



7 airports with it, Adanis look to buy stake in key aircraft back-end company

Adani in talks with Air Works which services IndiGo, Vistara, many foreign airlines; has presence in 27 cities

PRANAV MUKUL
NEW DELHI, MAY 28

THE ADANI Group, which manages seven airports in the country, is looking to invest in India's largest independent aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) organisation in a bid to strengthen its civil aviation portfolio.

The group is exploring an agreement with shareholders of Mumbai-based Air Works Group to acquire a stake in the 71-year-old aviation firm, sources told *The Sunday Express*.

Air Works services IndiGo, GoAir and Vistara, in addition to over a dozen foreign airlines including Lufthansa, Turkish Airlines, FlyDubai, Etihad, and Virgin Atlantic. It also counts the Indian Navy among its customers and, earlier this month, partnered with Boeing for heavy maintenance checks on three Indian Navy P-81 long-range maritime patrol aircraft.

"The Adani Group has started its due diligence into Air Works Group," a source said adding that talks were at an early stage.

Air Works Group, with a pan-India presence across 27 cities, competes with 50 stand-alone Indian MRO players in-

EXPLAINED
E Riding the aviation boom

ALMOST 90% of India's MRO (aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul) requirements are currently met through imports. In a report last year, Deloitte estimated that riding the aviation boom, Indian MRO industry's size is expected to increase from \$1.7 billion in 2021 to \$4 billion by 2031, at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 8.9% against the expected global CAGR of 5.6%.

cluding Government-run Al Engineering Services Ltd and GMR Aero Technic.

Billionaire Gautam Adani-run Adani Group operates the country's second largest airport in Mumbai, in addition to airports in Ahmedabad, Lucknow, Thiruvananthapuram, Jaipur, Guwahati and Mangaluru. The company also offers MRO services at its airports in partnership with

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DAY 50 OF LANKA PROTESTS

People run for cover as police fire teargas shells during a demonstration near President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's residence in Colombo on Saturday — the 50th day of the protests over the country's economic crisis. AP

REPORT, PAGE 14

CLEARs 4 OF 6 NAMES FOR ELEVATION

Centre sits on names of 2 advocates SC collegium cleared for Madras HC

Pending: advocate Abdul Hameed, former junior of Nalini Chidambaram; and leading criminal lawyer R John Sathyan

APURVA VISHWANATH
NEW DELHI, MAY 28

THE CENTRE has cleared four of the six names of advocates recommended by the Supreme Court collegium in February for appointment as judges of the Madras High Court, *The Sunday Express* has learnt.

On February 16 this year, the



Madras HC sent names to SC collegium in 2021. File

collegium headed by Chief Justice N V Ramana had recommended Nidumolu Mala, Sunder Mohan, Kabali Kumaresh Babu, S. Sounthar, Abdul Ghani Abdul Hameed, and R. John Sathyan for appointment as High Court judges. These names had been sent by the Madras High Court collegium to the apex court collegium in 2021.

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THE WORLD



AT NRA GATHERING, TRUMP BLAMES 'EVIL' FOR TEXAS SHOOTING

EXPERTS CALL ON WHO FOR ACTION ON MONKEYPOX

RUSSIA GAINS IN EAST, CAPTURES KEY RAILWAY JUNCTION

PAGE 14

GUJARAT EVENT

Nothing in 8 yrs of my govt can cause shame to people: PM Modi

Makes Assembly poll pitch, says taking schemes to all, no caste, religion bias

GOPAL KATESHIYA
ATKOT (RAJKOT), MAY 28

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi Saturday said that during the eight-year-long reign of the NDA government, he has not done anything nor allowed anyone to do anything inadvertently that would shame the citizens of the country. He said that his government, which completed eight years on May 26, was trying to build the India dreamed of by Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

Addressing a public meeting after inaugurating a multispecialty hospital in Atkot village of Rajkot district, Modi also thanked the people of Gujarat "for teaching me values and sending me to Delhi eight years ago".

"Thanks to the values you taught me, the education that you gave me, the lessons that you taught me, as to how one should live for the society, I didn't hold back in serving the motherland over the past eight years. It is your sanskar, and this soil and pious land of revered Bapu and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel that in eight years, I have not let anything hap-



PM Narendra Modi with Home Minister Amit Shah in Gandhinagar on Saturday. Nirmal Harindran

pen even by mistake nor have I done anything myself as would make you or any other citizen of the country hang his head in shame," he said.

Modi said his government had launched a campaign now to ensure that gains of government welfare schemes reached every intended beneficiary. "Whoever is eligible for a right, should get it. When the target is to take schemes to every citizen, discrimination is eliminated and leaves little scope for corruption, nepotism and discrimination along the lines of caste and region. Our government is working

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

IndiGo fined Rs 5 lakh for not letting special needs child board

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAY 28

AVIATION REGULATOR Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Saturday said it has imposed a fine of Rs 5 lakh on IndiGo for denying boarding to a specially abled child at Ranchi airport on May 7.

After the boy was stopped from getting on the plane, his parents too decided to not take the flight. IndiGo subsequently said the boy was denied permission to board the Ranchi-Hyderabad flight as he was visibly in pain.

The regulator said that in order to avoid such situations in the future, it would revisit its own regulations, and make it mandatory for airlines to take the airport doctor's written opinion on the health of a passenger before making the decision to deny boarding. The new regulations would also mandate written consultations with the captain of the aircraft for his or her opinion on allowing such a passenger on board, the DGCA said.

The DGCA had constituted a three-member team to investigate the incident on May 9.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Officials 'detained', CPWD staff seek action against J&K L-G aide

Amarnath work halted, answers sought on '10-hr detention'

ARUN SHARMA
JAMMU, MAY 28

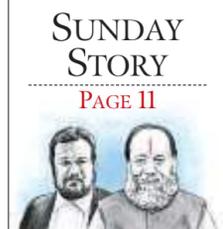
WITH THE Amarnath Yatra a month away, the construction of dormitories for pilgrims en route at Ramban has come to a halt following alleged detention of two senior engineers of the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) by the Jammu and Kashmir Police, on the orders reportedly of the Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor

Manoj Sinha.

The CPWD engineers' associations have alleged that Executive Engineer (Civil) R K Mattu and Assistant Engineer (Civil) Rizwan Alam were detained for over 10 hours on May 25 on the orders of Principal Secretary Nitishwar Kumar, who is considered the right-hand man of Sinha and holds charge as the Chief Executive Officer of the Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board (SASB), as well as Principal Secretary, Power Development Department.

While Ramban District SP Mohita Sharma refused to say anything on the matter, Kumar did not respond to repeated calls and messages. The two CPWD engineers' associations — Central Engineering Service Group A (Direct Recruits) Association and Central PWD Engineers Association — have also written separately to Union Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs Hardeep Puri and Lt Governor Sinha seeking action against

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Father, son and 'holy suits'

Father-son duo behind the string of petitions on Gyanvapi, Qutub Minar and others

Rajasthan Dalit labourer 'chained, assaulted' for 31 hours; FIR against 6

DEEP MUKHERJEE
JAIPUR, MAY 28

AN FIR has been registered against six people in Rajasthan's Bundi district for allegedly tying up a 35-year-old with a chain in a cattle shed and assaulting him for over 31 hours.

Radheyshyam Meghwal, an unskilled Dalit labourer from Biluba village in Bundi, has filed a complaint accusing Paramjit



Meghwal found chained in a village in Bundi district. Express

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Penalties for delays, cuts in weekly pay: Life gets riskier for 10-minute delivery executives

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

SOUMYARENDRA BARIK
NEW DELHI, MAY 28

DESPITE GROWING concern around road safety as speed becomes the core focus of quick commerce startups, firms such as Blinkit and Zepto are learnt to have introduced new incentive-based payment terms that include penalising workers for late deliveries in some cases.



Riders for Zepto said that a failure to meet the deadline counts as a 'breach'. File

Delivery workers say the new terms are forcing them to ride even faster with orders, and making them more prone to breaking traffic rules, putting themselves and others on the road at risk.

Riders of Zepto, which promises to deliver groceries, fruit, ice cream, vegetables, milk, and snacks in 10 minutes, said that a failure to meet the deadline counts as a "breach" — and if they fail to deliver even after another five minutes have passed, it amounts to an "external breach"

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Ruchi
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CASTE OR BIRADARI? HOW 'PRIVILEGE AND DESCENT' PLAYS OUT AMONG MUSLIMS

In the South Asian experience of religion, caste is often associated with Hinduism. Yet as sociological research on the lived experience of Islam in India has shown, caste is very much intrinsic to South Asia and practised by Muslims as well, albeit the nature of it might differ from that in Hinduism

TECH

RAJU NARISSETTI INTERVIEW

He speaks on Wikipedia's plans for India, the focus on regional languages



ENTERTAINMENT

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EXPRESS AUDIO

Game Time: A top athlete on the run from anti-doping watchdogs

NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY

Host Mihir Vasavda is joined by Indian Express' Nihal Koshie to discuss the prevalence of doping in Indian sports, and how dope testers monitor athletes

FROM PAGE ONE

Madras HC

In March 2022, the Law Ministry approved only two: Mala and Sounthar. *The Sunday Express* has learnt that the Centre since has cleared two more names, Babu and Mohan. However, the recommendation of Hameed and Sathyan are said to be pending.

"The Government has some objections with the two names. They have not been sent back officially but they remain pending," sources said.

The collegium to appoint judges of the High Court consists of the Chief Justice of India, Justices UU Lalit and Justice A M Khanwilkar.

Sources told *The Indian Express* that the state government and consultee judges — judges in the Supreme Court who are from the Madras High Court or have served in that High Court — had cleared the names of Hameed and Sathyan with "good reviews."

Hameed is a Chennai-based advocate and heads AAV Partners, a law firm. He has pre-

viously been a junior to senior advocate Nalini Chidambaram.

Sathyan is a leading criminal lawyer in Chennai. He has a Master's degree in Zoology and studied law from the Madras Law College in 1997. Sources said that even during 2016-2017, Sathyan was considered for elevation.

The Madras HC has a sanctioned strength of 75 judges. Currently, it has 60 judges.

Many in the Bar see this as a repeat of what had transpired in the case of C Emalias, another minority candidate recommended for judgeship.

In 2016, the Madras HC collegium had recommended the name of then Additional Public Prosecutor C. Emalias. A native of Kanyakumari district, Emalias comes from humble beginnings and had established a criminal law practice in Chennai.

The Supreme Court, in 2017, cleared the name along with eight other names. In 2018, the collegium reiterated the recommendation of Emalias along with that of Senthil Kumar Ramamoorthy, who was then Partner at Dua Associates.

In 2019, Ramamoorthy was appointed but Emalias was not. He was later appointed an Additional Advocate General of the state.

Adani

Mumbai-based Indamer Aviation Pvt Ltd.

"The proposed deal with Air Works is in line with the Adani Group's plan to leverage opportunities arising from the growing Indian civil aviation market and the increasing need for MRO services," another source, aware of the discussions, told *The Indian Express*.

Queries sent to the Adani Group and Air Works Group did not elicit a response.

"Adanis have been keen on supplementing their airports portfolio with MRO for some time now. They have an arrangement with Indamer Aviation but that hasn't really taken off. They have even made some appointments last year to decide on the company's broader MRO strategy," said a top executive at an airport development company. In its annual report for 2020-21, Adani Enterprises noted that the outlook for the company is "underpinned by the fact that India is expected to emerge as the third largest aviation market catalysed by the government's decision to popularise the public-private partnership model, graduate India into an MRO hub, flexible use of air space and matured regulatory framework with assured returns."

hard to take to saturation levels the schemes aimed at providing basic amenities... We are encouraging state governments to do the same and are helping them in this respect."

Speaking of upholding the values of Gandhi and Patel, Modi said: "The revered Bapu (Gandhi) wanted an India which empowers every poor, Dalit, deprived, one who is suffering, our brothers and sisters from tribal communities, our mothers and sister; where cleanliness and health is part of way of life; whose economy is powered by indigenous solutions."

By following the mantra of sabka sath, sabka vikas, sabka viswas aur sabka prayas, Modi said, his government has given a new impetus to the development of the country while keeping the poor in mind. "Pucca houses to three

crore families, 10 crore families freed from the compulsion of defecating in the open, nine crore women saved from the smoke (of conventional stoves), electricity connections to more than 2.5 crore poor families, piped water to six crore households, Rs 5 lakh worth of free medical treatment to 50 crore Indians -- these are not mere statistics," said the PM.

He went on to speak about his government's works during the Covid-19 pandemic, saying it gave free rations to the poor, provided financial assistance through Jan-Dhan accounts, provided testing and treatment facilities and later free vaccines to all.

The multispeciality K D Parvadiya Hospital, inaugurated by Modi, has been constructed by the charitable Shree Patel Seva Samaj Trust, in

which Gujarat BJP vice-president Bharat Boghra is a managing trustee. Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and several Union Ministers and Gujarat ministers were present at the ceremony.

Modi said the hospital would make healthcare services in Saurashtra better. "When people's efforts are synthesized with government initiatives, our capacity to serve increases manifold. This modern hospital is a big example of it."

Apart from free treatment under the Centre's Ayushman Bharat scheme and the state's Mukhyamantri Amrutam scheme, the hospital will provide subsidised care for diseases not covered under the two.

Modi also made a pitch for the coming Gujarat elections, saying "the double-engine BJP government (in the Centre and state)" was trying to take

the state to new heights. "Before 2014, there used to be such a government in Delhi that it would not see projects in project files but only Modi. It would lose its composure and stamp files as either cancelled or rejected. They nixed all types of projects, and blocked our mother Narmada. For the Sardar Sarovar dam, we had to sit on a fast."

Nothing in 8 years of my govt can cause shame to people: PM Modi

Works amended its memorandum of association to increase its authorised share capital and create a new class of Series B equity shares — in what is a tell-tale sign of the company being in the market to raise fresh funds.

J&K L-G aide

both Kumar and SP Sharma. CPWD Superintending Engineer Mohan Lal told *The Sunday Express* that since the May 25 incident, "No one, including engineers, contractors and labourers, are prepared to visit the construction site. In my status report, I have conveyed to the authorities the detention of our engineers by police and also the suspension of work at the site."

An Uttar Pradesh-cadre IAS officer, Nitishwar Kumar is on deputation to Jammu and Kashmir. He had arrived in Ramban on May 25 morning for scheduled inspection of the progress of dormitories being constructed by the CPWD for Amarnath pilgrims. According to several sources, Kumar took objection to the work being incomplete and CPWD Executive Engineer (Civil) R K Mattu not being available at the site.

Before he left for Banihal for inspection there, he reportedly verbally instructed the Ramban SP, who was accompanying him, to arrest or detain Mattu, along with Assistant Engineer (Civil) Rizwan Alam. While Alam, who was present, was detained from the site, Mattu was held while on his way over.

YK Tomer, the vice-president of the Central PWD Engineers' Association, told *The Sunday Express* that the two engineers were kept first at the Ramban Police Station for nearly eight hours, beginning 12 noon, and then shifted to a government guest house. They were released around 10.30 pm.

The same day, Superintending Engineer, Jammu circle, Mohan Lal sent a letter to UT Chief Secretary Arun Kumar Mehta, with copies to the Director General of Police, Principal Secretary to L-G (Niteshwar Kumar), the Officer on Special Duty to the L-G, and CPWD Director General, among others, detailing what had happened.

Mohan Lal wrote that they were not conveyed the time of the scheduled visit of Kumar till two-and-a-half hours before his arrival. He said on receiving the information, he left immediately for Ramban, but could not reach on time "due to travel time of 130 km in the hill area and landslides, as his office is stationed at Jammu". However, he said: "The CPWD's Assistant Engineer along with Junior Engineer and repre-

sentatives of contractors were present during the inspection... It is learned that the CEO, SASB, during his inspection gave verbal directions to SP Ramban, who was also present during the site visit, to arrest / detain AEs / EEs (assistant engineers, executive engineers) just on the basis of some pending petty work / items."

Accordingly, Lal wrote, while Alam was taken into custody from the site itself, Mattu was arrested on his way there.

Lal said that they wrote a letter to the SP Ramban and also called her up to get the men released, but she ignored them. In his letter to the UT Chief Secretary, Lal said that when they asked the police officer about the reasons for the detention, she threatened them with consequences.

"Thereafter, I tried to contact the CEO, SASB, telephonically but the call was not picked up. So a WhatsApp message was sent with the request to release our government officers on duty from police custody. However, no action in this regard (was) taken, neither by the SP Ramban, nor by CEO, SASB, to get our officers released even after... about 8 hours, which is a serious matter and highly unconstitutional (illegal detention of government officers while performing their duties)," he wrote, adding that there were prescribed rules and procedures to deal with any lapses on the part of government officials.

The Superintending Engineer also denied any delay on their part in the work. He said the CPWD was entrusted with construction of pre-engineered dormitories, made of steel, by the SASB in April 2021 and had begun work the next month. "As per the MOU signed between the CPWD and the SASB, Rs 10.67 crore was to be paid to it as an advance by the latter, but it deposited only Rs 8 crore (in) June 2021, the first time, after a lot of persuasion... Thereafter, all the installments/reimbursement of payment made to the contractors were delayed by 2-3 months every time even after (submission) of details by the Engineer-in-Charge... from time to time," Lal wrote in his letter.

He added that of the total revised cost of Rs 47 crore, only Rs 32 crore had been released to the CPWD till date. "Hence, there has not been any delay on the part of the CPWD for completion of the work," Lal said, adding that the rest of the work will be completed before the start of the Amarnath Yatra "subject to the release of the balance amount to all the seven contractors working at the site".

Seeking action against Nitishwar Kumar and the

Ramban SP, Tomar in a letter to the Lt Governor also raised the delayed receipt of funds and accused the authorities of "forcing the field staff to complete the work without following the MoU, harassment and misbehaviour". "You can imagine the high-handedness of officers of the local administration as they do not bother to pick up phones and reply to messages of senior officers of the CPWD for release of the illegally detained EE and AE," he wrote.

IndiGo

"It has been observed that the handling of the special child by the Indigo ground staff was deficient and ended up exacerbating the situation," the regulator said on Saturday. A more compassionate handling of the situation would have smoothed nerves, calmed the child, and obviated the need for the extreme step that resulted in the passengers being denied boarding, it said.

Special situations deserve extraordinary responses but the airline's staff failed to rise to the occasion and, in the process, committed lapses in adhering to the letter and spirit of the Civil Aviation Requirements (regulations), it noted. The competent authority in the DGCA had therefore taken the decision to impose a penalty of Rs 5 lakh on the airline, it said.

IndiGo was issued a show-cause notice after the three-member team in its preliminary findings said on May 16 that the airline was in violation of DGCA regulations.

IndiGo CEO Ronojoy Dutta had on May 9 expressed regret over the incident and offered to buy an electric wheelchair for the specially abled child. Dutta had, however, said the airline staff took the best possible decision under difficult circumstances.

Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia said on Twitter on May 9 that no human being should have to go through what the child had to, and that he was personally looking at the incident.

Dalit labourer

Singh, the main accused, and others of assaulting him after he couldn't finish a work he had promised to do.

Deputy Superintendent of Police Shankar Lal Meena, the investigating officer in the case, said preliminary investigation has established that Meghwal was kept chained in a cattle shed. "All the accused are absconding. We have constituted teams to search for them."

Meena said Meghwal had suffered minor injuries, but his condition was stable now.

Meghwal said in the FIR that he was forced to work as a bonded labourer as he doesn't have any land or property. "Three years back, I started working for Paramjit Sardar, a resident of Alfa Nagar as a hali (unofficial annual contract labourer). Paramjit kept me from May 2019 to April 2020. I needed money for my sister's wedding. I took Rs 70,000 as 12 months' wages and Rs 30,000 as loan from Paramjit."

Meghwal said he worked at Singh's fields as well as oversaw animal husbandry work for six months, but could not carry on as the long hours of work left him ill. The FIR says that Singh kept demanding Rs 1.10 lakh back from Meghwal, and that he managed to repay Rs 25,000 by taking up work at another place. When he couldn't raise the rest of the amount, which kept rising as Singh charged a 3% interest, Singh allegedly took Meghwal to his house and made him harvest wheat for 10 days without remuneration in 2021.

Then, on May 22, Singh, his younger brother and four friends reportedly got hold of Meghwal again. In his FIR, he said: "They abused me with casteist slurs, took me to Paramjit's house. They kept me chained in a cattle shed and tortured me with iron pipes. They kept me hungry for 31 hours."

The FIR against the accused has been registered under Sections 365 (kidnapping or abduction with intent secretly and wrongfully to confine person), 342 (punishment for wrongful confinement), 343 (wrongful confinement for three or more days), 323 (voluntarily causing hurt) and 143 (punishment for unlawful assembly) of the IPC, along with relevant sections of the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.

10-min delivery

for which they are penalised by the company.

Also, the riders said, Zepto had in March cut their minimum weekly wage by 20 per cent. Earlier, the company paid them a guaranteed Rs 3,500 per week provided they remained logged into the app all seven days; this, the workers said, had been cut to Rs 2,800. "So if I decide to take leave on Saturday and Sunday, I do not get paid the weekly minimum guaranteed wage," a Zepto delivery executive said, requesting anonymity.

Zepto CEO and co-founder Aadit Palicha said not all late deliveries are penalised. Deductions are made only when delivery riders engage in "fraud", he told *The Sunday Express*. Also, Palicha said, there is a helpline where workers can register their

grievances if they believe deductions have been unfair.

According to Palicha, the minimum guarantee is helpful for riders who work at newer warehouses that do not typically see many orders in a day. "Once the stores start doing good orders, we default back to their (delivery riders') regular rate cards," he said.

Recently, a 19-year-old Zepto delivery staffer died after an unidentified vehicle hit his two-wheeler from the rear in Dwarka in northwest Delhi. Several stakeholders, including lawmakers and police, have repeatedly expressed concerns over traffic violations and safety as riders rush to meet unrealistic delivery deadlines.

Zepto's main rival Blinkit has cut the per-delivery payment to workers from Rs 50 to Rs 25, and introduced an incentive-based payout structure similar to Zomato's. According to the rider-side app that *The Sunday Express* accessed, Blinkit pays an incentive of Rs 100 for delivering 15 orders a day, and Rs 150 for delivering 32 orders a day.

Blinkit workers said their daily earnings are down by nearly 15-20 per cent, and they are now forced to deliver orders as quickly as possible in an attempt to achieve daily targets. "Under the old model, if I did 32 orders a day, I would make Rs 1,600, but under the new model, including the surge pricing during peak hours, I will make about Rs 1,350 for the same amount of work," said a Blinkit worker who declined to be identified. The company did not respond to a detailed questionnaire sent by *The Sunday Express*.

A cash crunch has forced Blinkit to shut over 50 dark stores and lay off hundreds from its workforce in recent weeks. Zepto, meanwhile, closed a \$200 million funding round earlier this month at a valuation of \$900 million.

Platform firms like Zepto use third-party services to hire delivery workers. One of these providers is Zyppt, which onboards riders for Zepto on a flat monthly remuneration of Rs 18,000, and also offers them an electric scooter. However, workers said that if they work even a day less than 28 days in a month, Zyppt deducts Rs 3,000 from their monthly remuneration.

Two delivery workers at Blinkit and Zepto told *The Sunday Express* that their immediate supervisors resorted to verbal abuse if riders took more than 10 minutes to deliver an order. Palicha, however, claimed Zepto's attrition rate was the lowest among all hyperlocal delivery services, and 7 per cent lower than its immediate competitor's.

He also said that warehouse managers did not have visibility into individual orders. "If a rider's order is flagged to be suspicious, then a manager is alerted who will have a conversation with the rider," Palicha said.

During a special enforcement drive against delivery riders violating traffic rules, the Greater Chennai Traffic Police recently registered cases against almost 1,000 delivery executives working for platforms like Swiggy, Zomato, and Dunzo.

"We file cases against delivery workers who engage in traffic violations and intimate their respective companies about that. On the day we carried out the special enforcement drive... we registered close to 1,000 cases," Kapil Kumar C Saratkar, Additional Commissioner of Police, Greater Chennai Traffic Police, told *The Sunday Express*.

"To put that number in perspective, we filed a total of around 8,000 cases of traffic violations that day. We believe there are 9,000 such workers in Chennai, and if 1,000 of them are being booked for breaking traffic rules on a single day, that is a huge number," Saratkar added.

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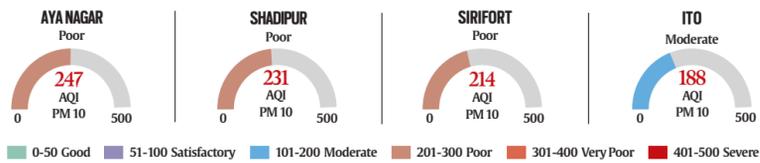
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Identification No. Road Online NCB No. 339
No. 1014 / Date: 21.05.2022

- Name of the work :- Periodical Maintenance (SDBC Work) in the District of Keonjhar.
- No. of work :- 10 (Ten) Nos.
- Estimated Cost :- As per Annexure in NIT.
- Class of Contractor (Eligible) :- As per Annexure in NIT.
- Period of Completion :- As per Annexure in NIT.
- Other details :-

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender On-line for bidding		Last Date & Time of seeking Tender Clarification	Date & Time of Opening of Tender in O.D.S.E.N.E.R.W. Circle, Keonjhar	
		From	To		Technical Bid	Financial Bid
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Keonjhar	Road Online NCB No. 339	02.06.22 at 11.00 A.M.	03.06.22 up to 5.00 P.M.	03.06.22 up to 5.00 P.M.	03.06.22 at 11.00 A.M.	03.06.22 at 11.00 A.M.

Further details can be seen from the website: www.tendersorissa.gov.in

Sd/-
Chief Construction Engineer,
R.W. Circle, Keonjhar
OIPR-25177/11/0007/223



SKYWATCH
FORECAST: May 29
 Partly cloudy sky
MAX: 41 | **MIN: 27**
 0.6° C above normal | 0.2° C above normal

IN GHAZIABAD

After exchange of fire that lasted half an hour, two wanted men shot dead

MALAVIKA PRASAD
 GHAZIABAD, MAY 28

IN TWO separate incidents late Friday night, two wanted criminals were killed during an exchange of gunfire with the Ghaziabad Police, allegedly after they tried to evade arrest.

The accused have been identified as Avneesh alias Billu and Rakesh, residents of Dujana village in Gautam Buddha Nagar. According to police, Billu was the prime accused in a double murder case from three weeks ago in Kavinagar.

Both men carried bounties on their heads, police said—RS 50,000 for Rakesh and RS 1,00,000 for Billu.

G Muniraj, the Ghaziabad SSP, said, "We had increased our nightly checks and set up barricades after being tipped off that the accused had been spotted in the area. Late Friday, we were tipped off that Rakesh and his associate had been spotted near Madhuban Bapudham on a blue Bajaj Pulsar bike. The SWAT team of the Crime branch chased the



accused, but he opened fire and escaped."

"The team informed the control room, and Superintendent of Police City 1st, Nipun Agarwal, along with his team, surrounded the accused, who opened fire. The police team were hit on their bullet-proof jackets and cross firing went on for 30 minutes, during which Rakesh was shot. He was provided first aid and taken to MMG District Hospital, where he was pronounced dead," Muniraj added.

At Indrapuram, police were tipped off about Billu being spotted on NH-24, going towards

Pusta Road on a Honda Livo bike. "Superintendent of Police, Crime, Deeksha Sharma chased the accused along with her team, and his bike got caught in the fence near Pusta Bridge. The accused opened fire and there was cross firing that lasted 30 minutes, during which a police personnel was also injured. Billu was shot in the crossfire and sent to MMG District Hospital, where he was pronounced dead," Muniraj said.

The two accused faced cases of murder and extortion, among others. Police said they were members of the Anil Dujana gang, infamous for criminal activities.



Police said the accused were members of the Anil Dujana gang, infamous for criminal activities. Gajendra Yadav

While Billu had 27 cases against him, Rakesh had 15. Rakesh's father Jaypal Singh (70) was at home in Dujana when he was informed of his son's death. "Police arrived in the morning and told me. They asked

us to identify the body and we left for the hospital," he said, adding that he hadn't seen his son in 12 years. "I had not met him in so long that I have nothing to say."

At Dujana village, the double encounter was the biggest talking point. "I heard about their death today on WhatsApp," said Ajay Nagar, owner of a photocopy shop. "Our parents know each other but I had never met or seen Rakesh."

"We had not seen both of them in years and most of us have forgotten about them," said another resident.

Police said the bodies would be taken to a mortuary in Hindon for a post-mortem, after which they would be handed over to the families.

NHAI told to ensure emergency lanes are operational at toll plazas

Gurgaon: The Gurgaon deputy commissioner has directed the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to ensure dedicated emergency lanes are made operational at toll plazas in the district, adding that action would be taken against the concessionaire for failing to do so.

In an earlier road safety committee meeting in March 2022, the DC had said that concessionaires operating toll plazas on highways in Gurgaon would provide emergency medical services including ambulances, first aid, emergency life support services and trained staff for safety of citizens and to ensure smooth traffic flow.

