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Raashii Khanna talks about working on 'Aranmanai 4': 'It was the easiest set to be on'

Actress Raashii Khanna is over the moon with the response her latest release 'Aranmanai 4' has received. Talking about her... **12**



TCS announces to create global AI centre of excellence in France

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) on Tuesday announced the creation of a Global Artificial Intelligence (AI) Centre of Excellence in Paris during the Choose France Summit. **07**



Won't allow thieves to have a sound sleep, will empty their coffers: PM Modi in Jharkhand

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said that the 'looters' of public wealth will have a tough time and his government... **02**

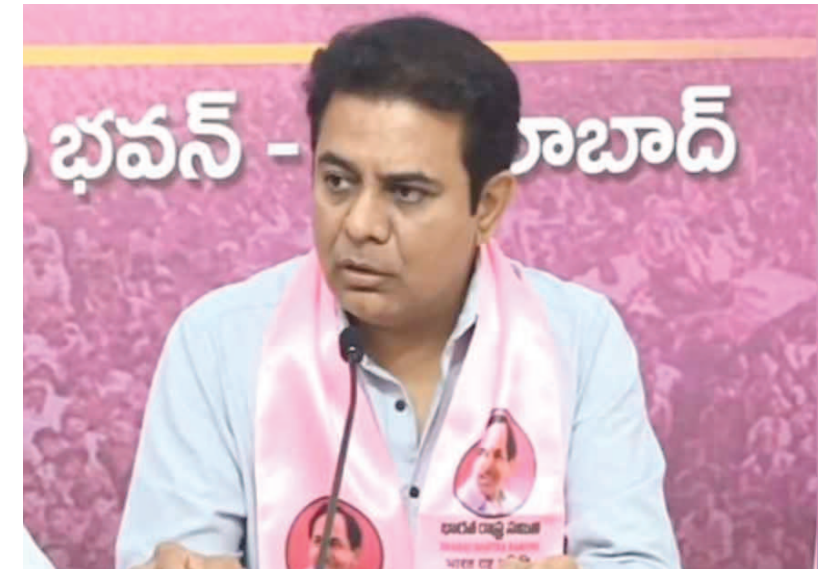
Congress exudes confidence of winning 13 Lok Sabha seats in Telangana

Hyderabad, May 14 (NSS): The Congress party is expected to win maximum number of Lok Sabha seats in Telangana. Congress leaders strongly believe that the the polling has gone in their favor everywhere and the voters have blessed their governance in the State. Based on survey reports, opinions of the party leaders and the

information received from various quarters, the Congress leaders exuded confidence that the party would win 13 Lok Sabha seats in Telangana. On Tuesday morning, TPCC president and Chief Minister Revanth Reddy spoke to party leaders, MLAs, Ministers, MP candidates and other leaders from his residence over the phone and reviewed the polling process.



KTR slams Congress & BJP



BRS MLC Kavitha in judicial custody till May 20



Hyderabad, May 14 (NSS): The Rouse Avenue court in New Delhi has extended the judicial custody of BRS MLC Kavitha till May 20 in connection with the liquor policy case. On Tuesday, Kavitha was produced before the court virtually. On the occasion, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) officials requested the court to extend judicial custody of Kavitha for 14 days as part of the investigation. The ED told the court that the investigation of the case was in progress and a supplementary charge sheet was filed with 8,000 pages. The court said it will inquire into the issue of considering the supplementary charge sheet filed by the ED on May 20.



Congress & BRS parties will disappear in country, predicts BJP MP Laxman

Hyderabad, May 14 (NSS):BJP MP Dr K Laxman today said his party would get 370 MP seats and the NDA alliance would win over 400 seats in the Lok Sabha elections. Speaking to media persons at the State BJP office here on Tuesday, Laxman said in the elections held so far, the BJP would sweep almost all the seats. "The voters have turned to Narendra Modi and voted with faith in him. Whereas

the Congress party will not even get the status of Opposition", he claimed. He said the people did not trust CM Revanth Reddy even though he prayed all the gods on the farm loan waiver. "In the past, if KCR borrowed money and made the State to beg for money, now Revanth Reddy is doing the same. The investigation into Kaleshwaram has not yet moved forward. In Telangana, the BRS party will disappear. Even if the BRS party has a jockey, there

is no situation for it to return to its past glory. The party is not in a position to win at least one seat and will not even get deposits. The BJP is going to emerge as a strong force in Telangana. In the future, the BRS party is sure to merge with the Congress party," he predicted. He said there was going to be a political danger in August for Revanth Reddy on his promise of waiving off the farm loans.

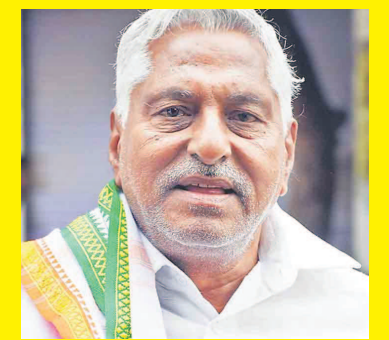
Rajanna Sircilla, May 14 (NSS): BRS party working president K Taraka Rama Rao today lashed out at the BJP and Congress governments at the Centre and in the State. He alleged that the two parties were wrestling in Delhi and working together in the State. Speaking to mediapersons here on Tuesday, he alleged that the Congress government was cancelling the good work done by their government in the State and added that it was trying to abolish the new districts besides making attempts to remove the traces of their party president KCR in the State. He alleged that the Six guarantees of the Con-

gress party were trampled upon and added that the State government cheated the farmers by saying that it would implement Rythu Bharosa scheme. He alleged that CM Revanth Reddy restricted himself to seeking votes by changing the dates on the loan waiver issue. He claimed that the farmers were now telling them that the agriculture sector was good during the rule of KCR. He said the farmers had taught a lesson to the Congress party in the just concluded MP elections and added that the opposition to the Congress party was visible in the form of votes.

Continued on pg 02

BJP, BRS worked together to defeat Congress : Jeevan Reddy

Nizamabad, May 14 (NSS): Congress candidate for Nizamabad Lok Sabha Jeevan Reddy has alleged that both Bharatiya Janatha Party (BJP) and Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) have worked together to defeat the Congress in the Lok Sabha elections. Speaking to the media here on Tuesday, Jeevan Reddy said that the BJP and BRS parties have stooped so low that they tried



all possible tricks for political gains and leaders of both parties have joined hands to defeat the Congress party.



DK Aruna sure of BJP winning 12 LS seats in Telangana

Mahabubnagar, May 14 (NSS): Former minister and Mahabubnagar BJP Lok Sabha candidate D K Aruna today claimed that the people of the constituency had already determined to elect her to parliament seat with two to three lakh vote majority. She

said on the polling day, the enthusiastic voters along with their families thronged the polling booths before 7 am to exercise their franchise in her favour. Speaking to media persons here today, DK Aruna said though Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy toured the constituency eight times to woo voters and threatened them at several places.

I will provide better governance, vows AP CM YS Jagan

Amaravati, May 14 (NSS): APMCYS Jagan Mohan Reddy has assured the people that he would provide better governance in Andhra Pradesh. He tweeted on Monday's polling. "People expressed their happiness to exercise their right to vote without even caring the hot sun. I thank those who came to bless me," he said.



Chandrababu Naidu seeks steps to stop post-poll violence in Andhra

Amaravati, May 14 (IANS) : Telugu Desam Party (TDP) President N. Chandrababu Naidu on Tuesday demanded immediate action against those involved in a series of attacks on the party workers and their properties in the aftermath of the Assembly and Lok Sabha elections in Andhra Pradesh, which were held on Monday. Voicing concern over the incidents of post-poll violence at Macherla, Chandragiri, and Tadipatri, the senior politician spoke to the Director General of Police, Harish Kumar Gupta. Blaming the ruling YSR Con-



gress Party (YSRCP) for the series of attacks on TDP workers and their properties, he urged the police chief to initiate immediate action against those behind the violence. **Continued on pg 02**

Dy CM visits Dattatreya Swamy temple in Bhupalpally

Bhupalpally, May 14 (NSS): Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka on Tuesday visited Sri Dattatreya Swamy temple at Danwada village in Kataram mandal of Jayashankar Bhupalapally district. On the occasion of the third anniversary of Sri Dattatreya Swamy temple, special pujas and rituals were performed in the temple. During the visit, the Deputy Chief Minister was accorded a grand welcome by the temple authorities. He had a darshan of the presiding deity and took vedic blessings from the

priests. Minister Sridhar Babu, MLAs Vijaya Ramana Rao, Makkhan Singh, Prem Sagar Rao, Gandra Satyanarayana and Adduri Laxman Kumar and other Congress leaders accompanied Bhatti Vikramarka. Later, speaking to the media, the Deputy Chief Minister thanked Congress leaders and workers who have worked relentlessly for the victory of party candidates in the Lok Sabha elections. He exuded confidence that the Congress party would win about 12 to 14 Lok Sabha seats in Telangana.



Distributed money and liquor in Sirisilla

Rajanna Sirisilla, May 14 (TIM Bureau) : Congress Party Sirisilla Constituency In-Charge KK Mahender Reddy demanded that KTR, who mocked democracy, degraded and distributed money and liquor, should immediately resign from his MLA post and come for re-election. He asked KTR if he has the guts to resign. On Tuesday, KK Mahender Reddy held a media conference with the party leaders at the Shivanagar Congress party office in Sirisilla. During Monday's polling, the BRS party was accused of making a mockery of democracy in Sirisilla by distributing money and liquor.

In the meeting, KK Mahender Reddy said that first of all the Congress party workers, leaders and in-charges of all departments worked tirelessly for the victory of the Congress party and also thanked the government employees, officials and police Jayantranga who worked hard for the smooth running of the election process. He said that all of them participated in the election process for the preservation of democracy after facing hardships and suffering under the sun. However, BRS working president and local MLA KT Rama Rao said that they have trampled on the Constitution of India and made a mockery of the Election Commission's policy. He said that all the people noticed the

- Democracy was mocked
- KTR should immediately resign from the post of MLA and go for elections
- Congress leader KK Mahender Reddy's demand in the media conference

manner in which money and alcohol were distributed due to the fear of defeat. "He said that the voters themselves were told to vote for the car by giving money and three cases of distribution of money and liquor were registered in Sirisilla. He said that the ranks of BRS were caught distributing money in Padma Nagar in Tangallapally, while a BRS councillor was distributing liquor in

Sirisilla, a special police squad raided and caught him and registered a case. Also, the officials said that another BRS leader had complained about the open distribution of money with the evidence they received, and a case is being registered against this too. They said that a complaint was made to the RO that they were caught on videos distributing money in a ward.

