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Elections are between Rahul & Modi only: Amit shah

Hyderabad, May 9 (NSS): Union Home Minister Amit Shah today said the 2024 Lok Sabha elections were only between Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Addressing a public meeting in

Yadadri Bhuvanagiri, Amit Shah said, "These elections are between the development of the family and the development of the country. In Telangana, the BJP won four seats in the 2019 elections.



Narendra Modi courtesy Meets PV Narasimha Rao's Family

Hyderabad, May 9 (TIM Bureau) : In a display of statesmanship transcending political boundaries, Prime Minister Narendra Modi met the family of former prime minister late P.V.Narasimha Rao yesterday. This meeting follows the recent conferment of the Bharat Ratna upon PV Narasimha Rao, a move spearheaded by Modi to acknowledge Rao's pivotal role

in India's economic reforms. Modi's outreach to Rao's family is in recognition of his legacy as a key figure in shaping the post-independence India. The meeting, which took place at Raj Bhavan immediately after Modi's arrival to Hyderabad, signifies his respect for PV Narasimha Rao, hailed as the pride of not only the telugu states but entire India.



BRS, BJP attempting to deceive people again : Uttam

Hyderabad, May 9 (NSS) : Minister for Civil Supplies and Irrigation N Uttam Kumar Reddy accused the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of attempting to deceive the people to win the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. Shankamma, the mother of Srikantha Chary, who sacrificed his life for the cause of

Telangana statehood, joined the Congress party here on Thursday. On the occasion, Uttam Kumar Reddy and other leaders welcomed her into Congress fold with a 'khandwa'. Later, speaking to the media, the Minister acknowledged Srikantha Chary's ultimate sacrifice for Telangana's statehood.



The President, Smt. Droupadi Murmu presenting the Padma Vibhushan Award to Shri Konidela Chiranjeevi at the Civil Investiture Ceremony-II at Rashtrapati Bhavan, in New Delhi on May 09, 2024.



Come what may, 4% Muslim quota will continue: CM Jagan

Kurnool (Andhra Pradesh), May 9 (IANS) : Stating that four per cent reservation for Muslims is not given based on religion, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister, YS Jagan Mohan Reddy on Thursday promised that the quota will continue in the state. "Come what may, four per cent Muslim reservations will remain and that is YSR Congress Party's final word," said the YSR Con-

gress chief while addressing an election rally in Kurnool. CM Reddy also assured the Muslims that be it reservation, NRC, CAA, or any other sentiments of minorities, the YSRCP will always stand as a steadfast pillar, supporting their dignity and honour. Claiming that 4 per cent reservation is not given based on religion.



We should fight against centre's step-motherly treatment: KTR

Hyderabad, May 9 (NSS): BRS party working president KTR today said there was a need to fight against the step-motherly treatment of Telangana by the Centre. He said if four projects are to come to the State, the BRS party should win in the upcoming MP elections and added that the BJP or the Congress party

leaders could not bring any development project to the State as they are slaves of Delhi. KTR said KCR's soldiers should be in Parliament for fighting with the Centre over the interests of the State. KTR made these remarks while addressing a youth meeting at Old Alwai in Malkajgiri parliamentary constituency.



Amaravati MP Navneet Kaur's comments on Akbaruddin sparks row

Hyderabad, May 9 (NSS): Amaravati MP Navneet Kaur's comments on Akbaruddin's past comments sparked a controversy between BJP and AIMIM parties.

Padma Rao Goud campaigns in Secunderaad

Hyderabad, May 9 (NSS): BRS Party's MP candidate from Secunderabad parliamentary constituency T. Padma Rao Goud held an election padayatra in Tarnaka division today. Along with the leaders of the BRS State Youth wing, he conducted a door-to-door campaign in Manikeshwari Nagar. He urged voters to vote for the BRS party in the upcoming elections. He said his government in the past had developed all the divisions

without compromising anywhere. Goud said hospitals, function halls, government schools and colleges had been constructed to ensure that the people of Secunderabad did not face any difficulties. He also said efforts would be made to develop all the constituencies of Secunderabad Parliamentary constituency in the days to come.



SBI STATE BANK OF INDIA
BANJARA HILLS
PUBLIC NOTICE
To: Smt. Shabeena Shaik D/o. Zilani, H.No.3-159/108 Bhavpuri Colony, Andhra Pradesh-522101.
UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE FROM DUTY
Please refer to the Memo No. 3785 dated, 12.01.2024 calling upon you to report for duty. It is observed that you are continuing to be absent from duty since 01.09.2023.
The above position is highly irregular and in contravention of the rules governing your service in the Bank. You are therefore, hereby advised to report for duty within 30 days of the date of this notice. If you fail to do so, you will be deemed to have voluntarily retired from service on the expiry of this notice, in which case you would also be liable to pay to the Bank one month's pay and allowances in lieu of the notice.
Sd/- REGIONAL MANAGER / DEPARTMENTAL HEAD
BANJARA HILLS, HYDERABAD.

Branch Office: H.NO.2-52/88,Sai Teja Enclave Indira nagar, Gachibowli, Hyderabad. -500032
Tel: 040-40179219, 7625079155.
Email: gachi.bowl@canfinhomes.com
POSSESSION NOTICE (RULE 8(1) For Immovable property)
The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of Can Fin Homes Ltd. under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 and in exercise of the powers under the said Act and Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued a demand notice dated 04-03-2024 calling upon the borrowers Mr Katukam Rajendar S/O Late Katukam Yellaiah And Mrs Katukam Mahalakshmi W/O Katukam Rajendar, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.24,00,300/- (Rupees Twenty Four Lakh Three Hundred Only) with further interest at contractual rates, till date of realization within 60 days from the date of the said notice.
The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on this the 07th day of May of the year 2024.
The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.
The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of CFHL for an amount of Rs.24,00,300/- (Rupees Twenty Four Lakh Three Hundred Only) and interest thereon.
DESCRIPTION OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY
All That The Residential House Bearing No.3-159/Old H.No.3-69/4, In Survey No.911,912/1 And 912/2, Admeasuring 193.0 Sq. Yards Or 161.34 Sq. Mtrs, With A Plinth Area Of 1260 Sq. Feet Of Rcc Roof, Situated At Maruthi Nagar, Within The Limits Of Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation Malkajgiri Circle And Mandal, Medchal Malkajgiri District (Formerly Ranga Reddy District), TS. And **Boundaries:**North:Well, South: 25' Wide Road, East: Portion Of H.No.3-160 Belongs To K.Sally, West: H.No.3-158 Belongs To K.Sathaiiah.
Date: 07.05.2024
Place: Hyderabad
Sd/-Authorized Officer Under SARFAESI Act,2002
Can Fin Homes Ltd.

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES
E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with provision to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive/physical symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of the Bank/ Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" basis on the date as mentioned in the table herein below, for recovery of its dues due to the Bank/ Secured Creditor from the respective borrower(s) and guarantor(s). The reserve price and the earnest money deposit will be as mentioned in the table below against the respective properties.
SCHEDULE OF THE SECURED ASSETS

S. No.	Name of the Branch Name & Addresses of the Borrower of the Account	Description of the Immovable Properties Mortgaged/Owner's Name (Mortgagor/property)	A) Date of Demand Notice u/s 13(2) of SARFESI ACT 2002 B) Outstanding Amount as on C) Possession Notice Date u/s 13(4) of SARFESI ACT 2002 D) Nature of Possession Symbolic /Physical Constructive	A) Reserve Price B) EMD C) Bid Increase Amount	Date/ Time of E-Auction	Details of the encumbrances known to the secured creditors
1	PNB, Nandigaon Branch (271500) Mrs. Gattineni Lakshmi Parvathi W/o G. Srinivas Rao, H.No.6-15-1, BV Rao Nagar, Raikail Poultry Complex, Chhatnagally, Farooq Nagar, Ranga Reddy Dist. - 509217.	All that the part and parcel of Shed with plinth area of 7550.00 Sq.Feet, Ground Floor RCC Room plinth area of 225 Sq.Feet and First Floor AC Sheets Room plinth area of 225 Sq.Feet in the open land admeasuring Ac 01-01 Gts in Sy.No. 403/EE and another Shed with plinth area of 6200 Sq.Feet, AC Sheets plinth area of 225.00 Sq.Feet in the open land admeasuring Ac 00-18.1/2 Gts in Sy.No.402/RU, situated at Raikail village & G.P., Farooq Nagar Mandal, Ranga Reddy District under the Jurisdiction of the Sub-Registrar Office Farooq Nagar and Registration District Ranga Reddy District T.S. in the name of Mrs. Gattineni Lakshmi Parvathi W/o G. Srinivas Rao and bounded by: Boundaries of Shed No.1 in Sy.No. 403/EE: East: Land in Sy.No.403; West: Land in Sy.No.403; North: Way in the land of Sy.No.402; South: Land in Sy.No.403; Boundaries of Shed No.2 in Sy.No.402/RU: East: Land in Sy.No.402; West: Way in the land of Sy.No.402; North: Land in Sy.No.402; Rem. Land of Vendor; South: Way in the land of Sy.No.403; Owner: Mrs. Gattineni Lakshmi Parvathi w/o G. Srinivas Rao.	A) 05-11-2019 B) Rs.44,11,699/- Plus Future interest & costs w.e.f. 01.05.2024 less Deposits, if any. C) 06-02-2020 D) Symbolic	A) Rs.2,19,60,000/- B) Rs.21,96,000/- C) Rs.1,00,000/-	31-05-2024 From 10:00 AM to 05:00 PM	Subject to outcome of S.A. No. 9/2023 before Hon'ble DRT-II, Hyderabad. No encumbrances best known to the authorized officer. Bidders are requested to conduct their own due diligence before bidding.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF E-AUCTION SALE
The sale shall be subject to the Terms & Conditions prescribed in the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 and to the following further conditions:
1) The properties are being sold on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" and "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" and "WHATEVER THERE IS BASIS".
2) The particulars of Secured Assets specified in the Schedule hereinabove have been stated to the best of the information of the Authorised Officer, but the Authorised Officers shall not be answerable for any error, misstatement or omission in this proclamation.
3) The Authorized Officer reserves the right to accept any or reject all bids, if not found acceptable or to postpone/cancel/adjourn/discontinue or vary the terms of the auction at any time without assigning any reason whatsoever and his decision in this regard shall be final.
4) All pending dues viz. House Tax, Water Tax, Electricity Bills, Monthly Maintenance Charges, etc., are to be borne by the purchaser only.
5) Intending bidders will have to register in the auction site www.ibapi.in or www.mstcecommerce.com well before the auction date.
6) The Sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction portal www.mstcecommerce.com on 31-05-2024 as mentioned above.
7) For further details and inspection of the properties, intending Purchasers may contact Mr. A. Soma Shekhar, Senior Manager, Punjab National Bank, Circle SASTRA-Hyderabad, Ph. 8297242288 or Mr. M. Srinivasulu, Manager, Punjab National Bank, Ph. 9160247376.
8) **Statutory 15 Days Sale Notice under provision Rule 8(6) Rule 9(1) of the SARFAESI Act, 2002** - The borrower/s and Guarantor/s are hereby notified to pay the dues as mentioned above along with up to date interest and other expenses before the date of e-Auction, failing which the schedule property will be auctioned/sold and balance dues, if any, will be recovered with interest and cost.
9) For detailed term and conditions of the sale, please refer www.ibapi.in, www.mstcecommerce.com, & www.pnbindia.in.
10) TDS @ 1% of the final sale amount has to be remitted by the successful purchaser.
Date: 08-05-2024, Place: Hyderabad
Sd/- Authorized Officer, Punjab National Bank, Secured Creditor

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES
E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with provision to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive/physical symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of the Bank/ Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" basis on the date as mentioned in the table herein below, for recovery of its dues due to the Bank/ Secured Creditor from the respective borrower(s) and guarantor(s). The reserve price and the earnest money deposit will be as mentioned in the table below against the respective properties.
SCHEDULE OF THE SECURED ASSETS