Deputy commissioner Nishant Kumar Yadav chaired a meeting of the district road safety committee, and said the district administration will write to the NHAI to construct carriageways in industrial areas on the same specification as highways instead of service lanes. **ENS**

डी एन ए फिंगरप्रिंटिंग एवं निदान केंद्र
 (डी एन ए फिंगरप्रिंटिंग एवं निदान केंद्र, भारत सरकार का स्वतंत्र संस्थान)
 पुणे, महाराष्ट्र, भारत. फोन: +91-40-2721 6014 / 6011, फॅक्स: +91-40-2721 6006, वेबसाइट: http://www.cdfd.org.in
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 - 4) Senior Project Associate
 - 5) Project Scientist - III
 - 6) Project Scientist - II
 - 7) Research Associate - I
 - 8) Project Associate - II
 - 9) Project Associate - I
 - 10) Computer Programmer Grade 'A'
 - 11) Laboratory Assistant
 - 12) Project - Junior Research Fellow
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Chief (INFS-III), Gurgaon

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POSSESSION NOTICE
 (FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY)

Whereas, the undersigned being the authorised officer of the BANK OF BARODA under the securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice calling upon the borrower(s)/Gurantor to repay the amount within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/Gurantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under sub section (4) of section 13 of the Act with rule 8 of the said rules.

The Borrowers/Gurantors/Mortgagors in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property/ies and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of the BANK OF BARODA for the amount and further interest there of the contractual rate plus, charge and expenses till date of payment.

The Borrower's attention is invited to provision of sub section (8) of section 13 of the SARFAESI Act 2002, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Name of the Branch/ Name & Address of the Borrower/Guarantors	Description of the Immovable Properties	Demand/ Possession Notice Date	Outstanding Amount
Bank of Baroda, Khopli Branch (E-Vijaya) Borrower : M/s Mahadeo Chura Mill (Prop.- Manohar Kumar), Guarantor : Mr. Ramvilash Sah, S/o- Late Munshi Lal Sah. Both are at Mauza- Arniya, Near Brahma Ashan, South of Kushwaha Chowk, Samastipur Road, Jandaha, Vaishali, Bihar.	All that part and parcel of the property consisting of land and building bearing Khata No.-874, Khesra No.-5381, Survey Thana No.-625 Rural Area-1.687 Decimal as per Sale Deed No.-11878, Dated-29-11-2014 in the name of Mr. Ramvilash Sah, S/o- Late Munshi Lal Sah situated at Mauza-Arniya, Near Brahma Ashan, South of Kushwaha Chowk, Samastipur Road, Jandaha, Vaishali, Bihar. Boundaries : N:Nij Manmohir, S:Hukumchand Singh, E: 4ft. Wide Nizi Rasta, W:Narayan Singh	05-03-2022 / 24-05-2022	Rs. 8,48,378.49/- as on 03.03.2022 together with further interest thereon at the contractual rate plus all cost charges & expenses till date payments

Place : Vaishali
 Date : 28.05.2022

Authorised Officer
 Bank Of Baroda

RASHTRIYA CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS LIMITED
 (A government of India Undertaking)
 CIN : L24110MH1978G01020185
 Regd. Office: "Priyadarshini", Eastern Express Highway, Sion, Mumbai 400022. Website: www.rcfttd.com

Let us grow together

Extract of Statement of Consolidated Audited Financial Results for the Quarter and Year Ended 31st MARCH 2022 (₹ in lakh)

Sl. No.	Particulars	Audited			
		Quarter ended		Year ended	
		31.03.2022	31.03.2021	31.03.2022	31.03.2021
1.	Total income from operations	410988	229531	1281217	828118
2.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and /or Extraordinary items)	27723	20119	78519	51365
3.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before Tax (after exceptional and /or Extraordinary items)	27751	20590	91282	51836
4.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after Tax (after exceptional and /or Extraordinary items)	21226	15352	68081	37530
5.	Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and other Comprehensive Income (after Tax)	22394	16130	68166	37727
6.	Paid Up Equity Share Capital	55169	55169	55169	55169
7.	Reserves / Other Equity (excluding Revaluation Reserves)	329072	278174	329072	278174
8.	Net Worth	384241	333343	384241	333343
9.	Outstanding Debt (Long term)	136123	124727	136123	124727
10.	Long Term Debt Equity ratio	0.35 : 1	0.37 : 1	0.35 : 1	0.37 : 1
11.	Earnings Per Share (of ₹ 10/- each) (₹) *				
	(i) Basic (₹)	3.85	2.78	12.34	6.80
	(ii) Diluted (₹)	3.85	2.78	12.34	6.80
12.	Debt Redemption Reserve	**Refer Note	**Refer Note	**Refer Note	**Refer Note
13.	Debt Service Coverage Ratio *	1.28	1.18	2.99	2.26
14.	Interest Service Coverage Ratio	7.39	7.92	8.76	4.83

* Not annualised in case of quarterly figures
 ** In accordance with Gazette Notification No. GSR 574(E) dated 16th August, 2019 issued by Ministry of Corporate Affairs Company is not required to create Debt Redemption Reserve in respect of the above referred debentures as they have been issued on private placement basis.

Formula used for calculation of Ratios:
 a. Debt : equity Ratio = (Long Term Borrowings + Current maturities of Long Term Borrowings) / (Shareholders funds)
 b. Debt Service Coverage Ratio = (Profit before Finance costs, Depreciation, Exceptional Items and Tax) / (Finance Costs + Current maturities of Long Term Borrowings)
 c. Interest Service Coverage Ratio = (Profit before Finance costs, Depreciation, Exceptional Items and Tax) / (Finance Costs)

Key numbers of Standalone Financial Results of the Company are as under: (₹ in lakh)

Particulars	Quarter ended		Year ended	
	31.03.2022	31.03.2021	31.03.2022	31.03.2021
Total Income	414066	233670	1294862	840779
Profit / (Loss) before tax	27757	20440	91514	51617
Profit / (Loss) after tax	21232	15202	68313	37311
Total Comprehensive Income for the period	22400	15980	68398	37508

Notes: 1. The above financial results are drawn in accordance with the accounting policies consistently followed by the Company. The results have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of Directors at their meeting held on 27th May, 2022. These results have been reviewed by the Statutory Auditors as required under Regulation 33 and Regulation 52 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. 2. The results for the quarter and year ended 31st March, 2022 are in compliance with the Indian Accounting Standards (Ind AS) as prescribed under section 133 of the Companies Act 2013 read with Rule 3 of the Companies (Indian Accounting Standards) Rules, 2015 and Companies (Indian Accounting Standards) Amendment Rules, 2016. 3. Board of Directors at their meeting held on 27th May, 2022 have declared a final dividend of ₹ 2.37 per equity share of ₹ 10/- each, i.e. 23.70% on paid up equity share capital of the Company for the financial year 2021-22 which is subject to approval of Shareholder's of the Company. This is in addition to the interim dividend of ₹ 1.35 per equity share paid by the Company. 4. The above is an extract of the detailed format of the Financial Results for quarter and year ended on 31st March, 2022 filed with the BSE Limited and National Stock Exchange of India Limited under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the standalone and consolidated Financial Results are available on the website of the Company at www.rcfttd.com and also available on the website of Stock Exchanges at www.bseindia.com and www.nseindia.com

For and on behalf of the Board of Directors
RASHTRIYA CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS LIMITED
 (S. C. Mudgerikar)
 Chairman & Managing Director
 DIN : 03498637

Dated : 27th May, 2022
 Place: Mumbai

Chardham & Hemkunt Sahib Yatra
 A warm welcome to all the registered pilgrims who have come on the Yatra

Narendra Modi
 Prime Minister

"In view of the ever-increasing number of devotees, I appeal to all of you dear devotees that before starting the Chardham Yatra, kindly check the availability on the portal <https://registrationandtouristcare.uk.gov.in> operated by the tourism department. Get registered to start the Chardham Yatra. Also the devotees should pay special attention to the fact if there are breathing and heart-related problems due to high altitude, cold and lack of oxygen, they must undergo a health check-up before coming to the Yatra. All of you are requested to give your cooperation to the administration to make the Chardham Yatra smooth experience. The Uttarakhand government is committed to your welcome and continued cooperation."

Pushkar Singh Dhali
 Chief Minister, Uttarakhand

Important Notice
ChardhamYatra will not be allowed without registration. Start the journey only when you have been registered.

Registration for ChardhamYatra can be done at <https://registrationandtouristcare.uk.gov.in>.

Leave for the journey only after the health check-up.

It would be appropriate for old and sick persons and persons suffering from Covid in the past not to go on the journey or postpone it for some time.

The ChardhamYatra is till Deepawali. So to avoid the crowd, schedule your journey according to the convenience and availability on the portal.

For any health related information, we will contact on the helpline number 104 and 108 for ambulance.

Information & Public Relations Department, Issued in Public Interest by Uttarakhand | uttarakhandtourism.gov.in
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Jaypee Hospital Is Setting A Benchmark In Delivering Excellence In Healthcare

The Hospital motto is 'Life First'



From The Time You Have Taken Over The Helm Of Affairs As The Ceo Of Jaypee Hospital, What Are The Developments That Have Initiated Here In Terms Of Medical Care?

I joined Jaypee Hospital as the Director of cardiac surgery in 2014 and subsequently in 2016 also assumed the appointment of CEO of Jaypee Healthcare. Jaypee hospitals are located at Palampur, Bulandshahr and Anoop Nagar. I come from an army background, where in addition to my speciality I had the opportunity to serve in various administrative appointments. I personally believe that a clinical background proves to be an advantage as an administrator. I took on the responsibility of CEO with many an advantage on my side as a doctor, surgeon and administrator, besides experience. In every sphere of medical care we have kept pace with the introduction of new technology and our departments and institutes have grown to achieve a status of world class referral centres. We have been able pursue various academic activities and have started PG programs in a number of specialities.

Could You Share About The Outreach Hospitals Of Jaypee Group?

The Jaypee Group has done several projects in Himachal Pradesh and our Chairman, Mr. Jaiprakash Gaur has an emotional bond with the state. He realised that a state-of-the-art healthcare centre was lacking in the state and he took the responsibility of building and running Vivekananda Medical Institute at Palampur. Mr Gaur's home town is Bulandshahr which again holds a nostalgic and special place in his heart. The town lacked a comprehensive healthcare facility and Jaypee group has established a multispecialty hospital in the town.

Do You Have Any Expansion Plans In The Near Future?

We are constantly upgrading and strengthening the existing facilities that we have. Recently, we have set-up current generation Cath-labs at each of our hospitals at Palampur and Bulandshahr and the numbers of ICU beds have been increased to cater to the increasing workload of these centres. These hospitals already have CT scans and in the near future we will be setting up MRI machines. Nursing college is also awaiting state government's approval to be started from the next session at VMI, Palampur.

How Do You Envisage The Master Jaypee Hospital In Noida Growing As A Medical Hub?

The main thrust of this hospital has been on creating it as an academic centre. It is my belief and conviction that any hospital that has teaching facilities and an academic environment also provides better and modern patient care. It encourages the doctors to work in a more academic manner than focus on just the commercial aspect of their profession. Consequently, it is noticed that the casualty is better attended, the patients are better tended to and the conversation is largely professional. Keeping this in mind we have started DNB programmes in different specialities and various Fellowships in this hospital.

India Is Known To Be A Medical Destination For Not Only Its Expert Doctors, But Also For The Affordable Treatment That It Offers. How Is Jaypee Hospital Leveraging This Aspect?

It is indeed remarkable that for a hospital that started in 2014, our reputation as a credible hospital providing personalised medical care was quickly established such that at times upto twenty percent of our patients are from foreign countries. We have significant number of international patients following our outreach programmes and collaboration with local hospitals in various SAARC and Central Asian countries. We also conduct OPDs in Iraq and some African countries. Our institute has been training doctors from abroad in various specialities and offering certificate programmes. Medical tourism and academics are the strengths of Jaypee Hospital and also among the main thrust for developing this facility as a Centre of Excellence.

It Is Said Screening Is The First Step Towards Prevention. What Is Jaypee Doing On This Front?

We do corporate health check-ups with whom we have tie-ups, and our proactive marketing team has a monthly schedule for regular check-ups, mother and child check-up, organiz-



Jaypee Hospital is a flagship initiative of the Jaypee Group and has more than 35 dedicated specialities that cover every branch of surgical and medical care, thus making it a leading comprehensive healthcare center. It has renowned doctors, trained para-medical staff and in house cutting-edge medical facilities. The hospital has excellent and robust transplant programmes across specialities, particularly liver and kidney.

ing out on the 10000 steps in a day, the kind of food one consumes which is high in sodium and saturated fats etc is the most important factor. My advice to the people is to walk for a healthy heart.

Women Too Are Increasingly Becoming Heart Patients At A Younger Age. Could You Share The Reason For It?

Yes, the situation in women is as grim as heart attacks in young men. The reasons leading to heart problems are similar to those in men and probably the foremost is a changing lifestyle. Women until reaching menopause were naturally protected from a heart problem by the hormone Estrogen. But now with drastic lifestyle changes that have altered hormonal balance has made young women also vulnerable to cardiac issues. This is becoming a significant social issue as the impacts of heart problems have a cascading effect on not only the young patient, but also the family and the socio-economical matrix.

When You Look Back What Makes You Proud About Your Team?

I feel proud that we have such excellent doctors who can handle any medical emergency and can speak at any international forum with confidence. And the commitment of the entire staff is commendable. Many who joined the team when the hospital started are still with us and continue to work with the same commitment and dedication. Even during the Covid pandemic not one of them complained or excused themselves from work. In fact, they worked more fiercely to tackle the situation. What more could I ask for!



Dr. (Lt. Gen) Manoj Luthra is currently the Chief Executive Officer of Jaypee Healthcare and has the administrative responsibility of looking after Jaypee Hospital, Noida (U.P.) and other hospitals of the Jaypee group. He is a renowned, practicing cardiac surgeon with over 30 years experience in all aspects of Cardiac Surgery and was previously Dean of Armed Forces Medical College before assuming his present appointment.

discontinued due to the Covid pandemic but we intend to re-start them soon.

During The Covid Pandemic, How Did Jaypee Hospital Cope With The Unprecedented Medical Emergency?

We divided the hospital into two sections- Covid and non-Covid. The west wing of the hospital was earmarked for Covid and all admissions, tests, ICU etc. was separate from the East wing, which was open for the regular patients. The division of space was done in such a way that the interaction of doctors and staff of both wings can be avoided, except in cases when speciality doctors had to check-on Covid patients having co-morbidities and needed emergency attention. Such doctors adhered to strict protocol. The hospital beds were segregated so that we were able to establish 200 non-ventilated beds plus 100 ICU beds for Covid patients.

What Are The Gaps In The Medical System That Need To Be Bridged?

The fundamental issue is about the reach or accessibility of medical care to the masses. Though there is a system in place for healthcare beginning with primary health centres, district hospitals, government hospitals, yet despite the best of intentions they are never enough. These hospitals never have enough medicines and infrastructure is inadequate to provide for a teeming population. So there is a mismatch between how much can be provided and the demand. When it comes to high-end corporate sector hospitals, only people who can afford it are treated in such facilities. The common man cannot afford such expensive treatment and therefore does not get the best, which he has a right to.

How Are You Ensuring Equitable Healthcare At Jaypee Hospital?

The credit goes to our Founder Chairman, Jaiprakash Gaur ji, whose vision and mission was to provide an ethical healthcare facility in this region, where the common man can receive the latest advanced treatment at affordable cost. Every patient visiting Jaypee hospital gets equal care irrespective of the economic status and ethnicity. All our healthcare workers are trained to provide personalised and compassionate care. Our patient welfare department regularly takes feedback from every patient to help improve patient care continuously.

Does Cardiac Problem Occur Due To Fatigue And Wear And Tear Of The Heart From Years Of Uninterrupted Functioning?

Repetitive functioning of an organ per se does not lead to fatigue. But wear and tear does occur pertaining to the organ's functionality because the entire cellular structure in the body is affected due to the ageing process. There are hormonal changes as well over a period of time, which affect the optimal level of functioning of various organs. Also, one ages because ones thinking changes along with a host of other psychosomatic reasons. Consequently, all body organs will follow that natural process. In addition the condition of the heart gets impacted because of other factors e.g., Atheroma occurs wherein there is a build-up of deposits such as fat, cholesterol and calcium, that adhere to arteries of the heart, all of which leads to the narrowing of arteries, the valves become more fibrous as age progresses that could cause leakage and gradients as a result of which the heart has to put in extra effort to pump blood. Such a pathology eventually impacts heart health.

When An Individual Is Young Their

Body Can Withstand Pressures Of Various Kinds, Then Why Is It That There Are Increasing Cases Of Young Heart Attacks?

The singular biggest reason for increase in the incidence of heart attacks in young adults is probably the change of habits, termed as lifestyle changes in medical parlance. The common lifestyle habits that are detrimental for the

over-all health of an individual are varied, stress triggered by various circumstances, emotional or otherwise, leading a sedentary lifestyle with lack of exercise and substance abuse like smoking cigarettes and alcohol consumption etc.

Family history too has a role to play where genetic influences make an individual more susceptible to a heart problem. Probably, miss-



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6 GOVT & POLITICS

Night shift: UP brings new rules for women in factories

ASAD REHMAN
LUCKNOW, MAY 28

IN A move to improve ease of doing business in Uttar Pradesh, the state government has amended rules for women working at factories and introduced a new set of conditions for factories to ensure safety and security of their women employees.

Labour Department Additional Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra on Saturday said that under the new regulations, woman factory workers can work after 7pm and before 6am if they give their consent in writing to the employer. "If there are women who want to work in night shift, they can do so after giving it in writing," Chandra told *The Sunday Express*.

"There are some conditions that have been brought for factories where women work at night. After fulfilling them, the factories will be allowed to make women work at night. Previously, the process for factories to get permission was a lengthy one. We have made it easier," he said. "So far, night shift was not allowed without special permission. Now, we have allowed night shift too. These rules are only applicable on factories."

"The application process for women to work at night will be online. The factories can send an application and state they are fulfilling the conditions. It will be done on the Labour Commissioner portal. And permission will be granted," Chandra said.

Laying down the new conditions for factories, Chandra in an order on Friday said women will not be allowed to work at factories between 7pm to 6am unless they give written consent. Also, no woman worker "shall be terminated from her employment if she refuses to work" in that time slot. The conditions include that women who choose to work between 7pm and 6am "shall be provided free transportation from her residence to workplace by employer... and back".

After 2020 jolt, BJP set to go solo in Haryana civic elections

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, MAY 28

THE BJP on Saturday announced that it will go solo in the Haryana civic elections scheduled on June 19. The party is ruling the state in alliance with the Jannayak Janata Party with which it had contested the last civic polls in 2020, but had suffered a jolt.

"The BJP state executive has decided to contest the polls alone. In all municipal corporations, we will contest the election on party symbol," state BJP president Om Prakash Dhankar said.

The decision, announced after a two-day meeting of the state executive in Hisar, comes a day after a Delhi court awarded a four-year jail term to former Haryana CM Om Prakash Chautala in a disproportionate assets (DA) case and ordered to seize four of his properties. Following the court order, the JJP cancelled all its party programmes till further notice.

Chautala's grandson Dushyant Chautala is Deputy CM in the alliance government.

Announcing the cancellation of party programmes Friday, Dushyant's younger brother Divvijay Chautala said, "The sentence awarded to my grandfather... is painful and unfortunate. We hope that a relief shall be granted by High Court... in wake of the punishment. JJP's all political programmes stand cancelled".

While there was no immediate reaction from the JJP over its ally's decision, Dhankar said BJP's election committee will meet in Panchkula on July 1 to take decision on candidates. "Before this, an observer will be sent to every district on May 30 and 31 where they will meet the local party leaders. Then, based on their report, a final decision will be taken in panchkula," Dhankar said. He said the party will contest the polls on party symbol, the district units will take a call on whether to contest the elections to municipal committees on party symbol.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi welcomed BJP state president CR Patil at an event in Gandhinagar on Saturday. Gujarat CM Bhupendra Patel and Union Home Minister Amit Shah are also present. *Nirmal Harindran*

Fertiliser subsidy Bill to cross Rs 2 lakh cr this year, says PM

AVINASH NAIR
GANDHINAGAR, MAY 28

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi on Saturday said the Central government's subsidy Bill for fertilisers will cross an estimated Rs 2 lakh crore this financial year — 25 per cent more than the fertiliser subsidy of the last financial year.

The Prime Minister virtually inaugurated the "country's first Nano Urea Liquid" plant of IFFCO (Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited) during a "Sahakar Se Samridhi" event — a gathering of all cooperative institutions of Gujarat — at Mahatma Mandir in Gandhinagar. The Rs 175-crore IFFCO unit at Kalol has a capacity to produce 1.5 lakh 500 ml bottles of Nano Urea.

During the event, Modi also promised to set up eight new Nano Urea liquid plants that will help reduce India's dependence on imported fertilisers.

"I am feeling a special happiness while inaugurating the country's first Nano Urea plant at Kalol... The half a litre bottle of

Nano Urea will equivalent to one bag (50 kg) of Urea. Just imagine the amount of transportation cost it will save for the farmer. In coming days, eight more such plants will be set up across the country. It will reduce our dependence on imported urea. I hope this innovation will not just remain limited to urea and be replicated to other fertilisers."

"India is second biggest consumer of Urea globally. But in terms of production we are third... We import one-fourth of our requirement for fertilisers. But in case of Potash and Phosphate, we end up importing 100 per cent of our requirement from foreign countries," said Modi while addressing a gathering of members of cooperatives bodies largely from dairy and banking sectors.

The Prime Minister narrated how reduced availability caused by the Russia-Ukraine conflict and Covid-19 pandemic had caused the prices of fertilisers shoot northwards in the international market. However, the government did not increase the price of fertilisers, he said.

OBC QUOTA FOR PANCHAYAT POLLS

Chouhan govt misleading people, says Kamal Nath

IRAM SIDDIQUE
BHOPAL, MAY 28

MADHYA PRADESH state Congress president Kamal Nath Saturday accused Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and his ministers of lying and misleading the state by their assurance that the upcoming panchayat elections will have 35% reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBC). The truth is that OBC reservation is not more than 9-12%, he said.

State minister Bhupendra Singh countered him, saying it was because of efforts by the BJP government and Chief Minister Chouhan that Madhya Pradesh got the go-ahead from Supreme

Court to conduct the panchayat elections with OBC quota.

Speaking to reporters at the state Congress office, Kamal Nath said the OBC quota breakup. He said for zilla panchayat members, 875 posts (or 11.2%) are reserved; for janpad panchayat chairman posts, it is 313 posts (9.5%); for janpad panchayat members, it is 780 posts (11.5%); and for sarpanch posts, it is 2,820 (12.5%).

He said 19 of the 52 districts will have no OBC quota for zilla panchayat members and 28 districts will have not such quota for janpad panchayat chairman posts.

"This shows that the BJP is not only doing injustice but also misleading the members of our OBC communities," Kamal Nath said

REGIONAL PARTIES: TOP EARNERS (IN Rs CRORE)

FY20-21	FY19-20		
DMK	149.950	DMK	64.904
YSR-Cong	107.990	YSR-Cong	92.739
BJD	73.347	BJD	90.350
JDU	65.310	JDU	23.354
TRS	37.658	TRS	130.460
AIADMK	34.076	AIADMK	89.606
AAP	17.600	AAP	49.651
Sena	13.841	Sena	111.403
MNS*	7.531	SAD	16.470
SAD	5.998		

*No data available for FY19-20

SOURCES OF INCOME OF 31 REGIONAL PARTIES

OTHER SOURCES
₹152.551 cr
(28.81%)

OTHER DONATIONS/ CONTRIBUTIONS
₹126.265 cr
(23.85%)



ELECTORAL BONDS
₹250.600 cr
(47.34%)

10 parties saw increased income**
19 parties saw a decrease in income**

₹529.416 cr total income of 31 regional parties in FY20-21

82.03% of the total income went to the top 5 parties

34.96% decrease in total earnings of 29 parties — from Rs 800.264 cr in FY19-20 to Rs 520.492 cr in FY20-21

**Data for both FY20-21 and FY19-20 available for only 29 of 31 parties. Source: Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR)

AAP picks 2 Padma-awardee Sikhs for RS

KANCHAN VASDEV
CHANDIGARH, MAY 28

STUNG BY criticism over picking non-Punjabis for Rajya Sabha seats in March, the ruling AAP in Punjab Saturday chose two Sikhs, both Padma Shree award winners, as its candidates for the polls to the Upper House of Parliament. The candidates are environment activist Baba Balbir Singh Seechewal and businessman-philanthropist Vikramjit Singh Sahney.

An announcement in this regard was made by Punjab Chief

Minister Bhagwant Mann on his Twitter handle.

"I am happy to announce that AAP is nominating two Padma Shri awardees for the Rajya Sabha. One is environmentalist Padma Shri Sant Balbir Singh Seechewal and second is Padma Shri Vikramjit Singh Sahney. My best wishes to both of them," said Mann in a tweet.

The term of two Rajya Sabha members from Punjab, Ambika Soni (Congress) and Balwinder Singh Bhunder (Shiromani Akali Dal), is due to expire on July 4.

Given the overwhelming majority of AAP in the Punjab

House — 97 of the 117 legislators are from the ruling party — its candidates are likely to be elected unopposed.

Sources said that AAP was on the defensive when it had nominated two Delhi-based leaders to Rajya Sabha in March this year. The Opposition had also criticised AAP, alleging that it had sent non-Punjabis to Rajya Sabha from the state. The party also faced criticism for not being able to send a Sikh or a social activist.

Taking a lesson, the AAP has now chosen two Sikh personalities, who are well known for their activism.



CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan; Cong leader Kamal Nath

after reading out the numbers.

Targeting Chouhan and his ministers, he said, "Such a big lie, such a big betrayal... Shivraj ji should be ashamed. They are boasting that they are giving 30-35 per cent OBC reservation when the truth is it is 9-12 per cent."

The former chief minister said when in power, the Congress gov-

ernment brought in the MP Panchayat Raj Avam Gram Awaraj Adhiniyam 1993. According to Sections 30 and 32 of this legislation, the state government is empowered by the Constitution to grant 25% OBC reservation.

State Housing and Urban Development Minister Bhupendra Singh accused the opposition party of posing legal hurdles for OBC quota. He said both panchayat as well as local body polls were held with OBC reservation, but the Congress went to High Court five times and then to Supreme Court.

"The Congress opposed OBC reservation and it was during this time that Supreme Court nullified OBC reservation in the state. It was because of the BJP government

and efforts of CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan, who made all preparations, that Madhya Pradesh became the first state to get go-ahead from Supreme Court for OBC reservation for elections," he said, referring to the May 19 order.

"When we talk of OBC reservation in MP, there are several places where OBC reserved seats have increased. There might be some places where it reduced also but the Congress had gotten the reservation ended. Whatever reservation we are getting now, is due to efforts of the CM... The fact that elections are being held with OBC reservation is a big achievement of the state government."

The three-phase panchayat polls will be held from June 25.

Govt turning blind eye to Muslims' hardships: Madani

AMIT SHARMA
MEERUT, MAY 28

JAMIAT ULAMA-E-HIND chief Maulana Mahmood Asad Madani Saturday said the government had turned a blind eye to the hardships faced by Muslims in the country. Speaking at a meeting, Madani said, "The country is going through a phase of turmoil but those in the government have sealed their lips..."

"We cannot extinguish fire with fire. We have to defeat the atmosphere of hatred with love. Be calm and do not be swayed by the designs of those who want to disintegrate our country," he said.

Siddaramaiah questions RSS's claim of representing all Hindus

JOHNSON TA
BENGALURU, MAY 28

TAKING his 'Aryan' taunt at the RSS further, former Karnataka chief minister Siddaramaiah on Saturday questioned the Sangh Parivar's claims of representing "all Hindus", while supporting only the BJP politically.

"How is one identified as a Hindu according to the RSS? Is it enough to be born to Hindu parents? Or should one be a member of the BJP?" Siddaramaiah said, in a series of social media messages questioning the definition of Hindus by the RSS and BJP.

He also asked if all castes fit into this Hindu view of the RSS.

"Why has the RSS, which claims that all Hindus are one, reserved all their office-bearer positions for just one caste? How many RSS office-bearers are from Dalit and backward classes?" Siddaramaiah said Saturday.

A day earlier, in the course of a speech to mark the death anniversary of Jawaharlal Nehru, Siddaramaiah asked whether the RSS had its origins in India and whether it was an Aryan or Dravidian outfit.

"Is the RSS native to India? We have been quiet and do not want to unnecessarily discuss it. Are Aryans from this country? Are they Dravidians? We have to look at their origins," the former CM said.

AFTER CHANCELLOR PLAN

Bengal considers ousting Governor as Visitor of private varsities

May replace him with education minister; Opposition slams move

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, MAY 28

DAYS AFTER the West Bengal Cabinet decided to introduce a Bill in the state Assembly to appoint Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee as the chancellor of all state-run universities, the government is now contemplating removing Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar from the post of Visitor in private universities.

Sources in the state education department said the government is considering appointing Education Minister Bratya Basu to the post. According to a senior education department official, "The state Cabinet has in-principle approved the initiative. The proposal will now be placed for clearance in the next Cabinet meeting. The government is, meanwhile, also exploring legal aspects before making a move in this regard."

On Thursday, the state Cabinet had approved a proposal to introduce a Bill to make the Chief Minister the chancellor of all state-run universities. Basu had then told the media that the Bill would be introduced in the next Assembly session.

The move has raised fears that it would set the stage for another confrontation between the TMC-led government and the Governor, who has repeatedly clashed with the government since he assumed charge in 2019.