KVR Karur Vysya Bank THE KARUR VYSYA BANK LTD.
Warangal Main Branch
H.No.9-2-31, 32 & 33, Nirmala Mall, J.P.N. Road, Warangal, Telangana, 506002. Ph: 0870-2562149/2427592 Cell: 9959988571

DEMAND NOTICE UNDER SARFAESI ACT, 2002
Reg: Notice issued under Sec 13 (2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 (SARFAESI Act) for recovery of dues in the Loan A/c of A.Borrowers: 1.M/s Maheshwara Enterprises Represented by its proprietor, Mr. Ramesh Kodam H.No 46-6-509, NTR Road, Enumamula, Warangal, Telangana, 506002...Borrower 2.Mr. Ramesh Kodam H.No 18-4-181, KAMUNIPENTA, KARIMABAD, WARANGAL, Telangana, 506002...Borrower/Proprietor B.Guarantors 3. Mr. Sadanandam Kodam S/o Late Malliah D NO 18-4-181, KAREEMABAD, WARANGAL, Telangana, 506002...Guarantor 4. Mrs. Swarupa Kodam W/o. Sadanandam, H.No. 18-4-181, KAREEMABAD, WARANGAL, Telangana, 506002...Guarantor
Whereas you have committed default in repayment of loans in the above mentioned loan account to the secured creditor bank, the Bank has issued notice under the SARFAESI Act calling upon you to repay the outstanding amount of Rs.9,56,930.74 Ps.(Rupees Nine Lakhs Fifty Six Thousand Nine Hundred and Thirty and Paise Seventy Four Only) as on 18-04-2024
Whereas the notices sent to No.1 of you by Regd. Post has been returned un-served. You are hereby called upon to visit the bank and obtain copy of the notice in your own interest in order to note the full particulars of the loan dues, securities charged to the bank etc.
You are hereby called upon to pay the amount as shown above together with interest till date of payment within 60 days from the date of the notice failing which, the secured creditor Bank will be constrained to exercise its rights of enforcement of the secured assets mortgaged to the bank as mentioned below, as per the provisions of SARFAESI Act.
Schedule-A (Details of the mortgaged property in the name of Mr. Sadanandam Kodam & Mrs. Swarupa Kodam) The residential building and open space bearing Municipal H.No.18-7-94/1 constructed in total of 151.00 Sq. Yards or 126.25 Sq. Meters, with plinth area of 507.5 Sq. Ft. Situated at Bommalagudi Veedhi, Kareemabad, Warangal District, within the limits of Warangal City Municipal Corporation and within the limits of Registration District Warangal and Sub-District, Warangal Fort, Warangal and bounded by: East: H.No.18-7-98/1 of E Yadamma & H.No. 18-7-99 of Bingi Indira West: Road North: Remaining Part of house of vendors South: H.No. 18-7-93 of M.Sadanandam
Date: 24-04-2024 Sd/- Authorized Officer
Place: Warangal Main The Karur Vysya Bank Limited

Chandrababu Naidu seeks steps to stop post-poll violence in Andhra

Continued From pg 01
Naidu also alleged that YSRCP MLA from Macherla in Palnadu district, Pinneli Ramakrishna Reddy, resorted to violence in a pre-planned manner after Monday's polling. The former Chief Minister alleged that hundreds of supporters of YSRCP attacked the TDP workers, as he demanded that additional forces be sent there to check the violence. Naidu also demanded that police pickets be set up in all the villages and those indulging in violence be arrested Referring to post-poll violence in several districts, he urged the DGP to act immediately to restore law and order in the state. Earlier, Naidu urged the Election Commission and the police to focus on restoring law and

order in Andhra Pradesh, as he demanded that they deal firmly with those indulging in violence and provide protection to the people. In a social media post, he alleged that even after polling, the YSRCP 'goondas' were attacking TDP workers and people. He also voiced concern over the tense situation at some places, including Palnadu and Chandragiri. The TDP chief alleged that YSRCP's Macherla MLA and his followers attacked a TDP office in Karampudi, ransacked furniture, and damaged the vehicles parked near the office. They also alleg-

edly attacked police personnel who tried to stop them. The TDP candidate from the Chandragiri Assembly constituency, Pulivarti Venkata Mani Prasad alias Nani, was also attacked by a group of people in Tirupati on Tuesday. Pulivarti Nani was returning after a visit to the strong room at the Padmavathi Mahila University when his car was attacked by a group armed with rods and sticks. Nani, his security guard, and the driver were injured in the attack.

KTR slams Congress & BJP

Continued From pg 01
He claimed that even among the girl children, there was a strong opposition to the Congress party as it failed to implement its promise of the payment of ? 2500 per month to 1.67 crore girls within 100 days of coming into power while noting that the promises like one tola gold and Scooty vehicles, girls are angry with the Congress party. He claimed that the women were in a situation to walk on roads for drinking water now. KTR claimed that women were not in a position to forgive this government.

OMEGA AG SEEDS PUNJAB LIMITED
CIN: L01119TG1992PLC082816
H.No.1-98/9/31, P.No.31S, Flat No.101, Ramkuteer, Ayyappa Society, Madhapur, Hyderabad, Telangana-500081

Statement of Financial Results for the Quarter and Year ended 31st March 2024 (Rs. in Lakhs)

Particulars	Quarter ended			Year Ended	
	31/03/2024 (Unaudited)	31/12/2023 (Unaudited)	31/03/2023 (Unaudited)	31/03/2024 (Audited)	31/03/2023 (Audited)
I Income					
I Revenue from operations	-	-	-	-	-
II Other income	-	-	2.87	-	-
Total Revenue (HII)	-	-	2.87	-	-
II Expenses					
Cost of materials consumed	-	-	-	-	-
Change of Inventory	-	-	-	-	-
Employee benefits expense	1.50	1.50	1.51	6.00	6.00
Finance costs	-	-	-	-	-
Depreciation and amortization expense	-	-	-	-	-
Other expenses	2.57	2.95	2.03	11.47	21.87
Total expenses	4.07	4.45	3.54	17.47	27.87
III Profit before Exceptional items and tax	(4.07)	(4.45)	(0.67)	(17.47)	(27.87)
Exceptional Items	-	-	-	-	-
Profit / (Loss) before tax	(4.07)	(4.45)	(0.67)	(17.47)	(27.87)
IV Tax expense:					
Current tax	-	-	-	-	-
Deferred tax	-	-	-	-	-
Profit/(loss) for the period from continuing operations	-	-	-	-	-
Profit/(loss) from discontinued operations	-	-	-	-	-
Tax expense of discontinued operations	-	-	-	-	-
Profit/(loss) from Discontinued operations (After tax)	-	-	-	-	-
V Profit/(Loss) for the year	(4.07)	(4.45)	(0.67)	(17.47)	(27.87)
Other Comprehensive Income					
A (i) Items that will not be reclassified to Profit or Loss	-	-	-	-	-
(ii) Income tax relating to items that will not be reclassified to Profit or Loss	-	-	-	-	-
B (i) Items that will be reclassified to Profit or Loss	-	-	-	-	-
(ii) Income tax relating to items that will be reclassified to Profit or Loss	-	-	-	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising Profit / (Loss) and Other Comprehensive Income for the period)	(4.07)	(4.45)	(0.67)	(17.47)	(27.87)
VI Earnings per Equity Share - Basic and Diluted	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.01)	(0.22)	(0.35)

Notes to Accounts:
1. The above audited financial results of OMEGA AG SEEDS PUNJAB LIMITED for the Quarter ended and Year (Audited) ended 31st March 2024 as reviewed and recommended by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of Directors at its meeting held on 14th May, 2024. The Statutory Auditors of the Company have carried out a Limited Review on standalone financial results and expressed an unmodified conclusion thereon.
2. The Financial results have been prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards prescribed under Section 133 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with (Indian Accounting Standard) Rules, 2015 (Ind AS), and other accounting principles generally accepted in India and guidelines issued by Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).
3. The Company operates in single segment. Accordingly, disclosures under Indian Accounting Standards (Ind AS) 108 on operating segments are not applicable to the Company.
4. Previous period figures have been reclassified and regrouped wherever considered necessary to conform to the current period figures.

By Order of the Board
For Omega AG Seeds Punjab Limited
Lakshmanarao Kondaveti
Managing Director
DIN: 07706939

Date: 14th May 2024
Place: Hyderabad

Won't allow thieves to have a sound sleep, will empty their coffers: PM Modi in Jharkhand

New Delhi, May 14 (IANS) : Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said that the 'looters' of public wealth will have a tough time and his government in the third term will not only deprive them of a sound sleep but also empty their coffers. PM Modi's stern message for 'looters and plunderers' came at a public rally in Jharkhand's Koderma and was directed at the rampant corruption under the INDIA alliance government in the state. Notably, a mountain of cash, amounting to Rs 35 crores was recovered during ED raids from the servant of the personal secretary of Jharkhand Congress minister Alamgir Alam. "I will not let the thieves sleep peacefully. I will take away their sleep and also empty their coffers. You are the owner of this money. No one can steal or loot it. Our govt is taking strict action against them," said PM Modi at the public rally and added that his political rivals are peeved over him because of this. "It's because of our government's zero-tolerance on corruption, INDI alliance is hurling abuses at me," he said. He held the 'Shahi Parivaar' responsible for criminals and ruffians 'gaining ground' in the state and exploiting people for their personal prosperity. "I had said from the Red Fort, I will spend my life to free the country from corruption, nepotism and appeasement. The INDI alliance of JMM-Congress-Left is the biggest model of all these evils," the Prime Minister pointed out. Notably, PM Modi was addressing the public rally in Jharkhand, hours after filing the nomination from the Varanasi Lok Sabha constituency in UP. Addressing the huge gathering, PM Modi listed out many



milestones of his government and explained how the Centre's welfare policies were benefitting the people. "Rs 5 lakh free medical treatment is our guarantee for all. Our government has built 4 crore houses for the poor and marginalized, after returning to power, we will ensure that others also get this benefit. In Koderma alone, 1.25 lakh puccas houses have been built," he informed, drawing applause from the gathering. "In the third term, free ration for 80 crore people will continue for another five years while farmers will continue to get the benefits under Kisan Samman Nidhi

Yojana," he added. He also slammed the ruling dispensation in Jharkhand and said that despite the state being a powerhouse of mining resources, the locals haven't benefitted from it. "Our govt framed a policy which mandated that the region with mining resources will be entitled to a share in its earnings. It's because of this policy, Jharkhand has got Rs 12,000 crore till date," the Prime Minister pointed out. PM Modi also took the Opposition to task over calls for vote jihad, by a Samajwadi Party leader, and their opposition to Ram Temple.

OPINIONmail



IS RUSSIA MULLING TO EXPERIMENT WITH USING NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN SPACE

Russia recently rejected a UN resolution proposed by the US and Japan, which aimed to prevent the development and use of nuclear weapons in space. This action by Russia indicates that they are moving closer to making the idea of using nuclear weapons in space a possibility. Thankfully, Russia did not express any intention to deploy a nuclear weapon in space, which would be a violation of the 1967 Outer Space Treaty. However, the Russian UN representative criticized the new resolution, referring to it as a deceptive tactic and claiming that they were being manipulated.

