High Court in the case Amarieet Gupta v. Election Commission of India And Ors observed wherein the Public Interest Litigation, PIL has been moved seeking a direction upon the Election Commission of India, ECI to develop a mechanism to ensure that arrested political leaders are allowed to campaign through VC for the upcoming Lok Sabha polls 2024.

In the present case, the petition has been filed by Amarjeet Gupta, a final year law student and has been moved through Advocate Md. Imran Ahmad. Before the court, a direction is also sought on the Central Government to provide information about the arrest of a political leader or a candidate immediately to the Election Commission of India.

Therefore, Gupta is being aggrieved by the timing of arrest of politicians after the announcement of model code of conduct by ECI, particularly Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, national convener of Aam Aadmi Party.

Further, Gupta is aggrieved by the fact that electors are deprived of their fundamental right to get information under Article 19(1)

(a) of the Constitution of India from the said politicians by way of being spectators and listeners of election

campaigning. The petition stated that the leaders of political parties are also deprived of their constitutionally guaranteed fundamental and legal right to campaigning during the election.

It has also been stated by Gupta that he sent a representation to the authorities but the same has not been responded to.

The petition reads that the petitioner also highlights that the electors of India in general and Delhi in particular have been subjected to be uninform ed voters because they are not able to learn about the objectiveness and the ideology of a national party as the leader of the said political party is arrested while MCC is still

SUPREME COURT GRILLS NCDRC MEMBERS WHO ISSUED WARRANTS DESPITE SUPREME COURT ORDERS, REJECTS THEIR PLEA OF IGNORANCE

TDG NETWORK

The Supreme Court in the case M/s Ireo Grace Realtech Pvt. Ltd. v. Sanjav Gopinath observed and has expressed its reservation on the explanation offered by the Na- responsible for the above tional Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission's members for issuing nonbailable warrants against a company's directors despite the Supreme Court order directing non-coercive steps. The Apex Court in the case observed and has passed an interim order on March 1, wherein the court directed that no coercive steps should be taken against the company's directors in the execution petition pending before the NCDRC.

On March O8, the commission asked the directors to file affidavits of compliance.

The NCDRC issued nonbailable warrants against the directors on April O2.

The court in the case sought an explanation from the Presiding Member and the Member of the NCDRC who were

The counsel, Senior Advocate Ranjit Kumar, appearing for the appellant submitted before the court that the aforementioned order of the Supreme Court was duly taken note of by the Commission in its March 08 order.

The court directed the appellant to file an affidavit of compliance with regard to the execution of decree.

On the other hand, the counsel, Attorney General R. Venkataramani, representing the NCDRC's members, submitted before the court that the error was 'inadvertent and

unintentional'. Further, he explained to the

sels had appeared before the Commission, and they did not say anything about the Supreme Court's order. The bench of Justice Amanullah asked him to the attornev General continue and said,

bench that the proxy coun-

'Let him...We see your line of approach, you are entitled to that but...we will have to enlighten you. Probably, you have missed the main nuance...' It has also been explained by

the Top Law Officer that it was not that the Commission was not trying to overreach the Supreme Court's order. Therefore, the said court also perused a joint affidavit filed by the presiding member and the member of the NCDRC stating that the error on their part was inad-

SUPREME COURT: REPEALED PROVISION CEASES TO OPERATE FROM THE

of this rule.

vertent and unintended and they sought apology from the Supreme Court. Thus, the affidavit went on to state that 'at no stage the order dated 1st March of the Hon'ble Supreme Court was brought to our notice by the proxy advo-

cates.' The court in its order recorded that it is being clear from the March O8 order that a copy of the Supreme Court's order was handed over to the Commission. Further, the court in its order recorded that, it is not plau-

sible to accept the explanation that the aforesaid order passed by this Court was not brought to the notice of the NCDRC. The bench of Justice Amanullah orally remarked that, the approach is too simplistic. And it requires to be rejected outrightly in the face of it...we are talking about April O2nd order. On March

O8th, this order is noticed in that very case. every day the counsel is not supposed to keep producing the order.

The bench of Justice Amanullah also stated that, You do not read your own orders? Otherwise, leave that post if in the case observed and has you cannot be so responsible. It is an order of yours. It is not the briefing of the counsel that you do not see your own order before that. The bench of Justice Kohli asked for an answer to the order passed on March O8 by the Commission.

Further, the bench of Justice Kohli stated On one breath, the order of this Court is recorded; in the other breath, the next sentences, (directors) are directed to file affidavit of compliance. Why would they do that? In other words, they were to stay their

SUPREME COURT IMPOSED RS 5 LAKHS COST ON UNION GOVT, CAUTIONS AGAINST FILING FRIVOLOUS PETITIONS IN FUTURE

TDG NETWORK

The Supreme Court in the case Union of India and ors v. Sudipta Lahiri observed and has imposed a cost for an amount of Rs. 5,00,000/ on the Union of India wherein challenging an order passed by the Meghalaya High Court based on the Union's own concession that a previous decision covered the matter.

The Supreme Court while deprecating the Union's move to challenge the High Court's order recorded that this was a 'sheer abuse of the process of law' and cautioned the Union against filing frivolous petitions.

The bench comprising of Justice Vikram Nath and Justice Satish Chandra Sharma dismissed the Special Leave Petitions which imposing the cost.

The counsel appearing for the petitioner-Union Of India submitted before the court that the matter was squarely covered by a previous decision.

The High Court in the case disposed of the matter on the statement of the counsel appearing for Union of India Adding to it, the curt stated that the petitioners are cautioned not to file such frivolous petitions in future.

Before the High Court, the counsel appearing for Union had challenged an order passed by the Central Administrative Tribunal, In the Similar case, where the Union had challenged the Tribunal's order, the High Court had rejected the appeal on the ground that the Tribunal had given adequate reasons on March 14, 2022.

Further, the court also noticed the legal position as arrived by the Karnataka High Court in the case Union of India vs. M.N.Ramachandra Rao. Thus, the Supreme Court later affirmed the same.

It has also been submitted by the Union before the court that the same could be disposed of in view of the March 14 order.

The court stated that since the previous writ petition was disposed of without interfering with the relevant order passed by the Central Administrative Tribunal, the same order is passed herein. The court also made it clear that in keeping with the order dated March 14, 2022, the relief that the respondent herein will be entitled to will be confined to what is

covered by the legal position indicated in the Karnataka judgment and not beyond.

Further, the Union approached the Apex Court against this order. The Supreme Court stat-

ed that there was no basis for the Union to challenge the aforementioned order through this Special Leave Petition.

The court stated that, this court further perused the order dated March 14, 2022 and this court find that the present matter was disposed of in the same terms as in the order dated March 14, 2022 and there was no occasion or iustification for the Union of India to have challenged the said order by way of this Special Leave Petition.

The court in the case observed and has directed the same to be deposited in the Armed Forces Battle Casualties Welfare Fund within eight weeks. Thereafter, a week, the Union was required to file proof of such deposit with the Supreme Court Registry.

The counsel, Additional Solicitor General of India Vikramjeet Banerjee appeared for the petitioner.

The counsel, Advocate on Record Avijit Roy represented the respondents.

Supreme Court Collegium Recommended Justice MB Snehalatha As An Additional Judge Of Kerala High Court

NEW DELH

The Supreme Court Collegium recommended Justice MB Snehalatha as an additional judge of the Kerala High Court. The Supreme Court Col-

legium had recommended the elevation of Justice MB Snehalatha in October 2023.

The Central government notified the appointment of Justice MB Snehalatha in April 2024

The Chief Justice A J Desai administered oath of office. The Speakers at the occasion included AG Gopalakrishna Kurup and the KHCAA President.

Justice MB Snehalatha was born on May 31, 1964 in Ernakulam's Vypin. Justice Snehalatha com-

pleted her LLB from Government Law College, Ernakulam and later she secured a post-graduate Justice Snehalatha was then promoted to a District Judge on March 12, 2014, and presided over Motor Accident Claims Tribunal at Attingal.

degree in law from the Mahatma Gandhi University. Justice Snehalatha got enrolled as an advocate in the year 1987 and she cleared the Kerala Judicial Service Examination in 1995 while commencing her Judicial career as a Munsiff Mag-

Justice Snehalatha later worked as an Additional Munsiff at Palakkad and Kozhikode, as Munsiff at Kodungallur and North Paravoor, as the Principal Munsiff at Palakkad and as Judicial First-Class Magistrate at North Paravur and In February 2010, Justice Snehalatha was promoted and she was being posted as a Sub-Judge at Perambayoor and Chief Judicial Magistrate at Thiruvanan-

Kunnamkulam.

thapuram. Justice Snehalatha was then promoted to a District Judge on March 12, 2014, and presided over Motor Accident Claims Tribunal at Attingal. Justice Snehalatha also served as Additional District and Sessions judge and presiding officer of the additional tribunal for the Motor Accident Claims at Thiruvanantha-

Justice Snehalatha at the time of elevation to the Kerala High Court, she was the Principal District and Sessions Judge, Kollam.

puram and Palakkad.

At present, the number of judges at the Kerala High Court is 42 judges, as against a sanctioned strength of 47, with 5 women judges.

DATE OF REPEAL, SUBJECT TO SPECIFIC STATUTORY PRESCRIPTION can enable the repealed pro-**TDG NETWORK** The Supreme Court in the case Pernod Ricard India

(P) Ltd. vs. The State Of Madhya Pradesh observed that with regards to the subject to statutory stipulation, a repealed provision ceases to operate from the date of repeal, and the substituted provision starts operating as and when it is substituted. The bench headed by Justice P S Narasimha stated that the operation of repeal or substitution of a statutory provision is thus clear, a repealed provision will cease to operate from the date of repeal and the substituted provision will commence to operate from the date of its substitution. Therefore, the said principle is being subject to specific statutory

prescription and the Statute

vision to continue to apply to transactions that have commenced before the repeal. The court stated that the substituted provision which operates prospectively, if it affects vested rights, which being subject to statutory prescriptions, can also operate retrospectively.

FACTS OF THE CASE

The appellant was the sub-licensee under the M.P. Excise Act, 19151 for manufacture, import and sale of Foreign Liquor. The same was being regulated under the Madhya Pradesh Foreign Liquor Rules, 1996.

Therefore, the relevant rules for the present case are Rule 16 and 19. While the Rule 16 prescribed the permissible limits of loss of liquor in transit and the Rule 19 provided penalty for the breach In the matter, the breach took place during the license period of 2009-10 and the penalty for the same was around four times the maximum duty payable on foreign liquor. However, no such action was

taken against the appellant during the said period. In March 2011, the Rule 19 was substituted by an

amendment and as a result of it, the penalty was r educed from four times the maximum duty payable to an amount not exceeding the duty payable on foreign liquor. Following the said development, the notice was issued to the appellant for payment of the penalty as per the old Rule 19.

