



# THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

HYDERABAD • WEDNESDAY • MAY 08, 2024 • ₹9.00 • PAGES 18 • LATE CITY EDITION



## MODI HAS NO MORAL RIGHT TO SEEK VOTES: REVANTH

- Referring to PM Narendra Modi's visit to Warangal, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Tuesday said that the former has no moral right to seek votes
- Addressing a street corner meeting in Warangal, Revanth sought to know from the PM as to why the Centre failed to set up Bayyaram steel factory, Kazipet coach factory and ITIR project | **P5**



## People's Welfare First

Come let's end the 10 years of corrupt rule in India.

**Join hands for the nation      Vote for Congress!**

Telangana Congress is revolutionising the way people's welfare schemes are implemented. The objective is to Keep Telangana people happier than ever.

Here are some absolute winning schemes to win their hearts!



### Telangana Congress vows 2 lakh farm loan waiver by August 15, 2024

By August 15th, Revanth Reddy has promised farm loan waiver up to **Rs.2 Lakh rupees**. He also assured that the process of waiving loans would be completed by Independence Day this year.



### Telangana Congress announces 12000 for auto drivers every year.

Now to support auto drivers make a decent living, Telangana Congress is offering **Rs.12000 every year** to their families.

#### Constituency Wise MP Candidates



Dr. Mallu Ravi  
Nagarkurnool



T. Jeevan Reddy  
Nizamabad



Velichala Rajender Rao  
Karimnagar



R. Raghurami Reddy  
Khammam



Balaram Naik Porika  
Mahabubabad



Suresh Kumar Shetkar  
Zahirabad



Md. Sameer Waliullah  
Hyderabad



Ch. Vamshi Chand Reddy  
Mahabubnagar



G. Vamsi Krishna  
Peddapalli



Raghubeer Kunduru  
Nalgonda



Neelam Madhu  
Medak



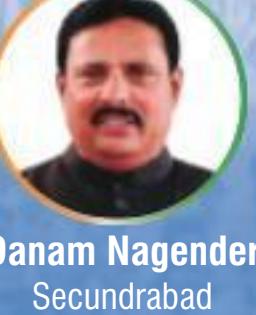
Dr. Kadiyam Kavya  
Warangal



Dr. G. Ranjith Reddy  
Chevella



P. Sunitha Reddy  
Malkajgiri



Danam Nagender  
Secunderabad



Dr. Ch. Suguna Kumari  
Adilabad



Ch. Kiran Kumar Reddy  
Bhongiri



**Choose Progress...**

**Vote for Congress**

# RELIEF AND HAVOC IN TELANGANA AFTER HEAVY RAINS

2 labourers killed on spot after a poultry farm under construction collapses, one dies of lightning

AJAY TOMAR @Hyderabad

AFTER suffering from sweltering heat for several days, people breathed a sigh of relief after heavy rains lashed the city late on Tuesday evening, with several parts even experiencing hailstorms.

Serilingampally, Kukatpally, Bachupalle, Khairatabad, and several parts of Secunderabad recorded the highest amount of rainfall, according to the Telangana State Development Planning Society (TSDPS).

Areas such as Yousufguda, Koti, Gachibowli, Chandanagar, and Shaikpet also witnessed considerable showers. The average rainfall recorded in the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) was 34 mm until 9 pm.

As per the GHMC's EV&DM, water stagnated in many parts of the city, such as Rajendranagar, Khairatabad, Balanagar, the journalist colony in Panjagutta, Kavadiyada, and Narayanguda. Traffic was also disrupted, hampering the flow, due to water logging in these areas.

Between 6pm and 8 pm, the EV&DM received a total of 49 emergency calls, 32 of which were concerning the falling of trees and the rest for water stagnation. The highest number of road clearing operations were conducted at LB Nagar, Shilparamam, and Mettuguda. While clearing works were completed at 28 locations.

"We have 30 DRF (Disaster and Response Force) teams on the ground, with around 200



A traffic cop takes shelter from heavy rains by standing underneath a traffic kiosk in Hyderabad on Tuesday | SRI LOGANATHAN VELMURUGAN

personnel and 25 officers attending to clearing road and water stagnation issues. Ever since the forecast was made, we have been on alert. The work is likely to be completed by late night or early morning," EV & DM Director Prakash Reddy told TNIE, adding that the DRF teams will be alert in further days as well.

Meanwhile, power supply was also disrupted at several places as trees and electric poles were uprooted.

However, there was no disruption to the metro services, clarified HMRL MD, NVS Reddy. But as many as five MMTS services - three between Hyderabad and Lingampally and two between Secunderabad and Falaknuma - were disrupted.

"The rainfall was much needed to provide respite from

## Three killed in lightning strike

As many as three people died by lightning and untimely rains in the state on Tuesday. Two labourers were killed on the spot when a poultry farm under construction collapsed due to heavy rains and gales in Lakdaram village of Kukunoorpally mandal. The victims were identified as Nagulu (35) Subramanyam (40). Another person was killed due to lighting in Lakdaram village of Kukunoorpally mandal.

the heatwaves, but at the same time, travelling back home will get difficult now," N Bala, a security guard outside a mall in Begumpet, told TNIE.

## Transformer blast delays Eamcet exam

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
@ Karimnagar



Parents protest alleging negligence by the college management

negligence on part of the college management. They staged a protest on Rajiv Rahadari, causing traffic snarl upto two

kilometres. Parents accused the college management for not having generators to avoid such situations. The management tried to pacify them by assuring them that they would bring in a mobile generator to restore power and continue the exam.

As per schedule, the exam was to be conducted from 3pm to 6pm. However, the management sought permission from the higher officials to extend the exam time. Eventually, the test was completed by 7.30 pm.

Miyapur in Rangareddy records 13.35 cm of rainfall, highest downpour in the state

In Peddapalli, procurement centre resembles a pond, with paddy heaps soaked in rainwater

## Rains create havoc at paddy procurement centres; state govt to take necessary steps

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
@ Mulugu/Hanamkonda/Karimnagar

UNSEASONAL rains hit many parts of Hanamkonda, Mahabubabad, Warangal, Mulugu, and Bhupalapally districts on Tuesday evening, much to the dismay of farmers. Hailstorms caused trees to be uprooted and damaged crops such as paddy and jowar, which farmers were harvesting in Rythu Vedika and houses.

In the erstwhile Karimnagar district, thundering rain, hailstorms, and strong winds soaked the paddy fields and caused damage to the mango crop. In Nancherla, Jagtial, palm trees were uprooted, and electrical poles fell, resulting in power interruptions for several hours in various locations. In Poosala village, Peddapalli district, the paddy procurement centre resembled a pond, with paddy heaps soaked in rainwater. Hailstorms damaged standing crops in Peddapalli head-quarters and Kalwa Srirampur mandal.

Farmers in affected areas, particularly in Eturunagaram,

Inavole and Mutharam and Mahadevpur mandals in Bhupalapally district, are concerned about their soaked paddy crops. They urge the state government to expedite the purchasing process at these centres.

Srinu, a farmer from Eturunagaram village said: "We had stored paddy at the procurement centres, but the government did not take any adequate measures for proper procurement. The government should speed up paddy procurement given the damage caused by unseasonal rains and hailstorms."

However, there has been a respite in heat due to rains as the state recorded the highest maximum temperature of 45°C for the past two weeks.

By Tuesday evening, temperatures had dropped below 40°C, providing relief to the public from the oppressive heat.

Transport Minister Ponnambalam Prabhakar assured that the state government would take all necessary steps to shift paddy from procurement centres and provide compensation for paddy damaged by hailstorms and untimely rains.



The Enforcement Vigilance & Disaster Management (EV&DM) personnel clear silt from the stormwater drainage in Jeedimetla on Tuesday

## IMD issues yellow alert till May 11, rains to continue for next 48 hrs

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
@ Hyderabad

### Rainfall highest in Hyd, outskirts

- Miyapur 133.5 mm
- KPHB Colony 112.8 mm
- Chandanagar 107 mm
- Bachpally 102.3 mm
- Lingampally 99 mm
- Gachibowli 95.3 mm
- Yousufguda 94.8 mm
- R C Puram 88.3 mm
- Sultanpur 85.5 mm
- Koti 84.5 mm



A farmer covers paddy before heavy rains lash the state in Telangana on Tuesday

dershowers along with gusty winds towards evening or night. Maximum and minimum temperatures in the city are likely to be around 39 degree Celsius and 27 degree Celsius respectively, the IMD's forecast said.

For the next 48 hours, Hyderabad is expected to receive light to moderate rain or thun-

## 7 children rescued from trafficking

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
@ Hanamkonda

AS many as seven children who were being trafficked from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Jharkhand were rescued by the Railway Protection Force (RPF) and Hanamkonda Child Welfare Department officials at Kazipet Railway Station on Monday midnight.

According to sources, the

RPF and welfare department, on a tip-off, conducted searches in Dhanapuri Express and rescued the children.

The children were later handed over to Kazipet Government Railway Police (GRP) for further investigation.

Of the seven children, three were found to be taken to Hyderabad for forced labour while the other four were

found to be traveling independ-

ently to Hyderabad, intending to seek employment in private companies.

Recognising the vulnerability of these minors, the RPF and GRP Kazipet swiftly facilitated their transfer to Oasis Home, Hanamkonda, in collaboration with Child Line 1098, ensuring their immediate access to care, protection, and necessary support services.



## RPF PERSONNEL REUNITE 3-YEAR-OLD WITH PARENTS



Hyderabad: The Railway Protection Force personnel on Monday rescued a 3-year-old girl who went missing at the Secunderabad railway station and reunited her with her parents. The personnel found the minor wandering aimlessly near gate No. 4 on platform No. 1. Immediately, they made a public announcement to alert the passengers about a missing girl and were able to trace the girl's father. Upon inquiry, the RPF learnt that the family had come to Secunderabad railway station to board the Satavahana Express. While his wife was busy with their other children at the booking office, the 3-year-old went missing.

The RPF personnel in coordination with the Child helpline authorities ensured that the minor was safely reunited with the parents. In 2024, the RPF Secunderabad division rescued 51 children and handed them over to the Child helpline authorities under Operation Nanhe Farishta.

## Daily Starscope

PETER VIDAL

**08 May:** Since ancient times we have been fascinated by comets, the strange stars with tails which appear in the sky from time to time and then disappear after a few weeks.

Once we regarded them as harbingers of doom. These days some scientists think life on earth was actually seeded from comets. Perhaps we all came from outer space!

**ARIES** (Mar 21-Apr 20)  
Everything that is important is taking place behind the scenes. You may suspect that some underhand activities are all likely to feel they have the right to make demands on your time, but they could be making a big mistake. You have given enough ground already. Don't let yourself be put upon any more: it's all a matter of knowing where to draw the line.

**TAURUS** (Apr 21-May 21)  
Relations and business associates are all likely to feel they have the right to make demands on your time, but they could be making a big mistake. You have given enough ground already. Don't let yourself be put upon any more: it's all a matter of knowing where to draw the line.

**GEMINI** (May 22-June 21)  
You'll be a good listener. It's all too likely that what is now said or implied could seem unfair, unreasonable or unjust, yet it's all in the nature of the times that this should be so. It's just that some people like the sound of their own voices too much!

**CANCER** (June 22-July 23)  
You must do what you can to safeguard your position, yet this might have to be achieved while people around you are looking the other way! Colleagues are likely to pick up the wrong end of the stick at work but, if you're prepared, then nothing will knock you off your perch.

**LEO** (July 24-Aug. 23)  
Try to understand that certain individuals are misguided, and that this could be the reason why your rights are becoming an issue, or why ethical questions are becoming more important. For your part, you may concentrate on the larger picture, sparing a thought for where you'll be this time next month - or next year.

**VIRGO** (Aug. 24-Sept. 23)  
Much has changed that you are not even aware of yet, but with your new-found confidence and ingenuity you will soon be in an ideal position to overcome all obstacles. Today's problems may be solved by throwing money at them. However, you have to find the right target first!

**LIBRA** (Sept. 24-Oct. 23)  
After weeks when partners seemed to have the upper hand, you are at last beginning to see exactly how you can turn the tables on them. Your best approach is to be as subtle as you possibly can. Just don't let other people think that you're going behind their backs.

**SCORPIO** (Oct. 23-Jan. 22)  
The ideal pattern to the day would be to have a lazy morning and a busy afternoon, so let's hope circumstances permit. Also, turn your attention to matters like exercise and diet to make sure you're treating yourself as well as you should. Remember - you only have one body!

**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 23-Dec. 22)  
Try to inject a little of your legendary creativity into today's affairs and make enjoyment the main standard by which you measure and grade all activities. Give as much time as is needed for relationships with children, and a little more besides!

**CAPRICORN** (Dec. 23-Jan. 20)  
You may be on the right track - or you may not. What is most important now, though, is not whether you're right or wrong, for nothing is black and white. Stop and think and consider what it is about your present activities that is good for you, and what should be improved.

**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 21-Mar. 19)  
In view of changes in positive regions of your horoscope, even a major move or upheaval on the home front should be to your advantage in the long-term. In the short-term, though, a minor sacrifice may be necessary. Give a little now and you'll get more back later.

**PISCES** (Feb. 20-Mar. 20)  
You're a little more emotional than usual, but that shouldn't be a handicap. You are still in a strong position to dictate terms, especially if there are financial questions at stake. You should be able to make other people see things your way, and even notch up a small saving.

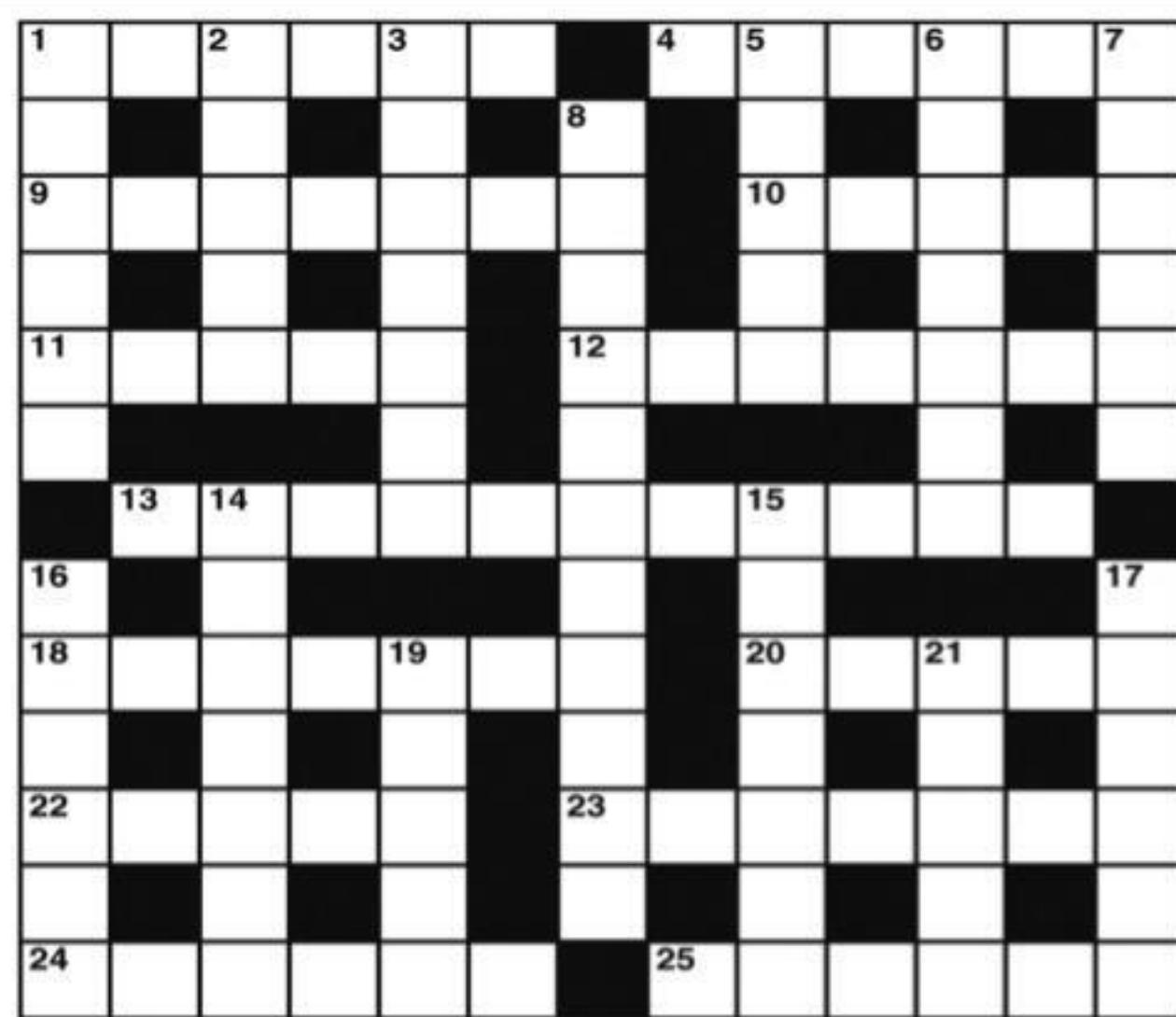
Solutions to Yesterday's puzzle

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

**SUDOKU EASY**

TEST YOUR NUMBER CRUNCHING SKILL WITH OUR UNIQUE PUZZLE

Fill in the grid with digits in such a manner that every row, every column and every 3x3 box accommodates the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



## CROSS WORD

### ACROSS

- Concerned with drama still being contested on court (24)
- It hit a Pacific island badly (6)
- City makes Joe rich (7)
- Look about a ship of the line (5)
- Manage while at home to have a quarrel (3-2)
- We're yet in the process of growing (3,4)
- Their constructors must meet very high costs (11)
- Tact as well as art may be needed to draw (7)
- House deposit? (5)
- Colour uniformly worn (5)
- Offensive rumour about a retired doctor (7)
- Insurrection is seen in the arena (6)
- Make clear it may be caused by overworking (6)

### YESTERDAY'S SOLUTIONS

Across: 1 Rebit, 2 Bank overdraft, 3 Ulysses, 4 Drum up, 5 Tudor, 6 Dressed to kill, 7 Rustler, 11 Airlift, 13 Airline, 19 Agrees, 20 Totes, 21 Shellac.

Down: 1 Refit, 2 Bank overdraft, 3 Ulysses, 4 Drum up, 5 Tudor, 6 Dressed to kill, 7 Rustler, 11 Airlift, 13 Airline, 14 Agrees, 16 Lotus, 18 Ethic.

## JUMBLE

BY DAVID L. HOYT  
AND JEFF KNUREK

PRAGH




</tbl\_r



# THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

HYDERABAD • WEDNESDAY • MAY 08, 2024 • ₹9.00 • PAGES 18 • LATE CITY EDITION



## XI APPOINTS SENIOR DIPLOMAT XU FEIHONG AS NEW ENVOY TO INDIA

The appointment comes after a long delay of 18 months amid frozen relations between the two countries over the military standoff in Ladakh

CHENNAI ■ MADURAI ■ VIJAYAWADA ■ BENGALURU ■ KOCHI ■ HYDERABAD ■ VISAKHAPATNAM ■ COMBATORE ■ KOZHIKODE ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ■ BELAGAVI ■ BHUBANESWAR ■ SHIVAMOGGA ■ MANGALURU ■ TIRUPATI ■ TIRUCHY ■ TIRUNELVELI ■ SAMBALPUR ■ HUBLI ■ DHARMAPURI ■ KOTTAYAM ■ KANNUR ■ VILLUPURAM ■ KOLLAM ■ TAEPALLIGUDUM ■ NAGAPATTINAM ■ TIRISSUR ■ KALABURAGI



READ SHARE FOLLOW  
[newindianexpress.com](http://newindianexpress.com)  
[facebook.com/thenewindianexpress](https://facebook.com/thenewindianexpress) [twitter.com/newindianpress](https://twitter.com/newindianpress)  
[instagram.com/newindianexpress](https://instagram.com/newindianexpress)

1976

THE LAST TIME THERE WAS SUCH A LONG GAP IN THE POSTING OF A CHINESE ENVOY IN INDIA

# Average turnout again in third phase

Overall voting percentage 63.53%, as compared to 67.33% in 2019 LS elections; Uttar Pradesh lowest at 57.34%

PREETHA NAIR @New Delhi

in the third phase.

MARKING another dip in voter turnout, the third phase of the Lok Sabha election on Tuesday recorded average polling of 63.53% across 93 seats in 11 states and Union territories. The same 93 seats had polled 67.33% in 2019.

While Assam had the highest voter turnout at 77.06%, Goa came second at 75.13% and West Bengal at 73.96%. UP witnessed the lowest at 57.34%, while Bihar polled 58.16% Gujarat 57.62%, Maharashtra 61.44%, Chhattisgarh 70.05%, Karnataka 69.65%, and MP 66.05%.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah were among those who exercised their franchise in Gujarat. In the third phase, stakes are high for the ruling BJP as it had won 71 of the 93 seats in the 2019 Lok Sabha election.

While the BJP is looking to repeat its stunning performance in the 2019 elections, the states in focus will be Maharashtra, Karnataka and Gujarat. All 26 seats in Gujarat, 14 seats in Karnataka and 11 seats in Maharashtra are up for grabs.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi shows his ink-marked finger after casting his vote for the third phase of Lok Sabha elections, in Ahmedabad on Tuesday. Union Home Minister Amit Shah is also seen | PTI

### Sporadic violence in West Bengal areas

Sporadic violence in the four seats in West Bengal as Trinamool, BJP and Congress-CPI(M) workers clashed with each other in various parts of Murshidabad and Jangipur. All parties lodged separate complaints on poll violence

### High polling in 4 Assam seats despite rains

High polling registered in Assam despite inclement weather. Amid rains, people used different modes of transport, including boats, to reach the polling stations across Guwahati, Barpeta, Dhubri and Kokrajhar constituencies

### Polling peaceful in Uttar Pradesh, says CEO Rinwa

UP's Chief Electoral Officer Navdeep Rinwa said the polling was peaceful. Some complaints were received from parties through email and were promptly resolved, he said. In all, 48 ballot units, 48 control units and 152 VVPATs were changed till 6 pm

# HEAVY RAIN IN HYD AFTER PROLONGED HEATWAVE

A two-wheeler rider struggles through a flooded road in Hyderabad on Tuesday | SRI LOGANATH VELMURUGAN

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Hyderabad

BRINGING much-needed relief from scorching heat, several districts, including Hyderabad, received rains on Tuesday. Miyapur recorded the highest rainfall of 13.35 cm.

Areas such as Yousufguda, Koti, Gachibowli, Chandanagar, and Shaijkpet also witnessed heavy showers. The average rainfall recorded in the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) limits was 3.4 cm until 9 pm.

Several roads were flooded in the city and power supply disruptions were reported in many parts after trees got uprooted and fell on electric lines. The SCR cancelled five MMTS trains following rains.

Unseasonal rains also hit many parts of Hanumakonda, Mahabubabad, Warangal, Mulugu and Bhupalapally districts. Trees got uprooted

and paddy and jowar harvest were damaged in hailstorms.

In erstwhile Karimnagar district, rain left paddy fields soaking and caused damage to mango crop. In Nancherla, Jagtial, electric poles were dislodged, resulting in power interruptions for several hours in various locations. In Poosala in Peddapalli district, rainwater flooded a procurement centre causing damage to heaps of paddy. Hailstorms damaged standing crops in Peddapalli district headquarters and Kalwa Srirampur mandal.

In Medak district, two labourers died when an under-construction building collapsed due to rains.

CM Revanth Reddy, who was in Warangal, reviewed the rain situation in the city and directed GHMC officials to take up relief measures in low-lying areas and restore power supply on a war footing. **P2**

ECI  
SAYS CM  
REVANTH  
VIOLATED MCC

Directs govt to defer Rythu Bharosa until LS elections | **P5**

## New opportunities for youths

THIS IS MODI'S GUARANTEE



Will double the amount of Mudra Yojana to ₹20 lakh  
Will create millions of employment opportunities in high-value services, start-ups, tourism and sports through manufacturing, infrastructure and investment

Will ensure scholarships to meritorious students from deprived sections and expand employment opportunities

Will make government recruitment transparent, and will implement law to prevent paper leaks

Will promote start-ups in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities

Right Intent, Right Results

Phir Ek Baar  
Modi Sarkar

Press the lotus button Make BJP win

# Haryana govt in a minority after exit of 3 independents

HARPREET BAJWA @Chandigarh

THE Nayab Singh Saini-led Haryana government was on Tuesday reduced to a minority as three independent MLAs withdrew their support amid Lok Sabha polls, triggering a major political crisis in the state.

Technically, the government will not fall immediately since there has to be a gap of six months between confidence votes. The last trust vote was on March 12 after Saini replaced Manohar Lal Khattar as the chief minister. However, the Congress went for the BJP's jugular, demanding President's rule in the state.

The three Independents are Sombir Sangwan (Dadri), Randhir Gollen (Pundri), and Dharampal Gondar (Nilokheri). They said they will extend support to the Congress during the general elections.

The trio made the announcement at Rohtak in the presence of the Leader of Opposition and former Haryana CM Bhupinder Singh Hooda and Haryana Congress president Uday Bhan. Sangwan claimed that another Independent MLA, Rakesh Daultabad (Badshahpur), was also expected to join them but was unable to reach the venue in time.

The 90-member state assembly now has an effective strength of 88 as Khattar and Independent MLA Ranjit Chautala resigned after the BJP gave them the Karnal and Hisar Lok Sabha tickets, respectively. Before Ranjit's resignation, six of the total seven Independents in the state were with the BJP.