If Russia or any other country were to detonate a nuclear weapon above Earth, the consequences would be alarming. Such an explosion could be just as destructive as a ground-level detonation, posing a significant threat. Detonating a nuclear bomb on the ground versus in orbit shows some significant differences. Dr. Michael Mulvihill, a research fellow at Teesside University, explains to BBC Science Focus that when nuclear weapons are detonated on the ground, they primarily emit a large amount of energy in the form of X-rays. The X-rays released by a nuclear explosion in the atmosphere can heat the air to extremely high temperatures, resulting in a blazing inferno (destructive fire or intense heat). This intense firestorm generates the powerful shockwave and iconic mushroom cloud that engulfs debris and gives rise to fallout. Fallout refers to the radioactive particles and debris that are dispersed into the atmosphere after a nuclear detonation. When a nuclear weapon is detonated in space, since there is no atmosphere, it does not produce mushroom clouds or shockwaves like it does on Earth. However, this doesn't mean that the effects are any less frightening. The consequences can still be quite alarming in their own way.

According to Mulvihill, in the vacuum of space, a nuclear explosion releases an immense amount of energy in the form of X-rays, gamma rays, intense streams of neutrons, and charged particles at the subatomic level (means lesser than atom). Additionally, it generates a phenomenon called an electromagnetic pulse, or EMP. An electromagnetic pulse (EMP) is a sudden surge of electromagnetic energy. When an EMP interacts with the upper atmosphere, it has the ability to remove electrons from it. This can result in the disruption of radar systems, communication failures, and the disabling of power systems.

Following the initial explosion, a band of radiation envelops the Earth, which can endure for months, or even years, without certainty. This radiation has the potential to harm satellites and, as Mulvihill highlights, it poses a significant danger to individuals in space during that period, including astronauts aboard the ISS. According to Mulvihill, the EMP would disrupt the power systems on the ISS, causing severe damage to the life support systems and other critical components responsible for maintaining the station's atmosphere. Additionally, Mulvihill suggests that the astronauts onboard would likely be exposed to dangerous levels of radiation. The conditions in orbit would be extremely inhospitable to life.

As the number of satellites in space continues to increase, with around 10,000 currently in low Earth orbit and tens of thousands more planned for future launches, the implications of detonating nuclear weapons in space become increasingly significant. This is due to our growing dependence on the systems we deploy in orbit. When viewed from the Earth's surface, aside from causing power grid failures and communication disruptions, the effects of a nuclear explosion in space could have a certain mesmerizing beauty. As the charged particles resulting from the explosion interact with the Earth's magnetic field and atmosphere, they would create stunning auroras that span vast distances and could persist for several days. So, at least in that aspect, there would be a captivating spectacle to witness. During the Cold War, the United States and Russia, as global superpowers, conducted nuclear tests in various environments, including on land, underwater, and even inside mountains. They explored almost every possible scenario for detonating nuclear weapons.

(By Girish Linganna)

EDITORIAL
the indian mail

MODI'S INSINUATION AGAINST RAHUL: PM REALISES HE'S LOSING THE POLL PLOT

Narendra Modi's two latest remarks — first hitting out at Rahul Gandhi over Sam Pitroda's 'skin colour' comments, and second charging Ambani and Adani with buying Rahul's purported silence — have caused furore in the political circles. Not only have they shaken the trust level of the top leaders of the RSS and BJP, these also underscore significant dimensional change in Indian national politics.

Modi accusing Rahul of striking a deal with the corporate moguls Mukesh Ambani and Gautam Adani — two of most prominent crony capitalists synonymous with the prime minister and influencing his policies — and seeking to know from the Congress leader whether he had received "tempo loads of black money", has led to speculations

if the prime minister was in the right state of mind. Observers also construe that Adani and Ambani have pulled the rug from under the feet of Modi. Nevertheless, Modi's unwitting and frankly preposterous allegation has one unflattering message, that Ambani and Adani have huge amounts of black money. Quick to retort, Rahul Gandhi sought to know on a now viral social media post: "Modiji are you scared? Normally you speak of Ambani-Adani in closed rooms. For the first time, you have taken their names in public. You even know that they send money in tempos! Is that your personal experience?" Modi must not have imagined that he would face this nature of high octane rebuke from Rahul, which would harm his image severely in the midst of the elections. Except his flatterers and hardcore



members of the saffron ecosystem, no other BJP or RSS leader has appreciation for Modi's unhinged remarks. While they fear that Modi's increasingly uncontrolled and haphazard messaging would send ripples of unrest within the corporate sector, this would further denigrate the image and character of the saffron brigade, which includes RSS and almost other 300 organisations associated with the saffron ecosystem.

Ever since Adani issue surfaced in public, Rahul Gandhi has been seeking to know from Modi, even

on the floor of Parliament, about his personal relations with Adani and accused him the PM of protecting his business interests at the expense of the national exchequer. Yet, despite Gandhi's incessant accusations, never once did Modi take Adani's name in public, or bother giving any explanation. He maintained a deafening silence in the matter. Even after the publication of the explosive Hindenburg report that depicted how inflated Adani's wealth and stocks were, Modi stayed mum. (IPA Service)

ELECTION COMMISSION IS ABDICATING ITS CONSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY TO HOLD IMPARTIAL POLLS



Elections to half the seats in the Lok Sabha have been completed with the third phase of polling being over on May 7. This has provided enough experience and time to assess how the Election Commission (EC) has gone about superintending the conduct of a free and fair poll. The verdict in this matter can only be that it has failed badly.

All the apprehensions about the work of the EC, two of whose commissioners were appointed just three days before the announcement of the election schedule, are proving to be true.

The EC has not discharged its elementary responsibility of enforcement of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) and ensuring a level playing field for all parties. Contrary to the self-satisfactory statement issued by the EC about its record on enforcement of MCC during the first month since the announcement of elections on March 16, the period saw the EC abdicating its responsibilities.

First of all, the EC was a silent spectator to the State sponsored repression of opposition leaders. The national convener of Aam Aadmi Party and chief minister of Delhi, Arvind Kejriwal, was arrested on March 21, five days after the announcement of the elections and the MCC coming into force. The EC should have issued an advisory to all the central agencies not to take any coercive action against leaders of political parties during the period of elections. But this was not done. The income tax department froze the national bank account of the Congress party and later the CPI(M) Thrissur district committee's bank account. The aim was to financially cripple the parties concerned during the election campaign.

The most glaring lapse as far as the enforcement of the MCC is concerned, is the refusal to take any action against the rabidly communal speeches being made by prime minister Narendra Modi.

(IPA Service)

MAJOR POLITICO-LEGAL SETBACK FOR CONGRESS IN KERALA

The Congress in Kerala suffered a severe legal as well as political setback when the vigilance court in Thiruvananthapuram rejected the petition filed by party MLA Mathew Kuzhalsadan seeking a probe against Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and his daughter Veena on the allegation that they had received a monthly payment from the Cochin Minerals and Rutile Ltd (CMRL) in return for favouring operations of the company. The court found no merit in Mathew's allegations that the CM and his daughter had illegally benefited from the LDF Government's "mining lease concessions" to the Kochi-based company in 2016. The five documents produced by the petitioner, the court ruled, have failed to prove the allegations against the CM.



AFTER ONE YEAR OF ETHNIC TENSIONS, MANIPUR REFUSES TO BE NORMAL

How long it takes to listen to the victim's tearful cries? That too when she is a mother of a four-year old, dares to plead to the demons for her life as her death could be the death of her child too. Their assent to it has been conditional. "Disrobe yourself or die."

The stream of violence keeps flowing since last one year. There have been many victims, unnoticed, unlamented, unavenged. For the women of Manipur, not only the country, the entire world stands stunned. As the unrest in Manipur continues unabated in north-east India, authorities remain quiet. With a population of three million, Manipur, a state in north-east India, has been witness to continued violence among the tribes, mainly between the majority Meitei community and the minority Kuki tribe. In the recent flare up, many more have

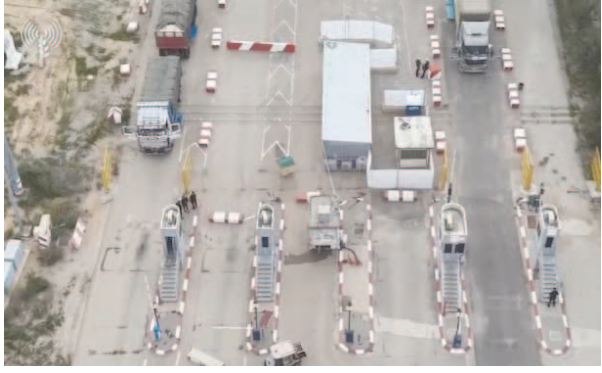
been killed. More than thousand have been reported injured. More than seventy thousand have lost their home and livelihood. There have been set up more relief camps in last one year and people in their own country have turned refugee looking for shelter, security, food and medicine. Several thousands have taken shelter in neighboring states. Some have come to Delhi also. The unrest started on May 3, 2023, with the solidarity rally by various tribal groups underlining the issues of social status and tribal rights. It provoked distrust in communities especially between Meities and Kukies.

In Manipur there have been communities like KukiZos, Meities and Nagas. They are all Tibeto Barmans, said to be migrated from Northwestern parts of China. Myanmar was their first halt. Later they preferred to shift to what is now called Manipur. However, Meities consider themselves as the original settlers and Kukies

as migrants. Both the communities are generally from the Imphal valley regions while on the hills have settled the Nagas. Land holding patterns are still fluid with a colonial influence. The politico-economic issues are stained with fault lines that divide them in "Us" and "them" without any awareness of affinities. Meities have complains that KukiZos, the "illegal migrants" in the valley area, grow poppy and indulge in drug abuse which destroy the lives of the youth. In return, the KukiZos and other tribes in the hills hold those in valley responsible for

their poverty, driving them to the margins of the state. There is hardly available any health care centre or educational institutions like schools and colleges. Imphal was and has been the nerve centre of these atrocities. Kangpokpi, a hill district, has been victim of repeated violence. Churachandpur, another hill district with 90 percent tribal population, faces the same plight. It is true that now number of violent incidents has been less, but intensity is same and some time even more barbaric. (IPA Service)





Hamas attacks Israel's Kerem Shalom crossing into Gaza

Tel Aviv, May 14 (IANS/DPA) : Hamas again mounted an attack on the Kerem Shalom border crossing between Israel and the far south of the Gaza Strip - the fourth such attack since Tuesday. Mortars were used in Tuesday's attack, the al-Qassam Brigades said on the Telegram messaging service. Israel's Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) organisation, which is responsible for coordination with Palestinian civil authorities, posted on the X messaging service: "Hamas just fired at the Kerem Shalom, the main humanitarian aid crossing into Gaza." The attack was the fourth time this week that Hamas had actively fired on the crossing point, it said. "Hamas will do anything to prevent aid from reaching the people of Gaza," COGAT added. Over recent days, Israeli protestors have again blocked aid convoys seeking to enter the Gaza Strip, saying that the deliveries are aiding Hamas in resisting Israeli forces.

