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India Inc saw robust deal-making activity in April, with three major domestic consolidations by the Adani Group valued at \$2 billion, representing 38 per cent of the total deal values...

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Country witnessing anti-Modi wave, says Telangana CM

Hyderabad, May 13 (IANS) : Telangana Chief Minister, A Revanth Reddy on Monday claimed that there is an 'anti-Modi wave' sweeping the country and that if the BJP fails to reach the magic figure the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) partners will not extend support. CM Reddy exuded confidence that the INDIA bloc will form the next government at the Centre. CM Reddy was talking to media persons after casting his vote in the

Lok Sabha election along with his wife and daughter in Kodangal in Vikarabad District. The Chief Minister questioned the silence of the Election Commission on anti-Constitution statements of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He said while INDIA bloc partners were issued notices for their statements, no action was taken against PM Modi and other BJP leaders for their remarks.

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On eve of nomination filing, PM Modi's roadshow gets bigger than before in Varanasi

Varanasi (UP), May 13 (IANS) : The flower shower, once it began, did not stop. A million lights twinkled in the air and their reflection danced on the Ganga River, creating a mesmerising look. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's roadshow in his parliamentary constituency Varanasi could not have got

any bigger or better than this. The Prime Minister began the roadshow by garlanding the statue of Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya at the Banaras Hindu University (BHU) gate intersection. He was accompanied by UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, before state BJP President Bhupendra Chaudhary joined in later.

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Chiranjeevi, Jr NTR, Allu Arjun cast votes in Hyderabad

Hyderabad, May 13 (IANS) : Tollywood stars K. Chiranjeevi, Junior NTR and Allu Arjun were among the first to cast their votes in

Hyderabad on Monday. Chiranjeevi accompanied by his wife Surekha cast their votes at a polling centre in posh Jubilee Hills.



Where will funds for Congress' 'Khata-Khat' schemes come from, asks Nirmala Sitharaman

New Delhi, May 13 (IANS) : Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday fired a fresh salvo against Rahul Gandhi and the Congress, for making "lofty promises disconnected with reality" during the Lok Sabha poll campaign without explaining where the huge funds to finance these schemes were going to come from.

The Finance Minister said that these schemes could not be implemented without increasing taxes or borrowing heavily and running down the economy. The Finance Minister said on X: "Has @INCIndia considered the cost of the lofty promises made in their manifesto? Have they calculated how much the 'Khata Khat' schemes will cost fiscally? Will

they borrow substantially for them, or will they raise taxes to fund them? How many welfare schemes would @RahulGandhi shut down to accommodate the fiscal cost of the 'Khata Khat' schemes?"

Continued on pg 02



KCR casts his vote in Chintamadaka

Siddipet, May 13 (NSS): BRS supremo Kalvakuntla Chandra sekhar Rao and his wife Shobha exercised their franchise at Chintamadaka polling booth on Monday morning. Former minister Harish Rao and several BRS leaders accompanied KCR. On the occasion, a large number of villagers of Chintamadaka met him. Speaking to mediapersons after casting vote, KCR said the polling was going on well in Chintamadaka. He said there is a chance of 65 to 70 per cent polling. Asked whether he would join hands with the India Alliance if it form the next government.

Andhra CM Jagan Mohan Reddy, TDP chief Chandrababu Naidu cast votes

Amaravati, May 13 (IANS) : Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and YSR Congress party chief Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy and Telugu Desam Party president N. Chandrababu Naidu cast their votes in the first hour on Monday. While Jagan Mohan Reddy cast his vote in Pulivendula in the YSR Kadapa district, Chandrababu Naidu exercised his franchise at Undavalli in Guntur district. Polling was underway for simultaneous elections to the 175-member Assembly and all 25 Lok Sabha seats in the state.

Jagan Mohan Reddy, accompanied by his wife Bharati,

polled his vote in the Pulivendula Assembly constituency from where he is seeking re-election. Chandrababu Naidu accompanied by his family voted at a polling centre at Undavalli in Guntur district. The former chief minister was ac-



companied by his wife Nara Bhuvaneshwari, their son Nara Lokesh and daughter-in-law Brahmani. Chandrababu Naidu is seeking re-election from the Kuppam constituency in his native Chittoor district.



Hyderabad BJP candidate Madhavi Latha booked

Hyderabad, May 12 (IANS) : Hyderabad police on Monday booked BJP candidate from Hyderabad Lok Sabha seat K. Madhavi Latha after she asked some burqa-clad Muslim women voters to show their faces at a polling station to verify their identity. A case was

registered against her at Malakpet Police Station under sections 171 C (undue influence at elections, 186 (obstructing public servant in discharge of public functions), 505 (1) C (act with intent to incite, or which is likely to incite).



Ex Vice-President, Tripura Governor cast votes in

Hyderabad

Hyderabad, May 13 (IANS) : Former Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu and Tripura Governor N. Chandrababu Naidu, were among prominent leaders who cast their votes here on Monday for Lok Sabha elections in Telangana. Naidu and his wife Ushamma were among the first voters at a polling station at Obul Reddy School in upscale Jubilee Hills in Secunderabad parliamentary constituency.

Country witnessing anti-Modi wave, says Telangana CM

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He alleged that PM Modi was misguiding the people of the country. He also remarked that despite serving as Chief Minister for nearly 13 years and as Prime Minister for 10 years, PM Modi has not fully understood the spirit of the Constitution of India. Accusing the

Modi Government of misusing the central agencies, he said no action was taken against BJP leader Navaneet Kaur for her '15 seconds' remark but the Ministry of Home Affairs lodged a complaint against Congress leaders in a viral video case and Delhi Police rushed to Hyderabad to serve notices. He said that tainted leaders

were cleared of corruption charges after they were taken into the 'BJP washing machine'. Revanth Reddy also slammed the BJP for seeking votes in the name of PM Modi. "We are seeking votes on the policies of the INDIA bloc but BJP is asking for votes in the name of Modi. This shows who is 'namdaar' and who is

'kaamdaar'", he said. He exuded confidence that the INDIA bloc will form the next government at the Centre. He was also confident that in Telangana the Congress party would secure more than the 33.5 per cent votes it secured in Lok Sabha elections in 2019. He termed the Lok Sabha polls a referendum on 100 days' rule of

the Congress government in the state. He claimed that the BJP was also saying that it was the referendum on PM Modi's rule. Asserting that PM Modi will turn 75 on September 17, 2025, he said if there is an age limit, the BJP should decide on the Prime Minister accordingly. CM Reddy clarified that there is no religion-based reservation in the country and quota is provided

to only those who are socially backward. He asked why the NDA did not promise in Andhra Pradesh that it would scrap Muslim reservation. He also alleged that the BJP was conspiring to create law and order problems in Telangana to divert investment to Gujarat. "They want to create an UP-like situation here," he said.

Where will funds for Congress' 'Khata-Khat' schemes come from, asks Nirmala Sitharaman

Continued From pg 01

The Finance Minister asked would Rahul Gandhi care to answer these questions and explain how their gigantic schemes of fiscal splurge would work without increasing taxes or borrowing heavily and running down the economy. "Here's a challenge to him to answer these questions for the people of India," she said. She said that the truth is that the BJP government's fiscal

management is much better than that of the UPA despite facing the COVID-19 pandemic in which substantial resources were used for relief efforts. She also asserted that the Modi government had managed the country's fiscal situation in a much better manner than the Congress-led UPA government and cited figures to drive home her point. "During the UPA rule from FY2004 to FY2014, Central Government Debt, including external debt at current values, grew about 3.2 times, from Rs 18.74 lakh crore in March 2004 to Rs 58.59 lakh crore in March 2014. This increase was much greater than the 2.9 times growth from Rs

58.59 lakh crore in FY 2014 to Rs 172.37 lakh crore in FY 2024 (RE)," she said. This lower increase between FY 2014 and FY 2024 occurred despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, where the Centre borrowed to provide relief to those in need even as revenues fell, she added. She said that the Central government's debt, which was 52.2 per cent of GDP at the end of FY 2013-14, was reduced to around 48.9 per cent in FY 2018-19 through gradual fiscal consolidation. "During this period, the fiscal deficit was lowered from 4.5 per cent in FY 2013-14.



Harish casts his vote in Siddipet

Siddipet, May 13 (NSS) : Former minister and BRS party MLA Harish Rao today exercised his right to vote with his family in polling booth No. 114 at Bharat Nagar Ambitus School in Siddipet. Speaking on the occasion, Harish Rao said he exercised his right to vote in Bharat Nagar along with his family members.

Table with 4 columns: Name of the Borrower(s), Description of secured asset, Total Outstanding Dues, Date of Demand Notice, Date of Possession. Includes details for various property auctions.

Public Notice For E-Auction For Sale Of Immovable Properties. Includes details of the auction, terms and conditions, and contact information for the authorized officer.



KTR casts his vote along with his family in Hyderabad

Hyderabad, May 13 (NSS): BRS party Working President KTR today said elections were a rare opportunity to elect governments once in five years. He also said the Constitution gave a great opportunity to decide what kind of government the people want. KTR voted along with his son Himanshu and wife Shailima at the GHMC community hall in the city. Later speaking to media persons, he urged everyone to come out and exercise the right to vote. He advised them to vote for good governments, good leaders and those who represent the people's issues. He criticized that the government with three officials was struggling to install generators at the polling stations to overcome power cuts.



Pawan Kalyan, Balakrishna cast votes in Andhra Pradesh

Amaravati, May 13 (IANS) : Jana Sena Party (JSP) chief Pawan Kalyan and Telugu Desam Party (TDP) leader N. Balakrishna, both leading actors of Tollywood, cast their votes in Andhra Pradesh on Monday. Pawan Kalyan cast his vote in the Mangalagiri Assembly constituency in the Guntur district while Balakrishna exercised his franchise in the Hindupur constituency in Sri Sathya Sai district. Simultaneous elections to the 175-member state Assembly and 25 Lok Sabha seats are underway in Andhra Pradesh. Pawan Kalyan accompanied by his wife

Possession Notice (For Immovable Property) Rule 8-(1). Includes details of the auction, terms and conditions, and contact information for the authorized officer.

FORM NO. 14 [See Regulation 33(2)] OFFICE OF THE RECOVERY OFFICER - I/II DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL HYDERABAD (DRT 2) 1st Floor, Triveni Complex Abids, Hyderabad-500001. Includes details of the debt recovery process.

On eve of nomination filing, PM Modi's roadshow gets bigger than before in Varanasi

Continued From pg 01 The roadshow began amid the beating of drums, blowing of conch shells, and chanting of mantras, lending to the occasion a festive mood in the middle of the Lok Sabha election campaign. Late Ustad Bismillah Khan's family played 'shehna' for the Prime Minister while school girls dressed as 'Bharat Mata' were seen standing along the route. Youths dressed as Lord Shiva also stood along the route while the crowd chanted 'Har Har Mahadev'. The scenario resembled a carnival more than a roadshow. The crowds brimmed over as the 5-km roadshow wound its way through

the streets packed with PM Modi's supporters, who wore T-shirts 'Har Dil Mein Modi' and 'Hamar Kashi, Hamar Modi' written on them prominently. Houses and shops along the route were illuminated with fairy lights, as the party workers poured in from the neighbouring districts and from all sections of the society to cheer the Prime Minister and be part of the occasion. People also held aloft lotus torches and waved them as the convoy passed by.



PM panel report brings back focus on changing nature of demography in Rajasthan cities

Jaipur, May 13 (IANS) : A working paper released by the Economic Advisory Council (EAC) to the Prime Minister has again brought the focus back on the changing nature of religious demography in the desert state. According to the working paper released recently, India's Hindu population decreased by 7.82 per cent between 1950 and 2015, from 84.68 per cent to 78.06 per cent, while the Muslim population went up from 9.84 per cent to 14.09 per cent during this period, marking a 43.15 per cent rise. Vikrant Singh from the NGO Jansankhya Foundation told IANS that a few years back, the BSF released a report that flagged concerns over increasing radicalisation of Muslim population in the border district of Jaisalmer. The report released in December 2018 found rising prevalence of "Arab customs" in the bordering villages, Singh said.