The interesting question raised for the adjudication was whether the penalty was to be levied as per the one. The Division bench of the High Court held that the Rule, that existed during that license year, must apply. The court in the case also reasoned that determination of penalty is a substantive law and thus, cannot operate retrospectively. The matter reached to the Supreme Court. The Division bench comprising of Justice Narasimha and Justice Aravind Kumar in the case observed that the purpose of the amendment is to achieve a proper balance between crime and punishment. The court after making the above-mentioned observations also stated that the op-

the case stated that the prin-

ciple governing subordinate

old rule or the substituted

or withdrawal. eration of subordinate legislations is slightly different as they depend on the parent act. Adding to it, the court in

legislation is slightly different in as much as the operation of a subordinate legislation is determined by the empowerment of the parent act...Without a statutory empowerment, subordinate legislation will always commence to operate only from the date of its issuance and at the same time, cease to exist from the date of its deletion The court in the case referred

to Section 63, the Publication of rules and notifications of the Act. The court also noted that as per this, the repealed provision would not operate for rights and responsibilities that occurred while it was valid. It has been stated under section 63 of the M.P. Excise Act, 1915, only enables the government to issue subordinate legislation with effect from such a date as may be specified.

NAWAZ SHARIF SET TO BECOME PRESIDENT OF HIS PARTY

AGENCIES

hree-time former Nawaz Sharif is all set to become the president of his party, PML-N, seven vears after he was disqualified by the apex court from holding any public post, the party announced here on Friday.

A senior Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader told PTI that Nawaz, 74, will be elected president of the ruling party on May 11 in a meeting of the party leadership.

In 2017, the Supreme Court of Pakistan disqualified Nawaz as premier and party president for his alleged corruption in cases related to the Panama Papers revelations about his illegal wealth stashed abroad.

PML-N Punjab president



Rana Sanaullah told a press conference that a decision to make Nawaz Sharif president of the party again has been taken at a party meet-

"A resolution was passed at the party meeting today to make the elder Sharif PML-N president to undo the injustice meted out to him (Nawaz) in 2017 by the Supreme Court," Sanaullah

The party will request Nawaz on his return from China to accept the president's office of the party.

Nawaz is currently on a five-day private visit to

"Nawaz Sharif was removed from the party president's office through a conspiracy. Now Nawaz has been acquitted in all (corruption) cases, he should again take up the party's reins,"

Sanaullah said and added the party will be re-organised under his (Nawaz's)

leadership.

Following his return to Pakistan after a four-year self-exile in London in October last vear, Nawaz Sharif got a clean chit in mega corruption cases allegedly with the blessings of the powerful military establishment.

He was all set to become prime minister for the fourth time but his party failed to get a clear majority in the National Assembly on its own in the February 8 general elections.

Nawaz then allowed his younger brother and the incumbent party president Shehbaz Sharif -- who is considered the favourite of the military establishment -- to lead a six-party coalition government at the Centre.

Punjab govt seeks more time to name Lahore Chowk after Bhagat Singh

THE DAILY GUARDIAN REVIEW SATURDAY | 27 APRIL 2024

Pakistan's Punjab government on Friday sought time from a high court on the issue of naming the Shadman Chowk here after freedom fighter Bhagat Singh.

The Lahore High Court (LHC) Justice Shams Mahmood Mirza was hearing a petition by the Bhagat Singh Memorial Foundation Pakistan seeking contempt proceedings against three top officials of the provincial and district governments for not complying with the court's order about naming the Shadman Chowk after Bhagat Singh.

In 2018, the LHC ordered the government to name after Bhagat Singh the Shadman Chowk in Lahore, where he was hanged 93 years ago. During the hearing, Assistant Advocate General of the Punjab government Imran Khan told the court that the government should be given more time for the issuance of a notification to name Shadman Chowk after the freedom fighter.

NEW DELHI

The petitioner's counsel, advocate Khalid Zama Kakar, argued that a lot of delay had already been made in the matter. The court accepted the request of the government law officer and adjourned the hearing till June 7. The provincial and district governments committed contempt by deliberately not complying with the LHC's order to change the chowk's name in 2018.

Bhagat Singh, who fought for the independence of the subcontinent, was hanged by British rulers on March 23. 1931, along with Shivaram Rajguru and Sukhdev Thapar after being tried under charges of hatching a conspiracy against the regime.

'Don't drag Pakistan for political mileage during elections in India'

AGENCIES

Pakistan on Friday urged Indian leaders to stop dragging the country in their speeches for political mileage during the election season.

Speaking at a press briefing here, Pakistan's Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said that Islamabad rejects all the claims made by Indian leaders over Jammu and Kashmir.

"Indian politicians to cease their reckless practice of dragging Pakistan into India's populist public discourse for electoral motives," she said.

"We are witnessing an alarming surge in provocative statements from Indian leaders asserting unwarranted claims on Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan rejects these claims. Fuelled by hyper-nationalism, this



Spokesperson of the Ministrv of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan Mumtaz Zahra Baloch.

inflammatory rhetoric poses a grave threat to regional peace and susceptibility," she said. Zahra claimed that Indian claims were contrary to historical and legal facts.

India has previously rejected such statements by Pakistan on the Kashmir issue.

India's Ministry of External Affairs has repeatedly asserted that "The Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir and the Union Territory of Ladakh are and always will be integral and inalienable parts of India. No other country has locus standi to comment on the same".

Another batch of 24 fishermen detained in Sri Lanka repatriated to India

AGENCIES

Twenty-four Indian fishermen who were detained by the Sri Lanka Navy for allegedly fishing in the island nation's waters were on Friday repatriated to India, two days after another group of five Indian fishermen were sent to their homeland.

"Twenty-four Indian fishermen repatriated from Sri Lanka. They have boarded from Colombo and are currently on their way home," the Indian High Commission in Colombo said in a post on X.

On Wednesday, five Indian fishermen detained by the Sri Lanka Navy were re-

patriated to India. Earlier this month, 19 In-

dian fishermen detained by the Sri Lanka Navy were repatriated to India, the **Indian High Commission**

The fishermen issue is a contentious one in the ties between India and Sri Lanka, with Lankan Navy personnel even firing at Indian fishermen in the Palk Strait and seizing their boats in several alleged incidents of illegally entering Sri Lankan territorial waters.

The Sri Lanka Navy has so far held 23 Indian trawlers and 178 Indian fishermen for allegedly fishing in the island nation's waters thus far in 2024, and handed them over to authorities for legal action, the Sri Lankan Navy late last month confirmed in a statement.

AGENCIES

Ukrainian bombardments killed three people in separate attacks on Russian border regions and in occupied Ukrainian territory, Russian and Moscow-installed officials said Friday.

Ukrainian forces over recent months have escalated fatal missile and drone attacks on Russian border regions, and also targeted Russian energy infrastructure.

"The village of Korovyakovka was shelled from the Ukrainian side today," the Russian governor of the Kursk region announced on social media, "A local resident was killed," he said. Ukraine has been targeting border regions in reprisal for Russian bombings of Ukrainian towns over the past two years.

A day after another attack



Village of Korovyakovka in Kursk Region.

on the border region of Bryansk, a woman succumbed to her wounds, governor Alexander Bogomaz said.

Moscow-installed authorities in the Lugansk region of Ukraine on Friday said one person was killed and two more were injured by Ukrainian shelling on the village of Novodruzhesk.

The Lugansk region has been partially controlled by Russian-backed forces since 2014 and the Kremlin claimed to have annexed it in late 2022. Meanwhile, Russian airstrikes killed at least six people in a Ukrainianheld part of the embattled Donetsk territory on Thursday, according to local officials.

Vadym Filashkin, the Donetsk regional governor, said in a post on Telegram that shelling killed three people and injured four in the village of Udachne, west of the Russian-held city of Donetsk. Another three people were

south in Kurakhivka, the regional prosecutor's office said. Both villages are north of Mariupol.

killed about 50 kilometers

Farther north in the Kharkiv region, a Russian missile attack wounded 10 in the city of Balakliia, regional Governor Oleh Syniehubov said on Telegram. Russia occupied Balakliia at the beginning of its full-scale invasion, but Ukraine recaptured it months later. The injured were in passenger train carriages, Syniehubov said, according to Reuters.

Those assaults followed a Russian missile attack that officials said injured at least six people in central Ukraine's Cherkasy region.

Ihor Taburets, the regional governor of Cherkasy, said the blast waves and debris from the missiles damaged nearly 50 houses.

Sri Lanka to hand China-built airport to India and Russia a cabinet statement said,

AGENCIES

Sri Lanka will hand over management of its \$209 million Chinese-built airport to two Indian and Russian companies, a cabinet statement said on Friday, as the island nation attempts to reduce losses from its state enterprises.

Mattala Rajapaksa International Airport (MRIA), funded by China EXIM Bank, has stoked controversy since its opening in 2013 due to a low number of flights, environmentally sensitive location and persistent financial losses.

The airport's management will be handed over to Shaurva Aeronautics (Pvt) Ltd. of India and Airports of Regions Management Company of Russia for 30 years, without mentioning the deal value. Sri Lanka is negotiating

with China EXIM Bank to restructure the airport loan, part of \$4.2 billion borrowed for other infrastructure projects.The airport was built during the tenure of former president Mahinda Rajapaksa who shifted the country closer to China and away from its traditional neighbour India. The airport is located in Rajapaksa's home town. Sri Lanka defaulted on its foreign debt in May 2022 after the island nation's foreign exchange reserves fell to record lows triggering the worst financial crisis in more

Sri Lanka is working to reduce losses made by dozens of state owned companies after securing a \$2.9 billion bailout.

than seven decades.

Blinken meets with Xi, many contentious issues discussed China says talks on Tibet only

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken met Friday with Chinese President Xi Jinping and senior Chinese officials, stressing the importance of "responsibly managing" the differences between the United States and China as the two sides butted heads over a number of contentious bilateral, regional and global issues.

Talks between the two sides have increased in recent months, even as differences have grown. Blinken said he raised concerns with Xi about China's support for Russia and its invasion of Ukraine, as well as other issues including Taiwan and the South China Sea, human rights and the production and export of synthetic opi-

Blinken sounded a positive note on recent progress made in bilateral cooperation, including in military communications, counternarcotics and artificial intelligence, on which the two sides agreed to start a dialogue on how to reduce risks from the rapidly emerging technology.

"We are committed to maintaining and strengthening lines of communication to advance that agenda, and again deal responsibly with our differences so we avoid any miscommunications, any misperceptions, any miscalculations," he said.

But he stressed that "even as we seek to deepen cooperation, where our interests align, the United States is very clear-eyed about the challenges posed by (China)



Antony J. Blinken meeting Xi Jinping, at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing

and about our competing visions for the future. America will always defend our core interests and values.'

Notably, he said he raised ongoing concerns about Beijing's supply of materials, including machine tools and micro electronics. to Moscow that President Vladimir Putin is using to boost Russia's defenses and its war on Ukraine. "Russia would struggle to sustain its assault on Ukraine without China's support," Blinken told reporters after his meeting with Xi.