The chancellor is the titular head of a state university. In almost all states, the Governor serves as ex-officio chancellor, and in this capacity appoints vice-chancellors of state universities and presides over convocation ceremonies, among other responsibilities.



Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar and the TMC govt in Bengal have been at loggerheads

Under the existing rule, the Governor, as Visitor of private universities, can preside over the convocation of the university. The Visitor also has the power to call for any information relating to the affairs of the university.

Opposition parties have, meanwhile, criticised the state government for its latest move. Dubbing the initiative "unfortunate", senior CPM leader Sujjan Chakraborty called it an "attack on the education system".

"The state government now wants to continue its extortion bid in private universities as well," he said.

BJP national vice-president Dilip Ghosh said, "Instead of controlling the universities, the state government should have monitored the progress of these institutions. There should not be an attempt to curb the autonomy of these institutions."

Slamming the Opposition, TMC state general secretary Kunal Ghosh said, "If Prime Minister Narendra Modi can be the Chancellor of Visva-Bharati University, then Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee could also become the Chancellor of state-run universities. The state government has taken a practical decision in the students' interest."

Abhishek hits out at '1% of judiciary' for ordering CBI probes

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, MAY 28

TMC LEADER Abhishek Banerjee on Saturday lashed out at "1 per cent of the judiciary" for ordering CBI investigation in "every case" in the state.

Abhishek, while addressing a rally in Haldia in Purba Medinipur district, said he countered the "harassment" by central agencies by inducting two BJP MPs into the TMC.

He said, "I am ashamed to say [this]. But there is one per cent in the judiciary who are hand in glove and have a tacit understanding and are ordering CBI investigation in every case. This is just 1 per cent of the judiciary," he said, without elaborating further.

"If anyone thinks that they will take action against me for speaking the truth, I will speak the truth 1,000 times," he added.

The Calcutta High Court has ordered CBI investigations in a number of cases in the past few months, including the recruit-



TMC leader Abhishek Banerjee

ment drives by the School Service Commission (SSC).

"The CBI and ED are being misused to threaten us [TMC leaders]. The Enforcement Directorate tried to harass me by calling me to Delhi twice. I decided to give them a befitting reply by inducting two BJP MPs into the party," he claimed.

Opposition leaders criticised Abhishek's remarks.

State Congress chief Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said, "...In India, everything is governed by the Constitution. The law, the administration and the judiciary have been set up to maintain it. It is disgusting to attack that judiciary."

State BJP spokesperson Shamik Bhattacharya asked, "Will the people of the state accept such irresponsible words [from the TMC]?"

—WITHPTI

First week good show as UP Assembly makes a nervous screens debut

MAULSHREE SETH
LUCKNOW, MAY 28

AT Rs 6,15,518.97 crore total outlay, the Uttar Pradesh Assembly just saw its biggest budget, as well as fireworks between the ruling BJP and the opposition Samajwadi Party benches. But, behind the scenes, young and old, across parties, bonded over another development in the House: the Assembly going 'paperless'.

Last week, the UP Assembly became only the second in the country to come on board NeVA (National e-Vidhan Application), whereby all Assemblies will come on a single digital platform. The country's largest House took its

first step towards going paperless with last year's Budget, but now, tablets have been installed on the desks of all the 403 MLAs putting questions, answers, archival materials, speeches and other documents at the tip of their fingers.

If not easy, it has been enthusiastic going, after a one-day training session on May 21. On May 24, as Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya got up to read out an answer to a question raised by SP MLA Devendra Pratap, Speaker Satish Mahana reminded him: "The answer is already on the device. Parha hua mana jaye (To be considered read)."

But when he wanted to seek more time for debate on the Budget, senior SP MLA Lalji



CM Yogi Adityanath, Speaker Satish Mahana and Dy CM Keshav Prasad Maurya as the UP Assembly goes full digital. *Vishal Srivastava*

Verma preferred to flag the physical copy of Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly rules, rather than its digital format.

The younger MLAs — the current Assembly has as many as 100

first-timers — are having an easier time. Like the SP's Ankit Bharti, who at 25 is as young as it gets. The Saipur MLAs, a Bacherlor's in Business Administration, smiled that the technology had been a

great leveller for them when it came to their seniors. "I would not know what was going on earlier, but technology has made me comfortable. There is something now in which I can assist the experienced MLAs."

If younger legislators like him could be seen lending a helping hand, apart from nervous experts from the government's NIC (National Informatics Centre), Speaker Mahana took the lead in conveying technical terms in layman's language. When some struggled with flipping on to the next page on their tablets, Mahana, 61, told them to pinch their fingers "like you do when turning a page in a book". Many MLAs could not hide their delight

at accomplishing the above.

Later, as MLAs raised too many questions together, with experts looking increasingly harried, Mahana told them to take things slowly. "Aap abhi Class 1 mein nahin pahunchte, aur PhD karne chale hain (You haven't cleared Class 1 yet, and want to do a PhD)," he joked at a member's question on how to upload their supplementary questions online.

Rashid Husain, one of the NIC experts, informed that each member could log into their devices using their own ID and password. The ministers have another software on their devices allowing them to directly exchange live notes with their respective secretaries, to pull relevant informa-

tion as and when needed when required in the House.

Uttar Pradesh Agriculture Minister Surya Pratap Shahi's query regarding how to get to the 'My Notes' section on the tablet was vociferously backed by the BSP's sole MLA, Uma Shanker Singh, as requiring immediate response. Shahi was told to go to the part labelled "Tippriyan".

The SP's Irfan Solanki, clearly more at ease with the devices, was seen opening the logo of the party on the e-books of each MLA and taking a photo of the same.

In days to come, MLAs can also mark their attendance in the House via the biometric system on the devices, as well as their votes on issues on the floor.

Many in touch, BJP can have 30 MLAs in state: Goa unit chief

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
PANAJI, MAY 28

BJP GOA in-charge C T Ravi Saturday said that the saffron party may get the support of 30 MLAs in the 40-member House

In the coastal state. At present, the BJP, which won 20 seats in the assembly election held in February, has the support of 25 MLAs with independents and other party MLAs backing it. Addressing the party's state executive meeting held in Panaji,



CT Ravi

BJP national general secretary Ravi said, "On behalf of the central BJP, I thank all of you for your hard work that ensured the BJP's victory and

for forming the third successive government in Goa. Your (election) slogan was 'Bavisaant Baavis (22 in 2022)'. With support (from other MLAs) we are 25 in 2022. But don't worry; a lot of people are in contact (with us). Within 2022, we will cross 30.

The party has not given permission. That's why we are 25. If the party grants permission, we will be 30 in 2022." After the poll results were declared on March 10, two Maharashtrai Gomantak Party (MGP) MLAs and three

Independent MLAs supported the BJP in government formation. MGP leader Ramkrishna alias Sudin Dhavalikar was made a minister in CM Pramod Sawant's cabinet. Notably, the MGP had contested the election in a pre-poll alliance with the

Trinamool Congress (TMC). The Congress won 11 seats, the AAP won two, and homegrown parties Goa Forward Party and Revolutionary Goans Party won one seat each. Despite its aggressive campaign, the TMC could not win a single seat in the state.

Sl. No.	Name / Address Contact No. of the Branch	Name and Address of the Borrower(s)/Guarantor (s)	Outstanding in Rs.	Details of Property	Reserve Price (Rs.) / EMD/Bid Multiplier Amt./A/c No. / IFC Code
11.	JAINAGAR BRANCH, BHELWA Chowk, Main Road, Jainagar, Bihar - 847226 Mob. 8210998601	1. M/s Sonu Traders, Prop. Md. Gulzar, Ward No. 16, Bhelwa Tola, Jainagar, Dist. Madhubani, Bihar. 2. Md. Gulzar S/o Md. Naeem Ward No. 16, Bhelwa Tola, Jainagar, Dist. - Madhubani, Bihar. 3. Md. Naeem, S/o Md. Shaheed, Ward No. 16, Bhelwa Tola, Belhi Dakshin, Jainagar, Belhi, Dist. - Madhubani Bihar. 4. Md. Saddam, S/o Md. Naeem, Ward No. - 16, Bhelwa Tola, Jainagar, Dist. - Madhubani, Bihar	Rs. 3,45,775.62 as on 18.05.2022 + interest & Other Cost thereon till realization	Mouza Usrahi Deodha, Thana No. - 14, Tajuji No. - 856, Khata No. - 1091, 1096, 218 (new), Khesra No. - 8440, 8441, 8451 (Old), 10346, 10347 (New), Area- 01 Kathha. Anchal Jainagar, Dist. - Madhubani, Bihar. Boundary - North - Jagdish Pd. Yadav, South - NH 104 Road, East - Laxmi Sah, West - Sunita Devi & Others.	Rs. 15,00,000/- Rs. 1,50,000/- A/c - 8362295000001 IFC Code - CNRB0008362
12.	BASOPATTI BRANCH, Babandei Chowk, Block Road, Basopatti, Bihar - 847225 Mob. 8210998580	1. M/s Utkarsh Spare Parts, Proprietor - Vandita Pandey, Vill - Pihwara, Post Ultra, District, Madhubani, Bihar. 2. Vandita Pandey W/o Shankaranand Pandey, Vill - Pihwara, Post - Ultra, District - Madhubani, Bihar	Rs. 15,57,939.48 as on 18.05.2022 + interest & Other Cost thereon till realization	Sale Deed No. - 928 Dated - 20.02.2019 All That Part and parcel of Land Measuring 21.80 Decimal = 5 Katha, Covered under Khata No. - 166 (Old) 24 (New), Khesra No. - 1298, (Old) 893 (New), Situated at, Mauja Pihwara, Thana No. - 77, Tajuji No. - 6247, 6248 & 6249, PS - Saharghat Anchal Madhwapur, Dist. - Madhubani Jagahbandi No. - 91 in the Name of Vandita Pandey W/o Shankaranand Pandey Boundary - North - Pokhra, South - PCC Road, East - Devendra Pandey and Vinay Kumar Pandey, West - PCC Road.	Rs. 24,68,000/- Rs. 2,46,800/- A/c - 8362295000001 IFC Code - CNRB0008362
13.	SUPAUL BRANCH, 1st Flr., WN 10, Station Road, Supaul, Bihar-852131 Mob. 8210998631	1. Anil Kumar Singh, S/o Maheshwar Pd Singh, H. No. - 23A, Vill - Vishanpur, Supaul, Bihar. 2. Punam Devi, W/o Anil Kumar Singh, H. No. - 23A, Vill. - Vishanpur, Supaul, Bihar.	Rs. 3,84,993.62 as on 18.05.2022 + interest & Other Cost thereon till realization	Deed No. - 1025 Dated - 07.03.2009 All That Part and Parcel of property measuring 15 Dhur = 3.27 Decimal Covered under Khata No. - 62 (Old) / 457 (New), Khesra No. - 845, 879 (Old) / 348, 362 (New), Thana No. - 215, Village - Bisampur, PO - Lauth, Mouza - Supaul, Dist. - Supaul, Bihar. Boundary - North - Niz Hissardar, South - Rasta 6ft., East - Hal Chitra Rekha Devi, West - Hal Dazi Devi.	Rs. 22,61,400/- Rs. 2,26,140/- A/c - 8362295000001 IFC Code - CNRB0008362
14.	SUPAUL BRANCH, 1st Floor, WN 10, Station Road, Supaul, Bihar - 852131 Mob. 8210998631	1. Janardan Sharma, S/o Surat Lal Sharma, Gangapur, Ward No. - 16, Saragarh, Supaul, Bihar. 2. Janita Devi W/o Janardan Sharma, Gangapur, Ward No. 16, Saragarh, Supaul, Bihar	Rs. 8,80,928.70 as on 18.05.2022 + interest & Other Cost thereon till realization	Sale Deed No. - 5795 Dated - 29.07.2013 All That Part and Parcel of Land measuring 10 Dhur Covered under Khata No. (O) - 114, (N) - 137, Khesra No. (O) - 1000, (N) - 1136 Situated at Gangapur, P.S. - Kisanpur Mauja Supaul Patti Jhakarahi under Nagarpurishad, Ward No. - 26, Thana No. - 215, Tajuji No. - 548, Registry Office - Supaul, District - Supaul, in the name of Janardan Sharma S/o Surat Lal Sharma Boundary - North - Fauji, South - Niz Hissardar, East - Road, West - Bisoi Jha.	Rs. 13,10,000/- Rs. 1,31,000/- A/c - 8362295000001 IFC Code - CNRB0008362
15.	DARBHANGA BRANCH, DELHI MORE BRANCH, 1st Floor, Umesh Nagar, NH-57, Delhi More, Darbhanga, Bihar - 846005 Mob. 8210998591	1. Mr. Shankar Mahato, S/o Jethan Mahto, At - Chandanpatti Gangwara, Post - Saramoanpur, Darbhanga - 846007 2. Mr. Jagannath Kumar Mahato, S/o Mr. Shankar Mahto, At - Chandanpatti Gangwara, Post - Saramoanpur, Darbhanga - 846007. 3. M/s Krishna Furniture House (Prop. Mr. Jagannath Kumar Mahato), Vill. - Gangwara, PO - Saramoanpur, Darbhanga - 846007	Rs. 17,37,082.88 as on 18.05.2022 + interest & Other Cost thereon till realization	Sale Deed No. - 16154 Dated - 05.08.1982 All That Part and Parcel of Land measuring 3 Katha 5 Dhur Covered under Khata No. - 31, Khesra No. - 51, Jamabandi No. - 295 Situated at Mauza Gangwara, Pargana - Bharwara, P.S. - Anchal, Sub Registry & Dist. - Darbhanga, Thana No. - 492, in the name of Shankar Mahto S/o Jethan Mahto. Boundary - North - Dist Board Road, South - Sarkari Band, East - Ganga Mandal, West - Moti Lal Thakur & Mahadev Sahu New Purchaser.	Rs. 37,10,000/- Rs. 3,71,000/- A/c - 8362295000001 IFC Code - CNRB0008362
16.	BITHNAULI KHEMCHAND BRANCH, Near Main Chowk Rd, NH - 107, Bithnauli Khemchand, Bihar-854304 Mob. # 9448911780	1. M/s Suhana Jhankar Electronics, (Prop. Pappu Kumar Mehta), Champa Nagar, K Nagar, Purnea, Bihar. 2. Pappu Kumar Mehta S/o Shivanand Mehta, Champanganagar, Kohbara Urf Ram nagar, K Nagar, Purnea, Bihar. 3. Sulekha Devi W/o Pappu Kumar Mehta, Champanganagar, Kohbara Urf Ram Nagar, K Nagar, Purnea, Bihar	Rs. 31,82,746.24 as on 18.05.2022 + interest & Other Cost thereon till realization	Sale Deed No. - 17161 Dated - 26.12.2013 All That Part and Parcel of Land measuring 05 Decimal Covered under Khata No. - 123, Survey No. - 5069, Situated at Mohalla / Village - Koshi Project, Mauja - Kohbara, Thana - K Nagar, Thana No. - 02, Tajuji No. - 1/1309 in the name of Sri Pappu Kumar Mehta S/o Shivanand Mehta. Boundary - North - 10 Feet Kachchi Rasta, South - Nand Lal Gupta, East - Niz Seller, West - Kachchi Rasta.	Rs. 37,81,000/- Rs. 3,78,100/- A/c - 8362295000001 IFC Code - CNRB0008362
17.	MADHEPURA BRANCH, First Floor, Main Road, Madhepura, Bihar - 852113 Mob. 8210998611	1. M/s Anamika & Sons Company, Proprietor - Savita Sinha, Prabhat Nagar Main Road, At Sadhua, Tulshibari District - Madhepura, Bihar. 2. Savita Sinha W/o Pawan Kumar Sinha, D/o Raj Kumar Sinha, At Sadhua, Tulshibari Belhaghat, District - Madhepura, Bihar. 3. Pawan Kumar Sinha S/o Prabhat Kumar Sinha, main Road Sadhua, Near Dr. Udit Kumar Raja, Tulshibari, PS - Madhepura, District - Madhepura, Bihar	Rs. 14,71,761.37 as on 18.05.2022 + interest & Other Cost thereon till realization	Sale Deed No. - 8761 Dated - 04.09.2015 All That Part and Parcel of the Land Measuring two Katha (8.73 Decimal) Covered Under Khata No. - 02 and 328, Old Khesra No. - 5636 and 4681, New Khesra No. - 2117, 2444, 2445, 2118, 2442 and 2443, situated at Mohalla - Sadhua, Mauja - Tulshibari Thana - Madhepura, Thana No. - 61, Tajuji No. - 468, Jamabandi No. - 7959, Anchal + Thana - Madhepura, Distt - Madhepura in the Name of Savita Sinha D/o Sri Raj Kumar Sinha Boundary - North - Jhatkan Mandal, South - Khesa New 2148, East - Debu Mandal and Jhatkan Mandal, West - 10 Feet Private Road and Pushpa Devi.	Rs. 34,00,000/- Rs. 3,40,000/- A/c - 8362295000001 IFC Code - CNRB0008362
18.	KURTHA BRANCH, Vill - Kurtha PO+PS - Sheosagar, Bihar-821111 Mob. 8210998553	1. M/s Ravish Mini Rice Mill, Prop. - Mr. Birendra Kumar Singh, S/o Shri Ramdev Singh, Village-Sakari, PS - Kudra, Dist.-Kaimur, Bihar-821108. 2. Mr. Birendra Kumar Singh S/o Shri Ramdev Singh Village-Sakari, PS-Kudra, Dist.-Kaimur, Bihar-821108. 3. Guarantor / Mortgagee: Smt. Geeta Devi, W/o Sri Vijay Shankar Singh, PO - Auwan, PS-Sheosagar, Dist.-Rohtas-821115	Rs. 33,92,154/- as on 21.05.2022 + interest & Other Cost thereon till realization	EMT of land and building in the name of 1. Smt. Urmila Devi W/o Sri Birendra Kumar Singh Ravish Rice Mill (Land & Building) bearing Plot No-1529, Khata No-220, Thana No-659, Mauza-Sakari, PO+PS-Kudra, District-Kaimur Bihar, Area-0.07 Decimal. Boundary - North - Shyam Narayan Singh, South - Niz, East - Niz, West - Ram Bilash Yadav. Deed No 6302 dated 28.12.2013. 2. Sri Birendra Kumar Singh, S/o Late Ramdeo Singh & Smt. Urmila Devi, W/o Sri Birendra Singh & Smt. Urmila Devi, W/o Sri Birendra Singh Bare Land Bearing, Plot No-1568, Khata No-98, Thana No-659, Mauza-Sakari, PO+PS-Kudra, Dist.-Kaimur Bihar, Area-0.09 Decimal. Boundary - North - Chenai Road, South - Urmila Devi, East-Plot No. 1583, West - Plot No-1567. Deed No 9534 dated 21.09.1995	Property-1 Rs. 37,99,000.00 Rs. 3,79,000/- Property-2,3 & 4 Rs. 74,55,000/- Rs. 7,45,500/- A/c - 8359296000001 IFC Code - CNRB0008359
19.	KURTHA BRANCH, Vill - Kurtha PO+PS - Sheosagar, Bihar-821111 Mob. 8210998553	Borrower - M/s Priya Mini Rice Mill, Prop. - Sri Vijay Shankar Singh, S/o Ramchela Yadav, Vill-Sakari, PO+PS-Kudra, Dist.-Kaimur, Bihar-821108. Guarantor / Mortgagee :- Smt Geeta Devi, W/o Sri Vijay Shankar Singh, PO-Auwan, PS-Sheosagar, Dist-Rohtas-821115.	Rs. 24,23,669.60 as on 21.05.2022 + interest & Other Cost thereon till realization	EMT of land and building in the name of 1. Sri Vijay Shankar Singh, S/o Sri Ramchela Yadav, Khata No-270, Plot No-1530, Thana No-659, Mauza-Sakari, Thana-Kudra, Dist.-Kaimur. Total Area 3.125 Decimal As per Possession Notice dated 26/10/2021 Boundary :- North - Sheo Bachan Sah, South - Niz & Rest Plot No 1530, East - Rasta West - Rest Plot No 1530. 2. Smt Geeta Devi, W/o Sri Vijay Shankar Singh, Khata No-35, Plot No-73, Thana No-87, Halka No-4, Thana-Sheosagar, Mauza-Auwan Dist.- Rohtas-821115 Total Area-10 Decimal As per Possession Notice dated 26/10/2021 Boundary :- North - Guddu Singh, South - Niz Vendor, East - Upendra Yadav, West - Bhagwan Chaudhary	Property 1 Rs. 11,00,000/- Rs. 1,10,000/- Property 2 Rs. 50,00,000/- Rs. 5,00,000/- A/c - 8359296000001 IFC Code - CNRB0008359
20.	MAHAR BAZAR BRANCH, Mob. 8210998338	M/s Surekha Stores, Prop. Sh. Shashi Nath Singh, S/o Late Raghuvansh Singh, Ward No. 07, Hasanpur - Utri Hasanpur Junaid, Vaishali - 844503	Rs. 34,85,000/- as on 25.05.2022 + interest & Other Cost thereon till realization	All That Part and Parcel of the Property bearing Khata Number - 674, Khesra No. - 2211, 2212, 2216, Thana Number - 625 situated at Mauza - Hasanpur Junaid, Anchal & Sub division - Mahnar, Vaishali, Area - 11 Dec. Equivalent of 4798.20 sqft. Mortgagee - Sh. Shashinath Singh S/o Late Raghuvansh Singh Boundary - North - Ravindra Singh & others, South - Shivanath Choudhary A/P Road, East - Late Ramchandra Jha & Virodhi Singh, West - Ram Ishwar Chaudhary & Others.	Rs. 37,98,000/- Rs. 3,80,000/- A/c - 209272434 IFC Code - CNRB0006959
21.	ARM BRANCH, K-217, Sangeeta Palace, 2nd Floor P.C. Colony, Hanuman Nagar, Patna Mob. 8102916048	1. M/s Raghooji Hatchery and Farms Pvt. Ltd. C/o - Akash Kumar Sonu, 1st Floor Ram Sagar Singh Complex Kachhari Road, Hajipur Dist. Vaishali Bihar. 2. Mr. Akash Kumar Sonu S/o Koushendra Singh, House No. 7, Road No. - 1, Rajput Nagar, Hajipur, Vaishali - 844101. 3. Mrs. Anju Rani W/o Sri Sudhir Kumar, A-61, Anand Vihar Colony, Ambedkar Path, Near Jagdeo Path, Patna - 800014. 4. Mr. Satya Prakash, S/o Sri Satish Kumar Singh, At Kataro Anchal, Patedhi Belsar, Dist. - Vaishali - 844101. 5. Koushendra Singh, S/o Late Surendra Chandra Singh, House No. 7, Road No. 1, Rajput Nagar, Hajipur Vaishali - 844101. 6. Smt. Chandra Kala Devi, W/o Sh. Shyam Sunder Chaudhary Ward No. 16, Medanical School, Pokhra Mohalla Hajipur Vaishali - 844101. 7. M/s Raghooji Hatchery and Farms Pvt. Ltd., At Kataro, P.O - Patedhi Belsar, P.S. - Patedhi Belsar Gouraul Dist. - Vaishali, Bihar - 844118	Rs. 15,42,000/- Rs. 1,94,200/- A/c - 8362295000001 IFC Code - CNRB0008362	1 Khata 10 Dhur. As per Deed No. - 2557 Dated - 31.05.1996 Boundary - North - Road, South - Indrawati Devi, East - Chandrakala Devi, West - Godawari Devi. Deed No - 1136 Dated - 02.02.1991 Boundary - North - Road Nagarpalika, South - Brijandan Prasad, East - Municipal School, West - Niz Anupam Chandra	Rs. 72,63,000/- Rs. 7,26,000/- A/c - 209272434 IFC Code - CNRB00017415
22.	KISHANGANJ BRANCH, 1st Floor Beside Khurapatti Road, Kishanganj, Bihar-855108 Mob. # 8210998608	1. Mohammad Mustak S/o Md. Wakil, Wd No. - 6, Near Pakki Road, Vill - Sarogara, PO - Belwa, Dist - Kishanganj, Bihar. 2. Shamina Khatoun W/o Md Mustak, Vill - Sarogara, PO - Belwa, Dist. - Kishanganj, Bihar	Rs. 27,09,502.80 as on 18.05.2022 + interest & Other Cost thereon till realization	Deed No. - 2751 Dated - 04.04.2013 All That part and parcel of a Land and Building area 04 Decimal 05 Kari Situated at Mauja - Halamala, Thana No. - 01, Khata No. - 576, Khesra No. - 998/9, Tazui No. - 07 Under Sarogara, Belwa, Dist. - Kishanganj Bihar in the name of Shamina Khatoun W/o Md. Mustak. Boundary - North - Jamaluddin, South - Road, East - Basir, West - Md. Mister.	Rs. 15,14,000/- Rs. 1,51,400/- A/c - 8362295000001 IFC Code - CNRB0008362

Last Date of EMD 27.06.2022 For Detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in www.canarabank.com
Date : 27.05.2022 Place : Patna Authorised Officer Canara Bank

UP CM IN UTTARAKHAND

Dhami could have won had we campaigned together: Yogi

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE DEHRADUN, MAY 28



UP CM Yogi Adityanath

ADDRESSING A public rally to campaign for Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami before the by-election to Champawat, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Saturday suggested that the result on Khatima seat would have been different had he campaigned there with Dhami.

Kedamath, Badrinath, Gangotri and Yamunotri — are being transformed like Ayodhya, Kashi-Vishwanath and Mathura-Vrindavan in UP. "Now Ayodhya has been transformed — Ram-Jala's temple is being constructed," he said. "Kashi Vishwanath is visited by at least 1 lakh people every day. Mathura Vrindavan is taking a new shape.

Dhami had contested unsuccessfully for Khatima in the Assembly polls earlier this year. Adityanath said, "I was supposed to come for some public meetings during the Uttarakhand elections. But suddenly my event at Khatima was cancelled, and my time was rescheduled for Tehri, Kotdwara and other places."

"In Uttarakhand, too, Char Dham shrines are being transformed under the leadership of the Prime Minister by Chief Minister Dhami."

He said, "Due to the honourable Prime Minister's programme in Rudrapur, I wasn't able to visit Khatima. I felt in my heart that if we would have gone to Khatima together, the picture would have been different."

The UP Chief Minister said: "I am thankful to the people of Uttarakhand that they showed faith in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision and guidance, and Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami's vision, and gave two-third majority to the party in the state. With Pushkar Singh Dhami reappointed CM, it is destiny that people of Champawat are now getting to vote for their CM as the local MLA."

In the Assembly polls, BJP won 47 of 70 seats; the Congress got 19 and BSP and Independents bagged two seats each. While BJP became the first ruling party to return to power in Uttarakhand, Dhami lost the election from Khatima to Congress's Bhuwan Chandra Kapri.

Urging people to come out on the voting day, Dhami cited an anecdote: when a sage asked everyone to bring milk, everyone in the gathering brought water, assuming that the others would bring milk. "Do not let that instance repeat on the voting day. Go out and vote."

Addressing Saturday's rally along with Dhami, Adityanath also said that the Char Dham shrines in the hill-state —

Vertical-lift Pamban Bridge likely to be completed by year-end: Officials

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA RAMESHWARAM, MAY 28

THE CONSTRUCTION of the new Pamban Bridge, a Railways' engineering marvel, will be completed by December with an estimated cost of Rs 560 crore, officials said Saturday.



A view of the old and new Pamban bridges on Saturday. PTI

The two-km bridge is India's first vertical lift sea bridge that would open upwards to let big ships pass through.

It is being developed by the Railway Vikas Nigam Limited. While an over 100-year-old bridge is already in service, the new one will be more advanced and technologically robust.

Trains can run at a maximum speed of just 10 kmph on the existing bridge, while on the new bridge they can go up to 80 kmph, the officials said.

The upcoming bridge will be a boon for devotees and pilgrims who wish to embark on a spiri-

tual journey to Rameshwaram and Dhanushkodi.

The old bridge is single-line, non-electrified section, whereas

the new one will be a double-line, electrified railway track. Freight trains were banned on the old bridge, but they will be al-

lowed on the new one. The new bridge was to be operationalised in September last year, but it was delayed due to the pandemic.

May bring law against forced conversion in next session: Goa CM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE PANAJI, MAY 28

GOA CHIEF Minister Pramod Sawant Saturday said the government may bring in a new law or amend existing ones to stop forced religious conversions in the state.

Sawant said that this law may be proposed in the Monsoon Session of the Goa Assembly that begins July 11.

"Some of our MLAs have said that there should be a strong law for this (stopping forced religious conversions). We will definitely do that and may bring it in during the next assembly ses-



Goa CM Pramod Sawant

sion," he said.

Sawant also lauded the Goa police for arresting a man who, according to the CM, "would induce people to change their religion by using magic". Goa Police arrested Dominic D'souza on Thursday after two separate FIRs were filed against him. He was released on bail by a local court on Friday.

"He had previous cases of carrying out religious conversions," Sawant said.

8 COPS INJURED; 70 HELD Stone pelting on wedding procession in Gujarat over groom riding mare

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE AHMEDABAD, MAY 28

AS MANY as 70 people were arrested and 82 booked from Kumpat village in Gujarat's Banaskantha district after a mob pelting stones on a wedding procession of a man belonging to an OBC community on Friday. Several people including eight policemen were injured.

The mob allegedly objected to the groom riding a mare during the procession.