Now it's not the border cities alone, but the demography is changing in almost all the cities in Rajasthan as one particular community can be seen residing in the older pockets of the cities and towns, he claimed. Earlier, there used to be diversity in the older parts of the towns, which seems to be changing now with the Hindus migrating to the newer pockets in many cities in the state now, he said.

India should respect Pak as it has atom bomb, says Cong veteran Mani Shankar Aiyar

New Delhi, May 13 (IANS) : After Sam Pitroda's controversial statements, another veteran Congress leader Mani Shankar Aiyar has triggered a fresh row by saying that "India should give respect to Pakistan as it has atom bomb". In an interview that has gone viral now, Aiyar says, "India should give respect to Pakistan as it has an atom bomb! If we don't give them respect, they'll think of using an atom bomb against India. India showing muscular policy should not forget that Pakistan also has muscle (atom bomb) at Kahuta (Rawalpindi)." BJP spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla launched a blistering attack on Aiyar's remarks on India's relations with Pakistan. Accusing the Congress of maintaining close ties with Pakistan, he said, "Despite Pakistan's involvement in terrorist activities against India, Aiyar talks about respecting them."

He asserted that Aiyar's remarks exemplify Congress' ongoing affinity toward Pakistan, a nation known for harbouring and supporting terrorists targeting India. The BJP spokesperson said, "When support came from Pakistan for the Congress, their leaders gave a clean chit to Kasab and Pakistan for 26/11. Shashi Tharoor used words with a language similar to Pakistan's for Kashmir. Many Congress leaders made statements regarding the Pulwama and Poonch terrorist attacks, and now Mani Shankar Aiyar, by standing with terrorists and supporting Pakistan, shows the Congress' hand with terrorists and Pakistan, and now another evidence of this has



come to light." Slamming Aiyar, BJP leader Major Surendra Poonia posted on X, "Mani Shankar Aiyar is batting on behalf of ISI and wants India to sit in lap of Pakistan! Why Congressis have so much love for Pakistan it's in their SYSTEM." Aiyar's statement comes soon after the resignation of Congress overseas chief Sam Pitroda, a close aide of Rahul Gandhi, whose statements have embarrassed the grand old party. Aiyar is also no stranger to controversy. He has been regularly making statements in favour of Pakistan and against Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

In 2015, Aiyar, during a panel discussion with a Pakistani anchor said that PM Modi has to be removed. "The first and the foremost thing is to remove Modi. Only then can the talks move forward. We have to wait for four more years... Bring us back to power and remove them..." Again, very recently Aiyar took potshots at the Modi government during an event in Lahore. He said: "We have the courage to conduct surgical strikes against you, but we don't have the courage to sit across the table and talk."



Allahabad HC reverses acquittal of two accused after 43 years

Prayagraj, May 13 (IANS) : The Allahabad High Court (HC) has overturned the acquittal of two murder suspects by a trial court in Gorakhpur, 43 years ago and sentenced both to life term. In response to a government appeal, Justice Rajiv Gupta and Justice Shiv Shanker Prasad reversed the acquittal of Pyare Singh and Chhotku, convicting them under Section 302 (murder) and other relevant sections. The court directed the Chief Judicial Magistrate of Gorakhpur to ensure the arrest of both accused and their transfer to jail to serve their sentences. The case dates back to September 22, 1978, when a person named Ganga was killed, leading to an FIR against seven people in Gorakhpur the following day. The High Court heard the plea and noted in its verdict, "After considering the facts and circumstances of the case and examining the findings recorded by the trial court in the acquittal of accused Pyare Singh and Chhotku, we are of the view that the trial court has not examined the evidence led by the prosecution in the right perspective."

LS polls: 23 candidates in fray for Gurgaon seat; 3 withdraw nomination

Gurugram, May 13 (IANS) : A total of 23 candidates are in the fray for the Gurgaon Lok Sabha seat after three candidates pulled out of the electoral race on the last day of withdrawal of nominations on Monday, an official said. A single-phase polling will be held in all 10 Parliamentary constituencies in Haryana, including Gurgaon, in the sixth phase of Lok Sabha elections on May 25. Gurugram District Election Officer and Deputy

Commissioner Nishant Kumar Yadav allotted election symbols to all the candidates on Monday. Yadav said 14 candidates from registered parties and 9 Independents would be contesting the election from Gurgaon Parliamentary constituency. Among the nominees, the key candidates are BJP's Rao Inderjit Singh (Union Minister and sitting Gurgaon MP), Congress' Raj Babbar, Jannayak Janta Party nominee -- singer-rapper Rahul Yadav -- popularly known as

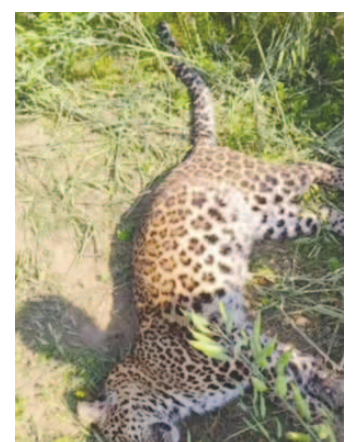


Fazilpuria, Vijay Kumar from Bahujan Samaj Party, and Sohrab Khan from the Indian National Lok Dal. Balwan Singh, Rahul Thakran and Soni Hemlata are the ones who withdrew nominations.



Agra lawyer claims temple below Fatehpur Sikri dargah, files case

Agra, May 13 (IANS) : An advocate from Agra has filed a court case, claiming the presence of a Hindu temple within the premises of a dargah (shrine) in Fatehpur Sikri. According to advocate Ajay Pratap Singh, a civil court in Agra has accepted his claim. He has identified the Dargah of Salim Chishti in Fatehpur Sikri as the temple of Goddess Kamakhya, with the adjacent mosque forming a part of the temple complex. The advocate said that the disputed property, currently under the purview of the Archaeological Survey of India, was originally the sanctum sanctorum of Goddess Kamakhya. He also challenged the belief that Fatehpur Sikri was founded by Akbar, asserting that references to Sikri, also known as Vijaypur Sikri, appear in Baburnama, indicating its earlier significance. Citing archaeological evidence, the advocate pointed to excavations conducted by former Superintending Archaeologist D.B. Sharma, which revealed Hindu and Jain artefacts dating back to around 1000 A.D. British officer E.B. Howell also described the disputed property's pillars and roof as Hindu sculpture, disputing its classification as a mosque. Further, historical references suggest that during the Khanwa war, the king of Sikri, Rao Dhamdev, transported the consecrated idol of Mata Kamakhya to safety in Ghazipur.



Leopardess beaten to death by villagers in UP's Pilibhit

Pilibhit, May 13 (IANS) : A three-year-old leopardess in Uttar Pradesh's Pilibhit district was killed by village locals with sticks and sharp-edged agriculture tools after it attacked them while they were working in their agricultural fields, a forest official said. Three people suffered injuries in the attack by the feline, forest officials said. The incident took place in Rampur village. An autopsy conducted by veterinary officers, Deepak Verma and Suresh Chandar, said the cause of death was due to severe brain haemorrhage and excessive blood loss due to deep cuts on the feline's head and elbow.

28-year-old man held for molesting minor boy in Delhi Metro

New Delhi, May 13 (IANS) A : 28-year-old man was apprehended for allegedly touching inappropriately and molesting a minor boy in the Delhi Metro, a police official said on Monday. The accused was identified as Jitender Gautam, a resident of Khera Khurd village in Delhi. His arrest comes after the minor boy, wrote on social media platform X that while he was travelling by metro to his residence and as he reached the Rajiv Chowk Metro station, a



person started touching his hip with his finger while boarding the train. "The complainant thought it would have happened by mistake but the accused continuously molested the minor until he reached the Kashmere Gate Metro station.



Drone show highlighting Kashi's development wins applause

Varanasi, May 13 (IANS) : A drone show where 1,000 drones showcased the developments that have taken place in Kashi in the past 10 years, above the river stream, through light formations took Varanasi by surprise on Monday night.

Odisha : BJD releases election manifesto with focus on youth & farmers

Bhubaneswar, May 13 (IANS) : The ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD) in Odisha released its poll manifesto for the upcoming elections in Odisha. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik through a video message announced the release of the manifesto that contains nine promises focusing on youth, Women Self Help Groups,

farmers, etc. Patnaik termed his party's manifesto as people-oriented and said it will lead Odisha to become the number one state in India in the next 10 years. "With the blessings of Lord Jagannath and citizens of Odisha, the guarantees presented in this people-oriented manifesto will be implemented through 5T govern-

nance model and will make Odisha the number one state in terms of economic growth and development by 2034, two years before the centenary celebrations of formation of Odisha state, with the cooperation of people and a strong leadership," CM Patnaik said. Among the major promises made in the manifesto, the party has

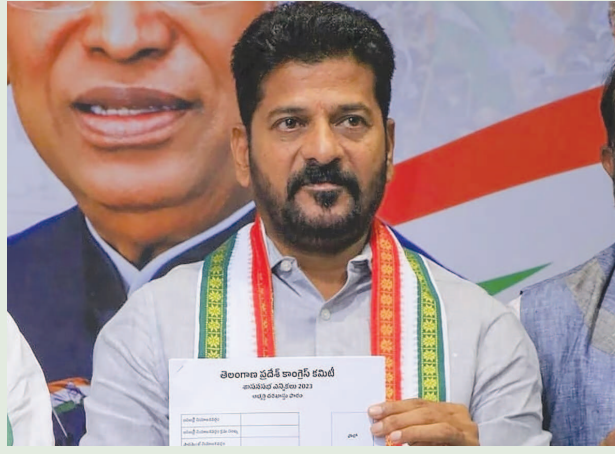
promised to present a first of its kind 'Youth Budget', earmarking Rs 1 lakh crore for 10 years. BJD claimed that Rs 1,000 crore out of the Budget will be spent annually on the basis of the suggestions given by the youth. The party also announced to provide 2 lakh government jobs. In a move to pre-empt the opposition's poll plank of Odia

Asmita (Odia Self-Identity), the ruling BJD has declared the creation of Rs 1,000 crore corpus fund as 'Heritage Development Fund' for the preservation of temples, heritage places and places related to eminent personalities in the state. It also promised to earmark Rs 100 crore for the development and promotion of Odia as a classi-



cal language. "The state has received zero funds from the Centre for the propagation, promotion and research on Odia language as a classical language.