"Fueling Russia's defense industrial base not only threatens Ukrainian security, it threatens European security," he added. "As we've told China for some time, ensuring transatlantic security is a core U.S. interest. In our discussions today. I made clear that if China does not address this problem, we

Blinken did not elaborate on with Dalai Lama's representatives how the U.S. would address the matter if China did not, but Washington has imposed large numbers of sanctions against Chinese firms for doing business with countries such as Russia, Iran and North Korea.

He said he urged China to use its influence "to discourage Iran and its proxies from expanding the conflict in the Middle East" and convince North Korea "to end its dangerous behavior and engage in dialogue." Blinken also discussed with Xi China's maritime maneuvers in the disputed South China Sea, and reiterated "ironclad" American support for the Philippines, its oldest treaty ally in Asia. Xi stressed that China and the U.S. must seek common ground "rather than engage in competition."

China on Friday said it will talk only with the representatives of the Dalai Lama and not the officials of the Tibetan government in exile based in India but ruled out dialogue on the highest Tibetan Buddhist spiritual leader's long-pending demand for autonomy for his remote Himalayan homeland. Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin was reacting to reports of the backchannel talks between the Tibetan government-in-exile and the Chinese government when he said China regards the Tibetan government-inexile based in Dharamshala as a separatist bloc.

The so-called Xizang's

madrassas in Uruzgan province

Rains, floods destroy nearly 70 schools,

government-in-exile is a completely separatist political bloc. It is totally against the Chinese Constitution and laws. It is illegal, Wang told a media briefing here.

No country has recognised it. On Thursday, Sikyong or the political head of Tibet's government-in-exile, Penpa Tsering, told a visiting group of journalists in Dharamshala, India, We have had backchannel (engagement) since last year. But we have no immediate expectations from it. It has to be a long-term (one).

Insisting that the talks are very informal, the head of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) said, I have my interlocutor who deals with people in Beijing. Then there are other elements also trying to reach out to us.

According to Wang, the Chinese government has two basic principles for contacts with this (Dalai Lama's) group. First, we will only have talks with the representatives of the 14th Dalai Lama instead of the so-called representatives of the socalled government-in-exile or the so-called administrative centre, Wang said.

Secondly, the topics for talks will be only for the arrangements and not for the so-called autonomy of Tibet, the main demand of the 88-year-old Dalai Lama.

They should have some self-introspection and refrain from all activities sabotaging the stability of Xizang and go back to the right way so that we can move towards the next step, Wang said.

At least 155 killed in Tanzania due to floods caused by weeks of heavy rains

DODMA (TANZANIA)

At least 155 people have lost their lives as a result of flooding and landslides caused by heavy rains in Tanzania, according to Al Jazeera.

In an address at the Parliament on Thursday, Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa said that the current rainy season has been made worse by the El Nino climate pattern, which has resulted in flooding and the destruction of roads, bridges, and

railroads. "The heavy El Nino rains, accompanied by strong winds, floods and landslides



in various parts of the country, have caused significant damage," Majaliwa said.

Majaliwa went on to blame unsustainable farming methods such "slash and burn" agriculture, uncontrolled livestock grazing, and deforestation--for the disastrous impacts of the rains. The prime minister stated

that 51,000 houses and more than 200,000 individuals were impacted by the rains. Emergency services were rescuing those stranded by

the flooding as inundated schools were closed, reported Al Jazeera.

Over 226 peopole are also iniured due to floods, rains in Tanzania, as East Africa continue to batter heavy downpour.

El Nino is a naturally occurring weather phenomena that is commonly linked to rising global temperatures, droughts, and heavy precipitation.

The East African region has been pounded by heavier-than-usual rainfall during the current rainy season, with flooding also reported in neighbouring Burundi and Kenya.

AGENCIES Several teachers and students Recent rains and floods have destroyed nearly 70 in the province schools and madrassas in Uruzgan province of Af-

claim that the ghanistan, and lack of sufeducational process ficient funds is hampering their repair work, accordhas slowed down ing to TOLOnews. Shamsullah Kamran, the

head of Education in Uruzgan said that the Uruzgan **Education Department** have been completely or lacks sufficient funds to rebuild these schools. He said, "As a result of the

rains and floods, approxi-

mately seventy schools

partially destroyed. If these schools do not receive attention from organizations, we will face significant problems.'

Several teachers and students in the province claim that the educational process has slowed down as a result.

They say most of the students from the schools that were damaged are now studying in open areas or private residences.

According to teacher Sirajuddin Sirajmal, "The students are in a situation where they have no place for learning," TOLOnews reported.

Lamenting the situation, Javed, a student said, "We sit under the sun; we have nothing, and the teachers

do not come, forcing us to go back home.' "We ask the government to rebuild our schools so

that we can continue our

studies," another student said. Uruzgan locals have also expressed concerns over the loss of educational fa-

cilities, as per TOLOnews. The locals claim that this will have a detrimental impact on their children's academic development. They demand that the

interim government authorities and relief agencies immediately rebuild the damaged schools.

CRESCENT MOON



A crescent moon over Jemaa el-Fnaa, the city's main square, Marrakech, Morocco. Photo: Agencies

URGENT UN REFORMS IMPERATIVE TO REFLECT CURRENT REALITIES: INDIA

AGENCIES

ndia has said that the revitalisation of the UN General Assembly must be seen in the wider context of the overall reform of the United Nations, including the Security Council, ensuring that it reflects the current geopolitical realities and can meet increasingly complex challenges.

"India has always been of the view that the General Assembly can be revitalised only when its position as the primary deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations is respected in letter and spirit," Minister at India's Permanent Mission to the UN, Pratik Mathur said. Addressing the Ad Hoc

Working Group on the Revitalisation of the Work of the General Assembly on Thursday, Mathur said that the revitalisation of the 193-member General Assembly must also be seen in the wider context of the overall reform of the UN.

"It is our firm belief that the urgent and comprehensive UN reform, including of the Security Council, is imperative to make it reflective of current geopolitical realities and enhance its capability to meet increasingly complex challenges of our time," he said.

The UN's success rests on the effectiveness of the General Assembly in carrying out its role as its chief deliberative and policy-making body as envisaged in the UN Charter, Mathur said.

Minister at India's Permanent Mission to the UN, Pratik Mathur

India gave a clarion call to make this reform of global governance architecture that is fit for purpose for the 21st century — a reality in the 'Pact of the Future' that Member States are currently negotiating ahead of the Summit of the Future to be held in September, during the high-level UN General Assembly session.

Mathur said that with the proliferation of the agenda

of the General Assembly, the Annual General Debate is gradually turning out to be one of the several high-level events that take place at the start of each new session of the General Assembly.

"The Annual General Debate has a special place in the annual agenda of the UN, and we should not let it be equated with various high-level events which do not enjoy the participation of all member states," he said.

Mathur said that India believes that for the revitalisation of the General Assembly, the sanctity of the Annual General Debate and its associated elements must be restored.

He further noted that the essence of the General Assembly is in its intergovernmental nature.

Indian-origin man killed in US by police while detesting arrest

A 42-year-old Indian-origin man in the US was shot and killed by police in San Antonio after he struck two officers with his vehicle as they were trying to arrest him in connection with an aggravated assault case against a

Sachin Kumar Sahoo was pronounced deceased at the scene after police officer Tyler Turner shot at him on April 21 in San Antonio, a city in Texas.

The Bexar County Medical Examiner's Office said Sachin Kumar Sahoo died from multiple gunshot wounds during last weekend's altercation with police, the San Antonio Express-News re-

Sahoo originally hailed from Uttar Pradesh, Sources said he could have been a

naturalised US citizen.

According to a preliminary investigation, just before 6:30 pm on April 21, officers were dispatched to a home in Cheviot Heights in San Antonio for a report about Aggravated Assault with a Deadly Weapon, the San Antonio Police Department said in a statement to

Upon arrival, officers found a 51-year-old female who had been intentionally struck by a vehicle. The suspect, Sahoo, had fled the location. The victim was transported to a local hospital in critical condition. San Antonio Police Detectives issued a felony arrest warrant for Sahoo in that incident.

93 people arrested at Southern California University amid anti-Israel protests

AGENCIES

As protests against Israel mount in US universities, 93 people have been arrested on suspicion of trespassing during Wednesday's demonstrations at the University of Southern California.

The Los Angeles Police Department informed that 93 people were arrested at the University of Southern California.

"The university is a private campus and the group had been violating some of their orders. It was a trespass at that point and we assisted with the arrests," Los Angeles Police Captain Kelly Muniz said during a briefing.

Moreover, one person was also arrested for assault with a deadly weapon, Muniz said, as CNN reported.

No protesters or officers



have been reported injured, police said.

The USC Department of Public Safety ordered protesters gathering at the campus' Alumni Park on Wednesday afternoon to disperse or face arrest for trespassing, reported CNN.

According to a university official, tensions escalated during the demonstrations, as at one time, protesters refused to relocate and remove their tents and other prohibited items.

Following this, the university closed its campus on Wednesday evening as LAPD began arresting demonstrators.

Earlier on Thursday, House Speaker Mike Johnson called for the resignation of Columbia University's president amid ongoing

demonstrations sparked by pro-Palestinian sentiments at major American universities, it is reported.

Protesters at Columbia University, where demonstrations ignited last week, demand the severance of ties with Israeli academic institutions and a complete divestment from entities linked to Israel amid the ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict.

House Speaker Mike Johnson emphasised the need for order on campus, stating that if the university president cannot restore calm, she should resign. However. student reactions to this call for resignation are varied, with some expressing willingness to continue working with her.

However, over 30 arrests were made during protests at the University of Texas in

'India-UK vaccine partnership helps fight malaria in Africa

AGENCIES

The UK government hailed its vaccine partnership with India which will help combat malaria as one of the biggest killers of children in sub-Saharan Africa.

Collaboration between British scientists and Indian manufacturers has resulted in two essential life-saving malaria vaccines – RTS,S and R21 -- being developed. These have been used in Ghana, Kenya and Malawi, with 2 million children vaccinated since 2019, and, in January, Cameroon became the first country to give the vaccines to children routinely.

"Both vaccines are significant scientific breakthroughs and important additions to the range of tools

we have for fighting malaria," Anne-Marie Trevelyan, UK Minister of State for the Indo-Pacific in the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), said

"Both vaccines are now being rolled out across Africa to immunise more than 6 million children by the end of 2025. This is a huge step forward in the global fight against malaria and would not have been possible without a strong UK-India partnership," she said.

On Thursday, to mark the World Health Organisation's World Malaria Day, the FCDO announced that Sierra Leone, Liberia and Benin will begin their first rollout of the UK-Indian developed RTS,S vaccine, "marking a significant milestone in end-

World's first skin cancer vaccine gets 1st patient in UK

AGENCIES

An international clinical trial testing a novel cancer immunotherapy, which may prevent skin cancer from recurring, has recruited its first patient in Britain this week. The mRNA-based technology, the vaccine tech used for some COVID vaccinations, is aimed at people who have already had high-risk melanomas the most serious form of cancer removed.