US: Hundreds of faculty, staff demand UCLA chancellor's resignation

Los Angeles, May 14 (IANS) : Nearly 900 members of the University of California (UC) faculty and staff have been calling on Gene Block, chancellor of the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), to resign over the university's response to pro-Palestinian protests on campus. "We will not stand by as our students are assaulted and silenced," said the group in an online petition, Xinhua news agency reported. "We remain committed to protecting our students' safety and their right to protest, assemble, and speak freely." A total of 895 people from the 10-campus public university system have signed the petition as of Tuesday night. Of them, 642 are from UCLA. In the petition, the group said that they demand that UCLA recommend all legal charges be dropped and grant full amnesty to all students, staff and faculty involved in the encampment and peaceful protest. "Following the violent and aggressive police sweep of the Palestine Solidarity Encampment on May 2, 2024, resulting in more than 200 students, faculty, and staff arrested while peacefully protesting, it has become obvious that Chancellor Block has failed our university," said the petition. UC faculty and staff members also demand that UCLA issue a report within 30 days to fully disclose all investments so that students may under-



stand how the university prioritises their finances and call on UCLA to divest from all military weapons production companies and supporting systems. In a message to its members earlier this week, the UCLA Academic Senate, representing the university's faculty, said: "Recent events that transpired on our campus deeply dismayed and disappointed many faculty, staff, students and alumni." The UCLA Academic Senate said it will hold an emergency meeting on Friday to consider a no-confidence resolution and a censure resolution of Block, who has been chancellor of UCLA since 2007. UCLA's Undergraduate Students Association Council also passed a resolution on Tuesday night calling for the resignation of Block if he does not meet the demands of the Palestine Solidarity Encampment, according to Daily Bruin, the university's student newspaper.



Senate Inquiry calls for Australia to increase Antarctic science

Canberra, May 14 (IANS) : The Australian government should consider the purchase of a second Antarctic vessel to boost research on the continent, a Senate inquiry has found. The Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications made 16 recommendations in a report published on Tuesday to ensure that science remains the top priority of the Australian Antarctic Division (AAD), Xinhua news agency reported. After it was revealed that the budgets within the AAD were poorly managed, the inquiry was launched in August 2023, the findings of which were supported by the governing Labor Party, opposition Coalition and Greens Party.

UNGA votes to upgrade Palestine's observership to special status, bypassing US veto

United Nations, May 14 (IANS) : The UN General Assembly on Tuesday voted to upgrade Palestine's status in the world body while keeping it as an observer, in a move aimed at bypassing the US veto of full observership. In the shadow of the Israeli invasion of Gaza and faltering efforts for a ceasefire, the landmark resolution was adopted with 143 votes, including that of India, France, China, Russia, and Japan, with 9 against, including the US and Israel, and 25 abstentions, including the UK, Canada, and several European members, defying the lone US veto of Palestine's bid for full observership last month at the Security Council. Apart from the US and Israel - whose Ambassador proceeded to shred the UN Char-

ter -- the others opposed were Hungary, Czechia, Argentina, Micronesia, Palau, Papua New Guinea, and Nauru. Palestine's Permanent Observer Riyad Mansour said before the vote that supporting it is "an investment in peace" and "the right thing to do". While remaining an observer state, Palestine gets the right to be elected to offices within the Assembly, sit among the regular member nations instead of at the back with other observers, speak on all matters, make proposals, and introduce amendments to matters before the body, and participate in various procedural matters. But its special observership will not allow it to vote at the Assembly or seek membership in other UN bodies. The Security Council will not have to approve the special status, unlike full observership, which the US has

vetoed. The resolution, proposed by Algeria and co-sponsored by Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and the Maldives, also asked the Council to reconsider Palestine's request for full observership. US Deputy Permanent Representative Robert Wood warned that it would be vetoed. Adopted after extensive discussions among diplomats, the resolution circumvents a US law that would have automatically cut off its contributions to the UN if it gave full observership. That would cripple the organisation as Washington is the biggest contributor accounting for 22 per cent of the regular UN budget and 27 per cent of the peace-keeping budget. Israel's Permanent Representative Gilad Erdan accused the UN of "anti-Semitism" and of flouting the UN Charter. He dramatically took out



a mini paper shredder at the podium and put a copy of the Charter through it. Israel's brutal retaliation for Hamas's October attack gave the impetus for the move to upgrade Palestine's status after the full membership bid failed. Many US allies like France, Australia, and Japan voted for the resolution, while others like Britain, Germany, and Italy abstained, leaving Washington with a small coterie of mostly small states voting with it and Israel against the resolution. More than 34,000 people, most of them women and children, have been killed in Israel's attacks on Gaza, from where Hamas launched the attack in which about 1,200 people were killed and about 240 were kidnapped. After Israel's invasion of Gaza destroyed its infrastructure and limited the supply of food to the territory.



Singapore records lower gender inequality: Report

Singapore, May 14 (IANS) : Singaporean females have attained growing equality in the workplace over the past few years, according to the Progress on Singapore Women's Development 2024 issued on Tuesday. The employment rate for Singaporean females aged 25 to 64 has increased from 69.2 per cent to 76.6 per cent from 2013 to 2023, with the gender employment rate gap narrowed to 12.4 percentage points, according to the report released by the Ministry of Social and Family Development, Xinhua news agency reported. Local females' representation in business leadership has also increased. For the top 100 companies listed in the Singapore Exchange, the percentage of women on boards has tripled from 7.5 per cent in 2013 to 22.7 per cent by last June. Healthcare services have been improved for women, said the Ministry, noting that the number of females aged 15 years who have received the HPV vaccine increased from 1.3 per cent to 89.4 per cent from 2014 to 2022. Singaporean authority also amended the Women's Charter last year to strengthen the government's ability to intervene in family violence, the report added.



US, Egypt eye flexibility to reach Gaza deal

Cairo, May 14 (IANS/DPA) : Egypt and the US have called for flexibility to reach a hitherto elusive ceasefire and hostage release deal between Hamas and Israel after an inconclusive round of negotiations in Cairo. Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken agreed during a phone conversation on Tuesday night on the "importance of urging the parties to show flexibility" and make the necessary efforts to reach the deal, an Egyptian Foreign Ministry spokesman said on Tuesday. Israel and Hamas do not negotiate directly, so the US, Qatar and Egypt are acting as mediators. Shoukry and Blinken discussed the latest security and humanitarian situation in Gaza's southernmost city of Rafah, packed by refugees.

Russian State Duma approves Mikhail Mishustin as PM

Moscow, May 14 (IANS) : The Russian State Duma or lower house of the Parliament has approved Mikhail Mishustin as Prime Minister, according to a statement posted on its website. Mishustin garnered a total of 375 votes in favour, with no veto, of his reappointment as Prime Minister, nominated by Russian President Vladimir Putin earlier on Tuesday, Xinhua news agency reported. In a meeting with Mishustin on Tuesday, Putin noted that much had been accomplished in the country under difficult conditions, and it would be

right for Mishustin to continue his work as head of the government. During his speech at the State Duma, Mishustin said the government will focus on strengthening the economy, ensuring technological sovereignty, supporting families with children, enhancing the well-being of citizens, and prioritising regional and infrastructure development. Mishustin was first appointed as Prime Minister in 2020, after serving as the head of the Russian Federal Tax Service from 2010 to 2020.



German Police investigating fight at lecture on anti-Semitism

Hamburg, May 14 (IANS/DPA) : Police are investigating two women on suspicion of assault after a fight broke out in the crowd following a lecture about anti-Semitism at the University of Hamburg in northern Germany. Several heckling incidents had already broken out during the talk entitled "Hostility towards Jews, anti-Semitism, anti-Zionism - current forms of anti-Jewish violence." That led to an argument between the 56-year-old wife of the lecturer and several members of the audience after the end of the event on Wednesday, the police said in a statement published on Tuesday.



Afghanistan accuses US of violating its airspace

Kabul, May 14 (IANS) : Afghanistan Acting Deputy Prime Minister on Political Affairs Mawlawi Abdul Kabir has accused the United States of violating the country's airspace, local media reported Tuesday. The US drone operations are a problem because Afghanistan has no necessary equipment to stop the US operations, Tolonews quoted Kabir as saying.



Son moves home, leaves ailing father behind in Kochi

Kochi, May 14 (IANS) : It's normal for people to leave behind unwanted things when they move home, but in Kochi's suburb Eeroor, a man and his family moved out from their rented accommodation and left behind his old and ailing father. Locals were aghast on Tuesday morning when they found out that 70-year-old Shanmugham, who had been ailing for a long time, had been left behind by his driver son Ajith and the family had shifted to an undisclosed new location. Ajith's former landlord said that he had not been getting rent for a while and had approached the police for a solution. "Ajith told the police that he would vacate the house but he needed some more time. It was only yesterday that someone informed me that they had vacated my house."

Kerala Left in quandary as 3 Rajya Sabha vacancies arise

Thiruvananthapuram, May 14 (IANS) : As the results of the Lok Sabha polls are awaited on June 4, a fresh issue appears to have surfaced in Kerala and all eyes are on how the ruling CPI-M-led Left is going to navigate it. Three members are due to retire from Kerala from the Upper House on July 1, and the problem now is that while all the retiring members belong to the Left, the new nominees will see the Left winning two, while the Congress-led UDF is certain to win one. The retiring members are state party chiefs of two Left allies -- Binoy Viswam who heads the CPI in Kerala, and Jose K. Mani of the Kerala Congress (Mani) (KC-M) and CPI-M veteran Elamaram

Kareem. With the Congress-led UDF certain to win one, the ruling Left will win only two, of which one will certainly be taken by big brother CPI-M. Then it is whether CPI or KC-M gets the nomination. While the CPI is the second biggest ally in the ruling Left and has been with the Left Democratic Front (LDF) since its formation, the KC-M is the third biggest ally which joined the Left only in 2020, after their party split, the one led by Mani joined the LDF. A political critic, on condition of anonymity, said that it's a 'Catch 22' situation for CPI-M. "The situation will become clearer when the Lok Sabha polls results come out on June 4. The CPI has

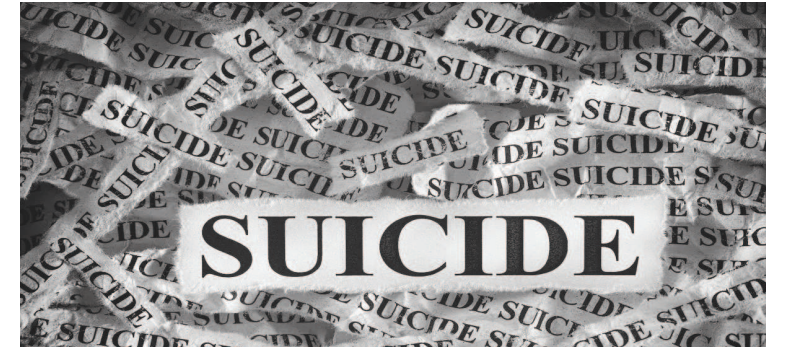
Constituency watch: Congress' OBC-BJP's Maratha vie to conquer prestigious Pune LS seat

Pune (Maharashtra), May 14 (IANS) : Thrilled after the knockout victory of the Congress candidate Ravindra H. Dhangekar in the Kasba Peth Assembly by-elections 15 months ago, the party has attempted to cash in on the goodwill even for the 2024 parliament polls. The Congress has fielded the OBC leader Dhangekar for the prestigious Pune Lok Sabha seat to grapple with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)'s Murlidhar Mohol, its Maratha face and an ex-Mayor, in place of the late Brahmin heavyweight Girish Bapat, who died as the sitting MP in March 2023. Besides Congress' Dhangekar and BJP's Mohol, the third corner is occupied by Prakash Ambedkar-led Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi (VBA)'s Vasant More, who quit Raj

Thackeray-headed Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) in March (2024) after being denied a party ticket. Dhangekar's victory in the Kasba Peth Assembly by-polls, a BJP Brahmin bastion was impressive in many ways. The by-polls were necessitated by the death of sitting MLA Mukta Tilak -- a great-granddaughter-in-law of the freedom fighter Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak. The BJP did not field any member of the Tilak family or even a Brahmin but nominated a Maratha Hemant Rasane who lost to Dhangekar in the BJP's bastion. Later, local leaders attributed the BJP's loss to factors like not fielding a Brahmin and not giving a ticket to a Tilak family member to garner sympathy votes. Rattled by Dhangekar's surprise sweep, the worried BJP did not favour the Lok Sabha bypoll after Bapat's demise and the seat re-



mained vacant for nearly 15 months. Since 1952, a Congress fortress 10 times, the Pune Lok Sabha seat had deserted the party on at least 7 occasions, aligning with some prevalent political 'wave' or a prominent candidate. The city of Peshwas has sent four union ministers from here -- N. V. Gadgil, Mohan Dharia, V. N. Gadgil, Suresh Kalmadi, besides a High Commissioner to the UK, N. G. Goray. In the 2014 Lok Sabha polls, the BJP's Anil Shirole won the seat from the two-time Congress MP Kalmadi who came under a cloud of corruption, and in 2019, Bapat defeated Congress rival Mohan Joshi.