OPINIONmail



CONGRESS DEPENDING ON ITS SOCIAL GUARANTEES FOR SUCCESS IN TELANGANA POLLS

The Congress will not be able to do a repeat of the November 2023 assembly election victory. KCR's Bharat Rashtra Samiti (BRS) hasn't recouped its loss and isn't in shape despite party head K Chandrashekar Rao's frequent pep talk to party leaders and party workers. Politics has veered to the communal in the interregnum and "Samajik Nyay" is the key. Like "in the United States, when the Whites set the questions, the Blacks failed the SAT. So, we should take the cue and Dalits should set the questions for the upper castes' candidates..." This is 'Samajik Nyay' and the video went viral. Millions are convinced even as there is talk of a strong wind blowing against Prime Minister Narendra Modi's reservations on reservation for "SC/ST and OBC". But the Congress in Telangana is "fighting to revive its fortunes", making one wonder whatever happened to Congress fortunes after the 2023 assembly elections victory? Chief Minister Revanth Reddy cannot be such a damp squib? His Aap Ki Adalat showing gave the impression he isn't a political novice but it seems he has hidden shortcomings. Only a novice could fall into a deepfake trap. So with Chief Minister Revanth Reddy all talk and no substance, the mood in the BJP camp is upbeat. Telangana sends 17 MPs to the Lok Sabha and the BJP is angling for at least 7. Polls will be held on May 13. Bad news for the Congress is Revanth Reddy is on the back foot even after rolling out six guarantees, all of them lifted from Congress' assembly elections manifesto. Revanth Reddy is also not happy that he was "summoned" by the Delhi Police in the Amit Shah deepfake video case. Reddy's star fell and now he's saddled with aides — Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka and ministers N Uttam Kumar Reddy, D Sridhar Babu, Ponnam Prabahakar, and Komatireddy Venkat Reddy. Senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and self-proclaimed party "sanchalak" Priyanka Gandhi Vadra will help. That said, the Congress is heavily banking on "Muslim reservation" to win Telangana. The BJP is banking on Hindu votes consolidation for "abki baar 400 paar". Secular parties are fighting the new perception that Muslim votes consolidation is as communal as Hindu votes consolidation. India's demographic dividend, who are there in huge numbers, enthusiastically agree with the new definition of communal polarization. The Congress promise of bringing "Muslim reservation" if it comes to power at the Centre is a gamble. The June 4 outcome might even surprise the Muslims. The Muslims will realize that they might not be in required "totals" to influence outcomes in scores of so-called Muslim constituencies. Even somebody like Asaduddin Owaisi is fighting a tough battle in his pocket-borough Hyderabad this time. That said, it will take a lot of convincing to change the minds of K Chandrashekar Rao and Rahul Gandhi, both of whom are diehard "secular". KCR undertook a bus tour of all the 17 parliamentary constituencies of Telangana. In between he got into trouble with the Election Commission for "using offensive language". The uplifting part is KCR is drawing huge crowds and Telangana's Muslims are reportedly turning to the BRS in big numbers. The reality is the Congress is ahead of the BRS in attracting Muslim votes. The BJP is banking on Modi. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah have been frequent visitors to Telangana, delivering speeches laced with "Hindu-Muslim". Question is, will June 4 spell the death of such rhetoric? Will politicians of all hues put a halt to their "polarising rhetoric"? Will Prime Minister Narendra Modi stop talking of Hindu-Muslim if he gets a third term or Rahul Gandhi gets his first ever term? The battle for Telangana isn't all that big. Lots of politicians who switched parties have been given tickets by their new parties. Former Congressmen are fighting the Congress and it is the same with the BRS and the BJP. The BJP has the most number of turncoat candidates.

(By Sushil Kutty)

EDITORIAL
the indian mail

The dynamics of tax cuts and collections under Modi govt : A tale of prosperity

In the midst of a political maelstrom, where the Congress and its cohorts spun tales of fiscal folly, data and facts reveal the real, upbeat picture. Contrary to their narratives set on various social and micro-blogging platforms that the Narendra Modi-led government had pared corporate tax in a hot-haste manner which had no benefit for the Indian economy and that personal tax has overtaken corporate tax, the move was not just a flash in the pan; it was a clarion call to stoke the fires of investment in the manufacturing sector, a cornerstone of the Modi government's 'Make-in-India' campaign. New companies born after October 1, 2019, with eyes on manufacturing, were handed a golden ticket - a chance to pay income tax at a mere 15 per cent, provided they kept clear of exemptions and got their gears turning by March

31, 2023, a deadline with whispers of an extension to 2024. The bulls on the stock market doffed their hats to this audacious move. On the day of the announcement, the Sensex leapt by 5.3 per cent, its most significant single-day rally in a decade, and the ascent continued with a 3 per cent rise when the markets opened the following Monday. In September 2019, the Modi government's move to whittle down the base corporate tax from a hefty 30 per cent to a svelte 22 per cent, sidestepping the usual budgetary beats and setting the stage for a streamlined tax regime. This move was nothing short of slicing through the Gordian knot, unravelling the complex jumble of taxes that had businesses in tangles. The Congress and INDI Alliance, perhaps blindsided by their own narratives, seemed oblivious to the fact that this pivot from the norm was designed to grease the wheels of commerce and that it was the corporate giants who had previ-



ously feasted on tax breaks under the United Progressive Alliance (UPA), while the common taxpayer now found favour under the Modi administration. The move later came to its organic fruition; the corporate tax cut of 2019 unfurled a trifecta of benefits; Indian corporate tax rates now stood toe-to-toe with global contenders, and the leaner tax rate cut the fat from the required rates of return, enticing firms to invest more, and the trimmed tax rate plumped up firms' cash reserves, sparking a spree of capital expenditures. The tax cuts' immediate aftermath was veiled by the Covid pandemic's global upheaval. Yet, hindsight reveals a clear picture

as analysts agree that this fiscal sleight of hand has buffed the shine of the Indian economy. This is evidenced by the swell in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from USD 36 billion in 2013-14 and registered its highest-ever annual FDI inflow of \$85 billion in the financial year 2021-22. Since the Modi government moved to fiscal consolidation in 2019, the figures paint a rosy picture of the Indian economy. Personal income tax collections, with the Securities Transaction Tax (STT) in tow, ballooned to Rs 12.01 lakh crore for the fiscal year 2023-24, marking a hearty 24.26 per cent increase.



LEFTIST COLUMBIAN PRESIDENT GUSTAVO PETRO BREAKS DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL

On International Workers' Day, Gustavo Petro, Colombia's first leftist president, announced that the country would sever diplomatic ties with Israel over its ongoing genocidal assault on Gaza. "Tomorrow we will break diplomatic relations with the state of Israel for having a government, for having a president who is genocidal. . . . If Palestine dies, humanity dies," Petro said. Petro has been one of the foremost critics of Israel on the Left in Latin America. On October 16, Israel suspended arms shipments to Colombia after a diplomatic spat between Petro and Israeli

foreign ministry spokesman Lior Haiat. In the dispute, Petro condemned Israel's siege on and sanguinary bombardment of Gaza, as well as the involvement of Israeli mercenaries in the mass murder of members of the Patriotic Union (UP) party in Colombia. "Neither Yair Klein nor Rafael Eitan will be able to describe the history of peace in Colombia. They unleashed massacre and genocide in Colombia," Petro tweeted. The involvement of Mossad intelligence operative Rafael Eitan and Israeli lieutenant colonel Yair Klein in the mass extermination of the UP is a buried chapter of Colombian history. In the wake of the government's unprecedented

suspension of diplomatic ties with Israel, it's a history worth revisiting. The UP was born out of El Acuerdo de La Uribe, a 1984 peace deal between the FARC guerrillas and then president Belisario Betancur. Its emergence was a serious rupture in Colombian politics, a left-wing alternative to an archaic electoral duopoly among two sects of the country's ruling elite. The party's electoral platform promoted agrarian reform, the cancellation of foreign debt and International Monetary Fund structural adjustment programs, and the nationalization of Colombian oil, gas, and mineral resources.

THE TALE OF STUDENTS IN TWO BERLINS AFTER A GAP OF NINETY ONE YEARS

It was May 10 in Germany's terrible year, 1933. Hitler had been in power for hardly three months, when students and staff emptied the university libraries of forbidden books and threw them, an estimated 20,000 books by over a hundred authors, into the flames of a giant bonfire. Most authors were German-Jewish, atheist, liberal, and leftist, Bertolt Brecht, Anna Seghers, Sigmund Freud, and Magnus Hirschfeld, but also some foreign works were thrown into the flames — Maxim Gorki, Ernest Hemingway, Jack London, and Dos Passos. Ninety-one years later, this May 3, just across Berlin's famous Unter-den-Linden Blvd. and in the same university courtyard where those books had once been dragged from, some of today's students — courageous, determined, the total opposite of the Nazis of 1933 — were forcibly hauled away to waiting police vans. The students of 1933 were advocating murder, preparing for the genocide which was to follow.

INDIA'S DIPLOMATIC RELATION WITH U.S. CONTINUES TO BE UNDER STRAIN ON PANNUN ISSUE

Relations have soured since Joe Biden labelled India as 'xenophobic'. Addition ally, tensions have been fuelled by criticisms from Washington and a foiled assassination attempt. However, experts believe that Washington will make sure that nothing hinders its strategy to work with New Delhi in order to counter China's challenge to both. Despite recent tensions over Washington's views on New Delhi's human rights record and an assassination attempt in the U.S., the challenge posed by China continues to bring India and the United States together. Experts suggest that despite considerable tension.

NETANYAHU BUYS TIME BY REJECTING GAZA CEASEFIRE AMIDST SHORT-LIVED CELEBRATIONS

This week's Gazan short-lived celebration of a ceasefire that was not to be, highlights what is at stake in the seven-month-old war and Israel's refusal to end the carnage. Thousands poured into Gazan streets within minutes of Hamas advising it had accepted a Qatar and Egyptian ceasefire proposal. "We have shown the world that we survived this war as Palestinians. We stood our ground on our land. We survived 212 days of attacks and devastation by the world's most advanced weapons. We did not leave. We survived on our own with no help from outside," said Ahmad, a young Gazan, one of the thousands celebrating in the streets of Rafah Hamas' acceptance of a ceasefire with Israel. The celebrations were short-lived. They dissipated 90 minutes later as



Israel made clear its rejection of the proposal. "The Hamas proposal is far from meeting Israel's core demands," Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's office said in a statement.

Sri Lanka to hold presidential election between Sep 17 and Oct 16

Colombo, May 13 (IANS) : The election commission of Sri Lanka on Monday announced that it will hold the presidential election between September 17 and October 16. The election commission in a notice signed by its chairman R.M.A.L. Ratnayake said it

will call for nominations to hold the Presidential election within the specified timeframe in terms of the provisions of the Constitution, Daily Mirror reported. "By virtue of the powers vested with the Election Commission to fix the date for the election, it will hold the Presidential election be-

tween 17 September 2024 and 16 October 2024," the notice said. Sri Lanka last held its presidential election in November 2019. Several Sri Lankan parties have declared their candidates for the election, Xinhua news agency reported.



Man shoots two officers in Paris police station

Paris, May 13 (IANS/DPA) : Two police officers were shot by a man in custody, who grabbed one of their service weapons, at a police station in Paris, local media reported. The man was arrested on Monday evening for domestic violence, as the BFMTV channel and the newspaper Le Parisien reported citing police sources. The man grabbed the weapon and

shot the two officers while police were trying to search him at the station, according to the reports. One of the police officers was hit in the upper body and the other in the thigh. The attacker was also reportedly injured when police officers fired back. All the injured were taken to hospital. Police union UNSA said the staff at the affected station in the 13th arrondissement of Paris.

Delegations leave Cairo, fail to reach Gaza truce deal

Cairo, May 13 (IANS) : The delegations of Hamas, Israel, Qatar and the US left Egypt after talks for reaching a truce in the Gaza Strip hit an impasse, the media reported. "The delegations participating in the Cairo talks left for consultations, while some points of disagreement remained unresolved," Egypt's state-affiliated Al-Qahera News TV channel report quoted an unnamed senior official as saying on Monday. The delegations arrived in Cairo on Monday to achieve a comprehensive truce in the conflict-stricken Gaza. Yet, no agreement has been reached despite some progress in the negotiations,

Xinhua news agency reported. Among the major disputes between the conflicting parties are the number and lists of Israeli hostages and Palestinian prisoners to be released under a swap deal, as well as issues regarding Israel's partial withdrawal from Gaza to allow free movement of Palestinians in the enclave. The talks stalled when the Israeli military launched an operation in Gaza's southernmost city of Rafah crowded with more than one million internally displaced Palestinians and took control of the Palestinian side of the key Rafah crossing. On Tuesday, an Israeli source told Xinhua news agency that the Israeli army will continue its operation in Rafah "as planned" since



the truce talks have collapsed. Cairo, Doha, and Washington are seeking to broker a deal for a prisoner exchange and a second ceasefire between Israel and Hamas, following the first one that ended last November. Persisting for seven months, the Israeli attacks on Gaza have so far killed more than 34,800 Palestinians and wounded over

78,400 others since the conflict broke out on October 7 last year, according to the Gaza health authorities. The Israeli onslaught followed a surprise attack by Hamas on southern Israeli towns, in which about 1,200 Israelis were killed and around 250 others were taken hostage.



Turkish minister dismisses claim of easing ban on trade with Israel

Ankara, May 13 (IANS) : Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz's claim that Turkey eased its ban on trade with Israel is "fictional and has nothing to do with reality," a Turkish Minister said. "The statements of the Israeli Foreign Minister are absolutely fictional and have nothing to do with reality. We stand behind the decision we have taken as a government regarding trade with Israel. This decision remains valid," Turkish Trade Minister Omer Bolat said on Monday on social media platform X.