For the trial, University College London Hospitals (UCLH) doctors are giving it alongside another drug, pembrolizumab or Keytruda, that also helps the immune system kill cancer

One of the first patients to sign up for the trial is British musician Steve Young, 52, from Hertfordshire, east England, who was diagnosed with stage II melanoma, which was removed.

"I feel lucky to be part of

this clinical trial. Of course, I did not feel so lucky when I was diagnosed with skin cancer, in fact, it came as quite a shock, but now that I've had treatment, I'm keen to ensure it does not recur. This is my best chance at stopping the cancer in its tracks," Young said.



The personalised treatment works by instructing the body to make up to 34 proteins, each targeting neoantigens identified by gene sequencing and thought to be driving the cancer in that particular patient. The neoantigens are proteins found only on the cancer cells, and the individualised neoantigen therapy is designed to each patient, while Keytruda blocks an immunological brake that protects the can-

"The idea behind this immunotherapy is that, by prompting the body to make these proteins, it can prepare the immune system to quickly identify and attack any cancer cells bearing them, with the aim of preventing recurrence of melanoma," said University College London medical oncologist Heather Shaw, the national coordinating investigator of the new trial.

The new Phase 3 clinical trial, being led by UCLH, is

prime the immune system evaluating the combination to attack the tumour cells in of mRNA-4157 (V940) and Keytruda (pembrolizumab) versus a current standard of care (pembrolizumab) as a risk-reducing treatment option for patients with resected high-risk, stage IIB to IV melanoma. It follows a successful Phase 2 study, which found that in patients with stage IIIB to IV resected melanoma, this treatment option almost halved the risk of cancer recurrence or death after three years compared with treatment with Keytruda alone among patients with advanced melanomas following surgical removal

Romania indicts ex-president Iliescu again over 1990 crackdown Military prosecutors said

AGENCIES

Romanian prosecutors Friday issued a fresh indictment against former president Ion Iliescu for crimes against humanity in a deadly 1990 crackdown on protesters, the latest of several pro-

ceedings against him.

Four people were killed in June 1990 after Iliescu allegedly called in thousands of miners to help police put down the demonstration, iust months after the execution of the communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu.



Repeated investigations into the violent crushing of the anti-communist protest have been dragging on for two decades.

First accused in 2005, the former president was ordered to stand trial in the case in 2017, but charges were dropped on procedural grounds and the investigation was later reopened.

tics due to its backing of local

proxies such as Hamas and

in a statement on Friday they had ordered "the continuation of the criminal proceedings against Iliescu... on the charge of committing crimes against humanity".

Besides the four dead, two people were raped, more than 1,300 injured and some 1,200 unlawfully deprived of their liberty "on political grounds", the prosecutors said.

Iliescu, now 94, was informed of the charges against him at his home in Bucharest and could face up to 25 years in prison.

MUIZZU'S WIN IN MALDIVES, ISRAEL-HAMAS ESCALATION, IRAN-PAKISTAN ON KASHMIR

This week fetched couple of challenges for global affairs with intensified violence between Israel and Iran on one hand while Israel and Hamas on the other: despite continuous requests and directives from the global community to announce a ceasefire immediately; and the recent resounding success of the Muizzu government in Malé bringing a clear indication of a critical shift in the political landscape of Maldives and the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

Defying various political analyses, the recent resounding success of the Muizzu government in the parliamentary elections of Maldives clearly indicates a critical shift in the political landscape of not only Maldives but also of the overall IOR. Just six months after Mohamed Muizzu assumed office as the president, Maldives once again casted its votes last week, resulting in a decisive majority for the ruling coalition in the parliament. Muizzu's People's National Congress secured 66 out of the 93 seats in Majlis. Together with other allied parties and independent candidates, they obtained a total of 74 seats, constituting over three-fourths of the parliamentary representation. With this victory, Muizzu is much motivated to push India out. India-Maldives relations have already suffered a lot already due to Muizzu's anti-India campaign and his pro-China policies

After showing off its 'true' love for China, Maldives faced a political turmoil as



zu faced impeachment. The opposition-led parliament initiated impeachment proceedings against President Muizzu, accusing him of authoritarian behaviour and abuse of power. Muizzu was elected to power last year on the back of an aggressive 'India Out' policy that has seen the Maldives drawing closer to China. He had also ordered Indian troops stationed in Maldives. Maldives also gave a Chinese 'research' ship, the Xian Yang Hong O3, (which

is flagged as a spy ship) its

permission to dock in its capital, Male. I had mentioned this apprehension in one of my previous columns that, "His pro-China attitude will not only pose challenges to the neutrality of IOR, I am also worried Maldives will prove to be next Sri Lanka or Pakistan if it falls in to the trap of 'string of pearl' strategy of China." With this whooping victory once again, Muizzu seems to be all set to further strain India-Maldives relations and become a trap of China's debt diplomacy. This would definitely

impact the stability and security of the region. Maldives' strategic loca-

tion in IOR makes it a very special nation for the entire region despite its small size. Maldives's strategic location across the strategic sea lanes that connect East Asia with West Asia increases its significance in the region. So far, India and Maldives enjoyed good bilateral relationship, and the earlier government did not fall a trap to China's 'string of pearl' strategy, using which it has already captured strategically located ports in different nations located between Chinese mainland and Port of Sudan in the Horn of Africa. China aims to control IOR region, which is obviously unacceptable to the nations like India and the US. So far, India had its strong presence in Maldives but with Muizzu's entry as the president of Maldives, it seems that apart from the bilateral relations between India and Maldives, the regional integrity may suffer heavily.

On the other hand, the ongoing Israel-Hamas war is also proving damaging for the peace and stability of the world. Despite requests and directives of the global community, none of the two parties involved in a gory conflict is ready to cease. Amid this conflict, the recent conflict between Iran and Israel have additionally raised concerns about the possibility of the tensions spreading from West Asia to rest of the world. Recent events have emphasized Iran's position as an unpredictable player in global poli-

the Houthis. While Iran has betrothed itself in a direct conflict with Israel, it is also inviting problems for itself by exasperating various nations including India. This week, Pakistan and Iran have jointly expressed the view over the peaceful resolution to the Kashmir according to the wishes of the region's populace, as stated in a joint announcement following Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi's first official visit on 24 April. This statement has raised India's eyebrows. "We have raised the issue with Iranian officials." stated the spokesperson for the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, in response to queries about India's stance on the joint

statement concerning the

Kashmir matter. India has consistently upheld its position that Kashmir is an internal concern and has clearly emphasized on several occasions that external parties or organizations should refrain from meddling in this issue. Despite knowing this, why Iran is intruding into an internal matter of India and troubling its bilateral relations remains a pertinent question!

Achieving the lasting peace in global politics seems to be a far-fetched dream, the leaders at least can keep working for the same. The leaders need to understand that global peace and security come before their own political objectives. Those who do not go by this very simple rule face multiple repercus-

BRAIN PICKING

Few people know

that I am also

and drawing.

an artist: I truly enjoy sketching



PRIYANKA CHOPRA ENJOYS WORK DAY WITH DAUGHTER MALTI ON **SETS OF 'HEADS OF STATE'**

TDG NETWORK

Actor Priyanka Chopra Jonas shared glimpse of 'bring your baby to work' day as she took her daughter Malti Marie to the sets of 'Heads of State'. The actor shared cute photos.

Taking to Instagram stories, Priyanka treated fans with new pictures from 'Heads of State' sets but this time it is extra special as it features Malti,

The image captured Malti sitting on her lap and can be seen interacting with the people on the sets.

Sharing the photo, she wrote, "Bring your baby to work day." In the next picture, Priyanka can be seen playing with Malti.

Priyanka on Wednesday took to her Instagram account to share behind-thescenes pictures of her from shoot diaries.

The 'Barfi' actress looked stunning in a radiant selfie. She wore a cool pair of sunglasses and posed with a river in the background.

Earlier, Priyanka gave glimpses of her recent vacation in Switzerland, taking a break from her busy schedule. 'Heads Of State', is an upcoming action comedy featuring Idris Elba, John Cena, and Jack Quaid in key roles, under the direction of Ilva Naishuller.

Alongside, she recently announced her involvement in The Bluff, directed by Frank E Flowers.

Priyanka also announced her new film in collaboration with the production team of Barry Avrich's new feature documentary 'Born Hungry' as a producer.

On the Bollywood front, she will be seen in Farhan Akhtar's next directorial 'Jee Le Zaraa' alongside Katrina Kaif and Alia Bhatt. However, no update has been provided on the film since the announcement was made a couple of years ago.



SHAURYA MEHTA AND SRISHTY RODE SHINE IN 'DIL YE DILBARRO' **MUSIC VIDEO**

TDG NETWORK

Singer, composer, and songwriter Shaurya Mehta has once again captivated music lovers with his latest release, the mesmerizing music video 'Dil Ye Dilbarro'. Teaming up with the talented Srishty Rode, this duet showcases Shaurya's versatile talent and heartfelt compositions. With soulful lyrics by Kaushal Kishore and melodious vocals by Rupali Jagga and Shaurya himself, the song strikes a chord with listeners, evoking a range of emotions.

Speaking about the song. Shaurya expressed his excitement, emphasizing the beauty of 'Dil Ye Dilbarro' and its resonance with audiences. The picturesque backdrop of Ladakh adds an extra layer of charm to the music video with the Pangong lake as a cherry on the cake. The dreamy larger than life music video kicks off with Shaurya donning the Indian Army uniform in a tribute to the sacrifices made by our troops. Despite facing challenges during the shoot such as harsh weather conditions including some shots at -7 degrees C and cold

Singer, composer, and songwriter Shaurya Mehta has once again captivated music lovers with his latest release, the mesmerizing music video 'Dil Ye Dilbarro'.

Himalayan winds, Shaurya's dedication to his craft shines through, resulting in a visually stunning and emotion-

ally stirring production. The collaboration with Srishty Rode, Rupali Jagga, and Kaushal Kishore has been instrumental in bringing 'Dil Ye Dilbarro' to life. Each member of the team has contributed their unique talents, resulting in a seamless blend of music, lyrics, and visuals. Shaurya's commitment to pushing creative boundaries is evident in the incorporation of Kashmiri poetry into the song, adding a distinct cultural flavor to the composition.

PICTURE PERFECT

Bollywood actresses Neetu Kapoor, Soni Razdan and Alia Bhatt pose for a picture at the premiere of director Sanjay Leela Bhansali's upcoming debut web series 'Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar', in Mumbai. (ANI)



ACE PRODUCERS RAJ AND DK UNVEIL FIRST LOOK OF TELUGU FILM 'PARADHA'

TDG NETWORK

nown for his critically acclaimed debut film **∟**"Cinema Bandi," produced by Raj and DK, Praveen Kandregula is coming up with his second film, promising to deliver yet another captivating cinematic experience. Ananda Media is all set to mark its grand entry into the Telugu film industry with its debut production, produced by Vijay Donkada along with Sreenivasulu PV and Sridhar Makkuva. Samantha, Raj & DK unveiled the title, first look and concept video of the movie.