Unhappy with exam results, class 12 student commits suicide in Assam

Guwahati, May 14 (IANS) : Disappointed over her class 12 result, a girl student committed suicide in Assam's Tinsukia district, police said on Tuesday. She was a student of Margherita College. According to police, the result of the examination was declared on Tuesday. As she got third division instead of her ex-

pectation of first, she took the extreme step. When no one was at the home in APO colony in the Margherita area on Friday afternoon, the girl hanged herself, a senior police official said. After receiving information, a team of Margherita police went to spot and recovered the body. After autopsy, the body was handed over to the family.

Upendra Kushwaha files nomination from Karakat Lok Sabha seat

Patna, May 14 (IANS) : Rashtriya Lok Morcha (RLM) candidate Upendra Kushwaha filed his nomination from the Karakat Lok Sabha seat on Tuesday. He was accompanied by a large number of supporters who had earlier assembled at the office of the District Magistrate-cum-Retiring Officer in Sasaram, the district headquarters of Rohtas. "I have no issues with anyone. I have come to Karakat only to work for its development. The people's enthusiasm is visible and I am getting sup-

port from people of all castes, religions and communities," Kushwaha said. When asked about political opponents in this election, he said, "In Karakat, the contest is one-sided. There is no other angle in this. The people here have given me opportunities from 2014 to 2019. We have served the people with utmost honesty. The blessings of the public are with us and they will vote for the development of Bihar and the country." "People are happy with the work done by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the last 10 years."



J&K: PC decries EC's notice about song shared by its chief

Srinagar, May 14 (IANS) : Jammu and Kashmir-based party People's Conference (PC), on Tuesday, expressed its concern over the recent notice served by the Election Commission (EC), targeting a song shared by PC President Sajad Lone on X. "The video in question is not an official song of the party but rather, a creation by Kashmiri youth. It embodies heartfelt sentiments of the Kashmiri people, vividly portraying the enduring

pain and suffering experienced in the region over decades. We firmly believe that sharing such a song, which reflects the painful history of the region, should not be seen as a violation of electoral norms," stated PC Spokesperson Adnan Ashraf Mir. He further urged the EC to apply the rules uniformly and desist from selective scrutiny, and that fairness and equality are indispensable in preserving the integrity of the electoral process.



contested for two seats and the KC-M one. The results will be crucial for both these parties. The CPI-M will be the last word if both CPI and KC-M insist on the one seat," said the critic. Mani has been in the Parliament since 2009, when he won his first win and retained his Kottayam Lok Sabha seat at the 2014 Lok Sabha polls, but with a year re-

maining as part of a political adjustment, the Congress gifted one of their Rajya Sabha seat to Mani. After his party moved over to the Left in 2020, he resigned and contested again and won his seat. Now all eyes are on the CPI-M, with one seat, and whom they will back. The notification for the elections to the three seats is expected anytime now.



Accompanied by EAM Jaishankar, diplomat-turned-politician Sandhu files nomination from Amritsar

Amritsar, May 14 (IANS) : Accompanied by External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, BJP candidate Taranjit Singh Sandhu filed his nomination from the Amritsar Lok Sabha constituency on Tuesday. The diplomat-turned-politician, who is making his electoral debut, also held a roadshow with Jaishankar before filing his papers. Exuding confidence that the former Indian Ambassador to the US will win the elections, Jaishankar said, "We have full confidence that the people of Amritsar will elect Sandhu and send him to Delhi. He will be a very good MP. He has been the most popular Ambassador of India." "He has brought many laurels to the nation as a diplomat. He will now bring the same energy and enthusiasm for serving the Guru Nagari, Amritsar," Jaishankar added. Starting his day before dawn, Sandhu first offered prayers at the Chhevin Patshahi Gurdwara before visiting the Ram

Dham Mandir here. Sandhu joined the BJP on March 19, almost two months after he wrapped up his term in office in Washington DC. During his campaigns, Sandhu, a 1988-batch Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer who shared a video of his interaction with US President Joe Biden during his stint as the US Ambassador, focused on addressing the issues of the farmers settled along the India-Pakistan border.



Foreign trip row: Kerala Gov Khan thanks media for informing that CM Vijayan is abroad

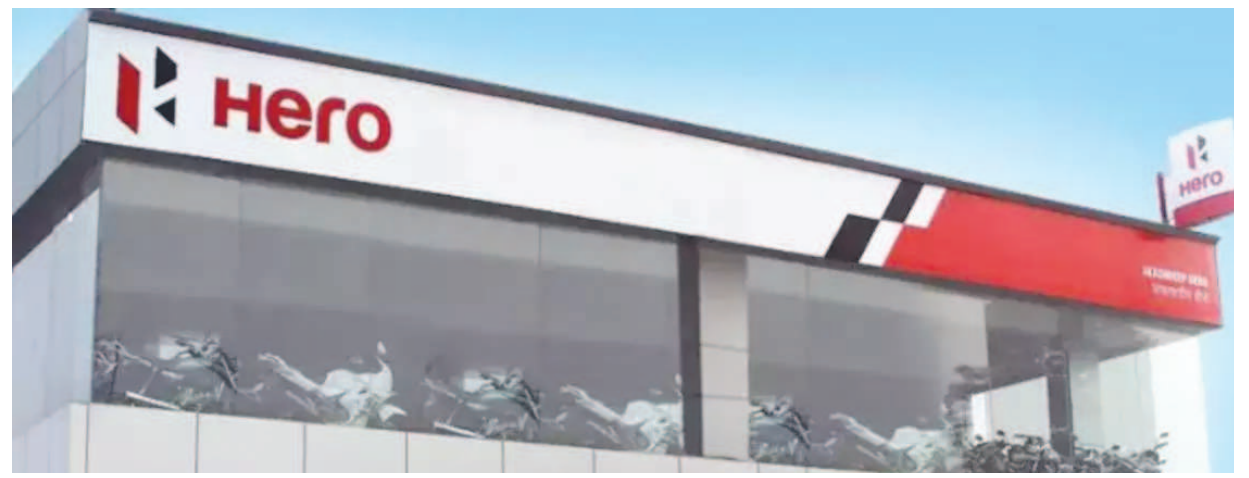
Thiruvananthapuram, May 14 (IANS) : Even as the political slugfest over the Kerala Chief Minister's three-nation private visit continues, Governor Arif Mohammed Khan waded into it on Tuesday by thanking the media for the information that Pinarayi Vijayan was abroad. Even as the Congress and the BJP slammed CM Vijayan for leaving quietly early this week, Governor Khan revealed that he also had no clue about the CM's impending trip. "Has he (CM Vijayan) gone on a foreign visit, I am not aware. Thanks to you (media) for informing me that the CM is on a foreign trip," said Khan. "In the past I had informed the President that the CM doesn't inform me when he leaves," said Khan. However, the CPI(M) has defended the trip of the CM and his family to Indonesia, Singapore.

TCS announces to create global AI centre of excellence in France

New Delhi, May 14 (IANS) : Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) on Tuesday announced the creation of a Global Artificial Intelligence (AI) Centre of Excellence in Paris during the Choose France Summit. Based at the new TCS PacePort in Paris, the centre will focus on the brain-machine interface, developing empathy in ma-

chines, and unleashing the creativity of AI, the company said. "The new centre will focus on boosting human-centered AI capabilities for the banking & financial services (BFS), manufacturing, and consumer sectors, to start with," Rammohan Gourneni, Country Head, TCS France, said in a statement. "We will hire new talent and part-

ner with universities to offer internships and projects to support the National AI Mission," he added. The new centre will join France's growing AI ecosystem and tap into its deep talent base in design and engineering, to build advanced technologies in the space of human-centric AI.



Hero MotoCorp becomes first auto firm to join government's ONDC Network

New Delhi, May 14 (IANS) : Strengthening the Digital India mission, two-wheeler giant Hero MotoCorp on Tuesday said that it has joined the government-run Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) Network, becoming the first auto company in the country to join the network. According to the company, this partnership will further improve the reach and convenience, providing an easily accessible digital mode to consumers. "Now with ONDC Network, we have pioneered the automotive

taxonomy for the auto industry, making it easier for customers to find vehicle parts and accessories to begin with," Niranjan Gupta, CEO, Hero MotoCorp, said in a statement. He further added that with this initiative, Hero MotoCorp is taking forward the government's Digital India mission and "we will continue to bring in more innovation in this space". Initially, ONDC will offer two-wheeler parts, accessories and merchandise on its platform. Consumers can easily discover the two-wheeler giant's genuine parts

by using any buyer apps on the Network, such as Paytm and Mystore, among others, the company mentioned. "When brands like Hero MotoCorp embrace the Open Network, it reaffirms our vision of driving digital transformation in the country by creating a fair and efficient ecosystem for all kinds of businesses to thrive," said T Koshy, MD & CEO of ONDC. With ONDC Network, Hero MotoCorp said that it is all set to deliver a renewed purchasing experience to its over 115 million customers.