Fear, anger in Pakistan after girls' school bombed on Afghan border

Islamabad, May 13 (IANS/DPA) : Suspected militants blew up a girls' school in north-western Pakistan, stoking fresh fears about the safety of female students whose education has been targeted by Islamists for years. The compound of the privately-owned school was partially damaged when the bomb went off during the night on Monday in the town of North Waziristan near the Afghan border, local police official Amjad Suhail said. No one was killed or wounded. The mountainous town of North Waziristan has long served as headquarters for Islamist mili-

tants linked to al-Qaeda and its affiliated Haqqani network of the Afghan Taliban. The Pakistani military forced out the Haqqani network from its territory through a series of offensives that began in 2014. The Pakistani Taliban, a group that follows the same hardline version of Islam as their Afghan counterparts but have a different organisation, have bombed girls' schools before. Hundreds of schools were bombed in Waziristan and Swat, the hometown of Nobel Peace Prize laureate Malala Yousafzai, between 2007 and 2009 when the Pakistani Taliban ruled these regions.



Senior conservative says UK PM Sunak ultimately to blame for Tory 'chaos'

London, May 13 (IANS/DPA) : UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak bears ultimate responsibility for a Tory party mired in chaos, a senior Conservative has said as a poll indicated a 30-point lead for Labour.

Tees Valley Mayor Lord Ben Houchen said the Conservatives are "fighting each other like rats in a sack" and the blame for the party's difficulties "ultimately lies with Rishi." Lord Houchen held on in Tees Valley in a rare bright spot in an otherwise dismal set of local election results for the Conservatives a week ago. He told BBC Radio Tees: "Things don't look great for the Conservative Party at the moment. There is still a way through but that way through is getting narrower by the day." He said there is general disaffection with politics among voters rather than a desire to back Labour, so there



is still the chance for the Conservatives to turn things around. "If the Government actually got on and delivered some real things and showed themselves to be competent, and did the things that people wanted them to, then there is a way through to be able to get some of that respect back, some of that confidence back from the public and to help reduce what is a very large gap at the minute," he said. The Conservatives suffered a mauling from the electorate in last week's contests, losing nearly 500 council seats, the West Midlands mayoral race and the Blackpool

South by-election. Sunak's woes deepened with the defection of MP Natalie Elphicke to Labour in protest against his record on housing and stopping small boat crossings of the English Channel. The scale of the difficulties facing Mr Sunak was underlined by a YouGov poll for The Times newspaper which showed Labour on 48% and the Tories on 18 per cent — just five points ahead of Reform UK among people who said they would vote and expressed a preference.



Iraqi Shia militia claims drone, missile attacks on Israel

Baghdad, May 13 (IANS) : A Shia militia in Iraq has claimed responsibility for drone and missile attacks on three sites in southern Israel. The militia, known as the Islamic Resistance in Iraq, said on Monday in two online statements that its fighters launched at dawn a drone attack "on the Nevatim (military) base in Be'er Sheva" and two drones toward a vital site

in Eilat, without providing additional details about the specific location targeted or any resulting casualties. In a third statement, the militia claimed responsibility for another attack on Tuesday morning when its fighters fired a long-range Al-Atiq cruise missile on the Ashkelon oil port, giving no details of the specific location targeted or any casualties as well,

Xinhua news agency reported. The statements stressed that the attacks were carried out "in solidarity with the people in the Gaza Strip," and the militia pledged to persist in targeting "the enemy's strongholds". Since the outbreak of the Gaza conflict on October 7, 2023, the Islamic Resistance in Iraq has launched multiple attacks on Israeli and US bases in the region.



Bank fraud case: ED conducts raids at 11 locations, seizes Rs 20 lakh

New Delhi, May 13 (IANS) : The Enforcement Directorate has seized Rs 20 lakh in cash and high-end luxury cars while it froze Fixed Deposits (FDs) worth Rs 1 crore, as part of an investigation into a multi-crore bank loan fraud linked to the promoters and group companies of Shree Raj Mahal Jewellers, an official said on Monday. The action came after raids were conducted at 11 locations on Tuesday in Delhi-NCR belonging to the Shree Raj Mahal Jewellers Pvt Ltd, Ginni Gold Pvt Ltd, Ashok Goel, Pradeep Goel, Praveen Kumar Gupta (promoters/directors) and several shell companies related to them. "During the search operations conducted on Tuesday, cash amounting to Rs 20.50 lakh, five high-end luxury cars, including Mercedes and BMW and FDs worth Rs 1 crore held by the promoters in the name of dummy entities/ persons, various evidence related to assets/ bank accounts held through several shell companies by the promoters were recovered and seized," the financial probe agency said.

Congress trying to regain power by dividing country : Raj BJP chief

Jaipur, May 13 (IANS) : Rajasthan BJP President C.P. Joshi on Monday condemned the 'racial' statement of Congress leader Sam Pitroda and said that it is clear from his statement that Congress is trying to divide Indians on the basis of caste, religion and colour. The Congress also has the same mentality that the British had towards Indians, he added. He also said that Pitroda's statement also shows the atrocities committed by the British against Indians based on apartheid and racial mentality. "A diverse country, where people on the East look like Chinese, people on the West look like Arab, people on the North look like White and people in the South look like Africa," Pitroda had said on Wednesday in an interview to The Statesman. The State BJP President added: "India has been a world leader. Today, under the strong and efficient leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the country is again moving ahead. At such a time, efforts are being made to stop India from progressing by comparing Indians with other countries. Prime Minister Modi is enhancing India's stature worldwide while the Congress insults the countrymen with its statements." He also said that Congress has undermined the unity and integrity of the country by adopting the policy of divide and rule in the country. "The country has become weak due to the policy of divide and rule."



Some YouTube channels becoming a menace to society, says Madras HC in oral observation

Chennai, May 13 (IANS) : The Madras High Court on Monday orally observed that some YouTube channels were becoming a "menace" to society by featuring derogatory content just to increase their subscriptions and it was high time that the government reined them in. A bench of Justice K. Kumaresh Babu made the oral observation while hearing a bail petition filed by G. Felix Gerald of the RedPix YouTube channel, who was booked along with fellow YouTuber, Savukku Shankar, under various provisions of the Indian Penal Code and the Tamil Nadu Prohibition of Harassment of Woman Act, 1988. Additional Public Prosecutor E. Raj Thilak told the court that the

Coimbatore cybercrime cell had registered a case against Gerald and Shankar after the petitioner interviewed the latter and had probably facilitated him to make derogatory statements against women police personnel, thereby lowering the morale of the entire police force. The cybercrime cell arrested Shankar, who had been arrayed as the first accused, on May 4. The APP told the court that Gerald had been summoned for an inquiry, but had not appeared before the investigating officer. As the petitioner's counsel stated that his client had been a journalist for the last 25 years, the judge said that it was Gerald who should have been arrayed as the first accused in the case because it was

he who had prompted the interviewee to make derogatory statements against women. "Is this what you even call an interview?" Justice Kumaresh Babu asked, noting that Gerald would have posed the question knowing well that the interviewee would answer it in a particular way. The judge also said that Gerald would have let Shankar make derogatory statements against women and encouraged it. The court asked the APP whether the petitioner should be asked to appear before the investigating officer on the condition that no coercive steps would be taken against him, but the APP responded that this would be like providing anticipatory bail indirectly.

Indian naval ships Delhi, Shakti and Kiltan complete visit to Singapore

New Delhi, May 13 (IANS) : Indian naval ships Delhi, Shakti, and Kiltan have completed their Singapore visit that was scheduled part of the operational deployment of the Indian Navy's Eastern Fleet to the South China Sea. According to the Indian Navy, the visit of the naval ships aimed at undertaking bilateral engagements, and discussing areas of mutual interest and cooperation, reaffirming the commitment to enhance mari-

time security and stability in the region. Rajesh Dhankhar, the Flag Officer Commanding of Eastern Fleet, and the commanding officers of the ships also had an interaction with the Fleet Commander of the Singapore Navy at its naval headquarters. The visit provided an opportunity for discussions on enhancing naval cooperation and interoperability between the navies of both India and Singapore. A deck reception was hosted onboard INS Shakti,

wherein personnel from both navies, the Indian diaspora in Singapore, and the local diplomatic community had the opportunity to interact with each other, furthering the bonds of friendship and mutual respect, an official said. As part of the Indian Navy's commitment to maritime education and outreach, local school-children were invited to visit the Indian ships. The children were given guided tours of the ships, where they learned about naval operations.



India cannot depend on other countries for its security : Defence Secretary

New Delhi, May 13 (IANS) : India cannot depend on other countries for its security and safeguarding national interests, Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane said on Monday. Speaking at the national symposium and industry meet on 'Emerging Technologies in Infrastructure Development' organised

by the DRDO, Aramane stressed that self-reliance will help the country take giant strides on the path of becoming a developed nation by 2047. He also emphasised the need to achieve self-reliance in every field to deal with future challenges. "India is a country with a significant percentage of young popula-

tion, and self-reliance will ensure gainful employment for them," he said. Underlining the importance of achieving 'Aatmanirbharta' in defence, Aramane asserted that there is no trusted trend in geopolitics, and India cannot depend on other countries for its security and to safeguard national interests.



Top Army Eastern Command officials discuss Manipur security situation with Governor

Imphal, May 13 (IANS) : Top Army officers, led by Eastern Command chief Lt Gen R.C. Tiwari on Monday met Manipur Governor Anusuiya Uikey and discussed the security situation in the ethnic violence-hit state, the Raj Bhavan said. A Raj Bhavan official said that the Army officials highlighted the security preparedness of the Army and Assam Rifles to face any eventuality in the state and also highlighted various activities taken up to ensure safety among the masses. The army officials highlighted the relief activities taken up to sup-

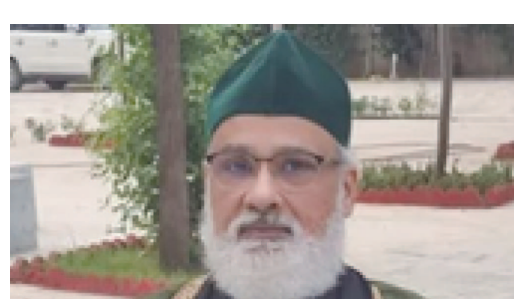


port displaced families in different parts of the state, the official said, adding that they also informed the Governor that the Army would always work to maintain peace and stability in the northeastern region in general, and Manipur in particular.

Sharpshooter of Lawrence Bishnoi gang nabbed from Bihar town bordering Nepal

Patna May 13 (IANS) : The police in Bihar's Araria arrested a sharpshooter belonging to the Lawrence Bishnoi gang from Jogbani town in the district bordering Nepal on Monday. The accused, identified as Krishna Kumar alias Jay Prakash, a resident of Bikaner in Rajasthan, was absconding since last year. Confirming the arrest, Amit Ranjan, the SP of Araria, said

that Kumar was living in Nepal from where he crossed the border and came to Jogbani to withdraw cash from an ATM. When he was withdrawing the cash from the ATM near the Jogbani railway station, the police nabbed him. "We initially arrested him in an ATM fraud case. During interrogation, it appeared that he was a sharpshooter of the Lawrence Bishnoi gang."



Rajasthan Speaker demands apology from Ajmer cleric for his remark on Jain saints

Jaipur, May 13 (IANS) : Rajasthan Assembly Speaker Vasudev Devnani on Monday condemned the statement made by Syed Sarwar Chishti, the Secretary of Anjuman Committee.