An intriguing title "Paradha" is locked for the movie billed to be a compelling drama, which is centred around female protagonists, boasts a stellar cast featuring the immensely talented Anupama Parmeswaran,



the versatile Darshana Rajendran, and the veteran actress Sangitha. Paradha means curtain and the first look poster where Anupama is seen without Paradha catches everyone's attention. Draped in traditional attires, Anupama is seen standing alongside some other girls who cover their faces with Voni. Anu-

pama is seen giving a stern

gaze. Unlike in her previous film, she will be seen in a de-glam role.

The concept video shows an idol of goddess in a village set-up. The shloka- Yatra naryastu pujyante ramante tatra Devata, yatraitaastu na pujyante sarvaastatrafalaah kriyaa, a famous shloka from Manusmruthi is heard. It means where Women are honored, divinity blossoms

there, and where women are dishonored, all action no matter how noble remain unfruitful. The shloka describes the theme of the movie.

Darshana Rajendran's first foray into Telugu cinema after she accomplished huge fame in the widely acclaimed films 'Hridayam' and 'Jaya Jaya Jaya Jaya Hey,' adding an extra layer of excitement for her fans in both the Telugu and Malayalam film industries.

in Hyderabad in May.

Notably, 'Paradha' marks

"Paradha" has been a labour of love, with shooting schedules spanning across picturesque locations in Delhi, Himachal Pradesh and some villages. While the crew's journey has been nothing short of adventurous, the excitement continues as they gear up for the final leg of shooting scheduled

TDG NETWORK

Actor Neha Sharma cast her vote in her father Ajeet Sharma's constituency in Bihar's Bhagalpur district on Friday. Ajit Sharma, a Congress

candidate, is contesting from Bhagalpur. The senior Congress leader, his wife, and his daughter

at a polling booth. Following her participation in the democratic process, Neha urged the people to ex-

ercise their right to vote. After casting her vote, Neha told ANI, "This is a very important day...I request people that this is a

known critic of the BJP-led

The actor, clad in a red

printed shirt and white

trousers, arrived at his

designated polling station

in Bengaluru to get his fin-

Speaking to media per-

sons after casting his vote,

the actor, who is not only

a prominent face in the

South film industry but

also made character ap-

pearances in several Bol-

lywood hits, said, "My vote

is my right. It gives me the

power to choose who will

represent me, be my voice

in Parliament. It is very im-

portant that you vote for a

candidate you believe in.

And, I voted for the candi-

date I believe in, the mani-

festo that promised change

from the divisive and hate

politics we have seen in the

Exactly one-half of the

28 Lok Sabha seats in

last decade."

ger inked.

very important right that we have. As an aware citizen, step out and vote because your vote is precious."

Bhagalpur is among the five seats in Bihar, along with Banka, Kishanganj, Katihar, and Purnia polling today.

Voting for the five Lok Sabha seats in Bihar began at 6 AM today and will last till 7 PM. The rest of the seats will go

Neha showed their inked fingers after casting their votes to polls in the remaining five phases of the general elections, with 2nd phase going on today.

Overall, the ongoing second phase of the Lok Sabha elections will witness voting in 89 constituencies spread across 13 states and union territories.

Firing outside Salman's residence: Two shooters arrested

TDG NETWORK

The two accused persons, arrested in Punjab in connection with the firing incident outside superstar Salman Khan's Bandra residence, were brought to Mumbai on a transit remand, the police informed on Friday.

The accused were brought to the city by the Crime Branch on Thursday, Mumbai Police informed.

The accused, Vicky Gupta and Sagar Pal, were grilled by officials of the elite National Investigation Agency (NIA) over several hours, officials informed on Friday. Earlier, on Thursday, the

Esplanade Court extended the police custody of both the accused arrested in connec-



tion with the firing incident till April 29.

They were produced before the metropolitan magistrate's court here after their previous remand ended on Thursday and were remanded in custody of the Mumbai Police Crime Branch.

Earlier, the Crime Branch claimed to have recovered strong evidence against gangster Lawrence Bishnoi and his brother Anmol Bishnoi, identifying them as the key conspirators and 'most wanted' in the case.

Mumbai Police registered a case against four people in the firing case, naming the Bishnoi brothers as key accused. According to the Mumbai Crime Branch, before the firing went down, the shooters had recceed

Salman's residence four times. They had also staked out Salman's farmhouse, the Crime Branch informed, adding that since the actor hadn't visited his farmhouse over several days, they planned to execute the firing outside his plush Galaxy Apartments residence in Bandra.

According to officials, the Mumbai Crime Branch recovered a broken mobile handset from the accused at the time of their arrest, adding that they were in possession of more than one phone.

The Crime Branch informed further that they were looking into the other phones as well. They also informed of the recovery of the second pistol, along with four magazines and 17 rounds from the Tapi River of Surat.

National Democratic Alliance (NDA) at the Centre, cast his vote in Bengaluru amid polling for the second phase on Friday.

ARTI SINGH DAZZLES IN RED LEHENGA, TIES KNOT WITH DIPAK CHAUHAN IN FAIRY-TALE CEREMONY

TDG NETWORK MUMBAI

Actor Arti Singh tied the knot with her longtime boyfriend Dipak Chauhan on Thursday in Mumbai.

The wedding ceremony took place at Iskcon temple in Mumbai in the presence of close friends and family members.

Arti looked breathtakingly stunning in a red lehenga.

Talking about the new bride and groom's outfits, Arti opted for a red-hued heavily embellished lehenga for her big day. She tied up her hair into a bun and accessorized her look with heavy golden-toned jewellery and a red chooda.

On the other hand, Dipak was in a white sherwani. Arti and Dipak also made their first public appearance

as newlyweds. They posed for the paparazzi stationed outside the reception venue. The newlywed also posed with Krushna Abhishek and Kashmera Shah.

Arti also greeted the paps with folded hands and

thanked them for being part of her wedding celebrations.

The couple distributed sweets among paps.

ing Kapil Sharma, Bipasha Basu, Karan Singh Grover and Archana Puran Singh, among others, arrived to bless the couple but it was Govinda's arrival at his niece's wedding that caught the attention.

hands.

Reportedly, it's an arranged marriage and the duo met through matchmakers. She has appeared in several TV Shows. She was also a part of Bigg Boss 13.

Congress-ruled Karana-TDG NETWORK taka is polling currently in the second phase. Actor Prakash Raj, a An electorally crucial

'VOTED FOR CANDIDATE I BELIEVE

IN': ACTOR PRAKASH RAJ

GETS FINGER INKED

state south of the Vindhyas, Karnataka is to poll for the 18th Lok Sabha in two phases, with the first for 14 seats currently underway. The seats polling in Phase 1 in the state are Udupi Chikamagalur, Hassan, Dakshina Kannada, Chitradurga, Tumkur, Mandya, Mysore, Chamarajanagar, Bangalore Rural, Bangalore North, Bangalore Central, Bangalore South, Chikballapur, and Kolar. The BJP grabbed the bulk of the electoral spoils in the 2019 Lok Sabha Sabha elections, winning 25 of the 28 seats. This time, however, the BJP has set aside three seats for the JDS, its alliance partner in the state.

The three constituencies where the JDS has put candidates are Hassan, Mandya, and Kolar.

Polling for the second phase in 88 seats across 13 states and Union Territories (UTs) began at 7 am on Friday and will conclude at 6 pm.



Fans were uncertain if Govinda would attend Arti's wedding, especially since he missed her pre-wedding ceremonies. Govinda was all smiles as he made a grand entry in an all-black sherwani to Arti's wedding. He also greeted the paparazzi stationed outside the wedding venue with folded



MADHU SINGH: A TRAILBLAZER OF VERSATILITY AND IMPACT

NEHA SOLANKI

adhu Singh, a beacon of focus and versatility, defies age with unwavering determination. From entrepreneurship to athletics, philanthropy to theatre, her impact resonates across myriad realms. Co-founding the Pardada-Pardadi NGO, she empowers young girls through education. Establishing "Harness India" catapulted her to international acclaim, fostering ties with Mauritius and South Africa. Expanding into serviced apartments with Perch Residences Pvt. Ltd., she garners accolades for exceptional service, even expanding to Melbourne. A golfer, CrossFit champion, and theatre enthusiast, Madhu's zest for life knows no bounds. Her nurturing presence extends to her family, epitomizing undeterred dedication and a profound commitment to positive change.

Q. Your journey spans across various fields, from entrepreneurship to philanthropy to athletics. What motivated you to explore such diverse paths,

and how do you manage to excel in each of them?

A. I believe that staying fit is the most important aspect to life and that it helps us achieve our goals; whatever they may be. Fortunately, Yoga was almost a religion in my parental home and I grew up practicing healthy habits from a very young age. Business is my passion and building a community is what drives me. After establishing in the export business and working towards women empowerment, helping girls to fulfill their dreams (while in Pardada Pardadi Trust) the progression to business felt natural

Q. Could you share some pivotal moments or challenges you encountered while establishing and managing "Harness India" and "Perch Residences Pvt. Ltd."? How did you overcome these obstacles?

A. I used to travel alone overseas extensively participating in various exhibitions, but due to shortage of funds I often use to deposit my passport as security with customs authorities with the promise of having my money refunded to me after obtaining orders from the vendors. This whole exercise used to be very stressful and challenging but a positive attitude and faith in myself and in my product helped me sail through.

Q. The establishment of "Pardada Pardadi" reflects your commitment to empowering young girls in rural India. What inspired you to initiate this noble cause, and what impact have you witnessed over

A. I received this inspiration from a bunch of talented girls in Roorkee Cantt, this was when my husband was posted there. I noticed that the girls were producing world class handicrafts but had none of the resources to sell it. I took this as a challenge and for the purpose formed a company called Harness India. Our very first collection was showcased at the prestigious Cottage Emporium of Delhi and MUMBAI and was a huge success.

Post this, I took this craft to my village in UP and helped my uncle to start a NGO called Pardada Pardadi; where young girls learnt this craft along with





FREE regular education. Today, not only the school girls but a large number of women of surrounding villages are engaged in this activity, and thus making a living from the same.

Q. Your achievements in sports, particularly in golf and CrossFit, are commendable. How do you maintain a balance between your professional endeavors and your passion for athletics?

A. I have always kept time in life, where I indulge in things close to my heart. To excel at any sports one has to invest in physical fitness, and to this end I found CrossFit the most suitable form of exercise that not only improves strength but builds stamina, flexibility

and speed at the same time. I believe in giving 100% commitment to anything I do, therefore when I participate in tournaments I check my work schedule, and if it permits me I dedicate more time to practice Golf as I believe in giving 100% com-

mitment to anything I do. Q. Your involvement in theatre adds another dimension to your multifaceted personality. How has participating in theatre enriched your life, and what lessons have you learned

from this experience? A. Dancing is my favorite pastim and I find theatre most enjoyable. Theater is the best way to connect with others and shed one's inhibitions as it takes you away from the mundane

UNDERSTANDING MENOPAUSE SYMPTOMS AND

routine to a fairyland. I will strongly recommend this to all of you, if you ever get an opportunity to do a theater play.