According to police, the incident occurred around 4:30 pm when the wedding procession of Vishnusinh Chauhan, started

from a temple in the village, under heavy police security.

"Chauhan, a Koli Thakor, had demanded police security claiming that he faced threats from people of the Darbar (Kshatriya) community from his village over him riding a mare during the procession. Police personnel from three police stations and additional force from DySP office Deesa were brought in to control the situation. We also had discussions with community leaders of the village," said MJ Chaudhary, PI, Deesa Rural Police Station.

According to police, as the procession began under police watch, a mob of 150-200 people started pelting stones.

3 sisters, 2 kids found dead in a well in Rajasthan

2 women were pregnant; kin allege dowry

DEEP MUKHERJEE JAIPUR, MAY 28

THE BODIES of three sisters — two of whom were pregnant — and two children of the eldest one were found by police in a well near Jaipur district's Dudu on Saturday. Their family alleged that their in-laws may have killed them over dowry.

According to the family, Kalu Meena, 25, Mamta Meena, 23, and Kamlesh Meena, 20, were married to three brothers from one family. While one of the dead children was four years old, the other was less than a month old, said the FIR.

"Prima facie, the incident appears to be suicide but the cause of death will be clear after the post-mortem examination. One of the women had also posted a status on WhatsApp that they were being troubled by their in-laws and that it was better to die. Since the bodies have been recovered now and the family is giving a supplementary report, we will register a case under IPC Section 304B (dowry death) based on that," said Jaipur Rural SP Manish Agarwal.

Police registered a case against the women's husbands and in-laws under IPC Sections 498A (husband or relative of husband of a woman subjecting her to cruelty), 406 (punishment for criminal breach of trust) and 323 (punishment for voluntarily causing hurt). Some people from the in-laws' family have been detained.

According to the FIR, registered after a complaint by the father, the youngest of the three sisters, Kamlesh, had told him over the phone on the morning of May 25 that they were being beaten

up by their husband and other relatives and feared for their life. They went missing the same day.

"When I reached Dudu and spoke to the in-laws, they along with five to seven people abused me and told me: 'They have died, we don't know anything, go away or you will also die'. Ever since then, we couldn't find our three daughters," the FIR quotes the father as saying.

According to the FIR, Kalu's two sons are aged four years and 22 days, respectively. Mamta and Kamlesh, meanwhile, were 8-9 months pregnant.

"I fear that they have killed my three daughters and two grandchildren in a planned manner and made them disappear," the father said in the FIR.

On May 25, the father filed a missing persons report at the Dudu police station. Police filed an FIR the next day. "Around a fortnight back, one of my sisters was beaten severely by her in-laws. We believe that our sisters were murdered. The police also took too much time to find the bodies," alleged their cousin, Hemraj Meena.

Activist Kavita Srivastava of the People's Union for Civil Liberties called for a fair investigation. "It is a loss of seven lives because two of the women were full term pregnant and died along with their unborn children. It is an extremely heinous crime and we can only think of the kind of suffering they were subjected to. The deaths are clearly caused by the intense cruelty and harassment by the husbands and in-laws along with dowry demands. There should be a fair probe by a high-ranking official. The case should be transferred from the local police," she said.

HATE SPEECH CASE P C George to 'reply' to Pinarayi; police send him notice to appear today

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, MAY 28

HOURS AFTER senior Kerala politician P C George, who is facing charges of delivering hate speech, announced that he would give a befitting "reply" to Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, the police on Saturday served with a notice to appear on Sunday before the officer investigating the alleged hate speech case against him.

On Friday, the High Court had granted bail to George, who has been in judicial custody after a court here cancelled the bail granted to him in a case pertaining to alleged hate speech he had at a Hindu maha sammelan here last month. Emerging from jail on Friday night, George told the media, "I would give a reply to Vijayan, who had lodged me in jail. I will say everything at Thrikkakara (which will go to the bypolls next week) on Sunday," he said.

George is scheduled to address rallies for the BJP candidate in Thrikkakara.

Reacting to the police notice, George accused Vijayan of conspiring to ensure that he appears before the police on Sunday.

Senior BJP leader and Union Minister of State for External Affairs V Muraleedharan said Vijayan is afraid that George will speak out the truth and thus wants to prevent him from addressing the people.

Instruct police to give free copy of FIR, HC tells Tripura govt

DEBRAJ DEB AGARTALA, MAY 28

THE HIGH COURT of Tripura has ordered the state's Home secretary to immediately convene a meeting with the state Director General of Police (DGP), all Superintendents of Police (SPs), and the Inspector General (Law and Order) and issue an advisory within six weeks to ensure that the Supreme Court's orders on registering FIRs are followed in every single police station of the state.

The order, passed by Justice Subhashish Talapatra on May 25, was made available to the media on Saturday.

The HC order came on a writ petition filed by one Subhash Paul of Madhupur village in Sepahijala district. Paul alleged that his rubber plantation was damaged and he was assaulted on March 1 this year.

In the petition, he claimed that he had filed a complaint with the local police station but police declined to furnish him with a 'received' copy of the complaint. They also allegedly declined to register an FIR, the petitioner mentioned.

In his order, Justice Talapatra said that officers-in-charge of police stations "shall be directed to supply a copy of the FIR, free of cost and forthwith... The secretary, Home, Tripura, is further directed to issue such advisory within a period of six weeks from the day the petitioner shall furnish a copy of this order."

TAMIL NADU CIVIL SUPPLIES CORPORATION Head Office, 12, Thambasamy Road, Kilpauk, Chennai - 600 010 Ph. No. (044) 26426773, Email ID: tnpsc.tn@nic.in

Directorate of Geology and Mining Government of Uttar Pradesh Khamij Bhawan 27/B, Raja Ram Mohan Rai Marg, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh 226001 Email: rampraveesh.singh@up.gov.in

Notice Inviting Tender "Invitation of bids for grant of Mining Lease for Phosphorite and for grant of Composite Licence for Phosphorite, Glauconite, Iron Ore, Gold, Iron Ore & Gold and Platinum Group of Elements (PGE)"

Circle Office- Ara, 2nd floor, Regal Complex, Near Raman Maidan, Ara, Bhojpur, Bihar, coarasamd@pnb.co.in CIRCLE SASTRA ARRAH, 1st floor, Mahuli Kothi, Near Peer Baba More, Arrah- 802301 SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

HATE SPEECH CASE P C George to 'reply' to Pinarayi; police send him notice to appear today

9 EXPRESS NETWORK

BRIEFLY

UTTAR PRADESH

Attack on police team: Ex-MLA, 18 others freed

Lucknow: A court in UP's Unnao on Friday acquitted former Samajwadi Party (SP) MLA Udayraj and 18 others in a 24-year-old case in which they were booked for allegedly rioting and using criminal force to deter a public servant from his duty. The alleged incident occurred when the accused reached Maurawan police station in Unnao to protest the arrest of a person against whom a non-bailable warrant was issued. **ENS**

NEW DELHI

Mining lease: EC gives Soren time to appear

New Delhi: Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren is learnt to have been given more time by the Election Commission to appear before it in a case related to a mining lease. Soren was asked to appear before the EC either in person or through his counsel on May 31. But he sought more time and is now learnt to have been asked to appear on June 14, sources aware of the development said. **PTI**

MAHARASHTRA

Savarkar an inspiration for country: Uddhav

Mumbai: Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Saturday said that freedom fighter Vinayak Damodar Savarkar's "scientific thinking" and "staunch nationalism" continue to be an inspiration for the country. Paying tributes to the Hindutva ideologue on his 139th birth anniversary, Thackeray said that Savarkar was a multi-faceted personality. "He was a litterateur, a powerful orator, a good organiser, who waged a war against the British rule. His scientific thinking and staunch nationalism are an inspiration," the CM said. **ENS**

NEW DELHI

Plane returns after windshield crack observed

Mumbai: A SpiceJet Boeing 737 aircraft (SG-385), which was heading to Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh, returned to Mumbai on Saturday after a crack was observed on the windshield, according to an official statement. The pilot-in-command decided to return to Mumbai, a spokesperson said. The air traffic controller was apprised and the aircraft landed safely at the Mumbai airport, the spokesperson added. **PTI**



FOREST FIRE NEAR LOC

A massive fire erupted in Mendhar forest near the LoC in Poonch, Jammu and Kashmir, on Saturday. **ANI**

Meerut: Six BJP workers held for poster stunt outside police station

AMIT SHARMA
MEERUT, MAY 28

MEERUT POLICE arrested six local BJP workers on Saturday, a day after a poster put up by them outside a police station caused a flutter on social media and led to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and opposition leader Akhilesh Yadav exchanging barbs on Twitter.

The poster, which said "BJP karyakartaon ka thane main aana mana hai (BJP workers are not allowed to enter the police station)", also had the name of Sant Saran Singh, the in-charge of Medical Police Station, and made it appear as if he had given the order.

"The act [of putting up the poster] has hurt the image of Meerut Police. We have arrested six persons in this regard," Meerut Senior Superintendent of Police Prabhakar Chaudhary told *The Indian Express*.

According to the Senior Superintendent of Police, the origin of the matter was a property dispute involving a family in



The poster triggered a war of words between CM Yogi Adityanath and SP chief Akhilesh Yadav, *Twitter/Akhilesh Yadav*

which the BJP workers got involved and reached the police station on Friday. "They were trying to put pressure on the in-charge to seek undue favour but when it was denied, they created a scene," said Chaudhary.

Some of the party workers then held the poster outside the police station - to grab attention.

As pictures of them with the poster went viral on social media, a tweet from the UP Chief Minister's official handle said,

"The police stations and tehsils used to be mortgaged (to ruling

party workers) during the tenure of the previous government. But no BJP worker ever goes to the police station or tehsil for any undue favour."

Later at night, SP leader Akhilesh Yadav tagged a picture of the poster and tweeted, "This has happened for the first time in last six years that ruling party workers have been barred from the police station. This really is the much-touted good governance of the BJP government."

Hours later, the police lodged an FIR against the BJP workers.

2 militants killed in J&K encounter

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
SRINAGAR, MAY 28

TWO HIZBUL Mujahideen militants were killed in an encounter with security forces in Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday, police said.

Acting on specific inputs about the presence of militants in Shitpora area of Bijbehara in the south Kashmir district, security forces launched a cordon and search operation there, a police official said.

He said as the forces were conducting the searches in the area, the militants fired upon them. The forces retaliated, ensuing an encounter in which two militants were killed, the official said.

Inspector General of Police (IGP), Kashmir, Vijay Kumar said the militants were affiliated with Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) outfit.

"Killed #terrorists identified as Ishfaq Ah Ganie R/O Chakwangund, #Anantnag & Yawar Ayub Dar R/O Dogripora, #Awantipora, affiliated with proscribed #terror outfit HM. The duo were involved in several #terror crimes," the IGP Kashmir said in a tweet.

Punjab restores Akal Takht Jathedar security, he rejects

KAMALDEEP SINGH BRAR
AMRITSAR, MAY 28

HOURS AFTER stoking a controversy by partially removing the security cover of Giani Harpreet Singh, the Punjab government Saturday sought to restore the same but the Akal Takht Jathedar refused, saying Sikh youth and Khalsa Panth were enough for his security even as opposition Shiromani Akali Dal accused the AAP government of being "anti-panth" and "anti-Punjab".

The controversy erupted after the Punjab Police withdrew the security of 424 people, including Akal Takht Jathedar, who had just a few days ago advised Sikhs to keep licensed weapons as "circumstances were such", drawing criticism from CM Bhagwant Mann. The Punjab Police withdrew three of the six personnel deployed as part of Jathedar's security cover.

"I have been told by security men that they have been called back. It does not matter. It has happened for the best. I don't need the security. Khalsa Panth

and our Sikh youth are enough to provide me security. I have asked officials to send back all the security personnel," the Jathedar said in his first reaction.

The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee hit out at the government. "(CM) Bhagwant Mann should focus on giving security to his bosses Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal and Rajya Sabha member Raghav Chadda and his relatives. Sikhs are capable of protecting Akal Takht Jathedar. He doesn't need (government) security," the SGPC said.

As the issue escalated, the government decided to restore the security for Jathedar, which he refused. "@PunjabGovtIndia restored security but Singh Sahib refuses to take it," said the SGPC. Till the time of going to press, there was no official reaction over the developments, but sources said senior police officials approached the Jathedar over the issue.

Meanwhile, Jathedar Giani Raghbir Singh of Takht Kesgarh Sahib also announced to return the security personnel assigned to him. He said he doesn't need any help from the government.

Seven soldiers dead: bodies to be brought home today

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAY 28

THE SEVEN soldiers who died on Friday when their vehicle fell nearly 60 feet into Shyok river in Ladakh belonged to Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala, West Bengal, Jharkhand, and Bihar, the Army said on Saturday.

Of 26 soldiers traveling in the vehicle from Partapur, seven were declared dead; 19 others were flown to the Command Hospital in Chandimandir, in Haryana's Panchkula district.

The Army identified the deceased as Subedar Shinde Vijayrao Sarjarao from Koregaon, Maharashtra; Naib Subedar Gurudayal Sahu from Betul, Madhya Pradesh; LHAV Mohamed Saijal T from Malappuram, Kerala; Naik Sandeep Kumar Pal from Kodarma, Jharkhand; Naik Ramanuk Kumar from Patna; Naik Prashant Shivaji Jadhav from Kolhapur, Maharashtra; and Lance Naik Bappaditya Khutia from Kharagpur, West Bengal.

The bodies will be taken to their hometowns on Sunday.

The accident took place around 9 am on Friday, when the soldiers were moving from the transit camp in Partapur to a forward location in Sub Sector Hanif. The vehicle skidded off the road around 25 km from Thoise and fell into the Shyok.

Army officials said the vehicle fell between 50 feet and 60 feet. All the injured were immediately evacuated to 403 Field Hospital at Partapur and surgical teams from Leh were sent, officials said. Seven of the 26 soldiers were declared dead. The others were taken to Command Hospital in Chandimandir with the Air Force's help.

President Ram Nath Kovind, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, among others, conveyed their condolences.

Singh tweeted on Friday that he had spoken with Army Chief, General Manoj Pandey, about the accident. The Army Chief apprised him of the situation and steps taken by the Army to save the injured soldiers, Singh said.

Gauri Lankesh trial to start July, hearings to be held every month

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU, MAY 28

AS PER the plan drawn up by the court of the Principal City Civil and Sessions Judge in Bengaluru, the trial in the September 2017 murder of journalist Gauri Lankesh will begin from July 4, with hearings to be held every second week of a month.

While the court had summoned the first court witness, Lankesh's younger sister Kavitha Lankesh, on Friday to commence the trial, her statement could not be recorded as some of the accused who are in a Maharashtra jail were not produced in court. The court wanted all the accused to be present in court for the statement to be recorded, saying they could attend via video-conferencing.

A Special Investigation Team of the Karnataka Police has named 17 people belonging to right-wing Hindutva fringe outfits as part of the conspiracy to kill Lankesh, 55, and for the execution of the murder. The editor of Kannada publication Lankesh Patrike, Lankesh was murdered at the doorstep of her home on the night of September 5, 2017, when she returned home for work.

The court, with a new judge presiding, also overruled a demand by defence advocates that the accused, who have pleaded not guilty, be brought physically to court. The court said they could be present via video-conferencing. While 11 of the accused were



Lankesh was killed in Sept 2017

produced via video-conferencing, the six lodged in Arthur Road Jail, Maharashtra, were not.

The sessions court turned down a plea by Special Public Prosecutor S Balan that the trial be started with recording of the statement of Kavitha Lankesh, who was present in court, as she was not required to identify any of the accused. The court held: "The presence of the accused during trial being the basic tenet of any trial, such prayer in the absence of consent by the defence is not sustainable."

The court later said that both sides had agreed for the trial to be held on a continuous basis for a week per month. The first session will be from July 4 to July 8.

Decks were cleared for the trial in the case in October last year following framing of the charges of murder, organised crime, and gun crimes, against 17 members of an extremist right-wing syndicate by the Principal Sessions Court, which is the special court for organised crimes in Bengaluru.

The framing of charges had been delayed for over two years on account of the Covid situation and due to multiple applications filed by the accused.

The arrested men, allegedly

Maharashtra sees first cases of new Omicron sub-variants

ANURADHA MASCARENHAS
PUNE, MAY 28

MAHARASHTRA HAS reported the first cases of BA.4 and BA.5 sub-variant of the Omicron strain of coronavirus, which has been detected in seven persons in Pune. State health authorities have said the patients - four men and three women - are stable and there is no need for hospitalisation.

According to the latest report of the Whole Genomic Sequencing (WGS), BA.4 variant has been found in four patients and BA.5 in three. Of the seven patients, four are above 50 and two in the 20-40 age group, while one is nine years old, state Surveillance Officer Dr Pradeep Awate told *The Indian Express*. Two of the patients have a history of traveling to South Africa and Belgium, while three have travelled to Kerala and Karnataka recently. Two other persons have no travel history.

All patients except the child had received both doses of the Covid-19 vaccine while one has also taken a booster shot. All of them had no mild symptoms of Covid-19. No one required hospitalisation and they were treated successfully in home isolation, said Dr Awate.



A video grab of Anusuya Rai, principal of university college, trying to convince students regarding uniform rules.

MANGALORE UNIVERSITY

Girls in hijab sent back; CM says focus on studies

SANATH PRASAD
BENGALURU, MAY 28

ADAY after Mangalore University issued an advisory making uniform mandatory, a group of girls wearing hijab reached the campus on Saturday.

In a video recorded early this morning, Anusuya Rai, Principal of university college, Mangaluru, could be seen counselling the girls and trying to convince them regarding the need for attending the classes without the headscarf.

At a meeting of the College Development Council with the V-C, Principal and members of the syndicate of Mangalore University on Friday, it was decided that as per the March 15 ruling of the Karnataka HC, no hijab would be allowed inside classrooms.

Meanwhile, Karnataka CM

recruited and trained in the use of guns and explosives, are said to have targeted the journalist for her "anti-Hindu" statements.

After filing a 9,235-page chargesheet in the case on November 23, 2018, the SIT had said the men "targeted persons who they identified to be inimical to their belief and ideology. The members strictly followed the guidelines and principles mentioned in Kshatra Dharmha Sadhana, a book published by Sanatan Sanstha".

Early in its investigation, the SIT had found that a 7.65 mm country-made pistol used to gun down Lankesh was the same as the one used in the murder of Kannada scholar M M Kalburgi, 77, at his home in Dharwad in August 2015. The same gun was also found to have been used to shoot Leftist thinker Govind Pansare, 81, in Kolhapur, Maharashtra, in February 2015.

A second gun used in the Pansare shooting was found to match with the weapon used to kill rationalist Narendra Dabholkar, 69, in Pune in August 2013.

The 17 arrested in the Gauri Lankesh case are Amol Kale, Parashuram Waghmore, Ganesh Misikin, Amith Baddi, Amith Degvekar, Bharath Kurane, Suresh H L, Rajesh Bangera, Sudhanva Gondalekar, Shradh Kalaskar, Mohan Nayak, Vasudev Suryavanshi, Sujith Kumar, Manohara Edave, Srikanth Pangarkar, K T Naveen Kumar, and Rushikesh Deodikar.

HEAT RISES OVER KERALA RALLY

PFI in no mood to backtrack on 'anti-RSS drive'

SHAJU PHILIP
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
MAY 28

THE CONTROVERSIAL slogans raised by a minor boy during a massive rally by the People's Front of India (PFI) in Alappuzha last week has brought into spotlight a campaign it has been running for the past six months called 'Save the Republic'. Meant to ensure "Muslims the rights envisaged in the Constitution", among other topics, the campaign has now evolved into a full-blown offensive against the RSS.

The PFI, facing cases over the rally, has disowned only the wording and style of the slogans raised, not the content - with the belief in PFI circles being that "RSS terrorism" needs to be strongly countered. PFI state president CP

Muhammed Basheer told the media: "We are not ready for any compromise. The RSS cannot silence the PFI. Let the RSS denounce its ideology of hate."

He also said that Muslims in the country were "fighting for existence", and that neither the CPM-led LDF nor the Congress-led UDF could put up a strong fight against the RSS. "Our fight is to protect Constitutional values and rights. Recent developments show that the country is in the final stages of being declared a Hindu Rashtra," he said.

After police booked two PFI leaders, including its Alappuzha district president Vandanam Navaz, in connection with the Alappuzha rally, the PFI held protests across many locations in Kerala. On Saturday, police took the boy who raised the contested slogans and his father from their

residence in Kochi. The father told the media his son "had taken part in agitations against the CAA and the slogans were against the threat created by the Sangh Parivar, and not against any community".

Over the past 15 years, the PFI has assumed many roles in the state, such as of a social crusader, moral police, and champion of Muslim and Dalit causes. The emergence of the Sangh Parivar has lately helped it project itself as the only Muslim answer to it. The alternative, the Indian Union Muslim League, still the largest political party of Kerala Muslims, treads a more moderate line being part of mainstream politics and an ally of the Congress.

The PFI's enmity with the RSS goes way back in Kerala, with the body and its earlier version, the National Development Front (NDF), and the Sangh Parivar in-

involved in a series of killings and counter-killings. The NDF, in fact, was launched two years after the Babri Masjid demolition, and the issue has remained central to the PFI. It marks the December 6, 1992, demolition every year, among the only Muslim organisations in Kerala to still do so.

Now, the PFI has taken the lead on the Kashi Vishwanath temple-Gyanvapi mosque row, which has resurfaced following a series of court petitions. It has been telling the Muslim community that its warnings regarding the intentions of the Sangh have come true, and that the Babri demolition was just the start of what was to follow. PFI leaders admit they see the issue getting much resonance among the Muslims.

No Muslim outfit or leader in Kerala has incidentally publicly reacted on the Alappuzha slogans.

Worryingly for Kerala, the rise of the strident PFI is correspondingly fanning Islamophobia among its Christian community, which in numbers and political clout is as strong in the state as the Muslims. Various Christian churches came out with strong statements criticising the slogans raised at the Alappuzha rally.

The gulf between the two communities is now the widest ever in Kerala, more so than even 2010, when a Christian college professor's right palm was chopped off by PFI men on charges of insulting Prophet Mohammad.

While the LDF and UDF weigh their words, mindful of their vote banks, the ground is also getting cleared for the BJP. If the PFI claims to be the only legitimate Muslim voice, the BJP was notably the only vocal "Hindu voice" on the Alappuzha rally.

Father of boy who raised controversial slogans arrested

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
MAY 28

THE POLICE on Saturday arrested the father of the minor boy, who had raised controversial slogans during a Popular Front of India (PFI) rally in Kerala's Alappuzha on May 21.

The police had registered a case after a video of the PFI rally, held as part of its 'Save the Republic' campaign, showed a minor boy raising hate slogans, apparently targeted at non-Muslims. In the last week, the police have arrested 20 other PFI cadres in the case.

After the video went viral and sparked a controversy, the

boy and his family had stayed away from their home in Kochi. On Saturday, the police arrested the boy's father from their house at Palluruthy in Kochi. He will now be handed over to Alappuzha police, which had registered a case under Section 153 A (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth etc) of the IPC.

After the police took the father into custody, several PFI sympathisers thronged their house, protesting the police move.

"Nobody taught my son to raise such slogans. He had taken part in many agitations, including protests against CAA (Citizenship Amendment Act),

in the past. He might have heard the slogans in such agitations and learnt them by heart," the boy's father told the media. He said the slogans were not against any religion. "Those (slogans) were against RSS. What is wrong in raising slogans against RSS?" he asked.

A few others who had taken the boy to Alappuzha were also taken into custody.

On Wednesday, police had arrested PFI activist Ansar Najeeb and PFI Alappuzha district president Vandanam Navas in the case, which was registered based on a complaint from advocate Vijayakumar of Bharatiya Abhibashaka Parishad. It was Ansar who had carried the boy on his shoulders.

SALUTE THE SOLDIER



Major M Saravanan, Vrc, 1st Battalion, The Bihar Regiment. In proud memory of Maj M Saravanan, Vrc, the "Hero of Batalik", who laid down his life on 29 May 1999...

Rajasthan State Road Development And Construction Corporation Ltd., JAIPUR. निविदा सूचना/2022-23. Construction Boys Hostel at Unani Medical College, Chauri (District Tonk).

JJVN LIMITED. H.O.: "UJJWAL", Maharani Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun-248006. Short Term Tender Notice. Office of The Executive Engineer (Civil-I), Lakhwar Multipurpose Project...

Government of Karnataka SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT. O/o Commissioner, 5th Floor, M.S. Building, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Veedhi, Bangalore - 560 001. No: SWD/PETC/S-4/CR-14/2020-21

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED. General public is here by informed that this Girl (depicted in the photo) namely: Rupam D/o Leela Nanad Pathak R/o Jhuggi No. 70/22, Deepak Colony, Delhi has been missing/kidnapped from her house since 19.05.2022 at 4.00 PM.

SML ISUZU LIMITED. Regd Office: Village Asron, Distt. Shahid Bhagat Singh Nagar (Nawanshahr). POSTAL BALLOT NOTICE. NOTICE is hereby given that pursuant to the provisions of Section 103, Section 110 and other applicable provisions...

SEARCH FOR MISSING. General Public is hereby informed that a person namely Chanderbhan, S/o Late Gariba, R/o E-59/404 Kalandar Colony, Delhi. Age: 62 years, Height: 5', Complexion-Fair, Face-Long, Wearing-Blue lower & white T-shirt no sleeper in feet has been missing from the area of PS. Seemapuri, Delhi, since 14.05.2019 at 03:03 PM.

कार्यालय मुख्य चिकित्सा एवं स्वास्थ्य अधिकारी नारायणपुर जिला नारायणपुर (छ.ग.) निविदा विज्ञापन क्रमांक/मु.चि.अ./क्रम/2022-23/2149 नारायणपुर, दिनांक-17/5/22

Rural Enterprise Acceleration Project (REAP) Uttarakhand Gramya Vikas Samiti (UGVS) Rural Development Department, Uttarakhand. 216, Pandit Wari -II, Dehradun, 248007, Ph:- 0135-2774800

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA STATE, FISHERIES DEPARTMENT. Open Competitive Bid (OCB) For Supply of Fish Seed (35-40 mm & 80-100 mm) for 2022-23. CORRIGENDUM. Bid Notice No.:395/C1/2022

AGRA SMART CITY LIMITED AGRA NAGAR NIGAM, AGRA. NIT No. 247/ASCL/2022-23. NOTICE INVITING TENDER. On behalf of Chief Executive Officer, Agra Smart City Limited the Quality and Cost Based System (QCBS) RFP are invited online from the eligible and approved Contractors registered.

Dr. PANJABRAO DESHMUKH KRISHI VIDYAPEETH, AKOLA, MAHARASHTRA. SEARCH COMMITTEE INVITES APPLICATIONS FOR THE POST OF VICE-CHANCELLOR. Dr. Panjabrao Deshmukh Krishi Vidyapeeth is a premier Agricultural University in Maharashtra was established on 20th October 1969 to cater the needs of teaching, research and extension education in agriculture and allied sectors of Vidarbha Region.

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE. e-tender is invited on behalf of the President of India for the under-mentioned work: e-Tender No. : ECR-CAO-C-S-ETEN-20-22/23 in Two Packet System. 1. Name of work: Supply of 1,10,00,000 cm 50mm size machine crushed track ballast as per RDSO specification of B.G. Railway track & loading the same into any type of Railway wagons F.O.R. Japla for various projects under CAO/Con/South, EGR. Approx cost of the work in (Rs.) : 21,54,66,900.00, Earnest Money (Rs.): 12,27,300.00, Period of work completion : 09 (Nine) Months, Date and time for closing of tender 17.06.2022 at 15.30 hrs.

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON (See Section 82 Cr. P.C.) Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person Sandeep Mahesh Hakhwani @ Sonu S/o Sh. Mahesh Kumar Tharumal Hakwani R/o Vill. Bargg 2, P.S., Govind Nagar, Kanpur (UP) has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case F.I.R. No.216/19/US/420/465/472/120BIPC registered at P.S. South Rohini, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon that the said Sandeep Mahesh Hakhwani @ Sonu could not be found and where it has been shown to my satisfaction that the accused Sandeep Mahesh Hakhwani @ Sonu has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Sandeep Mahesh Hakhwani @ Sonu is required to appear before the court to answer the said complaint on or before 07.07.2022

क्याम्पल अडिपयन अभियाना विद्युत नगरीय विद्युत मण्डल दक्षिणपूर्व विद्युत निगम लिमिटेड, अजीमगढ़. निविदा सूचना. 1. निविदा नम्बर/दिनांक: 1.

LEASEING OF LVPH. Tender No. C259N/LEASEING VPH07. E-tenders in single packet system are invited by the undersigned for leasing of LVPH/7. E-tenders in single packet system are invited by the undersigned for leasing of LVPH/7. E-tenders in single packet system are invited by the undersigned for leasing of LVPH/7.

विद्युत निगम लिमिटेड, अजीमगढ़. निविदा सूचना. 1. निविदा नम्बर/दिनांक: 1.