Led by Adani Group, India saw robust deal-making activity in April: Report

New Delhi, May 13 (IANS) : India Inc saw robust deal-making activity in April, with three major domestic consolidations by the Adani Group valued at \$2 billion, representing 38 per cent of the total deal values, a new report showed on Monday. The month saw 191 deals worth \$9.4 billion, a 21 per cent increase in volumes, but a 37 per cent decrease in values compared to March, according to Grant Thornton's 'Bharat Dealtracker' report. The month saw 12 high-value deals (of more than \$100 million), totalling \$3.8 billion. "The deal outlook remains positive, underpinned by a thriving ecosystem that spans technology, consumer, and infrastructure sec-

tors and supported by forward-thinking government policies, poised to drive comprehensive growth across the board," said Shanthi Vijetha, Partner-Growth, at Grant Thornton Bharat. Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd (APSEZ) acquired 56 per cent stake in SP Group, and 39 per cent in Orissa Stevedores Limited (OSL) in Gopalpur Port Limited (GPL) for Rs 3,080 crore. "The transport and logistics sector witnessed a boost by Adani Ports' acquisition of Gopalpur Port Ltd, enhancing its logistical capabilities, critical for supporting India's growing international trade demands," the report mentioned. Ambuja Cements, Adani Group's building material company, an-

nounced to acquire My Home Group's 1.5 MTPA (million tonnes per annum) cement grinding unit in Tuticorin, Tamil Nadu, for Rs 413.75 crore. "The Adani Group's strategic acquisitions valued at \$2 billion underscored a trend towards strengthening core industries," the report said. Leading the charge, the manufacturing sector, spearheaded by Adani Group's acquisitions in the cement industry, "saw significant consolidation efforts aimed at enhancing production capacities and market reach", it noted. Moreover, the capital markets were vibrant with 4 IPOs raising \$2.8 billion and 11 QIPs securing \$1.4 billion last month, the report added.

Meta 'super greedy' at claiming credit for ad campaigns : Elon Musk

New Delhi, May 13 (IANS) : Tesla and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk on Monday said that Mark Zuckerberg-run Meta is "super greedy" at taking credit for advertisers who run campaigns on its platform. A Musk follower raised this issue in a post, saying several of his advertisers noticed that while running campaigns on both X and Meta, nearly all conversions are attributed to Meta, "with X reporting almost no conversions." "Interestingly, when X ads are turned off, total conversions significantly drop, including those reported on Meta. No research is needed to understand what's going on here," the follower commented. The X owner replied that "we are terrible at claiming credit, and Meta is super greedy at claiming credit."



Sensex falls 659 points; Auto, PSU stocks drag market

Mumbai, May 13 (IANS) : India benchmark indices fell nearly 1 per cent on Monday, following a negative trend in Asian peers. At 10:00 a.m., Sensex was down by 659 points or 0.93 per cent at 71,989 points, and Nifty was down by 201 points or 0.91 per cent at 21,854 points. Nifty small cap was down by 335 points or 2.08 per cent at 15,771 points and the Nifty mid cap was down by 763 points or 1.54 per cent at 48,769 points. Sectorally, Nifty Auto was the top loser, down by 2.88 per cent. Nifty PSU Bank and Nifty Energy indices were down by 2.88 per cent and 1.93 per cent, respectively. 1,282 shares were in red mark

and 738 shares were in green mark on NSE. On Sensex, 29 out of 30 shares were on the red mark and 1 one share was on the green mark. Tata Motors, Tata Steel, JSW Steel, SBI, NTPC, and Power Grid are the top losers. Only Sun Pharma is in the green. According to the brokerage firm Prabhudas Lilladher, "Nifty witnessed a significant slide during the week, with a 22,000 zone sustained as of now with bias maintained with a cautious approach and 21,750 levels as the crucial support base. A decisive breach above the significant 50 EMA level of 22,230 is necessary to improve the bias and establish conviction for further rise."



Indian tech leaders stand behind Ola's Bhavish in his fight against Microsoft & LinkedIn

New Delhi, May 13 (IANS) : Indian tech industry leaders have come out in support of Ola Founder and CEO, Bhavish Aggarwal, after his tirade against Microsoft-owned LinkedIn for deleting his posts and "bullying Indians" into agreeing with the Big Tech platforms or cancelling them out. Homegrown IT software company Zoho's CEO Sridhar Vembu agreed with Aggarwal, saying "we in India have to strongly resist this woke imperialism". "It is best understood as a fanatical religious doctrine that masquerades as a socio-political movement," Vembu posted on X social media platform. Edtech company Unacademy CEO Gaurav Munjal earlier posted that this is so "up on LinkedIn's part".

EVs, green hydrogen to propel India's journey towards net-zero target by 2070: Experts

New Delhi, May 13 (IANS) : The faster adoption of electric vehicles (EVs), the National Hydrogen Mission and other such initiatives will propel India's journey towards a net-zero target by 2070, eminent scientists and thought leaders have said. Speaking at an event organised by the Technology Development Board (TDB), under the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Professor Ajay Kumar Sood, Principal Scientific Advisor to the government, emphasised the promotion of EVs through initiatives such as the National Electric Mobility Mission Plan (NEMMP) and Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles (FAME), aiming to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions. He also highlighted the EV Mission, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Science, Technology Innovation and Advisory Council (PM-STIAC), which is dedicated to developing supportive standards and frameworks for EV adoption. "Substantial investments in green hydrogen production are a key component of the National Hydrogen Mission in India's



journey towards a net-zero target by 2070," said Sood. He also spoke about ongoing efforts in Carbon Capture Utilisation and Storage (CCUS) technologies, with policies aimed at cost optimisation and broader industrial application. Professor Abhay Karandikar, Secretary, DST further underscored the significance of innovation for national development. He highlighted the government's initiatives in funding various research and development programmes and nurturing innovation through schemes like

NIDHI and TDB, aimed at incubating startups and fostering entrepreneurship. "Technology is a double-edged sword: it reduces inefficiency but can also drive increased consumption. To combat this, focus on EVs, green hydrogen, carbon capture and energy-efficient habits. Transitioning to renewable energy globally is essential to tackle climate change," said Professor Ashutosh Sharma, President of INSA and former secretary, DST.

Hyundai Motor beats Volkswagen in Q1 operating profit



Seoul, May 13 (IANS) : South Korea's Hyundai Motor Group beat Volkswagen Group to rank second after Toyota Group in operating profit for the January-March period, their earnings data showed on Monday. In the first three months, Hyundai Motor Group posted an operating profit of 6.98 trillion won (\$5.08 billion), higher than 6.78 trillion won reported by the German carmaker, according to their earnings results. The won's weakness against the US dollar and strong sales of high-end models in the US and other major markets helped push up Hyundai's operating income in the past quarter, reports Yonhap news agency.

Paytm focuses on UPI Lite Wallet for low-value daily payments

New Delhi, May 13 (IANS) : One97 Communications Limited (OCL), which owns leading payments and financial services company Paytm, on Monday, said that it is now focusing on UPI Lite wallet to move the users who prefer wallet for low-value everyday payments. Paytm UPI Lite will act as an on-device wallet, allowing users to store funds and make payments on the go. It is designed for fast, secure, and reliable payments, allowing users to make instant, fail-proof transactions of up to Rs 500 each. "We see the wallet as an es-

sential payment tool that lets users keep money for everyday use and make quick payments on the go. Paytm UPI Lite improves this experience, allowing for faster transactions at local stores, street vendors, and regular purchases while keeping bank statements clear," a Paytm spokesperson said. "We are committed to growing the UPI ecosystem in partnership with NPCI to every nook and corner of India," it added. To enable UPI Lite payments, go to the Paytm app, click on the 'UPI Lite Activate' icon on the homepage, and then choose the bank account that you want to use with UPI Lite. Now, enter the amount you wish to add to UPI

Lite to start the payments, and then validate the MPIN to create your account. Following these steps, your UPI Lite account will be set up for easy, one-tap payments. To make payments using the UPI Lite wallet, simply scan any QR code, enter the mobile number or choose one from the contacts list. The company partnered with leading Payment System Providers (PSPs), such as Axis Bank, HDFC Bank, State Bank of India (SBI), and YES Bank that will ensure a robust and reliable framework for your UPI transactions, faci-

lating seamless and uninterrupted payment experiences. This service is especially useful for those who frequently handle small payments like buying groceries, paying for parking, or settling daily commute fares. It also keeps the bank statement clutter-free with only a single entry, regardless of the number of payments made, which is a significant convenience for users who prefer a clean financial overview.



Airtel, Google Cloud join hands to deploy GenAI solutions in India

New Delhi, May 13 (IANS) : Bharti Airtel and Google Cloud on Monday entered into a long-term partnership to accelerate cloud adoption and deploy generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) solutions in India. This alliance will provide Airtel customers with a suite of cutting-edge cloud solutions from Google Cloud, accelerating cloud adoption and modernisation. Both companies will create industry-leading AI/ML solutions, which Airtel will train on its extensive data set.



Akali Dal will take up pending issues of Punjab, if voted to power : Sukhbir Badal

Sangrur, May 13 (IANS) : Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) President Sukhbir Badal on Monday appealed to voters to send the Akali Dal representatives to Parliament so that the party could take up all pending issues of the state and resolve them once and for all. The SAD president, who led the 'Punjab Bachao Yatra' across Bhadaur, Mehal Kalan and Barnala assembly segments of this parliamentary constituency along with party candidate Iqbal Singh Jhoondan, said "this is the reason we have decided to contest alone. We realised that the Central government was not resolving any of the issues flagged by us including making MSP (minimum support price) a legal right of farmers, safeguarding our river waters for perpetuity and a stop to interference in our religious institutions". Badal said "It is a fact that the Delhi-based parties have betrayed Punjab and Punjabis.

'Sanatan Dharm' row: SC issues notice on Udhayanidhi Stalin's plea for clubbing of FIRs and complaints

New Delhi, May 13 (IANS) : The Supreme Court on Tuesday issued notice on a plea filed by Tamil Nadu minister Udhayanidhi Stalin seeking directions to consolidate various FIRs and complaints lodged against him over his controversial statements on 'Sanatan Dharm'. Agreeing to examine the plea, a bench presided over by Justice Sanjiv Khanna sought responses from various state governments in the matter. On April 1, the Bench, also comprising Justice Dipankar Datta, had granted time to bring all the subsequent events by way of filing an application seeking amendment in the petition. The petition highlighted that except for one complaint case instituted before the Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Bangalore, all other FIRs/complaints are pending before the states of Maharashtra, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir "which are currently ruled/administered by the Bharatiya Janata Party which is the ruling party at the Centre." The plea contended that the DMK leader has been receiving threats to his life and will encounter great difficulty in appearing before different police stations and courts in different regions. Udhayanidhi Stalin had spoken at a function of Tamil Nadu Progressive Writers on the eradication of Sanatan Dharma, saying that it was against social justice. He also



said that Sanatan Dharma must be eradicated like mosquitoes, dengue, malaria or corona. The Tamil Nadu minister for sports and youth affairs had said, "It (Sanatan Dharma) has to be eradicated, rather than opposing it." Later, he refused to apologise for his remarks and justified himself by stating: "I will say this continuously." Earlier, the top court had said that it would not entertain a plea seeking contempt action against Stalin Jr. over his controversial statements saying that it would be "impossible" to hear individual cases across the country. "If we start entertaining contempt, we will be flooded with it. We will not go into individual cases," it said.

Viral Sandeshkhali video : BJP leader approaches Calcutta HC

Kolkata, May 13 (IANS) : A local BJP leader, Gangadhar Kayal, in West Bengal's Sandeshkhali on Monday approached a single-judge bench of Calcutta High Court claiming that a fake sting-operation video involving him was being circulated. Kayal said in the video he was seen and heard claiming that the protests staged by the women against alleged sexual harassment by local Trinamool Congress leaders were orchestrated by the BJP.



The single-judge bench of Justice Jay Sengupta has admitted the petition. The matter is likely to come up for hearing on May 14, the day after the fourth phase of Lok Sabha polls. The video surfaced on May 4, Kayal, a Mandal president of BJP at Sandeshkhali, approached the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) claiming that in the video modulation of his voice was done through the use of Artificial Intelligence. To recall, the CBI is already conducting a probe into the matter of complaints of sexual harassment, illegal land grabbing and extortion at Sandeshkhali by a section of the Trinamool Congress leaders there. The development comes at a time when the ruling Trinamool Congress is going all-out in its campaign that the entire Sandeshkhali episode has been orchestrated by the BJP to show the ruling party and the state government in a bad light. A section of the Trinamool Congress leaders have even claimed that the decision to suspend Sheikh Shahjahan, the principal accused in the Sandeshkhali episode, from the party was taken in haste. Observers feel that now that the matter has reached the level of the Calcutta High Court, confusion over the authenticity of the video is likely to be resolved soon.

