

Bulldozers out in Saharanpur and Kanpur; UP police say 255 arrested

[approval]. Bulldozer action- has been taken against them.” According to the Saharanpur police, a total of 64 persons have been arrested in the case. SSP, Saharanpur, Akash Tomar said in a statement that the National Security Act (NSA) would be invoked against the accused involved in the case. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Saturday evening reviewed the law and order of the state and interacted with Commissioners, District Magistrates, Superintendents of Police (SP) and Senior Superintendents of Police through video-conferencing. The CM said police and administration should be on alert round-the-clock, take action against rioters and maintain dialogue with religious leaders and emi-

nent personalities of the society. A press note issued by the government said directions were issued to recover of loss of public and private properties from accused persons and also take strict action on people who attempts to disturb public order. Taking action against accused under National Security Act (NSA) and UP Gangsters’ Act. If the accused is found involved a second-time in the crime, mention it in the chargesheet, stated release adding that direction is also issued to deploy adequate police force at sensitive places and increase on-foot patrolling. Meanwhile, a video in which policemen are seen purportedly assaulting some persons inside a room, surfaced on social media. The video was purportedly shared by BJP MLA from Deoria, Dr Shalabh Mani Tripathi, on his Twitter account. MLA Tripathi did not respond to calls made on his cell-phone. When contacted, Additional Director General, Law and Order, Prashant Kumar said he was unaware of the matter. Meanwhile, the Prayagraj Police ar-

rested a 54-year-old businessman and claimed that he is one of the conspirators behind Friday’s violence in the district. Police said the role of Javed came to light during questioning of other accused. Javed had called for a “bandh” and asked people to reach the spot of the incident through WhatsApp message, added police. A local businessman, Mohammad Javed is also popularly known as ‘Pump’. Prayagraj Senior Superintendent of Police Ajay Kumar said, “During questioning, Javed told us that his daughter, who is doing her post-graduation in Delhi, often gives him her suggestions.” He, however, added that during preliminary inquiry, they have so far not found any evidence against Mohammad Javed’s daughter. When asked whether Javed’s daughter would be questioned, SSP Ajay Kumar said, “If strong evidence is found, action will be taken.” Circle Officer, Prayagraj, Satendra Prasad Tiwari said, “Javed is among 68 persons arrested so far.”

In yesterday’s violence that took place in nine districts, police have so far arrested 255 persons, said a police officer. Prayagraj police arrested 68, Saharanpur police 64, Ambbedkar Nagar police 28, Moradabad police 27, Hathras police 50, Firozabad police 13 and Aligarh police three and Jalaun police two. No arrests have been made yet in Lakhimpur Kheri.

In all, police have registered 13 FIRs in connection with Friday’s incident. Prayagraj and Saharanpur police registered three FIRs each while in other seven districts, one FIR each has been filed.

On Friday, around 2 pm some youngsters came from lanes and started pelting stones and bricks on police team deployed in security in different areas of Prayagraj. They also allegedly fired and threw bomb at a police team when cops used force to disperse them. The assailants attempted to set a PAC vehicle on fire but fire tender reached the spot and controlled the blaze. Several persons, including police personnel, got injured. The FIRs were lodged at Kareli and Khuldabad police stations in Prayagraj. In Khuldabad police, 70 named and 5,000 unidentified persons have been booked. The accused have been booked on various charges including promoting enmity between two groups, attempt to murder and using criminal force to deter public servant from discharge of his duty. The police also invoked Explosives Act, Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act and Damage to Public Property Act. Police claimed that during preliminary inquiry it has come to light that there was a “big conspiracy”. “We managed to foil their planning. We will look into the role of people whose names are cropping up in connection with the conspiracy. Action will be taken if evidence is found against them,” said a senior officer.

BJP upsets Cong, Sena in Haryana and Maharashtra

Mahadik, those elected from Maharashtra are Raut, NCP’s Praful Patel and Congress’s Imran Pratapgarhi. Opposition leader Devendra Fadnis, said to be the man behind the BJP’s strategy to field three candidates, said, “The surplus votes which BJP candidates received has exposed the Maha Vikas Aghadi government’s claim that it had the support of 170 members in the state Assembly. Somewhere, it also shows that smaller parties/independents are not happy with MVA.” He said the outcome would not have been different even if Nawab Malik and Anil Deshmukh had been allowed to vote or if Suhas Kande’s vote had been declared valid. NCP chief Sharad Pawar told reporters, “I am not shocked to see the results. If you see the votes polled by every candidate of NCP, Shiv Sena and Congress, they received the votes as per the quota. Only Praful Patel (of NCP) received one extra vote and I know where it came from. That was not MVA’s vote, it was from the opposite side.” He said the MVA had to bridge a big number gap for the sixth seat in which the Shiv Sena candidate was in the fray. The MVA, he said, showed courage and put in efforts but the BJP had

more independent MLAs on its side. Pawar’s daughter and Lok Sabha MP Supriya Sule congratulated the BJP “on their performance” and accepted the defeat of the MVA “with full humility.” “We clearly need to introspect on what went right and what went wrong. Actually if you look at the numbers game, clearly we didn’t have the right numbers till the end. But we took a chance because we genuinely had done very good work and the data speaks for itself that MVA has done good work. But obviously there are some gaps which we need to understand and study,” she said. In Haryana where two seats were at stake, the Congress was dealt a blow when Ajay Maken lost to independent candidate Kartikeya Sharma despite having the numbers. The other seat went to BJP’s Krishan Panwar. While the Congress had 31 MLAs, Maken got only 29 votes because Bishnoi cross-voted and the vote of one of its MLAs was invalidated. Sharma too secured 29 votes. In the final calculation of votes polled, Maken lost to Sharma with a margin of barely 2/3rd of a vote (0.66 lesser vote than Sharma). The unexpected defeat of Maken triggered conspiracy theories within the party and calls for fixing accountability. While AICC in-charge of Haryana, Vivek Bansal, who was also Maken’s polling agent, submitted a report to the Congress leadership, detailing the sequence of events and recommended action against Bishnoi, many questions remained. Bansal, who had seen the ballots of all party MLAs, refused to reveal the name of the MLA whose vote was invalidated. AICC general secretary K C Venugopal, in a press release, said, “Hon’ble Congress President has expelled Shri Kuldeep Bishnoi from all his present party positions including the post of Special Invitee of the Congress Working Committee with immediate effect.”

RS poll battle taken to its office, EC allows counting in two states

submit complaints on Haryana and Maharashtra. The Congress team arrived around 6.30 pm to counter the BJP, as also submit their complaint. Around 9 pm, another delegation arrived with a complaint against an Independent MLA [in Maharashtra] for openly displaying Hanuman Chalisa...till around 10 pm these complaints were scrutinised and counter-versions were heard.” “We have to hear what the RO has to say; the Commission cannot intervene until the RO passes an order and then examine it,” the official said. “Once he passes an order, and we felt there were contesting claims, we go through video footage. We received about a dozen complaints and eventually, after examining all footage, we found only one issue. After that the order was passed after midnight.” The high-intensity political drama began when a BJP delegation comprising Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Jitendra Singh and Arjun Ram Meghwal, among others, arrived at EC office at 5.30 pm and alleged that the RO improperly rejected representation of BJP’s authorised representatives in Maharashtra. They alleged that three MLAs — Yashomati Thakur, Jitendra Avhad and Suhas Kande — had compromised voting procedures. They cited EC’s decision in then Congress MP Ahmed Patel’s case in 2017 — the poll panel had set down conditions wherein any vote cast in violation of election rules would be cancelled, whether at the time of voting or counting. In the high-stakes Rajya Sabha election in Gujarat in 2017, the EC had, in a boost to Congress candidate Patel, disqualified two votes by Congress MLAs that were in favour of BJP. The BJP team was followed by a delegation with a complaint jointly signed by NCP’s Jayant Patil, Congress’s Balasaheb Thorat and Sena’s Anil Desai against a BJP MLA for allegedly violating procedures by openly displaying his ballot paper to persons other than his own party’s election agents. They also alleged that an Independent MLA, Ravi Rana, compromised procedure by openly displaying

Hanuman Chalisa, a religious book and sought to influence other voters and violated the secrecy of the ballot. They, too, cited EC’s Ahmed Patel order. Nirvachan Sadan soon saw another delegation around 9 pm, led by Congress’s Nana Patole against BJP MLA Sudhir Mugantiwar for allegedly displaying his ballot paper to persons other than BJP polling agents. Sources said EC found no evidence against BJP’s complaints regarding voting in Haryana and Maharashtra. In its order, EC noted that the video recording in the matter of Sena MLA Kande — that he had allegedly shown the marked ballot paper to his authorised representative as well as authorised representative of another party, “NCP” — is consistent with three facts mentioned by the RO in his report: “that the voter, instead of taking the ballot paper in the folded form, took it without folding; (b) that Kande showed the ballot paper to the authorised representative of his party from outside the cubicle of authorised representative; he was then asked to go inside the cubicle.” “Despite being asked by polling staff to go inside the cubicle, he lingered with unfolded ballot paper,” the EC said in its order. “In fact, the [video] footage showed that symbols on his [Kande’s] ballot paper could be seen by others too...this was the only complaint we found to be true among all the others,” the official quoted above said. The Commission invoked Article 324 of the Constitution and other powers to reject the vote cast by Kande. Targeted by protesters, BJP calls for Central forces in Howrah

strict action will be taken against all who indulged in violence. Why should the common people suffer because of BJP’s sins?” she said in a Twitter post. Firhad Hakim, state transport minister and Kolkata mayor, accused the BJP of targeting its own offices. “BJP is ransacking its own party offices to come to the limelight. Earlier, they tried to practice divisive politics in Bengal and failed. This time too, they are trying communal politics. They will fail again,” he said. Governor Dhankhar expressed concern over the “worsening” law and order situation and appealed to the Chief Minister to “sternly deal with law breakers”. Saying “all involved be identified and arrested,” he alleged inaction by the state Chief Secretary and police and called it an “unfortunate endorsement of the criminality of law violators.” Along a 35-km stretch of National Highway 6 in Howrah, the signs of violence are visible — one can see the remains of vandalised and torched BJP offices, shops, business establishments, a local club, police kiosks and vehicles. Standing with his bicycle near the Uluberia organisational district BJP office in Mansatala, Somnath Mondol, a party worker said, “This is the biggest party office in Uluberia organisational district. The mob targeted the office, ransacked the rooms and then set them on fire.” The two-storeyed BJP office was vandalised. Each room, including a computer office, was torched. In the backyard were charred remains of motorcycles and two damaged cars. “I saw young men, carrying bamboo poles, iron rods and cans of petrol, barging into the party office. They ransacked it first and then set fire to some of the rooms. Makeshift shops near the party office were also set on fire. They could not break open a sweet shop because of its iron shutters,” Jhontu Adak, owner of a sweet shop opposite the BJP office, said. About 5 km away, near the Panchla crossing, another BJP office had been destroyed — the Raghudebpur Anchal party office. A shop adjacent to the office too was torched. Burnt documents and furniture were all that remained in the party office. On the other side of the National Highway, in the Panchla market area, the Netaji Sangha Club and over a dozen shops had been vandalised and set on fire. “This is a shame for Uluberia as well as Panchla. They ransacked our club, looted Rs 80,000 cash, pictures of Netaji

Subhas Chandra Bose and other freedom fighters, and books. They even ransacked our health centre which was being used by local residents,” said Netaji Sangha Club general secretary Ajit Panrui. Rudra Adak said, “I rent out space near my house for parking of bicycles and motorcycles. Yesterday, the mob ransacked my home and vehicles. The vehicles belong to people of all communities. We fear what will happen once the police leave.” A huge contingent of police and RAF personnel stood guard. Like Thursday, protesters turned out Saturday and threw stones at policemen and ransacked shops. The police lobbed tear gas shells and then resorted to a lathicharge. Razaul Haque Faridar, owner of a garment shop, said, “This morning when I heard that they had set my shop on fire, I rushed to the spot. But I was too late. The policemen too were late. This is madness in the name of religion.” A fruit stall owner, Ainul Haque, said, “I pleaded (with the mob) several times to spare my shop but they did not listen. I have lost fruits worth Rs 70,000.” His MP seeks Nupur hanging, Owaisi says not party stand

punishment. If she is let off easily, then this (hurting religious sentiments) will be endless. We want to say that if any person is making such comments against any caste, religion, religious leader, or our Prophet, then there should be a law which ensures strict and immediate action, just removing her from the party is not enough action.” Distancing himself from Jaleel’s remarks, AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi said in Gujarat on Saturday: “Nupur Sharma must be arrested as per the law of our country. She should be punished as per the law of our country. This is the official stand of our party which differs from what Imtiaz Jaleel Sahab said. This is the official stand of our party and everyone (party workers) will have to agree with it.” “We demand the arrest of Nupur Sharma and her timely trial and conviction in accordance with the law of the country,” the AIMIM tweeted from its official handle. Speaking to *The Sunday Express* on Saturday, Jaleel said: “I was called by the Commissioner of Police to the protest spot as the situation was volatile and the crowd temper was high. I had to speak the language of the crowd.” Asked if he regretted saying that Sharma should be hanged, Jaleel said: “We are not a Banana Republic. As a lawmaker, I know that it is reprehensible to hang people on the streets. My intent was to state that there should be some stringent action against her. On one hand, we have a woman who is now going to spend well over a month in jail because of her alleged statement against NCP chief Sharad Pawar. On the other hand, we have someone who has disrespected the Prophet who is followed by billions of Muslims... I was only espousing that there should be a law against those who hurt religious feelings.”

startup event, typhoid RT-PCR, cataract detection via WhatsApp

supply chain systems. The company claims that when lyophilised (freeze drying), its Covid-19 vaccine can withstand 90 minutes of exposure to 100 degrees Celsius, and over a month at 37 degrees Celsius. The Mynvax vaccine for Covid-19 is being built on the recombinant subunit platform as compared to the cell-culture or egg-based technology, which enables it to get manufactured faster. The startup, which has raised early stage funding from investors like Accel, is working on developing human influenza vaccines as well. Besides Covid-focussed or led solutions, some other start-ups at the Expo aimed to bring out products that solve India-specific problems. For example, a recurrent theme was the unavailability of large and sophisticated diagnosis and monitoring equipment in rural areas. So, US-AID-backed Bengaluru-based startup Cardiac Design Labs has developed a five-in-one wearable device that claims to monitor a patient’s vitals nearly akin to that in an intensive care unit (ICU), without the need for heavy equipment or trained care staff. The product, named Padma Vitals, records information like non-electrode ECG, cuffless blood pressure, respiration rate, body temperature and blood oxygen saturation levels, with features such as alarms, remote monitoring, trend recording, episode detection, etc. Speaking to *The Sunday Express*, the company’s Founder & CEO, Anand Madanagopal, said the product is seeing uses at primary health care centres, remote medical facilities and home healthcare facilities among others. “The device connects to a mobile phone app via bluetooth, and thereon it requires only 20 kbps bandwidth to upload the data to the centralised system from where a doctor can remotely monitor a patient’s vitals. A key aspect of this product is that it does not require trained nurses to operate this,” he said, as he demonstrated the vitals of a patient in Bengaluru on his laptop. Over the last few decades, the subsumption of various devices and technologies into the smartphone has spurred meaningful innovation in the health tech industry. Hyderabad-based Logy.AI has built artificial intelligence solutions that allow people to send a WhatsApp image of their eyes or teeth to an automated message bot, which then feeds the image to the AI engine for it to diagnose a problem. The startup claims to use artificial intelligence-based image processing models to gauge — from the photo of eyes sent as a WhatsApp message — whether a person has cataract, which the startup says is responsible for 70 per cent of blindness in India. The startup’s service for users is done via a WhatsApp chatbot, where users can send an image of their eyes in the chat box and Logy.AI’s image processing algorithms will assess the image to ascertain whether or not that person has cataract. It claims that its image processing algorithms can detect whether a person has cataract or not with an accuracy of around 92 per cent. Logy.AI says it will not charge any fee from users for its service. It said that its revenue will come from partnerships with hospitals and diagnostics firms — it plans to charge an annual fee from these entities to share users’ data so that hospitals can suggest remedies/ tests to those with medical issues. Also at the Expo was Ahmedabad-based Bioscan Research, which has developed a screening device to detect intracranial haemorrhage called Cerebro, that can find out if a head trauma patient is suffering internal bleeding, in a non-invasive and non-radiative method. The portable device, which has been listed on the government’s procurement portal GeM (Government e-Marketplace), costs Rs 14 lakh. A representative of the startup said the main use-case was for sports teams, emergency rooms and trauma centres that can operate the portable device without the need for sophisticated MRI machines or other radiation-based diagnosis equipment that also need licensing from the Atomic

Energy Regulatory Board to operate. The Cerebro works on the near-infrared technology, which in medical use, mainly has application to screen intracranial bleeding. “The product helps in early detection of internal bleeding. A doctor on site may be able to gauge whether a trauma patient has a concussion but any delay in judging the bleeding can be dangerous,” said the representative. Boy awaiting Class X results among 2 dead in Ranchi, govt orders probe

following “rumour mongering”. Video clips on social media showed how police fired on protesters. JMM spokesperson Supriyo Bhattacharya said an inquiry had been ordered. “Every angle will be investigated -- from videos circulating on social media where police are seen firing on the crowd to what led to police failure in containing the violence. However, police resorted to firing because the situation was very harsh.” A government source said the Home Department issued an order Saturday, forming a two-member probe committee — it comprises Principal Secretary Disaster Management Amitabh Kaushal, Jharkhand Police ADG (Ops) Sanjay Lathkar. It has been asked to submit a report in seven days. State BJP president and Rajya Sabha MP Deepak Prakash told *The Sunday Express*, “The entire sequence of events is a complete failure of the state government.” Meanwhile, two RAF companies have been called in and more than 2,000 police personnel have been deployed at 12 points around the Main Road area where the violence took place. The area was peaceful Saturday. Relatives and neighbours of Sahil and Muddassar, who died of bullet wounds, are grief-stricken and have been in mourning. Salauddin, a former ward commissioner and neighbour of Sahil, said, “Sahil studied up to intermediate and used to work in a mobile shop. His father is an auto driver and the family is in complete shock. He sustained a bullet injury in the stomach. His last rites were performed at 3 pm today. We have demanded compensation from the government. We have asked on whose orders did the police open fire.” The second person to die was 15-year-old Muddassar Alam, awaiting his Class X results. His uncle Mohammad Sahid Ayyubi said, “The government failed us. What was the reason to fire and was that the only option with the police? The government needs to answer and the culprits should be booked.” “We don’t even know how he became part of the mob. He was shot in the head. His father works as a labourer and he was the only child of his parents. We have asked for compensation,” he said. Austin: China is hardening its positions along LAC

Taiwan and China split during a civil war in 1949, but China claims the island as its own territory and has not ruled out using military force to take it. Austin said: “China’s moves threaten to undermine security, stability, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific. That’s crucial for this region, and it’s crucial for the wider world. Maintaining peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait isn’t just a US interest. It’s a matter of international concern.” Austin said the US is working closely with both competitors and friends to guard against conflict. He said this includes “fully open” lines of communication with China’s defense leaders “to ensure that we can avoid any miscalculations”. Austin and China’s Defence Minister Wei Fenghe held a bilateral meeting on Friday on the sidelines of the event. Austin’s remarks came after General Charles A. Flynn, Commanding General of United States Army Pacific, said in Delhi on June 8: “I believe that the activity level (by China) is eye-opening. I think some of the infrastructure that is being created in the Western Theatre Command is alarming.”

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KANPUR

‘Illegal’ structure demolished: cops, civic body differ on owner ‘links’

KDA says owner’s ‘links with mafia’ being probed; son says he died 4 years ago

ASAD REHMAN
KANPUR, JUNE 11

DAYS AFTER the city witnessed protests, which subsequently turned violent, Kanpur Development Authority (KDA) on Saturday demolished a commercial building in the city’s Swaroop Nagar area. Police said the property belonged to a “close relative” of the prime accused in the June 3 violence.

The KDA, however, called it “routine procedure”, and “part of (its) campaign against land mafia”.

In a statement, KDA said the property belonged to one Mohammad Ishtiaq. “Police and administration have also informed that links of Mr Ishtiaq are apparently to mafia, which is being investigated,” it stated.

Ishtiaq’s son Ifteqar Ahmad (45), who works as a tailor, told *The Sunday Express* that Ishtiaq, 70, died in 2018 following a heart attack.

Asked about police’s assertion that the property razed on Saturday



The building demolished by KDA in Kanpur on Saturday. Vishal Srivastav

belonged to a close relative of Hayat Jafar Hashmi — prime accused in the June 3 violence case who was arrested along with three others from Lucknow the following day — KDA secretary Shatrohan Vaishya told *The Sunday Express*: “The case with KDA has been on...the issue is not of the recent incident (June 3 violence). The demolition order was passed in April. In that sequence, action was

taken. Now, if police find some link (with June 3 violence), that is separate. If police make it part of their investigation, they can tell you about it. The KDA doesn’t investigate. The action was part of routine procedure.”

Ifteqar said: “The property demolished is in my father’s name. The allegations regarding my links to accused Hayat Zafar Hashmi are baseless. I wouldn’t be able to recognise him if you make him stand in front of me. I know nothing about him.”

Ifteqar said he was not part of the protests on Friday (June 3). “I am a tailor; I have nothing to do with the protests. I have opened the shop daily since the incident, and you can check that with the local shopkeepers.”

While KDA in its statement said that the property faced demolition after a notice was served in the past, Ifteqar said, “I wanted to make it a commercial building. What was illegal in the building should have been told to me by those who demolished it. But I wasn’t intimidated.”

Asked about Ifteqar’s allegation

that he was not served a notice on demolition, KDA’s Vaishya said, “Officials who oversee that area have told us that notice was served, but he didn’t come on time and action went ahead.”

“One year ago, the building was sealed. I paid Rs 1 lakh to KDA through a cheque as fine, and the seal was removed,” Ifteqar said.

Asked whether prime accused in the June 3 violence has investments in the property demolished on Saturday, Kanpur Additional Commissioner of Police (Law and Order) Anand Prakash Tiwari said, “As per inputs available, both are very close and there are reasons to believe that investment has been made by the prime accused...”

Asked whether Ishtiaq Ahmad is being probed for links with the mafia, Tiwari said, “That is part of investigation. If there is any FIR or case diary...all this is part of investigation.” Told that Ishtiaq is dead, he said, “I didn’t say anything about him...I am not supposed to discuss investigation.”

Had Sharma, Jindal been arrested, violence wouldn’t have taken place: Rajbhar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
HARDOI, JUNE 11

SUHELDEV BHARATIYA Samaj Party president Om Prakash Rajbhar on Saturday stressed that had sacked BJP functionaries Nupur Sharma and Naveen Jindal been arrested earlier for their remarks over Prophet Mohammad, the violence in Uttar Pradesh could have been avoided.

He accused the BJP government of protecting the people who made such controversial comments.

“The government should take action against those who made the controversial remarks and those who took the law into

their own hands, but it should not harass the innocent,” Rajbhar told reporters.

“Had the government taken action against Nupur Sharma and Naveen Jindal, who made derogatory remarks, then no (violent) incident would have taken place.” He also claimed that the violence in Kanpur last week was a failure of the intelligence system of the government.

On June 3, violence had erupted in parts of Kanpur over the alleged “derogatory” remarks on Prophet Mohammad by former BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma during a TV debate.

Rajbhar contested the 2022 assembly elections with the Samajwadi Party, whereas in 2017 he was a partner of the BJP.

HC quashes order on removal of Basti madrassa principal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PRAYAGRAJ, JUNE 11

ALLAHABAD HIGH Court has quashed an Uttar Pradesh government order removing a principal of a madrassa in Basti district after an MLA and a minister complained against his appointment.

The high court said it is deplorable that the representatives of the public compel the public servant to pass illegal orders and the public servant complies with their illegal diktat without any demur.

Allowing a petition filed by Basharat Ullah, Justice Siddharth quashed the order passed by Special Secretary of the UP Government dated September 8, 2021, by which the petitioner was removed from the post of principal at Madarsa Darul Uloom Ahle Sunnat Badrool Uloom.

The court directed that the petitioner be reinstated in service forthwith and his arrears of salary be paid to him within six weeks.

The petitioner was appointed to the post in 2019 at the madrassa which is under the grant-in-aid list of the state government.

He had worked as an assistant teacher at the Darul Uloom Ahle Sunnat Madrasa in Gonda for five years.

Subsequently, a complaint was made against his appointment and the state government directed an inquiry into the allegations. A local MLA sent a letter to the chief minister of the state alleging that the conditional order of approval of the appointment was against the rules and should be cancelled.

Pursuant to this letter, the Special Secretary, UP government cancelled the approved appointment of the petitioner.

The petitioner challenged this order before the high court contending that his appointment was cancelled without holding an inquiry. It alleged that the action was absolutely arbitrary and has been passed on the diktat of an MLA.

The court noted that only the complaint made by Sanjay Pratap Jaiswal, a local MLA, and Swami Prasad Maurya, the then minister of labour and employment UP, was considered by the special secretary and thereafter a decision was taken to cancel the appointment of the petitioner.

In its judgement, the court observed, “The illegality in the conduct of the respondents is apparent from the material on record. The orders under challenge have been passed in gross violation of Article 14 of the Constitution of India (right to equality) and are hereby quashed”.

3 killed after being hit by train: Cops

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PRAYAGRAJ, JUNE 11

THREE MEN were killed while another was seriously injured after being hit by a train at the Shankargarh railway station in the district on Saturday morning, an official said.

Train number 11034 from Darbhanga to Pune was standing at the railway station and some of the passengers got down on the other side of the platform, the RPF official said.

As they were returning to their train, they were hit by the Chambal Express which came on the adjacent track killing two of them – Vikas Paswan (25) and Deepak Paswan (24) on the spot, the official said.

The third passenger, Munnu Shah (26), succumbed to injuries while on his way to hospital while the fourth passenger, Vikas Prajapati, has been referred to SRN Hospital for treatment. It is not yet clear why the passengers had got off the train, the official said.

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- Free training to 1.36 crore youth under PM Kaushal Vikas Yojana for better employment opportunities
- Number of Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) increased by almost 46% to 14,740 in last eight years
- About 70,000 recognized start-ups in the country; Youth become job creators; Number of unicorns grows to 100
- More than 9,500 Atal Tinkering Labs giving wings to the innovation by youth
- Best ever performance by Indian sportspersons in Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics, 2020
- Promotion of sports culture in the country with important initiatives like Khelo India Centres, ‘TOPS’ scheme, scholarship scheme for talented sportspersons, establishment of country’s first sports university



“ The government is trying to give youth the right environment and right resources to increase their skills. This is the threshold of new dreams and new resolutions for India. In such a scenario, the strength of the youth of India will take India to new heights. ”

— Narendra Modi —



dayp 22201/13/0031/2223



Lucknow



IRCON INTERNATIONAL LIMITED

(A Govt. of India Undertaking)

Website : www.ircon.org CIN - L45203DL1975GO008171



E-procurement Notice (National competitive Bidding)

e-Tender No.IRCON/2023/SHM/CT,WP/H&D/2022/89

e-Tender for and on behalf of South Western Railway is invited from bidders meeting qualifying requirements for the work of "Construction of Cable Trench, Water Pump House for Fire, Drainage work & High Mast Foundation at Shalimar Station in Howrah District for South Eastern Railway West Bengal".