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KERALA WATER AUTHORITY-E-TENDER NOTICE. Tender No.: RT1 No. 1RE03/SE/PHCK/2022-23 JJM- 2020-21 - wss to Vellavoor panchayat supplying and laying DI/PVC/GI distribution network and providing FHTCs including road restoration after pipe laying in Vellavoor Phase I - package 2 EMD: ₹2,00,000/-Tender fee : ₹10,000+ (18% GST) Last Date for submitting Tender : 20-06-2022 03:00:pm Phone: 0481-2562745

(नियम 92 (1) (क) (ii)) ई-निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना का प्रारूप. मध्यप्रदेश शासन, नगर पालिक निगम, खालियार. ई-निविदा जनसंपर्क क्र. 208 दिनांक: 27-05-2022 1655 दिनांक: 27/05/2022

SEARCH FOR MISSING. General Public is hereby informed that a person namely Chanderbhan, S/o Late Gariba, R/o E-59/404 Kalandar Colony, Delhi. Age: 62 years, Height: 5', Complexion-Fair, Face-Long, Wearing-Blue lower & white T-shirt no sleeper in feet has been missing from the area of PS. Seemapuri, Delhi, since 14.05.2019 at 03:03 PM.

SEARCH FOR MISSING. General Public is hereby informed that one female namely Komal W/o Pardeep, R/o A-301/302, Meer Vihar, Delhi, Age: 19 years, Height: 5', Complexion: Fair, Face: Round, Hair: Black, wearing Red Colour Suit & Salwar and Hawai Chappal, has been missing since 09.05.2022. In this regard a DD No. 61A, dated 10.05.2022 has been registered at P.S. Kanjhawala, Delhi.

कार्यालय मुख्य चिकित्सा एवं स्वास्थ्य अधिकारी नारायणपुर जिला नारायणपुर (छ.ग.) निविदा विज्ञापन क्रमांक/मु.चि.अ./क्रम/2022-23/2149 नारायणपुर, दिनांक-17/5/22

Rural Enterprise Acceleration Project (REAP) Uttarakhand Gramya Vikas Samiti (UGVS) Rural Development Department, Uttarakhand. 216, Pandit Wari -II, Dehradun, 248007, Ph:- 0135-2774800

THE SUNDAY PROFILE

Father, son and 'holy suits'



Illustration: Shyam Kumar

In 1993, Hari Shankar Jain, a Lucknow-based advocate, recorded his first big win — getting a court order to open the gates of the Babri Masjid for Hindus to worship there. Since then, Jain, now assisted by his son Vishnu, has been at the centre of a string of petitions that have suddenly been revived in courts — from Gyanvapi to Shahi Idgah, Taj Mahal to Qutub Minar. APURVA VISHWANATH on the Jains

ON MAY 17, Vishnu Shankar Jain, the counsel appearing on behalf of the petitioners seeking the right to worship in the Gyanvapi mosque in Varanasi, told the Supreme Court that the hearing will have to be postponed since his father and fellow lawyer Hari Shankar Jain was unwell. Though a battery of senior lawyers — from Solicitor General of India Tushar Mehta, to Ranjit Kumar and CS Vaidyanathan — had appeared against the mosque, none had the full case file. Only Hari Shankar Jain had it. The hearing had to be postponed.

A day earlier, Vishnu Shankar was seen flanked by members of the team that carried out a survey of the Gyanvapi mosque, as ordered by a Varanasi court, announcing to the media that a shivling was allegedly found in the wuzu khana of the mosque.

The father-son advocate duo of Hari Shankar Jain, 68, and Vishnu Shankar Jain, 36, are now at the centre of at least six ongoing cases that involve claims of ancient temple ruins in mosques — from the Teela Wali Masjid in Lucknow to the Bhojshala in Dhar, Taj Mahal in Agra, Qutub Minar in Delhi, the Shahi Idgah in Mathura and the Gyanvapi mosque in Varanasi. The cases filed by the Jains have triggered a string of similar claims across the country and led to a challenge of certain provisions of the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991.

In 2021 alone, the Jains filed seven cases on the Gyanvapi mosque issue, including those on behalf of the river Ganga and deities Nandi and Maa Shringar Gauri.

With his flowing beard and a prominent black tilak on his forehead, father Hari Shankar was a familiar face on television debates on the Ayodhya Ram Janmabhoomi issue until the 2019 Supreme Court verdict in the case. For the senior Jain, it had started with the Ayodhya case in 1993 — it was on his plea that

district judge Krishna Mohan Pandey ordered that the gates of the masjid be opened for Hindus to worship there.

"Hari Shankar was an independent lawyer then. One day, he went to court and told the judge that the deity had gone hungry for the last eight days... The judge allowed us worship and that irreversibly changed the course of the case," Champat Rai, Vice President of the Vishva Hindu Parishad and General Secretary of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra, the temple trust in Ayodhya, told *The Sunday Express*, adding that following the 1993 win, Hari Shankar became "a part of the team".

Later, when then Uttar Pradesh CM Mulayam Singh Yadav expressed reservations about appointing Judge Pandey to the Allahabad High Court, Jain filed another petition and backed the judge. Jain won the case and Justice Pandey was eventually appointed to the Gwalior bench of the Madhya Pradesh High Court.

Those in the Bar believe that this elevation sent a message to the lower judiciary. "The whole process was as political as it could get. To the lower court judges, the case sent a message that these are the petitioners who will back you," said a judge of the Allahabad High Court who retired in 2019.

Those who have known the senior Hari Shankar talk about his doggedness in going after his opponents.

In 1993, Hari Shankar contested an election from Amethi against Congress president Sonia Gandhi, but lost. He then filed a petition in the Allahabad High Court challenging Gandhi's election on the grounds that she is an Italian citizen and not Indian. As a back-up,

in case that argument failed, Jain also challenged the "validity of marriage of respondent with Rajiv Gandhi". And, as Plan C, he challenged the legality of Section 5(1)(c) of the Citizenship Act, 1955, under which Sonia acquired her Indian citizenship through registration. In 2000, however, the Supreme Court dismissed the petitions that "suffered from deficiency in pleadings but is also scandalous."

Over the last few weeks, the six cases the Jains had been pursuing for over 30 years — from Gyanvapi to Taj Mahal — have been all suddenly revived with judges accepting their pleas and passing preliminary orders.

"Wherever there is such a case, we will fight it," says Vishnu Shankar, who assists his father in these cases. The father-son duo list out 102 cases filed for their larger cause of "Hindu revolution by legal awareness". These range from taking on bans on firecrackers to challenging the registration of the Asaduddin Owaisi-led All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimimeen (AIMIM) as a political party,

to challenging the Waqf Act. Even as several of these cases have been dismissed, Vishnu Shankar says the "goal of establishing a Hindu Rashtra will be realised" as people will at least become aware of the issues.

Based in Lucknow, Hari Shankar Jain's practice began from the Allahabad High Court and has largely revolved around religion. Vishnu Shankar, who graduated from Balaji Law College in Pune, also hopes to follow in his father's footsteps and represent clients that his "conscience allows". An Advocate-On-Record, licensed to practice be-

fore the Supreme Court, he recruits regularly from the Chandraprabhu Jain College of Law in Delhi's Narela.

Vishnu Shankar is also the official spokesperson for the Hindu Front for Justice, the organisation that filed a public interest litigation on May 2 challenging the ASI's 2003 order, imposing restriction on Hindus to worship at Bhojshala in Madhya Pradesh's Dhar district. Bhojshala is an ASI-protected 11th Century monument, where the Kamal Maula Mosque is alleged to have been built over a temple of Goddess Vagdevi.

Apart from the Hindu Front for Justice, the Jains are linked to the Hindu Mahasabha, the Goa-based Sanatan Sanstha, Bhagwa Raksha Vahini and Hind Samrajya Party. In 2019, the Sanatan Sanstha felicitated Hari Shankar Jain for being a "Dharmayoddha who is incessantly working for the establishment of the Hindu Rashtra". The organisation has been linked to the killings of rationalists Narendra Dabholkar, Govind Pansare, MM Kalburgi and Gauri Lankesh in a 9,000-page chargesheet filed by a Special Investigation Team.

"We are often invited to Sanatan Sanstha to speak and I organise some conferences there. They are a dharmic organisation and we will be part of such places anywhere," Vishnu Shankar Jain told *The Sunday Express*.

In the recent Gyanvapi case, although the SC transferred the case from the senior civil judge in Varanasi to the district judge, arguing that the issue needed a more "seasoned hand", the order did not record the arguments made by the Muslim side that the civil judge's orders were biased as they relied entirely on the petitioner's version and were even passed ex-parte without hearing the mosque.

The Jains, however, see these as small triumphs in their larger fight. "Whether we succeed now or later, this will inspire many others to fight similar battles," Vishnu Shankar says.

=india75=



The Howrah wholesale fish market in West Bengal. The state produced nearly 1.7 million tonnes of fish in 2019-20. Hilsa is among the most popular fish sold at the market, with sizes varying from 500 gm to 1,500 gm. The price range is between Rs 850 and Rs 1,700. In 2019-20, Andhra Pradesh was the top fish producer in the country, with a total production of 4.1 million tonnes.

Partha Paul/File

NUMBER PLATE

0.75 million tonnes

The total fish production in India during 1950-51, which increased to 14.16 million tonnes during 2019-20. That year, Andhra Pradesh was the top fish producer in the country, with a total production of 4.1 million tonnes.

0.21 million tonnes

The total inland fish production in the country during 1950-51, which increased to 10.4 million tonnes in 2019-20.

0.53 million tonnes

The total marine fish production in the country during 1950-51, which increased to 3.7 million tonnes in 2019-20.

3.24 kg

As per Household Consumer Expenditure, NSS 68th Round, the per capita consumption of fish in a year in rural areas in India during 2011-12.

3.07 kg

As per the NSS survey, the per capita consumption of fish in a year in urban areas in the country during 2011-12. HARIKISHAN SHARMA

'I want to run away at the thought of rains'

Every year, as the monsoons keep their date with Mumbai, so do the floods that bring the city to a halt. A diary from Hindmata, one of Mumbai's chronic flooding spots, as it waits in dread for the rains

SANJANA BHALERAO

THE WALLS are tiled, the refrigerator and washing machine are mounted on a platform, smaller electronic devices wrapped up in plastic bags, and the special clothes stashed up in the loft. Yet, Prema Sannake knows she can never be too prepared. "I feel like running away from this place at the thought of rains," she says. The monsoons are merely half a month away and the 54-year-old homemaker is anxious.

For all the romance and *chai-pakoda* memories that the rains evoke, Mumbai's monsoons end up stalling life in the metropolis — flooding streets and train tracks, bringing down trees and leaving office-goers stranded. Almost every year, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), the civic body whose job is to get the city ready for the rains, finds itself scrambling

to clean the drains and desilt the pipelines. This year is unlikely to be any different.

Sannake and husband Dhondiram, who retired from BSNL in 2006, live in a 180-square-foot one-room flat at Hindmata junction, a chronic flooding spot in Mumbai's Dadar area. "Every year for over three decades, I have spent days and nights in knee-deep stagnant water inside our room," says Sannake.

She says she cannot remember a monsoon when the rains did not disrupt her life. Her two children — both in their late 20s — moved out in 2017 with their families to rented flats in a nearby locality, but that's not an option for the Sannakes. "This is the house I came to as a bride. This is the only place in the city I know as my house," says Sannake.

For almost all the years that she has lived here, Sannake has had to struggle with the rains. "Every year, politicians promise there will be no floods, but the problem only keeps



At Dr Ambedkar Road in Hindmata, all shops have built steps to prevent water from entering the premises during monsoon. Amit Chakravarty

getting worse. After the rains, it takes me nearly two days to scoop out the water and get the house back to normal. For four months every year, we sit in the water as it rains and when it stops, we throw out the water, bucket by bucket. I can't even cook during those days as the kitchen counter is stacked with boxes and other things," complains Sannake.

The two lofts in the room are a lifesaver. In the days leading up to the rains, Sannake starts moving grains, clothes, the microwave and wooden boxes into the loft. "We mount the refrigerator and washing machines onto a platform. But if the water rises beyond 2

feet, those get submerged. How many times can we get these repaired? I also put away all documents and keep the bottom shelf of the cupboard empty."

Hindmata is a saucer-shaped, low-lying area in Mumbai's central district between Dadar TT and Parel. Every year, floodwaters gush into people's homes and shops, rising to about three to four feet and staying that way for hours at a stretch.

Over the last month, the Sannakes have spent over Rs 1 lakh to flood-proof their ground-floor room. Among the new additions is a granite slab at the threshold to stop the water from gushing in.

The dilapidated three-storey building has both families and small-scale commercial establishments. Out of the 15 rooms on the ground floor, only the Sannakes and three other families have stayed on. Others have either sold the properties over the years or rented them out to small-scale cloth godowns.

Urban experts say it's not just the saucer-shaped topography that causes the annual flooding in Hindmata, and point to how the BMC is almost never prepared — while old sewer lines lie damaged, new illegal ones crisscross the area.

Old British-era arch drains — designed to carry rainwater from Dadar to Britannia (Reay Road) outfall and finally into the sea — have been reduced to barely 1.13 sqm from their original 2.69 sqm carrying capacity due to silting and encroachments, said a retired civic official.

In 2016, the BMC constructed the Britannia pumping station, claiming that it would make the Hindmata junction free of waterlogging. But the neighbourhood continued to get flooded. The following year, an inquiry into the functioning of the Britannia pumping station recommended the installation of additional drains to carry rainwater, following which, in 2019, Rs 50 crore was spent to lay the lines and augment the capacity of the existing lines.

But Hindmata remained a water-filled saucer during the rains.

Residents of the area are now pinning their hopes on an ambitious project — two new underground water tanks, at Dadar and St Xavier's Grounds, that are coming up to

temporarily store floodwater, which will be discharged into the sea through drains once the high tide recedes. The tanks, over a km from their building, are connected to Hindmata through a 1,600-mm-diameter stormwater drain line. But it's already May and the work is far from complete.

One of the main reasons for Hindmata's flooding is its geography, says the BMC. "The area is shaped like a saucer due to which all rainwater gets accumulated here from surrounding areas like Parel, Lalbaug and Dadar. To solve this problem, capacity of the underground tanks is being increased, so that they can hold more water," said an official from the SWD (Storm Water Drains) department.

The BMC's nearest pumping station from Hindmata — Britannia pumping station — is located at Reay Road, about 5 km away. Officials say that the farther away a chronic flooding spot is from a pumping station, the more time it takes for water to recede from the area.

On May 19, Mumbai Suburban Guardian Minister Aaditya Thackeray said after taking the stock of the city's monsoon preparation, "We have created holding ponds in areas like Gandhi Market, Hindmata, and chronic flooding spots. These can hold water for a few hours and drain it. But still, if extreme weather event like cloud burst takes place, no one can do anything. The fury of nature can be stopped by none."

But Sannake is running out of patience. "This year, if I have to bucket out water like I do every year, the pumps and tanks are a failure. I don't want to know if the water receded in an hour or two this year. I don't want a single drop of water in my room."

Across THE AISLE



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The Centre's policies tend to impose uniformity throughout the country (e.g., NEET, NEP, CUET). There has been a serious erosion of federal principles. The danger is that, in due course, federalism will be junked and India will become a unitary state — a proposal that was unambiguously rejected by the Constituent Assembly

LAST WEEK, I had written that 'Centre-states relations have never been so fraught'. In the last few days, there has been another flash point: who is doing more to cut taxes?

On May 21, the Finance Minister announced that the government had decided to reduce the "excise duties" by Rs 8 per litre on petrol and Rs 6 per litre on diesel. The notification was apparently made available very late in the day. All channels on that day and all newspapers the next morning assumed — and reported — that reductions had been made in the excise duties (which are shared with the states). It was wrong; the reductions had been made in the additional excise duties (which are not shared with the states).

On May 22, the Finance Minister tried to shame the states: 'I have reduced duties, now you reduce VAT'. It was an attempt at one-upmanship. As the numbers tumbled out, it became clear that the Centre had no case to ask the states to reduce the VAT on petrol and diesel.

NUMBERS DON'T LIE

First, let's analyse the 'reduction'. The bonanza for the Centre accrues from the Additional Excise Duty (also known as Road & Infrastructure Cess or RIC), Special Additional Excise Duty (SAED) and Agriculture & Infrastructure Development Cess (AIDC) which are not shared with the states. In May 2014, all excise duties amounted to Rs 9.48 per

litre on petrol and Rs 3.56 per litre on diesel. By May 21, 2022, the Centre had increased the duties to Rs 27.90 per litre on petrol and Rs 21.80 per litre on diesel. That amounted to an increase of Rs 18+ per litre!

Next, let's look at the shared basic excise duty and the not shared RIC which was reduced:

	Basic Excise Duty per litre (shared)	Additional Excise Duty (Road & Infrastructure Cess) per litre (not shared)	All Excise Duties
On May 21			
Petrol	₹1.40	₹13.00	₹27.90
Diesel	1.80	8.00	21.80
After May 21			
Petrol	1.40	5.00	19.90
Diesel	1.80	2.00	15.80

Of the shared tax revenues, the Centre keeps 59 per cent and all the States share the remaining 41 per cent according to the percentages determined by the Finance Commission. All the States together get a pittance from petroleum products: 57.4 paise per litre on petrol and 73.8 paise per litre on diesel! There is neither gain nor loss, of any significance, through Basic Excise Duty.

The real source of revenue is the not shared excise duties. Having raised it by Rs 18+ per litre of petrol and diesel, on May 21, 2022, the Finance Minister re-

duced it by Rs 8 and Rs 6 per litre, respectively! This is what I call Rob Peter More and Pay Peter Less!

VAT IS MAIN REVENUE

It is obvious that the states get practically nothing from the revenues raised by the Centre from petrol and diesel. Their main source of revenue is VAT on petrol and diesel (the other source being taxes on liquor). It is noteworthy that the states' own resources as a proportion of total revenues is dwindling. Exhorting the states to cut VAT on petrol and diesel is akin to asking the states to beggar themselves: they will go broke and be obliged to borrow more (with the permission of the Central government) or carry a begging bowl to the Centre for more grants-in-aid. The little financial independence the states have will evaporate. Yet, four states have made cuts in the VAT: Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Maharashtra and Rajasthan.

NEED TOTAL REVIEW

Neutral observers have argued that the entire gamut of Centre-states' fiscal powers and relations must be comprehensively reviewed. In particular, the working of Articles 246A, 269A and 279A relating to the GST laws must be reviewed. States must have more financial powers to raise own resources. It is a fact that states that are starved of resources do not devolve sufficient funds

to the urban and rural local bodies and the result is the 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution are lying in deep freeze. Neither funds nor functions nor functionaries are made available to the municipal and panchayat bodies.

The virtual monopoly of financial powers in the hands of the Central government has led to concentration of other powers in the Central government. The Centre has encroached on the legislative domain of the states (e.g. the farm laws). The Centre has exceeded its taxing powers (e.g., IGST on ocean freight, as pointed out by the Supreme Court). The Centre has often exercised its executive powers to override the executive powers of the state governments (e.g., transfer and 'posting' of the Chief Secretary of West Bengal on the day of his retirement from service in order to punish the officer concerned and over-awe the state). The Centre's policies tend to impose uniformity throughout the country (e.g., NEET, NEP, CUET). There has been a serious erosion of federal principles. The danger is that, in due course, federalism will be junked and India will become a unitary state — a proposal that was unambiguously rejected by the Constituent Assembly.

You decide, what do you want? One India with de-humanizing oneness and uniformity across subservient states or a Federal India that is enriched by vibrant, co-operating and competing states?

Fifth COLUMN

TAVLEEN SINGH
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India must choose

ON THE promenade in Davos this year there was heavy Indian presence. Major states set up their own investment offices directly opposite India Lounge. Right next door to India's main office was Russia House, renamed this year as Russia War Crimes House. Inside were photographs and videos of mass graves, devastated cities and the heart-breaking testimonies of people who had suffered brutalities at the hands of Russian soldiers. Almost everyone who attended this year's unusual summer annual meeting of the World Economic Forum visited the Russia War Crimes House to pay homage.

Ukraine dominated the conversations and discussions held at this annual meeting. On the second evening there was a concert for Ukraine that had an audience of more than a thousand people standing up in silence when the Ukrainian national anthem was the first piece played. In all the years that I have been coming to Davos, almost every year since I first came in 1995, I have never attended an annual meeting that was so completely dedicated to a single subject. Putin's ugly war. Klaus Schwab who founded the World Economic Forum 50 years ago said that in all the years that this Forum has existed, this was the most momentous because it marked a turning point. He said, 'History is truly at a turning point. We do not yet know the full extent and the systemic and structural changes which will happen.'

In nearly every session I attended, I heard eminent analysts of international affairs point out that we are now witnessing a change in the world order that we have not seen since World War-2 ended. There was speculation on whether we were seeing the start of a new Cold War or a continuation of the one we believed ended when that wall came down in Berlin and the iron curtain fell. The difference is that the new Cold War will be between the United States and China. Not Russia. So, did India make a mistake by not condemning Vladimir Putin strongly for starting his monstrous war that seems not to play by any of the established rules of conflict?

It is sad for me to admit this, but it seems that way. As someone who always looks out in Davos for where India stands in the story of the world, I was disappointed to find hardly any mention of our dear Bharat Mata. Indian ministers and officials were present in large numbers as were Indian journalists, but it seemed only other Indians noticed their presence. This column has said before that we should have condemned in much stronger words Putin's horrific war crimes of which the first was the unprovoked invasion itself. This week I repeat what I have said in the hope that the mighty mandarins who devise India's foreign policy wake up to the reality that it is time for us to choose a side.

Here are our choices. We can either choose to stand with other democracies and say loudly and clearly that Ukraine is suffering only because it demanded the right to be free and democratic. It was Ukraine's right to choose not to be crushed under the jackboot of a brutal dictator who does not allow his own people democracy and freedom. Or we can choose to continue standing with Russia who in the changed circumstances of the world is the junior partner of our worst enemy. In the new Cold War, the side that China leads represents autocracy and brute force. Is that the side that India should be on?

On the top of Raisina Hill in that building we call South Block sits a small army of officials who have grown up admiring the Soviet Union and thinking of it as our forever friend. I have engaged with some of them on the issue of Ukraine and they have repeated ad nauseum that Russia was only responding to deliberate Western provocation in the form of NATO expanding its borders into what the former Soviet Union believed was its sphere of influence. They always preface this by reminding me that it is they who are the experts on geo-political realities and that I am a mere hack poking my nose into an area where expertise is a prerequisite.

Well, let me say to these 'experts' that at this present time in world history they are pushing India into the arms of a formation that will be led by China who has shown us many times that it will never be our friend. It was probably on the advice of these 'experts' on geo-political realities that our Prime Minister has met China's Communist dictator 18 times, always extending the hand of friendship. The last of these meetings was in Mahabalipuram where Xi Jinping and Narendra Modi were immortalized drinking coconut water together. As picturesque a scene as when China's leader and his wife were photographed on that Gujarati swing. Even as these pictures were being taken, China was planning to send troops into Indian territory. The mighty mandarins of South Block were wrong then and history will prove them wrong one more time if we choose to stand on the side of autocracy and not on the side of democracy. If this is all that these experts in geo-politics and foreign policy can give us, then it is time to put an end to such 'expertise.'

The Panthers are coming to Nanded

Dalitality
SURAJYENGDE
Twitter: @Surajyengde



THE DALIT Panthers turns 50. Celebrations have been organised in my hometown in Maharashtra. An international Dalit Panthers-Black Panthers Conference is being hosted in India's hinterland for the first time. The Nanded Ambedkarites have decided to throw a party that would consist of intellectual discussions, speeches, film screenings, exhibitions, performances on traditional Ambedkari music and Dalit rap. In a first, Black Panther icons such as Michael D McCarty and Henry Gaddis have been invited to attend the conference alongside veteran Dalit Panthers' leaders such as J V Pawar.

No other city in India has organised such a conference. This is partly to let the world know that many activities happen in smaller parts of India but they remain unreported and unknown.

Dalit Panthers was started by first generation educated Marathi youth in Mumbai in 1972 but was dissolved five years later due to State pressure, internal ideological conflicts, and to make way for the next generation of thinkers to adopt their version of resistance. The Dalit youth living in Mumbai slums were frustrated with the State and its apathetic machinery. In response to the growing statelessness and insecurity, they blew fire like a dragon putting to flames the mirage of India that was commemorating its silver jubilee.

At the time, Raja Dhale, one of the co-founders of Dalit Panthers, compared the Tricolour to the sari draped around a Dalit woman. A Dalit Buddhist woman was stripped naked in public by the entire village in Maharashtra's Brahmanda. Dhale asked Indians if a Dalit woman's respect was more important or the Tricolour, because the punishment for disrespecting the Tricolour was more severe than that of stripping a Dalit woman.

The Dalit Panthers had an impressive presence in cities and its influence started growing in villages as news of their work spread. The style of the Panthers, known as "Pantheri", was to use language and words as an armament against injustice and violence.

The Panthers were literary marvels. Their speeches were seditious for the Indira Gandhi government. They were a national threat. Many regional parties, especially in Maharashtra, rose to fame just by opposing the Dalit Panthers. At times, police and intelligence units would be ready to arrest the speakers immediately after their speeches.

Such was the terror of the Panthers that wherever an atrocity against Dalits took place, entire villages would take refuge at the police station. "The Panthers are coming" threw casteists into panic. Villages continue to remain a ground for practising the thousand-year-old caste system. Separate settlements and reliance on landlords are imposed on groups made untouchable in society. If an untouchable dares to change his/her given place and demands fare wages, or resists sexual abuse of their wives, mothers or sisters, or sends their children to school, it invites a violent response and social boycott.

When the State failed Dalits, Dalit Panthers became an option. This enactment was not limited to street fights and protests. Many locals partook in the change they were seeking with the Dalit Panthers. The State put them behind bars. The college going youth were slapped with criminal cases so that they could not complete education nor get a government job.

The Dalit Panthers wave was strong and forceful. Almost everyone who believed in justice looked at them with admiration. It was primarily a movement led by intellectuals. Many youth of the '70s era, who later became professionals and leaders, reminisced about their work with the Panthers.

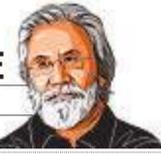
However, it was not always a clean picture. The Dalit Panthers as an organisation was not always an ideal body. It had united rivers of many places and with that came tensions. It remained an urban-centric body with leaders guiding it from far-away places. Though there were many charismatic leaders, only the ones reported about get a mention. Dalit Panthers of Maharashtra inspired the Gujarati, Kannada, Tamil, and North Indian Panthers. All were suave and were led by sophisticated thinkers. A huge corpus of literature is available in regional languages about them. It remains to be translated.

Suraj Yengde, the author of Caste Matters, curates the fortnightly 'Dalitality' column

history

HEADLINE

SIRFAN HABIB



THERE ARE some iconic words or expressions that become immortal and stay with us forever. *Inqilab* (Revolution) is one of them. It was used for the first time in a slogan *Inqilab Zindabad* (Long Live Revolution) by Maulana Hasrat Mohani in 1921 and soon became a rallying cry of our freedom struggle.

Now, it's at the centre of a Delhi High Court deliberation which sought to know the context in which Umar Khalid, accused in the February 2020 riots in the Capital, used the term *inqilab*, with the judge saying that 'revolution' by itself "isn't always bloodless".

Before going into the popular appeal of the slogan over the past few decades, we need to know a bit more about someone who coined it. Maulana Hasrat Mohani (1875-1951) was born as Syed Fazlul Hasan in a town called Mohani in Unnao district of Uttar Pradesh. Hasrat was his pen name (*takhallus*) as a revolutionary Urdu poet, that also became his identity as a political leader. Hasrat Mohani was a labour leader, a scholar, a well-known Urdu poet and also one of the founders of the Communist Party of India in 1925.

Along with Swami Kumaranand — another important name in the Indian Communist movement — Hasrat Mohani was the first person to raise the demand for 'Complete Independence' or 'Poorna Swaraj' for India at the Ahmedabad session of the Indian National Congress in 1921. This session was also attended by Ramprasad Bismil and Ashfaqullah Khan (both played an important role in passing the resolution in the general body of the Indian National Congress). Hasrat Mohani was elected member of the Constituent Assembly after Independence and was also a member of the drafting committee of the Constitution along with Dr B R Ambedkar. His stress on *Inqilab* and the slogan *Inqilab Zindabad* was inspired by his urge to fight against social and economic inequality and of course in his struggle for freedom from colonial oppression.

Before Hasrat Mohani coined this slogan, the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia made revolution symbolic of struggle for oppressed nationalities globally. India did not escape it either.

It was from the mid 1920s onwards that this slogan became a war cry of Bhagat Singh and his Naujawan Bharat Sabha as well as his Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA). Bhagat Singh was committed to *Inqilab* or revolution but it was

The idealism behind Inqilab Zindabad



Hasrat Mohani (left), a member of the drafting committee of the Constitution, with Dr B R Ambedkar. Wikimedia Commons

not merely a political revolution he aimed at. He wanted a social revolution to break age-old discriminatory practices. This *Inqilab Zindabad* was not merely an emotional war cry for the revolutionaries but had a lofty ideal, which was explained by the HSRA thus: "The Revolution will ring the death knell of capitalism and class distinction and privileges... It will give birth to a new state — a new social order."

Bhagat Singh and his Naujawan Bharat Sabha regarded communal animosity as central to their political agenda, but unlike common practice, they did not believe either in the appeasement of all religions or in raising such slogans as *Allah o Akbar*, *Sat Sri Akal* and *Har Har Mahadev* to prove their secularism. On the contrary, they raised just two slogans, *Inqilab Zindabad* and *Hindustan Zindabad*, hailing the revolution and the country. All those who revel in the name of Bhagat Singh should care to understand the vision he left behind for us as his intellectual legacy.