Constituency Watch: NCP(SP) brings new Maratha face, Raksha Khadse faces twin challenges in Raver

Mumbai, May 13 (IANS) : Political equations in the Raver Lok Sabha constituency from Jalgaon District in North Maharashtra have changed drastically after veteran leader Eknath Khadse's decision to re-join the BJP which he left in October 2020. Khadse had left the BJP while blaming the local leadership of injustice and neglect. Though Eknath Khadse is yet to be formally re-inducted into the BJP, he has a clout in the constituency due to his political journey of over 40 years. Now, with Khadse at her side, the BJP nominee Raksha Khadse hopes to score a hat-trick from Raver constituency which has been represented by the party since 2009 after it was created in February 2009 during the delimitation process. Raksha Khadse is pitted against NCP (SP) candidate Shriram Patil who is a leading industrialist and comes from the Maratha community. Significantly, Eknath Khadse is Raksha Khadse's father-in-law. The NCP(SP) had explored the option of fielding Khadse senior against his daughter-in-law but Khadse's move to rejoin the BJP changed the equation. With NCP(SP)'s move to nominate a new face, Raksha Khadse faces the twin challenge of battling the anti-incumbency factor and winning the seat with a higher margin. During the 2019 elections, Raksha Khadse polled 6,55,386 votes against Congress nominee Dr Ulhas Patil who got 3,19,504 votes. In the 2014 elections, Raksha Khadse had defeated NCP nominee Manish Jain when she had polled 6,05,452 votes against 2,87,384 votes by Jain. NCP(SP) hopes to cash in on the anti-incumbency factor against Raksha Khadse and also against the BJP. There are 4 lakh Marathas, 3.30 lakh Muslims and



2.59 lakh Leva-Patils in the constituency. Incidentally, Leva-Patils play a crucial role in the elections and therefore both Raksha Khadse and Shriram Patil have stepped up their efforts to woo them. Of the 18,21,750 voters, 9,41,732 are males and 8,79,964 are females.

The constituency is slated to go to polls on May 13 and there are 24 candidates in the fray. Raver is also known as the major banana growing area and it hogged the headlines in the past after the Congress party held its national convention in Faizpur from Raver.

Eknath Khadse's rivalry with BJP Minister Girish Mahajan and Independent Legislator Chandrakant Patil is well-known. Chandrakant Patil had defeated Khadse's daughter Rohini Khadse in the 2019 Assembly election from the Muktainagar seat. Girish Mahajan has dared Eknath Khadse to first resign from the NCP(SP) and be part of the poll campaign after his formal 'ghar wapsi'. However, the BJP's state and central leadership has asked party leaders including Mahajan and others from Jalgaon District not to target Eknath Khadse as the party is keen to retain the seat. With the intervention of DCM Devendra Fadnavis, the BJP's poll machinery has been activated for Raksha Khadse's victory.



Evidence by approver in scheduled offence can't be used against him under PMLA Act: Delhi HC

New Delhi, May 13 (IANS) : The Delhi High Court has granted bail to Sanjay Kansal, an accused in a money laundering case, after he turned approver in a related CBI investigation. Justice Amit Sharma ruled that the evidence provided by Kansal as an approver in the scheduled offence cannot be used against him in the ongoing proceedings under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). This decision stems from Kansal's status as a witness in the CBI case, following his pardon for the scheduled offences. His evidence in those proceedings, therefore, is not admissible in the PMLA case. The court referenced a judgement from the Allahabad High Court which noted that while a pardon elevates an accused to the status of a witness, it does not imply absolute absolution in the predicate offence. The Enforcement Directorate (ED) had accused Kansal of laundering nearly Rs 50 crore as part of a conspiracy with other co-accused. Despite these allegations, Kansal's role did not appear to extend to managerial or key decision-making capacities within the implicated company, M/s SBBEL.

Man kidnaps & sexually assaults 8-year-old girl in Delhi, held

New Delhi, May 13 (IANS) : An eight-year-old girl was kidnapped and then sexually assaulted by a 28-year-old man in South Delhi, police said on Monday, adding that the accused has been arrested.

The accused was identified as Arjun a.k.a Umar, a resident of Andheria Mod in the Mehrauli area.

According to police, on May 6, at around 3 p.m., a police control room (PCR) call regarding the kidnapping of an eight-year-old girl was received at Kotla Mubarakpur police station.

Upon reaching the spot Uday Chand Marg, the complainant, also the father of the missing girl, a resident of Wazir Nagar, told police that an unknown person had taken away his daughter.



Maha Cong Chief calls for purification of Ram Temple, gives fresh ammo to BJP

New Delhi, May 13 (IANS) : Maharashtra Congress Chief Nana Patole on Monday stoked a fresh controversy as he made a call for the purification of the Ram Temple if the Maha Vikas Aghadi alliance comes to power. Patole's remarks on Ayodhya's Ram Temple have given fresh ammo to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), besides escalating the conundrum that the party

already finds itself steeped in. "Prime Minister Narendra Modi didn't follow the right rituals before performing Pran Pratistha ceremony. The Shankaracharyas also vented their disagreement with it. People also want purification of the temple," Patole told media persons.

Rajasthan Health Minister smells scam worth crores in fake NoCs for organ transplant cases

Jaipur, May 13 (IANS) : Rajasthan Health Minister Gajendra Singh Khimsar said that the fake NOCs issued in organ transplant cases seem like a scam worth crores, and those accused will not be spared. Speaking to the media, he said that Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma had given him seven days to probe the issue and that he submitted a thorough report to the Governor on Monday.



Madras HC directs authorities to consider shifting Savukku Shankar from Coimbatore prison

Chennai, May 13 (IANS) : The Madras High Court vacation bench has directed the prison authorities to consider the plea of A. Kamala, mother of YouTuber Savukku Shankar, for shifting her son from Coimbatore prison to any other jail as she feared a threat to his life and had complained of custodial violence. The division bench of the Madras High Court comprising Justices A.D. Jagadish Chandira and R. Kalaimathi on Monday closed the habeas corpus petition (HCP) filed by A. Kamala and passed the orders after hearing senior counsel R. John Sathan for the petitioner and Additional Public Prosecutor E. Raj Thilak for the prison authorities.



Lebanon requests Qatar's assistance to evacuate Lebanese women from Gaza

Beirut, May 13 (IANS) : Lebanese Foreign Affairs Minister Abdallah Bou Habib has said that his country has asked for assistance from Qatar to evacuate Lebanese women from Gaza through the Rafah crossing. "We requested Qatari assistance to get Lebanese women and their families out through the Rafah crossing, as they have been stuck since the start of the aggression on Gaza, despite all our previous attempts to bring them home," Bou Habib added on Monday, according to a report by Lebanese National News Agency. The Lebanese Foreign Minister made the remarks after meeting with Qatar's Ambassador to Lebanon, Saud bin Abdul Rahman Al-Thani, Xinhua news agency reported.

Meanwhile, Bou Habib praised Qatar's constructive role in helping Lebanon emerge from its presidential crisis. Qatar is working through the five-nation group on Lebanon, which comprises Qatar, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, France, and the US, to help the country accelerate its presidential election and financial and economic reforms. The position of Lebanese President has been vacant since the end of the term of former President Michel Aoun in October 2022. The Parliament failed to elect a new President for the country in light of the division of political forces and the failure of the parliamentary blocs to agree on a consensual figure to assume the presidency.

New dispute looms between Rome and German NGOs helping migrants

Rome, May 13 (IANS/DPA) : A new dispute is brewing between Italy and private German aid organisations over the handling of boat refugees in the Mediterranean. Despite a ban by the right-wing government of Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, the German non-governmental organisation (NGO) Sea-Watch said it was continuing its flights to spot refugee boats. A video posted by Sea-Watch showed a small private plane taking off from the island of

Lampedusa towards the central Mediterranean, one of the most important routes for refugees from Africa to Europe. At the beginning of this week, Italy's aviation authority, which reports to the transport ministry of right-wing Prime Minister Matteo Salvini, issued several decrees. Accordingly, no more flights of this kind are allowed to take off from Lampedusa and three other airports in the south. This is also justified on the grounds that it would jeopardise the safety of migrants. Violations could result in the confiscation of



aircraft and heavy fines. Sea-Watch has said that it intends to defy the ban. "The flight ban is politically motivated and legally untenable," a spokesman said. "In the middle of the European election campaign, Italy is trying to get rid of the last witnesses to European crimes in the Mediterranean. We will not be intimidated by this."

Tripura HC asks govt to provide gratuity to retired Anganwadi workers, helpers

Agartala, May 13 (IANS) : The Tripura High Court on Monday directed the state government to provide gratuity benefits to all Anganwadi workers and helpers after their retirement, a senior lawyer said. Over 20,000 Anganwadi workers and helpers would benefit from this court order, senior lawyer Purushottam Ray Barman, who fought the case for the Anganwadi workers in the court, said. He said that Justice Sab yasachi Datta Purkayastha directed the Tripura government to provide gratuity benefits to all retired Anganwadi workers and helpers with interest.



Israeli police raid Al Jazeera offices in Nazareth

Tel Aviv, May 13 (IANS/DPA) : Israeli police have raided the offices of broadcaster Al Jazeera in the city of Nazareth, confiscating equipment belonging to the Arab-language TV channel. The raid comes several days after the Israeli government banned Al Jazeera, both blocking access to Al Jazeera's content in Israel and banning the broadcaster from operating. Israel's communications minister signed a closure order for the broadcaster on Monday, and Al Jazeera's office in the Ambassador Hotel in East Jerusalem was raided that same day. Israel accuses the channel of biased reporting in the Gaza war. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin

Netanyahu had already announced his intention to close the TV network's facilities operating in Israel more than a month ago. Israel's parliament had previously approved a measure widely known as the Al Jazeera law that enables the government to shut down and ban foreign broadcasters if they are classified as a risk to state security. The broadcaster has categorically rejected the Israeli accusations and described the ban as a "criminal act" that violated human rights and the fundamental right of access to information. Al Jazeera said it would take all possible action against the move and defend the rights of the broadcaster and its employees.

Tripura to start e-attendance for teachers, students in govt schools to improve quality of teaching

Agartala, May 13 (IANS) : In a bid to improve the quality of education and performance of teachers and students, the Tripura government would soon introduce the e-attendance system for teachers and students in all 4,912 government schools, an official said on Monday. A top Education Department official said that the digital move, being introduced under the Vidya Samiksha Kendra, would bring transparency in the entire academic system and better functioning of schools. "The entire process to cover the e-attendance system for teachers, students in all 4,912 government schools would be completed in a two-year time," the official told IANS, refusing to be named. The Vidya Samiksha Kendra, which was first launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Gujarat in 2022, was envisioned by the Union Education Ministry as a "force multiplier" that would amplify the existing capabilities of people in the education system, enabling a transformative impact on the



desired educational outcomes. After implementation of the e-attendance method in all schools, the geo-tagging system would also be introduced to bring all necessary aspects available online, the official pointed out. He said that after completion of the process of e-attendance system covering all the schools, the Chief Minister, concerned ministers and senior officials from their offices would monitor the performance of the teachers and schools. Currently, necessary training of headmasters and all concerned are going on to make them familiar about the new digital system. The Tripura government has already introduced the e-attendance system in some government offices, including the civil secretariat, headquarters of the administration, here. Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha, who also holds the Education Department, recently launched the state's first Vidya Samiksha Kendra (VSK) in Agartala to help students fulfil their dreams through quality education, real-time monitoring, and support of Artificial Intelligence (AI).