MARATHA STIR MAY UPSET CALCULATIONS IN MUNDE BASTION | **P6**

## SIKSHA 'O' ANUSANDHAN SAAT-2024

Empowering students for a brighter future

### VETERINARY & AGRICULTURE UG PROGRAMMES

- Bachelor of Veterinary Science and Animal Husbandry (B.V.Sc. & A.H.)
- B.Sc. (H) Agriculture

### APPROVAL & RECOGNITIONS

- Approved by UGC & VCI
- Re-accredited by NAAC with A++ Grade
- Accredited by ICAR
- Ranked in QS World Rankings 2024

### NIRF INDIA RANKINGS 2023

- 15<sup>th</sup> Best in University Category
- 16<sup>th</sup> Best in Medical Category
- 09<sup>th</sup> Best in Dental Category

To apply for admission through SAAT,  
Please visit: [www.soa.ac.in](http://www.soa.ac.in)

# Ghose to submit detailed Medigadda report

Ex-SC judge interacts with officials, locals after inspecting barrage

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

@Bhopalpally

FORMER Supreme Court judge, Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose, on Tuesday conducted an inspection of the damaged piers of the Lakshmi Barrage (Medigadda) of the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Scheme (KLIS).

During his visit to the site, Justice Ghose inspected Piers 19, 20, and 21 of Block No. 7 on the left bank, and slabs and parapet wall resting on Pier No. 20, as well as the disturbed and sunken beds on the Maharashtra state side of the project.

The former judge was accompanied by special secretary, Irrigation, Patil Prashant Jeevan, Jayashankar Bhupalpally district collector Bhavesh Mishra, officials from the Irrigation department and L&T, the contracting company.

After reaching the site, Justice Ghose summoned the local engineering staff and enquired about the situation before the sinking of the piers. The L&T engineering staff and officials of the Telangana Irrigation department were present.

The former Supreme Court judge also enquired about the damage and cracks. He met the barrage staff and discussed for hours the sinking of the piers. During the visit of the former judge, no one was allowed on the barrage.

Speaking to the media later, Justice Ghose said that a report will be submitted to the government on the matters that come to light during his inspection visit. "We also received a National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA) report and will study it thoroughly. A comprehensive report will be submitted to the government," said Justice Ghose.



## NDSA suggests geographical survey

FROM PAGE 3

The Committee also suggested a geographical survey to assess the foundation of the Medigadda barrage.

"For carrying out geotechnical investigations for assessing the barrage foundation, two boreholes shall be drilled in each bay of Block-7. The depth of boreholes shall be 25 m.

One borehole in each bay shall be located in the raft upstream of gate, whereas the second shall be located in the raft downstream of the gate," the report said.

Similar geotechnical investigations were suggested for Annaram and Sundilla barrages. The Committee recommended engaging organisations such as CSMRS, New Delhi / CWPRS, Pune / NGRI, Hyderabad for carrying out the investigations.

### Medigadda

The committee noted that the Medigadda barrage reinforce-

ments along the crack for full height of pier have failed. Cracks have developed in the piers downstream the radial gate as well. Structural cracks were noticed in the adjacent piers. Gantry girder and gantry rail alignment was distorted in horizontal direction in a few of the piers. Welding joints between the two gantry girders over pier are distorted.

Irrigation officials informed the Committee that 77 of the 85 radial gates in Medigadda barrage were successfully lifted. However, problems were encountered while lifting the remaining radial gates i.e. No. 15 to 22 in the distressed Block 7.

The panel was requested to suggest the way forward on the lifting of the remaining eight gates for carrying out the works before the onset of monsoon. It noticed that wide cracks developed at many other locations upstream and downstream the piers and raft of Block 7.



## CM avoiding Rythu Bandhu disbursal using poll code as excuse, alleges KCR

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

@Medak/Kamareddy

BRS supremo K Chandrasekhar Rao on Tuesday accused Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy of trying to avoid disbursing Rythu Bandhu amounts by citing the model code of conduct though he had promised to do so by May 9.

He also alleged that women too did not get the ₹2,500 pension promised by the Congress.

"Did you receive Rythu Bandhu amounts?" KCR asked farmers. He alleged that the Congress did not even implement the ongoing schemes and has turned into a curse for farmers in just five months.

Addressing an election rally in Medak, KCR said that the Congress hoodwinked farmers by not waiving the crop loans up to ₹2 lakh. "Congress also hoodwinked the people in the name of six guarantees. The CM is trying to reorganise districts and dissolve Medak district. Do you want Medak district to exist or not?" he asked the voters. He appealed to the people to support the BRS candidate so that Medak would continue to exist as a district.

Earlier at another rally in Kamareddy, KCR said that if



BRS chief K Chandrasekhar Rao interacts with people at a tea stall in Nizamabad

Prime Minister Narendra Modi returns to power with the BJP's slogan "Ab ki baar 400 par", prices of petrol and diesel will cross the ₹400 mark. He, however, said that the BJP would not cross 200 Lok Sabha seats this time.

"A coalition government will be formed at the Centre. If BRS wins 12 to 13 Lok Sabha seats, the party will play a key role at the Centre and protect the interests of Telangana," KCR said. He pointed out that the BJR was a distant third in 2019 in Zaheerabad.

"The BJP is a party of capi-

talists and investors. It has not done any good work at all. It is always trying to create a rift between religions for political benefits. Modi made 150 promises but did not fulfil even a single one. Due to this, the country's image has been tarnished in the world," KCR said..

"When incompetent, stupid and ignorant people come to power, the result is incompetence, stupidity and ignorance. The chief minister is continuing to take oath in the name of God. Is it necessary to make promises in the name of God?" KCR said.

The TSUTF said that submission of the first PRC report was delayed by 30 months. They requested Siva Sankar to fix the minimum salary at ₹30,000 and the maximum at ₹24,815. Stating that there was a variation in pay scales of teachers working in different cadres, they urged Siva Sankar to address this anomaly.



## FIX MINIMUM PAY AT ₹30K: TEACHERS TO PRC CHIEF

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

@Hyderabad

REPRESENTATIVES of teachers unions requested the Pay Revision Commission (PRC) chairman N Siva Sankar to recommend an increase of their salaries in line with the increased GSDP of the state. They wanted a minimum salary of ₹30,000 per month and 30% fitment.

The financial benefit of the next PRC should be implemented from July 1, 2023, the teachers said.

TSUTF president K Jangaiah and general secretary Chava Ravi submitted a

memorandum to the chairman of the second PRC here on Tuesday. Recalling that the GSDP rose by 60.3% in the last five years against the average national GDP, the TSUTF demanded an increase of their salaries accordingly.

The TSUTF said that submission of the first PRC report was delayed by 30 months. They requested Siva Sankar to fix the minimum salary at ₹30,000 and the maximum at ₹24,815. Stating that there was a variation in pay scales of teachers working in different cadres, they urged Siva Sankar to address this anomaly.

## INTERIM MEASURES AHEAD OF MONSOON

■ Carry out crack monitoring at appropriate locations to an accuracy of +/- 1.0 mm

■ Pier nos. 16 to 22 have either tilted or have developed cracks to varying magnitude. These piers shall be adequately braced at appropriate locations with suitable bracing system. Lattice girder/truss or box girder can also be used to arrest any likely lateral movement.

■ Rectify or replace defective or damaged pressure release valves in the raft

■ The damages to the plinth slab/end-sill noticed at certain locations may be repaired / recast. If boiling is noticed underneath the plinth slab, it shall be arrested by restoring the parametric joint at that location

■ The CC blocks which are intact may be used again. However, damaged CC blocks shall be replaced.

### FORTRADIAL GATES 15 TO 22 WHICH ARE STUCK DUE TO SINKING OF PIERS

■ Crane shall be parked at any block other than Block No-7.

■ Ropes shall also be checked for slackness to avoid tilting of gate while lifting.

■ All welds, bolts and pin connections in gate, hoist and its supporting structures shall be checked thoroughly before any of these gates is lifted.

■ Radial gates 20 and 21, which has suffered the maximum damage, shall be removed completely

■ The remaining six gates shall be lifted to fully open position and shall be latched/dogged firmly.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUNDILLA

■ All obstructions to the smooth and even distribution of flow of water through barrage and its immediate upstream and downstream shall be removed and ground trimmed. The left-over boulders and debris, dead concrete, sheet piles, shoals of sediment deposits and any other protrusions that obstruct the smooth flow upstream and downstream shall be removed.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ANNARAM

■ Sand heaps accumulated in front of the barrage bay raft shall be removed and the waterway cleared, strictly adhering to the norms of irrigation department or other regulations in this regard

■ The Medigadda barrage structure is 1632 m long and 20.1 m in height. The length of the barrage is divided into 8 blocks. After the damage, 77 out of 85 radial gates in barrage have been successfully lifted.

■ Problems have been encountered while lifting the remaining radial gates i.e. No. 15 to 22 in the distressed Block No-7.

### Annaram

On the Annaram barrage, the committee noted that the CC blocks and launching apron downstream were damaged for almost entire length of the barrage.

The wearing coat in the barrage sill / glaci / stilling basin was seen damaged and washed away in several bays. Huge sand heaps were seen accumu-

lated upstream in front of the barrage bay raft, for almost the entire length of the barrage. Hence the areas upstream could not be inspected.

### Sundilla

The CC blocks and launching apron at the downstream were seen damaged / settled / displaced for almost entire length of the barrage.

## Revanth collecting 10% to clear bills, alleges Eatala

MANDA RAVINDER REDDY

@Hyderabad

ALLEGING that Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy is collecting 10% commission to clear bills, BJP Malkajgiri candidate Eatala Rajender on Tuesday said that this money is being sent to former AICC chief Rahul Gandhi.

He said that while it took 10 years for BRS supremo K Chandrasekhar Rao to lose the trust of the public, Revanth has lost the confidence of the people in just five months.

Participating in a "meet-the-press" programme organised by the Press Club of Hyderabad, Rajender said that Revanth has lowered the dignity of the chief minister's post by using filthy language against his opponents. He also alleged that Revanth is a liar.

Rajender said that the Congress government failed to implement the promises made during the run-up to the Assembly elections. "No action was taken in the alleged Kaleshwaram project scam. The

government is merely bidding time by constituting committees on various issues. There is no action against anyone in the phone-tapping case," he added.

Responding to the war of words over quota, the former minister said that the BJP government at the Centre gave reservations to women in legislature. "Why will we scrap reservations?" he asked.

Rajender emphasised that the BJP has no intention of scrapping reservations. He said that people were tired of coalition politics in the past and in the name of INDIA bloc, Rahul Gandhi and the Congress were again trying to form a coalition government. "People want Narendra Modi to become the PM again," Rajender claimed.

"Allegations against BJP regarding reservation for Muslims are not correct, because 50% of Muslims have reservations under BC category. There are EWS reservations too. The BJP has said there should be no reservations on the basis of religion," Rajender said.

### BJP, BRS using ECI to victimise farmers: Venkat

Hyderabad: Accusing the BRS and BJP of using the Election Commission of India as a political tool to stop disbursal of Rythu Bandhu funds, R&B Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy on Tuesday alleged that farmers in the state were being victimised by the "evil political conspiracies" of the two parties. "Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has given orders to credit Rythu Bharosa amounts into accounts of farmers. The farmers were happy but it's unfortunate that BRS and BJP hatched conspiracies to stop the crediting of Rythu Bandhu amounts into the farmers' bank accounts using EC as a weapon," the minister said. Recalling that the BJP introduced draconian anti-farm laws, Venkat Reddy described the saffron party as an anti-farmer party which had caused the deaths of hundreds of farmers by bringing the contentious laws. He said that the farmers will understand the conspiracies of the BJP and teach it a lesson in the ensuing elections.

## Govt to purchase rain-hit paddy

ENS @Hyderabad

Allaying fears of farmers, state government officials on Tuesday said that the paddy soaked by the untimely rains would be purchased.

In instances where paddy has been damaged by unseasonal rains, the government reassures farmers that irrespective of the loss, it will purchase the paddy. The priority is to protect the livelihoods of farmers and ensure their financial stability, regardless of the challenges posed by adverse weather conditions. It is reiterated that the government is committed to procuring even drenched paddy from farmers and is ready to procure every single grain arrived at the PPCs.

## BRS victory will bring KCR back to power: KTR

IREDDY SRINIVAS REDDY

@Hyderabad

WITH just four days left to go before campaigning for the Lok Sabha elections ends, the three major political parties have pressed into service their top leaders, hoping to sway voters.

The campaign of the BJP, which appears to be in perpetual election mode, is being led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister

Amit Shah and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. Chief ministers from BJP-ruled states are also flitting in and out of the state, canvassing for the party's candidates in Telangana. The BJP is pinning its hopes on Modi's charisma and the BJP's governance.

The Congress campaign is being spearheaded by Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy at the state-level and its top na-

tional leaders — Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge — giving the party due attention by making frequent visits to the state. The party is banking on the Gandhi family's legacy and its manifesto to sway traditional supporters and attract neutral voters.

The BRS campaign is led by K Chandrasekhar Rao, KT Rama Rao and T Harish Rao.

## FROM OUR ARCHIVES

### TAKE A JOURNEY BACK IN TIME. LOOK AT HOW ELECTIONS UNFOLDED IN THE TELANGANA REGION OVER THE YEARS



### 1977: Cong sweeps TG region in post-Emergency LS polls

In the March 1971 elections, the Telangana Praja Samithi (TPS) led by Marri Chenna Reddy had won 10 seats. However, by September 1971, the TPS had merged with the Congress. In the 1977 elections, the first LS polls held after Indira Gandhi's Emergency was lifted, the Janata Party swept North India and came to power at the Centre. But in the Telangana region, the Congress bagged all the 15 seats, defeating the Janata Party—Congress for Democracy—CPM combine

Congress's Jagalam Kondala Rao, brother of Chief Minister Jagalam Vengala Rao, won from Khammam. T Lakshmi Kantamalla had won from Khammam on a Congress ticket in the three previous elections and in 1971, had been one of three candidates — along with the party's Nizarnabad and Adilabad nominees — to defeat the Telangana Praja Samithi. In 1977, she shifted to the Janata Party and contested on its ticket from Secunderabad but lost by around 4,000 votes to the Congress's MM Hashim

The number of seats in the Telangana region increased to 15 in 1977 with the addition of Hanamkonda. Former Andhra Pradesh chief minister PV Narasimha Rao won from the newly created segment and entered Lok Sabha for the first time. G Venkateswamy, who was Union deputy minister for rehabilitation in the Indira Cabinet, won from Siddipet (SC) segment for the third consecutive time

In March 2024, the then Governor of Telangana, Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan resigned and went on to contest elections on a BJP ticket from South Chennai. Similarly, in 1977, RD Bhandare, the Governor of united Andhra Pradesh, resigned from his post in February. He was fielded by the Congress from Bombay North-Central constituency and lost to the CPM candidate. Three BRS MLAs have now joined the Congress ahead of the polls. Party hopping was prevalent even in 1977 with 17 opposition legislators joining the Congress before the LS polls

17 opposition legislators join Congress

# ECI DIRECTS GOVT TO DEFER RYTHU BHAROSA

Election body says CM violated MCC and balance amount under the scheme should be disbursed only after LS polls

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
@ Hyderabad

IN a jolt to the ruling Congress, the Election Commission of India (ECI) on Tuesday deferred disbursement of aid under the Rythu Bharosa to farmers till the completion of polling for the Lok Sabha elections on May 13. It directed the officials concerned to submit a compliance report in this regard on Tuesday itself.

The ECI move came following a complaint from one N Venkumar, stating that Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy violated the model code of conduct by announcing at a 'Jana Jatara' meeting in Kothagudem a couple of days ago that disbursement of Rythu Bharosa assistance would be completed on or before May 9.

In a letter to Chief Electoral Officer Vikas Raj, the ECI stated that the chief minister has violated MCC and the balance amount under the scheme for 2023 Rabi season should be deposited in the accounts of the beneficiary farmers only after Lok Sabha elections.

"Though Rythu Bharosa is an ongoing scheme, the disbursement of 2023 Rabi season assistance must have been completed by January 2024 as per the precedent. Further, according to complaint received from Venkumar and report thereupon received from the Telangana CEO, the ECI found that Revanth Reddy has violated the MCC conditions laid down in this regard for ongoing scheme

by publicly speaking about ensuing disbursement under Rythu Bharosa scheme on or before May 9, which has also been reported in the media," ECI stated in the letter.

The election commission said Rabi instalment of the assistance was disbursed by the state government during October-January in the last five years and there was neither any fixed date for disbursement prescribed in the scheme "nor any special significance of disbursement in the month of May, 2024 for Rabi season of 2023".

"It is worth noting that similar directives were issued during the Telangana Assembly elections in 2023 for the Rythu Bandhu scheme. Former BRS minister T Harish Rao violated MCC by attempting to take credit for the scheme's disbursement during the election period. In the light of these concerns, the poll panel has directed the deferment of the disbursed instalment of the Rythu Bharosa scheme till

poll is over on May 13. This decision is aimed at ensuring the integrity of the electoral process and preventing the misuse of government schemes for electoral gains. Any attempt to politicise or exploit such government schemes for electoral purposes will be dealt with firmly to uphold the sanctity of the democratic process," ECI said.

Interestingly, according to officials, the state government had released over ₹2,400 crore to be paid to around 6.65 lakh farmers on Monday.

The CM was addressing a street corner meeting in Warangal in support of party's candidate Kadiyam Kavya after cancelling his campaigning meeting in Karimnagar due to rains. "During 2018 elections, KCR released Rythu Bandhu funds to farmers. Now, he is trying to obstruct us from disbursing the Rythu Bharosa amount," he said.

## Revanth targets KCR, vows to fulfil promise made to farmers

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
@ Hyderabad

ON a day the ECI directed the state government to defer disbursement of financial assistance under the Rythu Bharosa scheme, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy said that he would fulfil the promise he made to the farmers.

Blaming the BRS president K Chandrasekhar Rao for the development, the chief minister said: "KCR you note this down and come to Telangana Martyrs Memorial on May 9. The funds will reach where they are supposed to. See whether I would abide by my word or not."

Revanth also called upon the Telangana farmers to understand the conspiracies being hatched by the BRS and BJP to stop the disbursement of Rythu Bharosa funds.

The CM was addressing a street corner meeting in Warangal in support of party's candidate Kadiyam Kavya after cancelling his campaigning meeting in Karimnagar due to rains. "During 2018 elections, KCR released Rythu Bandhu funds to farmers. Now, he is trying to obstruct us from disbursing the Rythu Bharosa amount," he said.

Referring to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Warangal, Revanth sought to know from the former as to



Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy during a roadshow in Warangal on Tuesday

why the Centre failed to set up Bayyavaram steel factory, Kazipet coach factory and ITIR project.

"The prime minister should enter Warangal only after answering these questions," he said.

"These projects were not completed as you (KCR) never questioned the Centre and mortgaged Telangana to Modi," he said.

Stating that the Lok Sabha elections are a war between Gujarat and Telangana, Revanth called upon the people to support him in defeating Gujarat.

He also said that the recent As-

sembly elections were like semi-finals and the Lok Sabha polls are the final match.

"Modi is Gujarat a state or the country for you? The bullet train to Gujarat, Sabarmati Riverfront to Gujarat and shifting industries from Telangana to Gujarat. The Warangal city which was the capital of Kakatiya Dynasty has been reduced to a directionless city with the projects like Outer Ring Road incomplete," he said.

"The PM has no moral right to seek votes in Warangal," Revanth added.

## EXPRESS READ

### Addanki Dayakar booked for comments against PM

Nirmal: The Nirmal police registered a case against Congress leader Addanki Dayakar for making comments against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah. The police registered the case after the BJP lodged a complaint against the Congress leader for his "abusive speech intended to disrupt the peace". The Congress leader also insulted Lord Rama and Sita, the BJP alleged.

Tamilisai alleged that the Congress came to power in Telangana riding on false promises. Stating that the budget of five states was needed to implement the guarantees given by the Congress, she said that the grand old party "built a fort in the air".

Highlighting that Rythu Bharosa funds have not been disbursed, the BJP candidate asked how Chief Minister Revanth Reddy would mobilise funds to implement the loan waiver.

Tamilisai said that the people of the state should benefit more from Central government schemes. Stating that Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the state more than 22 times, she said that a majority of these visits have been as part of developmental projects. "This is remarkable," she added.

Tamilisai said that the BJP was the only party in the fray in this election with a strong prime ministerial candidate.

## FROM OUR ARCHIVES

**TAKE A JOURNEY BACK IN TIME.  
LOOK AT HOW ELECTIONS  
UNFOLDED IN THE TELANGANA  
REGION OVER THE YEARS**

### 1980 LS polls: Indira Gandhi wins from Medak, Cong-I sweeps TG

In the 1980 Lok Sabha elections, Congress-I swept the Telangana region and won all the 15 seats for the second consecutive time.

Pre-poll predictions said the Congress-I would definitely win in united Andhra Pradesh. An Express report dated January 1, 1980 reads, "Opposition to Indira Gandhi's party in Andhra Pradesh appears to be ineffective in most constituencies due to various factors"



### INDIRA PAYS DARSHAN TO KAMAREDDY SAINT

During a 12-hour whirlwind tour of Telangana, Indira Gandhi filed her nomination for the Medak seat, while she was also contesting from Rae Bareli, where she had lost in 1977. On December 4, 1979, an Express report cited a survey conducted by Osmania University as saying, "Several of the voters are not even aware of the fact that she is one of the contestants from the Medak constituency"

However, Indira Gandhi's charisma and the intensified campaigning bore fruit and a few days later, PM Charan Singh claimed, "An alleged secret pact between the Congress-I and Janata Party thwarted the opposition chances of putting up a common candidate against Indira Gandhi at Medak"

On January 3, 1980, an Express article said that an imported video-tape recorder was used for Indira Gandhi's campaigning in Medak. "The video projector helps refresh the villagers' memory about all the good work done by Mrs Gandhi during her regime". Meanwhile, the more religious bent of mind expressed that Indira would win "because she had paid a 'darshan' to 35-year-old Shabari Mata, a 'saint' at Kamareddy before filing her nomination". Results were in favour of the Cong-I, with Indira Gandhi securing 67.93% votes whereas S Jaipal Reddy of the Janata Party came second with 18.57%

### OLD CITY CURFEW ENDS 3 HOURS BEFORE POLLS

In the wake of communal riots reported across Telangana, Communal riots broke out in the curfew-bound Old City, killing four persons and injuring as many as 64 persons. Police patrolling was intensified, shops were shut down and a curfew was put in place

Research: Swethavimala M, Amrutha Kothapally, Pranav M Kiran

## BJP PLANS TO REVOKE RIGHTS OF 90% OF CITIZENS: BHATTI

ENS @ Hyderabad

DEPUTY Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka on Tuesday alleged that BJP was conspiring to do away with caste-based constitutionally-guaranteed reservations.

Stating that the BJP will remove the word "secular" from the Preamble of the Constitution, Vikramarka said that it was the prerogative of SC, ST, and BCs to stop the saffron party from returning to power for the third consecutive time.

Addressing a press conference at the Gandhi Bhavan amidst his busy election campaign, the deputy chief minister made specific accusations that BJP will revoke the rights of 90 per cent of the country's population.

Vikramarka also said that BJP was appealing to the people to give it a two-thirds majority only to change the Constitution.

"If you cast a vote for the BJP, the future will be bleak. SCs, STs and BCs mocking democracy.

He took a strong exception to filing of cases against Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy.

He said that BJP rulers are behaving like erstwhile "Delhi Sultans"

mocking democracy.

will lose their rights," Vikramarka cautioned. He said that the Congress was already in the process of conducting a caste census as promised by its leader Rahul Gandhi.

### 'BJP trampled upon the federal spirit'

Alleging that BJP trampled upon the federal spirit envisaged by the Constitution, Vikramarka said that the ruling party at the Centre was intimidating a chief minister for telling the truth and standing against the ideology of the BJP.

He took a strong exception to filing of cases against Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy.

He said that BJP rulers are behaving like erstwhile "Delhi Sultans"

mocking democracy.

**HIET**  
HINDUSTAN INSTITUTE OF  
ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY  
A Unit of Hindustan Group of Institutions

**EARN YOUR  
WINGS & EXPLORE  
NEW HEIGHTS**

**Join HIET.**

**AME**  
AIRCRAFT  
MAINTENANCE  
ENGINEERING

Approved by Director General of Civil Aviation, Govt. of India, New Delhi

MoU's with Leading Airlines / AMO's      Best AME College Award      Scholarships available

Training Partners

- Air India Engineering Services Limited
- Blue Dart Aviation Limited
- Orient Flights Aviation Academy
- Deccan Charters Pvt. Ltd.
- GMR Aero Technic Pvt. Ltd.

Toll Free: 1800 425 44 38   www.hiet.in

Campus: Navalur Road, Vellarithangal, Serpanancheri, Chennai - 601301.

E-Mail : info@hiet.in Ph: AME - 97901 84442

## Modi set to be first PM to visit Vemulawada temple

NAVEEN KUMAR TALLAM  
@ Rajanna-Sircilla

NARENDRA Modi is all set to become the first prime minister to visit the historic Sri Raja Rajeshwara Swami Temple in Vemulawada when he arrives here on Wednesday.

After offering prayers at the temple, where is likely to spend 15 minutes, the prime minister will address a public meeting in the temple town in support of the BJP's Karimnagar candidate Bandi Sanjay Kumar.

Local residents as well as devotees of Lord Shiva are hoping that the PM will make some announcements regarding the development of temple as well as the town.