Q. Family seems to be an integral part of your life. How do you navigate the demands of your professional career while prioritizing your familial responsibilities?

A. I am blessed with two brilliant sons who have always stood by me like a rock and helped mein my entrepreneur journey. My elder son is from IIT Delhi and

who aim to make a positive im-

Developing Future-Ready Senior Leadership For Workplace Success

ARVIND PANDIT

In the dynamic landscape of modern business, organisations must cultivate forward-thinking and future-ready leaders. As technology advances, demographics shift, and market forces remain unpredictable, the complexity of leadership roles, particularly at senior levels, in driving organisational success continues to escalate.

Today, in order to thrive and stay competitive, leaders must adopt a comprehensive approach that integrates technological advancements, evolving employee dynamics, and adaptive organisational structures. While embracing agility and foresight, managers also need to leverage emerging technologies to foster innovation and streamline operations effectively.

Another key aspect of future-ready leadership is to prioritise diversity, equity, and inclusion. By acknowledging the value of diverse perspectives and contexts, leaders can nurture creativity and resilience. With continuous learning, understanding, and collaboration, leaders can navigate uncertainties skillfully and drive impactful changes in organisations

Hence, investing in leadership development is not just a strategic choice but a necessity for organisations looking to stay ahead of the curve. By equipping leaders with the skills to navigate technological disruptions, embrace diversity, and drive innovation, organisations can position themselves for sustained success and resilience in the face of future challenges. The benefits of cultivating technologically efficient, future-ready leaders extend beyond organisational performance to include enhanced adaptability, innovation, and a competitive edge in a rapidly evolving business landscape.

EMBRACING TECHNOLOGY

ADOPTION Leaders in new-age establishments acquire a digital way of thinking by employing a range of high-tech tools in their routine operations. According to Gartner, 91% of businesses are engaged in some form of digital initiative, and 87% of senior business leaders say digitalization is a priority. They are prompt in embracing the latest technologies and, henceforth, better equipped to overcome industry challenges. By recognising the relevance of the digital mindset, even long-established firms have begun appointing tech-savvy talent to prosper in today's ever-evolving industry.

In addition, technology implementation is not only restricted to operative or project levels but is currently taking place across the organisation. Therefore, the responsibility of heads and managers remains critical in choosing



Women should serve as role models for other females within the organization. While organisations may appear to be inclusive, biases still exist. Hence, women leaders must be provided with opportunities in core business functions rather than solely in support roles.

the right technology and resources for their corporations.

With tech-enabled resources at their convenience, leaders, especially in senior roles, can now make informed decisions to ensure there is a perfect blend of diversity and inclusion within the organisational structure. Tech-savvy mentors continue to use data insights and digital resources to make wellversed and calculated selections.

FOSTERING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Businesses implement policies and practices to cultivate an inclusive environment within the organization and in line with the industrial trends of the geographical location. Confirming the same, 92% of business leaders agree that a strategic workforce education program should help an organization achieve its diversity and inclusion goals.

In addition to the training modules, new-age corporations offer work-fromhome or hybrid work arrangements, flexible scheduling, transportation assistance, and support groups. Additionally, having minority representation in leadership roles can provide a sense of comfort and support for all employees. Further, women should serve as role models for other females within the organization. While organisations may appear to be inclusive, biases still exist. Hence, women leaders must be provided with opportunities in core business functions rather than solely in support roles. This will not only promote gender equality but also contribute to the overall agility and adaptability of the organisation.

CULTIVATING AGILITY AND ADAPTABILITY

The leadership teams within the organisation are receptive to change, allowing for diverse and dispersed teams to function effectively.

An effective leader must not shy away from expressing their thoughts, embracing failure, and taking risks. Adding on, the stakeholders of the organisations have experienced significant growth, not only within their core domain but also in various other sectors, largely due to the agile mindset of their leaders.

In turn, this reflects that change is the only constant in life. Senior leaders need to be nimble and quick to adapt to shifting landscapes, market trends, and unexpected challenges to steer the ship towards success.

In conclusion, cultivating futureready senior leadership is a strategic approach for organisations looking to thrive in constant change and disruption. By embracing technology, championing diversity and inclusion, and nurturing agility and adaptability among senior leaders, companies can build a robust leadership pipeline poised to navigate challenges and seize opportunities in the dynamic business world. Investing in the development of future-ready senior leadership is not just a competitive advantage—it is a fundamental driver of organizational resilience and success in the years to

The author is the Founder & Managing Partner, Ishwa Consulting.

HORMONE THERAPY'S POTENTIAL BENEFITS



MS. SUSAN DAVIS

Despite decades of research, navigating menopause seems to have become harder - with conflicting information on the internet, in the media, and from healthcare providers and researchers.

Adding to the uncertainty, a recent series in The Lancet medical journal challenged some beliefs about the symptoms of menopause, and which ones menopausal hormone therapy (also known as hormone replacement therapy) can realistically alleviate.

So what symptoms reliably indicate the start of perimenopause or menopause? And which symptoms can menopause hormone therapy help with? Here's what the evidence says.

REMIND ME. WHAT EXACTLY IS **MENOPAUSE?**

Menopause, simply put, is a complete loss of female fer-

Menopause is traditionally defined as the final menstrual period of a woman (or person female at birth) who previously menstruated. Menopause is diagnosed after 12 months of no further bleeding (unless you've had your ovaries removed, which is surgically induced menopause).

Perimenopause starts when menstrual cycles first vary in length by seven or more days and ends when there has been no bleeding for 12 months.

Both perimenopause and menopause are hard to identify if a person has had a hysterectomy but their ovaries remain, or if natural menstruation is suppressed by a treatment (such as hormonal contraception) or a health condition (such as an eating disorder).

WHAT ARE THE MOST **COMMON SYMPTOMS**

OF MENOPAUSE?

Our study of the highestquality menopause-care guidelines found the internationally recognized symptoms of perimenopause and menopause are:

- hot flushes and night sweats (known as vasomotor symptoms)
- disturbed sleep
- musculoskeletal pain
- decreased sexual function or desire
- vaginal drvness and irritation

mood disturbance (low mood, mood changes or depressive symptoms), but not clinical depression.

However, none of these symptoms are menopausespecific, meaning they could have other causes.

In our study of Australian women, 38% of premenopausal women, 67% of perimenopausal women, and 74% of post-menopausal women aged under 55 experienced hot flushes and/or night sweats.

But the severity of these symptoms varies greatly. Only 2.8% of pre-menopausal women reported moderate to severely bothersome hot flushes and night sweats symptoms, compared with 17.1% of perimenopausal women and 28.5% of postmenopausal women aged under 55.

So, bothersome hot flushes and night sweats appear a reliable indicator of perimenopause and menopause - but they're not the only symptoms. Nor are hot flushes and night sweats a Western society phenomenon, as has been suggested. Women in Asian countries are similarly affected.

Depressive symptoms and anxiety are also often linked to menopause, but they're less menopause-specific than hot flushes and night sweats, as they're common across the entire adult life span.

The most robust guidelinesdo not stipulate women must have hot flushes or night sweats to be considered as having perimenopausal or post-menopausal symptoms. They acknowledge that new mood disturbances may be a primary manifestation of menopausal hormonal changes.

The extent to which meno-

pausal hormone changes impact memory, concentration and problem-solving (frequently talked about as "brain fog") is uncertain. Some studies suggest perimenopause may impair verbal memory and resolve as women transition through menopause. But strategic thinking and planning (executive brain function) have not been shown to change.

WHO MIGHT BENEFIT FROM HORMONE THERAPY?

The Lancet papers suggest menopause hormone therapyalleviateshot flushes and night sweats, but the likelihood of it improving sleep, mood, or "brain fog" is limited to those bothered by vasomotor symptoms (hot flushes and night sweats).

In contrast, the highestquality clinical guidelines consistently identify both vasomotor symptoms and mood disturbances associated with menopause as reasons for menopause hormone therapy. In other



THERAPY?

words, you don't need to have hot flushes or night sweats to be prescribed menopause hormone therapy.

Often, menopause hormone therapy is prescribed alongside a topical vaginal oestrogen to treat vaginal symptoms (dryness, irritation or urinary frequency).

However, none of these guidelines recommend menopause hormone therapy for cognitive symptoms often talked about as "brain

Despite musculoskeletal pain being the most common menopausal symptom in some populations, the effectiveness of menopause hormone therapy for this specific symptoms still needs to be studied. Some guidelines, such as an Australianendorsed guideline, support

IIM Ahmedabad, and the younger one is from ISB Hyderabad. I have tried to instill a good value system in my family. Q. What advice would you give to aspiring entrepreneurs,

athletes, and philanthropists pact on society while pursuing their passions?

A. The most powerful tool we all have is discipline, which helps you shine through any profession in this world. The biggest investment in life is your sincerity, life Its a beautifuljourney and each phase should be enjoyed and cher-

menopause hormone therapy for the prevention of osteoporosis and fracture, but not for the prevention of any other disease.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

The greatest concerns about menopause hormone therapy have been about breast cancer and an increased risk of a deep vein clot that might

cause a lung clot. Oestrogen-only menopause hormone therapy is consistently considered to cause little or no change in breast

cancer risk. Oestrogen taken with a progestogen, which is required for women who have not had a hysterectomy, has been associated with a small increase in the risk of breast cancer, although any risk appears to varyaccording to the type of therapy used, the dose and duration of use.

Oestrogen taken orally has also been associated with an increased risk of a deep-vein clot, although the risk varies according to the formulation used. This risk is avoided by using estrogen patches or gels prescribed at standard

WHAT IF I DON'T **WANT HORMONE**

If you can't or don't want to take menopause hormone therapy, there are also effective non-hormonal prescription therapies available for troublesome hot flushes and night sweats.

In Australia, most of these options are "off-label", although the new medication fezolinetant has just been approved in Australia for postmenopausal hot flushes and night sweats, and is expected to be available by mid-year. Fezolinetant, taken as a tablet, acts in the brain to stop the chemical neurokinin 3 triggering an inappropriate body heat response (flush and/or sweat).

Unfortunately, most overthe-counter treatments promoted for menopause are either ineffective or unproven. However, cognitive behaviour therapy and hypnosismay provide symptom

The author is the Professor (Research) at Monash University, Clinical Epidemiology.

A GREATER LOVE - DEMYSTIFYING DETACHMENT



ERIC LE RESTE

The concept of detachment is often regarded as remaining distant from others, as being cold and uncaring, especially by those growing up in the West. In the East, detachment is a spiritual concept much more widely recognised but even so, it is not always well understood. However, when detachment is properly exercised, combined, vitally, with the power of love, then the freedom that the soul experiences is full of a wealth of feelings, attitudes, and thoughts that were simply not possible when caught up in attach-

Detachment is about re-

gaining our freedom. It is an awareness that stops us from being torn apart when separated from things or people that we love. In the same way as a baker lines a baking tin to stop the cake falling apart when it is removed from the tin, detachment is the lining of protection that stops love being spoiled. Separation from those we love is inevitable, at some point, even if that is only in death. But there are many other reasons for separation and when we love with attachment, it only brings sorrow and suffering somewhere along the line.