Musk's Tesla regains top position in battery EV sales despite YoY decline

New Delhi, May 14 (IANS) : Elon Musk-run Tesla has regained the top position in BEV (battery electric vehicle) sales in the first quarter (Q1) of 2024, despite a 9 per cent (year-on-year) decline, a new report showed on Tuesday. Tesla takes the top spot in BEV sales with a 19 per cent market share in Q1, according to Counterpoint Research. Among the top three OEMs (original equipment manufacturers), only BYD Group achieved growth with 13 per cent (year-on-year), while both Tesla and Volkswagen experienced drops of 9 per cent and 4

per cent (year-on-year), respectively. According to the report, global passenger EV (BEV+PHEV) sales increased 18 per cent (year-on-year) in Q1 this year. While BEV sales grew by a modest 7 per cent (year-on-year) during the quarter, PHEV (plug-in hybrid EV) sales grew 46 per cent (year-on-year). "The cheaper upfront cost of PHEVs when compared to BEVs and the availability of a fuel tank that eliminates range anxiety were among the main reasons for high PHEV demand," said Research Analyst Abhik Mukherjee. As per the report, Tesla and BYD



have managed to trim their BEV manufacturing costs, allowing them to offer competitive prices. This has put pressure on other automakers like Ford and GM which are struggling to reduce their manufacturing costs. While analysts believe the EV market is set for significant growth in 2024, there are also signs of a slowdown

and annual growth could fall below 20 per cent. "The levelling off of early-adopter interest suggests a shift in consumer dynamics to the mass market in the long term and a new phase of evolution for the EV industry," said Associate Director Liz Lee.

Toyota pips Hyundai Motor to capture top spot in Q1 global hydrogen car sales

Seoul, May 14 (IANS) : South Korea's top automaker Hyundai Motor has slipped to second place in global hydrogen vehicle sales in the first quarter (Q1), data showed on Tuesday. The automaker sold 691 hydrogen fuel-cell electric vehicles (FCEVs) in global markets during the January-March period, recording a 66.2 per cent year-on-year drop, according to auto and energy industry tracker SNE Research. Japanese automaker Toyota overtook Hyundai to the top place, selling 868 units, or 36.4 per cent of all hydrogen models sold worldwide, Yonhap News

Agency reported. The market share of Hyundai Motor, which sold 2,044 units in Q1 of last year, fell to 29 per cent. SNE Research attributed the sluggish sales of Hyundai's Nexu model to the overall decline in the company's hydrogen vehicle sales. The drop in quarterly sales of Hyundai Motor came amid an overall growth decline in the hydrogen car segment. Global sales of all FCEVs during the three months under review amounted to 2,382 units, down 36.4 per cent from a year ago. As per data, South Korea has been experiencing low sales of hydrogen cars since the sector's peak in 2022.



PhonePe's Share.Market to introduce proprietary stock research using factor analysis

New Delhi, May 14 (IANS) : Share.Market, a PhonePe product, brings forth the Intelligence Layer on Stocks -- an in-depth quantitative factor-based analysis of each stock, a first-of-its-kind in the discount broking industry. The intelligence layer integrated with the product feature and execution layer ensures that investors are provided with comprehensive wealth solutions in a DIY mode within the discount broking framework. Navigating the complexities of the stock market and making informed deci-

sions can be daunting for investors especially when faced with intricate data analysis, such as understanding a stock's fundamentals or monitoring its price movements. Share.Market's Intelligence Layer eliminates this need. Instead, investors can rely on its comprehensive factor-based analysis to make their decisions with confidence. "We are redefining discount broking by shifting the focus from transactional processes to comprehensive wealth solutions. Factor analysis was always embedded into our WealthBaskets and Collections products and by bringing it onto individual stocks, we have now made it accessible to all investors in a consumable format," said Ujjwal Jain, CEO, Share.Market. "By providing actionable intelligence in a user-friendly format supported by educational content, we anticipate higher increased engagement on the platform as well," he added.



Zomato's Blinkit turns adjusted EBITDA positive, aims 1,000 stores in FY25

New Delhi, May 14 (IANS) : Zomato on Tuesday said that its quick commerce business Blinkit turned adjusted EBITDA positive in March, as the online food delivery platform clocked Rs 194 crore in adjusted EBITDA for the January-March quarter of FY24. The consolidated adjusted EBITDA improved by Rs 369 crore as compared to the same quarter last year. The adjusted revenue was Rs 3,873 crore, a 61 per cent growth (year-on-year) for the quarter, as food gross order delivery (GOV) grew 28 per cent (on-year), the company said in a statement. "We could not have imagined the current state of all four of our businesses -- food delivery, Blinkit, Going-out and Hyperpure. I think the team has executed phenomenally well over the last couple of years," said Deepinder Goyal, Founder and CEO, Zomato.

Smartphone sales in US expected to grow only 3 per cent by 2028 : Report

New Delhi, May 14 (IANS) : With 2024 bringing another decline in smartphone sales in the US, a new report on Tuesday showed that it is expected to grow only 3 per cent by 2028 in the country. According to data presented by Stocklytics.com, the total sales revenue will drop by \$1.2 billion (year-over-year) this year. "After reaching record highs at the peak of the

Covid-19 pandemic, US smartphone sales have been on an up-and-down trend, with the total sales revenue dropping by 10 per cent and then growing by 15 per cent year by year," the report said. Moreover, the report mentioned that the ongoing battle between iOS and Android has taken an unexpected twist, with the rate of iPhone activations in the US, a key indicator of Apple's market share.





After one death in Kerala, TN deploys Mobile Medical Teams in 12 blocks in Coimbatore to check spread of West Nile Virus

Chennai, May 14 (IANS) : The Tamil Nadu government's health department has increased surveillance in several villages of Coimbatore District against the spread of the dreaded West Nile Virus and deployed 12 Mobile Medical Teams (MMT) to screen people in 12 blocks. This is following many districts of Kerala reporting cases of the West Nile Virus, which is a mosquito-borne disease. The Coimbatore District Health Department has deployed 12 Mobile Medical Teams (MMT) to screen people with fever and influenza in 12 blocks to check whether they are infected with the virus. The disease is spread through the Culex mosquitoes and the symptoms are high fever, stiff neck, headache, disorientation, stupor, tremors, convulsions and muscle weakness. In some cases, it even leads to coma, paralysis and death. Dr R Ramanandan, Professor of Microbiology in a private medical college in Coimbatore told IANS, "West Nile Virus is a dangerous disease and proper medication has to be given to the patients at the earliest to prevent their condition from deteriorating. If the patient is not treated on time it can lead to paralysis and even death." Deputy Director of Health Services, Dr P Aruna told IANS that the department has accelerated the screening of patients with fever in Coimbatore District.

'Our achievements will enable lotus to bloom again,' says Anurag Thakur at launch of roadshow

Hamirpur (Himachal Pradesh), May 14 (IANS) : BJP MP Anurag Thakur, who has returned to the Lok Sabha from the Hamirpur seat four consecutive times since 2008, is one of the most prominent faces in the fray from Himachal Pradesh that will go to the polls on June 1. He believes when one works and delivers, there is no question of anti-incumbency, rather there is pro-incumbency. From this BJP bastion, his father and two-time chief minister Prem Kumar Dhumal, who always plays a crucial role in his son's campaigns, was thrice elected as an MP. "We will take our achievements to the people and will make the lotus bloom once again," Thakur told the media at his ancestral home in Samirpur, some 20 km from Hamirpur town, on Saturday before launching Vijay Sankalp Yatra, a roadshow. For Thakur, the key issue is development. "We will go amidst the public with the Modi government's achievements, and areas development and seek their blessings once again." Before the launch of Vijay Sankalp Yatra, Thakur performed 'kanya puja' and took the blessings of his parents. He also paid obeisance at Awahdevi Temple, his family deity, and sought her blessings for the smooth completion of the Vijay Sankalp campaign. The historical achievements of his constituency and welfare schemes of the Modi government have touched upon each and every person and reached across each and every household, believe constituents. "People have made up their mind to once



again elect a responsive, transparent and development-oriented government. People from all walks of life have benefited from pro-people schemes of the Modi government even in Congress-ruled Himachal Pradesh," former legislator Baldev Sharma, who represented Badsar in Hamirpur district, told IANS. He said in all his stints, Thakur has undertaken initiatives outside the realms of MPLADS to ensure all segments reap benefits, be it the State Olympic Games or promoting sports to ensure youth remains away from the clutches of drugs. The Congress, which has won this seat only once in the last nine Lok Sabha elections, had pitted former legislator Satpal Singh Raizada against the former BCCI chief, who has served as a Member of Parliament in the 14th, 15th, 16th and the 17th Lok Sabha,

wherein he won by a record margin. As per a post on Thakur's official website, his constituency has benefited tremendously through his socio-economic development projects across sectors, ranging from railways, roads and national highways connectivity, opening of bank branches, schools and colleges, medical facilities, etc. He has focused on fulfilling local community needs through the MPLADS fund and constructed community centres, mahila mandal bhavans, yuvak mandal bhawan, sarais, shamshan ghats, solar lighting and playgrounds for his constituents. Thakur will file nomination papers on May 13 for the last phase of Lok Sabha elections on June 1.



J&K: Sajad Lone gets ECI notice for violation of MCC

Srinagar, May 14 (IANS) : People's Conference (PC) Chairman and party candidate for Baramulla Lok Sabha constituency in J&K, Sajad Gani Lone has received an ECI notice for violating MCC. The ECI notice has been issued over the posting of a video by Lone on his X handle. In the notice, the DEO Kupwara has asked him to explain why he uploaded a video on his X handle without prior clearance/pre-certification from Media Certification and Monitoring Committee (MCMC). The notice said: "Sajad Gani Lone, candidate of Jammu & Kashmir Peoples Conference for 01 Baramulla, is hereby put on notice to explain why such violation has been made." "The response must reach this office within one day, failing which the matter will be reported to the office of Chief Electoral Officer, Jammu & Kashmir, Srinagar for appropriate action under rules," as per the notice.

'Thankful to NIA', slain BJYM leader Praveen Nettaru's wife says after arrest of prime accused

Bengaluru, May 14 (IANS): The wife of BJYM leader Praveen Nettaru -- who was hacked to death in 2022 in Karnataka's Dakshina Kannada district by PFI cadres -- on Tuesday expressed her happiness after the NIA arrested the prime accused in the murder case. Nutana Kumari said all her family members were happy over the arrest of Mustafa

Paichar. "All the accused in the case should be hanged. No such incident should recur in society. All our family members are happy, and I thank NIA officers on behalf of my family," Nutana said. "Stringent punishment should be given to the accused and that should be a lesson to those who indulge in such acts," she added. Mustafa Paichar was also carrying a reward of Rs 7 lakh and had non-bailable warrants against him.

The NIA in January 2023, filed a chargesheet against 21 accused, eight of whom had absconded after the crime. Praveen Nettaru, a Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM) district executive committee member, was hacked to death by two motorcycle-borne assailants in Bellare village of Dakshina Kannada district by PFI cadres two years ago. The NIA took over the investigation into the



murder case on August 4, 2022. Mustafa Paichar was arrested from Anemahal village in Hassan district along with Mansoor Pasha, who had harboured him.



Police bust inter-state prostitution racket in Arunachal, rescue four minors; 15 held

Itanagar, May 14 (IANS) : The police in Arunachal Pradesh have busted an inter-state prostitution and human trafficking racket, rescued four minors, and arrested 15 people, including six government servants, in connection with the case, officials said on Tuesday. A senior police officer said that the minor girls, aged 10 to 15 years, were trafficked to Arunachal Pradesh from Dhemaji in neighbouring Assam by two sisters, who allegedly ran a brothel-cum-residence in Itanagar. Acting on a tip-off, the police conducted a raid at the brothel run by Tech

Rina and Jamlo Tagung on May 4 and rescued two minor girls. The rescued girls told the police that they were brought to Itanagar from Dhemaji by two sisters -- Pushpanjali Mili and Purnima Mili, the officer said. Subsequently, two more minor girls trafficked from Dhemaji were rescued from the custody of Pushpanjali Mili. After being trafficked to Itanagar, the girls were forced into prostitution by the sisters along with two other women. The matter has been conveyed to the Child Welfare Committee (CWC), and a probe has been initiated.