Residents allege that during the BRS regime,

If you vote for the BJP,  
the future will be bleak.  
SCs, STs and BCs will  
lose their rights

Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, Dy CM

the then CM K Chandrasekhar Rao announced ₹100 crore funds for temple development but has not fulfilled that promise.

The Special Protection Group (SPG) commandoes, meanwhile, inspected temple premises along with district and temple authorities.

Meanwhile, Tuesday's thunderstorms caused havoc in Vemulawada, affecting the arrangements being made for the public meeting.

In Karimnagar too, the tents and chairs arranged up for the Jana Jatara meeting to be addressed by Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy were blown away by heavy winds, leading to the Congress cancelling the programme.

## Cong trying to 'emotionally divide people': Tamilisai

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Hyderabad



Former Telangana Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan addresses the media at the BJP state party headquarters in Hyderabad | SRI LOGATHAN VELMURUGAN

CONDEMNING as "false propaganda" the allegations levelled by the Congress regarding caste-based reservations, former Telangana governor and BJP's Chennai South candidate Tamilisai Soundararajan on Tuesday said that the grand old party was trying to "emotionally" divide people on the basis of caste.

Referring to the BRS as a "spent force", Tamilisai said that the pink party did not respect the Governor's office.

Speaking to TNIE on the sidelines of her first press conference in Hyderabad after her re-entry into active politics, she said, "They (BRS) thought of me as a BJP person but I did not see myself as a BJP person. I was only the people's Governor." She added that former chief minister K Chandrasekhar Rao never met her as mandated by Article 167 of the Constitution.

Tamilisai alleged that the Congress came to power in Telangana riding on false promises. Stating that the budget of five states was needed to implement the guarantees given by the Congress, she said that the grand old party "built a fort in the air".

Highlighting that Rythu Bharosa funds have not been disbursed, the BJP candidate asked how Chief Minister Revanth Reddy would mobilise funds to implement the loan waiver.

Tamilisai said that the people of the state should benefit more from Central government schemes. Stating that Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the state more than 22 times, she said that a majority of these visits have been as part of developmental projects. "This is remarkable," she added.

Tamilisai said that the BJP was the only party in the fray in this election with a strong prime ministerial candidate.

## Chief Electoral Officer Telangana

Lok Sabha Elections  
Polling Date: 13<sup>th</sup> May, 2024

## DO YOU KNOW YOUR POLLING STATION

To find out Scan here

Voter Helpline App



electoralsearch.eci.gov.in

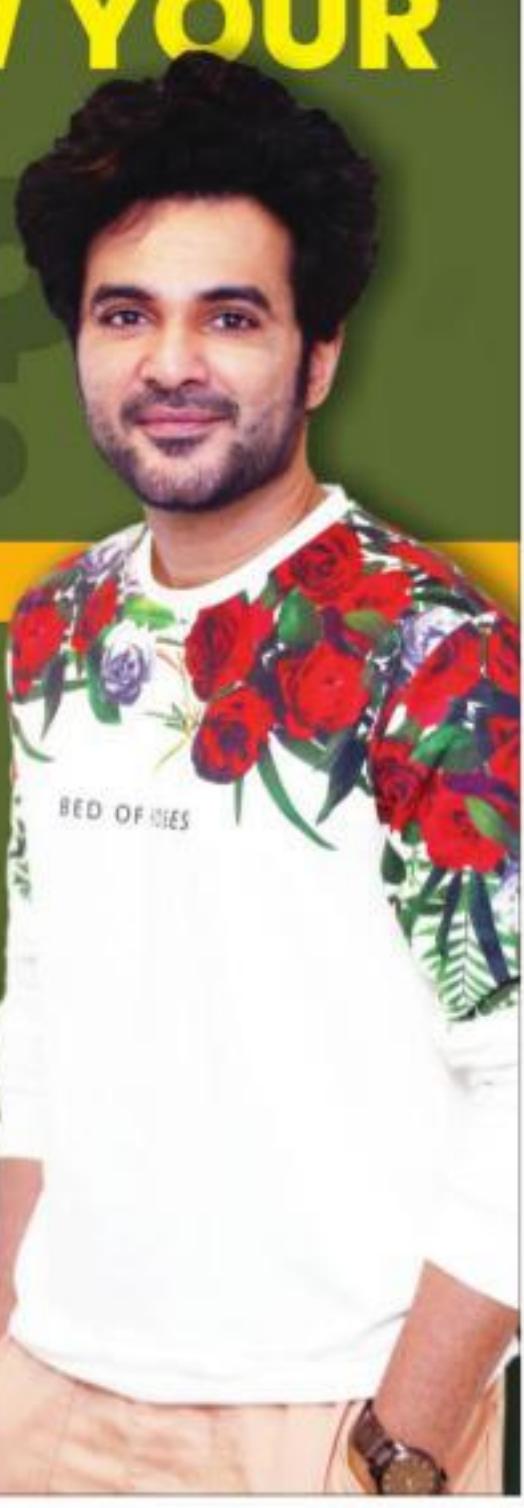


or through "Voter Sahaya Mithra"  
Chatbot on CEO, Telangana website  
www.ceotelangana.nic.in



Call  
1950  
Toll Free

Siddu Jonnalagadda  
Famous Cine Actor (DJ Tillu)



# J' HILLS CASE: MOM OF DEAD INFANT CLAIMS RAHEEL WAS DRIVING CAR

Cops reopened case after ex-MLA's son was involved in another crash

PRIYA RATHNAM @Hyderabad

KAJAL Chauhan, the mother of a toddler who died in a road accident in Jubilee Hills in March 2022, is learnt to have identified Raheel Amir, the son of former Bodhan MLA Md Shakil Amir, as the man who was driving the car that caused the mishap.

Reliable sources told *TNIE* that Kajal gave a statement to the police in which she named Raheel as the driver of the car that killed her son.

**PARENTS CALLED FROM SOLAPUR**

■ Kajal gave a statement to the police in which she named Raheel as the driver of the car that killed her son.

■ Police called Kajal Chauhan & her husband from Solapur where they had gone after the tragedy, to record their statement.

■ After a re-recorded testimony in Nampally City Court, the couple were taken to the city commissioner of police before they were escorted back to Solapur.



timony in Nampally City Court, the couple were taken to the city commissioner of police before they were escorted back to Solapur.

Additionally, to maintain privacy and security, all communications, including mobile phones, were temporarily disabled during her meeting with

the city police chief.

It may be recalled that Banjara Hills ACP Sudarshan, Jubilee Hills' circle inspector (CI) Rajashekhar Reddy and sub-inspector (SI) Chandrasekhar, who were the investigation officers in the accident case, have been suspended.

The police reopened the case after Raheel was involved in another car crash in front of Pragathi Bhavan in the early hours of December 23, 2023. The case took a new twist after Raheel's attempts to make another person take his place came to light and two inspectors were suspended for allegedly trying to shield the former Bodhan BRS MLA's son.

Raheel allegedly was driving his BMW car under the influence of alcohol and crashed into the barricades in front of Pragathi Bhavan whose name was changed to Mahatma Jyoti Rao Phule Praja Bhavan after the Congress came to power.

## 383 booths in Hyd critical: CP

S BACHAN JEET SINGH @Hyderabad

AS many 383 polling stations in Hyderabad have been identified as critical in terms of law and order problem, said Hyderabad CP, K Sreenivasa Reddy.

Another 1,050 polling booths have been identified as sensitive. These booths do not have any law and order problem but have been identified based on different parameters such as polling booths where voting is more than 90% or where more than 75% of votes were polled in favour of one candidate in the last election or where polling was less than 10%. The areas where re-polling was conducted owing to vitiation of poll process and electoral offences such as booth capturing, during any election for Lok Sabha or state legislative assembly in last five years or where any sort of violence took place leading to lodging of an FIR are first to be put under sensitive category, Hyderabad DEO and GHMC Commissioner, D Ronlad Rose said.

Addressing a press conference at the GHMC head office on Tuesday, Ronald Rose along with Sreenivasa Reddy and Hyderabad DC, Anudeep Durishtety and others, said that all measures to ensure that polling goes on smoothly and peacefully without any untoward incidents are taken.

Home Guards from Karnataka are also expected to come to Hyderabad to ensure security on the polling day, CP said.

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Hyderabad**

THE City Court has once again postponed the bail of Krishank Manne, Social Media Convenor for the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) on Tuesday. It can be recalled that he was arrested by the Osmania Police after forged charges were filed against him for reportedly posting a fake circular on his X account.

Scheduled for an earlier date initially, Krishank's bail hearing has now been postponed to Wednesday. One reason cited for these consecutive delays is unavailability of judges, either due to other commitments or leave. One of the session court judges, who was expected to preside over the hearing on Monday, deferred the case to Tuesday, only for it to be delayed further when the presiding judge admitted to needing more time to acquaint with the intricacies of the case.

Krishank's father, Leo Augustine Manne, talking to *TNIE* said, "It's the best example of miscarriage of justice and how it can be derailed by those who do not deserve to sit in high places without earning them."

Augustine further added, "And of all what hurts me the

**We trust the Honourable Judge for his knowledge & experience is much greater, therefore, we adhere to the orders with the custody. But to deny the right to be accompanied by his lawyer and to not have CCTV surveillance for the same, is it not violation of guidelines listed by the SC in matters of arrest?**

Suhanshi Surve, wife of Krishank Manne

most being an advocate, espousing civil rights for over 40 years, the silence of so called democrats, libertarians, and of all those, who had decried time and again against the state oppression. Is it the silence of the lambs or that it's not at their doorstep."

Krishank Manne's wife Suhanshi Surve, former Union Minister Sarve Satyanarayana's daughter said, "Court's decision to grant police custody is quite disappointing. Since the case is apparently baseless, it could have been dismissed. Yet, we trust the Honourable Judge, for his knowledge and experience is much greater, we also trust the legal process, therefore, we adhere to the orders and have no qualms with the custody. But to deny the right to be accompanied by his lawyer and to not have CCTV surveillance for the same, is it not violation of the guidelines listed by Supreme Court in matters of arrest?"

Meanwhile, BRS MLA and former minister KT Rama Rao will be meeting the social media convenor at Chanchalguda jail on Wednesday.

## EXPRESS READ

### 2 dead as tractor overturns, falls into canal in Jagtial

Jagtial: A tractor overturned and fell into a canal, leading to the death of two youths in Mallapur mandal. The tractor carrying gravel lost control while trying to avoid an oncoming vehicle from the opposite direction, plunging into the nearby D29 canal.

THE contest in Maharashtra's Beed Lok Sabha constituency, the bastion of the Munde family, is all set to go right down to the wire on May 13 as a confluence of factors is threatening to upset the conservative electoral calculations.

Beed has been represented by the Munde family since 2009. This time, the BJP has denied ticket

to sitting MP Pritam Munde, the daughter of late popular leader Gopinath Munde, and instead fielded her sister Pankaja Munde, who is facing tough challenge from Sharad Pawar-led NCP (Shardachandra Pawar's candidate Bajrang Sonwane).

Pankaja was a minister in

**SHOWTIME FOR GLADIATORS**

SIT probe a calculated witch hunt, says Revanna

ENS @ Bengaluru

Holenarsipur JDS MLA HD Revanna, an accused in the sexual harassment case, on Tuesday alleged that the statement given by the DCM to the media and the CM writing to the PM clearly indicated that the SIT investigation was nothing but a calculated witch hunt aimed at humiliating him and his family.

Revanna stated this in his bail petition filed before the special court.

Referring to the developments before and after the rejection of his interim anticipatory bail petition, Revanna contended that the SIT investigation lacked honesty and its sole intention was to arrest him and to ensure that he was humiliated.

## Toyota told to pay ₹50 lakh to Hyd man

AJAY TOMAR @Hyderabad

THE District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission-II, Hyderabad, has ordered car company Toyota and its retail showroom in the city to pay a compensation of ₹5 lakh along with a refund of ₹45.57 lakh for failing to deliver a vehicle booked by the complainant, for which he also obtained loans from the bank at high interest rates.

The complainant, Ramesh Mali, said he booked a Fortuner model car at the company's showroom in Sanathnagar in January 2022 and paid an amount of ₹45 lakh to the latter. Apart from the loan, the consumer said he was also paying an EMI of ₹45,548 to private financiers. Mali, however, added that the opposite party failed to deliver the vehicle despite repeated reminders and claiming a short supply of cars.

In its defence, Toyota asked the Commission to dismiss the complaint against it, contending that the accused retail outlet had entered into a dealership agreement with it, which it terminated after the former closed down the showroom abruptly. But the Commission denied it. However, citing the principal-agent relationship, the bench observed that Toyota failed to take any remedial measures over the fraud. Holding all parties responsible for deficiency in service and unfair trade practices, it ordered them to pay ₹5 lakh in compensation and a refund of ₹45 lakh with an interest rate of 9% per annum.

## Auto driver gets 20 yrs RI in sexual assault case

ILLUSTRATION: MANDAR PADKAR

ENS @ Hyderabad

A 45-year-old auto driver accused of sexual assault of a six-year-old girl was sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for 20 years and was imposed ₹5,000 fine by the special sessions judge for POCSO in Nampally on Tuesday. The victim was

granted a compensation of ₹2 lakh.

The accused, who used to reside in the same neighbourhood as the minor, sexually abused her on the terrace and threatened her to not disclose the forceful act to anyone. However, the victim complained

to her mother and a case was immediately booked. The Bharosa centre recorded the victim's statement and collected medical evidence.

Meanwhile, the police filed a chargesheet under Sections 376 AB of the IPC and relevant sections of the POCSO Act.



BJP-led government in Maharashtra from 2014 to 2019, but she lost the 2019 assembly elections to her cousin Dhananjay Munde, who is now a minister in the NCP (Ajit Pawar) government in Maharashtra. Interestingly, Dhananjay is Pankaja's star campaigner in 2024. As for Sonwane, he had contested the last Lok Sabha elections in 2019 but lost to Pritam Munde by over 1.5 lakh votes. He is trying his luck for the second time and is hopeful that he has better chances as the Maratha quota issue is fast emerging as a major deciding factor in the polls.

The Maratha voters are said to be backing Sonwane while Pankaja has a better connect with the OBCs.

"Maratha voters' polarisation was always an issue but the fragmented polarisation mainly helped the Munde family because it triggered a reverse polarisation of OBC communities against Maratha

## MY TAKE

# ON THE KNIFE'S EDGE: IT'S 'UNDERDOG' YSRC Vs CLASSIC TDP



**KALYAN THOLETI**  
Resident Editor, AP & Telangana  
chakravarthy@newindianexpress.com

Somewhere in the TDP think tanks, there appears to be a Congress brain because the schemes, the wording and even the strategy, one cannot help but conclude, are adapted from the grand old party's successful campaign in Telangana

track record, it seems the party has coined the Super Six – which in a way is ironic as it had been accusing Jagan of emptying the State coffers through the schemes. If it comes to power, it will have to do the same and more for its promises will surely put a bigger burden on the exchequer. Somewhere in the TDP think tanks, there appears to be a Congress brain because the schemes, the wording and even the strategy, one cannot help but conclude, are adapted from the grand old party's successful campaign in Telangana.

One can find pretty much the same conversations with few variations across Andhra Pradesh. There indeed appears to be a class divide, so to speak. The poor and minorities are with Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's YSRC and the middle and upper classes with the TDP. Interestingly, however, in urban areas, the TDP's message of jobs is resonating with sections of the lower middle class as well. The YSRC is counting on the beneficiaries of Jagan's welfare schemes, particularly women and the elderly, and rightly so. English medium education in government schools, pensions, healthcare and the volunteer system being the primary reasons for the same. Jagan being Jagan, he hasn't promised anything dramatic in his manifesto but that doesn't seem to matter for these sections. They believe he means what he says. To make inroads into these sections, the TDP has offered Super Six guarantees – taking a leaf out of the Congress playbook in Telangana. TDP's USP is the slogan of development and jobs but to offset Jagan's welfare agenda and

to a large extent, it is clear that the TDP's message of jobs is resonating with sections of the lower middle class as well. The YSRC is counting on the beneficiaries of Jagan's welfare schemes, particularly women and the elderly, and rightly so. English medium education in government schools, pensions, healthcare and the volunteer system being the primary reasons for the same. Jagan being Jagan, he hasn't promised anything dramatic in his manifesto but that doesn't seem to matter for these sections. They believe he means what he says. To make inroads into these sections, the TDP has offered Super Six guarantees – taking a leaf out of the Congress playbook in Telangana. TDP's USP is the slogan of development and jobs but to offset Jagan's welfare agenda and

It is understandable that Naidu and his allies see a tyrant in Jagan since the TDP chief and several of his party leaders have faced cases, arrests in the last five years. To attribute their experiences to the general public at large may not fetch the expected returns. Similarly, strategic moves like highlighting the Land Titling Act sound more like an effort to recreate the Dharani portal controversy, which damaged KCR's third-term prospects to an extent. In Andhra, however, the Act hasn't been implemented fully nor is there a controversy

in the last five years. To attribute their experiences to the general public at large may not fetch the expected returns. Similarly, strategic moves like highlighting the Land Titling Act sound more like an effort to recreate the Dharani portal controversy, which damaged KCR's third-term prospects to an extent. In Andhra, however, the Act hasn't been implemented fully nor is there a controversy

2019 elections. But in 2024, the scenario is different. Due to Maratha activist Manoj Jarange Patil's agitation, Maratha voters of the Marathawada region including Beed are against incumbent government and are rallying behind the NCP (SP) candidate," said a local journalist from Beed.

Expressing similar views, a political observer from the constituency said the challenges before Pankaja are formidable. "Even MLAs belonging to the Maratha community are barred from entering the villages for their perceived failure to bring in reservations for the Maratha community. This time, it's a really complex and tough battle where local issues play a much bigger role than the Hindu-Muslim binary and other issues like the Ram temple," he said.



The Election Commission's Model Code of Conduct has turned out to be a mockery and should be rechristened as Modi code of conduct. But we will continue to flag every incident of violation of rights of citizens of this country

Mamata Banerjee, West Bengal Chief Minister

newindianexpress.com

BIHAR

# PM takes a jibe at Lalu's Muslim quota remark

Modi says religion-based quota an insult to Ambedkar; RJD chief later makes U-turn

RAMASHANKAR & ANURAAG SINGH  
@Patna/Bhopal

FORMER Bihar chief minister and Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) chief Lalu Prasad on Tuesday stoked a controversy after he favoured "full reservation" for Muslims, drawing flak from Prime Minister Narendra Modi and NDA leaders.

Lalu later backtracked on his statement after Modi and other leaders launched a broadside against him even as he countered the PM, asking if he was aware of the recommendations of the Mandal Commission.

Referring to Lalu's comment, Modi said in MP that the Congress was silent, but one of its allies confirmed the INDIA bloc's intentions of giving reservation to Muslims. He also referred RJD president as a leader "who ate fodder meant for animals".

Speaking to the media in Patna, Lalu alleged that the ruling BJP wanted to do away with reservations by scrapping the Constitution. "Muslims need full reservation... The BJP wants to finish off the Constitution and democracy of the country," the RJD supremo said. After his remarks triggered a political storm, Lalu put out a video message clarifying that the basis of reservation should not be religion but social backwardness.

they want to give it Muslims."

Apparently taken aback by PM's strong comments, the RJD chief said, "Is he (Modi) a bigger and real OBC than me? He has also no more understanding of the problems of the poor, backwards and Dalits."

Lalu said, "Sanghis (RSS leaders) and BJP leaders have old wish and conspiracy to abolish Baba Saheb's Constitution and reservation given by Jan Nayak Karpoori Thakur. In 2000, the then BJP-led NDA government at the Centre had even formed Constitution Review Commission. Had they faith in Constitution, they would not have used divisive language, spreading hatred in the society."

Raising the issue of Congress government in Karnataka including the Muslims among the OBC category, Modi said the Congress is eyeing the reservation of SC, ST and OBC. "They've already done it in Karnataka by bringing all Muslims in the OBC category, which will steal the 27% reservation of existing OBC for its vote bank. The Congress now wants to replicate the same model nationally, isn't it like backstabbing Baba Saheb Ambedkar and disrespecting the country's Constitution."

The PM came down heavily on the Congress, saying that it did not want Baba Saheb Bhim Rao Ambedkar to get credit for making the Constitution. "That is why now Congress has started saying that Baba Saheb's contribution in making the Constitution was less, Nehruji played the biggest role in making the Constitution. Do you agree with this?" Modi asked.

Obliquely referring to Lalu's words, Modi said, "The Opposition can't see beyond appeasement. A fodder scam accused leader who is out on bail is advocating reservations for Muslims. He (Lalu) says reservations must be given to Muslims, and that means whatever reservation SCs/STs and OBCs have,



## RAISED TO POWER-III

From the ruling class to the hoi poloi voted in the third phase of LS polls. While the exact turnout figures are yet to come, voter enthusiasm was visible all around



(1) Home Minister Amit Shah with wife, son and daughter-in-law after casting their votes in Ahmedabad, Gujarat; (2) Congress leader Digvijaya Singh with wife in Bhopal; (3) Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma with his family at Amingaon in Kamrup district; (4) NCP(SP) chief Sharad Pawar waits for his turn at a polling booth in Baramati, Maharashtra; (5) Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge with wife in Kalaburagi, Karnataka; (6) Former Madhya Pradesh CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan with his wife and sons in Sehore; (7) Congress leader Sushilkumar Shinde with family in Maharashtra's Solapur; (8) People brave the rains to vote in Guwahati; (9) Chhattisgarh CM Vishnu Deo casts his vote in Jashpur district; (10) An elderly voter flaunts his inked finger in Hathras, Uttar Pradesh; (11) The polling station in Nagla Fatta village in Hathras wears a deserted look as people boycott voting over demand for roads; (12) Women show their fingers with indelible ink at Budana in Uttar Pradesh and (13) A mother carries her physically challenged daughter after casting vote in Hathras | PTI

JHARKHAND

## Rahul vows ₹1L to poor, raise in NREGA wages



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi at a public meeting in Jharkhand's Gumla on Tuesday | PTI



If the Constitution is destroyed, tribals will be finished, dalits will be finished and OBCs will be nowhere as everything will go to the 10-15 millionaires of this country

Rahul Gandhi,  
Congress leader

Jal, Jungle,  
Zameen

Rahul Gandhi promised to ensure tribals' rights over jal, jungle and zameen. "Adivasi means who have the first rights on the land of this country. If I am calling you adivasi... it means jal, jungle and zameen of this country belongs to you and hence you must have the first rights on it," he said. "We call you Adivasi, they (saffron organisations) call you Vanvasi which is kind of derogatory word for you. This is wrong... Vanavasi means those who live in jungles. You are not vanvasi, you are Adivasi... You are those who have the first right over jal, jungle and zameen," he said.

They don't want your progress. They want you to work as their domestic helps in big cities. They don't want your children to become engineers, lawyers and doctors," he added.

"This is the difference between BJP and INDIA bloc... We want your children to become doctors, engineers, lawyers and industrialists. Today they call you Vanvasi... In another few years, they will finish the jungles and ask you to beg before the people," Gandhi said.

He said the BJP wants to do away with Constitution so

that they can rule according to their own will. "But, INDIA Alliance will not let it happen and we are ready to sacrifice our lives to protect the Constitution," he said.

"It is the Constitution which gives you reservation, gives you employment, it gives education to your children and it also helps you getting treated in hospitals. If it is destroyed, tribals will be finished, dalits will be finished and OBCs will be nowhere as everything will go to the 10-15 millionaires of this country belongs to you," he said.

## ELECTION 2024

### BJP expels 28 members in Arunachal for 6 years

The BJP in Arunachal Pradesh on Tuesday expelled 28 members for six years after they contested the simultaneous assembly and parliamentary elections against the party's official candidates. The 28 members had contested the polls on tickets of National People's Party, Nationalist Congress Party, People's Party of Arunachal and as independent candidates.

### Another JMM MLA files papers as Independent

Another JMM legislator, Lobin Hembrom, on Tuesday filed nomination as an independent candidate from Rajmahal seat in Jharkhand.

As per the seat-sharing agreement in the ruling alliance in Jharkhand, the Rajmahal seat went to JMM, which fielded its sitting

MP Vijay Hansdak. Hembrom, the Borio legislator, filed the papers from Rajmahal to protest Hansdak's selection by the party.

### BJP candidates face farmers' ire in Punjab

BJP candidates continued to face farmers' ire in Punjab with party nominees Hans Raj Hans and Dinesh Babu on Tuesday witnessing protests during campaigning for the Lok Sabha polls. Hans is the BJP candidate from the Faridkot constituency while Babu is in the fray from Gurdaspur seat. The BJP candidates and leaders have been facing protests from farmers when they are campaigning for the polls in the state.

VALLEY SEATS

## BJP plays hide and seek in Kashmir messaging

FAYAZ WANI @Srinagar

mad Ashraf Mir:

The party has also not publicly announced whom the party would support in Anantnag and Baramulla LS seat.

When asked whom the party will support on three Valley seats, BJP's general secretary (Org) Ashok Koul said Home Minister Amit Shah has already made it clear that the party won't support NC, PDP and Congress.

"The party workers are free to vote for any candidate other than NC, PDP and Congress.

We have not told them anything. We have told them not to vote for NC, PDP and Congress and rest they can vote for anybody," he said.

Asked whether it would create confusion among the party workers, Koul said, "There will be no confusion. Our party workers are mature enough and they know whom to vote".

Another BJP leader, wishing to be named, said there has been a lot of positive change in Kashmir since Article 370 abrogation.

The BJP leader said there has been a lot of promotion of bat and apple in the last few years, indirectly referring to Apni Party of Altaf Bukhari.