Dated: 11.06.2022

| | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| Estimated Cost of the work | Rs. 1112.18 Lakhs. |
| Earnest Money Deposit | Rs. 11.57 Lakhs |
| Last Date and Time of e-Bid Submission | 25.06.2022 up to 17.00 Hrs |

For further details, visit website <https://www.etenders.gov.in/procure/app>. Corrigendum, if any, would be hosted only on the website.

General Manager/Estt
378 Prantali Pally, Kasba, Kolkata-700107

कार्यालय नगर परिषद, पाटी (राज.)
 (लावाबन्धन २२३१०१ टीएन-१०१, सुरतपालक के पास, पाटी-पिनकोड - ३०६४०१)
 (टेली-फैक्स : ०२९३२२२२२२२२, ई-मेल : mcnpali@yahoo.co.in, वेब-साईट : www.mcnpali.com)

क्रमांक : प.१२ () विकास / २०२२ / १०९दिनांक : ०८.०६.२०२२


REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) - १०९

नगर परिषद, पाटी की ओर से सख्तमान सरकार के विभिन्न विभागों में पंजीकृत संवेदकों से **Upgradation of 7.5 MLD STP Station at Mandiay Road, Pali** कार्य हेतु Request For Proposal (RFP) आमंत्रित की जाती है। संवेदक दिनांक १३.०६.२०२२ से दिनांक १५.०७.२०२२ तक अपने आवेदन जमा करा सकते हैं जिन्हें दिनांक १८.०७.२०२२ को खोला जावेगा। उक्त RFP हेतु Pre-Bid Meeting का आयोजन दिनांक ०८.०७.२०२२ को ओहोहस्ताक्षरकर्ता कार्यालय में रखा गया है।

इच्छुक संवेदक RFP से सम्बन्धित अन्य विवरण वेबसाईट <http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in>, <http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in>, तथा ओपेनसेल्लरकर्ता के कार्यालय से प्राप्त कर सकते हैं। उक्त RFP के यूरोपियन संख्या DB2223PFP0019 व टेंडर आईडी DB2223_P29846 है।

आयुक्त**अधिशाषी अभियन्ता**

राज.सं.सा.व.सी./२२/३१६४



punjab national bank

(A Govt of India undertaking)

HO: PLOT NO.-4 SECTOR-10, DWARKA, NEW DELHI-110075

CIRCLE SASTRAS CENTRE

CIRCLE OFFICE

1st FLOOR, SANGAM PLACE CIVIL LINES, PRAYAGRAJ-211001

Ph.: 0532-2560093

POSSESSION NOTICE (for Immovable Property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Punjab National Bank under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of Powers conferred under Section 13 read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued a demand notice mentioned below calling upon the following borrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of section 13 of Act read with rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002 on the specified date mentioned below.

The borrower's / guarantor's / mortgagor's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Punjab National Bank. for the amounts and interest there on mentioned against account given below.

| Name and Address of Borrowers/Guarantors | Details of Immovable Property | Name of Branch | Outstanding Amount | Demand Date | Possession Date |
|--|---|---------------------------------|---|-------------|-----------------|
| Borrower & Mortgagor- Mr. Mala Prasad Pandey S/o Mr. Sheshmani Pandey, H. No. 235, Awas Vikas Colony, Near Dr. Markandey, Mirzapur, Uttar Pradesh- 231001 | EWS House No. 235, Mahala- Domsuli Yojana (Awas Vikas Colony). City and District- Mirzapur Area- 453.28 Sq. Ft. i.e., 42.16 Sq. Mtrs. Owner- Mr. Mala Prasad Pandey S/O Mr. Sheshmani Pandey Boundaries (as per deeds): East- EWS 234, West- EWS 236, North- Gali, South- EWS 195 | Newadiya Ghat Mirzapur | ₹ 7,79,717.70/- (Rupees Seven Lakh Seventy Nine Thousand Seven Hundred Seventeen and Paise Seventy Only) with further interest w.e.f 01.01.2022 +CI & other charges, minus recovery. | 14.01.2022 | 07.06.2022 |
| Borrower- Sh. Ramjan Yadav, Anirudhpur Purabpatti, Pashkawaia, Mirzapur, U.P.- 231312 Guarantor/Mortgagor- (1) Smt. Vindu Devi W/o Sh. Ramjan Yadav, Add.- (B) Anirudhpur Purabpatti, Pashkawaia, Mirzapur, U.P.- 231312, (II) Gram-Anirudhpur, Purabpatti, Tappa- Kon, Pargana- Kantil, Tehsil-Sadar, District-Mirzapur, (2) Gupta Bindu Material (Prop: Parvesh Gupta), Jagannathpur, Sant Ravidas Nagar, Gopiganj, UP-221303 | Property situated on part of Araz No. 48, Mauza-Meerzapur, Tappa-84, Pargana-Kantil, Tehsil-Sadar, District-Mirzapur. Area- 68.448 Sq Mtrs. Owner- Smt. Vindu Devi W/O Sh. Ramjan Yadav Boundaries (as per deeds): East- Land of Seller, West- Land of Sahikhatadar Butul Prapatti, North- Land of Railways, South- 10 feet wide Kachha Rasta | Anirudhpur Paschim Patti | ₹ 10,22,608.95/- (Rupees Ten Lakh Twenty Two Thousand Six Hundred Eight and Paise Fifty Only) with further interest w.e.f 01.01.2022 +CI & other charges, minus recovery. | 27.01.2022 | 07.06.2022 |

Date: 11.06.2022

Place : Prayagraj

Authorised Officer, Punjab National Bank

**OFFICE OF THE SUPRINTENDING ENGINEER RURAL
ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT, CIRCLE KANPUR**
Address:-117/K-19, Sarvodaya Nagar, Kanpur.
Phone-0512-2500459 E_mail: seredkanur@gmail.com
E-Procurement Notice

Letter No:593/RED/Tender Notice /GSVM-Kanpur Nagar /2022-23 dated: 08-06-2022

**1. THE SUPRINTENDING ENGINEER RURAL ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT
CIRCLE, KANPUR** on behalf of Governor of Uttar Pradesh invites the percentage rate bids under work of Sansad Nidhi Yojna through **e-tendering system** from the eligible and approved Contractors registered with UP R.E.D., in appropriate class A and B as the case may be. The Bidder may submit bids for any or all of the works.

2. Name of work as per table.

| No. | Name of District | Name of work | Cost (Excluding GST) (in Lakh) | Bid security (EMD) in Lakh | Cost of Bid document including GST (in Rupees) | Period of completion including rainy season |
|-----|------------------|--|--------------------------------|----------------------------|--|---|
| 1 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 2 | Kanpur Nagar | की.एस.वी.एम. मोडकल कालेज से सम्बद्ध लाला लालामय्य एवं सम्बद्ध शिक्षितालय में 12 ओ.पी.डी. काउन्टर एवं डिजिटल शेड की स्थापना का कार्य। | 101.47 | 2.03 | 3500.00 | 04 Months |

3. Date of release of Invitation for Bids on on-line: 18-06-2022 at 12.00 Noon
4. Start date and time of down loading of Bid Documents 18-06-2022 from 12.00 Noon
5. Date and Time of Pre-Bid Meeting: 25-06-2022 at 11.00 AM.
6. Start date and time of submission of bid on tender website: 18-06-2022 from 12.00 Noon
7. Availability of Bid Documents and mode of submission: The bid document is available online and should be submitted online in <https://etender.up.nic.in>
8. Last Date/ Time for receipt of bids through e-procurement: 18-07-2022 upto 12.00 Noon
9. Date of opening of bids through e-procurement: 19-07-2022 from 12.30 pm on words
10. Any affidavit issued before start of tender process will not be accepted.
11. The Employer has right to issue addendum/corrigendum as per ITB clause-10 on-line which will not be published in any newspaper. All prospective bidders are advised to keep regular watch and visit e-tender portal regularly.
For further details please log on to <https://etender.up.nic.in> and download the bid document
All prospective bidders are requested to read the bid document thoroughly before submission of bid

UPID-177108 dt. 10.06.2022
www.upgovt.in

**SUPRINTENDING ENGINEER
RURAL ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT,
KANPUR CIRCLE KANPUR**

punjab national bank

(A Govt of India undertaking)

HO: PLOT NO.-4 SECTOR-10, DWARKA, NEW DELHI-110075

CIRCLE SASTRAL CENTRE

CIRCLE OFFICE

1st FLOOR, SANGAM PLACE CIVIL LINES, PRAYAGRAJ-211001

Ph.: 0532-2560093

POSSESSION NOTICE (for Immovable Property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Punjab National Bank under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of Powers conferred under Section 13 read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued a demand notice mentioned below calling upon the following borrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of section 13 of Act read with rule 3 of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002 on the specified date mentioned below.

The borrower's / guarantor's / mortgagor's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Punjab National Bank, for the amounts and interest there on mentioned against account given below.

| Name and Address of Borrowers/Guarantors | Details of Immoveable Property | Name of Branch | Outstanding Amount | Demand Date | Possession Date |
|--|--|--------------------------------|---|-------------------|-------------------|
| Borrower- M/s Rakesh Enterprises (Prop: Sh. Rakesh Chand Pathak) Village Madhopur, Gopiganj, Bhadohi, U.P.-221303. Guarantor/Mortgagor- (1) Smt. Meena Pathak W/o Sh. Rakesh Chand Pathak, Village Madhopur, Gopiganj, Bhadohi, U.P.-221303. (2) Sh. Harish Chand Pathak S/o Sh. Babuk Nath Pathak, Village Madhopur, Gopiganj, Bhadohi, U.P.-221303. | 1. Plot No. 268M, Area- 15 Chowr, situated at Revenue Village Gopiganj Tehsil Gyanpur, Distt. Bhadohi (Title Deed No. 2443) 2. Plot No. 580, Area- 0.08 Hectares situated at revenue village Gopiganj, Tehsil Gyanpur, Distt. Bhadohi (Title Deed No. 2403) 3. Plot No. 208M, area 1 bwa 10 choor, Revenue village Gopiganj, Tehsil Gyanpur, Distt. Bhadohi (Title Deed No. 2444) | Bhadohi | ₹ 7,75,520.87/- (Rupees Seven Lakh Severly Five Thousand Five Hundred Twenty and Paise Eighty Seven Only) with further interest w.e.f 30.04.2021 +DI & other charges, minus recovery. | 07.09.2021 | 07.06.2022 |
| Borrower- Sh. Ramjan Yadav, Aninudpur Purabpatti, Pakhawaya, Mirzapur, U.P.-231312 Guarantor/Mortgagor- (1) Smt. Vinu Devi W/o Sh. Ramjan Yadav, Add- (I) Aninudpur Purabpatti, Pakhawaya, Mirzapur, U.P.-231312, (II) Gram-Aninudpur Purabpatti, Tappa- Kan, Pargana- Kanil, Tehsil-Sadar, District-Mirzapur, (2) Gupta Building Material (Prop: Parvesh Gupta), Jagannathpur, Sant Ravidas Nagar, Gopiganj, UP-221303 | Property situated on part of Araz No. 48, Mauza-Meerzapur, Tappa-84, Pargana-Kanil, Tehsil-Sadar, District-Mirzapur. Area-68.448 Sq.Mtr. Owner- Smt. Vinu Devi W/o Sh. Ramjan Yadav Boundaries (as per deeds): East- Land of Seller, West- Land of Sahkhaledar Bursi Prapajap, North- Land of Railways, South- 10 feet wide Kachha Rasta | Aninudpur Paschim Patti | ₹ 10,22,608.50/- (Rupees Ten Lakh Twenty Two Thousand Six Hundred Eight and Paise Fifty Only) with further interest w.e.f 01.01.2022 +DI & other charges, minus recovery. | 27.01.2022 | 07.06.2022 |

Date: 11.06.2022

Place: Prayagraj

Authorised Officer, Punjab National Bank

उत्तर प्रदेश पावर ट्रान्समिशन
कारपोरेशन लिमिटेड 20
अत्यकालीन ई-निविदा प्रक्रिया अति
सं 21 / ECTC, PRG/2022-23
आवहताक्षरकर्ता द्वारा अति-
अत्यकालीन ई-निविदा संख्या 20 सं 21 / ECTC,
PRG (2022-23) निविदा पर सम्बन्धित आश्चर्यक विवरण
(परोक्ष धनराशि, निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य एवं कार्यावधि)
इलेक्ट्रिकल निविदा प्रणाली के अन्तर्गत ई-टेंडरिंग
पोर्टल <http://etender.up.nic.in> के माध्यम से
ऑनलाईन निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है जिसका पूर्ण
विवरण ई-पोर्टल पर उपलब्ध है। निविदा अपेक्षित /
प्रपत्र अर्चनाईन उक्त ई-टेंडरिंग पोर्टल पर दिनांक
20.06.2022 को 14:00 बजे तक उपलब्ध रहेंगे, जिसे
डाउनलोड कर
<http://etender.up.nic.in> साइट पर दिनांक
20.06.2022 को 14:00 बजे तक अपलोड किया जा
सकता है। निविदाएँ दिनांक 21.06.2022 को 15.00
बजे से खोली जायेंगी। विस्तृत विवरण एवं अन्य
सुचारु / परिवर्तन / संशोधन / वितरण हेतु उक्त
ई-टेंडरिंग पोर्टल पर देख सकते हैं। अधीक्षण
अभियन्ता विद्युत जायपद पारेषण मिडिल
0530-पावर ट्रान्समिशन कारपोरेशन लिमिटेड 57-
जार्ज टाउन, प्रयागराज हेल्थ लाइन दूरभाष सं 0
2532-2256298 "ग्रोट्टो हिल में बिजली बनायें"
पत्रांक 1042/विंजाओपाओमं(प्र) /टी-4
दिनांक : 10.06.2022

"IMPORTANT"

Whilst care is taken prior to acceptance of an advertising copy, it is not possible to verify its contents. The Indian Express (P) Limited cannot be held responsible for such contents, nor for any loss or damage incurred as a result of transactions with companies, associations or individuals advertising in its newspapers or Publications. We therefore recommend that readers exercise necessary caution before sending any monies or entering into any agreements with advertisers or otherwise acting on an advertisement in any manner whatsoever.

संस्कृति निदेशालय, उत्तर प्रदेश
बेगम अख्तर पुरस्कार वर्ष-2022-23
आवेदन-पत्र का आमंत्रण
पुरस्कार राशि-रु0 5.00 लाख (रुपये पांच लाख मात्र)

पात्रता:- 1 कलाकार उत्तर प्रदेश का मूल निवासी अथवा उसकी कर्मभूमि उत्तर प्रदेश होना चाहिए।
2- कलाकार की आयु 40 वर्ष से कम नहीं होनी चाहिए।

अर्हताएँ:- 1 कलाकार को अपनी प्रतिभा की दीर्घ साधना एवं श्रेष्ठ उपलब्धियों के भ्रमरक निर्विवाद मानदण्डों के आधार पर राष्ट्रीय ख्याति प्राप्त होनी चाहिए।
2- यह पुरस्कार कलाकार के गायन के क्षेत्र में सम्पूर्ण उपलब्धियों के आधार पर प्रदान किया जायेगा न कि किसी एक विशिष्ट संरचना के लिए।

“बेगम अख्तर पुरस्कार” का उद्देश्य दादरा, ठुमरी एवं गजल के क्षेत्र में विशेष प्रतिभावान विविध गायक को, जिसने अपने व्यक्तिगत प्रयासों से उत्कृष्ट आयाम स्थापित किया हो तथा राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर गौरवान्वित किया हो, को सम्मानित करना है।

पुरस्कार सम्बन्धी नियमावली एवं निर्धारित प्रारूप आवेदन पत्र संस्कृति विभाग, उ0प्र0 की वेबसाइट (<http://upculture.up.nic.in>) पर देखा जा सकता है।

उपरोक्त आवेदन पत्र निर्धारित प्रारूप पर दिनांक 12.06.2022 से 20.07.2022 सायं 05:00 बजे तक निदेशक, संस्कृति निदेशालय, उ0प्र0, जवाहर भवन, नवम तल, लखनऊ-226001 के कार्यालय में उपलब्ध कराये जायें।

निदेशक,
संस्कृति निदेशालय, उ0प्र0,
जवाहर भवन,
लखनऊ।

बेगम अख्तर पुरस्कार हेतु आवेदन पत्र का प्रारूप

- नाम-
- पिता/पति का नाम-
- जन्मस्थल-
- जन्मतिथि/आयु-
- राष्ट्रीयता
- पता-
 - वर्तमान
 - स्थायी
- व्यसाय (सरकारी सेवा में होने की स्थिति में पदनाम सहित उल्लेख किया जाए)
- कार्यक्षेत्र (दादरा/गजल/ठुमरी की गायिकी विधा में प्रस्तुति देने का अनुभव)
- पूर्व में प्राप्त सम्मान/पुरस्कार का विवरण
- विशिष्ट उपलब्धियों का संक्षिप्त विवरण
(200 शब्दों से अधिक न हो)

आर.ओ. संख्या-177151 दिनांक-10/06/2022
www.upgov.nic.in



SWAMI ATMANAND ENGLISH MEDIUM SCHOOL



ADVERTORIAL

Quality education for children from deprived families

SWAMI Atmanand English Medium School Scheme was started to provide free quality education in English medium, to children from economically weaker families in Chhattisgarh.

Considering the popularity of this scheme, 50 more new English-medium schools will be started in the state during the 2022-23 academic session, while the number of seats in each class has been increased from 50 to 40. A total of 32 Hindi Medium Excellence Schools are being run in the state along the lines of Swami Atmanand English Medium School.

The State Government had started the Swami Atmanand English Medium School to teach children from poor families in English medium. Government English medium schools were opened under this scheme. Swami Atmanand Excellent English Medium School has emerged as everyone's choice amid the Covid-19 pandemic. Enough English and Hindi lecturers, physical education teachers, librarians, office assistants, watchmen and part-time sweeper have been recruited in these schools. Apart from the excellent examination results in 2019-20, the schools have also won the parents' confidence through online education. Due to these facilities, more than 30 per cent of children studying in private schools in many districts have taken admission in these schools.

Every parent wants to send their children to these schools. In the future, according to the demand, enough schools will continue to come up. There will be no compromise on the quality of education imparted to the students.



**THE OBJECTIVE OF
THESE SCHOOLS IS TO
PROVIDE QUALITY
EDUCATION IN
ENGLISH MEDIUM
GRATIS**



The schools have state-of-the-art computer, language and robotics labs, a library, separate rooms for art and music, playgrounds, space for indoor games and are equipped with the BALA (Building as Learning Aid) concept. The work in 52 schools that was started in 2020-21 has been completed, while work in 119 schools is underway.

About 74,000 students are currently studying in 171 Swami Atmanand English Medium schools and 32 Hindi Medium Schools. Swami Atmanand Excellent English Medium School started a positive revolution which is in line with the Chhattisgarh government's emphasis on reforms in school education. These schools provide children from financially weaker backgrounds with affordable, accessible and quality education available in private schools. As all the seats in the existing schools were filled, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel had announced the opening of 50 more Atmanand schools, which will be opened in all the Vidhan Sabhas of the district, providing an opportunity to not only urban but also rural children to study in English medium school.

After CM Baghel's proposal to open government English medium schools was approved in the cabinet, three Swami Atmanand Utkrisht English Medium Schools were started in Raipur in 2019. Soon, 52 such schools were opened. The number increased to 119 and now stands at 171.

In view of the huge demand for admission in Swami Atmanand Excellent English Medium Schools, the CM had announced to increase seats in each class, on April 14. The School Education Department then increased the number of seats in each class to 50 from 40. Dr Alok Shukla, Principal Secretary, School Education Department then wrote to all District Collectors in the state to start new Swami Atmanand English Medium Schools.

Only government schools in the districts will be

converted into English schools. Collectors have been instructed to ensure that the renovation work and appointment of teachers should be completed before June 15. Children studying in Hindi medium will continue to do so in the same school. If necessary, classes can be held in two shifts so that students can easily study in Hindi or English medium.

On parents demands CM Baghel has announced plans to open 50 new Swami Atmanand English Medium schools in the state in June 2022. With this, 30,000 more children will be able to get admission in these schools. Presently, more than 1,35,000 students are studying in 171 Swami Atmanand English medium schools. In this year's state budget, Chhattisgarh government has provisioned of opening 32 excellent Hindi medium schools, which will benefit 17,500 students.

When compared to private schools, children in the Vanachal region are better educated in Swami Atmanand Vidyalaya. The popularity of the

**CM BAGHEL HAS
DECIDED TO OPEN 50
MORE SWAMI
ATMANAND ENGLISH
SCHOOLS DUE TO THE
HIGH DEMAND**

school is such that more than 1,48,000 applications have been received for 34,652 seats in 126 schools. More than 27,000 applications were received for nine government English medium schools in Raipur. In Mohla, Rajnandgaon, parents have even arranged a school bus to the Government English Medium School from Gotatola village to Mohla. It is jointly run by the parents of about 30 children.

The government has reserved 50 per cent of the seats in Government English Medium schools for girl students. If the number of girl students in a school is less than 50 per cent of the seats reserved for girl students, then preference will be given to students from poor families for admission in Classes 1, 6 and 9, and intermediate. For this, the parent has to submit an income certificate.

The government has also reserved 20 per cent of seats for children coming from BPL families. In case of more applications than the vacant seats in the schools, the children will be selected through a lottery. Apart from this, two seats have been reserved in each class for the students of Mahtari Dular Yojna. For admission, documents like the Aadhaar card of the child, birth certificate, domicile and caste certificate, mark sheet of the previous class and photocopy of the school transfer certificate are necessary.

The Chief Minister said that education is the state government's topmost concern. He said the government will ensure that the quality of Swami Atmanand School will be maintained. Like Swami Atmanand English Medium School, Swami Atmanand Hindi Medium School will be built in every district of Chhattisgarh.



CM's Swami Atmanand School meet-and-greet campaign

The CM travelled to all 90 assembly constituencies, interacted with students, took stock of various facilities at schools

CHATTISGARH Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel's meet-and-greet campaign started on May 4 in all the 90 Assembly constituencies of the state. The campaign started in Balrampur, a northern district of Chhattisgarh. During this, the CM reached Swami Atmanand School in Balrampur district, and interacted with the children of the school. He inquired about their studies and asked them their name and class. Seeing the CM interacting intimately with the school children, a student Varsha curiously asked him the secret of his fitness. Baghel, who responded with great ease, shared his fitness mantra — farming, yoga and swimming. While giving fitness tips to the children, the CM also advised them to practise yoga and exercise daily. After getting the answer to her question, Varsha asked another, "Did you want to be the Chief Minister since childhood or did you want to do something else?". To this, CM Baghel replied that he wanted to become a good farmer. As he was associated with public service works in the area, he eventually became the Chief Minister. Varsha said that she had read in the news about the CM's activism. The student said that she came to know that Baghel has been continuously reaching out to the public along with carrying out his administrative work. After

asking her question, the girl student appeared excited and cheerful as she got a simple answer to her question.

Similarly, another student asked, "How can our personality be like yours?", to which, the CM replied, "Keep studying well, follow the teachings of elders. Always try to learn new things. If you do physical labour, you will also become mentally strong." On the other hand, when the CM asked the students about how it feels to study in the Swami Atmanand School, the children said that they have good teachers, infrastructure, a better environment and they are getting resources. Sensing their curiosity, Baghel also took pictures with the children.

The Chief Minister took stock of the facilities available in the school. He inspected the computer and physics labs of the school. During this, he also held a discussion with the principal and teachers. The CM said to the teachers that the good image of Swami Atmanand School is the result of their efforts. "The intention of the government is to provide quality education to all the students of the state and teachers play an important role in this work," he said.

Tripti Netam, a Class 10 student of Dantewada, during a meet-up programme with the CM organised in the Katekalyan development block of the Bastar district, spoke in fluent English



and expressed her desire to become the Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh. Baghel said that one can become the CM by studying hard, serving the public and engaging in public service work. Tripti thanked the CM for starting the Swami Atmanand Government English Medium School. Baghel promised to solve the problems of the children studying at Swami Atmanand School and follow the advice of the students' parents.

He said that soon, hostel facilities



will also be available in Swami Atmanand schools. In the interim, tribal youths will be given money for their

bus fare. The CM said that new Swami Atmanand schools are opening soon and hostel arrangements will also be made in these School.

In today's era, it is very important to learn English. Parents have also insisted on their children going to English medium schools. Therefore, the Chhattisgarh government had decided to start the Swami Atmanand Government English Medium School. Now, children are leaving private schools to take admission in the gov-

ernment English medium schools.

CM Baghel dedicated the renovated Swami Atmanand English Medium School in Lohandiguda block of Bastar district. He participated in chaupal organized parents and school children. During the chaupla retired teacher Kamal Panigrahi, the grandfather of Tejal Panigrahi, who is studying in Class 4 and Chunoti Panigrahi studying in Class 7, told the CM that the school has not only imparted good education to children but also reconnected him with his family. Kamal said that he, along with his children, wanted his granddaughters to attend an English medium school. However, he was unhappy when they were admitted to a private English school in Jagdalpur. "As the Jagdalpur school was far, my whole family went to stay there. When the government opened the Swami Atmanand Government English Medium School, both my granddaughters got admission there. Now my son, daughter-in-law and granddaughters live with me," said Kamal, and thanked the CM.

When students demanded an e-library, the CM promptly announced plans to build one. Baghel inaugurated the school up-gradation work at Swami Atmanand English Medium School, Lohandiguda. He visited the astronomy and chemistry labs and the art room of the school.

6 GOVT & POLITICS

RAJYA SABHA ELECTIONS

Maharashtra: 9 votes Shiv Sena failed to get

ZEESHAN SHAIKH
MUMBAI, JUNE 11

IT WAS a difference of nine votes that led to BJP's Dhananjay Mahadik emerging triumphant over Shiv Sena's Sanjay Pawar in a tense electoral battle for the sixth Rajya Sabha seat in Maharashtra.

The Shiv Sena publicly blamed the failure on six of its erstwhile supporters for having failed to back to the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA). "We were on a slippery road and felt that if certain people had stayed true to the word that they had given us, we would have won. We have not got votes from Hitendra Thakur and his Bahujan Vanchit Aghadi (BVA), Karmala MLA Sanjaymama Shinde, Nanded's Shinde (Shyamsundar Shinde) and Devendra Bhuyar," Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut said.

Many of these men had sworn fealty to the MVA when it formed the government in 2019 but seem to have gradually grown disillusioned with the alliance.

The Sunday Express takes a look at the men behind the nine votes that the Sena failed to procure on Friday.