S. No.	Name of the Branch Name & Addresses of the Borrower of the Account	Description of the Immovable Properties Mortgaged/Owner's Name (Mortgagor/property)	A) Date of Demand Notice u/s 13(2) of SARFESI ACT 2002 B) Outstanding Amount as on C) Possession Notice Date u/s 13(4) of SARFESI ACT 2002 D) Nature of Possession Symbolic /Physical Constructive	A) Reserve Price B) EMD C) Bid Increase Amount	Date/ Time of E-Auction	Details of the encumbrances known to the secured creditors
1	PNB Regency Plaza, Hyderabad. M/s Nipun Constructions 8-3-678/70, 1st Floor, Pragathi Nagar, Sri Nagar Colony Exmt., Hyderabad-500045 Mr. Karanki Srinivasu Flat No. 402, Sri Niketan Apartments, Shyam Karan Road, Backside of Apollo Hospital, Ameerpet, Hyderabad - 500016.	Schedule of the Property: All that the house bearing Municipal No.7-1-229, admeasuring 107 square yards or 89.42 square meters, situated at Balkampet, Hyderabad and bounded as follows: North: Neighbours, South: 15'-0" Lane, East: H No.7-1-229/2, West: Neighbours House. Schedule A-1: Description of Property: All that the Flat bearing No. G-1 in Ground Floor, admeasuring 450 Square Feet, (including common area), together with undivided share of land admeasuring 13.37 Square Yards, out of 107 Square Yards, in premises bearing Municipal No. 7-1-229, situated at Balkampet, Telangana State, and bounded by: Boundaries for Flat G-1: North: Staircase & Flat No. G-2, South: 15'-0" Lane, East: H No.7-1-229/2, West: Neighbours House. Schedule G-2: Description of Property: All that the Flat bearing No. G-2 in Ground Floor, admeasuring 450 Square Feet, (including common area), together with undivided share of land admeasuring 13.37 Square Yards, out of 107 Square Yards, in premises bearing Municipal No. 7-1-229, situated at Balkampet, Hyderabad, Telangana State, and bounded by: Boundaries for Flat G-2: North: Neighbours House, South: Staircase & Flat No. G-1, East: H No. 7-1-229/2, West: Neighbours House. Owner: Mr. Karanki Srinivasu	A) 02-02-2022 B) Rs.2,49,70,294.65/- plus future interest and costs less amounts paid if any from 01.05.2024 C) 10-05-2022 D) Symbolic	A) Rs.28,19,000/- B) Rs.2,82,000/- C) Rs.25,000/-	31-05-2024 From 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM	Subject to outcome of S.A. No. 396/2023 before Hon'ble DRT-II, Hyderabad. Approval for the construction of the building is not available with us and the bidder shall take a note of it before offering their bid.
1	PNB Regency Plaza, Hyderabad. M/s Nipun Constructions 8-3-678/70, 1st Floor, Pragathi Nagar, Sri Nagar Colony Exmt., Hyderabad-500045 Mr. Karanki Srinivasu Flat No. 402, Sri Niketan Apartments, Shyam Karan Road, Backside of Apollo Hospital, Ameerpet, Hyderabad - 500016.	Schedule of the Property: All that the house bearing Municipal No.7-1-229, admeasuring 107 square yards or 89.42 square meters, situated at Balkampet, Hyderabad and bounded as follows: North: Neighbours, South: 15'-0" Lane, East: H No.7-1-229/2, West: Neighbours House. Schedule -A: Description of Property: All that the Flat bearing No. 201 in Second Floor, admeasuring 450 Square Feet, (including common area), together with undivided share of land admeasuring 13.37 Square Yards, out of 107 Square Yards, in premises bearing Municipal No. 7-1-229, situated at Balkampet, Hyderabad, Telangana State, and bounded by: North: Staircase & Flat No. 202, South: Open to Sky, East: Open to Sky, West: Open to Sky. Schedule-B: Description of Property: All that the Flat bearing No. 202 in Second Floor, admeasuring 450 Square Feet, (including common area), together with undivided share of land admeasuring 13.37 Square Yards, out of 107 Square Yards, in premises bearing Municipal No. 7-1-229, situated at Balkampet, Hyderabad, Telangana State, and bounded by: North: Open to Sky, South: Staircase & Flat No. 201, East: Open to Sky, West: Open to Sky.	A) 02-02-2022 B) Rs.2,49,70,294.65/- plus future interest and costs less amounts paid if any from 01.05.2024 C) 10-05-2022 D) Symbolic	A) Rs.28,19,000/- B) Rs.2,82,000/- C) Rs.25,000/-	31-05-2024 From 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM	Subject to outcome of S.A. No. 396/2023 before Hon'ble DRT-II, Hyderabad. Approval for the construction of the building is not available with us and the bidder shall take a note of it before offering their bid.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF E-AUCTION SALE
The sale shall be subject to the Terms & Conditions prescribed in the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 and to the following further conditions:
1) The properties are being sold on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" and "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" and "WHATEVER THERE IS BASIS".
2) The particulars of Secured Assets specified in the Schedule hereinabove have been stated to the best of the information of the Authorised Officer, but the Authorised Officers shall not be answerable for any error, misstatement or omission in this proclamation.
3) The Authorized Officer reserves the right to accept any or reject all bids, if not found acceptable or to postpone/cancel/adjourn/discontinue or vary the terms of the auction at any time without assigning any reason whatsoever and his decision in this regard shall be final.
4) All pending dues viz. House Tax, Water Tax, Electricity Bills, Monthly Maintenance Charges, etc., are to be borne by the purchaser only.
5) Intending bidders will have to register in the auction site www.ibapi.in or www.mstcecommerce.com well before the auction date.
6) The Sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction portal www.mstcecommerce.com on 31-05-2024 as mentioned above.
7) For further details and inspection of the properties, intending Purchasers may contact Mr. A. Soma Shekhar, Senior Manager, Punjab National Bank, Circle SASTRA-Hyderabad, Ph. 8297242288 or Mr. M. Srinivasulu, Manager, Punjab National Bank, Ph. 9160247376.
8) **Statutory 15 Days Sale Notice under provision Rule 8(6) Rule 9(1) of the SARFAESI Act, 2002** - The borrower/s and Guarantor/s are hereby notified to pay the dues as mentioned above along with up to date interest and other expenses before the date of e-Auction, failing which the schedule property will be auctioned/sold and balance dues, if any, will be recovered with interest and cost.
9) For detailed term and conditions of the sale, please refer www.ibapi.in, www.mstcecommerce.com, & www.pnbindia.in.
10) TDS @ 1% of the final sale amount has to be remitted by the successful purchaser.
Date: 08-05-2024, Place: Hyderabad
Sd/- Authorized Officer, Punjab National Bank, Secured Creditor



Election duties should be performed in a coordinated manner : Additional Collector Pujari Gauthami

Rajanna Sirisilla, May 9 (TIM Bureau) : Additional Collector Pujari Gauthami directed that the Sector Officers, Distribution and Reception Officers should carry out the election duties in coordination. Sector Officers, Distribution and Reception Officers under Sirisilla ARO were trained on the responsibilities to be performed at the EVMs distribution centers on 13th of this month. Additional Collector Poojari Gautami spoke on this occasion. He called on everyone to work together as a team and complete the election duties success-

fully. Sirisilla said that 30 sectors have been set up in ARO and there will be reserve staff. It has been explained that all measures have been taken to complete the distribution of EVMs on the 12th of this month by noon. It has been clarified that the respective personnel should go to the polling centers in the vehicle allotted to them. It was explained that suitable arrangements were made at the reception centers on 13th. The Sector Officers are advised to take all the documents to be given by the POs under their jurisdiction and submit them at the reception center. Reception center officials are instructed to take care of all the documents. After that, the doubts of the employees were cleared. Asked about their problems, Sirisilla RDO Ramesh, Master Trainer Pathuri Mahender Reddy and others participated here.

Additional SP Chandraiah who showed humanity

Additional SP picked up the dog which was hit by an unknown vehicle and left it dead on the road



Rajanna Sirisilla, May 9 (TIM Bureau) : Rajanna Sirisilla District Venkatapur hit by an unknown vehicle and killed a dog on the road. Additional SP Chandraya's vehicle coming from the other side took the dead dog on the side of the road and put it on the side of the road.



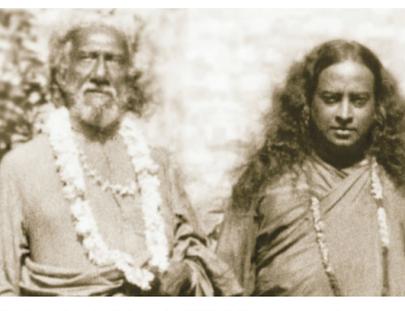
Legal Science Conference held at Sirisilla BC Study Centre

Rajanna Sirisilla, May 9 (TIM Bureau) : Rajanna Sirisilla Zilla Naya Sevadhikara Sanstha District Chief Justice Chairman N. As per the orders of Premalatha, a legal science conference was organized in backward classes (BC study circle) under the supervision of senior civil judge and secretary of district legal services organization Radhika Jaswal on Thursday. "Students of study circles were made aware of justice related matters. In this program "Senior Civil Judge Rajanna Sirisilla, District Judicial Service Organi-

Senior Civil Judge Radhika Jaswal participated

district Secretary Radhika Jaiswal, District Welfare Officer Lakshmirajam, AGP, G Anjaiah, T Harshamulu, Adepu Venu, S Mallesh Yadav, E Jyoti, Gurram Anjaneulu, BC Study Circle Director Jella Venkataswamy and others were present.

The Heart of a Jnanavatar (169th Birth Anniversary of Sri Sri Swami Sri Yuktaswar Giri)



Hyderabad, May 9 (TIM Bureau) : I give you my unconditional love" with this eternal promise of his taintless love, the 'Embodiment of Wisdom' Jnanavatar Swami Sri Yuktaswar Giri welcomed young Mukunda (later known as Paramahansa Yogananda, the founder of Yogoda Satsanga Society of India, the Father of Yoga in the West and the author of the best-selling spiritual classic 'Autobiography of a Yogi') to his ashram. Unknown to the divine drama of events, his visit had been anticipated and eagerly awaited since a decade and a half by the stoic Master. " " In January 1894 at the holy Kumbh Mela in Allahabad Sri Yuktaswarji had met the deathless Himalayan Master Mahavatar Babaji. Being aware that Yoganandaji was again in incarnation (Mukunda was born on 5 January 1893 at Gorakhpur) Babaji promised to send a young chela to Sri Yuktaswarji to train for "yoga dissemination in the West."

Rakesh Jaiswal offered Puja in Vemula wada shrine



Hyderabad, May 9 (TIM Bureau) : BJP's senior leader and Jambagh corporator Mr Rakesh jaiswal today offered prayers by performing Pradakshan with Gow Mata at Rajarajeshwari temple Vemulawada. Naveen Bhandari Ji Also Present..



Tripura to plant 15 lakh saplings to increase forest coverage : Minister

Agartala, May 9 (IANS) : The Forest Department in Tripura will plant 15 lakh saplings of different varieties in phases to further increase the state's forest cover, state minister Animesh Debbarma said on Thursday. Forest Minister Debbarma said in the first phase, five lakh saplings will be planted in a day in the first week of July across the state, while 10 lakh more saplings will be planted in the subsequent phases.

Tripura's current forest cover is over 62 per cent which is good as compared to the other states of the country, said Debbarma, who also holds the Science, Technology, and Environment portfolios. "We are keen to further expand the forest cover in Tripura to deal with the growing climate change-related challenges," he told the media. Making an appeal to the people, various organisations, and clubs to come forward and join

hands with the Forest Department to make the mega tree plantation drive a success, Debbarma said the government will try to involve all the stakeholders in its efforts. While many trees are felled to expand the national highways, state highways, and for various developmental projects, the Forest Department is making all efforts to expand the forest cover through new plantations, he said.



Delhi L-G recommends NIA probe into alleged funding of AAP by extremist group

New Delhi, May 9 (IANS) : The Lieutenant Governor of Delhi, V.K. Saxena, has written to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) seeking a probe by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) into the alleged funding of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) led by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal by pro-Khalistan extremist group Sikhs For Justice. CM Kejriwal is presently under judicial custody at Tihar Jail in connection with

the alleged excise policy scam. The latest move came after the L-G received a complaint from Ashoo Mongia, the National General Secretary of the World Hindu Federation, alleging that AAP received a staggering amount of \$16 million in funding from pro-Khalistan groups between 2014 and 2022 for facilitating the release of 1993 Delhi bomb blast convict Davinder Pal Singh Bhullar.

Kishan Reddy urges party workers to take part in Modi's meeting

Hyderabad, May 9 (NSS): Union Minister G Kishan Reddy today said that every street in Hyderabad should move to LB Stadium on Friday for PM Narendra Modi's public meeting. He said that the Party workers and youngsters should come to the LB Stadium. "Our beloved Prime Minister Modi will attend the meeting. All the workers should bring all the people in their booths. Modi's election campaign

in Telangana will end with Friday's public meeting. Everyone should campaign door-to-door on behalf of the Mahila Morcha on Saturday. We have to move forward with confidence. Our graph is increasing day by day. The contest for the second place will be between the Congress and the BRS parties. Even in constituencies where there is no strength, our strength will increase.



'Opposition's habit is to insult the bravery of jawans', Anurag Thakur tears into Channi

New Delhi, May 9 (IANS) : Anurag Thakur, the Union Minister for Information & Broadcasting, on Thursday took strong objection to Congress leader and former Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi's remarks on the Poonch terror strike, and called it "disgusting and shameful".



Country's 90 percent wealth is with two percent people: Rahul

Narsapur, May 9 (NSS): Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said that 90 percent of the country's wealth is with two percent people and Prime Minister Narendra Modi is working only for two percent people. Addressing the Jana Jatar Sabha at Narsapur in Medak district on Thursday, Rahul Gandhi alleged that the Prime Minister was not working for the welfare of majority sections of the people, but was spending his whole time to benefit for the development of his chosen industrialists. "Modi is privatising public sector institutions aimed at removing reservations in the country. Reservations are being lifted as part of encouraging private individuals," the Congress leader said. He said the Lok Sabha elections are being held between two ideologies, in which one side there are leaders like Rahul Gandhi, Sonia Gandhi, Kharge and Revanth Reddy, who oppose the change of the Constitution and on the other hand, Modi and RSS leaders who want to change the constitution. He reiterated that the Congress party would strive hard for the protection of Constitution, which is the voice of common people and the fruit of thousands of sacrifices.

Sangeet Som calls Akhilesh Yadav 'Babur Ki Aulad', says SP will pay the price for insulting Maharana Pratap

New Delhi, May 9 (IANS) : Former BJP legislator Sangeet Som said on Thursday that he was 'pained and peeved' over the insult meted out to India's hero and valiant Rajput warrior Maharana Pratap by Akhilesh Yadav and his men, saying that the 'Kshatriya Samaj' will teach a lesson to the Samajwadi Party (SP) in the ongoing Lok Sabha elections. He also dubbed SP chief Akhilesh Yadav as 'Babur Ki Aulad', and claimed that it was he who led his party workers and supporters in treading over the statue of India's greatest warrior while

wearing shoes. "The way Akhilesh Yadav and his supporters insulted Maharana Pratap's statue in Mainpuri is unacceptable and unbearable. The 'Babur Ki Aulad' (descendant of Mughal emperor Babur) will have to pay the price for this grave insult in these elections," Som said in a video message issued on social media. He also said that the Kshatriya Samaj and the Sanatanis of the region won't forgive Akhilesh Yadav and will teach his party a lesson in the upcoming phases of Lok Sabha polls. Notably, a case has been lodged against at least 100 Samajwadi Party workers for creating a



ruckus during Akhilesh Yadav's recent roadshow in Mainpuri in support of his wife and party nominee Dimple Yadav. Three persons have also been reportedly arrested for climbing and disrespecting the statue of Maharana Pratap during the roadshow, as shown in a video. Akhilesh Yadav's wife and SP candidate Dimple Yadav is contesting the elections from the Manipur Lok Sabha constituency.



District Collectors in Tamil Nadu cannot be 'unnecessarily harassed', SC tells ED

New Delhi, May 9 (IANS) : The Supreme Court on Thursday remarked that the District Collectors in Tamil Nadu cannot be unnecessarily "harassed" by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in the illegal sand mining case. A bench, headed by Justice Bela M. Trivedi, was apprised by senior advocate Kapil Sibal, representing the state government, that District Collectors, who appeared at the ED office in

Chennai pursuant to the apex court's order, were made to sit from morning till late in the evening. Deprecating the central agency's conduct, the Bench, also comprising Justice Pankaj Mithal, said: "You cannot do that... Do not harass them unnecessarily." During the hearing, the counsel appearing for the ED alleged that the district collectors did not furnish the desired information sought in the summons.