Tejashwi should worry about RJD: Chirag Paswan

Patna May 14 (IANS) : Reacting to Tejashwi Yadav's remarks on the 'history of the reservation', LJP President Chirag Paswan on Tuesday said that the Bihar Leader of the Opposition (LoP) Tejashwi Yadav should worry about RJD and his candidates. "The way he is concerned about me or the prime minister, if the same he had shown to the state then the tenure of RJD may not be known as a 'Jungle Raj'. I suggest him to

take care of his party and his candidates so that they could save their deposit at least," Chirag Paswan said. "Whatever is happening in our home or in our family is our concern. It is our personal matter. The issue in the elections is not what happened to Chirag Paswan's house. You keep saying that we have given jobs and we will give more jobs. Do you have any plans from where you will generate revenue for giving jobs? How can government revenue be in-

creased?" he asked. Calling Tejashwi his younger brother, Chirag Paswan said that it would have been better if Tejashwi had given attention to Bihar rather than him. "He became Deputy Chief Minister. The experience is not achieved by sitting in air-conditioned rooms. Experience comes from going to the public. Tejashwi thinks that the public is with his lies, but they are not.



'Law will take its own course', says Meghalaya Dy CM on FIR against DGP Bishnoi

Shillong, May 14 (IANS) : Meghalaya Deputy Chief Minister Prestone Tynsong on Tuesday asserted that the law would take its course regarding the allegation made against the current state Director General of Police (DGP), Lajja Ram Bishnoi, for using a bogus number plate. Tynsong told reporters, "We were notified on Thursday afternoon that there was a bogus license plate. Thus, a case has been filed, and the inquiry has just recently begun. Thus, allow the investigation to begin and the law to follow its natural course." A complaint was lodged against the Meghalaya DGP by former Assistant Inspector General of Meghalaya Police.

Assam BJP MLA cleans canal in Silchar, blames Congress 'misrule' for waterlogging

Guwahati, May 14 (IANS) : Despite the torrential rains causing widespread waterlogging in Assam's Silchar, local BJP MLA Dipayan Chakraborty took the initiative to clear the accumulated garbage in the Longaikhal canal and blamed the "misrule by the previous Congress governments for the woes in the city". Chakraborty has expressed concerns about the waterlogging problem in Silchar. The MLA along with representatives of the Indian Red Cross Society embarked on the Longaikhal canal, which is adjacent to the national highway in



the city, and an area of about 600 feet of the canal was cleaned for three hours. The recent torrential rains caused flash floods in Silchar town and adjoining areas.





Ukraine to face 'critical phase of war' in next two months : Commander

Kiev, May 14 (IANS) : Oleksandr Pavliuk, a Commander of the Ukrainian Ground Forces, said the country will face a "critical phase of war" in the next two months, the media reported. Russia will continue to focus on the offensives in the Luhansk and Donetsk regions, but also may strike the northeastern districts of Kharkiv and Sumy regions, he added on Tuesday as quoted by Xinhua news agency report. "Russia knows that if we get enough weapons within a month or two, the situation could turn against them," Pavliuk said. Ukraine urgently needs to strengthen its air defence, he said, noting that the expected delivery of F-16 fighters by early June will provide a "significant psychological boost" for Ukraine.

Humanitarian aid critically needed in Gaza: UN agencies

Geneva, May 14 (IANS) : Days after the Israeli army took control of the Rafah crossing, UN agencies have reiterated the severe humanitarian crisis in Gaza and emphasised the urgent need for humanitarian assistance. Volker Turk, the UN Human Rights Chief, issued a statement on Tuesday condemning actions that endanger the entry and distribution of critically needed humanitarian aid into Gaza, Xinhua news agency reported. "The handful of land crossings into Gaza serve as lifelines for the supply of food, medicine, fuel, and other necessities that must be allowed to reach the despairing and terrified population," he said. Turk urged all parties involved to ensure that civilian crossings and the flow of necessary goods for civilian survival are not put at risk due to military operations.

"Given the particular importance for civilians all across Gaza of the free flow of humanitarian aid, special care must be taken by both sides to ensure that these crossings remain safe and functional, and are neither direct targets of attack nor collaterally damaged," the UN Human Rights Chief emphasised. He reiterated his call for all parties in the conflict to immediately cease hostilities and to facilitate full, unrestricted, and continuous humanitarian aid to meet the needs of all Palestinians in Gaza "without delay". "We are scraping the bottom of the barrel," said UN Children's Fund Senior Emergency Coordinator in Gaza, Hamish Young, who told journalists in Geneva that no fuel or humanitarian aid has entered the Gaza Strip for five days. "This is already a huge issue for the population and all humanitarian actors but in a matter of days, if this is not corrected, the lack of fuel could grind humanitarian operations to a halt."



The situation in Gaza has reached even "more unprecedented emergency levels," the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) warned, with all crossings into Rafah closed or unsafe. The shutting down of the Rafah and Kerem Shalom crossing has cut off their ability to access fuel, supplies, and the transportation of humanitarian personnel, said Georgios Petropoulos,

who leads OCHA's Gaza sub-office. He also noted that this situation has impacted the movement of civilians across the border and the ability to evacuate medical patients from Gaza. According to OCHA, a continued lack of fuel will affect all key sectors as it could force hospitals to close and lead to a further worsening of malnutrition. Over the next 24 hours, five hos-

pitals run by the Palestinian Health Ministry and 28 ambulances are expected to run out of fuel. The UN World Health Organisation's Spokesperson Margaret Harris also spoke about the impact of fuel shortages. "Even if you've got somebody back from the brink, you've operated on them, you've put them on a ventilator."

US announces \$400 mn in additional weapons aid to Ukraine

Washington, May 14 (IANS) : The US has announced an additional package of weapons and equipment for Ukraine worth \$400 million. Capabilities included in the package were additional air munitions for Patriot and National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile Systems; Stinger anti-aircraft missiles; equipment to integrate Western launchers, missiles, and radars with Ukraine's systems; additional High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems and ammuni-

tion, according to a statement by the State Department released on Tuesday. Also to be provided to Ukraine were 155mm and 105mm artillery rounds; TOW and Javelin missiles and AT-4 anti-armor systems; Precision aerial munitions; High-speed Anti-radiation missiles; Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicles; M113 Armoured Personnel Carriers; Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles; coastal and riverine patrol boats; small arms ammunition and grenades; demolitions munitions; and spare parts, the statement said as

quoted by Xinhua news agency report. The US has committed more than \$51.3 billion in military aid to Ukraine since the beginning of President Joe Biden's administration, including more than \$50.6 billion since the beginning of the Russia-Ukraine war on February 24, 2022, the Defence Department said in a news statement. The new assistance from the US came on the same day northern Ukraine was reportedly attacked by Russia in a new ground operation that began on Friday dawn. Targeting the border town of



Vovchansk near Ukraine's second-largest city of Kharkiv, the attack was the most serious cross-border ground offensive by Russia in nearly two years, according to a CNN report citing a Ukrainian military source. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, who thanked the US for the new package on X, was quoted by CNN as saying the assault was part of "a new wave of counteroffensive actions" by Russia, adding that a "fierce battle" was being fought in the area.

Pandemic agreement talks to continue beyond deadline: WHO

Geneva, May 14 (IANS) : Governments around the world agreed to extend for another two weeks the talks over a landmark agreement on handling future pandemics, the World Health Organisation (WHO) said. A ninth and final round of negotiation involving WHO's 194 member states, advocacy groups, and relevant stakeholders ended Tuesday without finalising an agreement, which is scheduled to be considered for adoption at the World Health Assembly later this month, Xinhua news agency reported. The member states-led Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB) was established over two years ago to draft and negotiate a legally binding agreement on pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response.



Israeli airstrike kills first aid responder, communication technician in Lebanon

Beirut, May 14 (IANS) : A first aid responder and a telecommunication technician were killed during an Israeli airstrike in Tayr Harfa, a town located in the southern border area of Lebanon, Lebanese military sources reported. The sources told Xinhua news agency anonymously on Tuesday that an Israel drone fired an air-to-surface missile toward a team comprised of the soldiers of the Lebanese army, first aid responders from the Islamic Message Scouts, a local paramedics' organisation, as well as workers from Touch, a mobile operation in Lebanon. The team was carrying out maintenance work for a cellphone transmission station in Tayr Harfa when the attack occurred and one first aid responder and one technician from Touch were killed, the

sources said as quoted by Xinhua news agency report. Two other civilians were wounded and a military vehicle was damaged during the attack, the sources added. Moreover, the sources also noted that another Israeli airstrike destroyed a house in the village of Yarine, Tyre district, southern Lebanon, and killed a Hezbollah fighter, wounding a civilian. Meanwhile, Hezbollah said that it attacked several settlements and Israeli army positions with drones and heavy missiles. Tensions along the Lebanon-Israel border escalated on October 8, 2023, following a barrage of rockets launched by the Lebanese armed group Hezbollah toward Israel in solidarity with Hamas' attack on Israel on October 7.



UNRWA: 1,10,000 people have fled Rafah

Tel Aviv, May 14 (IANS/DPA) : Some 1,10,000 people have left Rafah in the south of the Gaza Strip since the Israeli army started advancing on the city, the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) said on Tuesday. "UNRWA estimates around 1,10,000 people have now fled Rafah looking for safety," the UN agency for Palestinian refugees said in a post on the X platform. "But nowhere is safe in the Gaza Strip & living conditions are atrocious," the post continued. "The only hope is an immediate Ceasefire." According to the Palestinian bor-

der authority, the Rafah border crossing to Egypt remains closed to humanitarian aid deliveries. The Israeli army said that troops were still deployed in the east of the city of Rafah and Al-Saitun in the centre of the Gaza Strip. In Rafah, the army had located several tunnel entrances. During battles on the Palestinian side of the Rafah crossing to Egypt, "several terrorist cells were eliminated." The Israeli air force also attacked several areas in the Rafah area from which rockets and mortar shells had been fired at Israel in recent days. The Kerem Shalom border cross-

ing, which serves as an important crossing point for humanitarian aid into the blockaded coastal strip, was also targeted. In al-Saitun, the army "eliminated several terrorists and destroyed terrorist infrastructure," it was also reported. The air force had attacked around 40 targets in the Gaza Strip within 24 hours.

50 killed as storms, flash floods lash Afghanistan province

Kabul, May 14 (IANS) : At least 50 people were killed as storms and flash floods lashed north Afghanistan's Baghlan province, a local official said. The natural mishap hit Gozargah-e-Noor, Jelgah, Nahrin, Baghlan-e-Markazi, and Barka districts, as well as the provincial capital of Pul-e-Khumri, Hedayatullah Hamdard, Provincial Director for the disaster management authority, said, on Tuesday. Storms and floods also hit most parts of other northern provinces, including Takhar, Badakhshan, and Samangan, leading to casualties and damage to properties, Xinhua news agency reported. Afghanistan has been receiving heavy rain and floods in the past month.