We live in a world that actively promotes attachment. If we are not attached to things that the world of advertising and commerce promote, then we would not keep on buying what is on offer. We need very clear thinking and understanding to be free of the influence of this kind of manipulation. In relationships, though, the lines are much more blurred. Real love is very much misunderstood. Jealousy and anger are not



Only a pure heart can harbour love that is unsullied by attachment.

love. Control and possessiveness are not love. Manipulation and violence are not love. Happiness and sweetness, generosity

and lightness do not create any kind of sorrow – they are attributes of love. The most precious thing we can own is our happiness, and

real love for another is precious. Detachment is the protector of that pure love and keeps it free from any form of pain or sorrow.

Attachment creates expectations, desires, judgement, criticism, and possessiveness. At the very worst it evokes strong and dangerous energies of uncontrollable attraction or uncontrolled repulsion. Detachment is seeing things as they really are, without the distorted and uncomfortable conversations going on inside, about what we imagine is happening. Detachment helps us to love more and appreciate being loved with no pain, no possessiveness, and is connected to the art of letting go. Love has a purity that is worth honouring. I do not need anyone else to be happy. Happiness does not depend on who I am with or what I am doing or what is happening. Spirituality, based on the understanding that I am a soul, a beautiful unique being experiencing life on this Earth, brings great happiness. I have full rights to the beauty of life, to love freely and simply be happy the moment I awaken - I am alive on planet Earth, taking part in the biggest

SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING

movie ever made, and I am part of it. Seeing all the victory and defeat, I can embrace it all with love and detachment. I want to play a beautiful role, to be one of the 'good guys' and make things wonderful.

Inner happiness and real love are like the perfume of a flower – nothing can make the fragrance more, or less. I can love and emanate the fragrance of love without becoming lost. When there are inevitable separations, then I can give that love and not wallow in sorrow; give them good wishes for what is to come. Like a river keeps flowing towards its destiny - to reach the ocean, it does not get stuck anywhere, it keeps on flowing. Everything and everyone we meet is for a temporary period of time, we all have our own destiny to reach.

Sometimes we find that it is easier to love some rather than others. This is based on selfishness; we find it easier to love those who bring us something. So, for the ones we find not so easy to love, there are five things we can actively do to find that pure love within us.

1. Get to know that person. Listen to their story.

2. Seek out the real qualities within them and name them, and talk about them

to others.

3. Bring spirituality into the relationship – they are a brother or a sister, God's child. How would God see them?

4. Find something to help them with. Bring something good to them.

5. Gift the sense of belonging. Let them feel they belong - we are all one family. It is one world; one family, and we are all going through something.

Love is sacred and the source of it is the Supreme Being, God. We must preserve a pure heart and not permit anyone to hurt that heart. We can combine being immensely spiritually loving, with deep compassionate detachment.

Eric Le Reste is a journalist and was a producer for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. He coordinates the activities of Brahma Kumaris centres in Canada.

Parameters for happiness



JIM RYAN

It is curious, is it not, that the majority of people in the world seek happiness and yet they only seem to experience it in small bursts of transient moments. When those moments pass, the search is on again, and often at great expense. To be truly happy, we have to understand what happiness is really based on.

Its roots lie deep within the individual consciousness, and it is based on knowledge, or the understanding of reality. The knowledge of the true, subtle, spiritual self. The understanding of the immutable law of cause and effect. The nature and form of the Supreme Being and the



Acquiring spiritual knowledge has a domino effect: it leads to wisdom, accurate judgment, right action, and happiness.

great epochs of the cycle of time, and their exact duration. When these truths are contemplated, they lead from one state of mind to another, each bringing a new and fulfilling experience until the highest

said that their time in space

spiritual experience of happiness is reached. Unhappiness, depression, stress, fear are all the result of a lack of the understanding of spiritual knowledge.

It is a domino effect of expe-

rience. Spiritual knowledge leads to an inner experience of wonder, which leads to accumulated wisdom, which leads to clear discrimination, which leads to accurate judgement, which leads to correct action,

which leads to the acquisition of a virtuous nature, which leads to pure and benevolent thinking, which leads to lightness of being, which leads to happiness.

Happiness must begin with

understanding what is. Understanding is the beginning but contemplating each truth requires its practical application in our lives and in our interactions with others. Holding knowledge only in the head is like understanding how to make a cake, but if the theory stays in the head, there will be no cake. It is applied truth that begins to activate the true consciousness of the self. To understand that I am a soul is only the first step in the process of simply becoming, of being. This process can be achieved in a very natural way when the consciousness is linked to that of the Supreme Being, in meditation. Delving into spiritual knowledge is moving into the sphere of true freedom, where pure activity, at the level of thoughts, words, and actions brings a lightness of being – and that is the platform for real happiness to emerge.

Jim Ryan has a background in education. He is an author and a Brahma Kumaris Rajyoga teacher, based at the Global Retreat Centre, Oxford, UK.

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY The act of de-cluttering shifts my focus from greed to need. When I learn the spiritual art of de-cluttering, I recognize the great value of accumulating subtle spiritual experiences. These fill my inner world with abundance and I lose the desire to accumulate physical possessions.

Today let me experience

living abundantly from

the inside out.

ELEVATE YOUR POINT OF VIEW



B.K. USHA

When we climb to higher altitudes, such as when flying in an aircraft or standing on a mountaintop, everything on the plains below appears small due to the effects of perspective and distance. As we ascend, our view expands, allowing us to see a broader area of the ground below. The distance between us and objects on the ground increases, and the farther away the objects are, the smaller their apparent size becomes.

And when someone goes beyond the Earth's atmosphere, into outer space, the view can be a transformative experience. Astronauts have

humanity's place within it. Many astronauts experience what is called the "overview effect", a cognitive shift in awareness during spaceflight, often while viewing the Earth from orbit or the moon's surface. They have mentioned how fragile and delicate Earth appears from space, with its thin atmosphere and the absence of visible borders between countries. There is a newfound appreciation for the planet's interconnectedness and a sense of responsibility for its well-being. Viewing Earth from afar also evokes a sense of unity among astronauts, regardless of their nationality or background. Many of them have spoken of feeling a part of something much larger than themselves and a deep connection to all humanity.

While the above is all about physical distance and perspective, a similar shift in perception occurs with

changed their perspective on life, the universe, and



By elevating our point of view we can see the larger picture, which helps us understand and respond to situations better.

the mind's eye. The more elevated our state of mind, the smaller matters appear to us. We see this happening in many ways. Two young siblings might be quarrelling over a toy, and for them it could be a serious issue - of rights, justice, equality, and fairness. But a parent who is watching would laugh it off as a petty spat. The two attitudes are the result of differing perspectives. The same happens in relationships - between individuals, groups, or countries. The higher the point of view, the broader the vision, and the larger the picture we see. Matters that might be a 'big thing' to a small mind would appear

as trifles to a broad-minded

How do we elevate our way of thinking? There are several ways to do it.

Seeking knowledge and diverse viewpoints, and engaging in discussions with those who have different backgrounds and perspectives helps to broaden our understanding of people and issues. Then, when we take time to reflect on our experiences, beliefs, and biases, we develop a better understanding of our thoughts and reac-

Going a step further, when we put ourselves in others' shoes and try to appreciate their perspectives, feelings, and motivations, we develop deeper connections with them and are able to see the world from different points of view.

Critical thinking also helps. Questioning assumptions, analysing information critically, and considering multiple angles before forming opinions or making decisions helps avoid narrowmindedness and have a more flexible approach to complex issues. Being open to constructive criticism and feedback is also important, as it may reveal blind spots or areas where our perspective might be limited.

But, as with astronauts who go beyond the Earth's atmosphere, if we step into the realm of spirituality, we too can experience an overview effect of sorts. When we consider the fact that all people in the world are essentially spiritual entities or souls, who are immortal, sentient beings of light, each playing their unique role in life, then the way we see ourselves and the world changes.

The fact that as souls we are all children of one Supreme Soul, and therefore part of one family, fosters a sense of spiritual kinship with the rest of humanity. Factors such as religion, nationality, race, and culture, which tend to create barriers between individuals and communities, cease to matter much. After all, like me the others too are souls, my brothers. The change in our point of view triggers other changes: fear, suspicion, and hostility give way to understanding and acceptance. Competition and deceit are replaced by cooperation. Strife and sorrow end, and

there is friendship and peace. All it takes is for us to elevate our perspective. The higher we go, the more we see and understand, and when we help others rise to the same level, we all get the picture, and there is no reason for conflict anymore.

B.K. Usha is a Rajyoga teacher at the Brahma Kumaris headquarters in Abu Road, Rajas-

RCB'S WIN OVER SRH WAKE-UP CALL SRH enter IPL record books FOR OTHER SIDES: EOIN MORGAN

SPORTS

ormer cricketer Eoin Morgan said that Royal Challengers Bengaluru's (RCB) 35-run win over Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) in the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024 will be a wake-up call for other franchises on how they take on Hyderabad.

While speaking at Jio Cinema, Morgan said: "So, I think the way RCB played is, I think, a wake-up call to how the other sides take on the SunRisers.'

The former English skipper said that the upcoming match of the Hyderbadbased franchise against Chennai Super Kings (CSK) will be "interesting" just to see can Ruturaj Gaikwad's side go back to what works for them.

"They are going to go to Chennai next. Obviously, so far at the Chepauk, we have seen really good batting pitches. So it will be interesting to see if CSK go back to what works for them - the CSK squeeze. On a good pitch, we saw what Marcus Stoinis did the other night at the Chepauk in that chase," he added.

Booking

7444

Recapping the match, RCB won the toss and elected to bat first. Skipper Faf Du Plessis (25) and Virat Kohli got the team off to a blazing

start in the powerplay. After a slowdown post-powerplay, Rajat Patidar (50) injected life into the RCB's innings. Virat was dismissed for 51 in 43 balls, with four boundaries and a six and failed to capitalise on his fine start during the powerplay. Despite some quick wickets, cameos from Cameron Green (37*) and Swapnil

Singh (12*) took RCB to

rates

206/7 in their 20 overs.

Javdev Unadkat (3/30) and T Natrajan (2/39) were the top bowlers for SRH. Pat Cummins and Mayank Markande took a wicket each.

In the run-chase, SRH kept losing wickets at regular intervals. Except for Abhishek Sharma (31), none of the previous heroes for SRH, be it Travis Head, Heinrich Klaasen, or Nitish Reddy made an impact. Skipper Cummins (31) and Shahbaz Ahmed (40) did put up a fight, but SRH was skittled out for 171 in their 20 overs.

Green (2/12) and Karn Sharma (2/29) were the top bowlers for RCB. Swapnil Singh also took two wickets for 40 runs. Will Jacks and Yash Dayal also got a wicket

RCB is at the bottom of the points table with two wins, seven losses and four points. SRH is at the third spot with five wins, three losses and 10

for most sixes in single season

The Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH), which is having one of its more fruitful seasons in the cash-rich domestic league with five wins from eight matches, entered the IPL record books for the most number of sixes hit in a single season, at 100.