Sandeshkhali agitation was BJP's ploy to win elections in Bengal : Mamata Banerjee

Kolkata, May 9 (IANS) : The agitation in Sandeshkhali against alleged sexual harassment of women by local Trinamool Congress leaders was nothing but a plot scripted by the BJP to win elections in Bengal, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee claimed on Thursday. Addressing a rally at Saithian under the Birbhum Lok Sabha constituency in support of Trinamool candidate Satabdi Roy, the Chief Minister said, "A video has surfaced which exposes BJP's scripted plan in Sandeshkhali. But they don't know that self-dignity is more important for women than money." She also cautioned the BJP against 'scripting' such blueprints in the future.

Canara Bank Dilsukhnagar BRANCH(1179) : Regional Office South Beside Saibaba Temple, Dilsukhnagar, Hyderabad
Tel: 040-23438701, cb1179@canarabank.com

VEHICLE OFF LINE AUCTION SALE NOTICE
OFFERS ARE INVITED FROM PUBLIC FOR PURCHASE OF BELOW MENTIONED VEHICLE TO BE AUCTIONED BY CANARA BANK, DILSUKHAGAR BRANCH, HYDERABAD, TELANGANA- 500060

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described movable property/ies Hypothecated/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive/physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of DILSUKHAGAR BRANCH, sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on 28/05/2024, for recovery of Rs.5,20,660.89/- (Contractual dues as on 09/05/2024 and interest thereon) due to the DILSUKHAGAR BRANCH of Canara Bank from Mr. Marrycany Srinivas Rao (Borrower) & Jakka Seetharam Reddy (Guarantor). The Details of the Vehicle are as follows:

Lot No	Particulars	Reserve price	EMD Amount
1	VOLKSWAGEN VENTO 1.5 TDI MT - HIGHLINE BSIV - 10/2016 Chassis No: MEXK16606HT059183 Engine Number: CWX142381 Registration No: TS 11 EK 0018	Rs. 4,50,000/-	Rs. 45,000/-

1. The Earnest Money Deposit stated above shall be deposited on or before 27/05/2024, 4:00 pm. The EMD amount has to be paid to Account No: 209272434 IFSC Code: CNRB0001179 of Canara Bank, Dilsukhnagar Branch, Hyderabad.
2. Off Line Auction of Vehicle will be held on 28/05/2024, between 11:30 A.M. to 12:30 P.M at Canara Bank, Dilsukhnagar Branch, Beside Sai Baba Temple, Dilsukhnagar, Hyderabad - 500060.
3. It shall be the responsibility of the interested bidders to inspect and satisfy themselves about the vehicle before submission of the bid.
4. The intending bidder should submit the KYC Documents along with the bid application.
5. Auction would commence at Reserve Price, as mentioned above. Bidders shall improve their offers in multiples of Rs.5000/- The bidder who submits the highest bid (above the Reserve price) on closure of 'Off line' auction shall be declared as successful bidder. Sale shall be confirmed in favour of the successful bidder, subject to confirmation of the same by the Secured creditor.
6. Successful bidder have to remit the balance amount within 2 day from the date of off line Auction, otherwise the EMD amount will be forfeited and will not be refunded under any circumstances.
7. Authorized Officer reserves the right to postpone/cancel or vary the terms and conditions of the off line auction without assigning any reason therefor.
8. For further details please contact AUTHORIZED Officer, Canara Bank Dilsukhnagar Branch, Contact No: 7382932171.
Place: Hyderabad, Date: 09-05-2024 Sd/- Authorized Officer, Canara Bank

Canara Bank Dilsukhnagar BRANCH(1179) : Regional Office South Beside Saibaba Temple, Dilsukhnagar, Hyderabad
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Lot No	Particulars	Reserve price	EMD Amount
1	MARUTI DZIRE VDI BSIV - 04/2019 Chassis No: MA3CZF03K0521169 Engine Number: D13A3499112 Registration No: TS 07 UG 4255	Rs. 4,00,000/-	Rs. 40,000/-

1. The Earnest Money Deposit stated above shall be deposited on or before 27/05/2024, 4:00 pm. The EMD amount has to be paid to Account No: 209272434 IFSC Code: CNRB0001179 of Canara Bank, Dilsukhnagar Branch, Hyderabad.
2. Off Line Auction of Vehicle will be held on 28/05/2024, between 11:30 A.M. to 12:30 P.M at Canara Bank, Dilsukhnagar Branch, Beside Sai Baba Temple, Dilsukhnagar, Hyderabad - 500060.
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Place: Hyderabad, Date: 09-05-2024 Sd/- Authorized Officer, Canara Bank

OPINIONmail



CONGRESS IS MAKING ALL EFFORTS TO MAKE IT A TRIANGULAR FIGHT IN ANDHRA PRADESH

The poll bugle has sounded in Andhra Pradesh. Voting takes place on May 13. Both for assembly and Lok Sabha. The big fight is between Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy's YSRCP and former Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's Telugu Desam Party, which is allied with the Bharatiya Janata Party and actor Pawan Kalyan's Jana Sena, a three-way tripartite tie. The last assembly elections, YSRCP polled nearly 50 percent and won 151 seats. Will it retain hold? Naidu's TDP believes it won't. In the overall all-India scenario, Andhra Pradesh is like a different planet. TDP and Jana Sena have by signing alliance with the Bharatiya Janata Party sworn allegiance to a third Modi term. Jagan Mohan Reddy's YSRCP isn't bothered whether Modi remains or Modi is evicted. Andhra Pradesh, ever since its division into two, has cut a lonely path. Part of the reason is Jagan Mohan Reddy's strictly regional image. Not that rival Chandrababu Naidu is "national". Andhra Pradesh has 4.08 crore voters, nearly half of them female. There are also 3,482 transgender voters. AP has 175 assembly constituencies and 25 parliamentary constituencies. Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy says he will retain power. The TDP, which got 23 percent of the vote share in 2019, believes the YSRCP will bite dust this time. Pawan Kalyan's Jana Sena got 1 percent of the vote-share in 2019.

The candidates' lists of the YSRCP for the 175 assembly seats and 25 Lok Sabha seats have been out for weeks. 50 percent of the candidates are from SC, ST, OBC and minority communities. The names are irrelevant but they seem to have the backing of the party's rank and file. Also, the TDP is satisfied with "pulling all stops" to take control of AP with BJP and Jana Sena in tow. The Congress and Left parties are bit players. There is a seat-sharing deal between TDP, BJP and Jana Sena. The BJP got six Lok Sabha and 10 assembly seats. TDP got 17 parliamentary and 144 assembly seats Pawan Kalyan's Jana Sena two Lok Sabha and 21 assembly seats. The BJP will be the junior-most partner in the government if the alliance wins the assembly. But Prime Minister Narendra Modi is more interested in the Lok Sabha count. If the TDP wins all 17 Lok Sabha seats allotted to it, there is no guarantee Naidu will not ask for more than his pound of flesh. Naidu is sure the TDP-BJP-Jana Sena triumvirate will defeat YSRCP easily and Andhra Pradesh will be rid of Jagan Mohan Reddy and his evangelical party. Religious conversions in Andhra Pradesh has been a sore point for years but whether it is an election issue is not apparent to outsiders though why Andhra Pradesh and Punjab are hotbeds of Christian evangelism will be an interesting study for a serious student. That being said, Pawan Kalyan is the most excited about the elections. The Jana Sena cannot wait for elections to be held and results to be declared. June 4 for Pawan Kalyan is so excruciatingly far. If Jana Sena wins both its Lok Sabha seats, there will be statewide celebrations. Add to that a good share of the 21 assembly seats allotted to it, and Pawan Kalyan wouldn't be asking for a BO Blockbuster again, ever.

What perhaps irritates Chandrababu Naidu, however, is Jagan Mohan Reddy's equanimity in the face of TDP claims. TDP is also fighting several disappointed "seat hopefuls". Meanwhile, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been holding rallies. Pawan Kalyan has to win the two Lok Sabha seats allocated to Jana Sena for Modi's sake. Jagan Mohan Reddy's confidence is bothering both Modi and Naidu. Jagan's "welfare-dependent statecraft" has both these leaders in their 70s sweating. Reddy's slogan "why not 175" is giving the TDP sleepless nights. Modi's nervousness must be only skin deep. What if Reddy's party YSRCP sweeps all 25 Lok Sabha seats? Willy-nilly even Jagan Mohan Reddy might have a say in deciding whether Prime Minister Narendra Modi gets a third term or not. The Congress party comeback is being led by Jagan's sister Y S Sharmila and she has been talking big. The Congress is also fighting "all the assembly and Lok Sabha seats". YS Sharmila is not shy of throwing a challenge to YS Jagan Mohan Reddy.

(By Sushil Kutty)

EDITORIAL
the indian mail

Campaigning ends in 11 Maharashtra LS seats locked in high-intensity political battle

Campaigning ended for the third phase of Lok Sabha elections in Maharashtra, covering 11 constituencies, where the ruling MahaYuti comprising the BJP, the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena and the Ajit Pawar-led NCP, and the Maha Vikas Aghadi comprising the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena, the Sharad Pawar-led NCP and Congress, are locked in a high-stakes political battle. Voting in this phase will be held on May 7 in Raigad, Baramati, Dharashiv, Latur, Solapur, Madha, Sangli, Satara, Ratnagiri-Sindhudurg, Kolhapur, and Hatkanangle. A total of 258 candidates are in the fray. Both the competing alliances face the huge challenge of bringing out the maximum number of voters to the polling stations amid ongoing heat waves so that these constituencies report 75 per cent polling on May 7. Both these

alliances have stepped up efforts in this regard in the wake of the lower turnout of about 60 to 62.71 per cent in the first and second phases of polling that took place in 13 seats. Of the 11 constituencies, the BJP is locked in a direct contest against the Congress in Latur and Solapur, against the NCP-SP in Madha and Satara, and against the Shiv Sena-UBT in Sangli and Ratnagiri-Sindhudurg. The Ajit Pawar-led NCP is contesting the Raigad and Dharashiv seats against the Shiv Sena-UBT, and Baramati against the NCP of Sharad Pawar while the Shiv Sena faces the Congress in Kolhapur and the Shiv Sena-UBT in Hatkanangle.

The BJP roped in Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath while for the MVA, NCP-SP chief Sharad Pawar, Shiv Sena-UBT chief Uddhav Thackeray, Congress MP Rahul Gandhi and party General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi addressed poll rallies to charge up

the cadres.

Of these 11 constituencies, it is Sharad Pawar vs Ajit Pawar in Baramati as both held hectic campaigning for supremacy and consolidation of their respective positions in their traditional home turf in the first elections after the NCP split in June 2023.

The NCP, led by Sharad Pawar, has fielded sitting MP and his daughter Supriya Sule, who is resolved to score a hat trick, against her sister-in-law (Ajit Pawar's wife) Sunetra Pawar.

Sharad Pawar and Supriya ran their campaign flagging off Baramati's development and its future plan while reiterating their strong opposition to BJP's divisive politics. On his part, Ajit Pawar, carried out his campaign, projecting its contest between Narendra Modi vs Rahul Gandhi and seeking votes for Modi to become PM for this third time. In Solapur,



Madha, Satara, and Sangli from the cooperative-rich and politically vibrant constituencies, the BJP has devoted all resources to spread its wings. In Solapur, it dropped the sitting MP and nominated its legislator Ram Satpute against Congress nominee and legislator Praniti Shinde. The BJP hopes to score a hat trick while Shinde, daughter of former Union Home Minister Sushilkumar Shinde has worked hard to regain Congress' lost glory. In Madha, BJP nominee Ranjit Singh Naik Nimbalkar faces a tough challenge from NCP-SP nominee Dhairyasheel Mohite-Patil while in Satara, BJP nominee and Chhatrapati Shivaji's descendant Udayanraje Bhosle is locked in a direct fight against NCP-SP candidate and Mathadi workers' representative Shashikant Shinde.

THERE IS NOTHING WRONG IN IMPOSING HIGH TAXES ON SUPER-RICH IN INDIA

The obnoxious speech of Narendra Modi on April 21 at Banswara, Rajasthan was notable for its vicious attack on Muslims and demonising any redistribution policy as a handing over of the gold and property of Hindus to the "infiltrators". The bigotry displayed in this speech has understandably attracted widespread condemnation.

But there is another aspect of the speech that exposes the extreme rightwing view of Modi and the BJP which results in the visceral hatred for

any proposal for redistribution of wealth and incomes to tackle the high degree of inequality that exists in India. Modi and the BJP used some remarks by Sam Pitroda, a Congress supporter, who talked about the necessity to consider an inheritance tax in India on the lines of such a tax that exists in the US. It is this reference to an inheritance tax which drew the ire of Modi and the rightwing ruling party. It is the policies pursued by the Modi government in the last decade with its tax concessions for the corporates, abolition of wealth tax, lowering the rate of income tax for the highest bracket and favourable treatment for its crony capitalists that have exacerbated inequality and made India one of the most unequal societies in the world.

(IPA Service)



REGULAR WORKERS' REAL WAGES DECLINED BY ONE PERCENT EVERY YEAR

Regular workers' real wages have been declining by one per cent every year under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's regime. However, BJP's election manifesto and Modi's guarantees have left this issue untouched, and used the word "wages" only twice, while giving the guarantee of periodic review of national floor wages. There is no guarantee of protection from declining real wages. International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the Institute for Human Development (IHD) has calculated in their recently published study that over the decade until 2022, the average monthly real earnings of salaried workers in India declined by 1 per cent every year (CAGR) since 2012. Regular monthly real wage in 2012 was Rs 12,100 which came down to Rs 11,155 in 2019, and Rs 10,925 in 2022. The decline was 1.2 per cent yearly upto 2019, and then 0.7 per cent as of 2022. In 2023, the average monthly real wage for adults further declined to Rs 10,790. Similarly, the average monthly real earnings of self-employed individuals declined annually by 0.8 per cent, from 7,017 rupees in 2019 to 6,843 rupees in 2022.