Suhas Kande: The Election Commission of India deemed the vote of Shiv Sena MLA Suhas Kande as invalid after the BJP alleged violation of rules, which delayed the counting of votes till early Saturday. While 43-year-old Kande has sworn fidelity to the Sena, the Nandgaon MLA has shared an uneasy relationship with the MVA government.

Thakurs of BVA: Hitendra Thakur is a six-time MLA from Vasai and his BVA has a strong presence in the semi-urban centres of Virar, Vasai and Nalasopara in Palghar. His brother Bhai Thakur is a convicted gangster. The BVA currently has three MLAs in the Assembly. After 2019, the party had extended its support to the MVA government. But in the run up to the Rajya Sabha polls, Thakur did not commit to either side.

Sanjay Shinde: Sanjaymama Shinde (52) is an Independent MLA from Karmala in Solapur district. His elder brother Baban Shinde was an MLA from NCP who groomed him into politics. In 2014, Sanjaymama, due to a turf battle with Ranjitsinh Mohite Patil, quit the NCP to join the Swabhimani Shetkari Sanghatna. In 2019, Sanjaymama contested the elections from Karmala as an Independent with the backing of the NCP. Soon after, he had announced that he would back the MVA government.

Devendra Bhuyar: The 33-year-old represents Morshi in Amravati. While he had won his election on a Swabhimani Paksha ticket, earlier this year, he had expelled him from the party.

Bhuyar is deemed to be close to Deputy CM Ajit Pawar, but has openly expressed his unhappiness over the functioning of Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray. He, however, said he had not "backstabbed anyone".

Shyamsundar Dagdoji Shinde: The 67-year-old is a first-time MLA of Peasants and Workers Party of India. The former IAS officer won the Loha seat by 50,000 votes. Shinde was at one point of time expected to join the NCP. He could not be reached for comment.

Nawab Malik and Anil Deshmukh: Both the NCP MLAs are currently in judicial custody and failed to get the nod from the judiciary to step out of jail and vote in the Rajya Sabha elections.



(From left) BJP leaders Jyotiraditya Scindia, Piyush Goyal, Devendra Fadnavis, Chandrakant Patil and Dhananjay Mahadik on Saturday. *Pradip Das*

Photo finish in Haryana: How Maken lost by two-thirds of a vote

VARINDER BHATIA
CHANDIGARH, JUNE 11

THE THREE-CORNERED contest for two Rajya Sabha seats in Haryana Friday turned out to be a thriller. While the ruling BJP's official nominee Krishan Panwar romped home, the principal Opposition Congress's candidate Ajay Maken failed to sail through despite his party's adequate numbers in a dead heat whose outcome could be determined only in the wee hours of Saturday. The Independent candidate backed by the BJP and its ally JJP, Kartikeya Sharma, edged out Maken because of Congress state satrap Bhupinder Singh Hooda's detractors within the party, Kuldeep Bishnoi and Kiran Choudhry. According to Congress sources, while Bishnoi did not vote for Maken, Choudhry "wrongly cast her ballot".

In the final calculation of votes polled, it appeared that Maken lost to Sharma with a margin of barely 2/3rd of a vote (0.66 lesser vote than Sharma).

The Haryana Assembly has 90 members. The formula of calculating the required score to ensure the victory of a Rajya Sabha candidate from a state is: Number of MLAs x 100 divided by number of Rajya Sabha vacancies + 1. That is



Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar flanked by the two RS election winners, in Chandigarh. *Jaibir Malhi*

how the total score or value of votes is calculated for each contesting candidate.

In Haryana's case, it could be calculated as 90 X 100 divided by 2+1, which equals 3000. However, one of the state's 90 MLAs abstained from voting, while one vote was rejected. This left Haryana's total count to 88 MLAs whose votes were found valid. Going by the same formula — 88 X 100 divided by 2+1 — it turned out to be 2933.33 (rounded off to 2934). So, this figure, 2934, was the qualifying score for a candidate in Haryana's Rajya Sabha fray.

The ruling camp accounted for 58 votes including the BJP's 40 MLAs, JJP's 10, one each of Haryana Lokhit Party and INLD, and six Independent MLAs. The Congress originally accounted for 31 votes, of which one was cancelled and

one was used for cross-voting for the ruling camp making the latter's tally 59. Panwar got 36 votes (first preference) while Sharma got 23 votes (first preference). As per the formula, Panwar's score became 36 x 100 = 3600 while he required only 2934. Sharma's score became 23 x 100 = 2300, but Panwar's surplus score of 666 also got added to his score making it 2966.

Maken got 29 votes polled in his favour and his score remained at 29 x 100 = 2900, which fell 34 short of the qualifying score. Thus, he lost the poll.

In simpler terms, with 88 valid votes and three candidates contesting for two seats, the two candidates who would poll more than one-third of 88 (29.34) would win. Going by this calculation, Panwar got 29.34, Sharma 29.66 while Maken got 29.00.

3-state boost and a downer: How BJP came out on top

LIZ MATHEW
NEW DELHI, JUNE 11

FOR THE first time in its history, the BJP crossed the 100 MPs threshold in the Rajya Sabha on March 31. The tally came down to 95 in the Upper House elections held on Friday, but, in nail-biting contests that went down to the wire, the ruling party won a seat each in Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Haryana above its strength in the Assemblies of these states.

The BJP's senior leaders and Cabinet ministers Nirmala Sitharaman and Piyush Goyal won — the Union finance minister from

Karnataka and her Cabinet colleague from Maharashtra — but the party faced a major setback in Rajasthan, where it has begun preparations for next year's Assembly elections, after its Dholpur MLA Shobharani Kushwah cross-voted for the Congress candidate, leading to the defeat of Independent candidate backed by the party.

Of the 16 seats for which elections were held, the BJP won three each in Karnataka and Maharashtra, and two in Haryana. Among the two who won from Haryana is independent candidate Kartikeya Sharma, who defeated senior

Congress leader Ajay Maken. Sharma who is a media baron was backed by the BJP-Jannayak Janta Party (JJP) ruling combine. Going by the arithmetic in Assemblies, the BJP should have won 20 seats but it managed to bag 23.

After winning four out of 13 seats in the Upper House elections held on March 31, the BJP's tally reached 101 (it included nominated members). This made it the first party to achieve the feat since 1988. After the party's MP from Punjab, Shwait Malik, retired in April, the tally was down to 100. With Friday's victories, the party's MP count in the Rajya Sabha will go up to 95.

Control slipping, JDS takes a body blow with RS election debacle

The loss may diminish the party's standing in the Vokkaliga community

JOHNSON TA
BENGALURU, JUNE 11

ON PLAIN reading, BJP's victory in three Rajya Sabha seats in Karnataka, especially the third, in a tight race with Congress and Janata Dal (Secular) appears to be result of a lack of co-ordination between the former allies in fighting unitedly against Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

A closer look at BJP's victory, especially in the third seat despite having only 31 spare votes, compared to 32 votes of JD(S) and 24 for Congress, reveals the shifting sands in fortunes of JD(S) and its leadership.

While ruling BJP and Congress, the primary opposition party in Karnataka, managed to ensure that the first-preference votes (121 MLAs for BJP and 70 MLAs for Congress) were all cast for their own candidates, JD(S) was not able to retain the support of all its MLAs. Two of 32 JD(S) MLAs cross-voted — K Srinivas Gowda from Kolar for Congress and S R Srinivas from Gubbi for BJP — contributing to the reduction of the JD(S)'s first preference votes to 30 and an increase in the first-preference votes for the third BJP candidate to 33 (including an excess vote cast for the main candidate, Nirmala Sitharaman).

The poll verdict was repeat of 2016 when eight JD(S) MLAs, disgruntled with the leadership of the then party chief and former Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy, cross-voted for the Congress and defeated JD(S) candidate B M Farooq.

The eight were suspended and later joined the Congress ahead of the 2018 state polls.

Sources familiar with the strategies involved in the Rajya Sabha polls in Karnataka said several forces cutting across political parties had come to-

Two of 32 JD(S) MLAs cross-voted — K Srinivas Gowda from Kolar for Congress and S R Srinivas from Gubbi for BJP

gether to exploit the weaknesses in the JD(S) to prevent a win for its candidate Kupendra Reddy who is a wealthy real estate businessman.

Sources said the loss is likely to diminish the standing of JD(S) leadership in the dominant Vokkaliga community, the party's driving force, on account of BJP ensuring the victory of actor S Jaggesh, who belongs to the community. The reduction of the popularity of JD(S) leadership — comprising former Prime Minister H D Devegowda, H D Kumaraswamy and his brother H D Revanna — is considered crucial for electoral fortunes of BJP and Congress in Karnataka. The Assembly polls in 2004, 2008, and 2018 had thrown up hung verdicts, with JD(S) emerging as a kingmaker in 2004 and 2018 by winning 30-60 seats in south Karnataka.

The failure of JD(S) leadership in keeping its flock together is likely to increase the political stock of state Congress chief D K Shivakumar, who kept the Congress votes together, sources said.

Shivakumar is a challenger for leadership of the Vokkaliga community in south Karnataka that currently lies with JD(S).

In the 2018 elections, the JD(S) leadership saw it as a personal challenge to defeat the MLAs who had cross-voted in Rajya Sabha polls two years earlier.

They ended up ensuring the defeat of the MLAs who contested the state elections on Congress tickets.

Mamata calls leaders of 19 parties for talks on Presidential polls, Cong not impressed

SOURAV ROY BARMAN & MANOJ CG
NEW DELHI, JUNE 11

IN WHAT appears to be a signal that the Trinamool Congress does not want to play second fiddle to the Congress at the national stage, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has invited leaders of 19 political parties to a meeting in Delhi next Wednesday to produce a "confluence of Opposition voices" for the presidential election.

The move surprised and upset the main opposition Congress, which had begun an exercise to reach out to like-minded parties including the TMC. Sources in the party wondered about the need for Banerjee to have taken such an initiative. It is learnt that a senior Congress leader has conveyed the party's unease to the TMC. Left parties, too, were not impressed by Banerjee's move.

The Congress put out a statement saying its president Sonia Gandhi had "reached out and deliberated the issue of the upcoming presidential election with Sharad Pawar, Mamata Banerjee and some other Opposition leaders" and "as per her discussions with other opposition leaders, she (has) deputed the Mallikarjun Kharge to coordinate with other leaders in view of her ill health owing to Covid."

"The Congress Party is of the opinion that the nation needs a person as President who can protect the Constitution, our institutions and citizenry from the ongoing onslaught by the ruling party. This is the need of the hour. While the Congress Party has not suggested a particular name, we owe it to our people to elect a President who can apply a healing touch to its fractured social fabric and defend our Constitution," the statement said.

It is to be seen whether senior leaders of the Congress, its allies like NCP, DMK, Shiv Sena and the JMM and that of the Left will attend the meeting.

"The presidential elections are around the corner, presenting the



In her letter, Mamata Banerjee called for 'a fruitful confluence of Opp voices'

perfect opportunity for all progressive opposition parties to reconvene and deliberate on the future course of Indian politics," Banerjee wrote in a letter to leaders of different parties, including Congress chief Sonia Gandhi and eight non-Congress Opposition CMs: Arvind Kejriwal and Bhagwant Mann (AAP), Naveen Patnaik (BJD), Pinarayi Vijayan (CPM), K Chandrashekar Rao (TRS), Hemant Soren (JMM), M K Stalin (DMK) and Uddhav Thackeray (Shiv Sena-led MVA).

Among other party leaders invited to the conclave are Akhilesh Yadav (SP), D Raja (CPI), Sharad Pawar (NCP), Lalu Prasad (RJD), Jayant Chaudhary (RLD), former PM HD Deve Gowda and HD Kumaraswamy (JDS), Farooq Abdullah (National Conference), Mehbooba Mufti (PDP), Sukhbir Singh Badal (Shiromani Akali Dal), Pawan Chamling (Sikkim Democratic Front), and K M Kader Mohideen (IUML).

Banerjee wrote: "The election is monumental because it gives legislators the opportunity to participate in deciding the Head of our State who is the custodian of our democracy. At a time when our democracy is going through troubling times, I believe that a fruitful confluence of Opposition voices is the need of the hour; to echo the deprived and unrepresented communities."

Banerjee's invitation to Patnaik, whom BJP is counting among its potential supporters outside NDA, signifies an attempt on her part to broaden the Opposition umbrella. The decision to reach out to Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) also seems to reflect that.

MVA faces upbeat BJP in Maharashtra MLC polls

SHUBHANGI KHAPRE & YOGESH NAIK
MUMBAI, JUNE 11

LEADER OF Opposition in the Maharashtra Assembly, Devendra Fadnavis, declaring on Saturday that BJP winning three seats in the Rajya Sabha polls was only the beginning, set the pace for the upcoming elections in the state, including the Legislative Council polls scheduled for June 20.

The Council elections, in which 10 seats are up for grabs, is also set for a contest as the BJP has fielded five candidates while allies Congress, NCP and Shiv Sena have fielded two each. Also, BJP-backed candidate Sadabhau Khot, who heads Ryat Kranti Party, is in the fray. In all, 12 candidates are in fray for 10 seats.

"After the Rajya Sabha victory, our resolve to get all our candidates elected to the Council has multiplied... The unrest within MVA is making people look for an alternative in the BJP," Fadnavis said.

The BJP had Praveen Darekar, Ram Shinde, Shrikant Bharatiya, Uma Khapre and Prasad Lad. The Shiv Sena nominated Aamshya Padavi and Sachin Ahir. While Congress candidates in fray are Chandrakant Handore and Bhai Jagtap, NCP has fielded Ramraje Nimbalkar and Eknath Khadse.

Each candidate will require 27 votes to win. The BJP, with 106 votes in the state Assembly, can get its four candidates elected easily. To get all its five candidates elected, the BJP requires 135 votes. Thus, for the fifth candidate, the party will require additional 29 votes.

Meanwhile, the Congress with 44 votes can comfortably ensure the win of one candidate. The party needs 54 votes for both its candidates to win. Thus, it would need 10 additional votes for its second candidate.

The Shiv Sena, which has 55 votes, can easily see both its candidates through. It requires only 54 votes for the purpose. The NCP, meanwhile, with 54 votes and can see through both its candidates.

EVEN AS LALU HAS BEEN AILING FOR A LONG PERIOD, HE HAS NOT LOST HIS POLITICAL HEFT AND SALIENCE

Autumn of the RJD patriarch: Lalu turns 74, party set to mark 25th anniversary

SANTOSH SINGH
PATNA, JUNE 11

AFTER LALU Prasad became the Bihar chief minister at the age of 42 in March 1990, he went to his Phulwaria village in Gopalganj district and broke the news to his mother Marachhiya Devi, saying in Bhojpuri: "Mai, hum mukhya-mantri ban gaini (mother, I have become CM)." Unimpressed, she asked him what was this post. When Lalu explained that it was even bigger than the "zamindari estate of Hathua Maharaj", she took a deep sigh and said, with sadness in her voice: "So you

could not manage to get a government job."

Lalu, who turns 74 on Saturday, would often refer to this conversation with his mother to highlight his modest background and his long struggle to reach the state's top post that he would often describe as "Raja of Bihar" in his heydays.

On July 5, the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) is going to commemorate its 25th birth anniversary. On this day in 1997, Lalu had broken ranks with his then colleagues and top Janta Dal leaders such as Sharad Yadav and Ram Vilas Paswan to form his own party, the RJD, and install his wife Rabri Devi

as the new CM a few days later. The journeys of the 25-year-old RJD and its 74-year-old founder president map an intertwined political saga marked with ups and downs, twists and turns, and accomplishments and failures.

Even as Lalu, who has been convicted in five of six fodder scams and is an accused in RRCTC and land-for-railway job cases, has been ailing for a long period, he has not lost his political heft and salience. He is one of the leading Opposition faces, who has continued to be a fierce critic of the Narendra Modi-led BJP government. In a recent virtual address to his party leaders, he cautioned



RJD chief Lalu Prasad, with son Tej Pratap Yadav distributes books to children on the occasion of his birthday, in Patna, on Saturday. *PTI*

people against "Emergency and civil war-like situation in the country", stressing on the need for having the Opposition's unity. His repeated convictions in fodder scams seem to have little bearing on his supporters even as the RJD, currently Bihar's principal Opposition party, continues to be a formidable force in state politics.

Lalu's younger son Tejashwi Prasad Yadav, Leader of the Opposition in the Bihar Assembly, is firmly at the helm of the RJD affairs. While he fights illness and court cases, he has handed over the party reins to Tejashwi, even as his elder son Tej Pratap Yadav remains a sulking and maverick

political player. Lalu has however managed to transfer his political legacy and support base to Tejashwi, who has taken the centre stage of Bihar politics in his own right now.

A two-time CM and ex-Union minister, the RJD patriarch has been playing the role of a guide for Tejashwi and his other party colleagues for a long time now. He has not been politically active since the 2015 Assembly polls due to his deteriorating health. But he is still the last word in the RJD in crucial matters like the selection of its candidates for various elections at the state and central levels in sync with the party's social

coalition priorities.

With Chief Minister and Janata Dal (United) supreme Nitish Kumar also ageing, the Tejashwi-led RJD has now started gearing up for future electoral battles with the BJP-led NDA alliance in the state and central elections. Currently, the RJD, which emerged as the single largest party in the 2020 state Assembly polls, does not have a single MP in the Lok Sabha. The Bihar Assembly election is due in late 2025, but the Lok Sabha polls are slated for early 2024, which Tejashwi is eyeing in a bid to emerge as a serious challenger to the NDA at all levels.

WATER CONTAMINATION IN RAICHUR

After 5 deaths, officials admit filtration unit not cleaned for 5 years

KIRAN PARASHAR
BENGALURU, JUNE 11

WITH THE death of a 48-year-old man on Friday, the number of people who died after drinking contaminated water in Karnataka's Raichur has gone up to five. Officials have said that several wards in the city have been receiving untreated water and that the filtration unit had not been cleaned or maintained for the past five years. Moreover, an automated filtration unit installed in 2018 had not been in use.

The man who died on Friday was Janakraj, a guest lecturer at a government engineering college. He was unmarried and had been taking care of his ailing 65-year-old mother.

Speaking to *The Sunday Express*, his sister Mahalakshmi said: "We left for Bengaluru last Friday as my son was taking the UPSC examination. On Monday when we returned, my brother was already admitted in a hospital battling for his life. Last Saturday, after he had breakfast, he complained of vomiting and diarrhoea. It went on for more than 24 hours, after which he was admitted... Even now, we are getting brown-coloured water and we boil it before we use it."

It was in the last week of May when many residents started falling ill due to contaminated water. Several people were admitted in city hospitals, including Raichur Institute of Medical

Sciences, after complaining of vomiting and diarrhoea. Officials said 14 of the city's 35 wards had been receiving water from the Tungabhadra river, via the Rumpur reservoir, without being treated. These wards house a population of around 1.5 lakh people. Sources said that stocks of bleach and alum, which are required for water treatment, had been exhausted, and were later purchased only after people had started dying from drinking contaminated water.

Speaking to *The Sunday Express*, Raichur City Municipal Council (CMC) commissioner K Gurulingappa admitted that the water filtration unit had not been cleaned or maintained for the past five years, leading to the contamination. He said a junior engineer and an assistant executive engineer, who were responsible for the filtration of water before it is supplied to the public, were suspended.

Gurulingappa said he assumed charge only on May 18, and had not been aware of the treatment unit being not maintained.

An official said that while untreated water had been supplied to residents for a while, the recent spate of illnesses and deaths may have come after water from polluted channels was consumed.

"We are now using the new WTP (water treatment plant) with permission, but are yet to officially take it to our control," Gurulingappa said. The automated WTP installed in 2018 had not

been in use amid a back-and-forth over the past four years between the CMC and the Karnataka Urban Water Supply and Drainage Board (KUWSDB) regarding repair work amounting to Rs 58 lakh.

In 2018, the KUWSDB had written a letter saying that the construction of the WTP was complete and asking the CMC to take over the plant and do further maintenance. It was only in 2020 that the CMC wrote back to the Board, saying that they would only take over the plant after some more repair work was done. For this, the KUWSDB gave an estimate of Rs 58 lakh, and despite more communication between the two bodies, no result was reached.

Raichur CMC president Lalitha Kadgol was not immediately available for comment.

Jayanna, a councillor from Ashapur (Ward No. 2), said, "Only after nearly 21 months did the CMC write a letter to KUWSDB, which is a huge delay. Even then, KUWSDB gave an option to pay Rs 58 lakh to address the objections raised, but the CMC failed to pay. In February, I raised this issue in the council but no one bothered to address it."

Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai said, "Already two officials have been suspended. Water samples from all the wards are being tested and investigation is on. Criminal cases will be registered if necessary," he said.



HONORARY DEGREE TO RATAN TATA

Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari confers industrialist Ratan Tata with the honorary Doctorate of Literature degree at the first special convocation of the newly formed HSNC Group University, at Raj Bhavan in Mumbai on Saturday. *Pradip Das*

KARNATAKA TEXTBOOK ROW

Lack of study material hampers learning recovery programme

SANATH PRASAD
BENGALURU, JUNE 11

EVEN AS a controversy over revisions carried out by the BJP government in Karnataka in language and social sciences textbooks has delayed their distribution in schools by around 20 days, a learning recovery programme initiated to fill the gap before schools begin their full academic programme has also been affected by the lack of study material.

The "Kalika Chetarike" or the learning recovery programme was introduced this year for Classes 1-9 by the primary and secondary education department but a reality check has revealed that students have not received worksheets related to the

programme and some worksheets are still in the editing stage.

Many teachers believe that a programme that was supposed to bridge the learning gap caused by Covid-19 may instead increase it now. Teachers of Class 10, especially those who teach language, are also worried about the uncertainty over Kannada textbooks because of the ongoing controversy.

"This year, students are facing a lot of problems in terms of uniform and textbooks. After 20 days of school reopening, we are supposed to begin Kalika Chetarike (learning recovery), but there is no supply of worksheets," a teacher at a government high school in Bengaluru rural district said.

"We are hearing from the DSERT (Department of State

Educational Research and Training) that some worksheets are in the editing stage. The language teachers for Class 10 are confused over what to teach because of the textbook revision controversy. The learning loss seems to be increasing," said Shoba, headmaster of a government high school in Sarakki.

A controversy has erupted in Karnataka over the alleged sanitisation of language and social sciences textbooks, resulting in delay in their distribution as the state government dallies between revising controversial portions or withdrawing the revised textbooks and returning to the old ones that have to be printed.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

Achhe din are here, going to get better in 2024 with Modi: Shah

GOPAL KATESHIYA
DIU, JUNE 11

HOME MINISTER Amit Shah on Saturday said achhe din (good days) are here and that they are going to be better in coming days as the country walks on the path of development with "Narendra Modi coming to you in 2024".

Addressing a public meeting at the Padmabhushan Sports Complex in the Union Territory of Diu, Shah said, "Mitron, sara divso avi to gayaj chhe. Achhe din aagaye hain magar aur bhi achhe hone wale hain (Friends, good days are already here and they are going to be even better). Narendra Modi has done the job of changing India over the past eight years. Narendraabhai is coming to you in 2024, having presented to us the map of development for the next 25 years, culminating with the centenary of India's Independence."

The Union Home Minister was in Diu to chair the meeting of the Western Zonal Council, the forum comprising Gujarat, Maharashtra and Goa as well as the UTs of Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu.

Saying that he has been a witness to the government's work



Amit Shah with Pramod Sawant at the Western Zonal Council meeting, in Diu on Saturday. *Express photo*

first as the national president of the BJP and then as the Union Home Minister, Shah said, "It is our popular leader Narendra Modi who achieved the feat of increasing the country's oxygen generation capacity by 10 times within a month."

Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant, Gujarat's Revenue Minister Rajendra Trivedi and Minister of State for Home, Harsh Sanghvi, Administrator of the UT of D&NH and D&D, Praful Patel and local MP Lalu Patel were present.

Shah also laid the foundation stones of seven infrastructure projects worth Rs 80 crore in Diu. They include a cable car service between Diu and Ghoghla, a public plaza near the historic Diu fort and memorials.

Hyderabad: Fashion designer 'dies by suicide'

Hyderabad: A woman fashion designer allegedly died by suicide at the posh Banjara Hills area in Hyderabad, police said on Saturday. The 36-year-old woman was found motionless in the washroom by her family members, who informed police. In a purported suicide note, she men-

tioned that no one is responsible for her extreme step and that she was feeling lonely and stressed, they said. The fashion designer is suspected to have ended her life by inhaling some poisonous chemicals and the matter needs to be probed, police added. A case has been registered. **PTI**

Buddha relics to be taken to Mongolia, Rijiju to lead team

DIVYAA
NEW DELHI, JUNE 11

IN A unique gesture, four Holy Relics of Lord Buddha are being taken to Mongolia for an exposition as part of Mongolian Buddha Purnima celebrations on June 14.

A 25-member delegation, led by Union Law Minister Kiren Rijiju, will accompany the relics on their journey, starting Monday.

The relics will be displayed at Batsagaan Temple, within the premises of Gandan Monastery, where Prime Minister Narendra Modi had visited in 2015.

The four relics come from among 22 Buddha relics, currently housed at the National Museum in Delhi, and known as the 'Kapilvastu Relics' since they are from a site in Bihar believed to be the ancient city of Kapilvastu. They were discovered in 1898.

During the 11-day visit, Union

Culture Minister G Kishan Reddy said, the relics will be accorded the status of a State Guest in Mongolia and will be taken in the same climate-controlled case as it has been kept presently at the National Museum.

The Indian Air Force has made available a special airplane — C-17 GlobeMaster — to carry the holy relics.

The last time these relics were taken out of the country was in 2012, when their exposition was held in Sri

Lanka. In 2015, the Holy Relics were placed under 'AA' category of antiquities and art treasures that should not be ordinarily taken out of the country for exhibition, considering their delicate nature. Reddy said New Delhi made an exception and permitted the exposition of Holy Relics in Mongolia on request of Ulaanbaatar.

Calling it a milestone in India-Mongolia relations, Rijiju said this will further boost cultural and spiritual relations between the countries.