# EDITORIAL

HYDERABAD

WEDNESDAY 08.05.2024

INDIAN EXPRESS IS NOT AN INDUSTRY. IT IS A MISSION.

— Ramnath Goenka

## RELEGATION FROM TOP TIER NEEDED TO BOOST INDIAN FOOTBALL

**A**NOTHER season of the Indian Super League is over. Mumbai Football Club lifted the title after beating Mohun Bagan Super Giant on Saturday. There were moments of jubilation and thrilling encounters interspersed with a sprinkling of controversies. Despite all this, there is a substantial debate on the quality of football being played in the middle. The topic that is dominating the discussion is the issue of relegation from the league. This was suggested by the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) in its roadmap for improving Indian football and making it more competitive. Intriguing as it may sound, ISL is one of the few top-flight national leagues that does not have relegation. And that needs to begin by the next season. The other side of the move—promotion from the I-League—started last year, when Punjab FC (formerly RoundGlass Punjab) joined ISL.

However, the All India Football Federation (AIFF) is still not clear about it. Things got a little more circumspect after AIFF president Kalyan Chaubey said that ISL would not be ready for relegation unless the I-League raised its bar. It is understandable if there is no promotion, but relegation is needed to keep the bottom-of-the-league clubs motivated and busy. It would push the likes of Hyderabad FC, which won only one match this entire season.

One must also understand that AIFF runs the I-League—so if its standard is not good enough, they should concentrate on improving it. The I-League has been going on for over 15 years and was the premier league until ISL was given the top status. And the I-League is not without promise either. If its quality was so hopeless, the just-promoted Punjab FC would have finished at the bottom of the ISL; instead, there were four clubs including East Bengal, Jamshedpur and former champions Bengaluru below Punjab. Even ISL teams scout from the I-League. It's not that all ISL teams are doing well financially either—there was an exodus from Hyderabad FC when it failed to pay players. So the onus is on AIFF; the I-League's supposed lack of quality should not be an excuse to not introduce relegation in ISL. Instead, AIFF should help nurture the I-League, which in turn will help ISL and, in the long run, the national team. To keep ISL healthy and kicking, other leagues need to prosper, too.

## CONG FAILS TO GRAB OPPN ROLE IN ODISHA

**T**HE closer Odisha comes to its first phase of polls, the faster the Congress seems to be unravelling in the state. There are three major political parties in the fray. The ruling Biju Janata Dal and the challenger BJP are engaged in a no-holds-barred contest. But the Congress is busy fighting its own demons. Last week, the party's Puri Lok Sabha candidate Sucharita Mohanty returned her ticket days before the nominations closed, citing a lack of funds for campaigning. She was apparently told by the party that her constituency was in a category in which the candidate must fend for herself or himself. For the record, at her first electoral outing in 2014, Mohanty polled 2.59 lakh votes. The grand old party has, so far, changed candidates in 10 assembly and two parliamentary constituencies, leaving little scope for the nominees to even make a serious bid. On Sunday, its change of the Puri assembly candidate led to violence.

This is only a symptom of the greater malaise that has gripped the party. This election presented the Congress a chance to regain political space in the state when the BJD and BJP were busy planning an alliance. It was an ideal opportunity to take up the vacant opposition space, but the party—riddled with favouritism, infighting and a self-over-party ideology—squandered it. It was on show when a nondescript place was chosen for Rahul Gandhi's campaign meeting on April 28. While a politically strategic location could have created an impact over the bigger region, the candidate's interest was preferred to the party's. Unsurprisingly, many of its senior members with electoral relevance quit ahead of the elections to join either the BJD or the BJP. Disenchanted by the top leadership's inability to grasp the situation—the need for young leaders, resources and change—the Congress has seen exodus of even its hardcore followers.

In Odisha, once ruled by the Congress for close to 40 years, there are still pockets where the party enjoys support, but has made little effort to revive it. With its base slipping away fast, the GOP could find itself decimated as the BJD and BJP are out to swallow its vote share. The opposition space is important in a democracy. But such is the state of affairs that the Congress appears in no mood to even grab that role.

### QUICK TAKE

#### RECOGNISE INDIA'S WW2 EFFORT

**T**HE UN observes May 8-9 as a time for remembering all Second World War victims. It marks the Allied forces' victory in Europe and is bookmarked by state events every year. One acknowledgement that goes missing is for India's contribution. More than 85,000 Indian soldiers died in the war. Claude Auchinleck, commander of the Indian army during the war, said the British could not have done without India's help, which included money and rations too. Yet the contribution is now airbrushed out of official Western accounts. The repayment that was expected around independence was not realised. The West can at least start by honouring the Indian soldiers' efforts.

**A**n individual, I have been associated with the RSS, ABVP and BJP for more than 40 years. From the controversy over the renaming of Marathwada University in Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar (previously Aurangabad) to the vexed issue of quota for the underprivileged, from the 1982-83 movement led by Bal Thackeray against Babasaheb Ambedkar's writings in *The Riddle of Rama and Krishna* and the RSS's vocal opposition to that movement, I have witnessed how the Sangh leadership had adroitly handled scores of issues with a firm commitment to its total opposition to caste-based discrimination.

As per my understanding, there are at least three key aspects of the RSS's approach to castes. First, its unequivocal support to quota for the socially marginalised. Second, its emphasis on ensuring that social justice is reflected in our day-to-day conduct. And third, its approach towards smaller identities as an inseparable part of a larger identity.

However, the overarching philosophy guiding the RSS's approach to all these vexed issues associated with the caste question is that of *samarasata* or social harmony. In the RSS scheme of things, the term adds significant value to the idea of social equality. It is more meaningful as it connotes not just intellectual acceptance for equality and justice, but also emotional participation in the process with an emphasis on sharing and caring. *Samarasata*, to me, is all about emotional integration. It is about a sense of belonging (to the entire society), about making every social group feel that the entire society needs every marginalised group and values its contribution. *Samarasata* is more about empathy than just sympathy.

But make no mistake. This emphasis is not for the sake of emotions alone. It aims to complement our intellectual conviction and commitment to social justice. Atal Bihari Vajpeyi's decision to rename the social welfare ministry as social justice ministry was not for no reason. Besides, this element of emotions makes social equality not just an egalitarian value, but a matter of experiential harmony.

As pointed out by Ram Madhav in a blog, "Samata is equality in thoughts; *samaanta* is equality in law; but *samarasata* is equality of emotions and feelings. For achieving *samarasata*—social harmony, to put it simply—fraternity is the basic requirement." Madhav further brings to our notice that, "Buddha, Mahavir, Basaveshwara, Kanakadasa, Ram-

The Sangh takes *samarasata* or social harmony among castes as an essential concept that goes beyond tokenism. That's why it has always supported quotas for the underprivileged

## WHY THE SANGH SUPPORTS RESERVATION

VINAY SAHASRABUDDHE

Senior BJP leader



SOURAV ROY

akrishna, Vivekananda, Narayana Guru, Dayananda Saraswati, Tilak, Gandhi, Ambedkar, Savarkar, Jyotiba Phule—endless is the list of great men who have sacrificed their lives in the pursuit of the lofty ideal of social harmony."

Way back in 1982, at a grand RSS conclave in Pune, the then Sar-Sanghchalak Balasaheb Deoras said without mincing words that if untouchability is not a sin, there is no sin on earth, and hence this social evil has to go lock, stock and barrel. The same kind of unambiguity was again witnessed when the present Sar-Sanghchalak, Mohanrao Bhagwat, repeatedly stated that quotas for the SC, ST and OBCs will have to continue uninterrupted. As recently as April, he said, "The RSS had always stood for reserva-

tion, as sanctioned and guaranteed under the Constitution, and that the organisation believed reservation should continue as long as it was necessary for those who needed it, provided it was for reasons of backwardness and lack of parity in terms of their living or social standing."

He elaborated, "We kept our own fellow human beings behind in the social system. We did not care for them and it continued for 2,000 years. Until we provide them equality, some special remedies have to be there, and reservation is one of them." All in all, there is no scope for even an iota of doubt about the Sangh's unequivocal support for quota.

Social equality and justice are principles that are supremely important and hence nobody can oppose. However,

## FOR AN AKSHAYA TRITIYA WITHOUT CHILD MARRIAGES

BHUWAN RIBHU

Child rights activist, lawyer & author of *When Children Have Children: Tipping Point to End Child Marriage*



One in four Indian girls is married before the legal age. The reasons for so many child marriages include cultural acceptance, disparity in laws, poverty and patriarchy. This Akshaya Tritiya, state governments, panchayats and civil society should come together to stop the practice

was not high on the list of priorities for most countries until it was included in the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (target 5.3: "eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilations"). Consequently, 193 member states are now racing to eliminate the practice by 2030.

In the past decade, at least eight countries have outlawed child marriage or

closer home, while one in four girls in India are married below the legal age, in 257 high-prevalence districts of the country the incidence of child marriage is more than the national average of 23.3 percent, according to the National Family Health Survey.

By the time you finish reading this article, hundreds of marriages would have been planned to be solemnised on Akshaya Tritiya or Akha Teej, which falls on May 10 this year. While the day is considered auspicious for marriages, the socially accepted crime of child marriage also takes place on this occasion.

The law of the land is clear. From the Age of Consent Bill 1860, and the Indian Penal Code provisions barring abduction for the purpose of marriage, to the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2006 (PCMA), India has one of the most comprehensive legal systems to prevent child marriage. The Supreme Court dealt with the issue of sexual intercourse with a child in a marital relationship as an offence tantamount to child rape, first in *Bachpan Bachao Andolan vs Union of India* in January 2017 and then in *Independent Thought vs Union of India*. Yet people continue to celebrate the crime as a happy occasion due to many reasons: cultural acceptance, disparity in laws, poverty, safety concerns for the girl child, patriarchy and gender issues.

In recent years, several high courts have opined that child marriage is allowed under personal laws in various communities. Such orders are in direct conflict with the PCMA, POCSO Act as well as Supreme Court judgements, and have created an avoidable confusion. Despite these challenges, data from the last three rounds of the National Family Health Survey signify a substantial reduction in early marriages, largely to the efforts of civil society and the government, particularly through laws like the Right to Education Act 2009.

In NFHS-3 (2005-06), a staggering 44.7 percent of women were found to have been married before 18. NFHS-4 (2015-16) captured a significant shift, with the share dropping to 26.8 percent. This trend continued to NFHS-5 (2019-21), where the share fell further to 23.3 percent. Globally, eliminating child marriage

have increased the minimum marriage age. But in the US, child marriage continues to be legal in 38 out of the 50 states.

India is home to a third of the world's child brides, according to UNICEF. Thus, the recent initiatives in India on awareness, education as well as strict law enforcement, like Assam's anti-child marriage drive, may become the first step towards putting the country at the forefront of global efforts on the count.

The year 2023 saw the world's largest social mobilisation against child marriage, led by 54 government departments across India, leading to over 5 crore people pledging against the practice under the aegis of the Child Marriage Free India campaign. This Akshaya Tritiya will

be a litmus test for those who were a part of this campaign to convert the resolve into deliverables.

First, state governments must prevent mass child marriages through awareness and law enforcement. Awareness campaigns can include school workshops, street plays, and checking the ages of brides and grooms.

Second, strict enforcement of the PCMA can be ensured if the agencies entrusted to uphold the law, such as the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) that's conferred with the power of a first-class judicial magistrate, start issuing injunctions. If a child marriage is solemnised despite an injunction, it is considered void. But in a majority of cases, the CWC has confined its role to short-term rehabilitation of children who need protection.

Panchayats can activate child welfare and protection committees at the village, block and district levels to monitor PCMA implementation; conduct counselling sessions for parents and relatives planning to marry off their children; monitor dropouts and stay vigilant for children missing from schools for more than seven days without intimation.

Third, aggressive prosecutorial drives under the PCMA and application of other criminal laws including those on trafficking, child rape and the POCSO Act will create deterrence. Stern messages should be sent by prosecuting priests, qazis and pandits who preside over such unions.

Fourth, it is time quality education is provided to all children, especially girls, till the age of 18. This must also be included in election manifestos of all parties.

In April 2024, India witnessed the heartening news of a girl topping inter examinations in Andhra Pradesh after her under-age marriage was stopped and she was able to pursue studies because of the efforts of her local MLA and district magistrate in Kurnool. This girl could be a living testimony of a brighter future. The time to ensure such a future for our children is now. If we fail to protect our children, nothing else would matter.

(Views are personal)

India's doom was sealed the very day they invented the word *mlechchha* and stopped from communion with others

Swami Vivekananda

newindianexpress.com

many who principally agree with these values fail to practice them with all sincerity. Many RSS-inspired organisations may not be passing resolutions or giving sermons on these principles. But their commitment to these values is often reflected in their conduct.

When Mahatma Gandhi and later Ambedkar visited RSS camps, they were satisfied that in the RSS, castes or details of social background are neither asked nor given any importance. Many in the RSS make a conscious effort to identify with underprivileged sections. During the birth centenary of Ambedkar some 23 years earlier, many in the RSS ensured that a portrait of Ambedkar adorned their homes. Many, like Girish Prabhune of Pune, have been untiringly working for the upliftment of the Parahis and similar denotified, nomadic tribal communities.

In the late 1980s, the RSS emphasis on building bridges was taken to such an extent that Texas Gaikwad, a Dalit Marathi playwright who had written a play depicting RSS volunteers as murderers of the nation, was approached and a dialogue was established to discuss prejudices and misgivings. In 1982-83, when many Hindu leaders including Bal Thackeray demanded a ban on Ambedkar's book, *Riddle of Ram*, the RSS-BJP refrained from seeking such a ban.

The RSS has its own way of explaining the relationship of castes and communities with the entire society. The approach is that, like all parts of the body, every section is important and all of them are interdependent too. Like the relationship of a body part with the entire body, every section of society relates with the society at large. This relationship is simultaneously related mutually as well as with the entire body. Hence the very question of a superiority-inferiority conflict is resolved with this interdependence, complemented by the spirit of co-working and mutuality.

Significantly, when it comes to *samarasata*, the RSS has always refrained from just tokenism. Organisations trying to wear social equality on their sleeves do a huge disservice to the cause. *Samarasata* is a silent revolution that emerged out of the thinking of the RSS leadership. Here, intellectual integrity and commitment are complemented by an element of emotionality. While equality could be just superficial and short-lived, *samarasata* is more profound and enduring with its focus on conduct and emotions. It has become the RSS's own way of doing away with hypocrisy and lip service.

(Views are personal)

(vinays57@gmail.com)

### MAIL BAG

WRITE TO: letters@newindianexpress.com

#### Planned succession

Ref: Godrej business split a lesson for family enterprises (May 7). Exemplary tradition of excellence carved out in a span of 127 years makes Godrej stand head and shoulders above almost all business enterprises in India. Let all the upcoming business houses emulate their steps of succession.

S Madhavan Thampi, Haripad

#### False promises

Ref: Andhra sides make similar promises (May 7). The ruling dispensation made several promises lavishly before the last election. Similar was the experience with the present opposition leader also. People no longer look into the content of the manifesto or take election promises seriously as they tend to evaporate with the election mood.

A G Rajmohan, Anantapur

#### Off-season break

Ref: How to deal with the epidemic of overtourism (May 7). Over-exploitation always leads to under-availability. To cope with the prospects of a tourist destination losing its sheen, some kind of break in operations may be mooted because these days, even off-season has had significant footfall.

Sachidananda Satpathy, Sambalpur

#### Inorganic growth

It is fallacious to conclude that higher taxes result in better tourist amenities. The government does not have a futuristic vision on tourism development. Tourism is growing in an inorganic manner, which needs better focus, an enabling plan and time-bound action.

Rajarao Kumar, Bengaluru

#### Owner's negligence

The news that two pet rotweilers attacked a small girl at a park is appalling. It's sad the dog owner's negligence cost the small girl. Although the police have registered a case, nothing will come of it because the victim belongs to a poor family—the daughter of the park's watchman. That there were similar incidents in the past, too, speaks volumes about the owner's level of respect for the laws of the land.

P G Menon, Chennai

#### Dangerous search

It's heartbreaking that an elephant was electrocuted by a sagging power line while searching for water. No animal should die due to a lack of water and food. The government must act swiftly to provide water sources, food and protect forest boundaries. Additionally, strict measures need to be taken to prevent human encroachment into forest areas and ensure habitat preservation.

V Paramesari, Tiruchirappalli

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

Chairman of the Board: Manoj Kumar Sonthali Editor: Santwana Bhattacharya

Resident Editor (Telangana): T Kalyan Chakravarthy\* Printed and Published by R K Jhunjhunwala on behalf of Express Publications (Madurai) Private Ltd., at H.No.6-3-II/13/I, B.S. Makta Lane, Somajiguda, Near Grand Kakatiya Hotel, Punjagutta, Hyderabad – 500 016 and printed by him at Sakshi Press, Plot No.D-75 & E-52, Industrial Estate (APIE), Balanagar, Medchal-Malkajgiri District, Telangana. Hyderabad: Vol. 48, No. 109 RNI Reg. No. 32179/77. Phone: 040-23413908. \* Responsible for selection of News under the PRB Act. Copyright: Express Publications (Madurai) Private Ltd., All rights reserved. Reproduction in any manner, electronic or otherwise, in whole or in part, without prior written permission is prohibited.



P. Chidambaram @PChidambaram\_IN  
Every party and the leader of that party is corrupt if he or she did not ally with the BJP as every ally of the BJP is pure as snow white.



Akhilesh Yadav @yadavakhilesh  
The massive voting in support of the India Alliance in the third phase has proved that no matter how much conspiracy the BJP does, the public will still cast their votes.



Mehbooba Mufti @MehboobaMufti  
Overwhelmed by the love & affection of our people who thronged the streets of Awantipora for PDP's road show today.

# Maldives foreign minister to visit Delhi on May 9

YESHI SELI @ New Delhi



A DAY ahead of the complete Indian military troop (88 members) withdrawal from the archipelago slated for May 10, Maldives Foreign Minister **Moosa Zameer** will be on an official visit to Delhi.

Two batches of the 88 Indian military personnel have returned and the last batch is expected soon. These Indians were deployed with one helicopter and two Dornier aircraft that India had deployed in Maldives for medical assistance and emergency services.

The fourth core group meeting between India and the Maldives took place in Delhi on May 3.

Meanwhile, Moosa Zameer will meet External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar during his upcoming visit.

Interestingly, Zameer is considering meeting India travel and tourism professionals while in the national capital. It may be recalled that after a Maldivian politician used derogatory words for Prime Minister Narendra Modi (when he was in Lakshadweep last year), Indian tour operators had launched a 'boycott Maldives' campaign.

As a result the outflow of Indian tourists to the Maldives dropped. Indian celebrities who

used to travel frequently to the country also stopped and that had dampened their outreach.

Statistics reveal that Indian tourists to the Maldives dropped to 42,638 as on April 30 this year from 73,195 from the corresponding period of the previous year.

Indians formed a substantial share of tourists to the Maldives until 2023, however, the diplomatic downturn in its relations with India will continue to impact the tourist inflows.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Tuesday "Moosa Zameer, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Maldives, will be in India on an official visit on May 9."

"The Maldives is India's key maritime neighbour in the Indian Ocean Region and Foreign Minister Zameer's visit is expected to lend further momentum to the bilateral cooperation between the two countries," the MEA said in a statement.

# Kharge writes to INDIA allies over discrepancies in EC data

Poll panel is yet to publish total number of voters in each constituency

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi



UPPING the ante on the alleged discrepancies in the voting data released by the Election Commission of India (EC) in the first two phases of the Lok Sabha polls, Congress president **Mallikarjun Kharge** on Tuesday wrote to the leaders of various parties of the opposition INDIA bloc urging them to raise their voice to safeguard democracy and protect the independent functioning of the poll body.

"Let us ensure the independence of the Election Commission of India and make it accountable," his letter read.

The EC released the final voter turnout figures for the first two phases on April 30, eleven days after the first phase on April 19, and four days after the second phase on April 26.

However, it is yet to publish the total number of voters in each Parliamentary constituency.

Several opposition parties, including Congress, CPM, and TMC have raised questions about the delay in releasing the polling data and the non-disclosure of the number of registered voters.

The 2024 Lok Sabha elections are the fight to save democracy and the Constitution of India, said Kharge in his letter, which he shared on X. "As you are aware of the recent developments,

the credibility of the ECI is at an all-time low. It is in the public domain how the ECI, perhaps for the first time in history, delayed the release of the final voting percentages of the first and second phases of the Lok Sabha elections.

The Congress chief also questioned the inordinate delay in releasing the final voting percentages for the two phases.

"In my electoral life of 52 years, I have never witnessed such a high increment of voting percentages, in the final published data, that we now assume came from the later hours of voting on the polling days."

The Congress chief also sought to know if there were any issues with the EVMs.

"On earlier occasions, the Commission has published voter turnout data within 24 hours of polling. What has changed this time? Why has the Commission failed to issue any clarifications to justify the delay, despite being repeatedly questioned by political parties and political activists?" he wondered.

The Congress veteran also threw a volley of questions to the EC. "We ask the Commission, for the first phase, why is there a near increase of 5.5% in the final voter turnout from the date of conclusion of voting (at 7 pm on 19.04.2024) to the delayed release of voter turnout data (on 30.04.2024)?"

For the second phase, there is a near increase of more than 5.74% in the final voter turnout from the date of conclusion of voting (at 7 pm on 26.04.2024) to the delayed release of data (On 30.04.2024)," he asked.

Apart from the delay, Kharge pointed out that the data released does not mention the votes polled in each Parliamentary constituency and the respective assembly constituencies.

**On earlier occasions, the Election Commission has published voter turnout data within 24 hours of polling. What has changed this time? Why has the Commission failed to issue any clarification to justify the delay, despite being repeatedly questioned by political parties and political activists?**

Mallikarjun Kharge, Congress president

Congress' former media coordinator Khera, actor Shekhar Suman join BJP

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ New Delhi

May contest from Bihar

BIHAR-born Bollywood actor Shekhar Suman and former Congress national media coordinator Radhika Khera joined the BJP on Tuesday. Their joining came on the third phase of poling in general elections and triggered speculation that the saffron party may consider sending Shekhar Suman to the Rajya Sabha either from Bihar or some other Hindi heartland state.

Shekhar, another actor Rupali Ganguly had also joined the saffron ranks.

the media, Radhika complained about "mistrust" after her Ayodhya visit. "Today's Congress is not Mahatma Gandhi's Congress, it is anti-Ram, anti-Hindu Congress", she alleged.

"I was punished in Congress for being a Hindu, a Sanatan girl and a devotee of Lord Ram," she said.

BJP sources said over 2,000 prominent leaders from various parties, mostly from Congress and AAP, have joined the BJP in the last 6-7 months.

Before Shekhar joined the BJP, another actor Rupali Ganguly joined the saffron ranks. Other prominent leaders who have joined BJP ahead of the LS polls are industrialist and former Congress leader Navin Jindal, former IAF chief Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhaduria, former Congress leader and spokesperson Gaurav Vallabh, former Delhi Congress leader Arvinder Singh Lovely.

# SC grants partial relief to 25K Bengal teachers

SUCHITRA KALYAN MOHANTY @ New Delhi

THE Supreme Court, in its decision on Tuesday, partially stayed the Calcutta High Court order that cancelled the appointment of over 25,000 assistant teachers and non-teaching staff in West Bengal, pending the final outcome of the Supreme Court's judgement.

This order provides a partial relief for the appointed teachers, as the Supreme Court stayed the Calcutta High Court's decision to cancel their appointments. However, the appointees must remain apprehensive about their future as the CBI continues its investigation, as mandated by the Supreme Court.

The SC said that the CBI would persist with its investigation into the scam but would not take any coercive steps or actions against the candidates or state government officials.

The Calcutta High Court had ordered the cancellation of 25,000 appointments of teaching and non-teaching staff after finding irregularities and misconduct without proper reasoning.

The Supreme Court granted conditional interim protection from the previous order and stated that the salaries of the unlawfully appointed individu-

## 'Ensure no innocent is in history sheet'

The top court on Tuesday asked the police in states and UTs to ensure that innocents and individuals from backward communities are not named in a history sheet. Initiating suo motu action, a bench said there are some studies available in the public domain that reveal a pattern of "unfair, prejudicial and atrocious" mindset.

als should be refunded, contingent on the case's outcome.

A three-judge bench of the Supreme Court, led by Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, emphasised the need for an expeditious disposal of the matter to serve the interests of justice.

The state government challenged the High Court's order, claiming it was made arbitrarily and without proper reasoning.

During the hearing, the apex court described the alleged recruitment scam in West Bengal as "systemic fraud," stressing that authorities are duty-bound to maintain digitised records related to the appointments.

On April 24, the West Bengal

## Maha govt told to hold safety audit of HC

The special bench of the Supreme Court led by the Chief Justice on Tuesday took note of concerns over the safety of the 150-year-old Bombay High Court building and the need for additional space, and directed Maharashtra government to "forthwith" conduct a safety audit of the heritage structure.

government appealed to the Supreme Court against the Calcutta High Court's decision, which invalidated and cancelled the appointment of 25,753 teachers made by the state's School Service Commission (SSC) in state-run schools.

The state government challenged the High Court's order, claiming it was made arbitrarily and without proper reasoning.

During the hearing, the apex court described the alleged recruitment scam in West Bengal as "systemic fraud," stressing that authorities are duty-bound to maintain digitised records related to the appointments.

## SC asks Patanjali to remove misleading ads

SUCHITRA KALYAN MOHANTY @ New Delhi

OBSERVING that certain misleading advertisements for Patanjali products are still available on various online platforms, the Supreme Court on Tuesday questioned Patanjali about the steps being taken to remove them.