BIDEN'S "XENOPHOBIC" LABEL FOR INDIA AND JAPAN IS A COSTLY MISTAKE

US President Joe Biden is receiving criticism from many groups for describing India and Japan as "xenophobic" because they do not desire an influx of immigrants. This has raised concerns about a possible diplomatic mistake, considering the United States' enhanced relations with these Asian countries as part of its strategy to counter China. Xenophobia refers to the fear, dislike, or prejudice against people from other countries

or cultures. It involves displaying hostility or discrimination towards individuals based on their foreign nationality or perceived foreignness.

Biden made these comments during a campaign fundraising event in Washington, primarily attended by Asian-Americans. It is noteworthy that these remarks followed his recent hosting of Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida during a state visit to the White House.

Biden expressed that one of the contributing factors to the growth



of the economy is the presence of immigrants, including the audience and many others. He emphasized that their contributions are valued and appreciated, highlighting the positive impact of welcoming immigrants.

In his remarks, Biden grouped both adversaries and allies, stating that China, Japan, India, and

Russia were encountering economic challenges due to their "xenophobic" attitudes. He suggested that their reluctance towards embracing immigrants was a contributing factor to their economic difficulties. He stated that they have a lack of desire for immigrants.



Jordan conducts 5 more airdrops of aid in Gaza

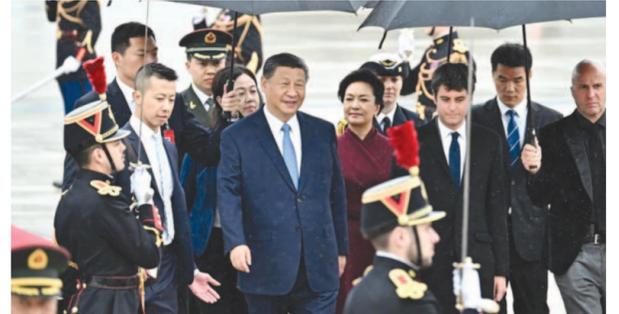
Amman, May 9 (IANS) : The Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army said on Thursday that it has carried out five airdrops of humanitarian and food aid targeting several locations in the northern Gaza. According to the state-run Petra News Agency, the airdrops included relief and humanitarian aid to support the people in the Gaza Strip. The operation involved aircraft from the Royal Jordanian Air Force, Egypt, the US and Germany, Xinhua news agency re-

ported. The armed forces said that they will continue to send humanitarian and medical aid via an air bridge, whether by flights from the country's Marka Aiport towards El-Arish International Airport in Egypt, airdrops on the Gaza Strip, or land aid convoys. The Jordanian Armed Forces has conducted 92 airdrops since the start of the current Palestinian-Israeli conflict, as well as 231 airdrops in collaboration with other countries.

China regards Europe as important dimension of its foreign policy : Xi Jinping

Paris, May 9 (IANS) : China regards Europe as an important dimension in its major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics and an important partner on its path toward Chinese modernisation, Chinese President Xi Jinping said here Thursday. Xi made the remarks at a China-France-EU trilateral meeting with French President Emmanuel Macron and European Commission President Ursula von der

Leyen at Elysee Palace, Xinhua news agency reported. Expressing his delight in meeting with Macron and von der Leyen again, Xi noted that France is the first stop of his overseas visit this year and that the trilateral meeting amplifies the Europe-wide significance of this visit. China always approaches its relations with the European Union (EU) from a strategic and long-term perspective, Xi said. It is hoped that China-France and China-EU relations would reinforce each other and



thrive together, he added. As the world enters a new period of turbulence and transformation, China and the EU, as two major forces in the world, should continue to see each other as partners, stay committed to dialogue and cooperation, deepen strategic commu-

nication, enhance strategic mutual trust, build strategic consensus, carry out strategic coordination, work for the steady and sound growth of China-EU ties, and continue making new contributions to world peace and development, Xi said.



Russian airstrikes in Ukraine cause power outages

Kyiv, May 9 (IANS/DPA) : Russian airstrikes in the north-eastern Ukrainian border region of Sumy have led to power outages despite many drones being shot down, Ukrainian officials said on Thursday. Authorities said that more than 4,00,000 households in three districts and the regional capital, Sumy, were affected. The Russian military attacked the area with 13 Iranian-made combat drones, they said. Although 12 of them are said to have been intercepted, energy systems were damaged, according to the energy supplier Ukrenergo. Meanwhile, more than 1,300 villages lost power. However, most of them have now been supplied with electricity again. Ukraine has been fending off a Russian invasion for more than two years. Russian attacks with missiles and drones have repeatedly targeted the country's power supply. Since heavy attacks in March, there have been regular power failures, particularly in the eastern Ukrainian region of Kharkiv.

Rafah border crossing remains open for aid, passengers : Egypt

Sinai, May 9 (IANS/DPA) : The Rafah border crossing remains open for aid and passenger movement, an Egyptian source and the border authority in Gaza said on Thursday. The information came after Israel began to evacuate Rafah city in southern Gaza, which borders Egypt, ahead of its expected military operation there. An Egyptian security source denied reports that Egypt closed the border crossing, adding that humanitarian aid trucks have crossed to get into Gaza. "Work continues at the Rafah crossing, as the Egyptian gate has been opened for passenger buses," the bor-

der authority in Gaza said in a statement. An Egyptian Red Crescent official said 40 trucks carrying medical and humanitarian aid have crossed the border so far on Monday, as 250 other trucks are being prepared. More than 1,000 people have also crossed from Gaza into Egypt, including 800 Palestinians as well as Egyptians and other foreign nationalities.



Hezbollah launches rockets on Israeli settlements

Beirut, May 9 (IANS) : The Lebanese armed group Hezbollah said it launched Katyusha rockets on Israeli settlements and military sites on Thursday in response to Israeli air strikes in southern Lebanon a day earlier. The group said in a statement that in response to

the Israeli attacks on Sunday that killed four civilians and destroyed several civilian homes, "the fighters of the Islamic Resistance targeted, through six operations, the colonies of Kiryat Shmona, Avivim, Shtula, Kfar Yuval, Kfar Giladi.



Russia announces tactical nuclear forces exercises

Moscow, May 9 (IANS/DPA) : Russia will conduct an exercise of its tactical nuclear forces on the orders of President Vladimir Putin, the Defence Ministry announced on Thursday. The announcement did not say if the missiles would be equipped with nuclear warheads. Russia has previously carried out nuclear forces training without nuclear warheads. "As part of the exercise, a series of activities will be carried out to practice the preparation and use of non-strategic nuclear weapons," the Defence Ministry in Moscow said. It was initially unclear when and where exactly the exercise, in which the southern defence district and the naval forces are involved, would begin. In October, the Russian military fired two intercontinental missiles and several cruise missiles for

training and deterrence purposes. It justified the exercise, which it had announced, by alleging "provocative statements and threats by individual Western officials against the Russian Federation." Since the start of its full-scale war against Ukraine more than two years ago, Russian representatives have repeatedly tried to test international support for Kyiv by stirring up fears of a nuclear war.



Israelis observe Holocaust Remembrance Day amid conflict with Hamas

Tel Aviv, May 9 (IANS/DPA) : Israel, on Thursday, is commemorating the six million Jews who were murdered by the Nazis and their accomplices during the Holocaust, as the Palestinian Islamist Hamas group holds more than 100 hostages from Israel. On Monday morning, sirens blared for two minutes across the country to commemorate the catastrophe. Cars stopped on the streets and passers-by stood in silent remembrance of the victims. Then, the central commemoration ceremony began at the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem. This year, Remembrance Day

is being observed in the shadow of the Gaza war, which has already lasted seven months. More than 100 Israeli hostages are still held by Hamas. On the occasion of Holocaust Remembrance Day, Israeli

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu emphasised that Israel must defend itself - alone if necessary. "During the terrible Holocaust, there were important leaders who stood on the sidelines.

The first lesson from the Holocaust is, therefore, if we do not defend ourselves, no one else will defend us," he explained in Yad Vashem on Thursday evening.



Israeli army carries out airstrikes on Rafah

Gaza, May 9 (IANS) : The Israeli army carried out on Thursday airstrikes on areas in eastern Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip, said Palestinian security sources and eyewitnesses. Sources and eyewitnesses told Xinhua that Israeli airstrikes created fire belts in the vicinity of Gaza Airport and on the outskirts of the Al-Salam neighbourhood, east of Rafah. The raids caused large explosions and inflicted significant damage on nearby structures, with no injuries reported yet. Before the attacks started, the Israeli army had called on the Palestinian civilian population to temporarily evacuate from eastern Rafah.



How will heatwave impact poll season in India?

New Delhi, May 9 (IANS) : How will heat impact the biggest democratic exercise of the world? India, where parliamentary polls are underway, has been sweltering under unprecedented heatwaves ever since the beginning of the summer season in April, and these are more pronounced in east and peninsular India than the north and northwest. The 2024 Indian general elections 2024 are a two-and-a-half-month process, with voting taking place in seven phases till June 1 where nearly 97 crore people are expected to exercise their voting rights. As elections enter the key phase at the beginning of May, the temperatures have also started peaking. Globally as well, each month is setting a new all-time record. The last 10 months, since June 2023, have been the hottest

on record, mainly because of a super El Nino. April 2024 also seems to be following similar temperature trends and will most likely be the 11th hottest month in a row. Sheer temperature and humidity will increasingly make it harder to work in the open and India's ongoing election process has shown how much the complexities of weather and climate impact the voting and canvassing process. What led to an intense heatwave in India? The India Meteorological Department (IMD) had already predicted more than double the average heatwaves during April-June, i.e. 10 to 20 days of heat waves against a normal of four to eight days to be precise. The heat this year is expected to be worse than in 2023, which has

been the warmest year on record to date. Mercury has been settling between 42 and 45 degrees, even soaring to 47 degrees in some parts of the country. April has seen one of the longest spells of heatwave extending up to 15 days. Parts of east and peninsular India have been the worst hit, as they are also battling humidity. Kerala is under the grip of a record heatwave and has reported 10 deaths due to heat stress while waiting in voting queues. According to the Kerala State Disaster Management Authority (KSDMA), around 413 heat-related health issues like sunburn, rashes, and heat stroke cases have been reported until April 22. Odisha has also recorded one death and around 124 have been hospitalised due to heat-related



illnesses across 16 districts. Maximum temperatures across India show large parts of the country as a large red mass, indicating above-normal day temperatures over most parts of the country. An unprecedented rise in temperatures can be attributed to the ab-

sence of pre-monsoon rain and thundershowers during April. Countrywide cumulative rainfall was deficit to the tune of 20 per cent. Rainfall during April over south peninsular India (12.6 mm) was the fifth lowest since 1901 and the second lowest since 2001.

This was followed by east and northeast India which was deficit by 39 per cent. According to Climate Central, a US-based organisation working on climate change, day temperatures were at least twice as likely because of climate change.

Home Secretary reviews response to hoax emails received by Delhi schools

New Delhi, May 9 (IANS) : In the aftermath of hoax emails received by several schools in Delhi last week, the Home Secretary conducted a comprehensive review of the situation. Stressing the importance of preparedness, he called for the development of detailed protocols and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to effectively address similar incidents in the future. "Home Secretary reviewed the situation in wake of hoax emails received by some schools in Delhi last week. He stressed the need to prepare detailed protocol and SOPs to handle any such situation in future. Home Secretary asked Delhi Police and schools to

have close coordination for an effective response mechanism so that misinformation does not create any unnecessary panic," said the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) Spokesperson in a tweet on Thursday. The Spokesperson added that the Home Secretary also emphasised the need to enhance security, CCTV cameras and regular monitoring of emails in the schools. A total of 125 bomb threat calls were received from different schools at emergency helpline number 112 from 5:47 a.m. to 2:13 p.m on May 1, Delhi Police FIR, in possession with the IANS read. Delhi Police's Special Cell has filed a First Information Report (FIR) against unidentified individuals under sections 505, 21,



507, and 120B of the Indian Penal Code. "During my duty hours, 125 bomb threat calls were received from different schools at ERSS-112 from 5:47 hours to 14:13 hours. The school authorities informed that they had received these bomb threats over their emails," read the FIR, registered on the basis of

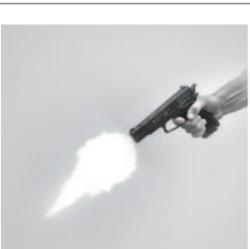
complaint given by police official in control Room. The FIR further said that on the receipt of the calls, PCR vehicles were rushed to the schools, district police, BDS, MAC, Special Cell anit Crime Control Room, DOMA, NORF, Fire, CATS etc. were also alerted.



Vokkaliga community will turn against Congress for arresting H.D. Revanna: K'taka LoP

Bengaluru, May 9 (IANS) : Karnataka's Leader of the Opposition R. Ashoka has claimed that the Vokkaliga community will turn against the Congress following the arrest of former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda's son H.D. Revanna. Speaking to media persons on Thursday, BJP leader Ashoka claimed that the way the Lingayat community "turned hostile towards the Congress after late CM Veerendra Patil was meted with injustice by the party, in the same manner following the injustice done to the Vokkaliga community and former PM H.D. Deve Gowda, Vokkaligas will also turn hostile to the Congress in the coming days". "H.D. Revanna's case and his son

Prajwal Revanna's case are different. Prajwal's case is being probed and there is no objection to it. In H.D. Revanna's case, it is evident that he was arrested intentionally. He is arrested in a kidnapping case. The victim's family has been forced to issue statements. This is a political conspiracy," LoP Ashoka said refuting the allegations against JD-S MLA H.D. Revanna, who was arrested recently by the Karnataka Police on charges of kidnapping one of the victims in the sex scandal case involving his son Prajwal Revanna. "The people of the state know about this conspiracy. This is being done to end Vokkaliga leadership in the state by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and his team, there is no doubt about it," he claimed.



Unidentified gunmen open fires at west Delhi car showroom

New Delhi, May 9 (IANS) : Unidentified individuals fired several gunshots at the glass wall of a car showroom in west Delhi's Tilak Nagar area on Thursday, police said. Although no bullet injury was reported, some individuals sustained injuries due to broken glass, they added. Deputy Commissioner of Police (West) Vichitra Veer said that an incident of firing has been reported in the area of Tilak Nagar police station and the establishment, on which shots have been fired is Fusion Cars, Ganesh Nagar, Tilak Nagar. As per the initial information, multiple shots have been fired aiming towards the glass and in the air. "Some persons have sustained injuries due to broken glass, and are under treatment. No bullet injury has been reported."