Molestation Case: CCTV footage of Raj Bhavan shown to 'common people', Governor not spotted in single frame

Kolkata, May 13 (IANS) : Amid allegations of molestation against West Bengal Governor C.V. Ananda Bose, the Governor's House on Monday showed 69-minute CCTV footage of the Raj Bhavan premises dated May 2 to around 100 'common people'. On May 2, a temporary female staff at the Raj Bhavan filed a police complaint accusing the Gov-

ernor of 'outraging her modesty', triggering a political storm in the state. Denying the charge vehemently from the beginning, the Governor on Wednesday announced that the CCTV footage of the Raj Bhavan will be screened at the Governor's House for the common people, barring Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

Construction of Ram temple will hugely benefit UP's economy: Sudhanshu Trivedi

New Delhi, May 13 (IANS) : BJP's national spokesperson and Rajya Sabha MP Sudhanshu Trivedi said on Monday that the construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya will not only enhance India's prestige and uplift spiritual and cultural consciousness, but also benefit Uttar Pradesh's economy hugely.



Kerala Govt Medical Officers Association protests Thiruvananthapuram Collector's 'diktats'

Thiruvananthapuram, May 13 (IANS) : The Kerala Government Medical Officers Association (KGMOA), a body of doctors working in the government hospitals, has complained about the alleged breaking of protocols by Thiruvananthapuram District Collector Jeromic George, who had summoned a doctor home to treat an infection. KGMOA officials said that last week, George called up a

senior state Health Department official and asked for a doctor to be sent to his official residence as he is suffering from a fungal infection of the toenail and wants it to be examined. Surprised by this demand, the health official, at first, did not take any action and soon came another call, where George, according to the KGMOA, repeated his demand authoritatively. The health official then called up the officer in charge at the state-run General Hospital

and asked for a general surgeon to be sent to the residence of the Collector immediately. "On getting the order, a doctor, who was seeing outpatients, quickly left for the residence of George. He had to wait for a while as the Collector was in a meeting. After a wait, the doctor attended to the health issue of the Collector and returned to the hospital," said the KGMOA official.



Punjab Police bust interstate weapon smuggling racket, two held

Chandigarh, May 13 (IANS) : In an intelligence-based operation, the Counter Intelligence (CI) unit of Jalandhar has busted an interstate weapon smuggling racket with the arrest of two smugglers after recovering six pistols and seven magazines from their possession, Punjab's Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav said on Monday. Those arrested have been identified as Harpreet Singh and Rahul Masih. DGP Yadav said preliminary investigations have revealed the racket was working in a well-oiled

manner and had procured four large weapons consignments from Madhya Pradesh's Ujjain in the past six months. The module members were in touch with a US-based criminal entity and procured weapon consignment on his directions. He said police teams have identified two more members of the module, who supplied weapons to gangsters. The teams are on a manhunt to nab them, said the DGP, adding further investigations are ongoing to establish the backward and forward linkages.

Major row breaks out between BJP, SS(UBT) over 'nakli santaan' jibe at Uddhav; Mahayuti ally also takes umbrage



Pune (Maharashtra), May 13 (IANS) : Ruling Mahayuti's ally Prahar Janshakti Party (PJP) on Monday took umbrage at a statement made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi against former Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray. During an election campaign in Maharashtra on Tuesday, PM Modi allegedly referred to the 'nakli santaan (fake children)' of Balasaheb Thackeray while alluding to Uddhav Thackeray and reiterated his earlier statements on the 'nakli party' Shiv Sena (UBT). Reacting to the statements, PJP President Omprakash Babarao Kadu, alias Bachchu Kadu said on Friday, "This should not have happened... Electioneering has plummeted to new lows... This is like a village panchayat-level poll campaign. If the PM has indeed said it, then it's not in the right spirit." Referring to the statements by the PM, Home Minister Amit Shah and other senior BJP leaders labeling the Shiv Sena (UBT) an imitation of the original founded by the late Balasaheb Thackeray, Kadu said, "We can understand

this up to the party level. However, it's no proper to drag family members and relatives into it while campaigning just to get votes." However, another Mahayuti ally and Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis said that the PM would never make such a statement disrespecting Balasaheb Thackeray. Taking offence to PM Modi's statement, SS(UBT)'s senior leader Sanjay Raut said that if someone calls Balasaheb Thackeray's children "fake", then "they are directly insulting the people of Maharashtra, and the people will teach them a lesson." Uddhav Thackeray also vented his ire late on Thursday night and promptly hit back saying, "Modi calls us 'nakli santaan', but he is 'be-akli' (brainless). This is a direct insult to my revered parents Balasaheb Thackeray and Meena Thackeray. The people of the state will not rest till they give the BJP a fitting reply for this slur."

Congress indulging in racial abuse: K'taka BJP slams Sam Pitroda

Bengaluru, May 13 (IANS) : The Karnataka BJP has slammed the Congress over Sam Pitroda's 'racial' remarks, stating that the party is indulging in "racial abuse" of people. "The people of South India have a history of 5,000 years. Without knowing the facts, Congress has called us South Africans while attempts are being made to disturb the peace," Karnataka Leader of

the Opposition (LoP) R. Ashoka said while addressing a press conference at the BJP headquarters. He said that the statement by Sam Pitroda reveals the mindset of the Congress. "The racial inclinations and making remarks over skin colour are in the DNA of the Congress. Before the controversial remark, Congress MP from Karnataka D.K. Suresh had made similar comments. Now, Sam Pitroda has made a remark that will



Decline in Hindu population is a concern, says BJP leader CT Ravi

Bengaluru, May 13 (IANS) : Former national general secretary of the BJP, C.T. Ravi has expressed concern over the decline in the Hindu population and an increase in the Muslim population between 1950 and 2015. Talking to IANS on Monday, he warned against overlooking the historical consequences of such shifts, pointing to examples like the creation of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Bangladesh due to demographic changes. Ravi emphasized that demographic shifts can lead to feelings of insecurity and threaten the stability of the Constitution.

Goa Speaker dismisses disqualification petition against former CM Kamat, Lobo

Panaji, May 13 (IANS) : Goa Legislative Assembly Speaker Ramesh Tawadkar on Monday dismissed a disqualification petition filed by Congress against former Chief Minister Digambar Kamat and MLA Michael Lobo. Goa Pradesh Congress Committee President Amit Patkar filed the disqualification petition on July 11, 2022, against its then-two leaders Digambar Kamat and Michael Lobo for anti-party activities, who later joined the BJP. Speaking to media persons, Amit Patkar said that the result was expected as the Speaker works on the instructions of the BJP government. "Our legal team is evaluating what has to be done next. We demand that the Speaker start hearing of other

disqualification petitions filed against eight MLAs, who switched parties," Patkar said. He said that the Speaker had submitted an affidavit to the High Court stating once this petition is disposed of pending petitions will be heard. "As per the Supreme Court's judgement, he has to decide on these petitions within 90 days. Still, if he fails, then we will take further legal remedies," Patkar said. In July 2022, Congress removed Michael Lobo as Leader of the Opposition alleging he was one who hatched a conspiracy, along with former Chief Minister Digambar Kamat, by hobnobbing BJP to split Congress MLAs. Patkar said that the Supreme Court judgment says anti-party activities amount to voluntarily giving up party membership. "We have evidence against them to prove that both were involved in anti-party activities and were trying to split MLAs," he said. Later on September 14, 2022, former Chief Minister Digambar Kamat, Michael Lobo, Delilah Lobo, Kedar Naik, Sankalp Amonkar, Rajesh Faldesai, Aleixo Sequeira



and Rudolf Fernandes merged the Congress into BJP, reducing Congress to 3 MLA's in 40 members assembly House. Subsequently, Congress had filed a disqualification petition before Speaker Ramesh Tawadkar against all eight MLAs, who had switched to the BJP on September 14. Two more individual petitions were filed by former AICC secretary Girish Chodankar and Dominic Noronha against these 8 MLAs. Claiming that the merger of these 8 MLAs is invalid, Chodankar had pleaded to disqualify them as members of the Goa State Legislative Assembly under Article 191 (2) para 2 of Constitution of India r/w para 2 (1) (a) of tenth schedule of the constitution of India. Congress leaders on many occasions have alleged that Ramesh Tawadkar is delaying the hearings of these petitions.



Minimally invasive robotic surgery frees woman from aggressive appendix cancer

Chennai, May 13 (IANS) : In a major medical breakthrough, a minimally invasive robotic-assisted approach has cured a woman suffering from Pseudomyxoma Peritonei (PMP) -- an aggressive appendix cancer. The global estimated incidence of PMP is approximately 1 to 4 out of a million, annually. It appears to be more common in women,

majorly in their 50s. The patient, aged 51, was diagnosed with bilateral ovarian masses and had extensive surgical intervention, including the removal of the uterus, ovaries, appendix, and part of the omentum. Subsequent examination revealed a high-grade mucinous tumour of the appendix with PMP, necessitating additional surgery. The patient was found to have gelatinous

deposits that remain in the abdomen post-surgery for appendicular mucinous tumours in the pelvis and around the cecum (first part of the colon). Due to the peculiar tendency of appendix cancer to spread to the lining of the patient's abdomen (peritoneum), doctors at Apollo Cancer Centre (ACC), resorted to minimally invasive Robotic Cytoreductive Surgery (CRS).

The surgery completely removed residual tumours from the abdomen. CRS was performed "to reduce the number of cancer cells in the abdominal cavity with right hemicolectomy (removing the colon which bears the appendix) and complete mesocolic excision (surgery for treating cancer arising from the colon and appendix).



divide the country," he said. He said that with this development, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, through his party, has assured racial discrimination. "Racist ideology had resulted in deaths. Great personalities like

Nelson Mandela and Mahatma Gandhi launched an agitation against racism. The Congress has now divided the minds of the people on skin colour. They have called people with a 5,000-year history Africans. What colour does the Con-

gress want to paint the Vokkaligas, Lingayats, and Dalits living in Karnataka with?" he said.



Man arrested for demanding Rs 20 lakh from car showroom owner

New Delhi, May 13 (IANS) : A 30-year-old man was arrested by police who had demanded Rs 20 lakh from a second-hand car showroom owner in west Delhi through a handwritten note, an official said on Monday. The officials said that the accused, identified as Karan Dhingra, a resident of Rani Bagh, was aware of the recent incidents.



It is in our common interest that we reach an understanding to take our relationship forward, EAM Jaishankar tells Maldives Foreign Minister

New Delhi, May 13 (IANS) : India on Monday reminded Maldives that it has been a key provider of development assistance to the island nation and several projects funded by New Delhi have benefited the lives of thousands of people in the country. "India has been a key provider of development assistance to the Maldives. Our projects have benefited the lives of people of your country; contributed directly to the quality of life. They range from infrastructure projects and social initiatives to medical evacuation and health facilities," External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said during his meeting with Moosa Zameer, Foreign Minister of Maldives, who is on his first official visit to India since assuming office.

In his opening remarks, Jaishankar mentioned India extending financial support to Maldives "on favourable terms" in the past and also mentioned New Delhi being the "first responder" on numerous occasions.



South Korean president apologises over scandal involving gift to wife

Seoul, May 13 (IANS/DPA) : South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol has apologised for his wife's decision to accept a luxury handbag as a gift, revelations of which have caused a scandal.

Yoon's wife, Kim Keon Hee, was secretly filmed by a hidden camera accepting the expensive handbag from a third party. The ensuing controversy has also politically ensnared the conservative president himself. Yoon said on Monday that his wife had behaved unwisely at the time and that

her behaviour had caused unrest for which he apologised. His remarks came at Yoon's first press conference since August 2022, and several weeks after his party was soundly defeated in April's general election. The scandal surrounding the first lady was also seen as one of the factors that helped determine the outcome of the election. Yoon, who previously served as South Korea's attorney general, rejected the political opposition's call for additional special investigations into the handbag scandal. There are already investigations into the incident, he said, and dismissed calls for a special prosecutor as a "political manoeuvre."