The court also denied an oral request to exempt the personal appearances of Baba Ramdev and Acharya Balkrishna at the next hearing. Previously, the apex court had excused them from appearing in person today, resulting in their absence.

The bench asked Patanjali what actions were being taken to contact the relevant agencies to remove the ads. "We want to point out that your misleading ads, which promote products that have now been prohibited, are still accessible on internet channels. What actions are you taking to remove them?" the apex court inquired.

The arguments on Tuesday were inconclusive and will continue after the Supreme Court's summer vacation.

MAYANK SINGH @ New Delhi

INDIAN Naval ships Delhi, Shakti and Kiltan have reached Singapore as part of the long-leg operational deployment, led by Rear Admiral Rajesh Dhankhar, Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet.

The visiting ships were given a warm welcome by personnel of Republic of Singapore Navy and the High Commissioner of India. "The visit is part of the Operational Deployment of the Indian Navy's Eastern Fleet to the South China sea," the Indian Navy said in a statement.

"This visit is poised to strengthen the longstanding friendship and cooperation between the two maritime nations through a series of engagements," it said.

INS Delhi is a guided missile destroyer, Shakti a replenishment fleet tanker and Kiltan an anti-submarine warfare corvette.

The region of SCS has been bearing tensions due to contested claims to maritime boundaries, which include islands and the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). China has been asserting its claim, based on its historical rights. Currently, the

# Indian Navy's warships in Singapore before deployment in South China Sea



Chinese navy is involved in a standoff with the US-backed Philippines naval ships in the South China Sea.

The Philippines is asserting its claim over the Second Thomas Shoal in the South China Sea, which is strongly resisted by China. China claims most of the South China Sea. The Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan have counter claims.

The Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the Philippines, Enrique A Manalo, and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar,

and SFA co-chaired the 5th meeting of the Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation.

Holding wide-ranging and substantive discussions on regional and international issues of mutual concern, they underlined that "both countries have a shared interest in a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific region. They underlined the need for peaceful settlement of disputes and for adherence to international law, especially the UNCLOS and the 2016 Arbitral Award on South China Sea."

# India slams Canada over offensive float during parade by Khalistani activists

YESHI SELI @ New Delhi

## Extremist elements

A float in the Nagar Kirtan parade in Canada's Malton showed Prime Minister Narendra Modi behind bars. "As you are aware, we have repeatedly raised our strong concerns regarding the violent imagery being used by extremist elements in Canada against our political leadership. Last year, a float depicting the assassination of our former PM was used in a procession. Display of posters of Indian diplomats have also been put out across Canada," said MEA spokesman Randhir Jaiswal.

any civilised society. Democratic countries, which respect the rule of law, should not allow intimidation by radical elements in the name of freedom of expression, it said.

"We continue to remain concerned about the security of our diplomatic representatives in Canada and expect the government of Canada to ensure that they are able to carry out

their responsibilities without fear," Jaiswal said.

India has urged Canada to stop providing criminal and secessionist elements a safe haven and political space.

Meanwhile, Canada's Immigration Minister Marc Miller has rejected External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's remark that Ottawa is "lax" about admitting criminals into the country, saying authorities conduct a thorough record check on people entering Canada on student visas.

On Saturday, Jaishankar said that India had "convinced them (Canadian authorities) several times not to give visa, legitimacy or political space to such people for whom it is causing problems for us and also for our relationship." His remarks came after Canadian authorities charged three Indians, who entered the country on student visa, with the murder of Khalistan separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar.

## J'khand cash haul: Minister's aide, help arrested

MUKEH RANJAN @ Ranchi

THE Enforcement Directorate (ED) arrested Jharkhand minister Alamgir Alam's personal secretary Sanjiv Lal and the latter's domestic help on Tuesday, following the recovery of more than ₹35 crore cash from a flat linked to them, officials said.

The agency also undertook fresh searches at five locations in the state and seized another ₹1.5 crore in cash.

Lal and his domestic help, Jehegir Alam, were taken into custody under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) following their questioning and produced before court, the officials said. In its remand note submitted to the court, ED said, "It is ascertained that Sanjeev Lal takes care of the collection of commission on behalf of some influential persons and plays a pivotal role in managing the tenders and collection of commission from engineers. Also, the commission is distributed to higher ups of government. During the investigation,

names of senior bureaucrats and politicians have emerged ...." On Monday, ED conducted raids at multiple locations in Ranchi linked to former rural development department chief engineer Virendra Ram, who is under judicial custody after being arrested by ED in a money laundering case.

Alamgir denied any connection with the recovered cash alleging that the raids were timed to be conducted ahead of the arrival of Rahul Gandhi in Jharkhand.

"Sanjeev Lal is a government official and has also served BJP ministers before being appointed his PS to me. Let the ED come to any conclusion first; then only I can say anything in this regard," said the minister.

Jharkhand BJP chief Babul Marandi demanded removal of the minister. He also alleged that a letter written by ED to the Chief Secretary alerting him about the rampant corruption in the rural development department was also recovered along with the cash.

"Look at the shamelessness of corrupt ministers; the business of acquiring immense illegal wealth continued by suppressing the letter on the basis of which the action was to be taken," Marandi said.



names of senior bureaucrats and politicians have emerged ...." On Monday, ED conducted raids at multiple locations in Ranchi linked to former rural development department chief engineer Virendra Ram, who is under judicial custody after being arrested by ED in a money laundering case.

Alamgir denied any connection with the recovered cash alleging that the raids were timed



INDIA	Max	Min	Max	Min
Ahmedabad	39	24	Mumbai	33 - 26
Bhopal	36	22	Panaji	33 - 24
Jaipur	37	24	Patna	38 - 24
Amritsar	34	18	Lucknow	37 - 20
Chennai	34	28	Port Blair	32 - 26
Kolkata	31	25	Imphal	29 - 18
Srinagar	23	08	Chandigarh	36 - 18

# Prestige of big players at stake in key states

MUKESH RANJAN @ New Delhi

THE voting for the third phase of the Lok Sabha elections concluded on Tuesday, with voters in 93 constituencies across 12 states and one Union Territory exercising their franchise.

All 25 of 26 constituencies of Gujarat, the remaining 14 seats of Karnataka, 11 seats in Maharashtra, 10 seats in Uttar Pradesh, nine seats in Madhya Pradesh, seven seats in Chhattisgarh, five seats in Bihar, four seats each in Assam and Bengal, two seats in Goa, and one seat each in Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu went to polling.

In Gujarat, the BJP has already won the Surat Lok Sabha seat as its candidate was elected unopposed, as the polling in 284 Lok Sabha constituencies got completed. In the third phase, key battles were seen in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah is seeking his re-election from the Gandhinagar constituency in Gujarat, a seat which has been won by the BJP since 1989. The seat has been represented by BJP leaders like Lal Krishna Advani and former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee. This time 62-year-old Sonal Patel of Congress is pitted against Shah.

In Maharashtra, all eyes are on Maharashtra's Baramati seat, which is witnessing Pawar Vs Pawar battle. Veteran politician Sharad Pawar's daughter Supriya Sule is taking on her cousin and Maharashtra deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar's wife Sunetra Pawar from the seat. Sunetra is making her electoral debut this time. The NCP (Sharadchandra Pawar) candidate Sule, who began her parliamentary journey as a Rajya Sabha member in 2006, is a three-time sitting MP from the Baramati Lok Sabha seat.

The results on this seat will be keenly watched, as this will determine which faction of the NCP has control over it. In Madhya Pradesh

Guna seat will be in focus, as civil aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia is in the fray. He was a Congress MP from the constituency from 2002 to 2019. In 2019, he lost from his family bastion to the BJP candidate Krishna Pal Singh.

Scindia has now switched to the BJP and this time he is up against the Congress' Rao Yadvendra Singh Yadav.

In Uttar Pradesh Mainpuri seat has been in focus for its being a family bastion of former UP Chief Minister late Mulayam Singh Yadav.

## WEST BENGAL

Sporadic violence marred the third round in the four constituencies in West Bengal as TMC, BJP and Congress workers clashed in various parts of Murshidabad and Jangipur seats. The TMC, the BJP, and the Congress-CPM alliance lodged separate complaints related to poll violence, voter intimidation, and assaults on poll agents in the first few hours of polling, sources from the parties said. The EC received 182 complaints by 9am, most of which were from Murshidabad and Jangipur. All the four seats are minority-dominated, with the Trinamool holding Murshidabad and Jangipur, while the BJP has Malda North, Malda South is represented by the Congress. In Jangipur area, BJP's Dhananjay Ghosh faced protests by TMC cadres as he tried to enter some of the booths. Around 73,37,651 voters, including 36,12,395 women and 154 from third gender, were eligible to vote. "The TMC has unleashed a reign of terror. EC must take strict action," said Mohammed Salim, Left-Congress candidate.

## MAHARASHTRA

Around 55% voting polling on eleven Lok Sabha seats in Maharashtra. The highest polling was reported in Kolhapur at 63.71% while the lowest was 45.68 % in Baramati constituency. In Baramati, Madha, and Hatkalangale, there were allegations and counter-allegations about money changing hands. NCP (SP) MLA Rohit Pawar posted a series of videos where deputy CM Ajit Pawar-led NCP workers were purportedly seen offering money. "A police vehicle was used to distribute the money for the votes by the ruling party," alleged Rohit Pawar, the grandnephew of Sharad Pawar. NCP MLA Dutta Barne video went viral where he was seen abusing the some people who were working for NCP (SP) candidate Supriya Sule and asking to vote for her. After the incident, Supriya Sule rushed to the spot to console her party workers and asked the police to take action. Actor-couple Riteish Deshmukh and Genelia Deshmukh voted in Latur, while Union minister Narayan Rane voted in Sindhudurg.



**OVERALL TURNOUT 61.45%**

## UTTAR PRADESH

Continuing with the streak of low voter-turnout, the voting percentage across 10 seats, mainly of Rohilkhand and Yadav land, stood out to be over 57 per cent. According to Election Commission figures, Agra witnessed 53.99% voting, Aonla 57.08%, Badaun 54.05%, Bareilly 57.88%, Etah 59.17%, Fatehpur Sikri 57.09%, Ferozabad 58.22%, Hathras 55.36%, Mainpuri 58.59% and Sambhal 62.81%. Meanwhile, during the day, a group of Muslim women, in Badaun's Sahaswan assembly segment, claimed that they were stopped from casting their vote. They also alleged that the men accompanying them were beaten up by police. However, Badaun District Magistrate Manoj Kumar refuted the charges, saying the people who had already cast their votes were gathering unnecessarily. Incidents of poll boycott were reported from many places. Voters in Badaun's Dhorapur village boycotted it for the first three hours as their demand for a road was not fulfilled.

## CHHATTISGARH

The third phase of polling in the remaining seven constituencies in Chhattisgarh recorded over 67% voter turnout till 5 pm on Tuesday. "The turnout is an approximate figure and might rise as voters were seen standing in queues at various polling stations after 5 pm," said an official of the chief electoral office in Raipur. Two ST-reserved seats of Raigarh and Surguja recorded the highest voter turnout at 76.48% and 75.12%. Bilaspur and Raipur witnessed low turnout at 60.05% and 61.25%. There were 168 candidates in fray and over 1.39 core voters in the third phase. Eight voters were stung by bees at a polling station in Aara village of Jashpur district. All were taken to a community health centre. In Raipur, a voter, Sudhir Mandpe, was not allowed to vote as the poll staff at Mother Teresa ward told him that he was not alive according to records. Mandpe claimed he voted in the Assembly polls four months ago.

## GOA/ DAMAN AND DIU

Daman and Diu constituency braced itself for high-stake showdown between BJP and Congress-led by Lalu Bhai Patel and Ketan Dhaya Bhai Patel. At Varkund village in Daman, first-time voters were welcomed with flowers. Meanwhile in Goa, while there were no queues outside polling stations in the first few hours, voters started stepping out later in the day. Goa assembly Speaker Ramesh Tawadkar said his assembly constituency of Canacona will record more than 80 per cent turnout, and more votes would mean an advantage for the BJP. State Social Welfare Minister Subhash Phal Desai said voters had come out in large numbers to vote for the BJP. Congress leader Girish Chodankar, however, refused to concede that it is an advantage for the BJP. More than 11 lakh voters were eligible to exercise their franchise for elections to the two Lok Sabha seats in Goa. A total of 16 candidates, eight were in the fray in North and South Goa constituencies each.

## KARNATAKA

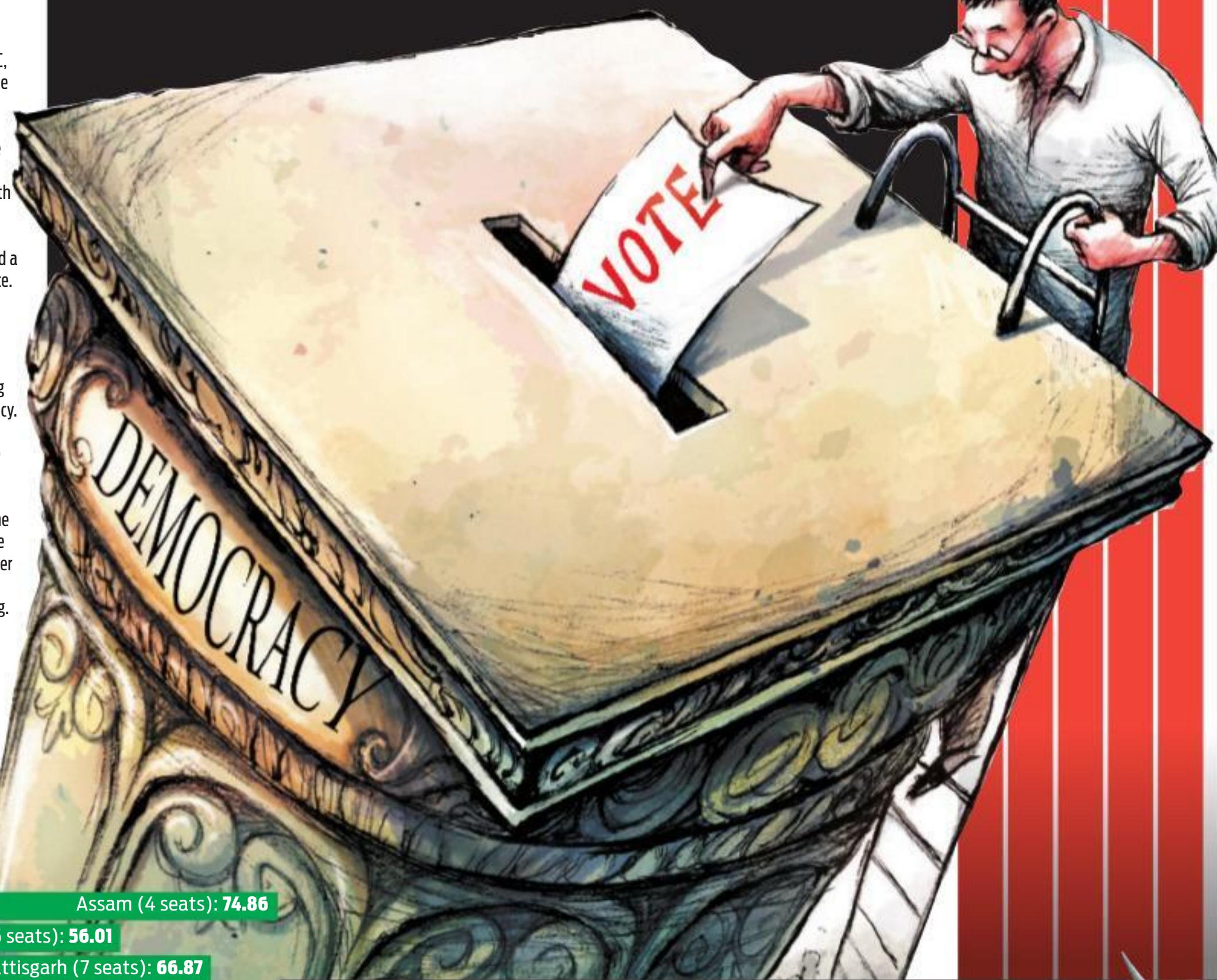
The elections witnessed a straight fight between the ruling Congress and the BJP in these segments. The JD(S) is not contesting in these seats and is supporting its NDA alliance partner – the BJP. The segments in the northern districts where elections were held today are Chikkodi, Belgaum, Bagalkot, Bijapur, Gulbarga, Raichur, Bidar, Koppal, Bellary, Haveri, Dharwad, Uttara Kannada, Davangere and Shimoga. A total of 227 candidates – 206 men and 21 women -- are in the fray for this phase covering northern districts. The Congress and BJP are locking horns on the electoral battleground again in less than a fortnight in Karnataka. Karnataka is the most important state for the BJP in South India as it's only here that it has held power in the past. Despite sporadic rains in most parts of the state, the 14 segments that went to polls faced heat wave-like conditions, with maximum temperatures between 38 and 44 degrees Celsius in districts.

## MADHYA PRADESH

Three high-profile constituencies where political biggies were contesting reported maximum voter turnout, as around 66% voting was reported on nine seats of Madhya Pradesh during the third phase of polls on Tuesday. The seats had reported 66.63% turnout in 2019. In the first two phases, the turnout was 8% and 9% less compared to that of 2019. Rajgarh seat from where former CM Digvijaya Singh was contesting as Congress candidate reported maximum 75%, followed by 74% in Vidisha where ex-CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan was the BJP candidate. Guna, where union minister Jyotiraditya Scindia is the BJP candidate, reported 72% voting, and Betul (ST) 73%. State capital Bhopal and Gwalior reported 64% and 67% polling respectively, while the lowest 55% polling was reported in Bhind (SC) seat. Morena recorded 58% turnout. No major incident was reported from across the 19 districts, where the polls happened on the nine seats.



# HIGHS & LOWS IN BATTLE OF MIDWAY



DHUBRI (ASSAM) 79.70%  
MURSHIDABAD (WEST BENGAL) 76.49%  
BARPETA (ASSAM) 76.20%  
KOKRAJHAR (ASSAM) 74.24%  
MALDAH DAKSHIN (WEST BENGAL) 73.68%

TOP FIVE SEATS  
WITH HIGH  
TURNOUT

AMRELI (GUJARAT) 45.59%  
BARHAMATI (MAHARASHTRA) 45.68%  
PORBANDAR (GUJARAT) 46.51%  
BHAVNAGAR (GUJARAT) 48.59%  
KACHCHH (GUJARAT) 48.9%

TOP FIVE  
SEATS WITH  
LOWEST  
TURNOUT



**TOTAL VOTERS 17.24 CR**

<b>8.85 CR</b> MEN VOTERS	<b>1,331</b> CANDIDATES were in the fray in the third phase	<b>20 STATES</b> <b>284</b> PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES
<b>8.39 CR</b> WOMEN VOTERS	<b>1.85 L</b> Polling Stations	are done with polling with the conclusion of Phase-3

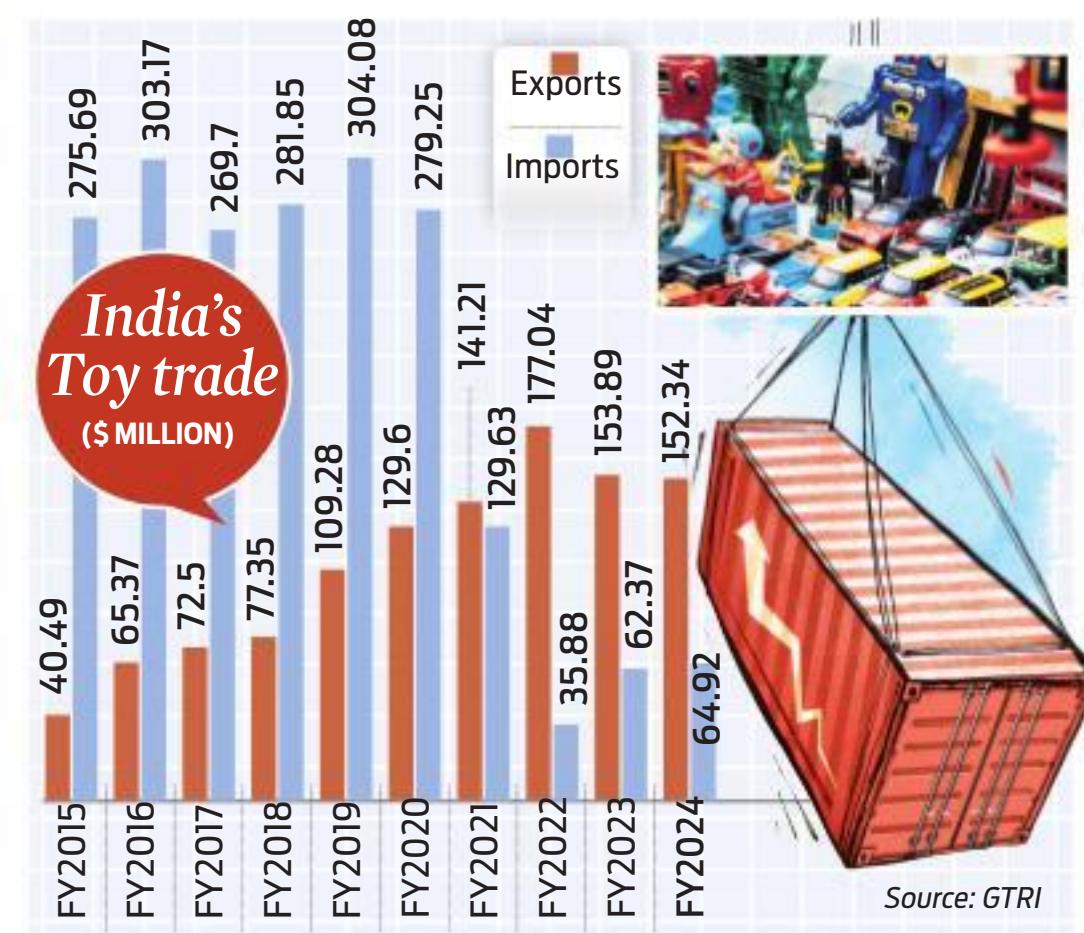
75 international delegates from 23 countries visited many polling stations in six states to witness the poll process. The delegates also witnessed the process of dispatch of polling materials and machines to the polling teams and were appreciative of the magnitude, transparency and most importantly the festive mood of voters.





# Toy exports fall 14% after hitting peak in 2021-22

Slowdown in mkts like US, Europe; subsidies in China, Vietnam main reasons, say industry



DIPAK MONDAL @ New Delhi

INDIA'S toy exports have hit the slow lane after showing spectacular rise since FY215. After touching a peak of \$177 million in FY22, exports of toys have been declining ever since. As per the data collated by the Global Trade Research Institute (GTRI), toy exports have come down to \$152 million in FY24. Simultaneously there has been a rise in imports. Toy imports have risen 81% since FY22 to \$65 million.

As per the industry, the tapering off of exports could be attributed to slowdown in major markets like the US and Europe. The stagnation could be attributed to 'cost disability' that Indian manufacturers face due to high subsidies given to manufacturers in China and Vietnam.

Talking to TNIE, chairman of Toy Association of India Manu Gupta said that India has achieved a certain critical level of toy exports, but in order to



exponentially grow from here, the industry needs to overcome the cost disability it faces due to massive subsidies offered by countries like China and Vietnam. He says in order to grow toy exports in the country, the government should consider the request for a Production-Linked Incentive scheme for the sector. He also bats for a National Toys Policy for a comprehensive boost to the sector.

Ajay Srivastava, founder, GTRI, however, attributes the stagnation in exports to the inability of quality control measures to boost exports.

"While quality control measures were primarily aimed at boosting local industry and ensuring safety, they did not significantly enhance India's toy exports," says Srivastava of GTRI. Introduction of higher import duties and the quality control measures has impacted the toy trade in India with imports falling drastically from \$304.1 million in FY19 to \$64.9 million in FY24.

## Number of 'ghost malls' increases in major cities

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ New Delhi

OWING to growing preference towards online shopping and the advent of top 'Grade A' class shopping centres, number of ghost shopping malls, characterised by a vacancy rate exceeding 40%, rose from 57 in 2022 to 64 in 2023 across eight major cities, said real estate consultancy firm Knight Frank on Tuesday.

The consultant noted that there has been a sharp rise in low-performing retail assets with nearly 13.3 million square feet (mn sq ft) of retail shopping centre space categorised as ghost shopping centres. There has been an increase of 238% year-on-year (YoY) in ghost shopping centres by gross leasable area (GLA) since 2022 in the prime markets. As a result of the rise in vacant spaces,



Knight Frank estimates that loss of value to be at ₹6700 crore or \$798 million in 2023.

National Capital Region (NCR) accounted for the highest Ghost Shopping Centre stock measuring at 5.3 mn sq ft (rise of 58% YoY), followed by Mumbai with 2.1 mn sq ft (rise of 86% YoY) and Bengaluru with 2.0 mn sq ft (rise of 46% YoY). The sharpest rise in

Ghost Shopping Centres was recorded in Kolkata (237% YoY), albeit at a lower base.

Knight Frank stated when new Grade A shopping centres were opened, many retailers made a beeline to expand their presence. This led to a high double-digit vacancy in Grade C structures. Ghost malls often fail to attract customers' and retailers' interest due to vari-

ous constraints such as bad location, obsolete design, strata sold arrangements in addition to dilapidation and unattractiveness of structures.

Shishir Baijal, Chairman & MD, Knight Frank India, said "Grade A malls have excelled, maintaining robust occupancy, foot traffic, and conversion rates, thereby delivering value to their customers. Conversely, Grade C assets and those classified as Ghost Shopping Centres are lagging, prompting landlords to take action to rejuvenate or divest such properties."