This slogan got major traction when Bhagat Singh and B K Dutt dropped bombs in the Delhi Assembly on April 8, 1929, and shouted Long Live Revolution (*Inqilab Zindabad*). It was later in the same year that Ramanand Chatterjee, senior journalist and editor of the *Modern Review of Calcutta*, wrote critically and mockingly about the slogan Long Live Revolution (*Inqilab Zindabad*). Bhagat Singh could not let it pass and responded by explaining its usage. He said, "The sense in which the word revolution (*Inqilab*) is used in that phrase is the

spirit, the longing for a change for the better. People generally get accustomed to the established order and begin to tremble at the very idea of change... Old order should change, always and ever, yielding place to new... It is in this sense that we raise the shout 'Long Live Revolution' (*Inqilab Zindabad*).

Bhagat Singh was even more definitive in his statement in the court on June 6, 1929. He said: "Revolution (*Inqilab*) is not a culture of bomb and pistol. Our meaning of revolution is to change the present conditions, which are based on manifest injustice." Bhagat Singh agrees with a quote he cites in his prison diary, which says a radical revolution is not utopian. "What is utopian is the idea of a partial, an exclusively political revolution, which would leave the pillars of the house standing."

The HSRA aimed at such a revolution (*Inqilab*) which would usher in a new era, demolishing the existing socio-economic and political structure of the Indian society. Their revolution was not for anarchy or lawlessness but for social justice.

Thus, we need to comprehend the meaning of *Inqilab* or revolution and the slogan *Inqilab Zindabad* in the context of its history. It will stay relevant till the people continue their struggle against diverse inequalities and oppressions.

The writer is historian and author, and formerly Maulana Azad Chair at the National University of Educational Planning and Administration

she SAID

DEEPIKA SINGH
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WHO FINDS love swiping left and right? "Isn't love an emotion that has to come to you organically?"; "But don't you, like, get murdered on Tinder?"

With these questions weighing heavily on my mind, I took my first, reluctant steps towards the world of online dating three years ago.

I was not hoping for much. As a plus-sized woman with features that don't fit in the conventionally attractive mould, I was used to being passed over for romantic alliances. And on a platform where the first impression is formed based on something

When I swiped right, and other stories

as frivolous as a profile picture, what chance did I have? To my surprise, I found at least five matches within the first few minutes on Bumble. And that was the beginning of what would be a watershed moment in my personal history.

My first date was with A, within 18 hours of us getting to know of each other's existence. He was cuter than his pictures, an amazing listener, and a cuddler par excellence. It was the best first date I have ever had. We met for another one three days later. He said he wanted me to read him poetry. I said I was more of a novel person. We settled on a short story. He rested his head on my lap as I read aloud. It was as romantic as it gets and completely surreal.

My second date was with D; I connected with him through Hinge. "I find you

very attractive," he said. Now these were words I had never heard being spoken for me before. Ever. I made him say, "Deepika, you are attractive" at least a dozen times and he obliged. He was nerdy, endearingly awkward but attentive to a fault, and single-mindedly focused on not doing anything that made me uncomfortable.

And then I met S. Gifted with dry humour, he cracked me up with every sentence. He was six years younger but with an IQ higher than all the guys I had dated before, combined.

Three years, countless matches and more than my fair share of dates later, if you ask what I feel about my online dating experience, I would say grateful. The men I met through the apps certainly turned out to be better people than those I had met

'organically'. I stopped being apologetic about my weight and realised I was attractive in my own unique way.

Now, the pitfalls: How can I meet a stranger just like that? What if he is only a serial killer on the prowl? Well, I did take my precautions. I mean sending pictures and contact details of the guy I am meeting to my friend is not the kind of stuff that one envisions for a first date, right? But we do what we got to do.

And, how do I know that he is "the one" by scrolling through a few pictures and a couple of sentences that pass off for bio? What if he is good looking but not photogenic? What if his bio sucks but he could have bowled me over in person? What, dear lord, if there is no bio?

So, in the end, can I say I am a dating app

convert? Ah, I wouldn't commit. My idea of meeting "the one" still remains old-fashioned — I would give anything to bump into him in an old, dusty bookstore. And then him asking me out for coffee, maybe?

But sadly, and shamefully, I am not going to bookshops anymore. In the same vein, I don't remember the last time a coffee shop took my breath away.

With work friends being the only people I interact with through the week, and girlfriends and platonic guy friends occupying my days off, these dating apps, "inorganic" as they sound, are virtually (pun intended) my only shot at finding "the one". I just hope that he is photogenic, has a sassy bio, and right swipes me back. And that he is, well, not a serial killer on the prowl.

DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, ASCI MEETING WITH E-COMMERCE COS

Framework on anvil to curb fake reviews on e-commerce sites

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, MAY 28

TO PROTECT consumer interest, the Centre will develop a framework to keep a check on fake reviews on e-commerce websites like Amazon and Flipkart.

The Department of Consumer Affairs (DoCA) will prepare the framework after studying the current mechanism being followed by other e-commerce companies and "best practices available globally", the Consumer Affairs Ministry said in a statement on Saturday.

The decision comes after the ministry and the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI)

ISSUES DISCUSSED AT VIRTUAL MEET

AT FRIDAY'S VIRTUAL MEETING, the issues discussed included how paid reviews, unverifiable reviews and absence of disclosure in case of incentivised reviews make it challenging for consumers to recognise genuine reviews, as per an official statement



held a virtual meeting on Friday with e-commerce companies, along with other stakeholders,

to discuss the magnitude and roadmap ahead for fake reviews on such websites.

Nidhi Khare, Additional Secretary, and Anupam Mishra, Joint Secretary, in the DoCA also attended the meeting.

According to an official statement, the issues discussed during Friday's meeting included how paid reviews, unverifiable reviews and absence of disclosure in case of incentivised reviews make it challenging for consumers to recognise genuine reviews.

Shopping on e-commerce sites does not allow users an opportunity to physically examine a product which means that consumers rely heavily on product reviews before making a purchase decision.

"Traceability by ensuring the

authenticity of the reviewer and the associated liability of the platform are the two key issues here. Also e-comm players must disclose as to how they choose the 'most relevant reviews' for display in a fair and transparent manner," Rohit Kumar Singh, Secretary, DoCA, said.

E-commerce entities participating in the virtual meeting "agreed that the issue deserves to be monitored closely" and also claimed that they have frameworks in place by which they monitor fake reviews on their sites, the Ministry said.

The companies also showed an interest in participating with the government to come up with the framework, it added.

AUTOMAKER'S ENTRY ON HOLD SINCE 2019 OVER DUTY CUT ISSUE

Tesla demand to start engine in India: Manufacturing only after nod for sale & services

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, MAY 28

TESLA INC will not set up a manufacturing facility in India until it is allowed to sell and service imported cars in the country first, the company's chief executive officer Elon Musk recently said on Twitter.

The company's entry into India has been on hold since 2019 as it wants lower customs duty on imported electric vehicles (EVs) in the country, a demand the government is yet to accept, instead requiring the automaker to set up a manufacturing base in India.

EV maker's duty cut demand

Responding to a user's question on Twitter about the company's manufacturing plans in India, Musk on Friday tweeted, "Tesla will not put a manufacturing plant in any location where we are not allowed first to sell & service cars".

Tesla had last year written to the government seeking a reduction in import duties on fully assembled cars.

At present, customs duty ranging from 60 per cent to 100 per cent is levied on cars imported as completely built units (CBUs), depending on the engine size and cost, insurance and freight (CIF) value less or above \$40,000.

CEO'S RESPONSE TO TWITTER QUESTION

RESPONDING ON TWITTER to a user's question about Tesla's plans in India, Musk tweeted, "Tesla will not put a manufacturing plant in any location where we are not allowed first to sell & service cars"



AP file

Govt wants production first

Earlier this year, Road Transport Minister and Highways Nitin Gadkari had said that if the US-based auto maker was ready to manufacture its EV in India, then there was "no problem", but the company must not sell imported cars in India. "If he wants to manufacture in China and sell in India, then it cannot be a good proposition for India," the union minister had said.

Tesla's giga factory in Shanghai is currently the closest manufacturing facility the company has to India.

Senior government officials had earlier told *The Sunday Express* that Tesla, in its proposal, did not detail any setup for manufacturing the electric vehicles.

The government's primary concern was that Tesla is seek-

EXPLAINED

ing duty cuts and then proposing domestic manufacturing conditional to the sales response in the country.

The tax cut demand hence did not find favour as it was also felt that other firms may seek similar concessions.

"Tesla wants customs duty cuts for imports. They are welcome to come and produce. But his argument is first I want to see how many people in India buy my vehicle. For that, he needs a lower customs duty ... if there's enough turnover, I might come. It's not a poor man's car. They are not producing a small EV equivalent for the middle class. They are producing a super class car. Why should we give a Customs exemption? If you can afford it, please pay the duty and take it," a senior government official had earlier said.

'Broad-based growth' fuels M&M Q4 net profit up 48%

Mumbai: Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) on Saturday posted a 48 per cent rise in consolidated net profit at Rs 2,237 crore for the fourth quarter ended March 31, riding on broad-based growth registered across all its businesses. In comparison, the automotive major had posted a net profit of Rs 1,513 crore for the same period a year ago.

The net profit excludes an exceptional item of Rs 293.73 crore for the quarter. During the quarter under review, the company said its revenue rose 21 per cent to Rs 25,934 crore from Rs 21,456 crore recorded during the same period a year ago.

"Despite significant challenges due to various factors like Covid-19, commodity prices, semiconductor shortages and the Ukraine conflict, we have delivered strong results at the consolidated level. All of our group companies are well-positioned to capitalise on growth opportunities," Anish Shah, MD & CEO at M&M, said. FE

'Investments in proptech cos to hit \$1 billion in 2025'

Investments in property technology (proptech) firms are likely to touch \$1 billion in 2025, almost double the 2020 level, as per a report by industry body CII and property consultant Colliers India



Proptech sector is expected to grow significantly over the next few years led by ease of transactions, transparency and advanced technology, the report said

'Coal India to import for first time in years'

SUDARSHAN VARADHAN
NEW DELHI, MAY 28

STATE-RUN COAL India, the world's largest coal miner, will import the fuel for use by utilities, a Power Ministry letter seen by *Reuters* showed on Saturday, as shortages raise concerns about renewed power outages.

It would be the first time since 2015 that Coal India has imported the fuel, highlighting efforts by state and central government officials to stock up to avoid a repeat of April, when India faced its worst power cuts in more than six years.

"Coal India would import



A coal mine in Birbhum, West Bengal. Power plants have been warned of cuts to the supply of mined coal if they don't build up inventories through imports. File

coal for blending on government-to-government (G2G) basis and supply ... to thermal power plants of state generators

and independent power producers (IPPs)," the Power Ministry said in the letter dated May 28. The letter was sent to all util-

ities, top federal and state energy officials including the Coal Secretary and the Chairman of Coal India.

India is expected to face a wider coal shortage during the third quarter of 2022 due to expectations of higher electricity demand, stoking fears of widespread power outages. The Power Ministry said in the letter the decision was taken after nearly all states suggested that multiple coal import tenders by states would lead to a confusion and sought centralised procurement through Coal India.

India stepped up pressure on utilities to increase imports to blend with local coal in recent

days, warning of cuts to the supply of domestically mined coal if power plants did not build up coal inventories through imports. However, the Power Ministry on Saturday asked states to suspend tenders that are "under process".

"The tenders under process by state generators and IPPs for importing coal for blending may be kept in abeyance to await the price discovery by Coal India through G2G route, so as to procure coal at least possible rates," the ministry said. Coal inventories at power plants have declined by about 13 per cent since April to the lowest pre-summer levels in years. **REUTERS**

BRIEFLY

AGEL project

New Delhi: Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL) arm Adani Hybrid Energy Jaisalmer One Limited has commissioned a 390 MW wind-solar hybrid power plant at Jaisalmer, Rajasthan.

Inox Wind Q4

New Delhi: Inox Wind has reported widening of its consolidated net loss to Rs 255.76 crore for the March quarter, mainly due to lower revenues. The consolidated net loss of the company stood at Rs 105.87 crore in the quarter ended March 31, 2021, it said in a BSE filing.

Glenmark Q4

New Delhi: Glenmark Pharmaceuticals said its consolidated profit after tax declined 26 per cent to Rs 173 crore for the fourth quarter ended March 31, 2022. It had reported a profit after tax (PAT) of Rs 234 crore in the January-March period of 2020-21 fiscal. **PTI**

Amazon investor proposal to review plastic use fails to clear

REUTERS
BENGALURU, MAY 28

AMAZON.COM INC'S investor-led proposal to review its use of plastic won 49 per cent support even as shareholders voted down all the 15 resolutions at the e-commerce giant's annual general meeting, a regulatory filing showed on Friday.

It was the only proposal that came close to reaching the 51 per cent mark for approval. Investors opposed resolutions that challenged the company's policies on various issues, including the treatment of workers and use of non-disclosure agreements.

To be sure, about 13 per cent of the company's voting stock is controlled by founder Jeff Bezos, raising the bar for any effort to win a majority of investor support. The proposal for a report on whether Amazon cloud, surveillance and other capabilities contribute to human rights violation won 40 per cent support. But an overwhelming 87 per cent voted down a proposal calling Amazon

ONLY PROPOSAL NEAR 51% APPROVAL



The proposal on plastic use was the only one that came close to reaching the 51% mark for approval

Investors opposed resolutions that challenged the company's policies on various issues

to review worker safety.

Only 39 per cent of votes were in favor of a resolution related to unionization of workers, but 47 per cent backed a report on whether Amazon's lobbying activities were consistent with the best interest of the shareholders. A move to review Amazon's facial recognition technology got 41 per cent votes in favour, while a report for more

details on gender and racial pay managed to get support from just 29 per cent of shareholders.

The resolutions are non-binding, but companies often take some form of action if they get backing of 30-40 per cent of votes cast. Separately, investors backed a proposal to clear executive compensation, elect director nominees and weigh a stock split by a big margin.

INTERVIEW WITH MEMBER, BOARD OF TRUSTEES, WIKIMEDIA FOUNDATION

'India an opportunity for Wikipedia, so are languages and reliable info'

NANDAGOPAL RAJAN
NEW DELHI, MAY 28

WITHIN HOURS of the shooting in Texas, the Wikipedia page of the Robb Elementary School in Uvalde saw 765 edits coming from 154 different contributors that was overseen by 103 page watchers ensuring only accurate information was published.

This ability to offer 'reliable information', especially in these critical times, is for Raju Narisetti — a member of the board of trustees of the Wikimedia Foundation — a 'significant opportunity' for Wikipedia in countries like India. The opportunity is also languages.

"Most people don't realise it but over 80 per cent of articles on Wikipedia are not in English. And among the 300 languages, Hindi is ranked at about 55, followed by Tamil and Telugu. On number of articles, Hindi is close to about 150,000 articles, Tamil



"... over 80 per cent of articles on Wikipedia are not in English. And among the 300 languages, Hindi is ranked at about 55, followed by Tamil and Telugu. On number of articles, Hindi is close to 150,000 articles"

RAJU NARISETTI

is about 130,000 articles and Telugu is getting to be about 100,000," Narisetti elaborates on why it is a significant opportunity for a non-profit like Wikipedia, which has a 2030 strategic roadmap to help every person on the planet to access free knowledge and information.

Narisetti, who has been associated with *The Washington Post* and *The Wall Street Journal* after starting his career as a journalist

in India, says several Indians are not aware of history, arts, politics and science. "So we are particularly targeting younger Indians, you know your typical Gen Z, with a campaign #KnowWithWiki."

And, India is already an important part of Wikipedia in more ways than one. Narisetti says that just in the past month, Indians have visited Wikipedia pages 750 million times. "Also,

while we focus on Indian languages, on Wikipedia, Indians are the second-largest English language contributors ... and that's a pretty amazing number."

In fact, India has a total of 65,000 Wikipedia contributors, which is about 20 per cent of all contributors on the platform.

And Indians have also backed Wikipedia fundraisers wholeheartedly.

"When we last did a fundraising campaign in India, 500,000 Indians contributed," he says, adding that this accounted for about 7 per cent of their global donors. "As a non-profit foundation, we believe that India is an opportunity and in some ways a challenge, because of the languages ... and how do we as a non-profit cut through the clutter?"

Wikipedia has over the years started offering content in about 300 languages, a lot of them from India. Full report on www.indianexpress.com

TOP OF THE WORLD



Michelle Bachelet. AP

CHINA

Govt must rethink Uyghur policies: UN rights chief

Beijing: The top UN human rights official said on Saturday that she raised concerns with Chinese officials about the impact of the broad application of counterterrorism and de-radicalisation measures on the rights of Uyghurs and other predominantly Muslim groups in China's Xinjiang region. Michelle Bachelet, who visited the northwestern region as part of a six-day trip to China, said, "It provides an opportunity for me to better understand the situation in China, but also for the authorities in China to better understand our concerns and to potentially rethink policies that we believe may impact negatively on human rights," she said in a video news conference before leaving the country. AP

JAPAN

Red Army founder freed after serving 20-yr sentence

Tokyo: Fusako Shigenobu, who co-founded the terrorist group Japanese Red Army, was released from prison on Saturday after serving a 20-year sentence, and apologised for hurting innocent people. "I feel strongly that I have finally come out alive," she said, welcomed by her daughter and a crowd of reporters and supporters in Tokyo. "I have hurt innocent people I did not know by putting our struggles first. I would like to take this opportunity to apologise deeply," she said. Shigenobu was convicted of masterminding the 1974 siege of the French Embassy in the Hague. AP

INDONESIA

Rescuers search for 26 after boat capsizes

Makassar: Indonesian rescue teams were looking for 26 people missing on Saturday after a boat with 43 people on board capsized on off Sulawesi island, the search and rescue agency said. The motorboat that had left Paotere port in Makassar on Thursday was reported missing on Friday when it failed to arrive at its destination. Rescued passengers were picked up by tugboats and taken to Banjarmasin in South Kalimantan and Jeneponto, an official said on Saturday. REUTERS

TED CRUZ CALLS FOR BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR GUN PURCHASES

At NRA gathering, Trump blames 'evil', not guns for Texas shooting

'Restricting access to firearms not the answer to preventing future tragedies'

AGENCIES
HOUSTON, MAY 28

AFTER AN opening day characterised by big name speakers, bombastic rhetoric and a mass of protesters just across the street from the convention hall doors, attendees at Saturday's session of the National Rifle Association annual meeting are likely to find a more subdued set of events. Saturday kicked off with NRA leaders addressing members of the organization. Those who attended Friday afternoon's Leadership Forum witnessed probably the most passionate moments of the convention.

The forum consisted of a series of political speakers, including the governor of South Dakota, Kristi Noem; Senator Ted Cruz of Texas; and Mark Robinson, lieutenant governor of North Carolina. The opening evening culminated in a speech by former President Donald J Trump, which began as a discussion of gun rights.

"The existence of evil in our world is not a reason to disarm law-abiding citizens," said former Trump, who was among the Republicans who lined up to speak before the gun rights lobbying group Friday as thousands of protesters angry about gun violence demonstrated outside. The members insisted that further restricting access to firearms was not the answer to preventing future tragedies.

"The existence of evil is one of the best reasons to arm law-abiding citizens," he said Friday. The NRA had said that convention attendees would "reflect on" the shooting at the event and "pray for the victims, recognise our patriotic members and pledge to redouble our commitment to making our schools secure."

Wayne LaPierre, the group's embattled chief executive, opened the programme with remarks bemoaning the "21 beautiful lives ruthlessly and indiscriminately extinguished by a criminal monster." Still, he said "restricting



Former president Donald Trump speaks during the NRA meeting. AP

EXPLAINED
Can gunmakers be liable for mass shootings?

SINCE 2005, the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act (PLCAA) has provided near blanket immunity for gunmakers and dealers from liability for crimes committed with their products. However, PLCAA has several provisions that allow a company to be sued, including for claims a company has knowingly violated laws related to the marketing of the product related to the shooting.

the fundamental human rights of law-abiding Americans to defend themselves is not the answer. It never has been."

Texas Sen Ted Cruz, who, like Trump, is considered a potential presidential candidate in 2024, railed against Democrats' calls for universal background checks for gun purchases and bans of assault-style weapons and instead pointed to broken families, declining church attendance and social media bullying. "Tragedies like the event of this week are a mirror forcing us to ask hard questions," he said. "We must not react to evil and tragedy by abandoning the Constitution or infringing on rights of law-abiding citizens."

Children called for help from inside classes, police waited

THE NEW YORK TIMES
UVALDE, MAY 28

FURTHER, SPEAKING in a whisper, a fourth-grade girl dialed the police. Around her, in Room 112 at Robb Elementary School, were the motionless bodies of her classmates and scores of spent bullet casings fired by a gunman who had already been inside the school for half an hour.

She whispered to a 911 operator, just after noon, that she was in the classroom with the gunman. She called back again. And again. "Please send the police now," she begged. But they were already just outside. And they had been

there for more than an hour.

Police officers held off as they listened to sporadic gunfire from behind the door, ordered by the commander at the scene not to rush the pair of connected classrooms where the gunman had locked himself inside and begun shooting shortly after 11.30 am.

"It was the wrong decision, period," the director of the state police, Steven C. McCraw, said on Friday after reading from the transcripts of children's calls to 911 and from a timeline of the police inaction during nearly 90 minutes of horror at the elementary school in Uvalde, Texas.

After days of shifting explanations and conflicting accounts, the disclosures answered many of the

basic questions about how the massacre had taken place. But they raised the even more painful possibility that had the police done more, not all of those who died would have lost their lives.

Gov. Greg Abbott of Texas, who earlier in the week had said the police "showed amazing courage by running toward gunfire," said on Friday at a news conference in Uvalde that he had been "misled" about the events and the police response, adding that he was "absolutely livid." Abbott told reporters that state lawmakers would review the tragedy and determine what went wrong. "Do we expect laws to come out of this devastating crime? The answer is yes," he said.

Americans favour changing gun laws

Nearly two-thirds of Americans support moderate or strong regulations of gun ownership, including 53% of Republicans



A family at a memorial site for the victims killed in Uvalde in Texas. AP

RAISING LEGAL AGE

72% of people support the idea of raising the legal age to buy a gun from 18 to 21 years old

ARMING TEACHERS

45% of Americans backed arming teachers, including 58% of Republicans, while 41% of people did not

Teachers' unions have opposed this idea

RED-FLAG LAWS

70% people surveyed said they support "red flag laws," which allow police to confiscate firearms from people that courts say are dangerous

79% people and 78% Republicans say they would support a candidate who supported passing background checks and red flag laws

19 STATES HAVE SUCH LAWS IN PLACE

Source: Reuters/Ipsos poll of 940 people conducted online on Wednesday.

Disease experts call on WHO, govts for action on monkeypox

REUTERS
GENEVA, MAY 28

SOME PROMINENT infectious disease experts are pushing for faster action from global health authorities to contain a growing monkeypox outbreak that has spread to at least 20 countries.

They are arguing that governments and the World Health Organization should not repeat the early missteps of the Covid-19 pandemic that delayed the detection of cases, helping the virus spread.

While monkeypox is not as transmissible or dangerous as Covid, these scientists say, there needs to be clearer guidance on how a person infected with monkeypox should isolate, more ex-

PLICIT advice on how to protect people who are at risk, and improved testing and contact tracing.

"If this becomes endemic (in more countries), we will have another nasty disease and many difficult decisions to take," said Isabelle Eckerle, a professor at the Geneva Centre for Emerging Viral Diseases in Switzerland.

WHO is considering whether the outbreak should be assessed as a potential public health emergency of international concern, an official told Reuters.

Meanwhile, Ireland and has confirmed its first case of monkeypox, the country's health agency said on Saturday. Argentina, too, confirmed the first two cases of monkeypox in Latin America on Friday, the Ministry of Health said.

LANKA ON THE BOIL

Protests demanding Gotabaya's resignation grow, enter 50th day

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
COLOMBO, MAY 28

SRI LANKAN police on Saturday fired tear gas and water cannons to disperse anti-government protesters as the ongoing agitation demanding the resignation of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa over the worst economic crisis intensified as it entered its 50th day.

Saturday marks the 50th day of the "Go Rajapaksa" protest which has also seen the death of a parliamentarian. The Sri Lankan police have on occasions used force to control the unrest.

News website newswire.lk reported that tear gas and water cannons were fired by police to disperse protesters near the World Trade Centre in Fort, Colombo. According to the



Protesters run for cover as police fire tear gas shells near the President's official residence in Colombo on Saturday. AP

Colombo Gazette newspaper, a protest was staged near the residence and office of Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, disrupting traffic along Flower Road.

The protest was staged by "No Deal Gama", it said.

Sharing a video of the protest, the Daily Mirror newspaper tweeted, "50 days of the Galle Face Struggle - People's Representatives and many civil activists march from Kollupitiya Junction to Galle Face."



A building heavily damaged in a Russian bombing in Bakhmut, eastern Ukraine, on Saturday. AP

Russia takes small cities, looks to widen east battle

ASSOCIATED PRESS
KRAMATORSK, MAY 28

AS RUSSIA asserted progress in its goal of seizing the entirety of contested eastern Ukraine, President Vladimir Putin tried to shake European resolve Saturday to punish his country with sanctions and to keep supplying weapons that have supported Ukraine's defence.

The Russian Defence Ministry said Lyman, the second small city to fall to Russia this week, had been "completely liberated" by a joint force of Russian soldiers and Kremlin-backed separatists, who have waged war for eight years in the industrial Donbas region bordering Russia.

Ukraine's train system has ferried arms and evacuated citizens through Lyman, a key railway hub in the country's east. Control of it also would give Russia's military another foothold in the region; it has bridges for troops and equipment to cross the Siverskiy Donets river, which has so far impeded the Russian advance into the Donbas.

But Russia's recent progress in Donetsk and Luhansk, the two provinces that make up the Donbas, could further embolden Putin. Since failing to occupy Kyiv, Russia has set out to seize the last parts of the region not controlled by the separatists.

"If Russia did succeed in taking over these areas, it would highly likely be seen by the Kremlin as a substantive politi-

Macron, Scholz urge Putin to release Azovstal fighters

Paris: French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz urged Russian President Vladimir Putin on Saturday to release the 2,500 Ukrainian defenders of the Azovstal steel plant detained by Russian forces, the Elysee palace said. The two European leaders, in a joint call, also urged Putin to accept a direct exchange with Volodymyr Zelenskyy, the palace said. They also insisted on the urgency of lifting the Russian blockade of the port of Odesa to allow Ukrainian grain exports, the palace said. REUTERS

cal achievement and be portrayed to the Russian people as justifying the invasion," the British Ministry of Defence said in a Saturday assessment.

Russia has intensified efforts to capture the larger cities of Sievierodonetsk and nearby Lysychansk, which are the last major areas under Ukrainian control in Luhansk province. Zelenskyy called the situation in the east "difficult" but expressed confidence his country would prevail with help from Western weapons and sanctions.

China signs deal with Samoa as Australia vows Pacific Islands strategy

REUTERS
SYDNEY, MAY 28

CHINA'S FOREIGN minister signed a deal with Samoa on Saturday to strengthen diplomatic relations, while Australia's new leader said he had a "comprehensive plan" for the Pacific, as Beijing and Canberra continued rival campaigns to woo the region.

China is building on a security pact it recently signed with Solomon Islands, which has alarmed the United States and its allies such as Australia as they fear a stepped-up military presence by Beijing. Australia's new centre-left government has made the Pacific Islands an early diplomatic priority, read more Prime Minister Anthony

Albanese said on Saturday his government's plan includes a defence training school, support for maritime security, a boost in aid and re-engaging the region on climate change. "We will be proactive in the region, we want to engage," he told reporters.

China's Wang Yi, on a tour of the Pacific seeking a 10-nation deal on security and trade, finished a visit to Samoa, where he met PM Fiame Naomi Mataafa and signed documents including an "economic and technical cooperation agreement", Samoa said.

Also Saturday, Fiji's PM Frank Bainimarama said he had a "wonderful meeting" with Australia's Penny Wong, who had visited days after taking office to show the new government's attention to the Pacific Islands.

#METOO: PATRICK POIVRE D'ARVOR FILES 16 DEFAMATION CASES, WOMEN HIT BACK

In France, renowned TV journalist faces over 20 rape, assault charges

NORIMITSU ONISHI
PARIS, MAY 28

FRANCE'S MOST trusted anchorman for decades, he used to draw millions in an evening news programme that some likened to a religious communion. In an earlier time, he embodied an ideal of the French male — at ease with himself, a TV journalist and man of letters, a husband and a father who was also, unabashedly, a great seducer of women.

Patrick Poivre d'Arvor, nicknamed the Sun King of French TV, seemed so confident of his reputation that last month he sued for defamation 16 women

who had accused him of rape, sexual assault and harassment, saying that they were simply "jilted" and "bitter."

Angered, nearly 20 women appeared together this month in a TV studio for Mediapart, France's leading investigative news site, with some recounting rapes or assaults that lasted minutes, carried out with barely a few words.

In what has become perhaps the biggest scandal in France's delayed #MeToo reckoning, their accounts amounted to a devastating rejection of the romantic persona that Poivre d'Arvor so assiduously cultivated with the help of France's gossip pages and its most powerful television net-

work. At 74, he is clinging to that image, denying all accusations and arguing that he is just an inveterate, serial "seducer."