Fearing defeat in LS polls, PM Modi's language has reached an all-time low: Congress

Mumbai, May 9 (IANS) : Apprehending defeat in the ongoing Lok Sabha elections, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's poll language has plummeted to an all-time low, Congress General Secretary Ramesh Chennithala alleged here on Thursday. "In the two phases of polling conducted so far, the BJP has realised that the verdict of the people is going against the party. That is why the PM is using such language out of frustration. It's unbecoming of a person holding the post of PM," Chennithala said. Speaking to mediapersons here, the Congress leader claimed that the voting sentiments so far indicate that the people want a change and are supporting the INDIA bloc at the state and national levels. "Now, the PM is attempting to incite religious tensions by invoking Hindu-Muslim sentiments and Pakistan in his

speeches and trying to create a communal divide in the country. That is why disrespectful references are made to the Opposition leaders like Sharad Pawar," Chennithala said. "The BJP government did nothing for 10 years... The people have lost confidence in PM Modi's guarantees, but they have full faith in Congress' five guarantees," claimed Chennithala. Replying to a query, the Congress leader said that Maharashtra Congress Working President M. Arif Naseem Khan has withdrawn his resignation from the state campaign committee. "There is freedom of expression in the Congress... Khan's resignation was discussed at the highest levels in the party which supports all castes and religions. He raised certain issues and met Rahul Gandhi in Pune last week, and his points have been taken note of," said Chennithala.



Suffering from depression, student commits suicide at NIT Silchar: Police

Silchar (Assam), May 9 (IANS) : An engineering student studying at the National Institute of Technology (NIT) in Assam's Silchar committed suicide on Thursday, the police said. According to the police, the student was suffering from acute depression which led to him taking the extreme step. The deceased has been identified as Kesar Pran Deka. The police said that Deka's body was found hanging in the washroom of the institute's guest house, where he had gone to meet his parents. Deka (20) was a resident of Tamulpur in Kamrup (Rural) district. The Superintendent of Police in Cachar district, Numal Mahatta, said, "During preliminary investigation, it has come to light that the deceased was suffering from acute depression and accordingly, his parents were called who were staying at the institute's guest house."



Govt showcases India as 365-day tourist destination at Arabian Travel Mart

New Delhi, May 9 (IANS) : The Ministry of Tourism is showcasing India as a 365-day tourism destination at the Arabian Travel Mart being held in Dubai. The 'Incredible India' pavilion was inaugurated on Thursday by Satish Kumar Sivan, Consul General of India to Dubai, with the aim of strengthening India's presence in the Middle East's tourism sector. The pavilion has made a resounding entry, aiming to capture the entirety of the UAE market.

The country's delegation comprising tour operators, luxury hotels, wellness resorts, and the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) will be highlighting India's attraction as a round-the-year tourist destination, according to an official statement. The Ministry of Tourism has launched the 'Cool Summers of India' digital campaign at the Arabian Travel Mart to dispel the notion of India being too hot for summer travel.

Maruti Suzuki launches Epic New Swift with all-new Z-Series engine

New Delhi, May 9 (TIM Bureau): Redefining the hatchback segment, Maruti Suzuki India Limited (MSIL), India's largest passenger vehicle maker, proudly presents the Epic New Swift. Designed for the youthful and spirited, the Epic New Swift is poised to create new benchmarks and build on its revered legacy, much like its predecessors. "Speaking on this momentous occasion, Mr. Hisashi Takeuchi, Managing Director & CEO, Maruti Suzuki India Limited, said, "Since its

launch in 2005, the Swift brand has been a symbol of excellence in the Indian automotive landscape. It pioneered the dynamism in the premium hatchback segment and captured the hearts of millions of customers. Our vision for the Epic New Swift is to build on its strong legacy by redefining the Joy of Mobility for Swift lovers and driving enthusiasts alike. The all-new Z-Series engine is a futuristic powertrain that brings about a new dimension of performance and sustainability, making it the most efficient hatchback in its segment. We are committed to

meet and exceed our customers' aspirations and will continue to steer the transformation of the Indian automobile industry by introducing advanced technologies for delivering superior performance. Commenting on the launch of the Epic New Swift, Mr. Partho Banerjee, Senior Executive Officer, Marketing & Sales, Maruti Suzuki India Limited, said, "With over 29 lakh customers in India, the Swift brand name holds a special place in the hearts of customers. Each generation of this premium hatchback has been ahead of its time, anticipating and ad-

ressing evolving customer aspirations. With the introduction of the Epic New Swift, we are building on the rich legacy and raising the benchmark.

The revolutionary Z-Series engine offers the best of both the worlds by combining performance with higher fuel-efficiency and lower emissions.

Armed with a host of safety features such as 6 airbags, 3-point seatbelts for all seats, ESP, ABS with EBD, Hill Hold Assist, the Epic New Swift underscores our commitment to constantly offer enhanced occupant safety.



HPCL profit dips 25 pc in Q4

Mumbai, May 9 (IANS): Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) on Thursday reported a nearly 24.9 per cent decline in consolidated net profit at Rs 2,709.31 crore for the Jan-March quarter of 2023-24 from Rs 3,608.32 crore in the same quarter last year as the public sector oil company did not pass on the higher crude oil costs to consumers.

"The HPCL board of directors recommended issuance of one bonus share for every two shares held, subject to approval by the shareholders. The record date for the bonus issue is set at June 21. The board also recommended a dividend of Rs.16.50 per share on face value of equity shares of Rs10/- each," the oil major said in a stock exchange filing.

Average Gross Refining Margin (GRM) during the year ended March 31, 2024, was \$9.08 per barrel as against \$12.09 per barrel recorded last year.

How India is set to beat China in overall GDP growth sooner than expected

New Delhi, May 9 (IANS) A robust gross domestic product (GDP) growth, continuous thrust on manufacturing with global giants (like Apple) strengthening their local supply chains, top American corporate honchos praising the overall development under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and political stability ensure that India is in a position to pip China on most economic parameters faster than expected.

If we look at the economic growth, India's GDP growth has been exceeding China's for a few years now.

While India clocked GDP

growth at around 7.5 per cent in 2023, China's growth hovered around 5 per cent.

For the first quarter (Q1) this year, China's GDP grew 5.3 per cent. On a quarter-on-quarter basis, it grew a mere 1.6 per cent.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has pegged India's growth projection to 6.8 per cent this year, an increase of 0.3 per cent over its January update, while China's GDP growth has been pegged at 4.6 per cent in 2024 and is expected to slow down further to 4.1 per cent in 2025.



Punjab National Bank clocks 160 pc surge in Q4

New Delhi, May 9 (IANS) Punjab National Bank (PNB) on Thursday reported a 160 per cent surge in its net profit to Rs 3,010 crore in the Jan-March quarter of the financial year 2023-24 compared to the corresponding figure of Rs 1,159 crore same quarter last year. On a sequential basis, the state-run lender's net profit jumped by 35.4 per cent compared to the Oct-Dec quarter.

The bank's board of directors have recommended a dividend of Rs 1.50 per equity share (75 per cent) for the year ended March 31, 2024 subject to requisite approvals, according to a PNB statement. The bank's gross non-

performing assets (NPA) ratio declined to 5.73 per cent of total loans, as against 6.24 per cent a quarter ago, and 8.74 per cent in the same quarter last year.

Its net NPA stood at 0.73 per cent as of March 31, 2024, as against 0.96 per cent in the previous quarter and 2.72 per cent in the year-ago period.

In absolute terms, gross NPA declined by Rs 20,985 crore to Rs 56,343 crore as of March 2024 from Rs 77,328 crore as of March 2023. Net NPA declined by Rs 15,786 crore from March 2023 to Rs 6,799 crore as on March 2024. The bank's Net Interest Income (NII) increased to Rs 10,363 Cr in Q4 FY'24 from Rs 10,293 Cr in Q3 FY'24 and Rs 9,499 Cr in Q4 FY'23 showing an improve-

ment of 9.1 per cent on Y-o-Y basis.

PNB's domestic net interest margin stands at 3.25 per cent in Q4 FY24 while the global yield on advances improved year-on-year by 0.5 per cent to 8.44 per cent in Q4 FY24.

PNB also recorded a 3.5 per cent increase in savings deposits to Rs 4.80 lakh crore while current deposits grew by Rs 3,565 crore as of March 2024 to Rs 72,201 crore on Quarter-on-Quarter basis.

Low-cost CASA deposits increased to Rs 5.53 lakh crore recording a on-year growth of 2.7 per cent.

Total retail credit increased by 12.6 per cent to Rs 2.23 lakh crore in March 2024.



Asian Paints posts 1.3 pc rise in Q4 net profit

Mumbai, May 9 (IANS): Asian Paints on Thursday reported a consolidated net profit of Rs 1,275.3 crore for the Jan-March quarter of 2023-24, a marginal increase of 1.3 per cent compared to the corresponding figure of Rs 1258.41 crore for the same period last year.

The total revenue of the company declined by 0.64 per cent to Rs 8,730.76 crore during the quarter from Rs 8,787.34 crore last year, Asian Paints said in a regulatory filing.

Market analysts attribute the decline in revenue to increased competition which has intensi-

fied with Aditya Birla Group company Grasim also making a major foray into the paints industry. The decorative business of Asian Paints registered a volume growth of 10 per cent, however, revenue fell by 1.8 per cent in Q4 FY'24 as the company resorted to price cuts to prop up sales.

The company's board of directors recommended a final dividend of Rs 28.15 per share, in addition to the interim dividend of Rs 5.15 per share declared in October 2023. The company's total dividend for FY'24 now stands at Rs 33.30 per share.

BMW 3 Series Gran Limousine M Sport Pro edition launched in India

New Delhi, May 9 (IANS): The new BMW 3 Series Gran Limousine M Sport Pro edition was launched in India by the luxury car maker on Thursday.

Produced at the BMW Group Plant in Chennai, the new BMW 330Li M Sport Pro is now available at an ex-showroom price of Rs 62,60,000

in the 330Li petrol variant at all the company's dealerships and online shops.

"In its M Sport Pro avatar, the car is not just bolder but also offers the best-in-class technology. With its excellent driving capabilities, the new BMW 3 Series Gran Limousine M Sport Pro Edition stays true to its reputation of being the ultimate sports sedan."



Byju Raveendran tells staff not to sell courses but counsel parents; cuts course prices

New Delhi, May 9 (IANS): In a bid to salvage the financial and cultural crisis edtech company Byju's is currently in, its Founder and CEO Byju Raveendran has asked staff to pull the plug on aggressive selling, while slashing course prices by up to 30 per cent. In a meeting with over 1,500 sales associates and managers, Raveendran apparently told them to adopt a pull-based sales model rather than "push-based". "Your job is not to sell, but to counsel. You just have to guide

the students and parents who are already inclined towards the transformative learning that Byju's offers. You are not sales people; you are education counsellors," Raveendran said. He told managers to now act as coaches, focused on supporting and enabling the sales team rather than enforcing strict call quotas, sources told IANS. On the other hand, sales associates were asked to have the flexibility to work on their own terms, "with no tracking of the number of hours spent on calls". "If you can get results by spend-

ing just half an hour a day, please do that. Want to only work on the weekends? Why not?" Raveendran told them in the meeting. The company, struggling to pay salaries to employees and clear vendor payments, has also reduced prices of its courses by up to 30 per cent.

The annual subscription for its 'Learning App' is now available at yearly price of Rs 12,000 (inclusive of taxes), while 'Classes' and 'Tuition Centres' (BTC) are priced at Rs 24,000 and Rs 36,000, respectively, on an annual basis.



Everyone wants votes but no one wants to campaign in Red light areas of UP

Lucknow, May 9 (IANS) : Everyone wants their votes but no one wants to campaign in these areas. These are the red light areas of major cities in Uttar Pradesh where politicians don't dare to tread. Candidates are hesitant to be seen here but still send messages through pamphlets to the voters. They even send 'goodies', albeit discreetly, and ask for votes. In Prayagraj, Meerganj is one such area that has Madras Gali, Satya Gali, Julaha Gali and Pahadi Gali that is largely

inhabited by sex workers. According to a source, the women in the area are politically aware and familiar with local politics. "They have their own political affiliations and watch television to remain abreast with political activities. Some leaders even talk to them on phone and provide whatever facilities they need. However, no candidate is ever seen here. They campaign by proxy," said a source. A local trader who owns a garment shop in the area, said, "Campaigning here is done by those who are involved in the 'trade'. They work on behalf of

various parties during elections and even ensure a voter turnout on polling day." Interestingly, he added, most houses in the area hoist flags of whichever party is in power. This is done to avoid police action. In Safedabad in Barabanki District, the red light area is said to be a SP stronghold. The maze of narrow lanes and bylanes, with drains overflowing, has SP flags in abundance. Pradeep Yadav, in his early forties, is the "guardian" of the area. "We did not let the BJP win even during the Modi wave. We will again make the SP win this time,"

he said. There are about 800 women living in these lanes and there is no poll talk. "These women will vote wherever Yadav says," informed a candidate and added that, "There is no point campaigning because no one listens to us." Civic amenities in the area are deplorable but no one is concerned — neither the residents, nor the authorities. In Varanasi, about half a kilometre from the railway station is Shivdaspur. Songs play loudly through the day and night in the lanes that are strewn with garbage. The women here say that they



have never seen a leader in person. "Sirf TV par dekha hai," they say. Similarly, no political leaders have ever campaigned in Lucknow's 'Chawal wali gali' in the old city area. The 'Chawal wali gali', incidentally, never sold rice. The lane is full of sex workers liv-

ing here since ages. No one knows how the lane got its name but it is now synonymous with the sex trade. Situated near Akbari Gate, this lane also has an array of shops selling various items like pickles, unique spices and street food.