Government of Andhra Pradesh Labour Department
Inviting Tender on A.P. e-Procurement Portal
Tender No. K/04/2022
INVITING Tender on A.P. e-Procurement Portal
Tenders are invited for the undersigned from IRDAI Registered Insurance Companies and IRDAI Licensed Insurance Broker/Providing insurance coverage against accidental death & accidental disability to the Primary Beneficiaries (PBs) of BPL families in the state of Andhra Pradesh under YSR BMA for a period of 1 year i.e. from 01.07.2022 to 30.06.2023. The Tender Notice will be available for download on A.P. e-Procurement portal from 13.06.2022. The date for submission of bids is 03.07.2022. As per Rule 151(j) of GFR, 2017 Bids responses will be opened three weeks from the date of publication of the tender notice i.e. on 07.07.2022.
Spl. Commissioner of Labour

Model Hospital Bapunagar Employee's State Insurance Corporation
(Ministry of Labour & Employment, Govt. Of India)
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ADVERTISEMENT NO: 05/2022
WALK-IN-INTERVIEW FOR RECRUITMENT OF DOCTORS ON CONTRACT BASIS
Walk-in- interview will be held at ESIC Model Hospital Bapunagar, Ahmedabad in the chamber of Medical Superintendent on 23/06/2022 and 24/06/2022 from 09:30 AM onwards for following posts:
Post Speciality / No of Posts
Senior Residents (Under 3 Years Residency Scheme) extendable every year General Medicine-04, General Surgery-01, Orthopaedic-2, Skin-01, Obs & Gynec-01, Anaesthesia-03 and Pathology-01.
Senior Residents 03 year againsts GDMO General Medicine-02, General Surgery-02, Orthopaedic-01, Paediatrics-02, Obs & Gynec-01 & Anaesthesia-03.
Full Time Specialists Radiology - 01
Full Time / Part Time Super Specialists Endocrinology-01, Oncology (Medical)-1 and Urology - 01.
Interested candidates may visit ESIC Website : www.esic.nic.in under tab 'Recruitment' for schedule, detailed vacancy position and terms & conditions.
-Sd/-
Medical Superintendent

Classifieds
FROM ANYTHING TO EVERYTHING.
PERSONAL
I, Rusama Devi, legally spouse of No. JC-522773H Sub Kuldeep Singh residing at Vill. Kothi, PO-Mandoli, Tehsil-Gangath, Distt.-Kangra (H.P.) have changed my name Rusama Devi to Rushma Devi vide Affidavit No. 17AA 798236 dated 25.04.22 before Notary Kangra (H.P.)
0060091660-1
I hereby declare that in service records of my husband Late Santosh Kumar 63905140NK my son Sandeep Kumar Mishra DOB is incorrectly mentioned as 17.01.1989 which should be read and written as 17.01.1990. Suman w/o Late Santosh Kumar r/o vill. Baisadha Pure Ram Datt Thana Pargana Tehsil & Distt. Amethi.
0060091674-1
I, Shatrughan Kumar Singh Service No. 15684967P, Rank-HAV of Unit. 46EW Coy C/O 99APO, that I have Changed My Son Name From Ishant Kumar To Ishant Kumar Singh, That Both Name Ishant Kumar and Ishant Kumar Singh Pertain To one and Same Person Affidavit Date 04-06-2022D. O. B 09/12/2008
0060091583-5
I, Beena Devi, legally spouse of No. 13769263W Hav Yash Paul Singh residing at Vill- Budhar, PO-Aloh, Teh-Rakkar, Distt-Kangra (H.P.) have changed my name Beena Devi to Veena Devi vide Affidavit No. 56AE 916314 dated 09.06.22 before Notary Ayodhya (U.P.)
0060091660-2
It is announced that Anima Tiwari daughter of Harish Tiwari whose address is 102 New Azad Nagar Satbari Road Kanpur will now be known as Adya Tiwari.
0060091665-1
I, Shatrughan Kumar Singh Service No. 15684967P, Rank-HAV of Unit. 46EW Coy C/O 99APO, that I have Changed My Son Name From Ishant Kumar To Ishant Kumar Singh, That Both Name Ishant Kumar and Ishant Kumar Singh Pertain To one and Same Person Affidavit Date 04-06-2022D. O. B 09/12/2008
0060091664-1
GENERAL
WANTED Bride Thane Alliance Invited for- 56 yrs Parsi Bengali Person, Own Flat, Caste No Bar. M : 9757233916.
0070789735-1
SIKH/PUNJABI
SM4 MBA Sikh Khatri Boy Dec.90/5"8" SINGLE Boy Working in MNC (Gurgaon). Lives in New Delhi (Punjab Bagh). Family is Financially Well Off with a Good Net Worth. Looking for a suitable Well Educated Match, Contact: 9312312433/88 10534080
0040618097-1

Bangladesh under pressure to act on Prophet remarks row: Awami League

Dhaka: Amid protests over the remarks against Prophet Mohammad by two now-suspended BJP functionaries, a senior leader of the ruling Awami League has said that the Bangladesh government is under pressure to take "action" as events in India have consequences in this country.

Khandakar Goulam Molla Naqshbandi, Chairman of the Religious Affairs Sub-Committee of the ruling Awami League and a member of the Advisory Committee, also said that disruptive forces try to take advantage of such a situation to disturb law and order in Muslim majority Bangladesh.

"Many issues arise due to conspiracy at the international level and petty politics at the local level, but the situation worsens if immediate action was not taken," Naqshbandi said while talking to a group of Indian journalists here.

"Bangladesh is under pressure from clerics and civil society to take action

over the remarks against the Prophet," he said, adding that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina knows how to deal with the situation. Naqshbandi said that Bangladesh has good relations with India, which is a friendly country. **PTI**

उत्तर प्रदेश पावर ट्रान्समिशन कारपोरेशन लिमिटेड
अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा सूचना
संख्या 22/ECTC, PRG/2022-23
अधोहस्ताक्षरकर्ता द्वारा अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा संख्या 22/ECTC, PRG/2022-23 से सम्बन्धित आवश्यक विवरण (धरोहर धनराशि, निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य एवं कार्यावधि) इलेक्ट्रॉनिक निविदा प्रणाली के अन्तर्गत ई-टेंडरिंग पोर्टल <http://etender.up.nic.in> के माध्यम से ऑनलाइन निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है जिसका पूर्ण विवरण ई-पोर्टल पर उपलब्ध है। निविदा अपिलेख/ प्रपत्र ऑनलाइन उक्त ई-टेंडरिंग पोर्टल पर दिनांक 28.06.2022 को 14:00 बजे तक उपलब्ध रहेंगे, जिसे डाउनलोड कर ऑनलाइन <http://etender.up.nic.in> साइट पर दिनांक 28.06.2022 को 14:00 बजे तक अपलोड किया जा सकता है। निविदाएं दिनांक 29.06.2022 को 15:00 बजे से खोली जायेंगी। विस्तृत विवरण एवं अन्य कोई सुधार/परिवर्तन/संशोधन/ विस्तार/शुद्धिपत्र हेतु उक्त ई-टेंडरिंग पोर्टल पर देख सकते हैं।
अधीक्षक अभियन्ता, विद्युत जनपद परेषण मण्डल, उग्रोपावर ट्रान्समिशन कारपोरेशन लिमिटेड, 57-जार्ज टाउन, प्रयागराज। हेल्लोलाइन दूरभाष सं० 0532-2256298 "राष्ट्र हित में बिजली बचाएं" पत्रांक: 1041/वि.जा.पा.मं. (प्र.)/टी-4, दिनांक-10/06/2022

FORM NO. 5 THE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL
(9/2-A, Panna Lal Road Allahabad-211002, U.P.)
(Areas of Jurisdiction, Part of Uttar Pradesh)
SUMMONS FOR FILING REPLY & APPEARANCE BY PUBLICATION
No. Dated:- 08.06.2022
(Summons to defendant under Section 19(3), of the Recovery of Debts due to bank and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 read with Rules 12 and 13 of the Debts Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993)
Original Application No. 144 of 2021
Canara Bank -Applicant (S)
M/s Rozy Food Product & Another -Defendants(S)
1. M/s Rozy Food Products a Proprietorship firm it register office at 15/683A, Saket Building Deputy Ka Parao Kanpur Nagar, District Kanpur-208003 and a Unit Situated at 105/591, Halim College Road, Chamanganj, Kanpur Nagar, District Kanpur-208001, through its Proprietor Smt. Firdous Jahan.
2. Smt. Firdous Jahan W/o Chand Alam, R/o 101/42, Gammu Ka Hata, Tikni Park, Coleelganj, Kanpur Nagar, District Kanpur-208003
In the above noted application, you required to file reply in Paper Book form in four sets alongwith documents and affidavits (if any), personally or through your duly authorised agent or legal practitioner in this Tribunal, after serving copy of the same on the applicant or his counsel/duly authorised agent after publication of the summons, and thereafter to appear before the Tribunal on 18.08.2022 at 10.30 A.M. failing which the application shall be heard and decided in your absence.
Registrar
Debts Recovery Tribunal, Allahabad

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Online applications are invited for the faculty posts on **DIRECT RECRUITMENT/DEPUTATION BASIS IN VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS** in All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Jodhpur (Rajasthan). Details of Posts is as:-

| S.N. | DESIGNATION | TOTAL POSTS |
|--------------|----------------------|-------------|
| 1. | Professor | 31 |
| 2. | Additional Professor | 08 |
| 3. | Associate Professor | 21 |
| 4. | Assistant Professor | 13 |
| TOTAL | | 73 |

The detailed advertisement and online application forms are available on institute's website: <http://www.aiimsjodhpur.edu.in>
Last date for submission of online applications is 11th July, 2022 (upto 5.00 PM).
(Dr. Dushyent Gehlot)
Senior Administrative Officer

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WANTED
FOR USA settled, Born-again Christian unmarried Female originally from Mumbai, 38, 5'-4", PhD in Pharmaceuticals, Invites alliance from unmarried educated working professional Male living in USA. Caste, language no bar. Contact with skiranfamily@gmail.com / 9757234576.
0070787246-1

CAST NO BAR
FOR USA settled, Born-again Christian unmarried Female originally from Mumbai, 38, 5'-4", PhD in Pharmaceuticals, Invites alliance from unmarried educated working professional Male living in USA. Caste, language no bar. Contact with skiranfamily@gmail.com / 9757234576.
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FACIAL PARALYSIS

JUSTIN BIEBER REVEALS RARE DISORDER

Justin Bieber says a rare disorder that paralysed half of the superstar performer's face is the reason behind his tour postponement. The multi-Grammy winner is suffering from Ramsay Hunt syndrome, he said in video he posted Friday on Instagram. The syndrome causes facial paralysis and affects nerves in the face through a shingles outbreak.

TOP OF THE WORLD



Prince Charles, Reuters

UK

Prince Charles slams 'appalling' Rwanda policy, says report

London: Prince Charles has privately described the British government's plans to deport asylum seekers to Rwanda as "appalling", two media reports said, as the first flight taking refugees to the East African country is due to leave next week. Charles is concerned that the controversial asylum policy will overshadow a Commonwealth meeting summit in Rwanda, where he is due to represent the Queen, *The Times* reported. "He said he was more than disappointed at the policy," a source told *The Times*. "He said he thinks the government's whole approach is appalling. A spokesperson for Charles did not deny he had expressed opinions about the policy in private. REUTERS

UKRAINE REJECTS CLAIM, SEEKS CLARIFICATION

Zelenskyy did not want to hear US warning on Russia invasion: Biden

Russia using more deadly weapons; we are going to prevail in war, says Ukraine President

AGENCIES

LOS ANGELES, JUNE 11

PRESIDENT JOE Biden, speaking to donors at a Democratic fundraiser, said Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy "didn't want to hear it" when US intelligence gathered information that Russia was preparing to invade.

The remarks came as Biden was talking about his work to rally and solidify support for Ukraine as the war continues into its fourth month.

"Nothing like this has happened since World War II. I know a lot of people thought I was maybe exaggerating. But I knew we had data to sustain it" — meaning Russian President Vladimir Putin — "was going to go in, off the border."

"There was no doubt," Biden said. "And Zelenskyy didn't want to hear it." Although Zelenskyy has inspired people with his leadership during the war, his preparation for the invasion — or lack thereof — has remained a controversial issue.

Ukrainian officials on



A Ukrainian tank in Donetsk region, eastern Ukraine. AP

Saturday rejected Biden's claim that Zelenskyy "didn't want to hear" early warnings about a Russian invasion.

A top aide to Zelenskyy, Mykhailo Podolyak, retorted on Saturday that it was "senseless to blame a country that for more than 100 days is resisting the might of the Russian aggressor if the key countries of the world could do nothing preventive to stop Russia" from invading in the first place. The Ukrainian leader-

ship and Zelenskyy understood Russia would strike militarily, Podolyak said, with the only question being the scale of the attack.

"Zelenskyy had on his desk, continually, analytical materials based on quality intelligence data," Podolyak said. "The president also was attentively reacting to all the words and warnings of our partners."

Zelenskyy's spokesman, Serhiy Nikiforov, also pushed back on Biden's comment that

EU decision on Ukraine seat likely next week

Kyiv: European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen told President Volodymyr Zelenskyy during a visit to Kyiv that the EU executive's opinion on Ukraine's request to join the EU would be ready by the end of next week. Von der Leyen said Saturday discussions with Zelenskyy "will enable us to finalise our assessment about whether to recommend Ukraine as a candidate for membership. REUTERS

the Ukrainian president did not want to hear warnings, saying the two leaders had multiple telephone calls before the war.

"Therefore, the phrase 'did not want to hear' probably needs clarification," Nikiforov told the

Ukrainian news site Liga.net.

Meanwhile, Zelenskyy insisted on Saturday that Ukraine would prevail in its almost four-month-long war with Russia that has become focussed on a grinding artillery slugging match over an eastern Ukrainian city.

Ukraine has appealed for swifter deliveries of heavy weapons from the West to turn the tide of the war with Russian forces. Yet even when out-gunned, Ukraine's army has proved more resilient than expected in early phases of fighting.

"We are definitely going to prevail in this war that Russia has started," Zelenskyy told a conference in Singapore via videolink.

Ukrainian and British officials warned Saturday that Russian forces are relying on weapons able to cause mass casualties as they try to make headway in capturing eastern Ukraine and fierce, prolonged fighting depletes resources on both sides. Russian bombers have likely been launching heavy 1960s-era anti-ship missiles in Ukraine, the UK Defence Ministry said.

Indian diplomat Amandeep Gill appointed as tech envoy by UN chief

YOSHITA SINGH

UNITED NATIONS, JUNE 11

SENIOR INDIAN diplomat Amandeep Singh Gill has been appointed by United Nations Secretary General as his Envoy on Technology, with the world body describing him as a "thought leader on digital technology" who has a solid understanding of how to leverage the digital transformation responsibly and inclusively for progress on the Sustainable Development Goals.

Gill, who was India's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva from 2016 to 2018, is the Chief Executive Officer of the International Digital Health and Artificial Intelligence Research Collaborative (I-DAIR) project, based at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva.

"A thought leader on digital technology, he brings to the position a deep knowledge of digital technologies coupled with a solid understanding of how to leverage digital transformation responsibly for progress on the Sustainable Development Goals," said a UN statement on Friday.

Previously, Gill was the Executive Director and Co-Lead of the United Nations Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation (2018-2019).

In addition to delivering report of the High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation, Gill helped secure international consensus recommendations on regulating AI in lethal autonomous weapon systems in 2017 and 2018, the draft AI ethics recommendation of UNESCO in 2020, and a platform on digital health and AI. PTI



US PROTESTS GUN VIOLENCE

Hundreds of demonstrators were rallying in Washington, DC, and across the US on Saturday, calling on lawmakers to pass legislation aimed at curbing gun violence. March for Our Lives, the gun safety group founded by students, said it has planned over 450 rallies for Saturday. Reuters

Fuel supplies crisis in Sri Lanka, last shipment from India to arrive this month

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

COLOMBO, JUNE 11

THE LAST of the fuel shipments due under the Indian Line of Credit are arriving in Sri Lanka this month with no indications on the sustenance of future supplies which are dependent on India's assistance.

The crisis has prompted an acute shortage of essential items like food, medicine, cooking gas and other fuel and even matches, with Sri Lankans for months being forced to wait in lines lasting hours outside stores to buy fuel.

"We are expecting the last diesel shipment under ILC (Indian Line of Credit) on June 16 and the last petrol shipment on June 22," energy minister Kanachana Wijesekara said. Sri Lanka's fuel purchases have been totally dependent on the ILC - a \$500 million credit line initially, which was supplemented with another \$200 million later.

Wijesekara said the mini-

mum daily requirement of diesel was 5,000 MT as people need it to run private generators due to the power cuts imposed. "We only issued between 2,800-3,000 MT on a priority basis last week," Wijesekara said adding that full requirement of diesel per week is now being supplied.

He said the daily requirement of petrol was 3,500 MT. "Since last Tuesday we have been issuing 3,000-3,200 MT daily". He said the situation related to kerosene oil was more serious.

Meanwhile, a top official of the UN World Food Programme (WFP) is planning to visit Sri Lanka on the invitation of PM Rani Wickremesinghe.

Wickremesinghe said he spoke to David Beasley, the Executive Director at UN WFP on Friday and invited him to visit Sri Lanka. "He accepted my invitation and is planning to visit shortly. We appreciate all the support extended to us by the WFP," Wickremesinghe tweeted.

Venezuela, Iran sign 20-year cooperation plan

ASSOCIATED PRESS

TEHRAN, JUNE 11

VENEZUELAN LEADER Nicolas Maduro and Iran's hard-line president signed a 20-year cooperation agreement Saturday, a day after Maduro praised the Islamic Republic for sending badly needed fuel to his nation despite US sanctions.

In an interview with President Maduro after his arrival in Tehran for a two-day visit, Iranian state media reported late Friday that Maduro hailed Iran's



Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro with his Iranian counterpart Ebrahim Raisi (left). AP

move to send fuel tankers to his energy-hungry nation.

"Tehran's delivery of oil to Caracas was a great help to the Venezuelan people," he said. Maduro's first visit to Iran comes amid tensions across the Middle East over the collapse of Iran's nuclear deal with world powers.

A high-ranking political and economic delegation from Venezuela — which like Iran is under heavy US sanctions — is accompanying Maduro, following an invitation from hard-line President Ebrahim Raisi. In a joint press conference Saturday, Raisi

and Maduro signed a 20-year agreement to expand ties in the oil and petrochemical industries, the military and the economy.

Iranian English-language PressTV quoted Maduro before the news conference as saying the two men would meet to discuss "the need to well inform the Iranian and Venezuelan nations about the war of sanctions and find ways to counter them."

Maduro said Venezuela and Iran are united by "a common vision" on international issues and are both victims of coercive measures by the US and its allies.

BOLIVIA

Ex-president gets 10 years in prison for coup

La Paz: Former Bolivian interim President Jeanine Áñez was sentenced to 10 years in prison on Friday on charges linked to her assumption of office in 2019 amid protests that led to the resignation and exile of her predecessor, Evo Morales. Áñez was convicted of dereliction of duty and acting against the constitution when she proclaimed herself president in what Morales and his party have called a coup. Áñez's supporters deny the claim. AP

USA

NASA team to study UFOs

Washington: NASA said on Thursday it plans to assemble a team of scientists to examine "unidentified aerial phenomena" — commonly termed UFOs — in the latest sign of the seriousness with which the US government is taking the issue. The US space agency said the focus will be on identifying available data and how it can use that information to advance scientific understanding of the issue. REUTERS

USA

Ronaldo 'rape' suit dismissed

Las Vegas: A Nevada woman has lost her bid in a US court to force international soccer star Cristiano Ronaldo to pay millions of dollars more than the USD 375,000 in hush money she received after claiming he raped her in Las Vegas in 2009. US District Judge said dismissing a case outright with no option to file it again is a severe sanction, but said Ronaldo had been harmed by the woman's counsel's conduct. AP

CHINA

9 arrested for beating women

Shanghai: Surveillance footage of men assaulting women at a restaurant in the northeastern city of Tangshan has unleashed a flood of outrage. Police said two women had sustained injuries and were being treated in hospital. All nine suspects were arrested as of Saturday. REUTERS



A Covid-19 test site in Beijing on Saturday. AP

SHANGHAI BEGINS MASS TESTING

Beijing warns of 'explosive' Covid outbreak

ANDREW GALBRAITH

SHANGHAI, JUNE 11

CHINA'S CAPITAL Beijing is facing an "explosive" Covid-19 outbreak connected to a bar, a government spokesman warned on Saturday, as the commercial hub of Shanghai began mass testing to contain a jump in cases tied to a popular beauty salon.

The warning followed a renewed tightening of Covid curbs in Beijing since Thursday, with at least two districts, including its most populous, Chaoyang, closing certain entertainment venues after a flare-up in a busy neighbourhood known for its nightlife, shopping and streets of embassies.

While China's infection rate is low by global standards, President Xi Jinping has doubled down on a zero-Covid policy that authorities say is needed to protect the elderly and the medical system, even as other countries try to live with the virus.

The latest cases in Beijing were linked to a drinking establishment Heaven Supermarket Bar. Infections have since surged, with Beijing saying on Saturday that all of the 61 new cases uncovered in the city on Friday had either visited the bar or had links to it.

In world first, written warning on every cigarette in Canada

V.JOSA ISAI

TORONTO, JUNE 11

EVERY INDIVIDUAL cigarette sold in Canada will carry a warning message under the terms of a new federal regulation intended to curb smoking, especially among young people, the country's minister of mental health and addictions announced on Friday.

The individual warning label, said to be the first in the world, will supplement the warning messages already printed on cigarette boxes in Canada, a country where smoking rates have fallen sharply over the past few decades.

Young people who share cigarettes and don't read the package labels would be able to see the health warning on individual cigarettes, said Rob Cunningham, a senior policy analyst at the Canadian Cancer Society.

Smoking is on the decline in the Canada, according to 2020 data from Statistics Canada, the na-

EXPLAINED Covid curbs relaxed elsewhere

THE TRAVELLERS to the US will no longer need to present a pre-departure Covid-19 international air test from Sunday. Japan and Taiwan also relaxed Covid rules by relaxing border controls and slashing quarantine period, respectively.

"The recent outbreak of cases related to Heaven Supermarket Bar is strongly explosive in nature and widespread in scope, and the composition of the individuals involved is also complex," Xu Hejian, spokesman of the Beijing municipal government, said.

In Shanghai, city officials announced three new confirmed local cases and one asymptomatic case detected outside quarantined areas on Saturday, as nearly all the city's 25 million residents began a new round of Covid tests. Authorities have ordered PCR testing for all residents in 15 of Shanghai's 16 districts this weekend. REUTERS

IT WAS CARRYING A FUTURE KING OF ENGLAND WHEN IT RAN AGROUND

Gloucester, Royal Navy shipwreck from 1682, found off coast of England

CHRISTINE HAUSER & DERRICK BRYSON TAYLOR

LONDON, JUNE 11

THE WRECKAGE of a Royal Navy ship, from which a future king of England narrowly escaped when it sank 340 years ago during a period of political strife, was discovered off the country's east coast, researchers said on Friday.

The ship, named the Gloucester, was found off the coast of Norfolk in 2007 by the brothers Julian and Lincoln Barnwell and their friend James Little after a four-year, 5,000-mile nautical search, according to a statement from the University of East Anglia. Norfolk

is a rural county about 100 miles northeast of London.

The discovery has only now been made public because of the time required to confirm the ship's identity and declare it to the government.

Lincoln Barnwell said his search for the Gloucester was partly inspired by the researchers who raised the Mary Rose in 1982. That ship, which sank during an engagement with the French in 1545, was the pride of King Henry VIII's fleet and was seen by historians as the forerunner of British Navy ships. It was raised from the mud a mile off Portsmouth, England, with most of its oak frame still intact. Salvaging it took 17 years and



The brothers Julian and Lincoln Barnwell measuring a cannon, part of the shipwreck of Gloucester, in 2007. AP

cost about \$7 million. The project was hailed at the time as "the world's most ambitious underwater archaeological operation."

Lincoln Barnwell said he felt privileged to find the wreck that was later identified as the Gloucester. "We were the only

people in the world at that moment in time who knew where the wreck lay," he said. "That was special, and I'll never forget it."

Findings from the wreckage, including a bell that helped researchers confirm the ship's identity in 2012, will be put on display next year at Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery. Clothing, shoes and professional naval equipment were also found alongside personal possessions. When the Gloucester ran aground and sank in 1682, it was carrying James Stuart, the Duke of York, who would go on to reign as King James II from 1685 to 1688.

"A tragedy of considerable proportions in terms of loss of life, both privileged and ordinary, the

full story of the Gloucester's last voyage and the impact of its aftermath needs re-telling, including its cultural and political importance, and legacy," Claire Jowitt, a professor at the University of East Anglia and a curator of the exhibition, said in a statement.

The disaster was controversial because the Duke of York, the heir to the throne and a former Lord High Admiral, barely made it off the sinking vessel in time. Other passengers and crew members waited for him to disembark first as dictated by protocol. Benjamin Redding, a senior research associate at the University of East Anglia who is a part of the team studying the wreck, said that there had been

"small whispers" about the duke's leadership abilities, as he was an experienced naval commander who became associated with a shipwreck, but that he had already been designated as heir by King Charles II.

"At the time, it was political suicide to blame James," Dr Redding said on Friday. He said the researchers hoped to find out more about the duke by examining the contents of the wine bottles, which might show they were imported from France, despite a ban on such imports from a Catholic country. "It would tell a lot about him," Dr Redding said. "One rule for everyone else, and a different policy for him." NYT

A new red line

A raucous TV debate and a string of tweets by two BJP spokespersons — normal grist to the Hindutva mill. But as their remarks on the Prophet spun out of control, the BJP faced its first blowback on its handling of minority issues. What followed was a swift crackdown and a govt statement saying it “respects all religions”. LIZ MATHEW explores what this moment means for the BJP, a party that’s in expansion mode and is dominated by the formidable political capital of the Prime Minister. With SHYAMLAL YADAV



Renuka Puri

A FEW minutes before 11 pm on June 1, a senior BJP leader got an angry call from a senior colleague. “What has this Naveen Jindal tweeted?” Until then, the leader, who is part of the media unit, had no hint of the storm that was to hit the party and the government. “I quickly trawled through Jindal’s tweets. I was shocked. He had been tweeting about the Prophet for a while by then and I had no clue,”

Six days earlier, BJP party spokesperson Nupur Sharma had, in a Times Now panel discussion, made derogatory references to the Prophet while replying to another panelist. Both Jindal’s tweet and Sharma’s remarks, at first, seemed the normal grist to the Hindutva mill that cranks right through the day on social media and prime time TV but as the weekend began and the videoclip went viral, complete with subtitles in English, alarm bells began ringing. Abusing minorities is par for the course for many TV talking heads but this was the Prophet. A line had been breached and the Islamic world was waking up.

Things came to a head last Sunday with hashtags such as ‘Boycott Indian Products’ and statements by public figures and influencers in the Gulf region. The 7.6-million diaspora, the \$37-billion remittances and a diplomacy that pivoted around Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s personal connection with many of the leaders there — all added up to unprecedented action. On June 5, the party sacked both the spokespersons over their remarks on the Prophet, and the government, facing a massive backlash from the Gulf nations, issued a statement saying it “accords the highest respect for all religions” and said that the remarks of the ruling party’s spokespersons “do not, in any manner, reflect the views of the Government of India. These are the views of fringe elements”.

The immediate crisis was tamped down but after Friday prayers, protests erupted in more than a dozen cities across the country with two protesters dying of bullet injury in Jharkhand’s Ranchi.

For the BJP, the incident and its aftermath present a singular challenge: For a party that is now India’s largest — and growing — how does it walk the tricky line between the cultural revivalism and ideological project that forms the bedrock for its growth and the emotions it has uncorked in the process among millions of Indians? So far, hate speeches on the campaign trail, violence against minorities, bulldozers targeting a section, protests against NRC/CAA, love jihad laws and the Karnataka hijab controversy — all have kept the pot simmering but what happens when it boils over? For a party this big and getting bigger, where does the core end and the ‘fringe’ begin? Who guard these walls and how impermeable are they? As the latest controversy shows, not very.