In tier 1 cities, total number of shopping centres have reduced in a period of one year. Despite new addition of 8 new retail centres, number of shopping centres reduced to 263 in 2023 as 16 shopping centres were shut down over the last year.

While the tobacco companies did the valuation for excise duty purposes based upon the maximum retail price valuation rule, the revenue authorities disputed by levying and demanding

the differential tax, based on the transaction value of product. Abhishek A Rastogi, founder of Rastogi Chambers, representing the tobacco companies argued for the application of cum duty tax principles in determining the duty owed.

He argued that the cardinal

principle of cum duty can't be ignored for finalisation of the demand and the quantum of duty must be finalised by the tribunal, keeping in mind the provisions of cum duty tax. The apex court accepted the review application to the extent of cum duty tax and ordered that tribunal must determine the quantum of duty based on this principle.

Cum duty principles will make the differential taxes to almost nil as these products were charged at 67% tax at that time. Interestingly, the tribunal had not given any ruling on the principles of cum duty tax at the initial stage as on the other two principles the tribunal had already decided in favour of the companies.

## Sovereign wealth funds' assets in India rise 60%

BENN KOCHVEEDAN @ Mumbai

ASSETS under custody of sovereign wealth funds in domestic companies rose by 60% to touch ₹4.7 lakh crore in the 12 months period preceding April 2024 as against ₹3 lakh crore last year, according to the latest NSDL data.

The world's largest sovereign funds such as the Government Pension Fund Global of Norway, which with ₹1.4 lakh crore in assets under custody is the world's largest; the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority, the Sama Foreign Holdings of Saudi Arabia, the Canadian Pension Funds, the GIC & Temasek of Singapore, and the Kuwait Investment Authority, among others, are some of the leading sovereign wealth funds which

have been pumping tens of billions into domestic companies/entities/infra assets. They're increasing their India bet, as the country remains the fastest growing large market.

These funds have been putting money in the country on the back of tax exemptions they have begun to get since recent years along with relaxation in the KYC norms, which has reduced the compliance cost ad time for them. Total securities/assets owned by sovereign wealth funds in domestic companies/entities/infra assets jumped by 60% to ₹4.7 lakh crore in the year ending April 2024, show data. In the previous 12 months period ending April 2023, assets under custody of these funds was ₹3 lakh crore, according to the same data.

BENGALURU-based mid-tier IT company Happiest Minds Technologies, which posted a 14% increase in the full financial year FY24 revenue at Rs 1,625 crore, is on track to achieve its long-term vision of \$1 billion in revenues by FY31.

In an interaction with TNIE, Venkatraman Narayanan, MD & CFO, said the objective of reaching \$1 billion will be a combination of both organic and inorganic growth. The company recently acquired PureSoftware Technologies for about ₹779 crore and this will strengthen the company's Banking, Financial Services, Insurance (BFSI) and Healthcare and Life Sciences verticals. It also acquired Macmillan Learning India for about Rs

4.5 crore to strengthen its edtech vertical. Narayanan said the compa-

ny's organic growth has been quite strong. "We have been growing at about 21-22% until now and in fact much faster. There were years when we have grown 37%, so our CAGR has been quite solid up until now and we are planning to keep the same growth rate or maybe even slightly better."

In a post-earnings media call, Ashok Soota, Executive Chairman, said FY25 is poised to be its best-ever year since the IPO. In February, the company announced its new vertical organisation structure comprising six new Industry Groups including edtech in order to compete in the global markets. It is also bullish on Gen AI and has created a Gen AI business unit.

Joseph Anantharaju, Executive Vice Chairman, said, this

separate business unit helps both internally and externally. "Internally because it gets the focus and the importance that you need to make it successful and from a customer perspective, it shows our seriousness and the depth that we are building," he added.

The company has around 14

customers already on Gen AI and it expects this to gather momentum through the year and into the next year. He added that they have built up a good sales pipeline for FY25. Happiest Minds is also looking at Gen AI as one of its prime engines of growth. "As long as we are focusing on areas like Gen AI, automation, security, there will be opportunities because these are all areas of need for customers," Anantharaju added.

The Hyderabadi drug company had reported a net profit of ₹959 crore in the January-March quarter of 2022-23 fiscal. Revenue rose to ₹7,083 crore in the period under review from ₹6,297 crore in the fourth quarter of FY23. For the full year ended on March 31, 2024, the drug major said its PAT rose to ₹5,568 crore as compared with ₹4,507 crore in 2022-23 financial year. Revenue rose to ₹27,916 crore for FY24 as against ₹24,588 crore in FY23.

## Will achieve \$1 bn in revenues: Happiest Minds

UMA KANNAN @ Bengaluru



There were years when we have grown 37%, so our CAGR has been quite solid up until now and we are planning to keep the same growth rate or maybe even slightly better.

Venkatraman Narayanan, MD & CEO, Happiest Minds Technologies

Narayanan said the compa-

## Hinduja overhauls corp structure for RelCap deal



Cyture to act as holding co of Aasia

As per IIHL, Cyture India will act as the holding company of Aasia as it will hold a majority stake in Aasia Enterprises, and its shareholders will be the same as that of partners of Aasia -- Ashok Hinduja, Harsha Hinduja, and Shom Hinduja

ers will be the same as that of partners of Aasia -- Ashok Hinduja, Harsha Hinduja, and Shom Hinduja. The other two

new entities -- Cyture Technologies and Ecopolis Properties -- will be the 100% subsidiaries of Aasia Enterprises. The

fourth newly introduced and incorporated company, IIHL BFSI Holding Ltd will be 100% owned by IIHL. The company has apprised of the change to the Reserve Bank of India, which had on 17 November 2023 given approval to its earlier structure for the transaction.

IIHL has emerged as the successful bidder for erstwhile Anil Ambani-promoted Reliance Capital with creditors approving its resolution plan with 99.6% vote share.

## Volatility Index touches 1-year high ahead of 2024 general elections outcome

ARSHAD KHAN @ New Delhi

AHEAD of the general elections results, volatility index, or India VIX, surged for the ninth straight session on Tuesday to hit a fresh 52-week high, sending jitter in the market. The index hit a high of 17.63 on Tuesday and later closed at 17.01, up 2.45%. With this, the fear gauge has jumped more than 70% in the last nine trading sessions.

"The rise aligns with historical trends, as the VIX typically climbs before major events like general elections... Based on this historical context, a further increase in the VIX is likely, with a potential move towards 25 before the election results," said Santosh Meena, Head of Research at Swastika Investmart.

The historical data shows that the index has seen a jump of 150% during 2019 and over 200% in 2014. Meena further states that two key factors are driving the VIX's rise. First, portfolio investors are buying protective put options to hedge their holdings. Second, traders are speculating on significant price movements post-election by purchasing both calls and put options.

The India VIX is a volatility index calculated by the NSE from the order book of NIFTY

options. The best bid-ask quotes of near and next-month NIFTY options contracts traded on the NSE's F&O segment are used for this. India VIX reflects investors' perceptions of market volatility in the near term, i.e. it portrays market volatility over the next 30 calendar days.

The fresh surge in India VIX comes after it had dropped 20% to 10.2 levels on April 23 when bulls were all over the market.

Since then the index has seen a sharp spike, raising concerns among market participants. Equity market benchmarks -- BSE Sensex and NSE Nifty have fallen more than 2% each in the last three sessions.

"While a lot can be explained in terms of historical trends, the approach of record peaks, upcoming election results, and even the liquidity impact on lot size reduction in Nifty, the recent swings are difficult to fully attribute," said Anand James, Chief Market Strategist at Geojit Financial Services.

James added that what is raising eyebrows now is how steep and the extent of the rise and fall is despite the short time frame. Just three weeks back, the VIX had fallen to record lows, after Nifty averted a major fall and bounced off the previous month's low, calming investors.

Cum duty principles will make the differential taxes to almost nil as these products were charged at 67% tax at that time. Interestingly, the tribunal had not given any ruling on the principles of cum duty tax at the initial stage as on the other two principles the tribunal had already decided in favour of the companies.

Cum duty principles will make the differential taxes to almost nil as these products were charged at 67% tax at that time. Interestingly, the tribunal had not given any ruling on the principles of cum duty tax at the initial stage as on the other two principles the tribunal had already decided in favour of the companies.

Dr Reddy's PAT up 36% to ₹1,307 cr; revenue at ₹7K cr

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ New Delhi

DR REDDY'S LABORATORIES on Tuesday reported a 36% rise in its consolidated profit after tax at ₹1,307 crore for the quarter ended March 2024, aided by robust sales in the US market.

The Hyderabad-based drug company had reported a net profit of ₹959 crore in the January-March quarter of 2022-23 fiscal. Revenue rose to ₹7,083 crore in the period under review from ₹6,297 crore in the fourth quarter of FY23. For the full year ended on March 31, 2024, the drug major said its PAT rose to ₹5,568 crore as compared with ₹4,507 crore in 2022-23 financial year. Revenue rose to ₹27,916 crore for FY24 as against ₹24,588 crore in FY23.

Marsh expected to be fit to bowl in T20 WC



Australia coach Andrew McDonald on Tuesday said even though skipper Mitchell Marsh's progress is slower than expected, the all-rounder will be fit to bowl in the upcoming T20 World Cup. "We've got plenty of time now that he has been ruled out the IPL. (Our) first game is just short of a month away now. So ample time for him to get ready," McDonald said.

[newindianexpress.com](http://newindianexpress.com)

# Aman, Deepak eye Paris ticket as World Qualifier to kick-off Thursday

FIROZ MIRZA @Chennai

A TOTAL of 14 Indian wrestlers (six each in men's freestyle and Greco-Roman and two in women) will be in action when the World Olympic Games Qualifier, the last chance to earn Paris ticket, begins in Istanbul on Thursday.

As many as four women wrestlers (Vinesh Phogat 50kg, Antim Panghal 53kg, Anshu Malik 57kg and Reetika Hoods 76kg) have earned an Olympic quota each but none of the male grapplers have managed a place for the country in the 2024 Games so far. Hopes were high when the men wrestlers competed at the Asian Olympic Games Qualifier last month but none of them could manage to reach the final. Sujeept Kalkal (65kg) and Deepak Punia (86kg), who got stranded

at the Dubai International Airport and could reach the venue only after the weigh-in, did not compete. The Indian team comprising 13 wrestlers, eight coaches and three physiotherapists along with the Wrestling Federation of India president Sanjay Kumar Singh flew for Istanbul on Tuesday morning. Deepak (86kg) is learnt to have flown for the venue on Sunday. The competition will begin with bouts in Greco-Roman followed by women's wrestling on Friday. The men freestyle wrestlers' competition will begin on Saturday. As per the criteria, the finalists apart from the winner of the play-off between two bronze medalists in each weight category will earn the quota.

## Challenges in freestyle

All eyes will be on Aman Sehra-

wat (57kg), Sujeept (65kg), Deepak Punia (86kg) and Sumit Malik (125kg) in the men's freestyle. Aman might have failed to reach the final in the Asian Qualifier but he could be India's brightest prospect in Istanbul. The 2023 Asian Games bronze medalist, however, will have to face tough challenges from Tokyo Olympian Georgi Vangelov of Bulgaria, world silver medallist Alireza Sarlak of Iran and Muhammet Karavus, the local favourite.

If that was not enough, Spencer Lee of the USA, former U-17 and U-20 world champion, will be in Istanbul, making his comeback to international tournament eight years after world title in U-20. Aman, the 2022 U-23 world champion, will also have to go past world bronze medalists Zanabazar Zandabud of Mongolia and German Horst



Lehr: Han Chong Song, the 2023 Asian Games silver medalist is also in the fray. Sujeept will be raring to go this time. Like, Aman he too will face stiff competitions from Zain Allen Rutherford of the USA, the 2022 world silver medalist.

Tokyo Olympian Deepak too has to overcome challenges from quite a few wrestlers including Magomed Eldarovitch Ramazanov of Bulgaria, who won gold in the first Ranking Series in Zagreb and Magomed Sharipov of Bahrain. The latter had recently lost to Deepak in the 2023 Asian Games. Punia's namesake, Deepak, who will compete in 97kg, will have to counter challenge from Nishan Preet Singh Randhawa of Canada. The Canadian defeated Deepak in the 2022 Common-

wealth Games.

Sumit Malik, who qualified for the Tokyo Games but had to sit out as he was tested positive for banned substances, will again try his luck in the 125kg. His biggest rival will be Zhiwei Deng of China. The veteran Chinese wrestler already has two world medals (silver in 2018 and bronze in 2019) apart from the 2018 Asian Games silver in his kitty. The rivalry of Sumit with Aiaal Lazarev of Kyrgyzstan can go to next level as the latter will be one of the contenders in 125kg. He defeated Sumit in the 2023 Asian Games by technical superiority. Earlier, the Indian had beaten him in the qualification round in the 2021 World Qualifier. Lazarev finished third but earned the ticket for the Tokyo Games as Sumit failed the dope test.

## Chinese threat for women

Mansi (62kg) and Nisha Dahiya (68kg) will try to leave behind their respective losses at the Asian qualifying event and make it six out of six for the country in women's wrestling for the Paris Games. Once again, the duo will have to face strong fight from their rivals especially the Chinese wrestlers. For Mansi, Jia Long from China can be one of the toughest rivals. The Chinese had won silver in the 2022 Worlds apart from winning the 2023 Asian Championships gold. Similarly, Chinese Feng Zhou could be Nisha's biggest competitor Zhou, the three-time Asian Games gold medalist and two-time world medalist (2018 bronze & 2015 silver), will be geared up to win the elusive Olympic medal.

# JAKE, THE REAPER OF RUNS

Despite missing the WC berth, the Australian youngster once again lit up the stage in IPL

SWAROOP SWAMINATHAN  
@Chennai

EVEN as late as the second week of March, Jake Fraser-McGurk's Summer plans didn't involve playing for Delhi Capitals. The breakout star of the Indian Premier League (IPL) may have probably been looking at shooting some hoops with mates, some fishing and working on his game in March, April and May.

Then, a spot opened up thanks to Lungi Ngidi's injury. Delhi plumped for him even if they had a stacked Aussie-heavy top-order. Whether by chance or by design, it has worked wonders. He has been electric and has routinely embarrassed top bowlers. On Tuesday, the opener continued with a breath-taking takedown of Rajasthan Royals inside the powerplay. He had made a soporific start (run-a-ball 7) as Trent Boult, one of the finest new-ball operators in the history of the league in terms of wickets, had altered the line of attack. The Kiwi usually searches for some swing early to bring the pads into play. Here, it was a nod to McGurk's aggression so the seamer was looking to angle in deliveries, with the length going to be short as well as full.

Off the fourth ball of the innings, Boult had hit McGurk in the unmentionables. The opener was down and the physio spent a good time working to ensure nothing was damaged. By the time McGurk's work was done for the evening, he had put a big dent in the visitors' aspirations of sealing a playoff berth with a win. After being hit in the box, McGurk went 401640401444646. Sure, some of those were slogs but the good thing with the way he slogs is his base, the bat speed and balance. It was in evidence straightforwardly as he hit through the line off Boult over mid-off after giving some room. His first six of the night — also off Boult



Delhi's Jake Fraser-McGurk smashed a 20-ball 50 against Rajasthan on Tuesday | AP

## BATTLE FOR THE FOURTH

Sunrisers Hyderabad and Lucknow Super Giants – two teams fighting to be in the top four – go up against each other. A look...

**NEED FOR TWO POINTS**  
SRH and LSG, placed fourth and fifth, respectively, need two wins in three matches to make the play-offs. Which practically makes this a direct match-up, giving the winning team a headstart. Who will come out on top?



### WILL AGARWAL PLAY?

After what seemed like a set combination for Hyderabad, Pat Cummins and Co went back to Mayank Agarwal in the last game. However, will he continue? If so, how much will it affect the team combination? The questions remain.

**Sunrisers Hyderabad vs Lucknow Super Giants, Hyderabad**

Live on Star Sports and JioCinema, 7.30PM

— was pumped straight into the sightscreen. The front leg was already out of the way when the Kiwi bowler was in his delivery stride. When the ball pitched inside his hitting zone, the bat made one smooth arc to send the ball soaring over the bowler's head. More boundaries followed. When Avesh Khan was introduced, the 22-year-old got lucky as an inside edge narrowly evaded the leg-stump before it sped

past Sanju Samson for a boundary. More good luck followed him as an uppish club just evaded the man stationed at extra cover. Avesh very quickly lost his length and JFM brought down the full face of the bat to loft him over mid-off. Sanju Samson had some words of advice but it didn't matter much as he kept travelling. In the process, the Australian reached a 19-ball 50. It ought to have been 56

Teams	P	W	L	Pts	NRR
KKR	11	8	3	16	1.45
RR	11	8	3	16	0.47
CSK	11	6	5	12	0.7
SRH	11	6	5	12	-0.06
DC	12	6	6	12	-0.31
LSG	11	6	5	12	-0.37
RCB	11	4	7	8	-0.04
PBKS	11	4	7	8	-0.18
MI	12	4	8	8	-0.21
GT	11	4	7	8	-1.32

\* – until the end of RR vs DC match

off 20 as an attempted R Ashwin carrom ball was a knee-high full-toss. But he mishit the delivery straight to covers. 60/1 off 42 overs. The light had been extinguished against the run of play but he had fulfilled his role to perfection as DC posted 221/8 before restricting RR to 201/8 to seal a 20-run win.

Having already had multiple innings like this this year, a few people expected him to feature in Australia squad but he didn't have any expectation. "There's two ways you can look at it," he told the *Willow Talk* podcast last week. "They (selectors) probably had a good idea of what (the squad) was a month and a half ago, trying to build that, how they can get the connection in that team. It's also hard to fit in. You've got David Warner, our best opener ever in three formats. You've got Travis Head, who's lighting it up over here (in the IPL) and has lit up for the past 18 months. And then Mitch Marsh is the same and he's also the captain." But with Warner still nursing an injury, Marsh still convalescing back home, will they be tempted to relook at Fraser-McGurk? With more than 15 days to go to hand in the final 15-man squads, you can't rule it out. Not yet anyway.

**Brief scores:** DC 221/8 in 20 ovs Jake 50, Porel 65; Ashwin 3/24) b/w RR 201/8 in 20 ovs (Samson 66, Parag 27; Mukesh 2/30).

## EXPRESS READ

### Boxer Preeti bags gold medal

ASTANA: Paris Olympics-bound Preeti was among seven Indian boxers to have clinched the gold medal as the country's medals tally hit a high of 43 at the conclusion of the Asian U-22 & Youth Boxing Championships. Indian boxers won 12 gold, 14 silver and 17 bronze medals to finish second behind hosts Kazakhstan who bagged 48 medals.

### Hridoy shines for Bangladesh

Chattogram: Towhid Hridoy hit his maiden half-century as Bangladesh beat Zimbabwe by nine runs in the third T20 on Tuesday to take an unassailable 3-0 lead in the five-match series. Put into bat first, Bangladesh compiled 165-8 with Hridoy hitting a 38-ball-57 and then defended the total by restricting Zimbabwe to 156-9.

### MLC to add 6 extra league games

San Francisco: The second edition of Major League Cricket will start on July 5 and will feature an additional six league matches, the organisers said on Tuesday. The defending champions MI New York featuring former West Indies cricketer Kieron Pollard will take on 2023 runner-up Seattle Orcas in the opening match on July 5.

### Gukesh, Arjun and Pragg in Warsaw for Rapid and Blitz

AGENCIES @ Warsaw

FRESH from his historic triumph at the Candidates' tournament, Indian Grandmaster D Gukesh will compete in the Superbet Rapid and Blitz chess tournament which begins here on Wednesday.

A part of the Grand

Chess tour, the event will also see GM R Praggnanandhaa in action for the first

time since the Candidates while world number seven Erigaisigai Arjun is the other Indian in the

10-player field for the tourna-

mament which will have nine rounds of rapid and 18 rounds of blitz to decide the winner.

The tournament favourite is

Magnus Carlsen of Norway

who starts as the top seed.

The four players who have signed up for

the entire tour are Gukesh, Praggnanandhaa, Anish Giri of Holland and Nodirbek Abdusattarov of Uzbekistan.

All of them will take part in

four out of five events out of

which two will be classical and

remaining three will be rapid

and blitz.

# Crystal Palace hand out royal thrashing to Man United

AFP @ London

MANCHESTER United are at risk of failing to qualify for Europe next season after a dismal 4-0 thrashing at Crystal Palace left the Red Devils eighth in the Premier League.

Michael Olise scored twice, either side of goals from the in-form Jean-Philippe Mateta and Tyrick Mitchell, as the Eagles' resurgence since the appointment of Oliver Glaser as manager continues. The time for a change of boss at Old Trafford could be coming soon as Erik ten Hag fails to ar-

rest a slide in his second season in charge. United have only been absent from European competition once since the 1989-90 season. That came after finishing seventh in David Moyes' sole campaign 10 years ago and the Scot was sacked with four games of the season to go. United have never come lower than seventh in the Premier League era but are staring that possibility in the face with Arsenal to come at Old Trafford on Sunday.

Ten Hag has routinely cited injury problems as mitigation for his side's struggles.

Ancelotti admitted German giants Bayern, six-time win-

ners, were the superior side in the first leg draw at the Allianz Arena. "These are similar clubs, they have great history and a lot of success in the Champions League," continued the Italian coach. "We respect them... they did better than us in the first leg."

The coach confirmed Andriy

Lunin would start in goal despite Thibaut Courtois returning from injury and keeping a clean sheet as Madrid clinched their La Liga crown this weekend. The Belgian stopper had been out since last summer with a bad knee injury. "The plan for a player coming back from injury does not change because of one game," said Ancelotti. "Courtois is doing well but he needs time to get back to his best self -- he had an ideal game." Madrid defender Dani Carvajal said the team was right

will be time to celebrate at the weekend, that's why we took that decision," said the Spain international. "We're having a great year, we're very excited for the Champions League, we're two games away from lifting it again. The dressing room knows it -- in the streets they're giving us encouragement so we can dream of our 15th."

Various long-standing Madrid players could leave at the end of the season after years spent at the club, with Luka Modric, Toni Kroos, Lucas Vazquez and Nacho Fernandez all out of contract in the summer. "I hope not, but some will be living their final Champions League match at the Bernabeu," added Carvajal.

# After missing out in 2023, Real keen to enter CL final

AGENCIES @ Madrid



Real Madrid's players attend a training session in Madrid on Tuesday | AFP

to avoid celebrating their title success on Saturday. "Not celebrating was the best thing to do, there's a vital game and there



A life of joy and happiness is possible only  
on the basis of knowledge and science  
- Dr S Radhakrishnan

## HOW IT WORKS

## HOW OLD ARE OUR WISE, AGED TREES?

HRITHIK KIRAN BAGADE



HERE are an estimated three trillion trees on Earth. Trees are amongst the old inhabitants of our planet, with some of them as old as thousands of years. Over the years, botanists have worked on ways to determine the true age of trees, with a tried and tested method being counting tree rings inside the trunk.

Counting tree rings is one of the most accurate ways to determine a tree's age. For this, one must locate a tree stump that has been cut down or get a cross-section of wood from near the bottom of a tree that reveals all the rings. The rings are intricate patterns formed inside the tree trunk. Analysing these patterns not only makes it easy to calculate a tree's age, but also helps gather other information about a tree's past, as well as climatic conditions during a particular phase of its life.

## AGE ANALYSIS

## 1 LOCATE THE CENTRE OF A TREE STUMP

Find a stump of a tree that was cut down or get a circular piece of a tree from near the bottom. Ensure the tree was cut horizontally so the stump or cross-section is relatively flat. The stump or cross-section of wood must be newer, and not rotten or falling apart, which will make accurate counting of the tree's age difficult.

## 2 ALTERNATING DARK-COLOURED RINGS, LIGHT-COLOURED RINGS

Look for alternating dark-coloured rings and light-coloured rings in the trunk. The light rings form during the first part of the growing sea-

son and the dark rings form at the end. Each pair of rings adds up to 1 year of growth for the tree. The light rings typically develop in early summer, while the dark rings form in late summer.

## 3 DARK RINGS TO CALCULATE AGE

Counting the dark rings aids in calculating the age of the tree. Starting from the middle of the stump or cross-section of wood, one must count the first dark ring. This counting must continue outwards from the middle ring, until one reaches the last dark ring.

The total number of dark rings represents the age of the tree in years. However, one must not count the bark of the tree as a dark ring, since it does not represent a year of growth because the bark just continues to get pushed out as the tree grows from the inside.

However, it is imperative to understand that the traditional method of determining a tree's age by counting rings in its trunk does not work for 100 per cent of the trees on Earth. Some species of tropical trees, for instance, do not form visible rings inside their trunks. Today, modern computerised methods are also available to calculate a tree's age.

HRITHIK KIRAN BAGADE

**E**VERYWHERE, time has no beginning and no end, just perpetual existence. However, in space, which stretches into infinity, time takes a whole new meaning. Helping astronauts, who call space home for several months, to keep time is not only a challenge, but a feat achieved through a blend of creativity, engineering, and ingenuity. Several space watches have been created over the years, handsomely adorning the wrists of space-farers, telling them the time on Earth, and aiding them to keep a track of normal life, routine and tasks.

Bengaluru-based Bangalore Watch Company (BWC), which has embarked upon the exercise of celebrating India's space prowess through its distinct wristwatches, aims to go higher. Recently, the six-year-old Indian watchmaker rolled out the country's first space-qualified watch, the *Apogee Karman Line*, which went through careful design and rigorous testing over the last 18 months, reaching high up and deep into the stratosphere, before landing safely back on Earth.