'Ramdroh', 'Rashtradhroh' are part of Congress, INDIA bloc's DNA: Yogi Adityanath



Lucknow, May 9 (IANS) : Launching a scathing attack on the opposition parties on Thursday, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that 'Ramdroh' and 'Rashtradhroh' (anti-national) are part of Congress and the INDIA bloc. Referring to the humili-

ation of Congress leader from Chhattisgarh, Radhika Khera, by the party members for visiting Lord Ram Lalla in Ayodhya, Yogi Adityanath said: "The incident shows that 'Ramdroh' is there in the DNA of Congress, SP, and the INDIA bloc, and whoever is

'Ramdrohi' is 'Rashtradrohi' as well. Chhattisgarh belongs to Lord Ram and any Ram devotee can belong to any party." He said that the INDIA bloc members have always disrespected Lord Ram and his devotees. "They make every effort to make the majority community feel insulted. Whether it is Congress, SP, National Conference, or DMK, the conduct of all these parties is condemnable. And it is this 'Ramdrohi' conduct of these parties that is throwing them into the abyss," the Chief Minister told media persons. He said that the Congress has never missed an opportunity to demean India in the eyes of the world, nor has it hesitated to disparage the Hindu religion. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath urged people to consider the

'Ramdrohi' behaviour as 'Rashtravirodhi' (anti-national), regardless of one's affection shown to them in the interest of the nation. He said that the public is vigilant and will make their own informed decisions. Emphasising that the greater the 'Ram Bhakt', guarantees the greater 'Rashtra Bhakt' (patriot), Yogi Adityanath described Prime Minister Narendra Modi as the epitome of 'Ram Bhakt' and 'Rashtra Bhakt'. "After a 500-year wait, the long-cherished dream of Ayodhya has finally come alive with Ram Lalla once again gracing the city. This transformation of Ayodhya was made possible under Modi's leadership and guidance. Today, the new Ayodhya unveils a fresh chapter before us," he added.



SC defers hearing on ex-TN minister Senthil Balaji's bail plea till May 15

New Delhi, May 9 (IANS) : The Supreme Court on Thursday deferred till May 15 hearing on the bail plea of DMK leader and former Tamil Nadu Minister V. Senthil Balaji, who was arrested last year in connection with a money laundering case linked to an alleged cash-for-jobs scam. A bench presided over by Justice Abhay S. Oka was requested by Solicitor General Tushar, the second highest law officer of the Centre appearing for the Enforcement Directorate (ED), to post the hearing on a non-miscellaneous day, saying that arguing the case would take more time. Notably, days other than Monday and Friday are classified as non-miscellaneous days in the apex court, when regular hearing is undertaken by different benches. Senior advocate Aryama Sundaram, appearing for Balaji, apprised the Bench,

also comprising Justice Ujjal Bhuyan, that the DMK leader has remained in custody since June last year. In an earlier hearing, the top court declined to pass any interim order staying the February 28 order of the Madras High Court, which had dismissed Balaji's bail petition. However, it issued a notice to the ED and sought the response of the central agency within four weeks. In its order, a bench of Justice N. Anand Venkatesh of the Madras High Court observed that even if Balaji had resigned from his position as a Minister, he continues as an MLA belonging to the ruling party in Tamil Nadu and continues to wield a lot of influence on the state government. The high court had asked the trial court to complete the trial within three months by conducting the proceedings on a day-to-day basis.

Can't force victim of rape to give birth to child of rapist: Kerala HC

Kochi, May 9 (IANS) : The Kerala High Court has ruled that a rape victim cannot be forced to give birth to the child of a man who raped her. "Section 3(2) of the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, provides that if the continuance of the pregnancy would cause grave injury to the physical or mental health of the pregnant woman, the pregnancy can be terminated. "Explanation 2 of Section 3 (2) says that where the pregnancy was caused by rape, the anguish caused by the pregnancy shall be presumed to constitute a grave injury to the mental health of the pregnant woman. Hence, a rape victim cannot be forced to give birth to a child of a man who sexually assaulted her. "Declining permission to a rape victim to medically terminate her unwanted pregnancy would amount to forcing her with the responsibility of motherhood and denying her human right to live with dignity, which forms a significant part of the Right of Life guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution," said the High Court. The High Court further pointed out that "pregnancy outside marriage.



Constituency Watch: For BJP it's fight for consolidation while Congress sees an opportunity to regain past glory in Nandurbar

Mumbai, May 9 (IANS) : The BJP and the Congress are locked in a high-intensity political battle in the tribal dominated Nandurbar constituency in North Maharashtra. The BJP has fielded sitting MP, Dr Heena Gavitt, who is eyeing a hat-trick, against the Congress nominee Adv Gopal Padvi, who is the son of the sitting Legislator KC Padvi and is contesting his maiden General Election. Nandurbar was a traditional bastion of the Congress till 2014 when Dr Gavitt defeated the nine-term MP and former Union Minister Manikrao Gavitt, riding on the Prime Minister Narendra Modi wave. In the 2019 elections, she was re-elected banking on her performance and the Modi government's works, defeat-

ing the Congress nominee KC Padvi. For the BJP and Dr Gavitt the election is quite crucial as the party seeks to further strengthen its grip in the constituency and increase its organisational presence all over the district. On the other hand, by fielding a new face, the Congress hopes to regain its past glory and reinstate its hold in the district. For Dr Gavitt, the BJP is playing up 'Modi's guarantee', the Viksit Bharat 2047 agenda and a slew of developmental works carried out by the NDA Government in 10 years and also by the Mahayuti Government since June 2022. The RSS' network, apart from the BJP's vibrant poll machinery, accompanied by cadres of the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena and Ajit Pawar-led NCP, has been Dr Gavitt's major source of strength. However, Shiv Sena leader and former Legislator Chandrakant

Raghuvanshi, who is a known rival of Dr Gavitt's father and BJP Minister Dr Vijaykumar Gavitt, has been a cause for worry. Despite Dr Gavitt's efforts to pacify Raghuvanshi, the latter is not working for her, though his support to the Congress' nominee has been a major booster dose for him. Dr Gavitt hopes to continue her victory march especially after the PM's rally slated for May 7 in Nandurbar for the May 13 polls here. The BJP claims that of all the initiatives, the implementation of the Rs 24,000 crore scheme for vulnerable tribal groups, launched on the birth anniversary of tribal icon Birsamunda, will yield positive results as it has been a game changer to push development in tribal areas.

Challans surge by 67 pc in Delhi for driving against traffic flow

New Delhi, May 9 (IANS) : Beware while driving against the designated flow of traffic in the national capital, you might be issued a challan for violating the rule. Since January, a staggering 30,062 motorists have been booked for violating this rule, a significant increase from the 18,047 violations recorded in 2023. This marks a noticeable uptick of nearly 67 per cent in prosecutions for "driving against

the flow of traffic" compared to the same period last year. "Over the past few months, there has been a noticeable surge in the number of vehicles violating traffic norms by driving against the designated flow of traffic. This reckless behaviour not only endangers the lives of the offenders but also poses a significant threat to other road users, leading to a rise in accidents and traffic congestion," said the traffic cops.





Shivpal booked for remarks against Mayawati

Budaun (UP), May 9 (IANS) : Uttar Pradesh Police on Thursday said an FIR has been registered against Samajwadi Party leader Shivpal Yadav for allegedly making derogatory statements against BSP chief Mayawati. Police said that on the complaint of BSP leader Ram Prakash Tyagi, an FIR was registered against Shivpal Yadav at the Civil Lines Police Station. He said that Yadav has been booked under sections 504 (intentional insult) and 505 (statements creating public mis-

chief) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). Shivpal Yadav's son Aditya Yadav is the SP candidate from Badaun, where voting will be held on Tuesday. In his complaint, Tyagi alleged that on May 3 he saw a news clipping in which Yadav used "indecent and objectionable" language against Mayawati. Tyagi has also urged the National Commission for Women and the National Commission for Scheduled Castes to take cognizance of the matter.



Molestation charge against Governor : Kolkata Police probing the content of the complaint

Kolkata, May 9 (IANS) : The Kolkata Police on Thursday issued a statement in connection with a molestation complaint lodged against West Bengal Governor C.V. Ananda Bose by a temporary staff of the Raj Bhavan in Kolkata, an allegation that the Governor has vehemently denied. In the statement, the police clarified that the investigation into the matter is not against any individual, but to find out what exactly happened on that day. The police also informed that the Special Investigation Team (SIT) formed to investigate the matter is

yet to get the CCTV footage from the Raj Bhavan. "Many mediapersons have asked me how the police can launch an inquiry against the Governor. We are probing the content of the complaint received at the Hare Street police station, not any individual. We are yet to get any CCTV footage from Raj Bhavan. We are in the process of speaking to some police personnel posted in the Raj Bhavan to proceed with the inquiry," the Deputy Commissioner (central division) of Kolkata Police said in the statement.

Delhi HC seeks reply from Delhi govt on plea for reconstitution of Waqf Tribunal

New Delhi, May 9 (IANS) : Delhi High Court on Thursday issued a notice on a plea seeking a directive to the Delhi government to promptly issue a notification for the reconstitution of the Waqf Tribunal in the national capital. Justice Subramonium Prasad has sought a response from the Delhi government on the matter, following a plea filed by Masjid and Dargah Shah Abdul Salam.

The plea highlights the lapse in the functioning of the Waqf Tribunal since April 20, 2022, due to the transfer of the former member of the State Judicial Service or ADJ from the Tribunal to another court. The plea said that the Delhi government has failed to issue the necessary notification under Section 83(1) of the Waqf Act, 1995, leaving the Tribunal without proper notification.

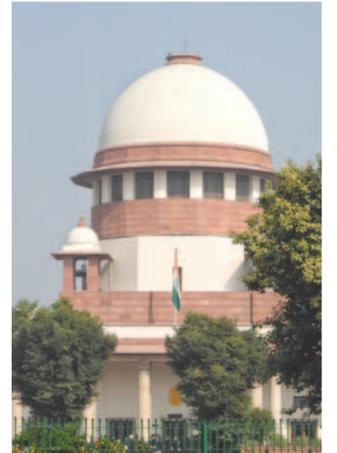


SC grants anticipatory bail to Umar Ansari in 2022 hate speech case

New Delhi, May 9 (IANS) : The Supreme Court on Thursday allowed the anticipatory bail plea filed by Umar Ansari, son of late gangster-turned-politician Mukhtar Ansari, in connection with the alleged hate speech case registered against him by Uttar Pradesh (UP) Police during the 2022 Assembly polls. Asking Umar Ansari to appear and participate in the ongoing trial, a Bench presided over by Justice Hrishikesh Roy said that in the event of arrest, he will be released on bail on furnishing a bail bond of Rs 20,000. During the hearing, senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the petitioner, contended that the offending

statement was not attributed to Umar Ansari, and other co-accused, including his brother Abbas Ansari, had already been granted regular bail by the trial court. Opposing the plea, Additional Advocate General (AAG) Garima Prashad, representing UP Police, submitted that non-bailable warrants were issued against Umar Ansari on account of his non-appearance before the trial court and he should surrender to get bail. Earlier in January this year, the Bench, also comprising Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra, issued a notice and granted ad interim protection from arrest to Umar Ansari. "Issue notice returnable within a period of four weeks, in the meantime, the petitioner is protected from arrest," the top

court had ordered. In December 2023, the Allahabad High Court rejected the anticipatory bail application filed by Umar Ansari, co-accused in the hate speech case. He allegedly threatened UP government officials with a public meeting in Paharpur area in Mau, during elections. Mau police, in March 2022 booked the Ansari brothers under Section 171F (offence of undue influence at an election) and 506 (criminal intimidation) of IPC, after a video of the speech went viral on social media. The Supreme Court in July last year had declined to quash criminal proceedings



against Umar Ansari and asked him to apply for discharge before the trial court. He had contended that he was charged for merely being on the stage when his brother allegedly made the controversial speech in violation of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC).

Families of Lalu Prasad, Shibu Soren looted the country : Samrat Choudhary

Patna May 9 (IANS) : After separate teams of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) seized around Rs 25 crore in cash from the house of a PA to a Cabinet minister in Jharkhand, Deputy Chief Minister of Bihar, Samrat Choudhary, alleged that the families of Lalu Prasad Yadav and Shibu Soren have looted the country.

The cash was seized from the house of a domestic help of Sanjiv Lal, the personal assistant to Jharkhand Minister Alamgir Alam. The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Thursday launched a series of raids across multiple locations in Ranchi, leading to the seizure of Rs 25 crore unaccounted cash.



Intense coral bleaching recorded in Lakshadweep due to marine heatwaves

Kochi, May 9 (IANS) : Researchers at the ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) have recorded a widespread bleaching event impacting the coral reefs in the Lakshadweep sea owing to marine heatwaves.

It was revealed in a survey from various Lakshadweep islands that a considerable percentage of the hard coral species have undergone severe bleaching, primarily due to a prolonged period of marine heatwaves affecting the region since late October 2023.

Marine heatwaves are rare extreme weather events that involve prolonged periods of abnormally-high ocean temperatures. These temperatures often exceed the 90th percentile of typical regional ocean temperatures based on historical data. In Lakshadweep, the Degree Heating Week (DHW) indicator, which measures accumulated heat stress, has surged above 4 degrees C-weeks.

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), this level of DHW poses a substantial risk of coral bleaching, threatening the region's diverse marine ecosystems.

Dr KR Sreenath, senior scientist of CMFRI said such heat stress levels signify a severe threat to coral health, leading to extensive bleaching where corals lose the symbiotic algae (zooxanthellae), compromising their survival by depriving them of essential nutrients.

"If the DHW continues to rise, reaching beyond 12 degrees C-weeks, it could precipitate an unprecedented biodiversity crisis due to multispecies mortality," said Dr Sreenath. According to Dr Shelton Padua, senior sci-



entist at CMFRI, the primary causes of these marine heatwaves as excessive heat atmospheric transfer coupled with shifts in ocean currents, leading to unusually high water temperatures. "Since October 27, 2023, the Lakshadweep Sea, spanning from 80.0 to 12.0 N latitude and 71.0 to 75.0 E longitude, has been experiencing these conditions, with temperatures consistently registering rises greater than 1 degrees C above the norm," said Dr Padua. Viewing that the health of marine ecosystems is integral to the livelihoods of coastal communities, influencing tourism and fisheries sectors, Dr Sreenath said that the ongoing marine heatwaves are likely to cause significant economic losses by disrupting their vital ecosystem services.