For the BJP, the incident and its aftermath present a singular challenge: how does it walk the line between its ideological project and the emotions it has uncorked among millions of Indians?

plunging with newer and unforeseen challenges.

There is an acknowledgement that instances like the recent one involving Sharma and Jindal threw the party “off track” and that the unprecedented disciplinary action against them was an attempt to correct that. As a leader put it, “When someone tries to derail the party’s programme, it is our duty to fix things and put the rail back on track.”

So, what’s the track the BJP has chosen for itself?

“It’s very clear: The BJP is in expansion mode. Prime Minister Modi has taken up the task of cultural revivalism. The construction of the Ram mandir is on track, Gyanvapi and Mathura issues will be resolved through the courts and we are moving towards a Uniform Civil Code. Amidst these, insulting the Prophet does not go well with the BJP’s stature today. You can expose Muslims, slam terrorist activities, but humiliating the Prophet is crossing a red line. Both Nupur and Naveen have crossed all limits of civility,” said a BJP Chief Minister.

That the BJP’s “stature”, which this leader spoke about, is closely linked to the Prime Minister’s is no secret — evident in a string of statements made by the party and the government that invoke the PM and his “mission”. Indeed, in a government and party that is dominated by the personality and the formidable political capital of the Prime Minister, a blowback like the one last weekend had to be quickly doused.

The role of BJP 2.0 is, according to a number of party leaders, shaped and defined by the single-minded focus of “supporting Prime Minister Modi’s Mission”. At least four senior leaders, including Union Ministers and party general secretaries, said that in his interactions with party leaders, Modi has often urged them to stick to “the development agenda” of the Central government.

“In our meetings, including the recent Jaipur meeting with general secretaries, Modiji said that party leaders should not do anything that derails the government’s agenda or makes the BJP or the government go on the defensive in the eyes of the public,” said one of them.

The Chief Minister who earlier spoke on condition of anonymity pointed out that it was Prime Minister Modi’s intervention that “stopped states who were keen on introducing Gita in the school curriculum” and that he told them that it would open a Pandora’s box as the Bhagavad Gita is an entirely Hindu scripture.

Eight years into the government and 20 years of Modi as a public figure have given the party and the government many platforms to reinforce and communicate the message of a Prime Minister “who wants to take everyone along” and often the hard edges of the big picture. Many point to the way the Central government, in an affidavit to the apex court, in an unusual departure from tradition and procedure, attributed its change in stance on the issue of sedition to the Prime Minister who “had expressed clear and unequivocal views in favour of protecting civil liberties, respect for human rights and believed that outdated colonial laws had no place in the country celebrating its 75th

WHEN THE GOVT BACKTRACKED
JANUARY 2015: Government comes under attack for its Republic Day advertisement that used an image of the Preamble of the Constitution without the words “socialist” and “secular”. Later clarifies that it had no intention of dropping the words.

APRIL 2018: I&B Ministry led by Smriti Irani announces guidelines to punish journalists for fake news. Following widespread criticism. A day later, PM orders ministry to withdraw its order

OCTOBER 2018: M J Akbar, accused by several women of sexual harassment and assault, forced to step down as Union minister after the #MeToo campaign

WHEN PARTY CRACKED THE WHIP
JANUARY 2015: BJP MP Sakshi Maharaj gets a showcase notice from the party for his controversial statement that Hindu women should give birth to “at least four children”. Earlier he was forced to apologise in Parliament for describing Mahatma Gandhi’s assassin Nathuram Godse as a “patriot”

MAY 2019: Party suspends Madhya Pradesh media cell head Anil Saumitra from primary membership after he called Mahatma Gandhi “father of Pakistan”

NOVEMBER 2019: Party removes Pragna Singh Thakur from the Parliamentary Consultative Committee of the Ministry of Defence, a day after she described Mahatma Gandhi’s assassin Nathuram Godse as “*deshbhadra*” in Parliament.

FEBRUARY 2020: BJP MP Ananth Kumar Hegde served show cause notice for remark against Gandhi

NOVEMBER 2021: Former MLA Vikram Randhawa removed from all official posts over objectionable remarks against Muslims

DEC 2021: Tejasvi Surya, national president of BJP youth wing and Bengaluru South MP, asked to withdraw his “reconversion” remark. “Every temple and mutt must have a target for reconverting people to Hinduism. We should convert even the Muslims of Pakistan back to Hinduism,” he had said

year of Independence”. This, at a time when the party’s governments have weaponised the sedition law to deal with dissidence. There are other instances, too. On May 12, addressing beneficiaries of

Centre-run schemes in poll-bound Gujarat, Modi hinted that he was ready for a third term, saying, “It is not enough that I should rest now, (thinking) that everything that has happened is good. No. My dream is saturation... meet your target 100 per cent.” The focus of the PM’s speech, unusually for a poll-bound state, stayed on welfare measures.

The message, therefore, that the party sought to drive home with its strict action against Sharma and Jindal was: “Do not spoil the narrative”.

“It has been eight years of the government — eight years of development, infrastructure development, welfare initiatives, start-ups, investment and more than two years of Covid management. A strong narrative has been seeded, built and amplified and there has been concerted political effort to move the narrative towards it. But this incident distracted all of it. It undermined the huge amount of work and efforts that had gone into the government and governance,” said a Union Minister.

So how does this then tie in with a string of discordant voices of hate that have come out from the BJP, not just from the “fringe”, but many from among the mainstream?

The chief of a state unit of the party, while seeking to distance the PM from some of his controversial remarks, said, “The Prime Minister has always insisted that government schemes are for people of all religions and communities and that we cannot differentiate among people even if there are some protests from our core support base. It’s true that some senior leaders have made inflammatory remarks but they have been immediately warned. Union Minister Giriraj Singh, party MPs Tejasvi Surya, Pragya Thakur, Sakshi Maharaj... such people were repeatedly warned by the leadership,” he said. He, however, admitted that sometimes they have to be “given a long rope considering their contribution to the party”.

BJP leaders also dismiss suggestions that the government wouldn’t have acted if not for the massive outrage from Gulf countries, where India has a large expat population.

“Unlike what the ‘liberals’ think, it was not diplomatic pressure that made the Prime Minister direct the party to take action against the spokespersons. Of course, it’s a matter that the government and the party are concerned about because we share cordial ties with those nations. But the relationship is mutual, never one-sided. The action (against the spokespersons) was also because their remarks went against what the RSS and the BJP consider as ethics. No genuine BJP leader or the RSS has ever made a derogatory statement against the Prophet or Jesus Christ. It’s not what we believe,” said a BJP leader who is familiar with the functioning of the RSS.

Is the fringe then becoming the mainstream, as some in the Opposition have been saying?

Claiming that the party is clear about who is fringe and who isn’t, a leader said, “It has never been the language of the BJP or the RSS. Nupur Sharma decided to talk like Kapil Sharma. She should have realised that he is the fringe and talking his language would make her the fringe.”

V D Sharma, Madhya Pradesh state BJP president, said, “As far as action against Nupur Sharma is concerned, it is upon us as individuals as to how we present our party. Say, a video of my worker drinking a cold drink gets

circulated as alcohol, it becomes fodder for the Opposition to tarnish our image.”

The delay in action against the two spokespersons, a leader argued, was because of “optimism or over-confidence”. “Sometimes you feel that things will die down on their own. Or you are over confident that you are too big to get affected by such a small incident,” he said, adding that expecting Prime Minister Modi to come out and make a public statement on the issue is “too much”.

“You cannot expect things to be handled the way you want. The Prime Minister will speak, but he will choose his time and venue,” the leader said.

BJP leaders also dismiss the suggestion that this incident and the BJP’s reaction to it point to an inflection point for the party and its handling of minority issues. “You can attack Christians on the issue of conversion. But that does not mean you humiliate or attack Jesus Christ. Similarly, you can criticise the Muslims on issues like triple talag, its anti-women approach etc. You can hit out at terrorists and terrorism or a community’s involvement in anti-national activities, but that should not be by ridiculing the Prophet.”

BJP strategists point out that for more than a year, both the BJP and its ideological parent, the RSS, have been “sending out signals” on the need to “stick to the fundamentals”.

Leaders pointed to the recent statement by RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat, when he said, “Don’t go looking for a *shivling* in every mosque”, and made it clear that the RSS was not in favour of launching any other movement (*andolan*) after Ayodhya on temple-mosque issues. While justifying the claims on the Gyanvapi mosque in Kashi, Bhagwat went on to make a distinction between “Islamic invaders” and Indian Muslims, whose ancestors, he said, were Hindus.

“Bhagwatji’s remarks should be seen along with the one he made in July 2021 (‘Hindu-Muslim DNA is one,’ he said at a book launch) and his 2018 speech at Vigyan Bhawan, where he said Hindu Rashtra cannot be imagined without Muslims. RSS never talked about mosques beyond those at Ayodhya, Mathura and Kashi. So his *shivling* message was to the fringe elements (in the RSS),” said an RSS leader, adding that the RSS leadership is concerned about the growing “fringe” within the outfit, particularly those who have come up after 2014, who “would say anything to come to the limelight”.

Sources in the RSS say that since 2014, they have been grappling with a key question: How to calibrate the RSS’s stand on minority issues.

They say the Sangh’s *sampark vibhag* has prepared a long list of Muslim intellectuals they can reach out to and convince that the RSS is not against Muslims or Islam as a religion but against those who are anti-India.

Said a long-time pracharak, “This is our long-term strategy. (Muslims) may or may not vote for the BJP but sooner or later, they will realise that we are for the betterment of their society.”

Sources say a section in the RSS is of the view that they need to stay away from issues of faith of the minority community. This section believes that issues of population control and the UCC should not be taken up on priority.

RSS sources also admit that “controlling the mob” is easier said than done. From be-

ing an organisation that has always been on the lookout for more members, the RSS is now careful about who gets in, with sources saying the effort is to induct more professionals, academics and government employees.

Is this then an admission that the genie that has been uncorked since 2014 is now too big to be bottled up again?

The action against Sharma and Jindal has triggered some uneasiness among the spokespersons, especially the younger lot and those in the state units. According to one of them, the remarks by Sharma and Jindal were “in reaction to the outrageous remarks” made against Hindu Gods.

“We are party soldiers, we go to defend the party as per the instructions given by the party. Sometimes, in heated debates, there could be some reactions — Nupur’s was a reaction. So some of us feel that the action was unfair,” said a spokesperson.

“It is just wrong timing,” said a leader from the party’s UP unit. “Her remark was blown out of proportion to create a controversy and target the BJP and the government.”

Party sources in the Uttar Pradesh, which is the epicentre of the BJP’s cultural revivalism project, say that while there have been no guidelines or instructions to the cadre defining what’s permissible and what’s not, they have been told not to react to the Nupur Sharma incident “till the matter settles down”.

Earlier, when communal tension broke out in Kanpur on June 3 over the Prophet remarks — on a day Prime Minister Modi and President Ram Nath Kovind were visiting — the party asked its leaders, along with its state spokespersons, to not react to the clashes.

In MP, a party spokesperson said on condition of anonymity, “What Nupur Sharma said was in the heat of the moment. When we go for television debates, people from both sides indulge in such talks.”

“*Kabhi kabhi do steps peeche lena chahiye*, one cannot win all fights. After all, the country comes first, then the party and finally the individual,” the leader added while calling it a “temporary setback” for the party.

Some of the senior leaders even hope that the developments “will ultimately benefit the BJP”. According to an office bearer of the party, the BJP will “further gain” as “the Hindus, including the moderates, would not like to see India being cornered like this.”

Though few admit it, the Nupur Sharma incident and the events since then — the crack-down, the government statement on “accord-ing the highest respect for all religions” and the protests in several parts of the country after Friday prayers — mark the first blowback for the BJP over its handling of minority issues.

While party spokespersons and leaders talk of a red line being breached in this instance, it’s a line that is usually beheld to the one drawing it.

Addressing the diaspora in Tokyo on May 23, while talking about how he is always up for a challenge, Modi had said, “*Mujhe makkhan par lakeer karne mein maza nahi aata hai, main patthar par lakeer karta hoon* (I do not enjoy drawing a line on butter, I enjoy drawing a line on stone).”

Sharma and Jindal saw a line, whether that was on butter or stone will shape the BJP’s challenge as its electoral juggernaut rolls on.

WITH INPUTS FROM ENS LUCKNOW & BHOPAL

Lucknow

Across
THE AISLE



PCHIDAMBARAM

Website:pchidambaram.in
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The sad truth is that the Prime Minister has not uttered a word of condemnation. He thinks that he can ride this storm too. And life will go on. Truth is, political life will not go on in India to the exclusion of 202 million Muslims. This time, it is not the Opposition, but the world that has forewarned Mr Modi

FRANCIS BARRAUD, a native of Liverpool and a painter, had a brother named Mark. Mark died. Francis inherited a cylinder phonograph player, recordings of Mark's voice and Mark's fox terrier named Nipper. When Francis played the records, the dog would run over to the phonograph and listen intently with a confused look about where the voice came from. Francis painted the scene and called it "His Master's Voice". The Gramophone Company bought the painting in 1899 for £100. The logo became so popular that, eight years later, the company changed its name to HMV. Nipper was immortalised with his own blue plaque in London in 2014.

NOT FRINGE

Last week, when I read that two spokespersons of the BJP had been subjected to disciplinary action (Ms Nupur Sharma was suspended and Mr Naveen Kumar was expelled from the party), I remembered the story of Nipper. Without meaning any disrespect, let me refer to the duo hereafter as Nupur and Naveen. On June 5, Nupur received a letter that began with the words, "You have expressed views contrary to the party's position on various matters". It left me wondering what is the BJP's position on matters concerning Muslims and Christians who are citizens of India? Nupur and Naveen are loyal foot soldiers of the BJP and they listen to their

leaders intently. Like many of you, Nupur and Naveen observe, read and listen. For example, in the 2012 election campaign in Gujarat, they heard Mr Narendra Modi say, "If we raise the self-respect and morale of 50 million Gujaratis, the schemes of Alis, Malis and Jamalis will not be able to do us any harm." They would have wondered who were the Alis, Malis and Jamalis, who are the "us" and why would the Alis, Malis and Jamalis draw up schemes that would harm "us"?

MEMORABLE WORDS

In the 2017 elections to the UP state legislature, the Prime Minister summed up his view of *sabka saath, sabka viswas* in a memorable speech: "If you create a *kabristan* (burial ground) in a village, then a *ashamsan* (cremation ground) should be created. There should be no discrimination." The words must have left a deep impression on Nupur and Naveen.

They heard the words of Mr Amit Shah on 11 April 2019. He said: "We will ensure implementation of NRC in the entire country. We will remove every single infiltrator from the country, except the Buddhists, Hindus and Sikhs... The BJP's pledge is to get rid of the infiltrators... The illegal immigrants are like termites. They are eating the grain that should go to the poor, they are taking our jobs." Nupur and Nareen must have been convinced that these were the right words uttered

by the right person in the right place.

On 15 December 2019, at an election rally in Jharkhand, the Prime Minister said that the people "creating trouble" were "identifiable by their clothes". Nupur and Naveen probably listened to that speech; and may have resolved to identify people by their clothes.

During the campaign in the elections to the UP legislative assembly, Mr Adityanath, the Chief Minister, repeatedly said, "The contest has moved much ahead. The fight is now 80 versus 20." Nupur and Naveen must have heard these words and it must have been burnt into their consciousness that the "20 per cent" was the enemy.

No one is in doubt about the BJP's position on Muslims that can be traced to M S Golwalkar ("Guruji" in the RSS). Muslims are not wanted in India or in India's Parliament and legislatures. Of the 375 BJP MPs in both Houses of Parliament, there will not be a single Muslim MP by the end of this month. The BJP did not field a single Muslim candidate in the elections to the 403-member UP assembly or the 182-member Gujarat assembly. In 11 states with a BJP chief minister, there is one Muslim minister. There has not been a Muslim as election commissioner in the ECI since Mr S Y Quaraishi retired in June 2012. The list is long.

In my view, Ms Nupur Sharma and Mr Naveen Kumar faithfully reflected the positions of the BJP on various matters.

They listened to the Master's voice and spoke in their own way. The BJP is modern India's The Gramophone Company.

DEAF EAR WON'T
WORK

The Opposition, including the Congress, had repeatedly warned the BJP and the government of the consequences of its anti-minority policies and phobia. They had warned the government on the anti-Romeo squads, the love jihad campaign, CAA, NRC, the abrogation of Article 370, the anti-conversion Bills in state legislatures, the raking up of non-issues like *hijab*, *halal* and *aazaan*, the Uniform Civil Code and many other issues that are clearly Islamophobic. The government turned a deaf ear. Now, when UAE and 15 other countries condemned the utterances of the BJP's spokespersons, the government is scrambling its defences. The heavy artillery of the Foreign Minister has been withdrawn and the deft draftsmanship of the Foreign Secretary brought into play.

The sad truth is that the Prime Minister has not uttered a word of condemnation. He thinks that he can ride this storm too. And life will go on. Truth is, political life will not go on in India to the exclusion of 202 million Muslims. This time, it is not the Opposition, but the world that has forewarned Mr Modi.

Fifth
COLUMN

TAVLEEN SINGH

Twitter @tavleen_singh



Religion
and politics
do not mix

THE STORM that two disgraced BJP spokesmen have caused because of their reckless comments about the Prophet of Islam has now begun to cause harm within India. Last week anger erupted outside mosques after Friday prayers in cities across the country. This is a fire that could burn down the edifice that Narendra Modi has so carefully constructed using the pillars of welfareism and nationalism. In the advertisements that promote his government's achievements, he says that he has worked for the nation's good like a 'member of the family'. Did he not notice that there were almost no Muslims in this family and that his party spokesmen just made this brutally clear?

If religion had not become part of our political discourse, none of this would have happened. But, because it has, we have a situation in which BJP spokespersons appear to have been encouraged to demean Islam. Wiser spokespersons would have known that to mock the Prophet of Islam was opening the doors to a discourse that can only end badly because then why should Hindus mind if the response is for Muslims to start mocking Hindu religious practices and gods? We may not have books that ordain punishments for unbelievers, but we have a caste system that kept a huge swathe of Hindus outside temples because priests decided that they were 'untouchable'.

What is essential as Nupur Sharma and Naveen Jindal may have discovered is for the official spokespersons of political parties to stay away from religious commentary. If this lesson has been learned from the shame and embarrassment their words have caused India, then some good may have come from this ugly incident. This seems unlikely, though, if you keep in mind that for months now, BJP spokespersons have been intentionally spreading hatred against Muslims and Islam. In achieving this end, they have been assisted by friendly, private news channels and by that vast theatre of absurdity and abuse that is offered by social media.

They have used it mostly to make the case that Indian Muslims are all traitors because they put religion above the nation. No opportunity has been missed to make this case. When COVID arrived in Delhi, preachers from Islamic countries were blamed for bringing it with them to a religious conference. Many spent months in jail. When the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) caused Muslims to protest a discriminatory amendment, they were called traitors. When Article 370 was abrogated abruptly and without consulting the Kashmiri people, those who protested in the Valley were also called traitors. The list goes on and on.

The campaign against Muslims and Islam by BJP officials has been most effective on Twitter and has a pattern. As someone who routinely points out that gathering in a mob to lynch some middle-aged Muslim farmer shows despicable cowardice, I am routinely bombarded with pictures of Hindus who have been killed by Muslims. The first tweet will usually accuse me for not speaking up when the victims are Hindu and then will come a barrage of tweets that attack me personally. The message I get is that if I continue to say that targeting a huge minority ceaselessly will end up harming India more than the Muslim community, then I am a traitor. The harm that it has done to India is now apparent.

The attack on the Prophet by spokespersons of India's ruling party has angered the leaders of Islamic countries with whom we do a great deal of business and from where Indian workers send half of our total remittances. These workers are among our poorest citizens. They already suffer discrimination and horrible working conditions but are forced to continue living their sad, lonely lives because it is not possible for them to earn that well in the home country in the jobs they do. After this episode, will they face more discrimination? Will some countries ban them from entering?

Clearly the Government of India was unprepared for the outrage that has come from nearly every Islamic country, or the fallout would have been more deftly handled. The Vice President of India was in Qatar when the insult to the Prophet started to cause a furor in the Islamic world. A banquet that was meant to honour him was also cancelled, ostensibly over a Covid incident. Surely, the poor man could have been given some advance warning. Then came that description of official spokesmen of the ruling party as 'fringe elements', which will go down as one of the silliest responses in diplomatic history.

The finale has been abject apologies from India on behalf of the BJP, but will the BJP learn any lessons from shaming Bharat Mata in this way? Will it tell its spokesmen to avoid attacking Islam in the manner they have so far? Will they turn down the hate campaign against Muslims that has now begun to create riots across the country? If these things happen it is possible that a small amount of good can come from this very unpleasant episode. But Nupur Sharma is on record saying that after she made her remarks about the Prophet, she was assured by senior BJP leaders that they would support her. This means that the campaign of hatred against Muslims will continue until it reaches a point when it causes another international embarrassment for India. What it will do to the fabric of Indian society is another story altogether.

Need to create, awaken
symbols of Dalit culture

Dalitality

MRUDUL NILE



WHILE DALITS in Maharashtra and particularly Mumbai observe the golden jubilee of the Dalit Panthers, the current generation, who are not a witness to the movement, are gasping in the dark to identify who and which party represents their political aspirations.

Dalit politics in Maharashtra has largely been revolving around the Republican Party of India, which was established by the post-Ambedkar leadership. Dr Ambedkar had indicated his desire to form such a party. But immediately after the establishment of the party, it was broken into factions that continue even today. On the other hand, another popular faction, Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi, too, could not send its representatives to Lok Sabha or the state Assembly in recent elections.

Keeping this background in mind, a study was conducted by me and Shweta Ahire, doctoral scholar at the Department of Civics and Politics, University of Mumbai, to assess political assertion in the Dalit ghettos of Matunga Labour Camp, Ramabai Ambedkar Nagar, P L Lokhande Marg and Shell Colony in Mumbai, alongside pilot work in Marathwada's Aurangabad.

The objective of the study was to largely assess and understand if political assertion depends on socio-economic and cultural factors. The study revealed that political assertion of Dalits in Mumbai is quite low. Scales were developed to assess socio-economic assertion with urban migration, cultural assertion with Ambedkarism, and political assertion with participating in Dalit movements and creating an alliance between the Left and Ambedkarites.

It was revealed that Dalits perceive electoral politics in isolation and do not link it to socio-economic and cultural development of the community. As a result, organising as a political bloc remains absent in the Dalit ghettos. This remains one of the most important factors responsible for the lack of manifestation of culturalisation.

Culturalisation for the purpose of this study means translation of symbols (for instance, the Bhima Koregoan war memorial or the Chaudar lake in Mahad) into a

constructed cultural identity. A better substantiation would be that one observes a large gathering of the Dalit community on the Mahaparinirvan Day on December 6 every year at Chaityabhoomi. However, this emotive element fails to get translated into political outcomes.

Culturalisation is often linked to consciousness. The Dalit community which is considered to be one of the most literate communities, but with no social capital does not have enough opportunities in the current economic system. The common Dalit struggles for his two square meals; the time to develop consciousness and then to translate it into culturalisation remains a slow process.

When Dr Ambedkar converted to Buddhism, he also gave a separate identity (out of the Hindu fold) to the erstwhile untouchables or Dalits. Religion generally generates a separate culture or a community creates new symbols of culture, thus a constructed cultural identity is formed. Moreover, as current politics anchors itself on religion, Buddhism emerges not only as a religious identity but also a political alternative to which the political aspirations are anchored. This cultural identity must be manifested in the modern state at different times, especially during elections.

It was precisely this that the Dalit Panthers achieved. Then young leaders of the Dalit Panthers, Namdeo Dhasal, Arjun Dangle, Raja Dhale and J V Pawar penned the miseries of the Dalit community through their writings, poetry etc, and thus attempted to fill the cultural vacuum that was much needed for the Dalit solidarity. The movement, though, was short lived; its inspiration continues to inspire.

Communities with a history of resistance and struggle celebrate the scars of such struggle which inspires its people. These scars often become the symbols of culture.

Therefore, it is important for the Dalit political parties and candidates to recalibrate political strategy for immediate gains in the elections. But at the same time, it is essential that the cultural movement and the consciousness towards cultural objects (memorials and sites of history of resistance) be manufactured for the Dalit solidarity and consolidation of votes.

A rational political community must be developed in the society so that the Dalit issues are not neglected by the ruling dispensations.

The writer is a professor of civics & politics at the University of Mumbai

history

HEADLINE

NIRUPAMA SUBRAMANIAN



FEW PHOTOGRAPHS can claim to have captured the exact moment. Even Henri Cartier-Bresson, the master, said finally it was all down to luck. And luck was with Sena Vidanagama on July 30, 1987.

Vidanagama, who passed away on June 6, at the age of 76, was a staff photographer at the Sri Lankan government-owned Lake House publications whose stable of newspapers include the *Daily News*. He and Amal Jayasinghe, then a *Daily News* reporter, were assigned to cover Rajiv Gandhi's departure from Sri Lanka a day after the signing of the India-Sri Lanka Accord. Vidanagama's black-and-white photograph of what happened that day, taken with an Asahi Pentax, would earn it — and Vidanagama — a place in the pantheon of journalism's greatest moments.

The portents around the Accord were hardly propitious. The news that Indian soldiers were to be stationed in the Tamil-dominated Northeast had already created an uproar in Sri Lanka's Sinhala-dominated south. Nationalist anger against the Indian intervention — the training of Sri Lankan militants by India, an IAF food drop over Jaffna in June 1987 at a time Sri Lankan forces had laid siege to the northern peninsula and believed they were on the verge of victory, the culmination in the landing of Indian troops — would lead to a full-scale insurgency over the next three years.

On July 28, a day before the Accord was signed, 19 people were killed in Colombo as police opened fire at protesters. In Delhi, there was uncertainty about Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's two-day visit to sign the agreement. But it was decided that the agreement must be signed as scheduled.

On July 29, Colombo was under curfew. A contingent of 10,000 Buddhist monks gathered to march to the airport to protest when Gandhi arrived. As they broke the security cordon, the police fired on them, killing five. Gandhi was accompanied by wife Sonia. They arrived with their own bullet-proof car and a large security contingent, and drove straight to a ceremonial welcome at the Galle Face Green. PM Ranasinghe Premadasa was conspicuous by his absence. The agreement was signed later in the day at the presidential palace, further up the road. On July 30, as Gandhi prepared to fly back to Delhi, he would leave behind an angry nation — in the north, the LTTE had rejected the agreement.

At the *Daily News*, Jayasinghe and Vidanagama were assigned to cover the departure ceremony. "It was not a high-prior-

The shot of Rajiv getting
hit — history in a frame



The photograph shot by Sena Vidanagama (left) of Rajiv Gandhi being assaulted in Colombo

ity assignment, just a ceremonial event," Jayasinghe, who later headed the Colombo bureau of the AFP, recalled.