Egypt, Jordan warn against humanitarian catastrophe of Israeli attacks in Rafah

Cairo, May 13 (IANS) : Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi and Jordan's Prime Minister Bisher Khasawneh have warned against the humanitarian catastrophe of the ongoing Israeli military operation in the Palestinian city of Rafah, according to the Egyptian Presidency office's statement. The two leaders made the remarks during a meeting in Cairo, where they reiterated the two countries' "full rejection" of the Israeli invasion of Rafah, the southernmost city of the besieged enclave, said the statement on Monday as quoted by Xinhua news agency report. "The Israeli operation impedes the only safe exit of the wounded and sick Palestinians and hinders the delivery of humanitarian and relief aid," they emphasised. The ongoing conditions require the international community to take its responsibilities for reaching an immediate and sustainable ceasefire and to push forward for the recognition of an independent Palestinian state which will help in achieving regional security and stability, the statement

Israel to continue Rafah operation as Gaza truce talks collapse: Official

Jerusalem, May 13 (IANS) : The Israeli army will continue its operation in the southern Gaza Strip city of Rafah "as planned," after the talks on the Israel-Hamas truce held in Egypt's Cairo collapsed, an Israeli official told the media. Meanwhile, a Xinhua news agency covering the developments reported mass Israeli troops stationed on the border with Rafah. The unnamed Israeli official confirmed on Monday that the Israeli delegation has left Cairo after talks with Hamas, the US, Egyptian, and Qatari negotiators on a

deal to end the hostilities and secure the release of hostages in Gaza, Xinhua news agency reported. The official did not elaborate on whether Israel will expand the offensive to more areas in Rafah at the southern end of Gaza, where about 1.2 million internally displaced Palestinians were taking refuge. According to Israel's state-owned Kan TV news, the talks were halted due to Israel's ongoing ground assault on Rafah. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's war cabinet was scheduled to meet later on Tuesday to discuss the continuation of the Rafah operation.



Russian attacks damage 2 hydroelectric power plants in Ukraine

Kiev, May 13 (IANS) : Russian missile and drone attacks two days ago heavily damaged two hydroelectric power plants in Ukraine, Ukraine's state-run hydropower generating company Ukrhydroenergo said. "Two hydroelectric power plants are out of operation," Ukrhydroenergo said on Monday in a post on Telegram, not specifying locations.

One year after violent protests shook Pakistan, military and Imran's PTI still at loggerheads

Islamabad, May 13 (IANS) : Marks one year to the time when supporters of former Prime Minister Imran Khan and his party Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) expressed their anger against the country's powerful military establishment by engaging in violence, riots, attacks on military installations and a 'call for resistance' -- a narrative that Khan successfully injected in his supporters since his ouster from power in April 2022. Today, both PTI and the military establishment mark as a 'black day' by labeling each other as the victim and an aggressor.



The current ruling federal government -- along with its coalition political partners who control the provincial set-ups in Sindh, Balochistan and Punjab -- condemn PTI and Imran Khan for brainwashing supporters who carried out targeted violent attacks on sensitive military installations across the country, last year. The military establishment also remains vocal on the issue. "The Armed Forces of Pakistan, along with Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJSC) and Services Chiefs, strongly condemn the criminal acts perpe-

trated. On this one of the darkest days in our national history, politically motivated and brain-washed miscreants in an act of rebellion, deliberately resorted to violence against state institutions and vandalised sacred symbols of the state and the sites belonging to national heritage," read a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR). The military establishment maintains that it showed "utmost restraint" during the orchestrated violence, highlighting that the malicious attempt to trigger confrontation between the protesters and the

armed forces was thwarted. The ISPR has made it clear that the culprits behind the riots and attacks will not be spared. "It is precisely for this reason there can neither be any compromise with the planners, facilitators and executors of May 9 tragedy nor they would be allowed to hoodwink the law of the land. Bringing the real culprits to justice is paramount to ensure that in the future, no one dares to desecrate memories of our heroes and the symbols of our unity through such an unwarranted conduct in the future," an ISPR statement stated.

Zelensky, European Parliament chief discuss Ukraine's European integration, security

Kiev, May 13 (IANS) : Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and visiting European Parliament President Roberta Metsola have discussed Ukraine's European integration and security issues.

At the talks, Zelensky said on Monday that Ukraine has fulfilled all the necessary conditions for starting accession talks with the European Union next month, according to the Presidential press service. For her part, Metsola said she was optimistic that EU member states will adopt the negotiating framework for Ukraine in June, Xinhua news agency reported.



Iran condemns US pressure campaign against ICC

Tehran, May 13 (IANS) : Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Nasser Kanaani has condemned the threats by a group of US lawmakers against the International Criminal Court (ICC) intending to prevent the tribunal from issuing arrest warrants against senior Israeli officials. He made the remarks on Monday in a post on social media platform X while reacting to warnings by pro-Israel US Congressmen that any arrest warrants for senior Israeli officials would encounter US retaliation, Xinhua news agency reported.

Kanaani also slammed recent threats by several US Republican Senators against the ICC to impose sanctions should the tribunal take any such action. The Spokesman said that through "exerting pressure" on the ICC, these US Congressmen sought to grant Israeli officials and military commanders immunity for their "war crimes" against Palestinians, which is a "shameful and worrying" move. He described the threats as "ugly interferences" that would set a "dangerous precedent" for contradicting the ICC's "objectives and philosophy of prosecuting and punishing war criminals".

Humpy, Pragg, and Vaishali set to compete in Norway Chess 2024

Stavanger (Norway), May 13 (IANS) : Indian Grandmasters Koneru Humpy, Vaishali Rameshbabu and Praggnanandhaa Rameshbabu are set to compete in the 12th edition of the prestigious Norway Chess Championship scheduled to take place from May 27 to June 7 at SR-Bank's main building, here. The prestigious event will feature World No.1 Magnus Carlsen (Norway), World No.3 Hikaru Nakamura

(USA), current World Champion Ding Liren (China), Women's World Champion Ju Wenjun (China), Lei Tingjie (China) among others. Popularly known as the 'Wimbledon of Chess', Norway Chess annually extend invitations to top Grandmasters from the world rating list. However, within the top 100 players globally, no women are listed. There has been a scarcity of women in top-level private competitions due to limited invitations and unequal prize

money. Hence, to address this issue and set a new benchmark for gender equality, Norway Chess has introduced the world's first-ever equal female tournament this year. The Norway Chess Women's Tournament, to be held in the same hall concurrently, with the same number of players as the Norway Chess, will have the same format and an equivalent prize fund.



Shooting : Adarsh, Manu top qualifications in fourth 25m Olympic Selection Trial

Bhopal, May 13 (IANS) : Manu Bhaker and Adarsh Singh topped the qualification rounds of the women's 25m pistol and men's 25m rapid-fire pistol (RFP) Olympic Selection Trial (OST) T4 respectively, as all five athletes in the event heading into the final to be held at the MP State Shooting Academy ranges on Tuesday morning. The men went first as Anish Bhanwala took a healthy four-point lead from the first precision stage into the second rapid-fire stage, only to be

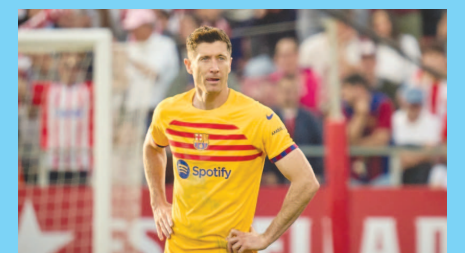
pipped by Adarsh on countback, after both posted scores of 583 with the same number of 24-hits in the inner 10-ring. Ankur Goel too shot the same score but had 10 fewer hits in the inner ring, while Vijayveer Sidhu clinched fourth with a 581, scoring just one inner-10 more than Bhavesh Shekhawat. Olympian Manu Bhaker in the women's 25M Pistol, also pipped Esha Singh on inner-10s after both shot an identical 586. Rhythm Sangwan came in third while

Abhidnya Patil (582) and Simranpreet Kaur Brar (564) were fourth and fifth respectively. On pure calculations and taking the best of three scores, Manu Bhaker and Esha Singh take the top two spots in the women's event, while Anish Bhanwala and Vijayveer Sidhu are 1-2 in the men's RFP, irrespective of what happens in the finals. The final team for the Paris Olympics will however only be declared after a meeting of the selection committee post the trials.

IPL 2024: 'Have struggled a bit after injury; hopefully will be back to being a player I was', says Rashid Khan

Ahmedabad, May 13 (IANS) : The IPL 2024 has witnessed the return of Afghanistan's premier leg-spinner Rashid Khan to high-octane cricketing action after undergoing a back surgery last year. So far, Rashid has been building up to achieve his best self with the ball and bat, seen from him taking ten wickets and making 102 runs in his

team's campaign so far. Ahead of Gujarat Titans' final home match against Kolkata Knight Riders at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad on Monday evening, Rashid spoke exclusively to IANS on his performances in IPL 2024, mindset behind acing last-ball finish against Rajasthan Royals and on leadership skills of Shubman Gill.



La Liga 2023-24: Lewandowski to stay at Barcelona, says agent

Warsaw, May 13 (IANS) : Robert Lewandowski's agent Pini Zahavi affirmed that the Polish striker would remain at FC Barcelona next season. He added that Lewandowski is not interested in a transfer to the Saudi Pro League. "That is nonsense. Lewandowski will stay in Barcelona one hundred percent. He wants to play another year in Catalonia," Zahavi told Polish media on Monday morning. The 34-year-old scored four goals for Barcelona in his last two La Liga matches, and sits fourth in this season's individual scoring charts with 17 goals, reports Xinhua. However, according to Spanish media Sport.es, Barcelona are considering selling Lewandowski as it would allow them to bring in other players.

Women's football nationals: Haryana pip Bengal on penalties; to meet Manipur in final

Kolkata, May 13 (IANS) : Haryana beat hosts Bengal 4-3 on penalties in the second semifinal of the 28th Senior Women's National Football Championship for Rajmata Jijabai Trophy at the Kishore Bharati Krirangan on Monday. After a goalless 120 minutes, Haryana's Shreya Hooda made a fine save, before Dular Marandi hit the post for Bengal to seal the result. Haryana are now through to their second consecutive Senior Women's NFC final and will hope to better their runners-up finish from last year. Ravi Kumar Punia's side will face Manipur in the final on May 15, who defeated defending champions Tamil Nadu 2-0 earlier on Monday.



Moody backs Rohit & Hardik to regain form ahead of T20 WC

New Delhi, May 13 (IANS) : Mumbai Indians' (MI) IPL 2024 campaign was majorly overshadowed by the Rohit Sharma-Hardik Pandya debacle with both players being criticised individually as well as for their impact on the team. However, former Australian cricketer Tom Moody has backed the two players to regain form ahead of the T20 World Cup, starting from June 1 in "I wouldn't be overly concerned with Rohit Sharma's form at this stage.

When it comes to representing his country for major events like an ICC World Cup, I see the experience of Rohit Sharma as invaluable not just with the bat but as the captain as well. "When it comes to form for players like Rohit Sharma, the way the event is structured there's a number of games in the group stage for players to find some form against less competitive sides," Moody, cricket expert and commentator with official TV broadcaster Star Sports for IPL 2024, told IANS in an exclusive chat. "When it comes to individual form or team form momentum can be captured quite early and then the team will be peaking at the right time when it comes to the back end of the tournament," he said.



Boxing: Nikhat Zareen off to a flying start in Elorda Cup 2024

Astana (Kazakhstan), May 13 (IANS) : India's reigning world champion Nikhat Zareen (52kg) began her campaign with a convincing 5-0 win against Kazakhstan's Rakhymberdi Zhansaya on the opening day of the Elorda Cup 2024 here on Monday. Minakshi (48kg) also made her way into the next round with a 4-1 victory over Gassymova Roxana of Kazakhstan. Conversely, Anamika defeated Zhumabayeva Arailym with a Referee Stops the Contest (RSC) win in the first round of the 50kg category bout. Meanwhile, Ishmeet Singh (75kg) and Sonia (54kg) bowed out after losing 0-5 against Kazakhstan's Armanuly Armat and China's Chang Yuan respectively.

WFI will decide which wrestler to compete in Paris, not IOA, clears federation chief Sanjay Singh

New Delhi, May 13 (IANS) : After six Indian grapplers secured Olympic quotas, Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) president Sanjay Singh has said that the federation will decide which wrestler will be participating at the 2024 Paris Games, "not the Indian Olympic Association (IOA)" He said that the fresh trials will be conducted to pick the final squad for the showpiece event. "Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) will decide which wrestler will participate in the Paris Olympics, not IOA.