Kshatriya community's influence reshaping Gujarat's Lok Sabha elections

Rajkot, May 9 (IANS) : The Lok Sabha elections in Gujarat have been marked by the Kshatriya community's tumultuous display of power and determination.

The protests against alleged derogatory remarks by Union Minister Parshottam Rupala, who is the BJP's Rajkot candidate, have evolved into a formidable force shaping Gujarat's political landscape. During a Dalit community function in Rajkot on March 2, BJP leader Rupala stated that while Dalits had shown unwavering dedication, Rajputs/Kshatriyas shared meals and married their daughters to heretics.

Rupala is a Patel, and his remarks on the Kshatriya community added fuel to the fire. Kshatriyas and Patels are two important communities that influence Gujarat's politics. Given the "roti-beti vyavhar" comment by Rupala, the

Kshatriya community organised itself, forming a coordination committee comprising 92 organisations across Gujarat.

Their demand for the withdrawal of minister Rupala's candidature went unheeded by the BJP, leading to escalated protests and disruptions in the BJP candidates' campaigns in Kshatriya-dominated areas.

The Kshatriya community constitutes approximately 70 lakh or 10 per cent of Gujarat's total population. This demographic strength has considerable influence over electoral outcomes, particularly in key constituencies like Jamnagar, Rajkot, Surendranagar, Bhavnagar, Kutch, Banaskantha, Sabarkantha, Anand, and Bharuch.

Despite apologies from Rupala and other party leaders, the BJP stood firm, prompting a shift in the Kshatriya community's stance. Initially targeting Rupala, they now pledge to vote against the BJP on all 25 Lok Sabha and 5 Assembly seats in Gujarat, signaling a significant challenge for the ruling party.

In response to a senior Kshatriya leader's appeal for forgiving the BJP, the community's coordination committee reinforced its resolve on May 5, urging Rajputs to uphold their commitment to voting against the BJP over the Rupala contro-



versy. Karansinh Chavda of the Kshatriya Coordination Committee emphasised, "This is a battle of ego versus pride. We aim to achieve 100 per cent anti-BJP voting across all 25 Lok Sabha and 5 Assembly seats. Our non-violent protests were ignored. The BJP's leaders continue to make divisive remarks without apology.

This lack of accountability is unacceptable. Our protests will extend beyond this issue. We will demonstrate our influence in future district and panchayat elections, impacting 10-12 seats and significantly influencing local bodies."

Meanwhile, Gujarat Congress leader Paresh Dhanani is the candidate for the Rajkot seat against senior BJP leader Rupala. This decision of the Kshatriyas has elevated the importance of the Rajkot constituency in Gujarat's political landscape.

Their move is noteworthy as Dhanani has a history of defeating Rupala, having triumphed over him in the 2002 Assembly elections for the Amreli constituency. Drawing a parallel to the disrobing of Draupadi in the Mahabharata, Dhanani emphasised the perceived insult felt by the Kshatriya community due to Rupala's comments.

Fierce battle on the cards in Telangana's Karimnagar

Hyderabad, May 9 (IANS) : Sitting MP and BJP general secretary Bandi Sanjay Kumar is taking on BRS leader B. Vinod Kumar and Congress party's Velicherla Rajendra Rao in what is likely to be a fierce battle in Karimnagar Lok Sabha constituency. Known as the political nerve centre of north Telangana, Karimnagar has a history of sending candidates of all major parties to the Parliament. A Congress stronghold since its inception till the mid-1990s, Karimnagar was wrested by the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) in 1996. Since then, Congress has struggled to regain the lost ground though it won the seat in 2009. Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) bagged the seat twice in 1998 and 1999 while Telangana

Rashtra Samithi (TRS) founder K. Chandrasekhar Rao (KCR) won the seat thrice in the 14th Lok Sabha in 2004 (2006 and 2008 by-polls). Congress regained the seat in 2009 when Ponnamp Prabhakar was elected but he failed to retain it in 2014. In both the 2014 and 2019 elections, TRS (now BRS) and BJP swapped the top two positions, with Congress slipping to the third spot. The winner and runners-up of the previous two elections are again in the fray. However, the victory of the Congress party in recent Assembly elections has given it a new hope of wresting the seat back. While both BJP and BRS declared their candidates in the first week of March, the Congress party delayed the announcement due to several aspirants for the ticket. It was only in the eleventh hour that Congress named Velicherla

Rajendra Rao as its candidate. Son of former Karimnagar MLA Velichala Jagapathi Rao, Rajendra Rao had contested the 2009 elections on the ticket of Praja Rajyam Party (PRP) floated by Tollywood superstar K. Chiranjeevi. He had finished third. In the recently held Assembly elections, Congress won four out of seven Assembly segments under the Karimnagar parliamentary constituency. The BRS won the remaining three. The BJP drew a blank. Sitting MP Bandi Sanjay of BJP himself lost the election from the Karimnagar Assembly seat in a three-cornered contest. BRS candidate Gangula Kamalakar defeated Sanjay by a narrow margin of 3,163 votes. While Gangula Kamalakar secured 92,179 votes, Sanjay polled 89,016 votes. Purumalla Srinivas of Congress

finished third by polling 40,057 votes. Despite the loss, Sanjay is hoping for a repeat of 2019 as he had won the Lok Sabha seat a few months after defeat in the Assembly elections. In the 2018 Assembly elections, the BJP leader had lost to Gangula Kamalakar of BRS by 14,974 votes. Congress party's Ponnamp Prabhakar had finished third. In 2014 too, Bandi Sanjay had suffered defeat at the hands of Kamalakar. In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, Bandi Sanjay won the seat by defeating Vinod Kumar of BRS by a margin of 89,508. Sanjay polled 4,98,276 votes while Vinod Kumar secured 4,08,768 votes. Congress party's Ponnamp Prabhakar had finished third with 1,79,258 votes. Political analysts say BJP won the Lok Sabha seat in 2019 with a huge majority



though the party did not have a single MLA seat. In the Assembly elections held in November 2023, the BJP finished second in Karimnagar and Huzurabad and third in Choppadandi (SC), Vemulawada, Sircilla, Manakondur (SC) and Husnabad Assembly segments. The BJP, which had secured over 1.22 lakh votes in 2009 and finished fourth, has been increasing its votes with every election. In 2014, its candidate Chennamaneni Vidyasagar Rao finished third. It was Vidyasagar Rao who was first elected on BJP ticket from Karimnagar in 1998 and retained

the seat in 1999. He had served as Minister of State in the Vajpayee government. He later served as Maharashtra Governor from 2014 to 2019. Karimnagar gained prominence when KCR was elected in 2004, which was the first election after he floated TRS (now BRS) to revive the Telangana movement. He retained the seat in 2006 and 2008 by-elections. Bandi Sanjay Kumar is confident of retaining the seat as he believes that there is a BJP wave with people making up their mind to give Prime Minister Narendra Modi a third term.



With influx of 50 more refugees, 34,332 people from Myanmar sheltered in Mizoram

Aizawl, May 9 (IANS) : With around 50 more refugees coming to Mizoram from Myanmar, as many as 34,332 Myanmar people have taken shelter in the northeastern state so far, officials said on Thursday. A Mizoram government official said that around 50 Myanmar people, including 10 women, fled Paletwa in the neighbouring country's Chin region and entered Hruitezwai village in Mizoram's Lawngtlai district during the past few days to evade recruitment in the Arakan Army (AA) militant group. Based out of Rakhine in Myanmar, the Arakan Army is the largest armed ethnic outfit in the country, which is re-

cruiting people from the Chin region to intensify their battle against the Army. "Young people in Myanmar who refuse to be forcibly recruited in the Arakan Army are fleeing to Mizoram," the official said. Before the latest influx of refugees, 34,282 Myanmar migrants took shelter in Mizoram's 11 districts in phases after the military junta seized power in the neighbouring country on February 1, 2021. At present, a total of 34,332 Myanmar nationals, including 10,900 women and 13,310 children, are living in the relief camps in Mizoram, while some are staying with their relatives or in rented accommodations. Besides the Myanmar nationals, around 10,000 men, women and children have also taken shelter in Mizoram after the ethnic violence broke out in neighbouring Manipur in May last year.

Congress nominee from Karnal gets bail in case related to blocking Delhi-Jaipur E-way in 2023

Gurugram, May 9 (IANS) : The district court in Gurugram on Thursday granted bail to the Congress nominee from the Karnal Lok Sabha seat, Divyanshu Budhiraja, and three others in a case related to blocking the Delhi-Jaipur Expressway during a protest in March last year. The blockade of the Expressway was carried out in protest against the cancellation of the Lok Sabha membership of former Congress President Rahul Gandhi. The court also ordered Budhiraja to furnish a Rs 50,000 bail bond. Those granted bail include Budhiraja, Arun, Anshu Sharma, and Lavnish Hudda. Based on a complaint filed by ASI Yogender Kumar, a case was registered against around 10 persons.



Over 15,000 houses, other properties damaged in Manipur in heavy rains, hailstorm : CM

Imphal, May 9 (IANS) : A total of 15,425 houses, other properties, and many vehicles have been severely damaged due to the heavy rains, accompanied by gusty winds and hailstorms, in Manipur, Chief Minister N. Biren Singh said on Thursday. The heavy rains and hailstorms also left a large number of trees and electric poles uprooted. The Chief Minister said that the maximum number of houses, 6,053, were damaged in Imphal West district followed by 5,600 houses in Imphal East district, 1,179 in Bishnupur, 800 in Thoubal, 540 in Churachandpur, 292 in Kangpokpi, 200 in Ukhrul and remaining in other districts. "The state sustained massive damages to various properties in Sunday's rain and hailstorm. Further assessments of damages are going on in different districts. Among the districts, the Imphal West district is worst affected by the

calamity," he told the media. Biren Singh said that 42 relief camps were opened to provide temporary shelter to the disaster-affected people and the respective Deputy Commissioners are providing relief materials to them. The state government has sanctioned Rs 6.19 crore to meet the relief expenses. The Chief Minister said that instructions were given to take suitable measures to prevent a hike in the prices of roofing and construction materials. The government would compensate the losses of livestock, crops and vegetables incurred by farmers, he said.

MP govt to provide ex gratia sums to kins of ASI Bagri, Cpl Vikki Pahade

Bhopal, May 9 (IANS) : Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav, on Thursday, said that his government will provide an ex gratia sum of Rupees one crore to kins of Indian Air Force (IAF) soldier Cpl Vikki Pahade, who was killed by militants in Poonch region of J&K on May 4. A compensation of the same amount will be provided to Assistant Sub Inspector (ASI) Mahendra Bagri, who was killed by sand mafia in Shahdol. In an official statement issued on Thursday, CM Yadav said that the state government would send a proposal to the Election Commission regarding approval for the ex gratia sum as the Model Code of Conduct for Lok Sabha elections is in force. "The state government will send the proposal to the Election Commission for the approval of ex gratia



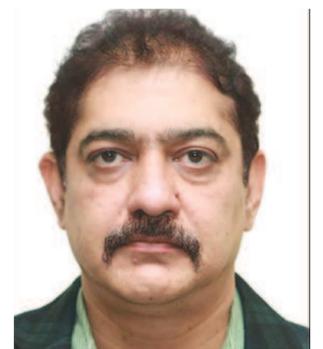
of Rupees one crore to kins of ASI Mahendra Bagri and IAF Jawan Vikki Pahade," Chief Minister's Office said on Thursday. CM Yadav will also attend the funeral of martyred Vikki Pahade and has left for Chhindwara. The last rites of ASI Mahendra Bagri was performed on Sunday, in the presence of Shahdol Collector and SP.

'New Aerocity in Goa will boost tourism prospects in state'

Jaipur, May 9 (IANS) : Goa, a favourite tourist place for many avid travellers, is now promoting itself as a wedding and MICE destination. Known for its sun, sand, sea and scenic location, the state has launched a beach wedding policy with a single-window system to ensure that couples tie the knot without facing any bottlenecks. "The new Aerocity coming here will change the dynamics of tourism," says Sanjeev Ahuja, secretary of tourism, Goa. Speaking to IANS, Ahuja said that the New Aerocity will further boost tourism prospects in Goa. "New Aerocity at MOPA air-

port is all set to boost the tourism prospects in the tourist-friendly state in the next few years. There will be a golf course coming for tourists which will engage the MICE tourists visiting Goa. This Aerocity will be developed to the tune of Delhi Aerocity," Ahuja said. He said that the state government is pushing big to make the state famous as a wedding destination. He said that beach weddings in Goa are trending and the Goa government is pushing this segment aggressively. "We are happy to see beach destinations getting popular. Our state government has come up with a beach wedding policy in Goa which makes it easier for everyone to seek permission to

solemnise the wedding on a beach. We have a single window system where people can apply and get permission for a beach wedding. It is catching up and we are happy that Goa is promoted as a wedding destination." Ahuja said that he is impressed with Rajasthan's tourism and credited the state for launching the wedding destination trend from Udaipur. When asked if Goa has taken any clues from Rajasthan tourism, he said: "We have been interacting with Rajasthan tourism. Rajasthan is the first state where destination weddings were prompted. We interact



with all tourism departments across the country and have regular interaction so that all states learn from each other." Ahuja said that they are promoting Goa throughout the world and organising roadshows in different countries and participating in tourism fairs in different nations too. "There is a huge market and I believe we need not compete with each other. These days people are going to a destination wedding, it is a healthy competition.



Bangladesh calls for holding Israel accountable for war crimes

Dhaka, May 9 (IANS) : Bangladeshi Foreign Minister Hasan Mahmud has called for immediate cessation of the current Palestinian-Israeli conflict, ensuring humanitarian access and holding Israel accountable for war crimes and crimes against humanity. "We, the members of the OIC (Organization of the Islamic Conference), should be part of a multi-tracked international engagement to end the Gaza crisis," he said while speaking at the 15th OIC Summit Conference in Banjul, capital of The Gambia, according to a Bangladeshi foreign ministry. The minister said the OIC should continue initiating dialogue with the governments and inter-governmental bodies like the United Nations, European Union and other organisations to counter Islamophobia and foster tolerance, Xinhua news agency reported.