As a band played, Gandhi inspected the navy line up. A sailor stepped out just after Gandhi had passed him and brought his rifle butt down on the PM. Gandhi ducked, looking back as he did, and took the hit on his shoulder. Within minutes, he was back beaming on the ceremonial dais with Sonia, President J R Jayewardene and the First Lady. The 22-year-old sailor, Wijemuni Vijitha Rohana de Silva, was caught and eventually sentenced to seven years in prison. He was released after a couple of years following a pardon by Premadasa who had become President by then.

Vidanagama was the only photographer to capture the instant of the attack in a still shot, remarkably full of movement — Gandhi ducking, Wijemuni's rifle butt swinging down on his shoulder, the guardsman by Gandhi's side leaning to one side.

Remember, that this was years before the first digital camera made its appearance. Back then, cameras had to be loaded with film, and after every shot, a lever cranked to move the film to the next frame. A photographer could not be sure of the image he had captured before the film was developed and the negatives were hung up to dry.

Thulasi Muttulingam, an ex-*Daily News* staffer, has recounted in a blog post an interview of Sena in which he details how he took the shot from a six-foot-high media dais on which all the vantage points had been taken up by international photographers and the Indian and Sri Lankan official TV cameras. But everyone thought the assignment was done after clicking photos of Gandhi's first

few steps at the guard of honour, and had let their cameras down.

"I too had finished clicking Rajiv Gandhi inspecting the Guard of Honour but kept watching him as he moved down the line of sailors. I acted reflexively when I saw one of the men move from the orderly line of sailors that Gandhi was inspecting. I really had no time to understand or process what was happening. I simply raised my camera and clicked. At the back of my mind, I had a vague notion that the sailor was fainting but after all, even that was news. I had no idea at that point that I was clicking an assault. It all happened very fast... If I had had a camera with today's technology, I could have taken all these shots but I had to crank my Asahi Pentax before each new shot, to focus properly and thus lost out on quite a few [moments]. In those days you couldn't click pictures one after the other like you can now."

With the reel pushed into his socks, Vidanagama ran with Amal all the way to Lake House. But it was hardly certain that the photograph would see the light of day. There was a standoff between the editor and the Lake House boss, who was also an adviser to the President.

The President had already told the media that it was an accident — Wijemuni, the attacking sailor, had fallen from a heatstroke. This was the story the Sri Lankan government wanted to retain. Vidanagama's photographs showed otherwise.

The Indian side too wanted to play down the incident, writes ANI chairman Prem Prakash in his book, *Reporting India*. On the plane back to Delhi, as he was telling the rest of the back pack about the incident, the Prime Minister's media adviser, H Y Sharada Prasad, told him not to spread "misinformation" and that "there was no such incident". Amid protests from the journalists, Gandhi watched the tape on the flight. Prakash told him the entire international press corps was certain to have captured the incident. Both sides realised quickly it was pointless to hide the facts.

Sena's photo was on the front page of not just the *Daily News* but papers across the world. As for Wijemuni, he tried his hand at politics, turned astrologer and was arrested once again in 2018 for a prediction that there would be an attempt on the life of then President Maithripala Sirisena.

Vidanagama's photograph became the definitive image of the attack. I treasure a copy given to me by the photographer as a piece of journalistic excellence.

On the
LOOSE

LEHERKALA

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THE ONLY time I've heard the word "sologamy" was when I came across articles on Kshama Bindu, the 24-year-old from Vadodara, who created a bit of a stir by announcing that she plans to marry herself. The groomless wedding on June 8 featured the full nine yards, from *phasas* and *sindoor*. She is also allegedly heading on a solo honeymoon. Bindu, who identifies as bisexual, says she is motivated to inspire those who are tired of being made to feel incomplete, if not married. According to the Hindu Marriage Act, there have to be two people in a marriage and "sologamy" does not pass legal scrutiny. In reports published in several newspapers, the Vadodara BJP city chief

Bride and without prejudice

Sunita Shukla has called Bindu "mentally ill", saying they will not permit her to perform her wedding in a temple.

It's easy to dismiss Bindu's gimmicky idea as an attention-seeking tactic — there are monetary benefits to growing her 25,000+ Instagram followers and getting talked about on Twitter. Except, her fantasy to be a bride in a fairy tale ceremony (minus the painful pitfalls of commitment) is one secretly shared by many of this generation, who view the concept of lifelong wedded bliss a tad suspiciously. Till Death Do Us Part. Really? Worldwide, marriage is on a downward trajectory. But should that mean one is denied a magical Cinderella moment, of being the centre of attraction in the greatest celebration of love ever invented — a wedding? To the bemused reactions flooding the Internet, Bindu stated, "I don't require a Prince

Charming because I am my own queen. I want the wedding day, not the next day".

Bindu's bold wedding deserves newspaper space only because too many women wait around for grand, sweep-in gestures by men: the bended knee proposal with the ubiquitous diamond ring, drilled into our psyche by cheesy Hollywood films. India hasn't escaped the cultural contagion of over-the-top nuptials — a man has proposed during an important cricket match, the girl's reaction aired on live television. (It's not enough to show you're rich, you need to be creative too.)

The theatrics around modern Indian weddings feel contrived since everything is about documenting perfection for the world. Along comes a girl who acknowledges the lure of the phone circus, conveniently disposes of (arguably) the

biggest challenge a marriage brings — a forever fixture, the partner. From a cynical perspective, Bindu's is a unique case of having your cake and eating it too.

More power to someone for channeling their inner Oscar Wilde, who observed that learning to love oneself is the beginning of a lifelong romance. It's true that people come and go, so best be your own companion. Besides, is it really so terrible to suspend reality and indulge in drama for one day, knowing fully well that fundamentally, nothing's changing? Perhaps what people find most offensive about Bindu's radical act of self-love (disregarding a significant other) is her confident assertion that there can be several ways to live — and that they are all correct. One has to wonder, however, if cherry-picking the good out of matrimony, the clothes, the ceremony and

traditions, and avoiding risk at all costs, is an even more profound delusion than the long and happy monogamous marriage.

Acting on principles of self-preservation works if one is trapped in a war zone but to feel the full adrenaline impact of romance requires relinquishing control. The most meaningful moments in our lives involve the lovely surprise of rationality being swept away by feelings. To love another, there is a risk of humiliation but to marry yourself because the alternative is fraught with danger means not really living at all. As a concept, "sologamy" is bittersweet, in keeping with these times where destructibility is valued over vulnerability. It makes for a good chuckle, if it was not so sad that some will never know what the world looks like from a place of enthrallment.

ECONOMY

LATEST ROUND OF RBI SURVEYS

Households see high prices over next 3 mths; consumer confidence rises

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, JUNE 11

INFLATION FOR the current period is expected to increase by 40 basis points (bps) to 10.1 per cent when compared to the March 2022 round of the survey, according to the Households' Inflation Expectations Survey conducted by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for May.

Households' median inflation perception has increased by 10 bps and 30 bps for three months and one year ahead periods, respectively, says the survey conducted among 3,036 households across the country.

"Majority of the households expect general prices and inflation to remain high over three

EXPLAINED
Essential spending may rise

EVEN AS the RBI raised upwards its inflation projection in its latest monetary policy meet, households — in spite of higher prices — expect their expenditure over the next year to rise, especially in the essential category, the latest survey showed.

months and one year ahead horizons," the RBI survey said. Expectations for overall price and inflation over next one year were in sync with those for non-

food products and cost of services, while three months ahead expectations were generally more aligned to those for food products and non-food commodities, it said.

The Reserve Bank's bi-monthly monetary policy has forecast that inflation is expected to be above 7 per cent — much above the banking regulator's comfort level — in the first two quarters of the current fiscal.

The RBI's medium-term target for consumer price index (CPI) inflation is 4 per cent within a band of plus or minus 2 per cent.

Unveiling the bi-monthly policy review last week, the Monetary Policy Committee of the RBI projected an inflation of 7.5 per cent in the June quarter

and 7.4 per cent in the September quarter. The central bank expects inflation at 6.2 per cent in the December quarter and 5.8 per cent in March 2023.

According to the RBI's Consumer Confidence Survey, the consumer confidence index for May improved to 75.9, an improvement from 71.7 in March. However, it is still in the negative territory. This indicates consumers being with negative sentiments with signs of improvement compared to last year. The future price expectations index stood at 113 for May, while in March it was 115.2.

If the consumer confidence index is below 100, then it is in the pessimistic territory while above 100 points to optimism. "Consumer confidence for

the current period has been consistently improving since July 2021; the sentiments on the key parameters like employment and household income improved further in the latest round of the survey, though they remained in a pessimistic zone," the RBI survey said.

One year ahead outlook of households remained in growth terrain despite marginal moderation in sentiments in the latest survey round, it added.

According to the survey, households assessed a rise in their current spending and expected it to increase further over the next one year; they expected higher essential spending, whereas the sentiments on non-essential spending remained downbeat.

INTERVIEW WITH CHAIRPERSON, CENTRAL BOARD OF DIRECT TAXES

'Hoping for more direct tax than expectations this fiscal; looking at crypto concerns'



Sangeeta Singh *Express*

In a taxman's language, most of the time, it's not evasion of tax by the common man. Evasion is actually a very strong word in the taxman's language"

DIRECT TAX revenue trends are encouraging so far and the tax department is hoping to collect more than the Budget estimates, Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) Chairperson SANGEETA SINGH said in an interview to MAYURA JANWALKAR. Taking note of the concerns raised for the workings of the taxation law for virtual digital assets, Singh said the Department is "looking at those concerns" and the intent of the soon-to-be-released guidelines is to explain the issue further. Edited excerpts:

The share of direct taxes is expected to increase. How are you anticipating the revenue growth for FY23? Is it expected to surpass Budget targets even this fiscal?

In the last financial year, we collected Rs 14.09 lakh crore. The Budget expectation for this year is Rs 14.2 lakh crore as of now. We are hoping and expecting we will collect much more than that. The trends until now are encouraging us to go in that way. As a whole, if you see, apart from this inflation and a couple of things that have happened, the trend seems to be going fine in the economy in April and May. So the trends are encouraging and we hope that we will be able to collect much more taxes than the last financial year.

The Income Tax Department has talked about increasing the tax base...

When we say increasing the tax base, we mean that the people who are filing returns should be much more. Last financial year, we got a total of 7.14 crore returns, which was much higher than the number we got the year prior. When we say we expect to widen the tax base, we expect that the people whose income becomes taxable would be filing their returns, and comply with the tax laws. That is the widening of the tax base. To address that, we do outreach programmes, we take out CDs, we have Samvaad channel on YouTube where our officers explain what the provisions are, how to file returns, how do we

process them, how returns are issued, what you mean by tax deductions, which we do in physical and online outreach programmes too. What we also do is share the information we have about the taxpayer with that taxpayer. When you are on portals, we have the Annual Information Statement (AIS) in which we show you what information we have about your transactions, the taxes you've paid, your savings bank interest.

If you have taxable income and if you have not disclosed those activities — sometimes it's sheer forgetfulness, you don't remember a transaction has happened — you can check all that and file your returns. In the recent Budget 2022, we have a provision called updated return ... you file your return of income, but if you are sharing the information with you and if you find that you have omitted something which should have been included in return, you can update your return. We're bringing in provisions which make it easier for a taxpayer to rectify mistakes or omissions in their returns. Next step we will be going on is pre-filing income tax returns. Not for everyone, because business people are slightly on a different footing than a salaried person. We are gradually going to stepwise increase to the next level so that it becomes simpler for a taxpayer to file their returns.

Increased monitoring of transactions is happening through the AIS. Are there categories/segments that are showing higher tax evasion?

In a taxman's language, most of the time, it's not evasion of tax

by the common man. Evasion is actually a very strong word in the taxman's language. People sometimes do not understand, sometimes they do not have the right advice, and sometimes for a salaried person who doesn't actively go on to deal with shares and all it's just forgetfulness. For all of those, this information sharing, provisions of revising your returns, updating your return are helpful provisions. However much you simplify, there will be some amount of complexity in it. We've also seen many times people not realising that even if their tax has been deducted at source, the compliance is to file a return.

The Income Tax Department on Wednesday clarified there is no change in the rate of taxation on virtual digital assets (cryptocurrency) and it will continue to be 1 per cent and not 0.1 per cent. Are any changes being planned for the tax structure for cryptocurrency?

I cannot speak on that. You will get to know when we issue our guidelines. As you know, the intention is to explain further on it but not at present.

Experts are saying that for virtual digital assets (VDAs), the wordings in the law are so vague, and it will lend itself to litigation. Are any steps being taken to tighten definitions?

We have to wait until the documentation is out. A lot of concerns have been expressed in respect of the VDA. We are looking at those concerns.

Full interview on www.indianexpress.com

Economy has shown remarkable resilience: CEA



V ANANTHA NAGESWARAN
Chief Economic Adviser *PTI file*

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, JUNE 11

INDIA HAS displayed remarkable resilience in recovery after a Covid-induced slump in growth, Chief Economic Adviser (CEA) V Anantha Nageswaran said on Saturday. The country has also managed to keep price pressure under check at a time when even developed nations are grappling with runaway inflation, he added.

Addressing an event on 'Indian Economy: Prospects, Challenges and Action Points' at Haryana Institute of Public Administration, the CEA stressed that key indicators of the economy have crossed their pre-pandemic levels. The latest GDP data showed real growth in FY22 exceeded the pre-pandemic (FY20) level by 1.5 per cent. "Today, we have a strong revival of private investment, and the country has comfortable forex reserves to withstand turbulence in the international currency market. The exponential growth of digital payments in India during the last few years is an indication of fast changes in the informal sector," Nageswaran added. **FE**

'Despite three significant Covid waves, India's economy recovered strongly'

The Indian economy has rebounded strongly despite three significant waves of the Covid-19 pandemic, the US Treasury said in a semi-annual report to the US Congress

ACUTE SECOND WAVE through the middle of 2021 weighed heavily on India's growth, delaying its economic recovery, the US Treasury report said

ACCELERATION OF VACCINATION ROLLOUT in the second half of last year, however, helped economic activity rebound strongly

44%: Share of India's population fully vaccinated, as of 2021-end

PRE-PANDEMIC LEVELS OF OUTPUT returned in second quarter of 2021, after contracting 7% in 2020, with full year 2021 growth of 8%

THIRD MAJOR OUTBREAK driven by Omicron variant was seen since the beginning of

2022, but the number of deaths and broader economic fallout has been limited



Gradual unwind by RBI: According to the US Treasury, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) kept its key policy rates unchanged at 4% since May 2020, but in January 2021 it began to gradually unwind the extraordinary liquidity measures designed to support growth during the early part of the pandemic

DHFL administrator gets RBI nod to be RBL Bank MD-CEO

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, JUNE 11

THE RESERVE Bank of India (RBI) has cleared the appointment of R Subramaniakumar as managing director and chief executive officer of RBL Bank for a period of three years, the lender said on Saturday. Subramaniakumar has earlier overseen the insolvency process of Dewan Housing Finance Corporation (DHFL) in

his capacity as administrator.

"Please note that a meeting of the board of directors of the bank will be convened in due course upon the completion of requisite formalities, inter alia to approve the appointment of Mr R Subramaniakumar as an additional director and as the managing director & CEO of the bank and the approval of the shareholders shall be obtained thereafter as per the applicable provisions of the Companies Act, 2013

and Sebi listing regulations," RBL Bank said in a communication to the exchanges.

The bank received the communication approving Subramaniakumar's appointment from the RBI on Friday. Subramaniakumar has 40 years of experience as a banker.

He started his career at Punjab National Bank (PNB) in 1980 and went on to head business transformation at the bank for three years. **FE**

Apple to ease payments for Dutch dating app developers

REUTERS
NEW YORK, JUNE 11

APPLE INC on Friday laid out how developers of dating apps offered in the Netherlands can skip Apple's in-app payment systems, a closely watched step by the iPhone maker in the face of global antitrust concerns about its control over the mobile app industry.

Apple has long mandated use of its in-app payment system, which charges commissions of up to 30 per cent that some developers like Tinder owner Match Group Inc have argued are too high. The Dutch Authority for Consumers and Markets (ACM) last year ruled that Apple's rules violated Dutch competition laws in the dating app market and required Apple to allow those developers to use third-party payment processors.

Investors are watching the developments in the Dutch antitrust case for the impact they could have on Apple's App Store revenues.



Tesla CEO Elon Musk. The company's stock has fallen 40% after Musk unveiled his stake in Twitter. *Reuters file*

August 4. If approved, it would be the company's first such action after a five-for-one split in August 2020.

Tesla said the split would enable its employees to "have more flexibility in managing their equity" and make its stock "more accessible to our retail shareholders." Alphabet Inc, Apple Inc and Amazon.com Inc have also recently split their shares.

While a split has no bearing on a company's fundamentals, it could buoy the share price by making it easier for a wider range of investors to own the stock. **REUTERS**

Tesla to seek investor nod for 3:1 stock split

AKASH SRIRAM & HYUNJOO JIN
BENGALURU, JUNE 11

ELECTRIC VEHICLE maker Tesla Inc on Friday proposed a three-to-one stock split, making its shares more affordable following recent sell-offs of the most valuable automaker.

The company also said Oracle Corp co-founder Larry Ellison, a friend of Tesla chief executive officer Elon Musk, will not stand for re-election to Tesla's board when his term ends at this year's shareholder meeting.

Ellison is among the top investors who have promised funding toward Musk's \$44 billion acquisition of social media firm Twitter Inc.

Shares of Austin, Texas-based Tesla rose more than 1 per cent in extended trading on Friday. They have fallen nearly 40 per cent since Musk unveiled his stake in Twitter in early April, hurt in part by a strict lockdown in Shanghai that has affected Tesla's production.

Shareholders will vote on Tesla's proposed stock split on

12TH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE OF WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION FROM JUNE 12-15 WTO meet: India to pitch 'fair, just outcome'

BANIKINKAR PATTANAYAK
NEW DELHI, JUNE 11

ON THE eve of the 12th ministerial conference (MC) of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Geneva, India on Saturday said it will pitch for "fair, just and transparent discussions and outcome" at the multilateral body, amid persisting differences between the developing and the developed countries on a broad range of contentious issues.

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal will lead the Indian delegation for the ministerial

The key areas of discussions and negotiations will include the 164-member WTO's response to the pandemic, fishery subsidies, agriculture issues, including public stockholding for food security, reforms at the multilateral body and a moratorium on custom duties on electronic transmission, as per the Commerce Ministry.

For its part, New Delhi will push for a permanent solution to the issue of public stockholding of grains for its food security and strive to protect the interests of farmers and fishermen at the ministerial.

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal will lead the Indian delegation for the ministerial, which will be held

In historic first, US gasoline average price tops \$5/gallon

LAURA SANICOLA
NEW YORK, JUNE 11

THE PRICE of US gasoline averaged more than \$5 a gallon for the first time on Saturday, data from the AAA showed, extending a surge in fuel costs that is driving rising inflation. The national average price for regular unleaded gas rose to \$5.004 a gallon on June 11 from \$4.986 a day earlier, AAA data showed.

High gasoline prices are a headache for President Joe Biden and congressional Democrats as they struggle to maintain their slim control of Congress with midterm elections coming up in November. Biden has pulled on numerous levers to try to lower prices, including a record release of barrels from US strategic reserves, waivers on rules for producing summer gasoline, and leaning on major OPEC countries to boost output.

Yet fuel prices have been surging around the world due to a combination of rebounding demand, sanctions on oil producer Russia after its invasion of



High gas prices shown in Los Angeles. The US average price for regular unleaded gas hit \$5.004 a gallon on June 11. *AP file*

Ukraine and a squeeze on refining capacity.

US road travel, however, has remained relatively strong, just a couple of percentage points below pre-pandemic levels, even as prices have risen.

Still, economists expect demand may start to decline if prices remain above \$5 a barrel for a sustained period.

Adjusting for inflation, the US gasoline average is still approximately 8 per cent below June 2008 highs around \$5.41 a gallon, as per US Energy Department figures. **REUTERS**

Biden warns inflation could last 'for a while'

California: US President Joe Biden said inflation could last "for a while" as data showed that politically sensitive price pressures unexpectedly accelerated in recent weeks. "We're gonna live with this inflation for a while," he said at a fundraising event. **REUTERS**

Strengthening NFRA: Govt examining panel proposals

New Delhi: The Centre on Saturday said it is committed to strengthening the working of the National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA), the independent regulatory body set up under the Corporate Affairs Ministry for the auditing profession.

Addressing an event organised by the NFRA as part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) celebrations, Ministry of Corporate Affairs Secretary Rajesh Verma said, "We need to see what more needs to be done to strengthen NFRA to enable it to discharge its duties effectively" as well as strengthen the mandates of protecting the public interests.

"The government is continuously focussed on further strengthening NFRA and in the process we are also looking into the recommendations of the Company Law Committee with regard to financial and operational autonomy of NFRA," Verma added. During his speech, he also traced the evolution of NFRA, which was established in October 2018. **ENS, WITH PTI**



ARTS etc

The Body as a Language

Actor K Gopalan on his Hindi-film debut with Anamika Haksar, his journey in theatre and the pursuit of abstraction in art



SPOTLIGHT

To The Place I Belong

Danish filmmaker Jonas Poher Rasmussen on his Oscar-nominated documentary *Flee* and how laughter creates connections

Rinku Ghosh

WHEN RANJANI Krishnaswamy was thinking about a storyboard for jewellery brand Tanishq's Mother's Day campaign, she didn't want a saccharine concept of the forever giver, nurturer and restorer. She wanted to keep it real and honest. And she found it from women around her, among consumers and colleagues. The brand's general manager (marketing) figured that maternity was a liability for working women, who got passed over for promotions, sidetracked from prized projects or simply offloaded if they wanted to take a longer break for their children. That's when she decided to flip the narrative of denial.

Tanishq's latest TV commercial breaks the "maternity jinx" at the workplace as its protagonist, who had quit her top job to care for her newborn for 14 months, decides to re-apply for another job after a break. When the interviewer asks her why there was a gap in her résumé, she simply says she had devoted herself to a start-up project, Life Bootcamp Corp., that required her to be on the job 24x7. A solo enterprise, she was leader and multi-tasker all at once. And after 14 months, the start-up could run on its own with a little help from a partner. She then shows a picture of her start-up unit, her child and husband. Needless to say, she was hired, as she had, in under a minute, convinced the board how maternity had helped her top up her skill set. It was indeed a bootcamp in leadership and modern management.

"With 7.5 million views (on YouTube) and countless shares, the sentiment has definitely caught on and we are getting responses from both men and women. The fact that the protagonist calls her husband a partner has definitely acknowledged the need for gender parity in caregiving roles," says Bengaluru-based Krishnaswamy, 44. She herself has lived through the post-maternity returnee phase determinedly in her career. "Agreed, women need to be given a fair chance and a level-playing field and organisations have to build that culture. But women tend to be understated and this inhibition limits us. I never played on the backfoot. Motherhood chisels you as a professional because it springs up life force, empathy, collaboration, dedication. And if she has come back, know that a woman is as keen and fierce to get ahead," she says.

Of course, it's not at all hunky dory. There's stone-cold seriousness in some of the responses. Like the one about "how it looks good in a film and not so much in reality, where a gap-year mom has to reconcile to reduced roles vis-à-vis male counterparts who have overtaken her space." Or how the recruiter is almost always male in the absence of many women at the top of the corporate ladder. Or, distressing experiences of a mother, who has to pump breastmilk for her child, to be fed by the nanny, leave early for work, run against time, not hang out with colleagues, all this, just so that she can stay one up in the productivity game. It is a 100m dash for a life-long marathon that many don't sign up for.

This angst was borne out by the Genpact Centre for Women's Leadership in their 2018 study, which said 50 per cent of working women in India left their jobs to take care of their children at 30. Even among those who returned, "a huge fraction dropped out within four months of rejoining." After becoming mothers, "only 27 per cent of women advanced in their careers... Of the women who returned to employment, a meagre 16 per cent advanced to hold senior leadership positions."

While most major corporations have enabling policies and schemes in place, they are not uniform and don't percolate down to middle and lower-middle level companies. For example, companies such as the Tata Group, Hindustan Unilever and IBM have crèches, flexi-hours, negotiable leave patterns and also pick up the tabs for the



ILLUSTRATION: SUVAJIT DEY

LET'S GET THE MOMS BACK

The hand that rocks the cradle may not rule the corporate world yet but company policies and campaigns are helping new mothers get their rightful place back, in the boardroom and on office floors

caregiver when a new mother is travelling. Restaurant aggregator and food delivery company Zomato has a unique support system, assigning an employee at the workplace to assist a new mother at home so that she is not required to be physically present. But, as Ritu Dewan, 70, founder-member, Centre of Gender Economics, says, "The other extreme is that in public organisations, the allocation for maternity schemes and crèches has come down. Besides, when you are encouraging

women to work from home, it is a clever way to deny her maternity benefits." And that's where the male mindset, the one that does things to look progressive, inherently looks at caregiving and family responsibility as a negotiable cost overhead. "Paternity leave is a progressive policy and maternity leave is like a shabby add-on. We have to now redefine maternity as a fundamental economic right because women are birthing a nation's future

workforce," adds Mumbai-based Dewan. While more women have rejoined the workplace and more fathers come forward to take up role responsibilities, gender equivalence is still a far cry. "This is a larger issue of closing the gap between deliverables and expectation. In a post-COVID world, when competition is cut-throat and the result has to be instantaneous, smaller companies like MSMEs cannot afford to be accommodative



STRENGTH OF A WOMAN

(Clockwise from above left) Sudha Shivkumar; Jayanti Dalmia; Ranjani Krishnaswamy; Farzana Haque

despite their best intentions," says Sudha Shivkumar, senior vice president, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) Ladies Organisation (FLO), who has traversed both sides of the divide. "Since the benefits are standardised for every category of woman employee, they become a deterrent for rationalising cost overruns with narrower margins," she says. So, while the Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017, allows women a 26-week paid leave after childbirth, its progressive intent is actually regressing women.

"Also, when mothers come back, people think they will resume from where they left without trusting that she has geared herself for the leap. So, we need a gap-management structure where you can build processes to handle maternity breaks. Then there's social decision-making. In my years of working, I have seen aggression and dominance in both genders. So, both men and women have to jointly decide how willing they are to shoulder spousal roles, synergise priorities and not blame or overload the other. And as PepsiCo's former CEO Indra Nooyi once told me, team-playing is as important at home as it is at the workplace. There has to be a trustworthy support, back-up matrix and the willingness to delegate tasks. Besides, what you can afford, others can't.

Transition has to happen along many pathways," says Chennai-based Shivkumar, 60.