## Space is the limit

In 2021, the company launched the 'Apogee' series of watches as an ode to the Indian space programme. Apogee refers to the point in the orbit of the Moon or a satellite at which it is furthest from the earth.

"We didn't want to stop at creating watches that were merely inspired by space, but to see if we could build them to be qualified and tested for space," says Bangalore Watch Company Co-Founder Mercy Amalraj. Accordingly, BWC's Apogee Karman Line terms itself as the first space-qualified watch from an Indian company.

Built on the Apogee series, BWC's new watch line has been designed to survive and function in space, which is an unforgiving environment, a vacuum, with no gravity, no oxygen, and extremely low temperatures, and space watches are designed to work seamlessly in these

Bengaluru-based watchmaker builds India's first space-qualified watch, which ticks successfully in the stratosphere



The Apogee Karman Line in space, 35 km above the Earth  
I PICS CREDIT:  
BANGALORE WATCH COMPANY

and a genuine leather strap were some other features.

A major problem that had to be addressed was pressure. There is no pressure in space, only vacuum. Another was temperature. These watches are not battery-powered, and work on automatic mechanism. They have hundreds of moving parts; when you move an arm, potential energy is converted into kinetic energy. "We subjected the candidate watches to differential pressure (low and high), repeating the cycle several times. Then we conducted freeze tests. Usually, when temperatures change, a watch's glass shatters and there is condensation behind the crystal. These tests were to eliminate such issues," he says.

## The launch

Post the successful on-ground tests, the watch had to be launched into space. BWC partnered with a UK-based company specialising in high-altitude hydrogen-powered balloons. "We had to build a 2-kg payload with a carbon fibre spacecraft, with our watch fitted on it externally. Multiple cameras were to record the whole journey. The spacecraft was attached to a balloon, and was launched from the UK, attaining a height of 114,000 feet (35 km), i.e., much higher than a commercial flight. At this altitude, the balloon was remotely detonated to bring the payload back to Earth. The latter started free-falling at 300 kmph, and was remotely parachuted to the ground as it got closer.

"The whole watch survived. We have four hours of footage on its entire journey, and how it sustained in that environment (at -60 degrees Celsius), and returned safely to Earth. There was no condensation behind the crystal, no issue with the movement or mechanism. Hence, we believe that this is the first Indian watch that has gone to space, and the first Indian watch that has been qualified for outer space," states Joshi, adding that the eventual goal is to see that the Apogee series would be worn by astronauts in human space-flight missions.

BEHIND THE SCIENCE  
ERNST MACH

## Shock Waves

HRITHIK KIRAN BAGADE

Czech physicist and philosopher Ernst Waldfried Josef Wenzel Mach contributed immensely to the physics of shock waves. The ratio of the speed of a flow or object to that of sound is named the 'Mach Number' in his honour. As a philosopher of science, he was a major influence on logical positivism and American pragmatism. Through his criticism of Isaac Newton's theories of space and time, he foreshadowed Albert Einstein's theory of relativity. Mach was born in Chrlice, Austrian Empire, on February 18, 1838, to a tutor.

Homeschooled initially, he received a doctorate in physics at the University of Vienna in 1860. In 1864, he took up a job as professor of mathematics at the University of Graz, and was appointed professor of physics two years later. During that period, Mach carried out work in psycho-physics and in sensory perception.

Mach's main contribution to physics involved his description and photographs of spark shock-waves and then ballistic shock-waves. He described how when a bullet or shell moved faster than the speed of sound, it created a compression of air in front of it. Using schlieren photography, he and his son Ludwig photographed the shadows of the invisible shock waves. Meanwhile, Mach also made several contributions to psychology and physiology, including his anticipation of gestalt phenomena, his discovery of the oblique effect and of 'Mach Bands'. One of the greatest of Mach's ideas today is the 'Mach Principle' – the physical origin of inertia.

In later years, Mach also became well known for his philosophy, developed in close interplay with his science.

## TIME AT 35-KM HIGH

conditions.

"Watches have been to space before. But most of them have been used only inside capsules or other spacecraft, in a pressurised environment. Only a few have been exposed to the outside. Not all watches can withstand external conditions of outer space, where temperatures plummet to -250 degrees Celsius, when facing away from the Sun, and +250 degrees Celsius when facing the Sun. We wanted our Apogee to be fit for outer space, and not just inside a capsule. Accordingly, the company created a specific prototype and performed a lot of testing on Earth, before the final test in space," says Bangalore Watch Company Co-Founder and Creative Director Nirupesh Joshi. The idea involved taking a few candidate watches from the Apogee series, testing them on the ground so as to mimic conditions in space, and then send a watch into space, to see if it survives through the inhospitable conditions up there.

## Sturdy for space

The Karman Line is a boundary 100 km above mean sea level that borders Earth's atmosphere, and the be-



The blue dials of the watch

ginning of space is 100 km above the Earth – it's where space begins. "We called our space idea the Karman Line Project, because we wanted to send the Apogee watch into the stratosphere," Joshi says. The company began by arriving at an ideal design and construction for a watch that could be put to the test of spaceflight, and its safe return to Earth. Two years ago, it developed a proprietary material called 'Cerasteel', comprising a steel inner core and a ceramic exterior, with an American firm. Cerasteel is rated an impressive 'SH' on the pencil hardness test. Along with a Black Cerasteel unibody case, and a special mechanism from Switzerland, offering 68 hours power reserve, a meteorite dial was also included. Sourced from a Swedish meteorite hunter, the blue-coloured Muonionalusta meteorite fell to the Earth a million years ago, but is believed to be older than our planet (over 4.5 billion years old). It was discovered in 1904. Besides, a scratch-resistant domed sapphire crystal, with two layers of anti-reflective coating,

THE SPECIAL OFFICER AND COMPETENT AUTHORITY,  
(UNDER KPIDFE - IMA & OTHER SCAM)

3rd Floor, Podium Block, V.V Tower, Dr. Ambedkar Veedhi, Bengaluru-560001

## REVISED NOTICE/INVITATION FOR E-AUCTION FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

Pursuant to attachment of Immovable properties by the Government under the provisions of the Karnataka Protection of Interest of Depositors in Financial Establishments Act, 2004 (KPIDFE Act) and pursuant to the absolute attachment order by the Hon'ble Special Court the Special Officer & Competent Authority (under KPIDFE-IMA and other Scam), is issuing notice for e-auction of the immovable property through e-auction on 'as is where is and whatever there is basis'.

The intending bidders will be required to furnish Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) (as mentioned against each material lot/auction in the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal only).

## Short Description of the Immovable Property

Sl. No.	DETAILS OF THE PROPERTY (Clear Title by Court in order No. MISC No. 966/2023)	Reserve Price	EMD (Rs)	Bid Increase Value (Rs)	Clear Title
1	All the piece and parcel of land measuring in Sy.No.188 Hissa No. A2 of Kangrali K.H village, Belagavi city, measuring 15 guntas 03 ana, Bounded on: East: Sy.No 187, 189 West: Hindalaga Seeme. North: Sy.No.190, 191 South: Kabaja Belagavi Seeme. Google Map link: <a href="https://maps.app.goo.gl/nNgYlZZ1X5eYukqr5">https://maps.app.goo.gl/nNgYlZZ1X5eYukqr5</a> Latitude and Longitude: 15°52'41.7"N 74°29'15.5"E	Rs.2,45,51,505/-	24,56,000/-	2,46,000	
2	All the piece and parcel of land & red tiled building in CTS No. 3546 of Resildargalli, Belagavi city, measuring 528-43 sq.mtr (2000 Sq.ft house building & 3686 Sq.ft vacant space total 5686 sq.ft), Bounded on:East: Land of Sri Ghatagi & Appugol, CTS No 3545 wall West: CTS No. 3547 wall North: Bangi Passage South: Road Google Map link: <a href="https://maps.app.goo.gl/JYcKfgkv5kg4yBzx6">https://maps.app.goo.gl/JYcKfgkv5kg4yBzx6</a> Latitude and Longitude: 15°51'43.3"N 74°30'42.3"E	2,41,65,500/-	24,17,000/-	2,42,000/-	
3	All the piece and parcel of land in Sy.No 188/C, CTS No. 2324, Kangrali K.H village, Hanuman Nagar, Belagavi City, measuring 443.04 Sq.ft (out of 9398.62 Sq.mtr) Bounded on: East: Re. Sy.No.187 West: Road North: Re Sy.No.188/B South: Re Sy.No.188/D Google Map link: <a href="https://maps.app.goo.gl/Nog4s7bCyzdGwccZ8">https://maps.app.goo.gl/Nog4s7bCyzdGwccZ8</a> Latitude and Longitude: 15°52'42.7"N 74°29'16.9"E	1,00,14,648/-	10,02,000/-	1,01,000/-	
4	All the piece and parcel of land in Re.Sy.No.163/2, measuring 5 Acre 01 guntas of Tadasaluru Village, Murugodu Hobli, Savadatti Taluk Belagavi District. Bounded on: East: Land of Sri Parameshwara Kattimani West: Land of Sri Basappa C Gowda North: By Road South: By Road Google Map link: <a href="https://maps.app.goo.gl/NnzUJViU1ukRvmURA">https://maps.app.goo.gl/NnzUJViU1ukRvmURA</a> Latitude and Longitude: 15°55'28.0"N 74°54'14.3"E	1,40,70,000/-	14,07,000/-	1,41,000/-	
5	All the piece and parcel of land measuring 04 Acres 03 Gunta in Sy.No. 191/1+2K in Ambadagatti Village, Kitur Taluk ( Previously named as Bylahongala Taluk), Belagavi District. Bounded on: East: Land belonging to Udaya Kalappa Pattara(Hittalu), West: Land belonging to Gangaya Guruvaiah North: Land belonging to Chidananda Pattara, South: Land belonging to Rayappa Dastikoppa Google Map link: <a href="https://maps.app.goo.gl/3vF74ythrWt85R3N6">https://maps.app.goo.gl/3vF74ythrWt85R3N6</a> Latitude and Longitude: 15°38'00.6"N 74°43'39.5"E	40,75,000/-	4,08,000/-	41,000/-	RTC stands in the name of Competent Authority and Auctioning Authority
6	All the Piece and Parcel of land measuring 01 acres 25 Gunta in Sy.No 10/1A/1 in Ankalagi Village, Bagevadi Hobli, Belagavi District. Bounded on: East: Property belonging to Shivappa Jakkati, West: Property belonging to Portdar Avaroli North: Government Naala South: Property belonging to Shivappa Jakkati Google Map link: <a href="https://maps.app.goo.gl/SvQQqd89BLuffPTA">https://maps.app.goo.gl/SvQQqd89BLuffPTA</a> Latitude and Longitude: 15°44'06.9"N 74°35'10.0"E	16,25,000/-	1,63,000/-	17,000/-	
7	All the Piece and Parcel of land measuring 01 Acres 29 Gunta in Sy.No. 115/1+5+6/2/3 in K.K Koppa Village, Belagavi Taluk, Belagavi District, Bounded on: East: Land belonging to Suresh Dote , West: Land belonging to Bassu Bavantha Godala Kundaragi North: Land belonging to Balappa Chandrappa Godala kundaragi , South: Land belonging to Neelakanta Godala Kundaragi Google Map link: <a href="https://maps.app.goo.gl/XF6Rpftu6UkBENi96">https://maps.app.goo.gl/XF6Rpftu6UkBENi96</a> Latitude and Longitude: 15°46'40.7"N 74°35'16.5"E	17,25,000/-	1,73,000/-	18,000/-	
8	All the piece and parcel of agricultural land bearing R.S.No.633 of Belagavi Village, Belagavi Taluk, Belagavi District totally measuring 03 acres 04 guntas 11.81 guntas, bounded as stated below: East: R.S. No.637 West: National High Way Service Road North: R.S.No.634 South: R.S.No.622 Google Map link: <a href="https://maps.app.goo.gl/Z7YRsNHbt47zKnmj7">https://maps.app.goo.gl/Z7YRsNHbt47zKnmj7</a> Latitude and Longitude: 15°50'26.5"N 74°32'35.1"E	7,75,00,000/-	77,50,000/-	7,75,000/-	

Date of Pre-bid meeting &amp; time and Place

16th May 2024 3 pm to 4 pm

Place: O/o SPLOCA, 3rd Floor Podium Block, Visvesvariah Tower, Bengaluru-01

Date of Inspection &amp; time

17th May 2024 11 am to 5 pm

Last Date of Submission of Bids &amp; EMD submission

Date &amp; Time of E Auction

20th May 2024 11 am to 1 pm

For Registration & Online Auction, you can login to: <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> (Helpdesk No: 080-46010000, 080-68948777) The interested bidders who require auction related information can contact Joint Secretary, Office of the Special Officer & Competent Authority, 3rd Floor, Podium Block, Visvesvariah Towers, Dr.Ambedkar Veedhi, Bengaluru-560001, e-mail ID: [splocaeaeuction@gmail.com](mailto:splocaeaeuction@gmail.com) or Contact Mob. No 6364403715.

Date: 07-05-2024

Place: Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/056/Zen/2024-25

The Special Officer &amp; Competent Authority (Under KPIDFE - IMA &amp; Other Scam) Bengaluru, Karnataka

Sd-



## DAY'S DIARY

### First Bond film

On this day in 1963, the first-ever James Bond film, *Dr. No*, starring Sean Connery as the super-spy codenamed 007 premiered in the US

## PLOT

Co-starring Ursula Andress, Joseph Wiseman and Jack Lord, *Dr. No* sends Bond to Jamaica to investigate the murders of a fellow agent and his secretary



## CHARACTERISATION

The spy was created by novelist Ian Fleming in his 1953 thriller *Casino Royale*. He wrote 12 novels over the next 10 years featuring Bond



## TRIVIA

Connery went on to appear in six more Bond films, including *Goldfinger*, *From Russia With Love*, *Thunderball*, *You Only Live Twice* and *Never Say Never Again*

Dazzling charm of the courtesans

PG 4

# Crooning with Nakash Aziz

With *Pushpa Pushpa* song Allu Arjun returns with swag in the first single from 'Pushpa 2'. Its singer Nakash Aziz talks to CE about the song, his latest collaboration with Arijit Singh, musical journey and more



INTERVIEW

RESHMI CHAKRAVORTY

**I**NFECTIONOUS energy, impeccable vocal prowess, ability to captivate, enchant, and transcend boundaries make singer Nakash Aziz stand out in the sea of talents of the Indian music industry. With his unique blend of versatility, energy, and soulful renditions, Aziz has carved a niche for himself in the hearts of music lovers, leaving an indelible mark on the Telugu film industry as well. Aziz's foray into Tollywood marked a significant milestone in his career. His debut in Telugu cinema came with the song "Vandemataram" from the film "Leader" (2010). Since then, Nakash Aziz has been a sought-after voice in Tollywood, delivering one chartbuster after another. Whether it's the foot-tapping beats of a dance number or the heartfelt emotions of a romantic ballad, Aziz's talent knows no bounds. The recently released single by Aziz, *Pushpa Pushpa* from Allu Arjun starrer *Pushpa 2* is ruling the charts. CE gets in touch with Nakash Aziz about the song, his new collaboration with Oryion Music curated by Arijit Singh, musical journey and more.

**Tell us about your track *Tu Naazneen* on Oryion Music.**

*Tu Naazneen* is a simple song that speaks about longing in a direct and straightforward manner. It's not trying to be complex or difficult. The song conveys the feeling of missing someone, especially in a long-distance relationship. It's all in the words, which are simple and heartfelt.

**You have sung a lot of Telugu songs. Which one is your favourite?**

It's difficult to choose a favourite Telugu song among all the songs I've sung. Each song has its own character and charm, and when I approach a new song, I try to forget what I've done in the past and give it a fresh and exciting interpretation. The South Indian film industry, especially Tollywood, has been consistently producing great music, and I'm glad that it's gaining recognition.

**What do you love the most about Tollywood and Hyderabad?**

What I love about Tollywood and Hyderabad is the city's great infrastructure and the professionalism in the film in-



dstry. There's a clear hierarchy and everyone knows their role without unnecessary interference. Any creative input is aimed at improving the final product, and decisions are made collaboratively. I appreciate this approach, as it ultimately leads to better quality work.

**What inspired you to pursue a career in music?**

My pursuit of a career in music wasn't so much about being inspired as it was about my love for music and art in general. I started making music in a garage, with basic equipment and limited resources. Over time, I sought to improve the quality of my music and collaborate with talented artists. This drive to collaborate with the best and be part of exciting projects has shaped my career in music.

**Can you tell us about your journey in the music industry so far?**

My journey in the music industry has been nothing short of beautiful. Despite warnings of its harshness, I've encountered genuine souls who've helped me grow. Instead of seeing it as exploitation, I view it as a way to refine my talents. Letting others push me has been key. They've pushed my talent, patience, and physical limits, helping me surpass what I thought possible. As a singer, every sound I create involves a deep connection between body, mind, throat, heart, and gut. Embracing this process, I've honed my skills. What I cherish most is collaborating with those who share my drive. Together, we push boundaries, constantly evolving. It's this journey of growth that keeps my passion for music alive.

**How do you approach the process of selecting songs to perform or record?**

Every time I step up to a microphone, it's a moment I cherish.



I vividly recall each recording session, with distinct memories from everyone. In the studio, I always strive to innovate, even if it means trying something unexpected. I believe in pushing boundaries, knowing that if it doesn't work out, there's always the delete button. It's about embracing the unfamiliar, giving it a chance to grow on you. Sometimes, what initially seems daunting becomes an integral part of the final piece. That's the beauty of experimentation in music.

**What challenges have you faced as a singer, and how have you overcome them?**

The challenge I often encounter is the expectation for me to be someone else. I find it unfair because everyone is unique, with something valuable to offer. As musicians, it's crucial to embrace each individual's contributions rather than imitating others. I steer clear of trying to mimic someone else for the sake of results. While tribute

or mimicry can be fun, serious emulation is unjust.

**Your versatility as a singer is widely appreciated. How do you manage to excel in various genres?**

I feel like I've just begun to delve into the vast world of music genres in my personal space. Exploring different kinds, forms, and genres of music brings me immense joy. I admire artists like Rehman sir, Pritam Da, and Vishal-Shekhar from the Hindi film industry who have brilliantly explored a wide range of genres. Their versatility is truly inspiring, and I thoroughly enjoy experiencing their diverse musical expressions.

**Are there any particular artists or musicians who have influenced your style or technique?**

Whenever I listen to an artist who approaches their music with honesty, I find it truly inspiring. Reflecting on my musical influences while growing up, it's a journey that begins with legends like Rafi Sahab, Kishore Da, Lata Mangeshkar, S.D. Burman, Jatin Lalit Ji, Pritam Da, Amit Trivedi, Vishal-Shekhar, and many others. The list is endless, including stalwarts like Jayadev Sahab and Naushad Sahab.

However, if I were to pinpoint major influences, I'd have to mention AR Rehman, Hans Zimmer, Michael Jackson, and Pritam Da. Yet, it feels unfair to single out just one. There's a wealth of inspiration to draw from, spanning across diverse artists like Coldplay and Bruno Mars. The spectrum of talent is vast and endlessly enriching.

**What advice would you give to aspiring singers who are just starting their careers?**

Today's singers have a distinct flavour compared to those of the past. There's a new breed emerging, and if I were to offer one piece of advice to any artist, it would be this: Remember, music is meant to be enjoyed. So, simply revel in your music, soak in the joy it brings, and let that be your guiding principle.

## Upcoming releases?

The songs for "Pushpa" were released recently, and I've had the pleasure of singing them in three languages: Tamil, Telugu, and Hindi. I'm thrilled that the Hindi version is sung by Mika Paaji, and I'm also part of this collaboration. It's been a while since we worked together, and I'm loving every moment of it.

## CULINARY TALES

SHRIMANSI KAUSHIK

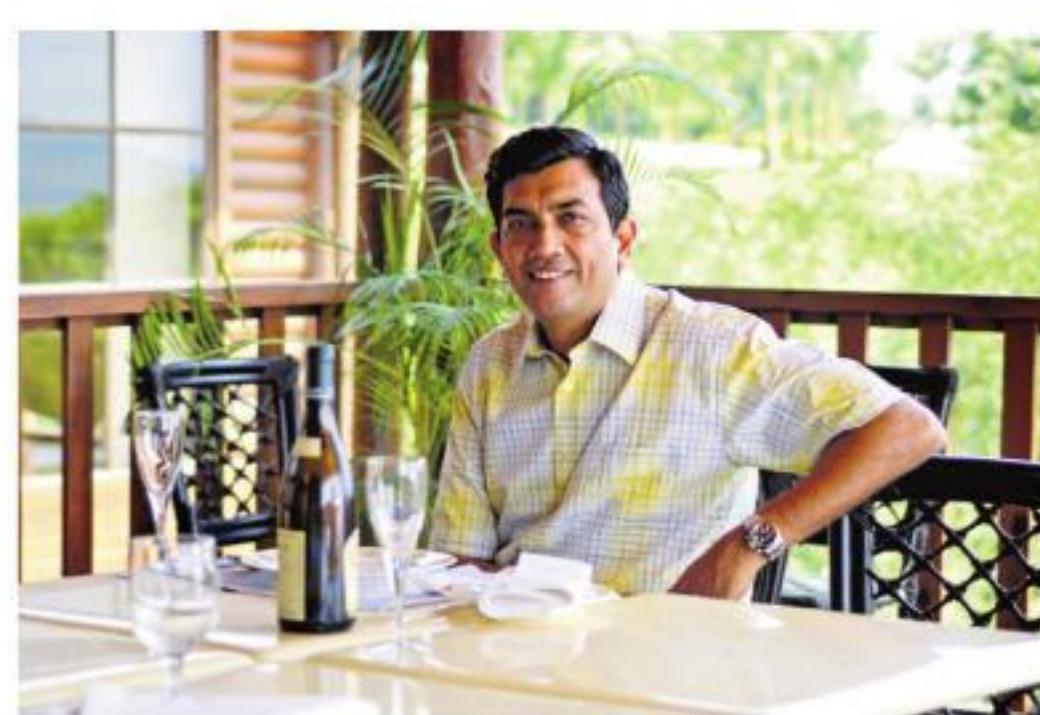
**W**ONDERCHEF Sanjeev Kapoor was in the city recently, exploring the history and heritage of the City of Nizams. Grabbing the opportunity, CE had a chat with him, where he revealed his earliest memories of Hyderabad, his favourite dish from the city and shared some simple and sweet cooking tips!

*Excerpts from the interview:*

**What comes to mind when you think of Hyderabad?**

Some of the very first memories of my childhood are associated with Hyderabad. My father used to be with the State Bank of India and Hyderabad has a staff college. During his career, he came to this city many times and while returning home, he would bring for my mother, some pearls, Pochampalli sarees and even flower vases with Bidari work. (So, it was not food). But then, there were fruit biscuits from Karachi Bakery as well! When it comes to food, the city can easily be in top four to six ranks in India. A

# 'Kachche Ghosht ki biryani is number 1'



art and taste of it.

**What is your take on fusion of food and is it possible to take something of the past and merge it into something new?**

That is always there. It has been happening for centuries and not just in India. With travels and migration, there is ex-

change of food, ingredients and culture. The pace of change is much slower than we think. It takes a lot of time for us to capture it. Around 400 years ago when tomatoes came, did someone think they would continue to be used for so long? This kind of change is not noticeable in one lifetime. When Persians



came in, the way they had Irani chai there is so much different from how it is had here now. The soil, water and produce have their own uniqueness, depending on the place. The intent of the chefs today should be to preserve the past but not copy simply because it's old. Take the best of it, make it relevant for today and do it in a way that it stays there for generations. Give them a chance to change that as well. We should not mock the change. The only way to make life better is to test and try. If you are not open to change, you may reject but be kind to it and respect it.

**Do you still perceive food in the**

life. The conversion of an ingredient to a dish adds to life. Hence, there is always an aspect of novelty in this process.

**Could you share one tip that you learned from people on ground and another one from your expertise for your fans?**

I am always eager to learn something new. One of the first things that I learned as a chef was that potatoes take much longer if you cook them with any acidity: be it with tomatoes, curd or *imli* (tamarind). So add it later unless you are pressure cooking. That was not something that we were taught. A tip that I would like to share for people cooking at home: Plan your meals. We, as Indians, don't plan ahead. We should plan our meals at least for a week. Put it down on your phones. Take 10-15 mins and do it with family. Spend that time with family, planning your meals. The benefit of it is that the headache of thinking what to cook today is gone, preparation time is reduced and you can delegate much more. The pain of thinking and taking irresponsible calls at the last minute is gone. The problem with such eating decisions is that you eat what you don't want to eat and it is harmful from health point of view.



SHRIMANSI KAUSHIK

**C**HRONIC Myeloid Leukaemia (CML) is one of those diseases that has gone from being life-threatening to a manageable chronic condition for most patients. With the possibility of longer life and fewer side effects, people with CML need to deal with the disease proactively and maintain consistency with follow-ups.

With the help of city-based doctors, we decode the disease, its symptoms, risks and how to manage the condition.

"Chronic Myeloid Leukaemia (CML) is often misunderstood, with patients sometimes confusing it with other forms of Leukaemia. In CML, the uncontrolled growth of white blood cells in the bone marrow defines its characteristic features," says Dr A V S Suresh, Senior Consultant Medical Oncologist & Haematologist at Continental Hospitals.