The feat was achieved during the clash with the Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium on Thursday.

Though the Sunrisers went down to Bengaluru on Thursday, tasting only their third defeat this IPL season, they posted the unique record for clearing the fence the most times in a single season.

The Sunrisers have lit up the ongoing 17th season of the gilded, cash-rich domestic T2O league with their batting fireworks, with the likes of Aussie

ing a vibe that is completely

unique to that part of the

world, while cricket is also

expanding in the USA and

I'm excited to be part of that

growth through the T2O

Yuvraj joined West Indies

icon Chris Gayle and eight-

time Olympic gold medal-

list Usain Bolt as the first

ambassadors to be revealed.

"India's clash against Paki-

stan in New York is going to

be one of the biggest sport-

ing fixtures in the world this

World Cup," he added.

dasher Travis Head and his but fell agonisingly short at opening partner Abhishek 97 sixes. Sharma, and Heinrich Earlier, on Thursday,

> the RCB won the toss and elected to bat first. Skipper Faf Du Plessis (25) and Virat Kohli got the team off to a blazing start in the powerplay. After a slowdown in scoring post-powerplay, Rajat Patidar (50) injected fresh impetus into the RCB's innings.

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Powerlifter gaurav sharma receives honorary doctorate by us varsity for sporting excellence

TDG NETWORK

World champion and powerlifter Gaurav Sharma was conferred with an honorary doctorate degree by the American University for his work in the field of sports.

Powerlifter Gaurav Sharma was given the certificate of Doctor of Philosophy during a special event in New Delhi. He was quite elated to receive the certificate and said that this honour will boost his morale to work more in the field of sports.

"This honor is very special to me and I want to thank everyone who helped me in my journey so far. This recognition will boost my morale to work more in the field of sports and help my country in becoming a global sports' powerhouse," Gaurav Sharma said in a statement.

The Delhi athlete had clinched two gold medals at the 2016 World Powerlifting Championships in England. In 2007, he won four gold medals at the Commonwealth Championships in New Zealand.

Initially starting out as a weightlifter, Gaurav later switched to powerlifting. He is also a Mahant in a temple in Chandni Chowk, Old Delhi.

In a recent interaction with the media, Gaurav Sharma expressed optimism about India's prospects at the upcoming Paris Olympics, attributing it to the support and international exposure provided to athletes by the Central government in recent years. Over the past few editions, the participation of Indian athletes at the Olympics has steadily increased.

At Tokyo 2020, the Indian contingent was made up of 124 athletes, the largest that the country had sent to the Games. India also bagged seven medals, their biggest haul in a single Olympics including Neeraj Chopra's historic gold medal in the men's javelin throw.

AGENCIES

The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Friday announced India legend Yuvraj Singh as an ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 ambassador, which will be played in the West Indies and USA from June 1 to 29.

With just 36 days to go until the pinnacle global event for T2O cricket gets underway, ICC said in an official statement, "Yuvraj, who famously hit 36 runs in an over during the firstever T20 World Cup in 2007 which he and India ultimately won, will attend a range of exciting World Cup promotional events in the United States in the lead-up to and during the T20 showpiece, including the highly anticipated India versus Pakistan fixture in

New York on 9 June." "Some of my fondest cricketing memories have come from playing at the T2O World Cup, including hit-



India legend Yuvraj Singh named ICC

ting six sixes in an over, so it's very exciting to be part of this edition, which is set to be the biggest one yet," Yuvraj, ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2007 champion, said in an official statement.

Yuvraj was named Ambassador with 36 days to go in celebration of his six sixes in an over during India's successful Men's T20 World Cup 2007 campaign.

"The West Indies is a great place to play cricket with the fans coming to watch creatbest players in the world playing in a new stadium," Yuvraj said. "It's an honour to have

season.

Yuvraj as an ICC Men's T2O World Cup Ambassador. His name is synonymous with the T20 World Cup, owning one of the event's most iconic moments when he became the first player to hit six sixes in a T20 International. He joins Chris Gayle and Usain Bolt as the first ambassadors to be announced, who will each add to the excitement of what will be the biggest T20 World Cup ever," Claire Furlong, ICC General Manager - Marketing and Communications, said.

Klaasen, who has emerged

as the team's middle-order

bulwark this season, flat-

tening rival attacks with

The Hyderabad-based

franchise achieved the

landmark of striking 100

sixes in just their eighth match in the ongoing IPL

Even in the 2022 season,

the Sunrisers raised hopes

of achieving the landmark

year, so it's a privilege to be

a part of and to witness the

their ferocious assaults.

The marquee tournament will be played from June 1-29 with co-hosts USA taking fixture at Grand Prairie Stadium in Texas. A total of 55 matches will be played by 20 teams across 9 venues, culminating in the final on June 29 in Barbados.

Ganguly bats for Axar and Pant's inclusion in T20 World Cup squad

TDG NETWORK NEW DELHI

Former captain Sourav Ganguly feels Axar Patel will book his place in the Indian team for the upcoming T2O World Cup as he can be moved around in the batting order depending on match situation.

Axar has bowled splendidly all season at an economy rate of 7.06 and when promoted, he showed his batting prowess against Gujarat Titans.

"Axar, is a certainty. Both Rishabh and Axar are certainties for me at the T2O World Cup. The way things are going in T2O, Rohit will want someone to come at No. 8 and bat, give those 15-20 runs which Axar can easily do, and if he needs someone on Canada in the opening to go and smack spinners, Axar can do that as well

"That's the advantage with Iadeja and Axar, they are so talented and gifted," Ganguly, Delhi Capitals' Director of Cricket, said on the eve of



their IPL clash against Mumbai Indians here.

Ganguly, who has helped the left-handed Axar with his batting, said the all-rounder has the ability to bat in Tests as well as T2Os.

"You should have the ability to strike the ball. You don't have to have time for technique in T20 cricket. But your basics should be there and he's always had that.

"When you see his batting in Tests for India, he gets runs under pressure on turning pitches. He has the ability to bat but in T20 you need the ability to strike and he does that when he's pushed up and he gets a little more time to settle and keep hitting.

Man City cut deficit with Arsenal following 4-0 win over Brighton

TDG NETWORK FALMER (UK)

A brace from Phil Foden helped Manchester City secure a flawless 4-0 win over Brighton in their Premier League on Thursday night, cutting their deficit with table-toppers Arsenal to just one point. Arsenal had moved four

points ahead of the defending champions by thrashing Chelsea while Liverpool slipped to Everton in their game.

Ederson made a save,



preventing Danny Welbeck from striking for Brighton but City's quality came through as in the 17th minute, Kevin De Bruyne powered a cross from Kyle

Walker inside the nets with a header from 12 yards. Julian Alvarez was playing in place of an injured Erling Haaland and he also flashed a shot past the goal.

Foden got a free-kick from the edge of the box. Bernardo Silva cut out a pass from Valetin Barco and the ball came to Foden, who wasted no time in putting inside the nets in the 26th minute. Eight minutes later, Foden got his brace and City tripled their lead. At the other end, Alvarez was also making its attempts at the goal and it was his third attempt where he got it. Ederson found Walker down the Brighton's left with a long pass and he powered it into the area and the ball eventually found Alvarez who finally got to score in the 62nd minute. The scoreline stayed intact till the full-time. Following the game, City manager Pep Guardiola said as quoted by Sky Sports, "The statement is three points. This is the only statement. We arrive today at

Arjun breaches Air Rifle world record in Olympic Selection Trials

TDG NETWORK

Arjun Babuta shone brightest on day seven of the ongoing Olympic Selection Trials (OST) one and two for Rifle and Pistol, breaching the existing finals world record in men's 10M Air Rifle.

His sensational tally of 254.0 in the OST T1 final on Thursday was 0.3 above the mark set by fellow finalist and India teammate Divyansh Singh Panwar, at the Cairo World Cup earlier this year.

Also registering wins in their respective OST T1 final matches were Nancy (women's 10M Air Rifle), Varun Tomar (men's 100M Air Pistol) and Rhythm Sangwan (women's 10M Air Pistol), as per a press release from National Rifle Association of India (NRAI).

Arjun's scoresheet was studded with two perfect 10.9 gems, besides 13 other shots which were 10.6 or above. His lowest score of 10.0 came only on the 21st shot, by which time he had already established a huge gap over the field, winning it by 2.8 in



the end over 2022 world champ Rudrankksh Patil. Sri Karthik Sabari Raj was

Nancy was probably a little less lethal than Arjun in the women's 10M Air Rifle OST T1 final, but definitely as effective in securing a comfortable and similar pillar-to-post win. Her tally of 253.4, missed the world mark by 0.6, but was more than enough to ward off quota holder Mehuli Ghosh by O.7. Olympian Elavenil Valarivan was third.

The men's 10M Air Pistol final saw Paris quota holder Varun Tomar secure yet another comfortable victory on the day, with a score of 244.1. Ravinder Singh was a whole 4.1 points behind in the second, while Varun's fellow Paris quota holder Sarabjot Singh (217.4) picked up the final podium points with a third-place finish.

Rhythm Sangwan, one

of three in the women's field to have qualified for both the Air Pistol and Sport Pistol trials, made up somewhat for her disappointments in the Sport Pistol trials earlier, by taking the overall lead in the Air Pistol event after a comprehensive performance in its first trial

After topping qualifications on Wednesday with a score of 578, she led from start to finish in the final to also collect the highest podium points available. Her score of 243.5 was a huge 5.7 better than second finishing Manu Bhaker. Reigning Asian Games champ Palak finished third.

The day also saw the qualification round for the men's and women's 50M Rifle 3 Positions OST T2 conducted. Olympians Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar and Anjum Moudgil topped the scoring charts respectively. Aishwary was particularly sensational as he posted a dizzying 595 to leave an eight-point gap between him and his nearest rival. The details of the results are as follows.

AIFF records historic 138% rise in women's footballers in last 21 months

TDG NETWORK NEW DELHI

Indian football has recorded a historic 138 per cent surge in women's player registration for the last two years, indicating a healthy growth in the popularity of the sport as well as an increase in young female athletes opting for football, professionally.

According to the All India Football Federation (AIFF) Central Registration System (CRS) data, India has 27,936 registered female footballers as of March 2024. This is a massive 138 per cent rise in



in the last 21 months, India had 11,724 female footballers registered in June 2022. President of AIFF, Kalyan Chaubey attributed it to a

the current season including the introduction of the 2nd tier competition Indian Women's League (IWL-2). "It's a very positive trend we

ecosystem is an encouraging sign that we are on the right track in our planning for women's football in India," said Kalyan Chaubey as per the AIFF press release. "Availability of live broadcast has indeed helped in enhancing the profile of the sport," he added. The 2022-23 season of IWL was played at a single venue in Ahmedabad among 16 teams, with Gokulam Kerala FC winning their third consecutive title.

are witnessing in India. To

have as many as 16,212 new

female players in our football