Israel begins Rafah evacuation ahead of planned military operation

Tel Aviv, May 9 (IANS/DPA) : The Israeli military called on residents of eastern Rafah, in southern Gaza, to evacuate to an "expanded humanitarian area," ahead of a possible offensive. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF), on Thursday, said that it "encourages" residents of eastern Rafah to move to an expanded humanitarian area in the al-Mawasi refugee camp on the Mediterranean, not far from the border with Egypt. "In accordance with the approval of the government, an ongoing situation assessment will guide the gradual movement of civilians in the specified areas to the humanitarian areas," the IDF said in a Telegram post. The IDF characterised the evacuation as "temporary," adding that calls for the relocation would be "conveyed through posters, SMS messages, phone calls and media broadcasts in Arabic."

"The IDF will continue pursuing Hamas everywhere in Gaza until all the hostages that they are holding in captivity are back home." In a follow-up post, the IDF told Gaza residents that it "will continue fighting the terror organisations that use you as human shields." Indirect negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian militant organisation Hamas in Cairo at the weekend on a ceasefire in the Gaza war and the release of hostages in exchange for Palestinian prisoners failed to produce any results. Israel wants to use the military operation in Rafah to smash the



remaining Hamas battalions. Hostages captured during the October 7 attacks, which triggered the conflict, are also believed to be held in the city on the border with Egypt. Israel's allies have been urgently warning against a Rafah offensive because hundreds of thousands of internally displaced Palestinians have moved there. Overnight, Israel's Defence Min-

ister Yoav Gallant spoke with his US counterpart Lloyd Austin, Gallant's office said. Gallant briefed Austin on the Sunday Hamas attack, in which approximately 10 projectiles were fired from the area adjacent to the Rafah crossing towards the Kerem Shalom humanitarian crossing area.

Ukrainian attacks with British weapons will invite retaliation, Russia tells UK

Moscow, May 9 (IANS) : Days after UK Foreign Secretary David Cameron said that Ukraine had the right to use long-range missiles sent by his country to strike deep inside Russia, Moscow on Thursday conveyed that this facility could invite retaliation on British targets.

UK's Ambassador to Russia, Nigel Casey was summoned to the Foreign Ministry and told Moscow will retaliate against British targets in Ukraine or elsewhere if Ukraine strikes Russian territory with UK-provided missiles, RT reported.

"Casey was warned that the response to Ukrainian strikes using British weapons on Russian territory could be any British military facilities and equipment on the territory of Ukraine and beyond," the Foreign Ministry said in a statement following the meeting.

Cameron's statements to the contrary "de facto recognised his country as a party to the conflict", it said, adding that Russia understands Cameron's comments as "evidence of a serious escalation and confirmation of London's increasing involvement in military operations on the side of Kiev".



The UK envoy was urged to "think about the inevitable catastrophic consequences of such hostile steps from London and to immediately refute in the most decisive and unequivocal manner the bellicose provocative statements of the head of the Foreign Office".

French Ambassador Pierre Levy was also summoned to the Foreign Ministry. Moscow has not yet disclosed the details of the meeting. Russia has taken strong exception to French President Emmanuel Macron's pitch for

NATO troops in Ukraine to prevent a Russian breakthrough Earlier in the day, the Russian Defense Ministry announced an exercise to test the deployment of tactical nuclear weapons. President Vladimir Putin ordered the drills after "provocative statements and threats" by Western officials, the military said.



S. Korea's working-age population to dip by nearly 10 mn by 2044 amid low births

Seoul, May 9 (IANS) : South Korea's economically active population is anticipated to plunge by nearly 10 million by 2044 amid the country's critically low births, data showed on Thursday. According to a report from the Korean Peninsula Population Institute for the Future, the number of people aged 15 to 64, which stood at 36.57 million in 2023, is projected to decrease to 27.17 million in 2044, Yonhap news agency reported. The report also showed the number of elementary school freshmen, which came to 4,30,000 last year, is set to nearly halve to 2,20,000 in 2033.

The number of deaths is expected to reach 7,46,000 in 2060, compared with births estimated at just 1,56,000, leading to a natural population decline of 5,90,000. Accordingly, South Korea's total population, estimated at 51.71 million in 2023, was forecast to drop to 39.69 million by 2065.



White House says it's examining Hamas agreement to ceasefire proposal

Washington, May 9 (IANS/DPA) : The US government has said that it is examining Hamas' agreement to a mediated proposal for a ceasefire in Gaza.

"We're currently reviewing that response. And we're discussing it with our partners in the region," National Security Council Communications Director John Kirby said on Thursday. Kirby evaded a journalist's question as to what exactly Hamas had agreed to in the proposal. He would not go into that, he said. "We still believe that reaching an agreement is the absolute best outcome not only for the hostages, but for the Palestinian people.

Entire NC unit in Ladakh's Kargil quits party to protest LS alliance

Srinagar, May 9 (IANS) : In a major setback to the National Conference (NC), its entire unit in Ladakh's Kargil resigned en masse from the party over its decision to support the Congress candidate in the UT's sole Lok Sabha seat.

In a letter addressed to NC President, Dr Farooq Abdullah, NC's Additional General Secretary for the Ladakh UT, Qamar Ali Akhoun has conveyed the decision of the Kargil unit to quit in the greater interest of the Ladakh region.

The differences between the NC high command and its Kargil unit stem from the disagreement of the Kargil NC leaders over the party's decision to support Congress candidate, Tsering Namgayal for the Lok Sabha seat.

The local NC unit has fielded Haji Hanifa Jan as an Independent candidate. Following the support of both powerful local religious organisations, namely the Imam Khomeini Memorial Trust.



Sharad Pawar to cast vote in Baramati after a decade

Pune (Maharashtra), May 9 (IANS) : After a decade, Nationalist Congress Party (SP) President Sharad Pawar will return to his home base Baramati to vote during the third phase of Lok Sabha elections on Thursday.

For decades, Sharad Pawar had been a voter in Baramati, but around a decade ago, he had shifted his voting to Mumbai to fulfil certain criteria of the Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA). His address was the landmark Silver Oaks bungalow at Malabar Hill in south Mumbai. The NCP (SP) chief had served cricket in various capacities, including as MCA President, BCCI President, and head of the International Cricket Council (ICC) in the past.

Marking a return to his native place, he has shifted his residential base to Pune and will vote at a polling centre in Malegaon village of the district.

However, his daughter Supriya Sule will vote in Baramati town, while NCP President and Deputy CM Ajit Pawar and his

wife Sunetra will vote at Katewadi village on the outskirts of Baramati town. This time, the two women - 'nanad' Supriya Sule and her 'bhabhi' Sunetra A. Pawar -- are locked in a direct prestige battle, the outcome of which is expected to determine the political supremacy of the Pawar uncle-nephew duo in their traditional family bastion. While campaigning during the final poll rally on Thursday night.

Boeing again scrubs crewed launch of Starliner



New Delhi, May 9 (IANS) : Boeing has yet again scrubbed the Starliner manned mission over an oxygen relief valve, two hours before launch, NASA announced. The CST-100 Starliner spacecraft was expected to launch NASA astronauts Butch Wilmore and Indian-Origin Sunita Williams.

While the crew had entered the spacecraft, it faced an issue with a valve in the rocket's upper stage leading to the scrub.

"Today's #Starliner launch is scrubbed as teams evaluate an oxygen relief valve on the Centaur Stage on the Atlas V," NASA informed in a post on X.com

Balasaheb would have slammed Uddhav Thackeray for his ideological compromise : Eknath Shinde

Thane (Maharashtra), May 9 (IANS) : Maharashtra Chief Minister and Shiv Sena chief Eknath Shinde on Thursday targeted Shiv Sena (UBT) President Uddhav Thackeray, questioning his silence over the recent remarks made by Vijay Wadettiwar, the leader of the opposition in the state Assembly, concerning the martyred policemen of the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks. Wadettiwar's claim on Thursday that late ATS chief Hemant Karkare was "not killed by terrorists during the 26/11 attacks" has snowballed into a political slugfest in Maharashtra.



'In the nets, he always bat like...', Yuvraj Singh reveals the key to Kohli's success



Former India star allrounder Yuvraj Singh voiced his opinion on how Virat Kohli became one of the greatest batters of this generation. He has come to the aid of his ex-teammate after criticism regarding his strike rate in T20's became the focal point of conversation ahead of the 2024 T20 World Cup. Many reports even speculated Kohli might be left out of the squad heading to the tournament.

"I think he understands his game really well. He knows if he's there till the end, he is going to win the game for India and he has done that on some big occasions - against Australia in Mohali as well," Yuvraj told ICC.

"Once he had the confidence of chasing and knowing the situation, he knows how to bat in these situations, knows which bowlers to attack, which bowlers to take singles off, when to attack again, handle the pressure and knows when to change his game," he said. Kohli has been India's star batsman for more than a decade and has been one of the star performers for Indian cricket at ICC tournaments ever since his induction into the team. The 35-year-old entered the 2023 ICC ODI World Cup after a lean patch without a century which extended to more than 1,000 days.



Premier League announces eight nominees For PL Player of the Season

New Delhi, May 9 (IANS) : The Premier League has announced the eight players that have been nominated for the PL Player of the Season award. All football fans can nominate their favourite players who they might believe are worthy of the prestigious award through the official site or app of the Premier League.

Erling Haaland and Phil Foden are the two nominees from the defending champions Manchester City. The midfield duo of Martin Odegaard and Declan Rice will be representing the current league leaders Arsenal, Alexander Isak (Newcastle United), Virgil Van Dijk (Liverpool), Ollie Watkins (Aston Villa).



Govt approves Nikhat Zareen's request for Game-ready Equipment; Sharath's trip to Germany

New Delhi, May 9 (IANS) : The Mission Olympic Cell (MOC) of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has approved boxer Nikhat Zareen's request for game-ready equipment that includes Laser Unit-BTL, Ankle wrap Game Ready, Full Leg Wrap Game Ready, Hand wrist wrap Game Ready and Trolley BTL Laser Unit. The Game-ready Equipment uses high-intensity laser applications that control homogenous energy spread without the need for an operator. This makes the equipment ideal for the back area, large muscle groups, and joint therapy. The equipment thus contributes to pain reduction and faster recovery after injury. Besides, the MOC also approved the proposal of paddler Achanta Sharath Kamal for financial assistance for training at the National Table Tennis Training Centre in Düsseldorf, Germany. Sharath will be training for 22 days under his coach Chris Pfeiffer and centre coach Danny Heister. Under the Target Olympics Podium Scheme (TOPS), MOC has recommended funding for his accommodation, food, training, sparring partner and recovery sessions.

Cricket growth will be boasted by the hosting of T20 WC 2024: USA cricket chief Venu Pisike

New Delhi, May 9 (IANS) : The United States of America (USA) will be co-hosting the ICC T20 men's cricket World Cup 2024 for the first time along with the West Indies and it will attract huge popularity in the growth of cricket in the baseball-playing nation, believes USA cricket chairman Venu Pisike.

The men's T20 World Cup is scheduled to take place from June 1-29. The USA cricket team, who are making their debut in the World Cup will play its first match against neighbours, Canada on June 1.



WTT Saudi Smash : Manika Batra knocked out in quarterfinals

Jeddah (Saudi Arabia), May 9 (IANS) : The brilliant campaign of top Indian woman paddler Manika Batra at the World Table Tennis (WTT) Saudi Smash came to an end after she lost to World No.5 Hina Hayata of Japan in the quarterfinals, here

on Thursday. Japan's Hayata beat World No.39 Manika 4-1 (7-11, 11-6, 11-4, 13-11, 11-2) in 39 minutes to reach the semifinals.



Focus on Sumit Antil as Indian para-athletes gear up for World Para-Athletics World Championships in Kobe

New Delhi, May 9 (IANS) : The Indian contingent comprising 33 athletes is all set to embark on a journey to the 2024 World Para Athletics World Championships in Kobe, Japan, as they prepare to showcase their prowess on the global stage. A total of 40 athletes, 32 men and 8 women, are participating in this edition which is to be held between May 17 to 24.

In the previous edition of the World Championships in Paris, India secured a commendable tally of nine medals, including three gold. Looking ahead to Kobe 2024, the Indian team aims to surpass this achievement with a target of 13-14 medals.

The athletes have undergone rigorous training and have received unparalleled support to enhance their performance. Positive results are expected from proven champions like Sumit Antil, Sachin Khilari, Simran Sharma and others. Reflecting on this momentous occasion, Devendra Jhajharia, president of the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI), expressed his optimism and dedication towards the team's goal.

"Our objective is clear: to exceed our previous achievements and bring home more medals than ever before. The hard work of our coaches and players, coupled with the unwavering support from the association officials, has fueled our ambitions for success," he said. Jhajharia, who himself has a remarkable sporting journey, added, "I vividly remember India's first gold medal in the 2013 World Championships in France. Now, as President, I am committed to ensuring our athletes receive the best support to excel not only in Kobe but also as we look ahead to the Paralympics in Paris 2024." Sumit Antil, the current world record holder in javelin throw, is excited about the upcoming event. "It is Olympic year, and every competition is very important. All athletes are excited. Everyone is happy with their training, and we hope to do well as contingent," said Antil.

Diksha to play her 100th event on Ladies European Tour

Seoul (South Korea), May 9 (IANS) : India's Diksha Dagar is all set for a new landmark. The 23-year-old will make a historic 100th start on the Ladies European Tour, when she starts at the Aramco Team Series Korea. Diksha, who has two wins

and 16 Top-10 finishes in her career that began in 2019 is currently ninth on the LET Order of Merit. There are two other Indians in the field. They are rookie Pranavi Urs and Vani Kapoor. In the team competition Diksha will lead the team of Czech Tereza Melecka and

Korean Do Yeon Park, while Pranavi and Vani are in the team led by Singaporean Shannon Tan, who won in Kenya this season. Diksha has in the past been on the winning team in the Aramco Team Series in London in 2021.



Uzo men's football nationals: Delhi triumph over Kerala on penalties to enter SF

Narainpur (Chhattisgarh), May 9 (IANS) : Delhi reached the semifinals of the Swami Vivekananda U-20 Men's National Football Championship when they overcame Kerala via a tie-breaker at the Ram akrishna Mission Ashrama Ground, here on Thursday. The tie-breaker was applied after the teams were locked 3-3 at the end of regulation time and 30 minutes of extra time failed to break the deadlock. Delhi proved superior to their rivals in the tie-breaker, winning 4-1.