Farzana Haque, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) leadership, board member and mentor, fell victim to social stereotypes despite working her way up in a company that has, perhaps, the most enabling environment. "I was speaking at Davos after I had delivered my son. Many asked me, 'who's looking after your child?' Nobody asked my male colleague, who also had a son, that question. Because it is assumed that male colleagues have a wife or mother taking care of things back home. We forget talent is genderless. Women fall out of the workforce because of social pressures. Caregiving is just thrust on them when everyone in the family has a moral responsibility to keep the unit together," she says. Once women get family support, get back into the workforce and make it to the boardroom by virtue of their profit-generating abilities, they will make sure that policies work and make new ones if they don't.

Haque, who encourages her women employees to stay the course and has expanded TCS' global footprint that way, says, "Mothers switch off videos during Zoom calls because they don't want to look unkempt, struggling as they are between chores and tending to their young. I've been working for 24 years, same company, same industry, and it's alarming that in 2022, highly qualified and able women give up despite processes."

Women need inclusion and acknowledgment of their abilities, not sympathy for birthing a child. As Haque says, "A woman needs maternity leave to heal her body and steady her child. Yet, when she comes back, people say, 'let's give her something easy to do.' No, give her something challenging to do, so she knows she's an A-plus performer. If she has left a child back home, she knows it's for a higher good and cause." As one of the decision-makers on the TCS board, she has hired a lot of women who go abroad to work, which has also influenced their pay packages. "Every time a woman employee in TCS has come back and educated women in her family, we have made sure that her family or even extended family is well supported with her salary," says Haque.

As post-maternity attrition has gone up to 45 per cent after lockdown, Delhi-based Jayanti Dalmia, president, FLO, worries that women hold just 17.1 per cent of the board seats in India (according to audit company Deloitte's report this year). This number increased by just 9.4 per cent from 2014, when the Companies Act, 2013, made it mandatory to have one woman member on every board. So, as leader of a women's collective, she is drafting a set of best practices that allows the continuity of women in the workspace and reduces the gender-wealth gap. "There are models that have worked in the West but have to be adapted to India. Iceland, for instance, gives a three-month leave to both parents and rotates the next three months between both. Singapore has eight weeks of paid leave by the company and another eight weeks provided for by public funds. Australia has a generous parental paid-leave policy. The idea is to ensure a gender-neutral parenting role besides ensuring wider day-care infrastructure so that we have the right child-rearing atmosphere," says Dalmia, 62.

But at 60, Hyderabad-based Uma Chigurupati, executive director, pharmaceutical company Granules India Ltd, a returnee mother who eventually started a business with her husband, wonders if women should subject their competency to male suppositions. "Why work for anybody else at all? Maternity prepares a woman for the worst challenges and firms up their commitment. It's the fastest way to acquire skills. So why not start out on one's own?" Women have certainly turned entrepreneurial with start-ups, many have at least one woman in their founding team. Yet this can't be an option. Simply because it makes maternity look like a job disqualifier. And it isn't. As author Maria Shriver said, "Having kids — the responsibility of rearing good, kind, ethical, responsible human beings — is the biggest job anyone can embark on."

Companies such as the Tata Group, Hindustan Lever and IBM pick up the tabs for the caregiver when a new mother is travelling

While women have rejoined work and fathers take on responsibilities, gender equivalence is still a far cry

DOWN IN JUNGLELAND



Ranjit Lal

Ranjit Lal is an author, environmentalist and bird watcher

Creature of Nature

When mountains are out of reach, beaches come to one’s rescue

IT’S FUNNY how often your own “pearls of wisdom” can come back and bite you in the bum! I’ve hectored people long and loud about how they blunder about in the most beautiful natural landscapes and really see nothing at all (unless it’s tigers, lions, elephants and anything plus-size). Many lucky people have houses in lovely locales to which they escape to and still remain blind.

Well, having lived in landlocked Delhi for more than 40 years now, I would take off to the mountains as often as possible too — usually once a year. Actually, we’ve been traipsing off to the mountains ever since I could remember: when we lived in Madras back in the ‘60s, it was Ooty and when we lived in Bombay (for 15 years), it was Mahabaleshwar, of course (poor Matheran got left out somehow). After being roasted in the plains, there’s nothing quite like the first whiff of cool mountain air against your cheek, like that first gulp of chilled beer on a parched day. For a long while, it was just being “one with nature” that was the main attraction. Then I got interested in birds.

Hill and forest birds are shy and quicksilver restless and can be difficult to wrinkle out. I was also interested in wildlife in general, so trips to sanctuaries and national parks were extra special, if few and far between. In Corbett, years ago, we were confronted by a “mad makhna”, who cocked his head and flapped his ears irritably as we fled back to the matchstick *machan* and awaited our pick-up elephants to arrive — which they did quite shortly. In Rajaji, we sent a huge bull elephant scurrying across the “rau” (or dried riverbed) when a colleague sneezed like a cannon firing in the huge echoing washroom. The elephant had just crossed over to the bank on our side just below the rest-house to have a snack. In Sariska, I caught a glimpse of just the tail end of a tiger in the grass as I nearly backed the car off the road in my excitement. There, too, we caught scent of big-cat close-up in one of the gullies — exactly the smell you get when you go near the tiger or leopard’s cage in the zoo. The lions in Gir, alas, were completely blasé about our presence, one pair even shamelessly honeymooning in front of us and our cameras. A furtive leopard, in the thicket, pointed out



RANJIT LAL

SEA FRIENDS
Starfish on the beach

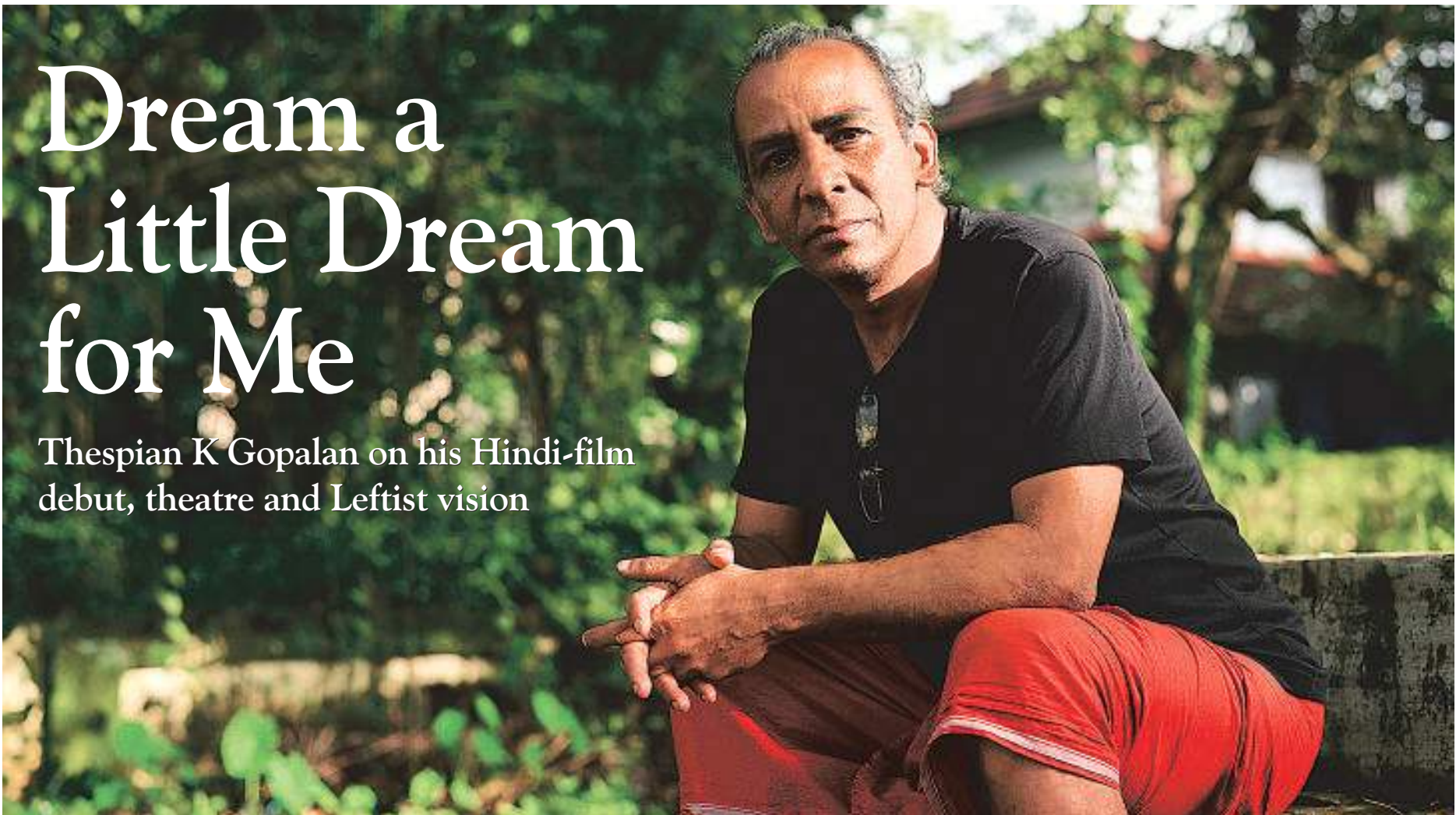
by a wildlife ranger made up for that somewhat; and made you admire the animal’s superlative camouflage. Jim Corbett was a great hero with his stories about man-eating tigers (for whom he had the greatest empathy) and Gerald Durrell was great fun and a wonderful raconteur. And, of course, I would go on and on about how people only had eyes for the big glam guys: tigers, lions, elephants, rhino and suchlike and just weren’t interested in seeing anything else. Sadly, and ironically, as more people (and idiots) got interested in visiting these beautiful national parks and sanctuaries, strict regulations came into play. There are fixed hours, fixed routes, and if a tiger is spotted, it is mobbed by Gypsies crammed with jabbers who need to have their mouths duct-taped and mobiles confiscated. You can no longer just drive around at will and really be “one with nature”.

Which you still could be in the mountains — provided you were careful enough not to become “one with a landslide!” Due to health issues, I had a ceiling of 6,000 ft above sea level, which I was not supposed to ascend and, on one occasion, I did rather overdo things and had to return to sea-level hotfoot. I learnt to acclimatise myself properly and was fine thereafter. A series of recent heart-failure episodes has now damnably put paid to that and I doubt I will ever be able to visit the mountains again. As I was rushing post-haste and breathless for the hospital the last time this happened, I snatched up a book that had just come to me for review: Sejal Mehta’s *Superpowers on the Shore* (Penguin Random House). All I can say is that while having to ration my reading every day, I was kicking myself blue. Back in Madras, Elliot’s Beach had been a favourite getaway (after a cyclone, the sea would present us with glistening cowries, chunks of coral and sea fans, and once a seahorse, too), and in Bombay, we’d spent weekends at Marve Beach wandering aimlessly on the sands, splashing through the tide pools without noticing a thing! This book made my eyes go wide; right there virtually underfoot was an astonishing, kaleidoscopic world crammed with the most amazing life and I’d missed it all! Even Juhu Beach, which we decided for being too crowded and dirty, was crammed with fascinating life forms and, not to mention, the rocky causeway from Haji Ali to the island *dargah*.

But all is not lost. The mountains may be out of reach, but the beaches — you couldn’t get more sea-level than that! Settle down near a rock-pool and keep your eyes open! And there’s 7,500 km of coastline at your disposal! As they say, when one door closes, a window opens.

Dream a Little Dream for Me

Thespian K Gopalan on his Hindi-film debut, theatre and Leftist vision



ALEXANDER VADAKKAN

Dipanita Nath

LALLI, A labourer from Kerala and committed communist, dreams of revolutions, social change and equality among people. In his sleep, he sees himself flying the red flag and rousing the oppressed. After an agent, who’d promised to help him migrate to Dubai, dupes him, Lalli is stranded in Shahjahanabad (Old Delhi). He works as a loader, and talks to people about justice and inequality. When theatre director Anamika Haksar wrote the character, based on a real experience, for her debut film, *Ghode Ko Jalebi* *Khilane Le Ja Riya Hoon*, she knew the right actor to play Lalli.

Haksar had first watched K Gopalan in 1995 when he was performing theatre sketches of Anton Chekhov and Malayalam writers in Thrissur and followed him through several powerful productions, such as Sankar Venkateswaran’s *The Water Station* (2011), a two-hour non-verbal play in which Gopalan essays a man who’s weighed down by a load but takes the audience by surprise by breaking into a dance. “He is able to penetrate into a character of another,” says Haksar.

The satirical film merges enacted scenes with animation and weaves dream sequences to create allegories. The story revolves around the lives of people who populate the streets of Old Delhi — migrant workers such as Lalli. For Gopalan, 53, the role of Lalli was a natural progression from the conflicts of his own life. “In Kerala, most people in theatre are from the Left. I was in school when I became a part of Leftist

organisations, interacted with members of the CPI (M) and also knew Naxals. I used to perform street plays. I dropped out of school early to do theatre. Lalli is a character compelled by the Leftist vision, which involves asking questions to those in power,” he says.

One of the finest performers in theatre, Gopalan’s work has been marked by a deep consciousness of social and political issues. In 2009, in Deepan Sivaraman’s *Spinal Cord*, a gritty retelling of Gabriel García Márquez’s novella *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* (1981), he played the 90-year-old mother of a man, who had been murdered in a case of honour killing. He won the Best Actor for the role at the Mahindra Excellence for Theatre Award 2010. Last year, Gopalan was honoured with the Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Akademi.

Most of Gopalan’s ideas were built by the legendary Jose Chiramel, who ran Root, a parallel theatre group that emerged out of School of Drama, Thrissur in 1988-89. Gopalan “lived and breathed theatre”, spending days and nights learning techniques such as improv. He would also frequent the School of Drama with Chiramel and hang out with students such as Sivaraman. “I found him to be an interesting personality. Though he had never been to college or university, Gopalan was very well read about politics and history. He was also a remarkable singer and painter,” says Sivaraman. In 1995, Gopalan, Sivaraman, PG Surjith,



CITY SYMPHONIES
(From top) K Gopalan; in a still from *Ghode Ko Jalebi* *Khilane Le Ja Riya Hoon*

James Elia, Jose Koshy, CR Rajan and a few others formed Theatre Eye, a youthful and politically-idealistic group. The first few productions included *Hattamala Nattinapuram* (*Beyond the Land of Hattamala*) of Badal Sircar and William Golding’s *Lord of the Flies*. The players went to remote villages in Kerala, to Delhi, Mumbai, Vadodara and other parts of India. Theatre Eye lasted for around five years, after which the members came together in *Spinal Cord* under a new banner of Oxygen Theatre Company. “There are many actors who don’t know good theatre from bad and do all kinds of work but Gopalan is different. He’s been careful about working with serious, thinking directors who are involved in developing the form. He has refined his art over the years and is, today, a very stylised performer,” says Sivaraman.

Gopalan was also a part of a Thiruvananthapuram group, Abhinaya, after which he went independent. His recent works include solos which, like his paintings, revel in the abstraction of body. He’s spent hours working on his own body, doing physical exercises and yoga — evident in *Ghode Ko Jalebi*..., where he loads goods, dances and, in a dream sequence, challenges a figure of authority to combat. “The first element in a play is the body inhabiting a space like a paintbrush on canvas. The body’s wrestling with reality and abstraction is similar to man’s own spiritual and material tussle,” he says.

A defining trait of Gopalan’s art is his constant presence in Kerala. Despite travelling widely with the Paris-based Footsbarn Theatre’s play *Indian Tempest* (2012), Gopalan returned to Thrissur and has “no desire to go elsewhere”. “I haven’t found people with whom I can vibe and communicate,” he says.

He also largely stayed away from films and television until now. *Ghode Ko Jalebi*... marks his entry in Hindi films, though he now has a number of other films in Malayalam, including this year’s sociopolitical thriller *Pada* by Kamal KM and a production with Mohanlal that has not been released. “I don’t have answers to why I’ve come in so late into films. In Kerala, theatre is not a part of everyday life. It is a luxury that few can access. With films, you can reach a wider audience. Anamika’s film is not just fiction but visual politics,” he says.

Ghode Ko Jalebi..., with a stellar cast — Gopalan, Ravindra Sahu, Raghubir Yadav, Lokesh Jain and Arun Kalra — released commercially on June 10. The film opened at MAMI Mumbai Film Festival in 2018, and travelled to global festivals, including to the New Frontier Program segment of the 2019 Sundance Film Festival. Dreams sway into reality and timelines merge as Haksar tells a gripping tale through magic realism. “Humans have a desire that the world becomes a better and equal place — these ideas make up magic realism. If one person’s dream is infringed upon by another person’s thinking, there is a contradiction. It is fascism if your own dreams aren’t your own. The film attempts to communicate that,” says Gopalan.

With inputs by Shiny Varghese



PHOTO COURTESY PABLO BARTHOLOMEW AND PHOTOINK



PHOTO COURTESY RAGHU RAI AND PHOTOINK



PHOTO COURTESY SOONI TARAPOREVALA AND PHOTOINK

‘It’s the hiding and secrecy that makes the image’

Pablo Bartholomew, part of a Delhi exhibition on street photography, on why the split second matters and the parallels between photography and hunting

Soror Shaiza

IT’S IN the walking, in the unexpected, the unknown, in the just-around-the-corner moment. Street photography has always been a craft that turned the ordinary into something magical. One such is Ketaki Sheth’s photograph *Jain Nuns, Walkeshwar Road* (Bombay, 1989). Against the dark backdrop of a building are two figures in white, their identity masked by their covered heads, walking away from the pull of parked cars. The photograph lets you interact with the surrounding as if you are actually there. Another such is Sooni Taraporevala’s photograph, *Women of Kamathipura* (Bombay, 1987). This well-known shot presents the uncertainty of the moment as it compels one to engage with the streetscape and the people in the frame.

These are part of the exhibition at Delhi’s Photoink where 23 black-and-white photographs from the archives of Sheth, Pablo Bartholomew, Raghu Rai and Taraporevala present the poetry of street photography. Curated by Devika Daulet Singh, “The Passerby”, which closes on June 26, takes one back to simpler times. “A time,” reads the gallery note, “when permission and consent were not negotiated in writing and the photographer could photograph with tacit understanding from passers-by.”

From 1970 to 2000, called the golden pe-

riod of photography, these images capture the everyday on city streets, from posing eunuchs to cart pushers, sleeping men to horses and cars. In this interview, Delhi-based Bartholomew, 66, talks about how street photography has changed, the performance and drama of it, and why it calls for a loaded gun. Excerpts:

How is street photography today different from the Seventies and Eighties?

Nowadays, it’s just a button you press to get an image. Back then, it was a process of time. You take a photo, you have to finish the role and you process it. Sometimes, if you’re out in the field, you collect all the rolls and go back to the studio, look at it and edit it, which can, sometimes, take months. Back in 1989, when I was in the Northeast exploring the Naga tribes, it took me more than two months to take the pictures and come back to process it. Nowadays, it’s something you can do with your eyes shut. Just one click and voila! You’d have an image without having any knowledge of the mechanism behind the picture.

Suppose you want a certain effect, you want to throw something out of focus or if you want to put everything in focus, how would you do it? You had to learn the technique. Nowadays, you don’t have to. That is the primary difference between photography of olden days and now.

With an analogue camera, how would



PABLO BARTHOLOMEW

FREEZE FRAME
(Clockwise from above) Pablo Bartholomew; Bartholomew’s *Eunuchs strike a pose*, Grant Road, Bombay, 1976; Raghu Rai’s *Two men*, Old Delhi, 1970; Sooni Taraporevala’s *Women of Kamathipura*, Bombay, 1987

you know you have seized the moment?

Look at Raghu’s photograph, *Two Men* (Old Delhi, 1970). If he was even a millisecond late, the image would have been different. The old man’s walking stick in the background would have been blocked by the man in the foreground. And the picture won’t be as it is now.

It illustrates that the split second matters and it can change the portrayal of a photograph. It’s like hunting. You need intuition and speed, and a loaded gun, of course!

Do you see a difference in people’s attitude in front of the camera now?

The difference is that everybody knows what a mobile is now and how it click pictures. People are posing, smiling, making faces, throwing hand signs. In those days, people

weren’t self-conscious or awkward, they were more natural and candid. They didn’t even notice, sometimes, thanks to our small portable handheld cameras.

So you were like a spy on the street?
I wouldn’t say ‘a spy’, but ‘a fly on the wall’ is more like it.

What were the challenges of street photography then?

There were these myths about photography. When I was in China in 1987, they didn’t want to be photographed, there was this prevailing fear that the camera takes away your soul.

Tell us about your photograph *Eunuchs strike a pose* (Grant Road, Bombay, 1976). How did you approach them?

There are various ways. One is to engage with the subject, the other is to observe. Eunuchs, anyway, have an interesting element. They make eye contact with you; they want money from you. So, there’s this whole drama and performance element in there.

Then, there are others like the *Parsi beggars*, *Fort* (Bombay, 1976). When I posted the photo online, people were shocked: ‘Oh, how can there be Parsi beggars?’. God knows what the story behind is, but they were there on the street. When they saw me taking a picture, they hid their faces because in those days, the Parsi population was so small that if this got published, they would be recognised. It’s that whole hiding and secrecy that makes the image.

Soror Shaiza is an intern with *The Indian Express*

 Lucknow

Chhetri, Sahal score as India beat Afghanistan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KOLKATA, JUNE 11

A STUNNING goal from talisman Sunil Chhetri and an injury-time strike from Sahal Abdul Samad powered India to a 2-1 victory over Afghanistan in the AFC Asian Cup Qualifiers here on Saturday.

The win helped India consolidate their position in the group as they seek to make a second straight appearance in the Asian Cup and fifth overall, having been knocked out in the group stage in the last edition in 2019.

Denied for 86 minutes, Chhetri put India ahead with a brilliant free-kick from just over 20 yards, taking only a couple of steps before unleashing his shot straight into the right corner of the net beating Afghanistan's goalkeeper.

It was the Indian superstar's 83rd goal in international football as he closed in on second-placed Argentine genius Lionel Messi among active players.

Afghanistan equalised within two minutes as Zubayr Amiri produced a sensational header in the 88th minute of the match. He was also helped by poor marking by the Indian defenders.

The match seemed headed for a 1-1 stalemate but Samad had other ideas. After a fine pass from Ashique Kuruniyan, Samad made some room for himself to strike the ball past the Afghanistan goalkeeper, leaving the spectators at the Salt Lake Stadium in a state of frenzy.

In a game where India created quite a few opportunities and showed their intent from the word go, Ashique emerged as one of the standout performers for the home team as he created several chances to keep Afghanistan defenders on their toes throughout the match.

He was instrumental in India getting the winner. After some pinball stuff at the edge of the box in stoppage time, the ball fell to Ashique. With defenders closing down on him, he slipped in a scintillating through ball for Samad who slotted the ball into the bottom left corner. India dominated the match for most parts and ended as the deserving winners. The hosts were coming off a 2-0 win over Cambodia in the opener, while Afghanistan entered the match after losing to Hong Kong. India will play their final game of the qualifiers against Hong Kong on June 14.

Denied for 86 minutes, Chhetri put India ahead with a brilliant free-kick from just over 20 yards, taking only a couple of steps before unleashing his shot straight into the right corner of the net beating Afghanistan's goalkeeper.

MIHIR VASAVDA
JUNE 11

AS FAR as hockey venues go, this one was novel.

A drop-in turf in the city-centre, on the shores of a lake, boats anchored on the marina on one side, surrounded by giant trees with mountains in the distance and a host city that has zero hockey tradition or history, apart from being home to the suits that govern the game.

In this cosy backdrop, hockey's shortest version, 5s, made its senior debut last weekend in Lausanne. All of it – the compact venue, quick and short matches, trimmed squads, and the overall youthful vibe – was designed to showcase the sport to a newer audience. More specifically, to the International Olympic Committee (IOC), which is based in the Swiss city.

It was, simply put, a pitch to consider 5s as a future Olympic sport. And that has stirred up a debate that's unlike anything hockey has seen in its recent history.

The apprehensions go beyond the usual gripes traditionalists hold against upstarts. The concern, this time, is survival. What were once whispers have turned, in some quarters, into rebellious roars that the 5s will eventually replace the traditional 11-a-side version at the Olympics.

The International Hockey Federation's (FIH's) chief executive, Thierry Weil, has dismissed those concerns. "A lot of people are concerned that 5s could replace 11s in the Olympics. I have clearly said that would not happen," Weil said.

The former FIFA executive's forceful rebuttal hasn't assuaged sceptics. And the split in world hockey was apparent when teams landed in Lausanne. The Asian sides – India, Pakistan, and Malaysia, usually slow to embrace change – were out in full force; the giants of Europe, never shy of innovations in the sport, gave it a total snub.

When hockey shifted from grass to artificial turf in the 1970s, the fundamental nature of the sport remained the same. In 5s, the game as we know it is virtually unrecognisable.

As the name suggests, each team is allowed to field five players including the goalkeeper and can make four substitutions; a match has two halves of 10 minutes each; there is no 'D', which means a goal can be scored from anywhere on the 'court' – which is half the size of the normal hockey pitch – once the player crosses the halfway line; and the boundary boards can be used to rebound the ball, giving the players an option to use the speed and angles generated from it in attacking moves. The ball is out of play only when it completely passes over the boundary boards on the sideline or backline. That means stoppages, in most cases, are only when a player

SPORTLINE

With the five-a-side format gaining acceptability and IOC keen to make the Games leaner to reduce the cost burden on host cities, conventional hockey has a challenge on its hands. Will the 2028 Olympics feature 5s, the good old 11s or both?

Diet Hockey, not just a fad



There are many who say that 5s will replace the traditional 11-a-side version at the Olympics.

gets injured.

Push for the 5s

It's understandable why the FIH is pushing this format. For all its history, the 11-a-side version remains a high investment sport, which has restricted growth in most of Asia, Africa, and South America. On the field, hockey might be enjoying one of its most competitive eras with any of the top eight teams in the men's game capable of beating one another and countries like France, Ireland and Japan making an occasional splash.

Off the field, though, the sport is not in the best of shape with the website inside-thegames.biz reporting that the FIH suffered a loss of close to 500,000 pounds in 2019. There are no takers for the men's World Cup, with India set to host the event for the third time in 13 years. And at the Olympics, it's one of the few sports that runs throughout the length of the Games but offers just two medals, has close to 400 athletes, and struggles with in-stadia attendance, TV-viewership, and social media engagements, all crucial parameters on which a sport's place in the Games is now determined.

The FIH has seen what T20 has done to cricket, financially speaking, and how 3x3 basketball seamlessly blended into the Olympics

THE RULES OF HOCKEY 5S

1 A match lasts 20 minutes, divided into two halves of 10 minutes each.

2 Each team can field 5 players and make four substitutions.

3 The field of play is around half the size of a regular field.

4 There is no 'D' around the goal. So, a goal can be scored from anywhere in the field by the attacker from within their attacking half of the pitch.

5 Unlike 11-a-side hockey, when the game is stopped and restarted if the ball goes out of play, in 5s, the ball can hit the perimeter boards and come back into play, with no stoppage. The ball is considered out of play only if it goes over the boundary boards.