"He was called a Don Juan for years," said Hélène Devynck, 55, a journalist who has accused Poivre d'Arvor of raping her at his home when she worked as one of his assistants in the early 1990s. "There were articles in Paris Match that said he was the paragon of French seduction. Which forces us now to ask, 'What does that mean — French seduction?'"

A court could decide. Nearly all of the most serious accusations against Poivre d'Arvor occurred so long ago that the



Covers of the French magazine Paris Match in June 1995 and April 2022 featuring Patrick Poivre d'Arvor. NYT

statute of limitations has expired. But since he himself has

now sued, the case may provide his accusers the opportunity to

confront him publicly in court in the coming months.

"His ego is destroying him," said Cécile Delarue, 43, a journalist who has accused Poivre d'Arvor of engaging in sexual harassment when she worked with him two decades ago.

Poivre d'Arvor has dismissed the women as having been motivated by "vengeance" because they had not "enjoyed the regard, or even a simple look, of a man they had once admired," in a written complaint that has been cited in the news media and whose contents were authenticated by his lawyer, Philippe Naepels.

The direct confrontation between the anchorman and his

accusers has contributed to a wider debate in France about seduction, courtship and consent that is being played out in mainstream and social media, where nowadays the description of a man as a great seducer can elicit derision, questions and skepticism, not admiration.

At the height of his popularity, between 1987 and 2008, 10 million people — a sixth or more of the French population — watched him daily at 8 p.m. on TF1, France's biggest network. Alexis Lévyria, a media historian at the University of Reims, compared the broadcasts with a Mass, with Poivre d'Arvor assuming "a nearly religious role."

In 2015, just out of journalism school and on her first freelance assignment, De Blasi was asked to go interview Poivre d'Arvor — but with warnings from her own editors and friends in journalism. "Little jokes about not wearing a décolleté, makeup or a skirt," she recalled.

The interview went without incident. But Poivre d'Arvor followed up with persistent calls asking her out to dinner, she said. When she refused, he called her editors to say she was a "bad journalist" who had refused to accept a scoop from him, de Blasi said.

"The gap between this man's image and what I knew was so great," she recalled. NYT

THE SUNDAY EXPRESS MAGAZINE

eye



POINT OF VIEW

Music of Change

Why calls for replacing the harmonium in Gurbani *sangeet* lacks an understanding of the instrument's long history of indigenisation



ARTS etc

Let's Make Grand Plans

An exhibition on the making of Brasilia, Brazil's modern capital, shows how brave architectural designs can transform a country's image



From 1963 to '66, Sheikh studied at the Royal College of Art, London, on a Commonwealth scholarship.

Pursuing his graduation in painting from FFA from 1976 to 1981, artist Veer Munshi remembers the classroom being full of students from across India and the world. "Nasreen (Mohamed) would ask us to sweep the studios and clean the ground before starting work. We did not understand why then, but now I realise how that brought us closer to nature. She encouraged us to draw found objects and we would do hundreds of sketches in a day, visiting numerous sites, including the railway station," says Munshi.



The school has continued to produce artists of stature across generations — from doyens such as Jyotsna and Jyoti Bhatt to Nilima and Gulammohammed Sheikh, Jeram Patel, Himmat Shah and Haku Shah to contemporary artists such as LN Tallur, N Pushpamala, Sheela Gowda, Mrinalini Mukherjee, Nikhil Chopra, Prabhakar Pachpute, Abir Karmakar and Shreyas Karle.

Over the years, the art fair, which drew people from across Gujarat and beyond, has become infrequent but the annual MSU final-year students' exhibition does attract crowds. As the prices of Indian art escalated, it has also become a hunting ground for gallerists to spot potential stars of tomorrow and also to anticipate trends. "The environment at Baroda has always encouraged individualistic thinking. Several artists I am working with are from the faculty and I definitely do some studio visits whenever I travel to the city. This year as well, I have signed up two young artists," says Bhavna Kakar, director of Latitude 28 gallery in Delhi, who pursued her Masters in Art History from MSU from 2000-2002.

As the close-knit circle of artists, who call Baroda their home grew, an ecosystem also developed around them. The city may still not boast of numerous art galleries but its equidistant location between the art centres of Delhi and Mumbai ensures opportunities. Several studio collectives have also mushroomed to provide young artists a conducive environment to practise.

While the reputation that its founders built persists, much has also changed. With the market becoming a driver for students, the focus has shifted from learning and experimentation to finding possibilities for monetisation. "When I was studying in Baroda, I realised that it was difficult to segregate various kinds of cultural expressions — we had writers, musicians, traditional folk artists coming to talk to us. This is something that made Baroda special. So when we were teaching, we tried to bring in those approaches. We hoped there would be a chain, but we don't know how it will be in the coming years," says Vasudevan Akkitham, 64, who was a teacher in the department of painting from 1990 to 2020. Pedagogical concerns require attention as the syllabus remains unaltered even if teaching methods may have changed over time.

Bureaucratic norms that require a mandatory doctorate to teach in universities, meanwhile, deters practicing artists from applying for positions. "When it comes to the appointment of teachers, a doctorate cannot be the only criterion for a practical subject. When KG Subramanyan was teaching, he appointed Gyarsilal Varma, a traditional craftsman from Jaipur, to teach us... If teachers come only with a theory-based doctorate degree, they may not be able to do any practical teaching in classrooms," says Akkitham. "Despite the controversies and unfair propaganda about the institution though," he says, they still receive around 300 applications each for 14 seats in Masters and 25 seats in undergraduate courses for painting.

The very corridors that once saw engaging arguments, now err on the side of caution. The increasing censorship of art in the country has meant an end to freewheeling conversations and creative experiments.

The studios now follow timings, and nude studies, once an important part of academics, has been discontinued. After the Chandramohan incident in 2007, a resolution was passed to check and approve all works in the annual display before its opening. "The artist is an interesting chronicler of the ethos of their times... If we interfere with this process through intimidation and vigilantism we will undoubtedly create skewed narratives that reflect and perpetuate only the dominant majoritarian views as history... a climate of fear and oppression has been injected into society where young creative people are wary of articulating their ideas freely," says Rodwittiya. "The damage done in 2007 and again this year is, perhaps, irreparable," says Bhatt.

Probably one of the most telling examples of self-censorship is Sundaram's reluctance to showcase some of the works he made in 1965-66 at his retrospective in Delhi in 2018. He preemptively "creatively covered up" the works. "It was a painting with a certain iconography that I could exhibit freely in '60s, but would be reluctant to show now, given the times," says Sundaram.

NO LONGER AT EASE

Once a centre that fostered creative experiments, the Faculty of Fine Arts at Maharaja Sayajirao University, Baroda, is now stymied by bureaucratic lacunae and a growing environment of cultural intolerance

Vandana Kalra

ARTIST VIVAN Sundaram distinctly remembers the excitement that preceded the inaugural art fair at the Faculty of Fine Arts (FFA) at the Maharaja Sayajirao University (MSU) in Baroda in 1961. He was pursuing his Bachelor's in painting when the first edition of the fair was held and he recalls how the faculty and students were agog with anticipation. "It brought together students from different departments. We were asked to be as innovative as possible with our works meant for public viewing. It was a lovely learning process," says Sundaram, 79.

Launched at the behest of artists-pedagogues KG Subramanyan and fellow Santiniketan alumnus Sankho Chaudhuri, the legendary fair was aimed at bringing the larger community in contact with art. Designed on the model of the much-feted art *mela* of Santiniketan, it comprised performances and workshops, as well as a fund-raiser drive from the sale of works of faculty and students, which included toys, postcards, utilitarian objects and masks alongside print portfolios, sculptures and paintings. To ensure affordability, the pricing remained modest. "The pendulum of exposure swung between the traditions of past art practices and new ideas, bringing folk art and craft forms to be introduced into the repertoire of learning," says artist Rekha Rodwittiya, 63, who completed her graduation in painting from FFA in 1981.

The radical thought and intellectual dissent that the department once encouraged, however, now appears to be under threat. Earlier this month, the MSU Syndicate unanimously decided to rusticate Kundan Yadav, a student in the sculpture department, for allegedly creating artworks that led to a protest by right-wing groups on campus earlier this month. The works deemed derogatory were in the form of cut-outs of gods and goddesses with newspaper clippings of violent crimes against women, including rape, pasted over them. Teachers and students argued that the works were not meant for public display, since the student was not from the outgoing batch, and were part of a confidential examination process. But that was not sufficient to prevent the vandalism or rustication. The incident

came exactly 15 years after another student, Chandramohan, was suspended from the art school and arrested for depicting Jesus and goddess Durga in an "obscene manner". He is still to receive his degree certificate.



Established in 1950 on the recommendation of the Hansa Mehta Committee report on educational policy for the Bombay Presidency, the curriculum and ethos of the art faculty in Baroda was defined by its first dean Markand Bhatt and stalwarts NS Bendre and Chaudhuri. Born in independent India and with no colonial baggage, there was assimilation of existing techniques and traditional Indian art forms, classical styles, art history and aesthetics. Discussions at FFA spilled over from classrooms to studios and homes of artists. The well-stocked library had the best of art books and international journals. Study tours organised to places such as Ajanta-Ellora, Udaipur and Mahabalipuram saw teachers cook for students and travel with them in second-class compartments. Artist Jyoti Bhatt, a student in the first batch, recalls the unconventional teaching methodologies. "Like professor Bendre and Chaudhuri, Mani da (Subramanyan) also showed us ways of drawing or composing on paper. However, he

PAINT ME A NEW WORLD

(Clockwise from top) Students preparing for the art fair at the Faculty of Fine Arts in 1968; photo-shoot of a play at FFA in 1980; artist Nasreen Mohamedi with her students in 1975



COURTESY: JYOTI BHATT ARCHIVE, ASIA ART ARCHIVE

would often make drawings on the floor of the painting department. Some of us copied these drawings later," says Bhatt, 88.

In the convivial atmosphere, the dialogue between teachers and students was not confined to academics. "The faculty was the epicentre and it was one big family," says Bhatt. Son of an educationalist in Bhavnagar, he stayed with Markand for a long time as a student, as he was unable to afford hostel accommodation. Gulammohammed Sheikh arrived in Baroda in 1955 and received the Saurashtra government scholarship of Rs 50 per month. He supplemented the irregular scholarship with income from commissioned portraits, reading poetry on the radio and writing assignments. He was still pursuing his Master's when Bendre invited him to join as a temporary tutor in art history on a salary of Rs 250 a month in 1960. Coming from Bhavnagar, he recalls how Baroda opened up a new world for him. "What the pioneers visualised was an artist who was literate and educated, a new citizen of modern India, because it coincided with the independence of the country. It was a small institution, the teacher-student ratio was 1:10 or 1:15. The studios were huge, they were like warehouses and were open throughout the day and night. For somebody like me, coming from a small town, it was a great experience to learn from teachers who

were working alongside you," says Sheikh, 85.

Attempting to establish a vocabulary that was telling of the times, during the initial years, the department saw artists respond to notions of Cubism and abstraction, depict their surroundings and subsequently turning to the figurative-narrative style. In 1956, on the advice of Bendre, the Baroda artists came together to form the Baroda Group, which included the likes of GR Santosh, Ratan Parimoo, Subramanyan, Shanti Dave, Bendre, Bhatt and Ramesh Pandya. Exhibiting in cities such as Bombay, Ahmedabad and Srinagar, between the mid-1950s and mid-'60s, their works were critically acclaimed. The showcase depicted their common concerns and their distinct artistic choices. In 1969, Bhupen Khakhar and Sheikh launched the journal *Vrishchik*, to express the views of artists, share their work and raise pertinent questions, which included a campaign to reform the Lalit Kala Akademi in the early '70s.

In his paper "Baroda School's Contribution to Contemporary Art's Trends" Parimoo, art historian and former dean at FFA, writes: "Baroda school is collectively what all its active participants have made it at any given time. Baroda has had no rebels, rather everyone is a rebel in his own way. It is in this dialectic manner that all conflicting avant-garde view points function side by side, irreconcilable to each other yet open to their developing possibilities."

With its formidable reputation of fostering talent and harbouring pluralist influences, FFA began to draw the attention of artists from across India. MF Husain gave demonstrations to students in the late '50s; in 1971, Krishen Khanna organised a display of his works. In the '60s and '70s, several members of the Baroda faculty were recipients of prestigious scholarships — if Parimoo studied at The Courtauld Institute of Art in London on a Commonwealth scholarship in 1960, next year Bhatt received an Italian government scholarship to study at the Academi di Belle Arti di Naples and a Fulbright in 1964.



DOWN IN JUNGLELAND



Ranjit Lal

Ranjit Lal is an author, environmentalist and bird watcher

Only Watch and Learn

There's a lot to learn from animals, be it their sense of focus or agility in hunting prey

SCIENTISTS AND field biologists learn a lot about the behaviour of the animals they are studying — a process that can take decades. (Jane Goodall spent 40 years studying chimpanzees). And yet, for you and me, by just casually watching animals, be they wild or domesticated, there's a lot we can pick up that could prove beneficial to us in our ordinary humdrum lives.

Take, focus for one. How many of us, who have been told to "pay attention" in class, suffer from attention-deficient syndrome? Our thoughts bounce from here to there like marbles in a mixie, and go from one thought to the next in a millisecond. Well, if you have a puppy, hold a ball in your hand and swing it back and forth. Watch the pup's big eyes, especially if he's a Retriever: they will be fixated on the ball, his muscles will be taut and for him, at that moment, nothing else exists. Throw the ball and he's after it in a flash. Watch the intense focus with which carnivores hunt — their eyes are riveted to their quarry, they move with deathly stealth until they are within range and then explode into action. Yes, you may say but their success rate is rarely over 50 per cent, and that's precisely because their prey is equally focused on not getting caught. Their ears and noses twitch, their eyes swivel, and if they sense the slightest threat, a leg goes up, they bark a warning and spring off, sometimes vertically.

Many of them have spotters in place — monkeys in the trees above them — who will grimace and bark the moment they see trouble. In Indian jungles, the peacock provides exemplary security and will give tongue the moment it senses danger.

Pack animals, like wolves and wild dogs, hunt in teams and may not appear fixated on a single victim, but they work to a well-coordinated plan, which usually means they single out the weak or vulnerable, separate it from the herd, tire it out and go in for the kill. Lionesses, hunting in prides, lay ambushes, three or four will drive the victim towards the killer waiting, hidden low below in the grass. But they too are opportunistic and will



CAUGHT IN THE HEADLIGHTS

A fawn poised to flee as it senses danger

change target at the right moment if need be.

From focus to fun now: How many of us have been delighted watching a fawn spring up and down in the grass as if on a pogo stick and then gallop away, dodging deftly between irritated adults?

We've already picked up a lot from watching animals and birds court. We've plagiarised many a folk dance from the crazy courting dances of cranes; we admire the sarus crane for its steadfast fidelity, we know how male birds deck themselves up to the hilt in bells and whistles and rainbow hues to impress the ladies and will sing and dance and build them palatial mansions if necessary. And, importantly, it's usually the ladies that choose their partners.

Of course, rival males fight for their sweethearts (making *National Geographic's* day!), but most have better sense than to engage in actual combat and are satisfied by posturing and snorting and pawing the ground around each other. Also, if a combat does break out there's sometimes a hanger-on watching the proceedings who will quietly escort the bride-to-be away, without suffering a scratch on her behalf!

Fights, sometimes to death, do occur and can be terrifying, not the sort of thing you would like to engage in. Usually, they are over control of harems and territories but again most times physical combat is avoided. Only ants and chimpanzees (and us) have been known to go to "war" and take "prisoners". Even when physical combat breaks out, there is no premeditated cruelty. Animals do not kill each other by slow, deliberate torture or think up ingenious and devious ways of imparting pain.

Wild dogs bringing down a wildebeest by disemboweling it while it flees might seem exceedingly cruel to us, but the dogs are simply trying to bring down their quarry as quickly as possible. A cheetah mom, who hamstringing a fawn and brings it to her cubs, has no intention of being cruel to the little thing, all she is doing is teaching her young how to hunt and fend for themselves. Spider moms and praying mantises may dine off their lovers during their honeymoon — not because they hate the opposite sex, but because the protein so added ensures healthier babies! There is no malice or vindictiveness involved, though yes, in some of the higher mammals — elephants and some primates for example — the concept of "revenge" may well exist. And all too often, it is humans who trigger it: Elephants don't easily forget the cruelties inflicted upon them by puny two-legged creatures, who must really only watch and learn!



EXPRESS ARCHIVE

Winds of Change

Despite the recent controversy over its foreign provenance, the harmonium, one of the subcontinent's favourite instruments, has long been indigenised

Suanshu Khurana

IN THE first half of the 19th century, when French musician Alexandre Debain was working on a reed organ called the harmonium that he would patent in 1840, he could have never imagined the acceptance the musical instrument would find in the Indian subcontinent. Part of the proscenium alongside legendary musicians such as Kumar Gandharva, Pandit Bhimsen Joshi and Kishori Amonkar, a quintessential accompaniment to film music, and accessible equally to the rich and the poor, the harmonium would become a familiar presence in the region, adopted by different communities and faiths. The humble *baaja* would make its way into temples, *gurdwaras* and *dargahs* and be played alongside *shabads*, Krishna *bhajans* and Sufiana *qalams*. "The harmonium has never felt un-Indian. The acceptance also came from music itself being a universal concept," says Vinay Mishra, har-



THREE ESSAYS COLLECTIVE

monium exponent and assistant professor at Delhi University.

Earlier this week, Giani Harpreet Singh, a Jathedar of the Akal Takht, asked the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) to work towards ensuring the phasing out of the harmonium from the Golden Temple as it was foreign and a "British" imposition. It drew one back to questions of authenticity, the evolution of the instrument in the subcontinent and how it replaced the tradi-

LET THE MUSIC PLAY

(Above, from left to right) Mohammed Rafi,

OP Nayyar with Asha Bhosle; Yashwantrao Kerkar on the table, Padharinath Kale on the harmonium with vocalist Kesarbai Kerkar

tional Gurbani *sangeet* string instruments such as the saranda, taus, dilruba, esraj and, the most significant one, the rabab.

According to musician, academic and revivalist of traditional Gurbani *sangeet* instruments, Bhai Baldeep Singh, "Rather than taking a unilateral decision, one needed to look at the recommendations of the *vidwaans*. I, too, think the harmonium is not suited for the music, but what is he (Harpreet Singh) inviting back in? The fake sarandas, the hotchpotch dilruba and the taus, an extension of a dilruba these days. One needs time to revive these instruments, a decade or more for people to learn them, find academic integrity and semantic precision." The Delhi *gurdwaras* have decided to train *ragis* in traditional string instruments in the next six months.

Debain's first harmonium was foot-pumped and became popular in Europe and the US. The British brought it to India some years later, where it found itself in the hands of Dwarkanath Ghose in Kolkata, who owned a musical instruments shop — Dwarkin & Sons

Resisting Riptides of Victimisation

The insidious social-media messaging is engineering a steady dose of misery in the garb of social justice and robbing people of a sense of agency in responding to life's hardships



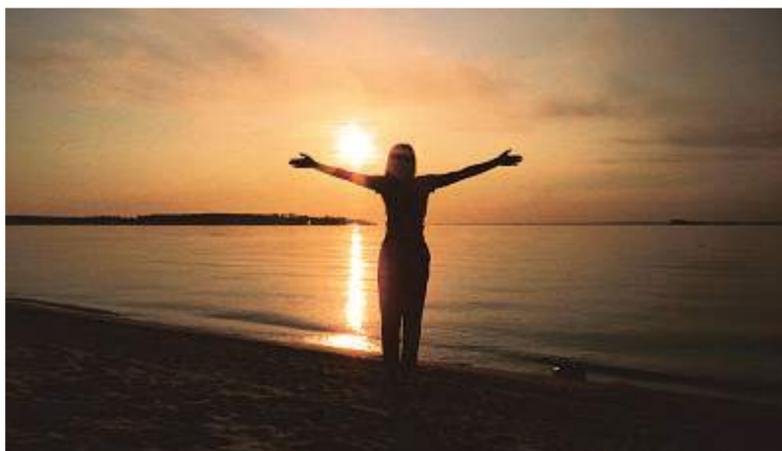
IMAGINE

BY SHELJA SEN

MY GENERATION is constantly being triggered by everything around them. It is as if they are in a permanent state of panic or outrage. When did we become so fragile? These words were by 25-year-old Shazia*, who was, at the time when I met her, living with cancer, struggling with the effects of chemotherapy and navigating through childhood abuse. As a witness to her journey, I was filled with awe at her ability to endure and the courage to find meaning in what seemed like senseless suffering. Her words have stayed with me as they struck a chord, and I am trying to unpack them in the present landscape of mental health.

I would like to clarify that this is not a "kids these days" story. Neither am I trivialising the intensity of the mental-health struggles. I am attempting to throw light on how these problems have to be critiqued and located in the socio-cultural-political context, which is pushing our children to these precarious precipices.

Social media shapes our language of distress: I have been in the field of mental health for more than 30 years. Along with being rather ancient, I also like to see myself as a bit of an anthropologist, always on the lookout for changes in trends in the way distress is expressed culturally, particularly in the way it is verbalised. With curiosity, I have seen the narratives change and morph into disconcerting patterns of distress. However, in the last five years, there has been a tectonic shift in youth mental health, which is nothing like I have witnessed before. The insidious social media messaging is engineering a steady dose of language of misery in the garb of social justice. Shazia shared with me that social media gave language to what she was experiencing, "I was nudged into taking the identity of the traumatised victim and everyone around me as my oppressors."



GETTY IMAGES

Culture of victimisation and fragility: What Shazia called a "triggered generation", fosters a narrative of youth as passive recipients of an unsafe world. It is a dangerous narrative as it deprives them of their sense of agency and strips them of their own belief in responding to life's hardships. As Shazia put it, "I spent ages after the abuse, buying into this idea that I was fragile and needed protection from everything that would trigger me. Maybe, initially, I did, but then it became a habit, and my threshold of tolerance became so low that I would go into a panic attack if I even heard a loud noise. Everyone around me started to walk on eggshells. It was cancer that really shook me out of my victimhood and I realised that I was done with this and that I wanted to live."

So, shifting a gear, what will help us stand up to this culture of fragility and victimisation? After countless hours spent in conversations with youths like Shazia, co-researching, reflecting and speculating, some ideas that might help us move forward are:

Exposing the matrix: A generation is being brought up in the echo chambers of social media, which indoctrinates hatred rather than love. We are subtly but persuasively made to take sides with, "If you are not with me, then you are against me!" There are multi-trillion

BREAK THE CHAIN

Many times, we assign intent to people's actions on the basis of the impact it has on us. At every hint of a transgression, there is a knee-jerk outrage, and rather than seeing people as multicoloured and multistoried, we start seeing them in binaries of black and white

companies which use dubious manipulations to encourage the riptides of victimisation with minimal regard to consequences. The worst thing is that we are not even aware of how we are being controlled and manipulated. As the computer scientist and ethicist Tristan Harris put it, "How do you wake up from the matrix when you don't know you are in the matrix?"

Conviction in our robustness and agency: Saha*, a 21-year-old trans non-binary person, would get extremely enraged to the point of threatening to leave home when their parents would misgender them or use their deadname. I was a little confused as I could sense that their parents were their strongest allies but were struggling with the unfamiliarity of the new language. In our conversation, Saha talked about years of discrimination and ridicule experienced in school and neighbourhood. They found solace in a US-based social media trans group, which gave them a sense of belonging but made them turn against their own parents seeing them as "tyrants". Through our conversations, Saha realised, "I am not a victim as, despite all that I have been through, I have held strong to what I believe in. I am resilient, and it is my parents who have supported me at every step. I have to be patient with them as they are also transitioning — I am just a few

— and TS Ramchandra and Co in Mumbai. Ghose made the instrument portable and economical. Taking a cue from Debain, who also created a harmonium pumped by hands, he manufactured a second kind, apt for the *baithiki* style of music. The drone quality, similar to the tanpura, was incorporated. It was heat-resistant and did not require extensive tuning. After World War II, when the import of harmoniums from Europe stopped, more factories came up in Ahmedabad and Bhavnagar to meet the demand.

The first imprint of the harmonium was in Parsi theatre in the 1880s, followed by Kannada theatre. Later, Marathi *natyasangeet* under Bal Gandharva took the harmonium to greater heights, followed by the instrument alongside sarangi in performances by court-sans, including those of Gauhar Jaan.

According to senior harmonium exponent Sudhir Nayak, the discussion over its authenticity is not new. Its presence has often been criticised by practitioners of Gurbani *sangeet* and classical music for lack of *meend* (glides), *gamak* (accent of a note) and *ghaseet* (a slide from one note to the other). "But they haven't looked at the way the instrument has evolved. It has gone through modifications such as increasing the air space for *meend* and *shruti* structures. Many musicians have worked to bring it as close to Indian music as possible and circumvent its demerits," says Nayak.

In the days leading up to the Independence, many Indian scholars including Rabin Dranath Tagore and Ananda Coomaraswamy, among others, debated over the need for India to preserve the chastity of its musical heritage. The British, who considered it a lowly instrument, banned it from All India Radio in 1941. This ban continued till 1971.

However, this was the time the harmonium thrived in films and ghazals. OP Nayyar, who in his initial days in Mumbai taught harmonium to poor children to make ends meet, found success with some iconic harmonium interludes in his songs such as *Leke pehla pehla pyar* (CID, 1956), *Bohot shukriya* (EK *Musafir Ek Haseena*, 1962) and *Kajra mohabbatwala* (*Kismet*, 1968). Ghazal legends Mehdi Hassan and Begum Akhtar always used the harmonium in concerts. Folk music, too, adapted well. As of today, India remains the world's largest exporter of harmoniums.

Assimilation is at the heart of Gurbani *sangeet*. Baba Mardana, Guru Nanak Dev's long-time companion, disciple and rabab exponent, was born into a Muslim family and helped set up *kirtan* traditions. For centuries, Muslim *rababis* have played alongside the sacred hymns in *gurdwaras*. The syncretic evolution of the Gurbani *sangeet* is also visible in Guru Granth Sahib, the holy book of the Sikhs, which includes the writings of both Hindu and Muslim *bhagats* (saints). So it was not unnatural when it integrated the "Western" harmonium with the music.

According to Bhai Jalwinder Singh, a *ragi* at the Golden Temple, while people need to know about the older instruments, one can't just rid Gurbani *sangeet* of the harmonium. "The *sangat* (congregation) prefers the current form of *kirtan* which uses the harmonium. I am a huge admirer of traditional instruments and believe that they should be brought to the fore. But we can take the harmonium along, and play them together. One does not need to be let go off for the other."

steps ahead of them."

Faith that people are more than the worst things they have ever done: If we continue seeing people in binaries of good/bad, oppressors/victims, then the world can become a very unsafe place to live in. However, if we were to reflect on our lives honestly, we can think of so many instances when we have been victimised and where we have, maybe inadvertently, been oppressive towards others. Many times, as we saw in Saha's story, we assign intent to people's actions on the basis of the impact it has on us — "Your words hurt me, so you are bad." At every hint of a transgression, there is a knee-jerk outrage, and rather than seeing people as multicoloured and multistoried, we start seeing them in binaries of black and white. Unwittingly, even psychologists and psychiatrists end up taking sides, locating the problem in individuals and therefore solidifying victimisation rather than seeing it as a reflection of problematic social practices.

Enduring adversity and building solidarity: I was very curious to know how Shazia managed to step out of "victimhood" and step into her agentic self. She shared that the first thing she did was to minimise her use of social media, "I unfollowed most influencers and only used it to follow the work of some of my favourite artists. It was liberating!" She found peace in teaching small children, which helped her recommit to what she valued most in life — joy in small things, laughter and togetherness. She did admit that there were moments when, what she called "victimhood", tried to take centre-stage, but it was her tribe of family, colleagues and her love for her work that kept her aligned to her north star.

Conversations with Shazia and Saha reminded me how it is the human chains of solidarity that save people when riptides hit hard in the ocean. As Paulo Freire commented on revolutionary love, "Because love is an act of courage, not of fear, love is a commitment to others... and to the cause of liberation."

*Pseudonyms used and stories shared with consent

Shelja Sen is a narrative therapist, writer, co-founder, Children First. In this column, she curates the know-how of the children and the youth she works with. She can be reached at shelja.sen@childrenfirstindia.com



Shiny Varghese

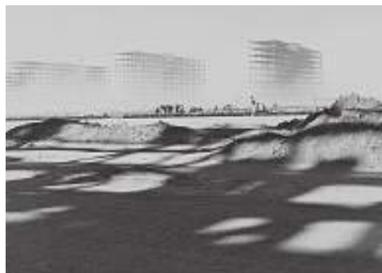
ITTOOK under four years, a determined President, his favourite architect and the wide savannah to make Brasília, the capital of Brazil. If it wasn't ambitious enough to move the capital from the seaside city of Rio de Janeiro into the interiors some 900 km away, it was equally audacious to imagine the shift could connect the rest of the country through highways and nudge people to come and settle in the middle of nowhere. But more than half a century later, Brasília inspires the world with its iconic structures.