He explained that CML progresses through three distinct phases: chronic, accelerated, and blast. The chronic phase constitutes about 90% of CML cases. "This phase can extend over several years, but if left untreated, CML can advance to the accelerated and blast phases," he said. "In the accelerated phase, the disease progresses more rapidly, and blast cells, which are immature blood cells, start to increase. If CML reaches the blast phase, the number of blast cells rises significantly, crowding out healthy blood cells. This can lead to severe symptoms and complications, requiring more aggressive treatments such as stem cell transplants," he explained.

Elaborating on the symptoms of CML, Dr Suresh said, "Night sweats, weight loss, fever, bone pain, and an enlarged spleen may manifest, especially as the disease progresses beyond the chronic phase. While some patients may experience these symptoms early on, others may not, and these indicators often improve with treatment initiation."

This is why adherence to medication and regular monitoring of BCR-ABL levels plays an important role when it comes to CML management, he adds.

A disease that affects over a million people globally, its diagnosis can be daunting due to



## DECODING CHRONIC MYELOID LEUKAEMIA

CE speaks to experts to help us understand Chronic Myeloid Leukaemia, its symptoms, the risks associated with the disease and how to manage it

the term 'blood cancer'. However, patients and families need to understand that CML is a chronic but treatable condition, remarks Dr Ganesh Jaishetwar, Lead Consultant and Head, Department of Haematology and Bone Marrow Transplant, Yashoda Hospitals.

"I see about four to five new cases of CML every month. In India, the median age of CML patients is between 40-50 years, younger than the global average by ten years," he told CE.

Dr Jaishetwar notes that many CML patients can achieve good disease control and lead fulfilling lives with advancements in medical technology and ongoing developments in

drug therapies. "Based on my experience, around 80-90% of patients maintain a high quality of life with regular medication and monitoring," he reassures.

It is important to note that although manageable, CML can progress if not monitored. With timely interventions and monitoring, challenges like medication resistance or side effects can be avoided. According to Dr Jaishetwar, monitoring haematological parameters and molecular response, as per ELN (The European LeukemiaNet) guidelines, improves long-term disease control. Even more important is to stay positive, follow the doctor's advice, and fol-

low regular follow-ups for a normal quality of life.

Adding to this, Dr G Sadashivudu, Head of Department of Medical Oncology, NIMS, says, "I have encountered patients of all ages, from nine to sixty years old, who have been diagnosed with blood cancer. Upon receiving a diagnosis of CML, many patients undergo severe emotional distress. It's crucial to provide them with proper counselling."

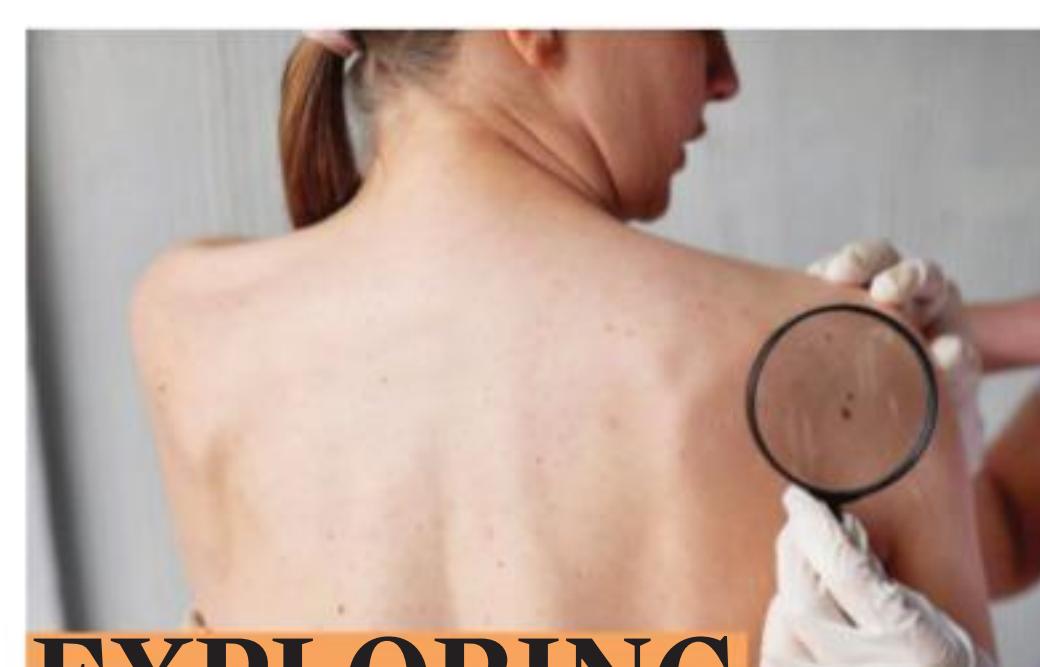


VENNAPUSALA RAMYA

**G**LOWY and healthy skin is everyone's fantasy, but in the process of achieving that, we are often exposed to multiple products and chemicals, which can have a significant impact like developing skin cancer. Since May is observed as 'Skin Cancer Awareness Month', we take a look at some harmful skincare ingredients that can cause skin cancer, with the help of experts.

Dr Yugandhar Sarma, Senior Consultant and HOD Department of Radiation Oncology at Renova Soumya Cancer Centre, explained that the skin, being the largest organ in the human body, protects internal organs and helps regulate the body's temperature. Due to exposure to various external factors, many conditions can occur on the skin. Skin cancer is one such condition where cells in the layers of the skin grow uncontrollably, forming ulcers, lumps, masses, and having a tendency to invade nearby structures and other parts of the body.

Age is a significant factor influencing the risk of skin cancer, with the likelihood increasing as individuals grow older, although it can also affect younger people. Excessive sun exposure stands out as the primary risk factor, with harmful UV light exposure amplifying the risk in affected areas. Fair skin and traits like red or blonde hair heighten vulnerability due to increased sensitivity to sunlight, resulting in higher chances of sunburns and, consequently, an elevated risk of skin cancer. Conditions that weaken the immune system, such as HIV, and viral infections like human papillomavirus, also contribute to susceptibility. Additional risk



## EXPLORING SKIN CANCER AWARENESS

factors include exposure to radiation, a prior history of skin cancer, occupational exposure to chemicals like arsenic or coal tar, and certain skin conditions such as actinic keratoses or xeroderma pigmentosum. Furthermore, rare genetic disorders like Gorlin's syndrome can also predispose individuals to skin cancer.

The most common symptoms of skin cancer are changes in the affected area of the skin. An ulcer that doesn't heal, any fleshy growth that is gradually increasing in size, or any changes in moles (birthmarks). These changes observed, specifically in sun-exposed areas of the skin, should trigger a consultation with a doctor. Changes in moles related to melanoma cancer can be easily identified by changes in symmetry, border, colour, diameter, and the evolving nature of the moles. There are three most common types of skin cancer: basal cell cancer, squamous cell cancer, and

melanomas, depending on the type of cell from which it arises. Different types of cancer can be seen in the skin, such as those arising from sebaceous glands, sweat glands, hair follicles, etc. The diagnosis of skin cancer can be made by a test called a biopsy, where a piece of tissue is removed from the doubtful area and examined. Further advanced tests such as IHC and molecular profiling can be done if necessary.

Preventing skin cancer requires adopting sun-safe and skin-smart practices as a cornerstone. Several steps can be taken to minimise the risk of developing skin cancer. First and foremost, individuals should avoid excessive exposure to the sun and ultraviolet light, especially during peak hours between 11 am to 3 pm. Using sunscreen lotions and creams regularly is essential for protecting the skin from harmful UV rays. Maintaining a healthy lifestyle by abstaining

READ SHARE FOLLOW  
Instagram.com/newindianexpress/  
facebook.com/thenewindianexpress/  
twitter.com/newindianexpress/  
Mail us: cityexpresshyd@newindianexpress.com

SHREYA VARANASI

**A**S the month of May begins, the city of Hyderabad along with the rest of the country is battling extreme temperatures. The quest for staying cool takes on new urgency as the mercury continues to soar. People turn to air-conditioners, coolers, and even cold water to stay cool in this scorching heat. However, these solutions are short-lived and might even have adverse effects on one's health. The ongoing environmental crisis must also be considered as it is also one of the reasons for the rising temperatures.

People around the world are looking for creative, eco-friendly methods to beat the heat without increasing environmental problems. Ideas ranging from innovative architecture designs to clever lifestyle changes are the focal point of many discussions surrounding the extreme heat. However, instead of focusing on new ways to stay cool this summer, we should look at how our ancestors dealt with heat in the past when there was an absence of modern-day technology. Some of these methods are not just considerate of the modern-day issues like environmental crisis but also have health benefits.

There are a few methods to keep ourselves as well as the places we live in cool. In the recent years, the use of earthen pots to store water has significantly increased, especially in urban households. Health benefits are said to be the reason for the switch to earthen pots. Besides cold water, experts suggest that drinks such as buttermilk, fruit juices with less sugar or no sugar at all, and *lassi* should be consumed more. Drinking plenty of fluids will help avoid issues like dehydration, and other health issues. Vasudha Mathur, Chief Dietician, Hitec City suggests consuming citrus and watery fruits like grapes, pomegranates, and the seasonal fruit — mango. She says, "Definitely, we should not miss out on mango which is dense in Vitamin A and other essential vitamins and minerals. We should not miss on taking advantage of those nutrients." *Phalsa fruit juice, Aam Panna, Mango Murabba, Kokam juice,*



## Embracing traditional solutions for cooler summer

As temperatures continue to soar each day, here are some ways to naturally cool down yourself and the surroundings



We should not miss out on mango, which is dense in Vitamin A & other essential nutrients

Vasudha Mathur, Chief Dietician

light and absorbing moisture from the air. Also, using materials like bamboo, rattan and terrazzo will also help in naturally cooling down the room. "Rattan is one of the trendiest materials right now which also happens to be environmentally friendly. It is quite like bamboo in terms of its sustainable benefits. It is fast growing, is produced in a low energy and does not have to be treated and processed that much," says Shivani Kishor Puria, an interior designer. She also recommends using breathable materials like linen or cotton and light pastels colours in home as they will help attract less heat.

As we navigate through the scorching temperatures of May, it is imperative to adopt sustainable and health-conscious methods to beat the heat. Drawing inspiration from traditions and adopting environmentally friendly alternatives can provide long-term advantages. By making simple lifestyle modifications and returning to traditional meth-

ods, we can create a more sustainable and comfortable environment for ourselves without increasing environmental problems.

Shivani Kishor Puria

from smoking, practicing safe sexual behaviours, and undergoing regular screenings can also contribute to prevention efforts.

Among the few external factors that can lead to skin cancers, harmful chemicals present in skincare products are a significant concern. Highlighting a few, Dr Swapna Priya, Consultant Dermatologist, Cosmetologist, Trichologist at Care Hospitals, said, "The recent trending concern revolves around benzene compounds in cosmetic products, particularly those used for acne skincare. While benzene itself is not present in these products, benzyl peroxide, commonly used in acne treatment, can break down into benzene at higher temperatures. Formulations containing benzyl peroxide should thus be used cautiously due to this potential risk. Benzene is a well-known carcinogen associated with various cancers."

Additionally, certain compounds known as endocrine disruptors, which can lead to hormonal imbalances in the body, are raising concerns. "Although further research is needed to conclusively link these products to cancer, endocrine disruptors like phthalates and parabens, commonly found in personal skincare products, may pose risks such as breast and prostate cancers. Another compound that is of concern is 1,4-Dioxane, found in many personal care products, including those labelled as natural. It's alarming that up to 40% of products labelled as natural contain this compound. It's often listed under different names, such as PEG, polyethylene, polyethylene glycol, polyoxethylene, etc. These compounds should be considered as potential endocrine disruptors, urging caution in their use," concluded Dr Swapna Priya.



Formulations containing benzyl peroxide should be used cautiously due to potential risk. Commonly used in acne treatment, it can break down into benzene at higher temperatures

Dr Swapna Priya



Skin cancer is a condition where cells grow uncontrollably, forming ulcers, lumps, masses, and have a tendency to invade other parts of the body

Dr Yugandhar Sarma



## HYDERABAD DIGEST

TOEFL iBT test score valid for all Australian visa purposes

ETS, a global education and talent solutions organisation, announced that effective May 5, 2024, the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)

iBT will be recognised as valid for all Australian visa purposes. This significant development provides opportunities for individuals seeking to study, work, or migrate to Australia, enabling them to demonstrate their English proficiency through the TOEFL iBT test.



BASF reiterates its commitment for Indian farmers

Piercing and sucking pests pose a significant threat to agricultural crops in India, causing extensive damage amounting to 35 to 40% loss in the productivity and yield of the produce. Farmers in India can now manage this challenge with Eficon, a new BASF insecticide. Eficon is powered by BASF's new active ingredient, Axalton in a specialised formulation.

Apollo Homecare launches its pilot 'Home Discharge Programme'

India has been facing a surge in cardiac diseases due to sedentary lifestyles, unhealthy diets, and tobacco use, leading to over 3,00,000 cardiac surgeries annually. While the surgical procedure is pivotal, the period following discharge from the hospital is equally critical for the patient's recovery and long-term well-being. With regards to the same, Apollo Home Healthcare has recently launched its first phase of 'Home Discharge Program' for post-discharge care of cardiac surgery patients in Hyderabad.

MLR Institute of Technology celebrates 19th Annual Day

MLR Institute of Technology (MLRIT) radiated with joy and pride as it commemorated its 19th Annual Day at MLR Dundigal. The event was graced by the esteemed presence of Chief Guest, Sougata Sen, Head of Campus Recruitment, Early Career at Hexaware Technologies.



# DAZZLING CHARM OF THE COURTESANS

Manisha Koirala, Richa Chadha, Aditi Rao Hydari, Sharmin Segal and Sanjeeda Sheikh on bagging *Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar*, shaping Sanjay Leela Bhansali's vision and crafting their characters

KARTIK BHARDWAJ

**T**HE casting process for a Sanjay Leela Bhansali ensemble sounds like a recruitment sequence from a heist film. "I was actually gardening back home in Nepal when I got the call," shares Manisha Koirala, who plays Mallikajaan, the queen-bee courtesan in Bhansali's recent glitter of a dream *Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar*. "I quickly washed the mud off my hands and picked up the phone. Sanjay and I have been in touch over the years but I didn't expect the call to be about work. I was surprised when he offered me the role," she says. "I thought I had given whatever I had but then this project brought me back."

For Aditi Rao Hydari, the series' songbird seductress Bibbojaan, it was like a shower of celestial blessings. "I remember that day. One of my films in the South had released to a hundred per cent occupancy. I was in the car, going for promotional interviews and I got a call from Sanjay sir's office, inviting me for a look test. It was a double bounty," she says. "Such a special day."

However, for Sharmin Segal, who plays Mallikajaan's younger daughter, the poetess Alamzeb, the casting process was more of a training montage. "Everyone knows I am Sanjay Leela Bhansali's niece. I was under a lot of scrutiny since I am part of 'the family,'" she says. "He made me audition seventeen times." It was less cinematic

and more casual for Richa Chadha, the alcoholic tawaif Lajjo ("We casually met and discussed cinema"), and Sanjeeda Sheikh, the vindictive Waheedan ("We had met once for a TV show but it didn't happen. I thought he had forgotten me. Turned out he didn't"). The omission is not something the auteur can be accused of. "I think he has four eyes even in the back of his head," jokes Manisha. "He has had this uncanny obsession with details since his first film." The actor worked with Bhansali on his debut directorial *Khamoshi: The Musical* (1996). "I was playing the daughter of hearing- and speech-impaired parents. He made me go to a special school for months to learn sign language. He even made my sign language teacher his assistant. So, by the time we got down to shoot, I knew my

character, my lines and sign language down to a T."

Bhansali has the reputation of being a micromanaging perfectionist on set. He once said that he wouldn't let actors go to their vanity vans until he found "the moment". His consciousness is telling him to micromanage but what he is actually seeking is the magic of spontaneity," says Sharmin. Richa negates the rumours of him being a hard taskmaster. "The thing is, he will give you agency if he trusts you as an actor. He will ask you what you think your character will do at this moment. What are they likely to say? How are they likely to feel? He did it with me in *Ram-Leela* (2013). There was a scene with Supriya Pathak and it wasn't working. I was fairly new at the time but he still asked me, 'What do you think will happen?' I said that if Supriya ma'am's character says the dialogue with some humanity, it will work. He is like a musician who keeps experimenting with different instruments to make the scene not just sound better but also interesting." Aditi also takes up the music metaphor. "Even the silences he has in his films have a certain musicality to them. It seems like he is setting his scene and the performances of his characters to a certain piece of music playing in his head," she says.

But what is a Bhansali project without its grand, intricate set? Spanning across three acres in Mumbai's film city, the set for *Heeramandi* has been the director's largest till



now. "When I first worked with him, I knew he had a vision to become bigger and better but to this scale!" says Manisha. "When I entered the set of *Heeramandi* for the first time I was flabbergasted by the grandeur. Each corner was just picture-perfect. I was also in my method actor mood.

I went to the set as it was Mallikajaan's place and I had to internalize it," Manisha added that to play the role she had to shed the tomboyishness of her personality and don the elegance of Mallikajaan. "My mother is a trained Kathak dancer and my grandmother

was a Bharatanatyam dancer. They even turn their heads as if it is a performance. I took some cues from their mannerisms to get the poise of my character," she explains. Richa, on the other hand, used veteran actor Meena Kumari as a template to express the melancholy of the lovelorn La-

joo. "It was not just her performances in films like *Pakeezah* (1972) but also how she was in real life. I read her poetry. I tried to almost mimic the pain, the incompleteness in her voice," she says.

Bhansali's imaginations are often criticised for being restricted to the beauty of imagery. Like a vivid but immovable painting. "But there is so much more than that," says Aditi. "I know that there is so much talk about the aesthetic world he builds. But for us actors, that is just the base. He is actually trying to create an authentic, immersive experience for the viewers and also for the actors who are part of it. It is all about the emotional journey he is taking you on."

"I think what he is constantly trying to do is to lift even an inconsequential scene," explains Manisha. "There can be nothing mundane." Sharmin is almost reverential. "I don't think any of us mortal beings can understand his vision or what goes on in his subconscious."



## Tron: Ares wraps filming

**O**N Monday, Director Joachim Rønning took to his social media handles to announce that his upcoming much-anticipated film *Tron: Ares* has wrapped filming.

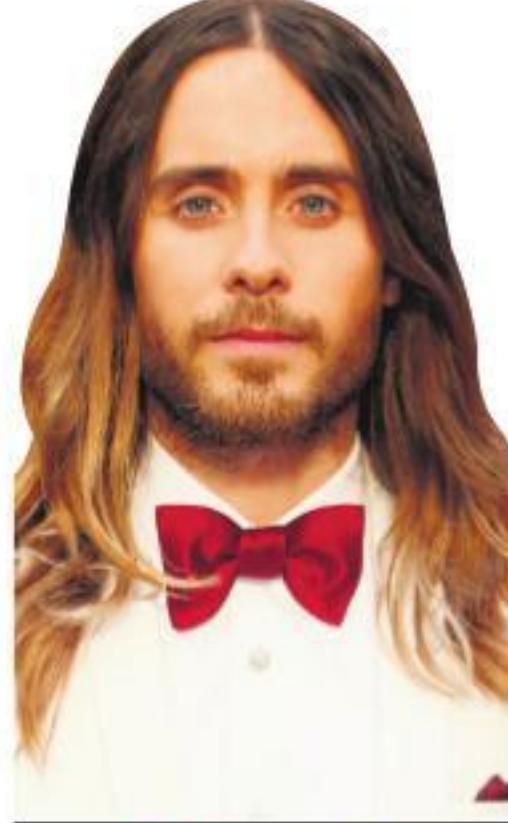
"That's a wrap on *TRON: ARES*," Rønning wrote. "Thanks to an incredible and tireless crew, I really believe we pushed the filmmaking limits on this movie. Even through six weeks of night shoots you never slowed down. Also, a big thank you to our wonderful cast for leaving everything on screen. I can't wait to show the world what we've done."

*Tron: Ares* stars Jared Leto, Evan Peters, Greta Lee and Jodie Turner-Smith in lead roles.

*Tron: Ares* also stars Hasan Minhaj, Arturo Castro, Gillian Anderson, Sarah Desjardins and Cameron Monaghan. Recently, actor Jeff Bridges confirmed that he is returning for the third film. *Tron: Ares* is written by Jesse Wigutow.

The film is centred on Ares, a highly sophisticated AI program sent into the real world on a dangerous mission.

Produced by Walt Disney Pictures and distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, *Tron: Ares* is produced by Leto, Justin Springer, and Emma Ludbrook.



NAMRATA JOSHI

**J**ALENA Keane-Lee's *Standing Above The Clouds* is about the power underlying solidarity of women, not just for the cause of gender but on the issues of community, culture, belief systems, environment, ways of living and life itself.

It follows the mothers and daughters of three native Hawaiian families dedicated to protecting the sacred mountain of Mauna Kea. Their efforts to safeguard it against the construction of the infamous Thirty Meter Telescope—the world's largest—started in 2010 and led to widespread protests, local, national, and global. The film tracks the ten-year struggle till the pandemic in March 2020 brought the movement, and life at large, to a pause.

While highlighting the specifics of their protest, the film grounds it in the universal concerns about environmental degradation, ecological crisis, and human rights violations. *Standing Above the Clouds* is also an anthropological documentation of native Hawaiian life. Also, it is a deeply personal and emotional tale about how the movement affected the women involved.

At the head of the movement is teacher Pua Case and her two artist-activist daughters Hawane Rios and Kapulei Flores. Their lives that had been centred around home, family, domesticity, and cultural practices and traditions, get taken over by frontline duties and court proceedings. It brings them closer to other women from the community—Leina Ala Sleighholm, Mahana Kihoi, Malama Monica—to form a rare sorority of strength. Yet there's also the danger of violence and arrests as they stand steadfast in their opposition to the building and development.

The film gives us an intimate peek into how their dedication to the grassroots movement affects them phys-

## For the love of mother nature



STANDING ABOVE THE CLOUDS

### CINEMA WITHOUT BORDERS

In this weekly column, the writer explores the non-Indian films that are making the right noises across the globe. This week, we talk about *Jaleena Keane-Lee's Standing Above The Clouds*

ically, emotionally and psychologically. After nine months of living in a camp on the mountain, COVID forces them to return home for some rest, recuperation and healing, "to retreat to the kitchen table", as one of them puts it. There is the aftermath of PTSD to deal with. The mantra is to stay positive despite the exhaustion.

What stood out for me were the ethnological details that the film maps out. The mothers and daughters are like the eyes of the filmmaker, and, in turn, the viewer, with which to see, get acquainted with and understand the native culture. There's something extremely tender and heartwarming in the way they follow and aim to preserve the shrines, cultural traditions, and practices. On the one hand, we have colourful songs, dances, rituals, and festivals. On the other is the pristine but fragile ecosystem. Their deep connection with nature is presented with depth and sensitivity. How

there is a fable-like feel to the narrative. No wonder the protests themselves come with an artistic touch and powerful messaging—"do not destroy what you cannot repair; it's not about fighting something but loving something".

The film recently won the Bill Nemtin Award for Best Social Impact Documentary at Hot Docs 2024 in Canada. It reminded me a lot of an Indian documentary by Shishir Jha called *Dharti Latar Re Horo (Tortoise Under the Earth)* about a tribal couple protesting corporatisation and commercialisation of the tribal belt while coping with the death of their daughter to uranium mining in Jharkhand. Both films are cautionary tales about the human toll of mindless modernization and development that leads to displacement and loss of not just human lives but ethnic cultures and organic ways of living. Films that are humanitarian wake-up calls that also celebrate the elemental feminine energy.

## Samuel L Jackson and Henry Golding to headline sci-fi thriller *Head Games*

The script is written by Colin Liddle, who penned the 2020 Showtime TV movie *Penny Dreadful: City of Angels*

**S**AMUEL L Jackson and Henry Golding are teaming up to lead the cast of the psychological sci-fi thriller *Head Games*, which will be directed by Anthony Mandler. The script is written by Colin Liddle, who penned the 2020 Showtime TV movie *Penny Dreadful: City of Angels*.

According to the description, the film will center around Jacob (Golding), a corporate spy who takes on the identity of a chef to infiltrate a private villa belonging to Graham (Jackson) the founder of a groundbreaking neuroprosthetics company in order to steal his seismic-shifting new invention.

As his plan unfolds, nothing is as it seems and the mind games between the two protagonists begin.

*Head Games* is Anthony Mandler's third feature after 2018's Kelvin Harrison Jr. crime drama *Monster* and 2023's Letitia Wright/Michael K Williams Western *Surrounded*.

Jackson recently

starred in Matthew Vaughn's spy caper *Argylle*, and the crime drama *Damaged*. He has lent his voice to *The Garfield Movie*, which is scheduled to hit theatres this month. Up next, he has *The Piano Lesson, Unholy Trinity* and *Fight Night: The Million Dollar Heist*.

Golding, who worked on Guy Ritchie's *The Ministry of Ungentlemanly Warfare* recently, will be seen in *Nine Perfect Strangers*, *The Old Guard 2*, *Simple Favor 2* and *Daniela Forever*, among others.

*Head Games* is set to commence principal photography this October. It will be produced by Range Media Partners' Brian Kavanaugh-Jones and Fred Berger, Brillstein Entertainment Partners' Josh Glick, and Everlast Pictures' Adonis Touants.

*Head Games* is Anthony Mandler's third feature after 2018's Kelvin Harrison Jr. crime drama *Monster* and 2023's Letitia Wright/Michael K Williams Western *Surrounded*.

Jackson recently