6 There are no penalty corners in 5s. However, a penalty stroke can be awarded.

alongside the traditional format. It hopes that the dramatic backdrops – like squash, 'courts' for 5s can be erected virtually anywhere – combined with easy accessibility, high-scoring, and fast-paced matches, will make hockey 'cool' for the younger generation.

For the IOC, which is altering the Olympic programme to target the youth, making the Games leaner, and looking to reduce the cost burden on host cities, formats like these are instantly appealing. "We've been extremely pleased it's achieved the goal we wanted. It has presented the sport to a lot of people who did not know it," Weil said of the Lausanne exhibition event, adding that IOC officials were there to study the format. "It exceeded our expectations." It might have, from a marketing point of view. But the gameplay lacked all the subtle finer elements that make hockey thrilling to watch. The matches were fast-paced with lots of goals scored but there were few body feints or dribbles, or even a smart build-up play. Most of it was the ball being slapped in the direction of the goal from a distance, which raised safety concerns.

Pushback from Europe

The European giants have maintained their distance, unwilling to give the tournament any legitimacy. This could be due to most players'

If it's your Birthday

Sunday June 12

See to it that all relationships with close partners are harmonious and that you and they are getting what you want, especially if work is involved.

Monday June 13

The moment you relax your grip, someone else will steal a march on you or gain the advantage in some other way. You will be called in to set an example and make peace.

Tuesday June 14

It's your knowledge of what's happening behind the scenes that adds a touch of spice to today's events and developments due over the next twelve months.

Wednesday June 15

You may find it easy to be preoccupied with your own needs. And yet, you will become aware of a partner's hopes and desires, and that there is a wonderful world out there, waiting for you.

Thursday June 16

Your most appropriate course is to use all that's best about your life and experience so far in order to make the most of your current relationships.

Friday June 17

You'll be discreet about your ideas, nostalgic in your feelings and ambitious with money. There's a chance you'll be chucking money into a hole next week.

Saturday June 18

It's the big picture which counts, and your major ambitions could soon be thrown into reverse gear, or even abandoned, depending on your whim.

SUNDAY CROSSWORD 2377

QUICK CLUES ACROSS

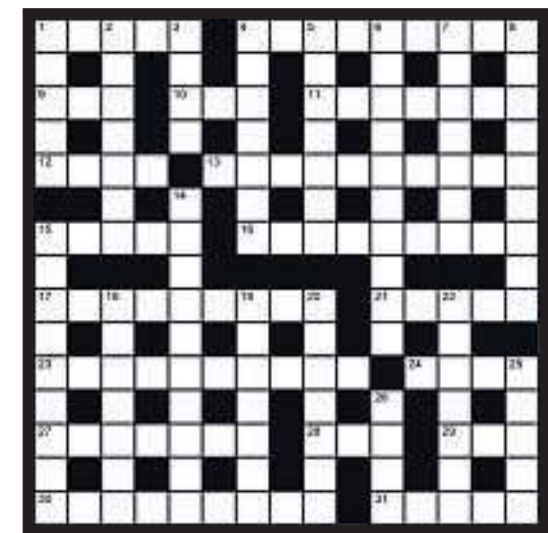
- Sweet spongy yeast cake (5)
- Miserly (9)
- Tamil Nadu pty. (3)
- Greek goddess of night (3)
- Satan or devil (7)
- Period of time (4)
- Occurring after one's death (10)
- Former Mrs. Trump (5)
- Pasta dish (9)
- Peculiar to a certain style (9)
- Eskimo boat (5)
- Art of good eating (10)
- Egg cell (4)
- Severe mental retardation (7)
- Foreman foe (3)
- Cut off (3)
- Not migratory (9)
- Inexpensive (5)

DOWN

- Pal (5)
- Rich Greek dessert (7)
- A people of Japan (4)
- Harmful (7)
- Pymalion's come-to-life statue (7)
- Obstetrician (10)
- Thaw (7)
- Standard of comparison ? (9)
- Gunboat-diplomacy British Foreign Secretary (10)
- A type of gelatin (9)
- As a substitute (7)
- Hunting call (7)
- Firm (7)
- Entail (7)
- Dispose of; complete; finish (3,2)
- Metallc element (4)

CRYPTIC CLUES ACROSS

- How a bird eats corn, a lot of it (5)
- Shares a room and has a big laugh (7,2)
- Finished and poetically made small ? (3)
- Sat around with former service women ? (3)
- Gunmen knock Claud out for the count (7)
- Writer has gone wrong initially! (4)
- Set aside nag so badly used? (10)
- Pretty conclusive if Koo is involved here (5)
- Aide suggests this unpropitious notion (5,4)
- Train isn't crashing during its journey (2-7)
- Quick! Come back! Cruciate ligament's ruptured (5)



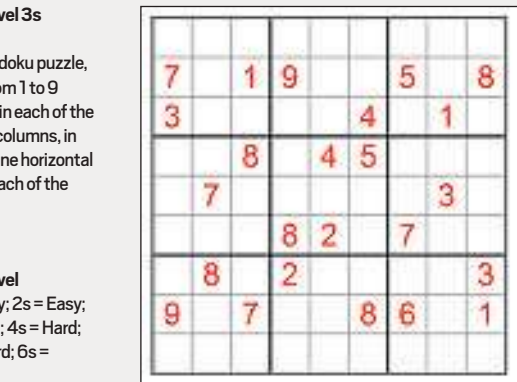
- Drinks all round - let's jump in ! (4,6)
- Old instrument that thief makes off with reportedly? (4)
- Unimportant desserts ? (7)
- Do auditors partially belong to this organization ? (3)
- Promissory note given in rather curious circumstances ? (3)
- The last runners try to be first in (5,4)
- Land and take off: beginning of flight (5)

- somewhere in Germany (7) (4,6)
- Opening with a spinner might be very good (3-4)
- Ruining by demolition work - becoming hardened to it (7)
- Rejoice with ten University heads let out (5)
- Think how to make a hot drink (4)

Solutions to 2376

QUICK CLUES Across: 1 Cupola, 4 Scuttled, 9 Gerund, 10 Odjig, 11 Tactism, 12 Black-eye, 13 Dot, 14, Tom-tom, 17 Trussed, 21 Look-up, 25 Lad, 26 Babyhood, 27 Pillar, 28 Setpiece, 29 Litchi, 30 Disagree, 31 Temple, Down: 1 Cogitate, 2 Performs, 3 Longshot, 5 Cobalt, 6 Twitch, 7 Loiter, 8 Degree, 12 Boosted, 15 Mrs, 16 Cel, 18 Domicile, 19 Skullcap, 20 Sportive, 22 Abused, 23 Abates, 24 Shying, 25 Louche

CRYPTIC CLUES Across: 1 Coding, 4 Amputate, 9 Legume, 10 Sculptor, 11 Izards, 12 Seafever, 13 Thy, 14 Poison, 17 Pendant, 21 Tumon, 25 SOS, 26 Motivates, 27 Infeard, 28 Uneared, 29 Awowed, 30 Tideover, 31 Frayed, Down: 1 Calliope, 2 Dogmatic, 3 Name-drop, 5 Mickey, 6 Uplift, 7 Active, 8 Enors, 12 Shadroe, 15 New, 16 TNT, 18 Turn-over, 19 Underway, 20 Intruded, 22 Amount, 23 Attend, 24 Everso, 25 Steele



Difficulty Level 3s

Instructions
To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Difficulty Level

1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius

SOLUTION SUDOKU 4862



BRIDGE

At times, it pays to be an optimist on bridge table. When you a certain lay out for your contract to succeed, just assume it is there and play your play accordingly. Dealer: South Vulnerable: East/West

| NORTH | | SOUTH | |
|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| ♠ | 873 | ♠ | J95 |
| ♥ | 543 | ♥ | AQ |
| ♦ | 87 | ♦ | AQJ103 |
| ♣ | K8754 | ♣ | Q62 |

| WEST | NORTH | EAST | SOUTH |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| | | | 1NT |
| dbl | pass | pass | pass |

The West hand: S-AK6 H-J10962 D-K2 C-AJ10
The East hand: S-Q1042 H-K87D-9654 C-93

South opened 1NT and got doubled by West. The auction stopped here and West led the jack of hearts. This does not have to be a disaster because South can set up the diamonds for four winners and will go down just one. Not too bad since they can surely make some heart contract of their own. East puts up the king of hearts and you win the trick. What card do you play to trick two? The club suit is full of potential. Say you lead a club towards the dummy. If West takes his ace, you have four potential club tricks where you had none before. If you get four club tricks you need just one diamond trick. West, if he has the ace of clubs, may not be able to play it constructively when you lead to the king. If he plays low, you will win the king and now you can attack diamonds. This line gets you seven tricks and the defenders can do nothing about it. This is not a guaranteed play because clubs might be 4-1, but it is a very good try. If clubs are 4-1, West can take his ace but that play will not give you four club tricks.

Your problem for the week:

Dealer: South Vulnerable: North/South

| NORTH | | EAST | |
|-------|-------|------|--------|
| ♠ | 842 | ♠ | 1096 |
| ♥ | AQ7 | ♥ | K2 |
| ♦ | A6 | ♦ | 1082 |
| ♣ | KQJ76 | ♣ | A10843 |

| WEST | NORTH | EAST | SOUTH |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| | | | 1♥ |
| pass | 2♣ | pass | 2NT |
| pass | 4♥ | pass | pass |
| pass | | | |

Sitting East, you hear South bidding hearts and notrump and North bidding clubs and raising hearts. West leads the two of clubs, dummy's suit, and you win the king with your ace. What is your plan?

JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip.

The most courageous act is still to ___ for ___. Aloud. - Coco Chanel (5,8)

| | |
|-------|---------|
| FFEOR | ATWLNLU |
| ■■■■■ | ■■■■■ |
| JISTO | ACLHKY |
| ■■■■■ | ■■■■■ |

SOLUTION: OFFER, JOIST, WAINUT, CHALKY
Answer: The most courageous act is still to think for yourself. Aloud. - Coco Chanel

YOUR WEEK AHEAD

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

You are bound to feel slightly confused over the coming weeks, but only if you persist in dealing with practical matters which, in your heart of hearts, you know should be left until tomorrow, or preferably until the day after. That, you see, will be when the Moon adds its strength to your daily routine.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

This may not be the first thing on your mind, but it's an ideal moment to make a few firm resolutions for the future. That way, by the time the future comes over the horizon, you will know exactly what you have to do. In the meantime, take it easy in love, and let a partner off the hook.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

Planetary activity influencing the summit of your solar chart starts you thinking about what you can do to improve your lot. In the first instance it's all a question of working out exactly what your desires are, anyway. As the ancient sages said: know thyself.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

The Moon is a continuing supportive influence for all you oh-sensitive Cancerians, and should at the very least give you some faith in the truth of your feelings. This, in turn, should allow you the confidence that you need in order to take the romantic initiative, persuading a partner that you're the one for them.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)

Set some time aside to check out your financial situation, particularly joint finances. The facts are confusing and, in the final analysis, the strength of your judgment is everything. Partners will back you to the hilt, but they can't make up your mind for you. At home, children need support.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)

The Moon is now challenging your sign, a fair enough indication that other people, perhaps family members, may be standing in your way. If so, ask yourself what you can get from it. For a start, other people may be enabling you to buy time, essential if you are to change your mind.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)

Your perfect planets will be moving into a strident and possibly confrontational but definitely positive set of alignments over the coming week. However, properly handled, each little difficulty will lead to a truly splendid new personal opportunity. Seize your opportunities now, while you have the chance.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 22)

The next fortnight should be one of relaxation and a quest for personal fulfilment, rather than a time for doing what you're told, yet again. When new responsibilities do come your way, they will probably concern children or younger relations, and should be well within your control. Only money matters are best avoided until you have the full facts.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23 - Dec 22)

The Moon favours a cosy atmosphere and suggests that building a comfortable, luxurious nest around yourself could result in massive amounts of sheer, unadulterated pleasure. That sounds like excellent news to me. When work does come calling, try to make sure it doesn't take over.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

If you have time, it's a fine moment for short journeys, especially if you are prepared to take a bargain, or make a brilliant new investment, before the week is out. Turn to family members when advice is needed.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)

Business matters zoom up your to-do-list. You're not always good at handling money, but your judgment will improve if you remember that imagination is often more important than so-called fact. You'll pick up a bargain, or make a brilliant new investment, before the week is out. Turn to family members when advice is needed.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

The Moon is backing your sign, so your imagination and instincts will be on full throttle. You may even have the strange sense that a dream is coming true. Always remember to back instincts up with facts.

BRIEFLY

**FIH Pro League:
Sreejesh shines as
India beat Belgium**

Antwerp: Goalkeeper PR Sreejesh saved a penalty stroke in an exhilarating shoot out after making some breathtaking saves in regulation time as the Indian men's team stunned Olympic champions Belgium 5-4 in the first match of the two-legged FIH Pro Hockey League here on Saturday. The Indian team was down 1-3 with just eight minutes left in the match but made it 3-3 to force a penalty shoot out. Sreejesh foiled an attempt from Alexander Hendrickx, who was taking his third PS, when the shoot out was locked 4-4 and Akashdeep Singh found the net to make it 5-4 for the Tokyo Games bronze medallists. Sreejesh, as usual, was brilliant under the bar, foiling a number of attempts from the hosts throughout the match but his two saves in the final quarter proved to be crucial. The eventful first quarter ended in a goalless stalemate with Sreehesh doing a fantastic job under the bar, making two saves. **PTI**

**Para shooting: Avani
wins second gold**

New Delhi: Young Paralympic champion Avani Lekhara continued her rich vein of form to clinch her second gold medal at the ongoing Chateauroux 2022 World Shooting Para Sport World Cup in France on Saturday. Lekhara shot 458.3 in the R8 - Women's 50m Rifle 3 Positions SH1 finals to take the gold ahead of experienced Paralympic stars Veronica Vadovicova (456.6) of Slovakia and Sweden's Anna Normann (441.9). Vadovicova and Normann took the silver and bronze respectively. The promising shooter from Rajasthan made a slow start to the finals but quickly got back her rhythm to produce consistent shots, including over 10 scores in the last three rounds, to emerge the winner. The 20-year-old Lekhara has already won the R2 - Women's 10m Air Rifle Standing SH1 gold with a world record effort on Day 1, and ensured India a quota for Paris 2024 Paralympics Games. **PTI**

**Mitchell hits
career-best 162**

Nottingham: Daryl Mitchell extended his career-best score in Tests to 162 before rain stopped play with New Zealand in a dominant position at 481-5 in the second match of the series against England. Day 2 at Trent Bridge was belonging to the Black Caps, who lost just one wicket — Tom Blundell for 106 — before lunch and saw Mitchell and debutant Michael Bracewell (40 not out) add 69 more runs in the second session. Rain arrived around an hour into the session and an early tea was taken. Bracewell, whose uncles Brendon and John played Test cricket for New Zealand, had already struck eight fours with powerful left-handed strokes. Mitchell, meanwhile, was cutting loose — as shown by his big six over long-on that moved him onto 149. **AP**



KEEPING THE FAITH

Rishabh Pant's first game as captain ended in a loss in New Delhi but in Cuttack he will hope to level the scoreline. **PTI**

**\$12 mn per match: IPL set
to be No.2 sports league**

Poised to overtake EPL; giant leap for Indian cricket says BCCI secretary Shah

SANDEEP DWIVEDI
NEW DELHI, JUNE 11

ON THE eve of the e-auction for Indian Premier League's (IPL) five-year media rights, the Indian cricket board is bullish: currently at No. 4 behind National Football League (NFL), English Premier League (EPL), and Major League Baseball (MLB), in terms of "per match broadcasting fees" the board expects IPL to jump to the second spot.

Unperturbed by the late withdrawal of e-commerce giant Amazon from the high-profile race that still has old-hand sports broadcasters Disney Star, Sony, Zee, along with the new entrant Viacom-Reliance, Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) secretary Jay Shah said that even if the rights go at base price, the valuation of cricket's biggest tournament would have taken a giant leap.

"At present, an NFL game costs a broadcaster about \$17 million, which is the highest for any sports league. That's followed by EPL, at \$11 million and the MBL figure, too, is roughly the same. In the last five-year cycle, we got \$9 million from one IPL game. This time, going by the present minimum base price that we have set, BCCI will get paid \$12 million per IPL match. That's a giant leap for Indian cricket on the world stage. We will be just behind NFL," Shah told *The Indian Express* quoting a BCCI study on global sports leagues.

For the BCCI, this will be the second successive broadcasting windfall from their five-year cycles. Back in 2017, the overall IPL rights went to Star India for around \$3 billion, an unheard amount for a cricket deal back then.

With IPL now a 10-team tournament and the duration of the league expected to be fur-



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ther stretched, the 2023-27 media rights deal is expected to break new ground.

An early indicator of Brand IPL growing despite the pandemic lull was the sale of two new teams earlier this year: BCCI earned a total of \$1.7 billion, with the Lucknow franchise going for 250 per cent more than the base price.

According to Shah, the BCCI opted for an e-auction for "better price discovery". By this process, the bidders will be following the auction online, with each bid displayed on their screens simultaneously. Only after a winner is decided, will the name of the bidder be revealed. "This also keeps the process transparent," said Shah.

The media rights this time are divided

into four categories: Package A: Indian sub-continent television; Package B: Digital space; Package C: Special bouquet of important matches; Package D: Overseas rights.

The special bouquet that includes weekend games, playoffs and final, is expected to undermine the exclusivity of Package A and B. Shah said this was done so that IPL has more broadcasting partners.

"If we had done this conventionally, we would have only a limited number of participants. We introduced Package C because we wanted many players to participate in the tendering process. This helps cricket grow, we need to expand the game and this will help. If more players are in the fray, it will be good for the game," he said. Citing NFL's example he said, "They have seven broadcasting partners, we are looking at just three or four."

With Reliance's Voot, Disney's Hotstar, along with Zee and Sony's OTT platforms, already involved in an intense battle to win eyeballs, this time around the digital rights amount may even outdo television bid.

Shah is aware of it. "By 2024, India will have 900 million internet users. That's the reason digital rights become very important for the growth of cricket," he said.

Since IPL isn't a year-long affair, the total broadcast contract value of the league is far less than the other premier sports leagues. NFL with \$43 billion and NBA with \$23 billion are head and shoulders above the rest.

"We are committed to the ICC FTP (Future Tours Programme). The Indian cricket team is our primary responsibility. By playing away games, other cricketing nations earn revenue. We have a responsibility to let the game grow around the world," Shah said.

TV TIMINGS

INDIA VS SOUTH AFRICA

2nd T20, Cuttack, Live on Star Sports network; 7 pm onwards

**Media rights auction:
No quick winners in
this long-drawn Test**

SHAMIK CHAKRABARTY
KOLKATA, JUNE 11

THE MEDIA rights auction of a T20 league could be played out like a Test match. It's going to be a long drawn out process.

The e-auction for the IPL media rights — linear and digital — for the 2023-2027 cycle commences at 11 am on Sunday in Mumbai. There's no end date and the entire process could spill over to the next few days. So the winner might not be announced on Sunday. Bids will be conducted per match basis, not for the entire season or the entire five-year cycle. The minimum bid increment (MBI) value is Rs 50 lakh and to maintain complete transparency, all the parties concerned, including the BCCI, will not get to see the bids until the highest bids are flashed on the monitor.

Four-pack offerings

There are four packages — A, B, C and D. Package A is the TV rights for the Indian sub-continent only. Package B deals with the digital rights for the Indian subcontinent. Package C has a special bouquet of matches, with non-exclusive digital rights for the Indian subcontinent. This includes tournament openers and playoffs. At the moment, the number is 18, with a total of 74 games to be played in the tournament. In the future, if the total number of matches increases, the number of games in Package C will rise in a ratio of two for every 10 games. For example, if the total number of matches rises to 84, Package C will offer a bouquet of 10 games. This has been introduced to attract companies who are willing to get a small share of the cricket pie, fetching the cricket board big money in the process. Package D contains the world rights for TV and digital.

Getting to the business

Package A and B will be rolled out upfront. The bidding commences from the base price of Rs 49 crore per game for the TV rights and Rs 33 crore per game for the digital rights. The competing parties will place their bids through an online portal. Once a bid is placed, the auctioneer will wait for 30 minutes for the next bid to come in. With the MIB being Rs 50 lakh, the auction will go on until the bids are exhausted.

Going digital

Digital viewership's fast-growing popularity is a reason why the BCCI has done away with composite bids and gone for separate bidding this term. Currently 30 per cent of Hotstar's global revenue comes from India, with the IPL being the determining factor. Reliance's Jio, meanwhile, has grown to be the country's largest telecommunications company. With digital viewing expected to be the name of the game in the near future, an intense battle between Disney-Star, Viacom18/Reliance, Sony and Zee could be on the cards. Five years ago, Facebook was the highest bidder in the digital rights segment, with a bid of Rs 3,900 crore, which amounted to around Rs 54.6 crore per game. Star India won the media rights with a composite bid of Rs 16,347.5 crore.

This time, with Rs 33 crore being the base price per game for the digital rights in the subcontinent only, the BCCI is expecting an unprecedented windfall from this segment. The fourth edition of the Indian Over-the-

PACKAGE OFFER

PACKAGE A
TV rights for the Indian subcontinent
BASE PRICE ₹ 49 crore per game

PACKAGE B
Digital rights for the Indian subcontinent
BASE PRICE ₹ 33 crore per game

PACKAGE C
A bouquet of 18 matches with non-exclusive digital rights
BASE PRICE ₹ 11 crore per game

PACKAGE D
World rights for TV and digital —
BASE PRICE ₹ 3 crore

TOTAL BASE PRICE all combined is set at **₹ 32,890 crore**

Top (OTT) Platforms Report 2021 (post-pandemic consumption), published by MICA Ahmedabad this year showed that digital subscriptions grew by 49 per cent. Consumption was highest among viewers aged 15-34; an age-group that caters to the IPL's die-hard fan base.

Financial obligation

Given that the base prices per game in the four packages are Rs 49 crore, Rs 33 crore, Rs 11 crore and Rs 3 crore respectively, and 74 matches are to be played in a season, increasing the bid by Rs 50 lakh, a participant increases its bid value by Rs 37 crore extra (74 X 50 lakh) per season and five times more for the entire five-year package. Financial obligation grows staggeringly in hundreds of crores with every MBI of Rs 50 lakh.

Enjoy the difference

At the e-auction, a company can separately put in bids for all the packages. The winner of Package A will get an automatic choice to offer five per cent more than the highest bid for Package B. Similarly, the winner of Package B will have the leeway to offer five per cent more than the highest bids in Package C and D. This, though, will have to be done within a stipulated time.

High transparency quotient

Circa 2017 saw closed-bidding. This time, the names of the bidders will not be revealed to ensure that rivals don't get any inkling and inflate the whole process. Even the BCCI officials won't get to see the bids until the highest bids across categories are shown live on the screen. The BCCI has roped in Mjunction to provide the platform for the e-auction.

Big guns firing

Seven companies have submitted their technical bids, but watch out for Disney-Star, the incumbent rights holder, and Viacom18/Reliance. Star under Uday Shankar had paid 158 per cent more than the previous rights cycle to acquire the IPL media rights five years ago. Five years down the line, Shankar is on Viacom18/Reliance's side, while Sony — it held the rights from 2008 to 2017 — and Zee could be the other two main players.

**Mary Kom requires
reconstructive
knee surgery**

New Delhi: Six-time world champion boxer MC Mary Kom has suffered an anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) injury and will require a reconstructive surgery, scans revealed on Saturday. The veteran Indian boxer's bid to compete at the Birmingham Commonwealth Games ended in a heartbreak on Friday as she was forced to withdraw midway from the selection trials due to a knee injury. Her treating doctor has suggested a reconstruction surgery as it's a "complete tear of ACL". For now, the Olympic bronze medallist has been advised "ice application and knee support" and has also been prescribed medication, including pain killer. The 39-year-old legend twisted her left knee in the first few minutes in the opening round of the 48kg semifinals against Haryana's Nitu. Mary Kom will thus miss the quadrennial event, where she had become the first Indian woman boxer to claim a gold medal in the last edition in 2018. Mary Kom fell down in the very first round of the bout. She tried to keep going after receiving medical assistance but after a couple of punches, she struggled to keep balance as she clutched her left knee and looked in a lot of pain. The Manipuri had to be carried out of the ring.

PTI

INTER-STATE ATHLETICS

Manu strikes javelin gold as 80-plus throws become a norm

ANDREW AMSAN
CHENNAI, JUNE 11

WHEN JAVELIN coach Kashinath Naik wanted to enrol DP Manu in the Army Sports Institute (ASI) two years ago, his decision was questioned by many, including his seniors in the elite training centre. Karnataka's Manu, back then, was a skinny thrower with "poor technique" and was in the 65m range.

Despite his shortcomings, coach Kashinath saw his raw potential. Manu's height, powerful legs, and long arms caught the seasoned coach's eye. Although it seemed like a gamble at that stage, Kashinath, who has worked with top throwers like Neeraj Chopra and Annu Rani, knew exactly what he was doing.

Manu, who breached the 80m mark in March this year, restored Kashinath's faith with a huge throw of 84.35m at the Inter-State Meet in Chennai on Saturday. Manu's effort earned him the top spot as Rohit Yadav, despite four 80plus throws (82.45, 80.49, 82.54, 82.07), finished with a silver medal around his neck. Yashvir Singh bagged silver with a best throw of 78.62m.

The 22-year-old admitted that even he was a bit surprised with the distance he managed in his only 80plus throw of the evening. "I was expecting something in the range of 82 or 83m but this has surprised even me. But this is a huge confidence booster. I am



Javelin thrower DP Manu with coach Kashinath Naik, the 2010 CWC bronze medallist, after winning gold at the Inter-State Meet. *Andrew Amsan*

extremely pleased with the result," says Manu who has already made the cut for the 2022 Commonwealth Games.

Manu's tryst with javelin began in high school when his physical education teacher one fine day asked him to have a go at it. Let alone technique, he had no idea about the sport. In his first attempt, the budding volleyball player somehow managed to cross

the 35m, not impressive by any standards, but it was love at first throw for the youngster.

"It was something different. I really liked it. I knew immediately that this was the sport for me and I soon started throwing more regularly," says Manu who never went back to volleyball after picking up the spear.

With Manu clear on which sport to pur-

Manu's effort earned him the top spot as Rohit Yadav, despite four 80plus throws (82.45, 80.49, 82.54, 82.07), finished with a silver medal around his neck. Yashvir Singh bagged bronze with a best throw of 78.62m.

sue, he had a huge problem to address. "I couldn't find any coaches," he says. South India has never been a hotbed for throwers, unlike the Haryana-Punjab belt. That means resources are scarce for budding throwers in the region. But Manu wasn't going to give up easily. He picked up the basic throwing technique by watching YouTube videos of World record holder Zan Zelezny.

"I picked up everything at the initial stage from YouTube. I even learnt workout and training methods by watching videos. Without a coach I somehow managed to throw around the 65m region," he explained.

But the then-teenager knew that to progress to the next level he definitely needed personal guidance from a coach. That's when Kashinath Naik, 2010 Commonwealth Games bronze medallist, stepped in.