Bringing the robustness of these ideas to the fore is an exhibition at the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), New Delhi, titled "Brasília 60+ and the Construction of Modern Brazil", which closes early July. From the story of its construction to its recent buildings, told through photographs of Brazil's masters — Marcel Gautherot, Cristiano Mascaro and Leonardo Finotti — along with other works of art and furniture exhibits, the show is a revelation of how a city was born, using the powerful symbol of architecture as its selling point. The project rejected European classical style and turned its face towards new modernism. By 1960, president Juscelino Kubitschek with urban designer-planner Lucio Costa and architect Oscar Niemeyer had spectacular buildings to show the world — the Brasília Cathedral, the Palácio do Planalto (Presidential Palace), the National Congress (the Parliament), and the President's official residence, Alvorada Palace.

André Aranha Corrêa do Lago, Brazilian Ambassador to India, who gives us a walk-through at the NGMA, talks about the evolution of the city, from the cross axes that divide the land into its residential zones, lined with superblocks, and the monumental path that presents the political symbols of the capital. As he points to a photograph of wooden cabins, he says, "This was the 'Presidential Palace' during the construction. The president would come by plane to visit the site because there were no roads to Brasília. It's preserved even today. Niemeyer had to create the designs for the new capital in candlelight, even as the city was being built, because there was no elec-

POWER OF THE CURVE

An exhibition on the evolution of Brasília, as the modern capital of Brazil, testifies to the architectural acumen and artistry of the country's greatest designers



PHOTOS COURTESY: EMBASSY OF BRAZIL

tricity then."

Costa was Brazil's first modernist, who invited Swiss-French architect Le Corbusier as a consultant who laid out the city like a bird or an abstract aeroplane, and got Niemeyer to come onboard. Costa master-planned the city and divided it into zones, separating functions into commercial, residential, monumental and cultural. Though many critics of Brasília speak of the binaries of the city being both real and mythical, it still stands as "one of 20th century's great political adventures".

Corrêa do Lago, who has been a member of the notable Pritzker Prize jury, says, "Niemeyer wanted his work to be understood at the popular and symbolic level by people who would use his building. His buildings don't look like any other but even a child can

REAL-UNREAL
(Clockwise from top)

The National Congress by photographer Leonardo Finotti; The Esplanada construction photograph by Marcel Gautherot; the Brasília Cathedral interior photograph by Leonardo Finotti

draw it." It's not hard to believe this statement when one sees the iconic National Congress building, with its cupolas that sit on a horizontal roof and its twin towers.

Corrêa do Lago brings us before a sketch done by Niemeyer for him, which testify to the architect's love for curves and fluid lines. The sketches show the way Niemeyer has used curved columns in the Presidential Palace and the Supreme Court. With the National Congress, they form the Square of Three Powers in the heart of the city.

If ramps are a preoccupation, so are curved columns with Niemeyer. However, he takes this element and treats it differently in the buildings, giving a frontal and profile placement, thereby changing the very look and feel of each building.

Niemeyer's finest work though is the Brasília Cathedral, where fingers of concrete stretch towards the skies, interspersed with stained-glass patterns in shades of blue and white. "People actually loved the structural robustness of the building in its unfinished state," says Corrêa do Lago. He points to the magnificent model of the cathedral at the show, with its tunnel entrance. "Niemeyer also plays with light and darkness. You enter the cathedral through the tunnel and it's completely dark, it's black, and once inside, it's a burst of light," he adds.

The exhibition presents the Capital in the making with Gautherot's photographs giving the barren landscape an almost ethereal feel, while the recent ones by Finotti place the buildings in their context with their open-air sculptures and visitors in the frames. It's hard to miss the pure geometry in the forms, and the sleek use of concrete.

The works of other famous collaborators such as artist Athos Bulcao's blue-and-white *azulejos* tiled facades and murals, and landscape designer Roberto Burle Marx's art make it to the exhibition along with furniture pieces by Niemeyer from Corrêa do Lago's own collection. Bulcao and Marx bring a certain humanism to the otherwise stark monumentalism. Bulcao, who gave workers a free hand in laying out tiles in some of his projects, and Marx's science in the craft of planting, be it grasses or native trees, have taken away the rigidity that could have been Brasília and given it the imperfections of the human hand and the seasonal decay of nature.

Brasília is not without its faults. What was called the "city of hope", where social fault lines would cease, hasn't worked out as planned. To this, Corrêa do Lago says, "Architecture cannot mask social differences. Brasília was meant to be a symbolic city for all Brazilians. Rio was the capital from the 18th century onwards until 1960 and it was marked by differences among those who had sea-facing homes, those who lived in the mountains or the interiors. But Brasília was a city of unity. Everyone was new here, which became the success of the city. Then architecture gave it icons. There are many readings of Brasília, no doubt, but I can't think of a world capital where architecture has been so recognisable and so absorbed by its people."

The Birds By My Window

Even as Maharashtra's green cover keeps depleting, an amateur birdwatcher on the feathered creatures that lift his spirits

Sidharth Singh

EVERY MORNING, I sit with a cup of chai by the window in my living room and the first few things I notice are the trees, the sky beyond their canopies and the dappled sunlight. But somewhere, the eye catches a blur of movement and the ears follow the sweetness of sound, to arrive at the daily sightings of resident birds in the neighbourhood.

Crows rule this domain in the Mumbai suburb of Khar, a low-lying marshland that was once used for fishing and salt production. Their murderous caws ebb and flow through the day, keeping other birds away from accessing the offerings of the earth. Then there is a family of pigeons nested in the balcony above. A friend once aptly described pigeons as "rodents of the sky".

Adjoining the palm grove is a pickleball court that is painted bright blue. It sits in a depression, surrounded by trees and must give the impression of a waterbody from the air, which is probably why the white-breasted kingfisher is a regular visitor. I'm usually greeted by a flash of blue, white and orange amidst the lower branches of the badam (country almond) tree as the kingfisher conducts its sly surveillance of the area. In the monsoon, it's virtually a lake, then the kingfisher dominates. The apex predator of this urban wood, however, is the black kite. It sits on the terraces of the apartment buildings and swoops down on unsuspecting creatures. When the kite descends to drink water, other birds disappear.

Bulbuls produce the sweetest birdsong. The white-throated fantails arrive in spring and depart in the monsoon. Invariably, I spot them briskly fanning their tails, as they hop from one branch to another, in a choreographed dance of sorts. Sparrows, mynahs, drongos and parakeets are occasional visitors, too. Sometimes, I am fortunate to have a rare sighting of the elusive golden oriole, whose glorious shock of bright yellow plumage never fails to bring a smile to my lips.

When I moved to Mumbai from New Delhi in the summer of 2003, I remember there being a lot of talk about the opening up of mill lands in the central districts of Worli and Parel. There were public debates on the need for open spaces in the city and that a portion of mill lands should be reserved for parks and playgrounds. Almost two decades later, most of the mills have metamorphosed into fancy office complexes, high-end malls, five-star hotels and gated communities. This culture of exclusion extends not just to the working class of humans but also to the trees, animals and birds that inhabit this shared space. A study conducted by the Bombay Natural History Society in 2020 found that 85 per cent of the bird population in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region had displayed negative effects of increasing anthropogenic habitat cover, which basically means more humans, fewer birds.



BIVASH BARUA

A SWOOP AND A SNATCH

With vibrant plumage and shrill calls, kingfishers stand out

A few years ago, my wife and I (and later, our newborn daughter) lived in Pune, in an apartment on Boat Club Road, a stone's throw from the Mula Mutha river. The apartment had a large terrace that overlooked the leafy colony of Narangi Baug and stood level with its tree line. In the vicinity were banyan, imli, ashoka, gulmohar, mango and old rain trees. We maintained a sizeable terrace garden with large ixora bushes, bougainvillea creepers, palms, succulents and other flowering plants. Needless to say, the terrace attracted many birds. Let me at this point clarify that I am not a serious bird watcher or a birding enthusiast or whatchamacallit. I have no real experience in the field and I do not own a single book about birds of the Indian subcontinent or elsewhere. This has been a natural progression of my morning chai drinking ritual.

The first birds I noticed on that terrace were the purple sunbirds that came to feed on the ixora, flying around in rapid bursts of speed. They were accompanied, at times, by the spotted munias (spice finch). A large crow pheasant often flew down from the dense foliage of the imli (tamarind) tree, its deep, resonant calls comforting us on sleepy afternoons.

Late one summer evening, there was an intense thunderstorm. As an old mango tree got uprooted in the colony, I witnessed an amazing sight. A large barn owl flew out of a tree and landed atop an old chimney pipe. It turned around to face the wind and lifted one wing, opening it out fully to catch the draft, then did the same with the other wing. I thought it was just trying to air its armpits, but after many minutes of such repetition, I was convinced that the owl was simply dancing in the rain!

Before Pune became one of the fastest-growing cities in India, the green stretch running along the Mula Mutha riverbank in Kalyani Nagar was popular as the "Yerawada birding point" and boasted a wide range of species from ruddy shelducks, red-wattled lapwings and pied kingfishers to partridges and the black headed ibis. A few years ago, a builder started fencing off a section of the park, claiming ownership of the land. Soon, a modification was issued in the city's development plan and permission was granted to construct high-rise buildings on the river bank. Then came the Metro. Though the residents of Kalyani Nagar have resisted, the construction of the Metro line has proceeded in fits and bursts. The birds still come calling, but who knows for how long!

Sidharth Singh is a writer and filmmaker in Mumbai. He is the author of the novel *Fighter Cock*

Dance of Dissidence

Sri Lankan Bharatanatyam and hip-hop dancer Usha Jey, on her viral video and using dance and art to understand identity

Suanshu Khurana

EARLIER THIS week, Usha Jey, a 25-year-old Paris-based dancer and choreographer, uploaded her video on Instagram that merged two completely unrelated dance forms — Bharatanatyam and hip-hop — in an attempt to cover the really long distance between them. The result is a stunning *mélange* as Bharatanatyam *adavus* (basic steps) hold with popping, locking and breaking effortlessly. Jey, with Mithuja and Janusha (Tamil-Sri Lankan Bharatanatyam dancers from Switzerland), shift personalities with every step as they dance to American rapper Lil Wayne's 2018 hit, *UpRoar*. "I call it hybrid Bharatanatyam. It is my way of switching between hip-hop and Bharatanatyam, two dance forms that I love, learn, and respect," says Jey, in an email.

Dressed in chequered bottle-green Kalakshethra saris and jasmine flowers in their hair, the trio has given a compelling performance and the response on social media (over 25 lakh views on Instagram and a long list of appreciation posts), on the delightful short performance has been hugely popular. American record producer, rapper, and record executive, Swiss Beatz, producer of the original track, recently shared the video on his so-

cial media. "Dance is magic for me... My aim is to keep the essence of each dance and create something that does justice to who I am," says Jey.

While many loved the uniqueness of the performance, some had issues with cuss words in the lyrics alongside Bharatanatyam. "As I am living in this hip-hop world, I didn't realise at first that it could disturb. I took a 'clear' version of *UpRoar*, a version where curse words are muted. My intentions are right and I'm true to myself. The interpretation one can have is based on their own story and background so I respect every opinion... I try my best to find the right balance and not hurt people's feelings, while still being me and letting my creativity be," she says.

Jey was born and raised in Paris. Her Sri Lankan Tamil parents from Jaffna, who left the country in the '90s during the 26-year-long civil war to escape "the Sinhalese government's oppression towards Tamil population". Jey grew up with questions on identity and attempting to understand her heritage.

Hip-hop, however, was a natural progression in Paris, a significant training ground for the art form. She went to a class because her best friend didn't want to go alone. "With time, I realised that this makes me happy and free," says Jey. She learned under



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TWORIGHT FEET

(Above) A clip from Usha Jey's hybrid Bharatanatyam viral video; Jey

Paris-based dancer and choreographer Kanon Ghetto-style, who gave her "faith to be a professional dancer."

It was a few years later that Jey began to connect with her roots. As a child, she'd discovered *koothu* — an informal dance depicting scenes from ancient epics — through Tamil movies and would perform among family and friends. When she opted to learn Bharatanatyam at 20, she figured it was late, but decided to immerse herself anyway. She found a *guru* in Bharatanatyam dancer Anthusha Uthayakumar and gave the next few years to the form; hip-hop stayed around. "While growing up as an Eela Tamil in France, I understood that my biggest wealth is my culture. That is why I cherish it a lot," says Jey.

Her quest to understand identity continued while the war in her country of origin

and its horrors resulted in anger and sadness within her. Dance became a form of expression. In a previous video she created in her hybrid Bharatanatyam series in 2020, she danced to *One Hundred Thousand Flowers*, a song about the discrimination and massacre of Tamils in Sri Lanka, created by Canadian-Sri Lankan rapper Shan Vincent de Paul in his album, *Made in Jaffna* (2021). He raps, *On your left hand side, if you look you'll see, five-star resorts built with mass graves beneath*. Jey's angry eyes and movements do the talking about an imbrued history.

"If I choose a dance, I have to really take time to understand the background of these forms. It takes time to learn about history... These two cultures are really close to my heart and putting them together is a representation of my life," says Jey, who will be releasing more videos in the coming weeks.

BRIEFLY

SAI seeks report after gymnast cries foul in selection trials

New Delhi: Acting upon a complaint by the country's most decorated gymnast Ashish Kumar on partiality at team selection trials, the Sports Authority of India (SAI) has sought a report on the issue from the Gymnastics Federation of India (GFI). The SAI said, if required, it will set up a committee to probe the matter. In a letter written to GFI president Sudhir Mittal, a copy of which was marked to SAI, Kumar said he "faced injustice" at the selection trials held between March 11-22. "Indian Gymnast Ashish Kumar in a complaint to the Gymnastics Federation of India has alleged that he faced partiality at the trials held between March 11 to March 22 for selection of the team for Commonwealth Games." PTI

Bhagat, Manasi enter Dubai finals

Dubai: Top Indian para shuttlers including Paralympic champion Pramod Bhagat and reigning world champion Manasi Joshi battled past their opponents to enter the finals at the 4th Fazza Dubai Para Badminton International here on Saturday. In total, nine Indian para shuttlers have made it to seven finals scheduled to be played on Sunday. In men's singles SL3, Bhagat, who won two gold medals at the recent Bahrain 2022 International, had to come back from a game down each to defeat an untiring Daisuke Fujihara of Japan, who eventually faltered after 18-all in the third game. Bhagat won 14-21, 21-14, 21-18 after fighting for 1 hour 16 minutes. PTI

LA Dodgers co-owner to take over Chelsea

London: Chelsea said on Saturday that a final agreement had been struck to sell the Premier League club to a consortium led by Los Angeles Dodgers part-owner Todd Boehly and backed by Clearlake Capital. The takeover is expected to be completed on Monday. The consortium, which won the bid to acquire the London side earlier this month, received approval from the Premier League and the British government this week for the sale to go ahead. REUTERS

Supernovas beat Velocity in final

Pune: Supernovas won the Women's T20 Challenge 2022 with a four-run victory over Velocity in the title clash. This was the Supernovas' third title triumph in the tournament. Supernovas posted a competitive 165 for seven in the allotted 20 overs. Deandra Dottin top-scored with a sparkling 62 off 44 balls, while skipper Harmanpreet Kaur blazed away to a 29-ball 43. Among the Velocity bowlers, Deepthi Sharma finished with five figures of 2/20, while Kate Cross and Simran Bahadur too accounted for two wickets apiece.

Brief scores: Supernovas: 165/7 in 20 overs (Dottin 62, Kaur 43; Deepthi 2/20) bt Velocity: 161/8 in 20 overs (Wolvaardt 65 not out; Alana 3/32, Dottin 2/28, Ecclestone 2/28).

Asmita availed, Gujarat looks for title now

This IPL has offered a window into Gujarati *asmita* (pride), there has been an unmistakable undercurrent of a collective linguistic, cultural ethos in the fanbase

ABHISHEK PUROHIT
AHMEDABAD, MAY 28

[A] [A] Garavi Gujarat [victory to proud Gujarat], the DJ exhorted an enthusiastically willing crowd to shout during the Qualifier 2 match of the IPL at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad on Friday. It is the name of the poem Narmadashankar Dave - considered to be the founder of modern Gujarati literature - wrote in 1873, and it is now the state's anthem. That it should be referred to during an IPL game at all, and one not even involving the newly-minted local team at that, is a small insight into what is often called Gujarati *asmita* (pride). It may not be as assertive as, say, the Tamil or the Bengali identity, but there is an unmistakable undercurrent of a collective linguistic, cultural ethos in India's westernmost state.

When the Ahmedabad franchise was seeking a name for itself, it had to decide between picking between the city it was going to be based in, or the state in which its home city was situated. Market research was commissioned, and ultimately, Gujarat Titans went for a name that would resonate with all Gujaratis, not just Amdavadis. The team will be playing its first game at its home ground in front of more than a hundred thousand people on Sunday night - the grand final against Rajasthan Royals. But having waltzed into the title clash under the leadership of an inspirational Gujarati first-time captain, they have already begun to capture the hearts of local fans, who had been starved of a team to root for during the first 14 long years of the league's existence.

Their team was not even playing on Friday, but you could see numerous fans with Gujarat Titans t-shirts, as if warming up for the big one on Sunday night.

It was an endearing fact not lost on Dr Parag Sheth, a local sports enthusiast who grew up seeing the fallow days when Ahmedabad would get the odd major cricket match amid a general absence of action. "Naturally yaar. We have reached the final and we are supporting Gujarat Titans, simple," Sheth said. "So many players from Gujarat have played in the IPL - the Pandya and Pathan brothers, Jasprit, Axar, Jadeja, Pujara - and it feels so good to finally have an IPL team from the state."

"Ahmedabad was left out all these years but Gujarat Titans have reached the final in their very first season," Sheth said. "It has proven our concern as to why Gujarat or Ahmedabad did not have an IPL team all these years. We would get very few matches earlier but right now it is like a carnival."

You can sense how thirsty the fans are for even a glimpse of players in the colourful league; on Friday evening, a young, uncapped player such as Yashasvi Jaiswal was cheered so loudly as he ran warm-up laps that it felt like Virat Kohli had been sighted.

The 2022 season has been played largely in Mumbai amid pandemic-enforced bio-bubbles but when the league reverts to the usual home-and-away format, Ahmedabad will host at least seven, if not nine, matches in a span of



Narendra Modi Stadium, the world's largest cricket facility, will be rooting for the debutants. (Below) Remakes of Gujarat Titans jerseys outside the stadium ahead of the final. file/Nirmal Harindran



a couple of months.

Priyank Panchal, the veteran Gujarat batsman and captain who has been around the India squad for a while now, knows how much it will mean for fans in the city where he has spent all his life.

"People are really excited here," Panchal told the Indian Express. "Fans will get to interact with each other and watch the players. And the size of the stadium will give a lot more people the opportunity to come, watch and get inspired. We talk about true fans, die-hard fans, and it is very important for those fans to get this kind of experience. They make this game all the more enjoyable. That is one part which I think because of this bigger stadium, is going to play a bigger role. And crucially, the kids who will go to watch will come back feeling that we can also play this game, we also have the opportunity now, that it is possible to take up cricket as a profession. Fans are the biggest thing after all."

As it has done in the rest of the country, spreading out from traditional centres such as Mumbai and Delhi, cricket has made its way around Gujarat too. The state, with its three first-class teams, Baroda, Gujarat and Saurashtra, has started to produce more players for the national side. Parthiv Patel, the former India wicketkeeper-batsman, had earlier recalled how he would have to travel to Mumbai for more and better exposure, as there was barely any to be had in Gujarat.

"Growing up, we used to analyse Mumbai cricketers, that we'd try to play like them and

so on," Parthiv had said. "It wasn't that Mumbai was the only centre in the country but it was the closest for us so we would come there a lot and play club cricket so that we would get to learn a lot. The facilities were good there."

"Now you see the facilities have improved all across Gujarat, not just Ahmedabad which has the big stadium, but even in the districts there are proper facilities where you can play first-class matches and conduct NCA (National Cricket Academy) camps. And with the infrastructure coming up, the players are also coming."

Parthiv was convinced an IPL franchise setting up base in Ahmedabad would inject fresh momentum into the local cricket set-up. "There is no doubt that kids will feel inspired when international stars are playing in front of them, maybe even inspired enough to take up the game at the age of 7-10," Parthiv had said. "Even if you can get to watch big players practising, it teaches you so much. Local bowlers who go to bowl in the team nets will pick up things. There are also ample opportunities to interact with high-level coaches."

As far as Sunday night is concerned, there is only one team the world's largest cricket stadium will be rooting for, and the Hardik t-shirts will be out in their numbers. "There is a burning desire to win, being a team from Gujarat, the final is in Gujarat, he wants to take that there," former India head coach Ravi Shastri had said about Hardik Pandya on Star Sports. As the Gujarat Titans slogan goes, *aava de* (bring it on). Garavi Gujarat can't wait.

Making Royals cool again

ABHISHEK PUROHIT
AHMEDABAD, MAY 28

IT MAY not have been the year in which the Indian Premier League title finally landed in Royal Challengers Bangalore's cupboard, despite the call of *ee saala cup namde* going viral. But Rajasthan Royals, forever the butt of jokes about flattering briefly and deceiving unflatteringly, have had a season that has naturally drawn comparisons with their title run in the inaugural IPL in 2008.

Naturally, because there hasn't been anything to compare in the years between 2008 and 2022. There was the briefest of sparks when they actually won the Eliminator in IPL 2013, only to go out in the Qualifier 2 to Mumbai Indians. The norm instead has been of RR having a neat little run of wins, usually early in the season, before predictably running out of steam at the business end. On a couple of occasions, they dragged themselves into the top-four, but were instantly chucked out in the Eliminator. Alternating between massive bets on stars that more often than not don't come good, and 'investing' - an RR favourite buzzword - in unknown local talent, the franchise has done little more than make up the numbers for an overwhelming majority of its existence. This year has been, finally, refreshingly different. Nine wins in 14 league games have meant the crowds have actually participated with gusto, with shouts of 'Rajasthan jeetega' [Rajasthan will win] when the DJ prompts them with the classic 'jeetega bhai jeetega'. The Orange and (joint) Purple Cap holders, Jos Buttler and Yuzvendra Chahal, are both from RR. Buttler began the tournament with three centuries in seven games, and then tapered off in the second half of the season, before coming back with a record-equalling fourth ton in the Qualifier 2 against RCB.

"I had some really honest conversations with some close people around me, (coaches) Kumar Sangakkara and Trevor Penney," Buttler said after Friday's win. "I was feeling a bit of pressure, getting distracted and I was trying to suppress it and it was only until a week ago or so I opened up inside and talking about that made me feel a lot better going into Kolkata and that innings gave me the confidence that helped (against RCB)."

Some credit for creating this kind of an enabling atmosphere, as well as for some smart tactical calls throughout the season, has to go to the skipper Sanju Samson. Even in the Qualifier 2, seeing that Glenn Maxwell was targeting his two veteran spinners, Samson brought back Trent Boult. It is beside the point that Boult dismissed Maxwell with the last ball of his over, but Samson had been receptive enough to deny Maxwell his stronger suit - hitting spin.

Samson's performances in the past have been a window into how RR's seasons have come apart. He leaves people gaping at the timing of his strokes at the start, but then he loses that touch and consistency and it all meanders into another decent season

that could have meant something big. But he's led a side full of stalwarts this time and also done reasonably well with the bat. "Sanju has been exceptional. He started off with quite a tough test last season with a young side and a lot of upheaval because of Covid bubbles, a tournament of two halves but he has really grown into his role," Sangakkara said after the Qualifier 2.

"He is a very soft-spoken, very reserved individual. He is exceptionally skilled with the bat. He has shown a lot of passion and hunger to take on this testing role of captaincy. Wicket-keeping, captaining and being the best batter in your side along with Jos Buttler is not an easy kind of role to fill but he has done it really well this season."

It cannot be compared to what the late Shane Warne achieved with a largely inexperienced bunch in 2008, but no matter what happens in the Sunday final, 2022 will remain the year Samson - and Buttler and Chahal and the rest - made Rajasthan Royals cool again.



India beat Japan 2-1 in first Super 4 league match

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MAY 28

THE INDIAN men's hockey team scored two fantastic field goals to beat Japan 2-1 in its first Super 4 league match and avenge its loss in the pool stage of the Asia Cup here on Saturday. The defending champions, who lost 2-5 against Japan in the pool stage, scored two eye-catching field goals through Manjeet (8th minute) and Pawan Rajbhar (35th) to register a narrow win.

Japan's lone goal came from a penalty corner through Takuma Niwa in the 18th minute. Japan threatened India initially and secured a penalty corner as early as in the opening minute but the Indians thwarted the danger. The Indians grew in confidence and got their footing as the match progressed. It was a moment of brilliance from Manjeet that handed India the lead. He made a brilliant solo run down the left flank after receiving a pass from Pawan Rajbhar and used 3D skills to perfection to beat Takashi Yoshikawa under the Japanese bar.

Maninder Singh earned India a penalty corner in the 13th minute but Nilam Sanjeev Xess' effort was saved by the Japanese de-

fence. As was the case in the first quarter, the Japanese started the second 15 minutes on a promising note and secured a penalty corner in the 18th minute from which Takuma Niwa scored from a rebound after Ken Nagayoshi's initial flick was saved by Indian goalkeeper Karkera.

Pepped up by the goal, Japan continued to put pressure on the Indian defence and earned two more penalty corners, which the Indian defence kept at bay.

Minutes later, Karthi Selvam missed a golden chance as he failed to get past Japanese goalie Yoshikawa from one-one-one situation. Rajbhar restored India's lead five minutes into the second half, slotting home from close range after being set up by Uttam Singh's brilliant stick work.

Five minutes later, India conceded another penalty corner but the Japanese failed to capitalise on the chance. Trailing by a goal, the Japanese mounted relentless pressure on the Indian citadel but the Birendra Lakral backline stood firm to keep their lead intact. Just three minutes from the final hooter, Japan secured a penalty corner but the Indians defended in numbers to register the win. India will play Malaysia in their next Super 4 stage match on Sunday.

Rising star Alcaraz dazzles to reach last 16 in Paris

REUTERS/AP
PARIS, MAY 28

CARLOS ALCARAZ'S meteoric rise continued on Friday when the Spanish prodigy produced yet another awe-inspiring performance to outplay American Sebastian Korda 6-4 6-2 and reach the last 16 of the French Open for the first time.

Facing the only man to beat him on clay this year, the sixth-seeded teenager, who saved a match point in the second round, showed his full range on a packed court Philippe Chatrier - mixing powerful forehands with gravity-defying drop shots.

The 27th-seeded Korda threw everything at his opponent, only for the ball to come back quicker and with more power and the American faded in the third after a high-octane fight in the first two sets.

Alcaraz, who now has an 18-1 win-loss record on the red dirt this season after winning titles in Barcelona and Madrid, will next face 21st-seeded Russian Karen Khachanov before a potential quarter-final clash against third seed Alexander Zverev.

"It's amazing to play in front of such a great crowd in this atmosphere on a night session," the 19-year-old Alcaraz, who stunned the crowd with some serve and volleying, said. "I'm having fun, I love playing



Carlos Alcaraz now has an 18-1 win-loss record on the red dirt this season. AP

tennis on such great courts, I love playing in France. Serve and volley is a weapon that I have so I use it." Should the stars align for Alcaraz, he could eventually take on either world number one and defending champion Novak Djokovic or 13-time Roland Garros winner Rafael Nadal in the last four.

"If I am winning, I just play against one of them. I think I'm ready. It's different to play against them," he said.

"I mean in the Masters 1000 or another tournament it's best-of-three and in Grand Slam it's best-of-five, but I would say I'm ready." Alcaraz got off to a brilliant start and

BOPANNA, MIDDELKOOP SURVIVE 5 MATCH POINTS

Paris: The never-say-die spirit came to the fore as Rohan Bopanna and Matwe Middelkoop saved five match points to knock out Mate Pavic and Nikola Pietrangeli, the reigning Wimbledon champions, from the Roland Garros. Bopanna's serve was as venomous as it has been throughout his career and his volleys too were as sharp as ever while his Dutch partner showed exemplary calm under pressure in the men's doubles third round. A break of serve early in the third set put them at a disadvantageous position but there was no dearth of spirit or class from Bopanna and Middelkoop, who eventually prevailed 6-7 (5) 7-6 (3) 7-6 (10) in two hours and 32 minutes. PTI

had a couple of double break points at 3-1, only for Korda to stave them off with a service winner and an ace.

But the Spaniard was untroubled on his service games and he wrapped up the open-

ing set having lost only six points on serve.

Korda found his range early in the second set and set up two break points but Alcaraz held firm and showed his ability to find the best shot at the best moment - including a sublime lob while on the back foot to go 30-0 up in the fifth game. He won that game with a superb forehand winner down the line.

No stopping Swiatek

Top-ranked Iga Swiatek won her 31st consecutive match and is into the fourth round at Roland Garros for the fourth time in four appearances with a sometimes-shaky 6-3, 7-5 victory over Danka Kovinic.

Swiatek, the 2020 French Open champion, has now collected 48 of the past 49 sets she has played. Her winning streak is the longest in women's tennis since Serena Williams won 34 in a row in 2013.

Swiatek improved her career record at the clay-court Grand Slam tournament to 17-2, a winning percentage of .895.

This one was not entirely smooth sailing for Swiatek against the 95th-ranked Kovinic, however. Swiatek's forehand was a particular trouble spot: That stroke was responsible for 17 of her 23 unforced errors.

The 20-year-old from Poland dropped four straight games to trail 5-4 in the second set before righting herself and claiming the last three to wrap up the win in 90 minutes.