Doctor killed by robbers at his home in Delhi

New Delhi, May 14 (IANS) : A 63-year-old doctor was allegedly killed by robbers at his home in southeast Delhi's Jangpura area on Tuesday, police said. The deceased was identified as Dr Yogesh Chander Paul who also had a private clinic in the Jangpura area. Police said that a police control room (PCR) call was received at 6.50 p.m. at Hazrat Nizamuddin railways station regarding murder on the upper Ground floor of C-14, Jangpura Extension, Delhi following which a police team rushed to the spot. "The deceased was a general physician. He lived at the above address with his wife Dr Neena Paul who is also a Delhi government doctor," said Deputy Commissioner of Police (southeast) Rajesh Deo. The DCP said that the dead body was found in the kitchen and the forensic team along with the crime team was called.

"There are also signs of robbery as rooms have been ransacked Prima facie, It appears that the accused persons robbed the house and brought fatality to Dr. Paul," the DCP added.



Sam Pitroda row : Congress trying to convey that India is not united, says Pralhad Joshi

Hubballi, (Karnataka) May 14 (IANS) : Commenting on Congress leader Sam Pitroda's remarks on diversity in India, Union Minister Pralhad Joshi claimed on Tuesday that the Congress had indulged in dividing the nation for generations. Speaking to reporters, Joshi claimed that the Congress was trying to portray that South Indians look like Africans and people in the North-East region look like Chinese and convey the message that the country was not united.

Months after reinstatement, Kerala cop gets promotion to ADGP rank

Thiruvananthapuram, May 14 (IANS) : Kerala Inspector General of Police P. Vijayan, who was suspended from service in May 2023 and reinstated after six months, was finally promoted to the rank of Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) on Tuesday. While he was reinstated later, his promotion, which was due, was kept in abeyance by the Pinarayi Vijayan government.

The IPS officer first felt the heat, when on April 26, 2023, he was first removed from the key post of head of the Anti-Terror Squad and also the

chief of the Kerala Books and Publications Society, and subsequently, suspended. At that time, no one had a clue of what had happened, but, it was later known that the charge against him was that he allegedly leaked crucial information to the media when Delhi resident Shahrugh Saifi, the accused in the Kozhikode train fire case, was brought from Maharashtra to Kerala in April last year. The order of promotion was finally issued on Friday and he has been posted as the Director of the Kerala Police Academy. Vijayan, who worked as a labourer when he was a student, cracked the Civil Service examination and through his hard work,



became a hugely popular police official, where his efforts even won the accolades of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The senior police official was listed as one of the 100 people to

take part in the 100th episode of Modi's flagship programme, "Mann Ki Baat", but the state government failed to give him permission to participate.



NSCN-IM warns of 'horrible human rights situation' if Naga political talks fail

Kohima, May 14 (IANS) : The Isak-Muivah faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagalim (NSCN-IM) on Tuesday said that in the event of failure of the current talks (with the government) they are apprehensive of horrible human rights situation returning to 'Nagalim' -- the Naga dominated areas.

It said that the Naga people are convinced that the prolonged Naga political talks should be concluded honourably.

The Naga group said the Naga people under the banner of National Socialist Council of Nagalim stand

firm on the historic Framework Agreement signed on August 3, 2015. "In spite of all these commitments and agreements, the government of India is trying to backtrack and disown the Framework Agreement by creating situations through the agencies of its surrogate Naga factions, opportunists and the neighbouring peoples who are hostile to the cause of the Nagas," the NSCN-IM said in a statement.

It said that Nagas believe that this 'Framework Agreement' would certainly bring a durable peace in the land and a lasting relationship among people.

"It will also guarantee the security of India and the future of the Nagas. All rational people of both parties fear that betrayal of the Framework Agreement will amount to murder of peace and progress in the region, which they feel will be too costly." The Naga outfit said that after decades of confrontations, the government of India and the NSCN finally resumed political talks in 1997, culminating in the signing of the historic 'Framework Agreement' on August 3, 2015.



Pak had more electricity than India because of Cong's misrule, Malviya hits back at Aiyar's 'respect' quip

New Delhi, May 14 (IANS) : In the wake of Congress leader Mani Shankar Aiyar's recent comment advocating that India treat its arch-rival Pakistan with respect, BJP leader Amit Malviya on Tuesday took a swipe at the grand old party and posted World Bank figures showing how the neighbouring country outdid India in providing electricity to its citizens because of the Congress' misrule.

Taking to his X handle, Malviya posted, "This one indicator is enough to know how badly the Congress ran India. "Till 2018, a higher percentage of Pakistan had electricity than India! "Yes... till 2018. No wonder likes of Mani Shankar Aiyar advocated that we treat Pakistan with respect." He also shared the World Bank statistics showing access to electricity in India and Pakistan through the years.

The graph showed that at the start of the decade in 2000.



Maharashtra : FIRs against state BJP chief Bawankule & LoP Wadettiwar for MCC violation

Mumbai, May 14 (IANS) : The office of the Maharashtra Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) said on Tuesday that FIRs have been filed against state BJP chief Chandrashekar Bawankule and Leader of Opposition in the Assembly Vijay Wadettiwar for alleged violation of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC).

These FIRs have been filed after the Election Commission of India received complaints.

Maharashtra CEO S. Chockalingam said that an FIR has been filed against Maharashtra unit Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president Chandrashekar Bawankule in Thane for the party advertisement in newspapers suggesting that victory for the opposition would lead to celebrations in Pakistan.



3 cops face action for forcing accused to pluck hair from beard in Rajasthan

Jaipur, May 14 (IANS) : An SHO in Rajasthan's Bhilwara was transferred to the police lines while an ASI and a constable were suspended on Tuesday for forcing an accused to pluck hair from his beard. The inhuman act came to light after a video surfaced on Friday morning, showing the policemen ordering an accused to sit on the floor and pluck hair from his beard.

According to sources, the cops from the Pratap Nagar police station arrested a person named Suresh Gurjar (35) from the Gulabpura area on May 8.

Maha Cong Chief wants Ram Temple 'purified', draws angry reactions from BJP

New Delhi, May 14 (IANS) : Maharashtra Congress Chief Nana Patole on Tuesday made a call for the purification of Ayodhya's Ram Temple, triggering fresh row and also adding trouble to the party's existing woes, regarding its stand on the Pran Pratistha ceremony. Nana Patole said that if the INDIA bloc is elected to power, it will conduct the purification of the Ram Mandir by the four Shankaracharyas. He also claimed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi didn't follow the protocol and hence it calls for a purification ritual.

Patole's call for purification of the grand Ram Temple drew angry reactions from the string of BJP Spokesper-

sons while strong backlash on social media as well.

A couple of BJP Spokespersons told IANS that Patole's remarks were in bad taste and reprehensible.

Rohan Gupta, speaking to IANS slammed the grand old party for their hatred and opposition to the Ram Lalla.

"First they questioned the existence of Ram Lalla, then opposed its construction and declined an invite for the Pran Pratistha ceremony.

Today, it talks about the purification of the temple. Those who didn't visit the temple are making calls for purification, it's absurd," Rohan Gupta said.

"Congress has developed a habit of crossing the line, in its hatred for Prime Minister. People of the country won't forgive it for its

sins. INDIA bloc won't get a chance to return to power," he added. RP Singh, another BJP Spokesperson, talking to IANS slammed the party's double-standards on the issue.

"They kept opposing the existence and realisation of Ram Lalla dream. Their leaders never paid a visit to Ram Temple and today, they want its purification," he said.

Former Congressman Pramod Krishnam hit out at Patole for insulting and derogatory remarks on Ram Lalla and said, "This is an absurd and ridiculous statement."

"By taking Lord Ram's name, one becomes pure. All our sins get washed away by taking his name. What does Congress want to say by purification? You should purify the minds of Con-



gressmen, the minds of those who want to destroy the party," Krishnam told IANS. He also advised the Congress to first get rid of their hatred against Lord Ram before talking about purification.

"If Congress pursues such rhetoric, this will spell doom for the party," he added.

TN Police arrest YouTuber Felix Gerald from Noida

Chennai, May 14 (IANS) : Tamil Nadu Police arrested the YouTuber Felix Gerald from Noida in Uttar Pradesh and will be brought to Tiruchi after getting a transit warrant from a magistrate on Tuesday.

The YouTuber is the second accused in a case filed by the Cyber Crime Police, Tiruchi for making derogatory statements against women police personnel during an interview.

He is the owner of the RedPix 24x7 YouTube and the Tiruchi Cyber Crime Branch has complained that during his interview with YouTuber Savakku Shankar made derogatory comments against women police officers. M.A. Yasmin, Deputy Superintendent of Police, Musiri, had filed a case alleging that A. Shankar alias Savakku Shankar had made demeaning comments against women police personnel,

consequently causing immense mental agony to them.

Shankar was arrested on May 8 in the case. Madras High Court had remarked that some YouTube channels are becoming a menace to society by publishing derogatory content just to increase their subscription and it is high time that the government reined in such channels. The Single bench judge of the Madras High Court, Justice Kumaresh Babu made these oral observations on Thursday while hearing a bail petition filed by G. Felix Gerald of RedPix YouTube channel.





Harsher laws insufficient to curb political violence: German Justice Minister

Berlin, May 14 (IANS/DPA) : Harsher penalties will not be enough to curb the increasing aggression against politicians, German Justice Minister Marco Buschmann has said. "The attempt to solve the social problem of a general brutalisation of political debate with criminal law alone will fail," the politician from the pro-business Free Democratic Party (FDP) told dpa. Nevertheless, he was prepared to look at proposals from the federal states on criminal law. The federal and state interior ministers had met for a video conference on Tuesday following the brutal attack on the Social Democratic Party's (SPD) leading candidate for the European elections in Saxony, Matthias Ecke. In a joint resolution, the conference of interior ministers asked the justice ministers to examine as soon as possible whether "the specific injustice that can be seen in the fact that such attacks jeopardise democracy" is already

sufficiently reflected in criminal law. It should also be examined whether "the deliberate dissemination of disinformation with the aim of influencing elections or escalating violence constitutes a criminal offence." Attacks on politicians have been on the rise. On May 3, Ecke was putting up posters in Dresden when he was badly beaten, because of which he had to be hospitalised. On Tuesday, a man hit Berlin's top economic official, Franziska Giffey of the SPD, on the back of the head in a public library. The leading Green Party candidate for the city council, Yvonne Mosler, was jostled and threatened while putting up election posters in Dresden. According to the police, two members of the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) in the state parliament were verbally and physically attacked by suspected opponents of the party in Stuttgart on Tuesday.

Ukraine reports serious shortage of electricity due to Russian attacks

Kiev, May 14 (IANS) : Ukraine's state-run energy company Ukrenergo has said that the country is in significant electricity shortages due to Russian missile and drone strikes. Ukraine's power plants are unable to produce the same amount of electricity as before the Russian attacks due to large-scale damage, Ukrenergo said on Tuesday in a post on Telegram. The country is applying power limitation schedules for industrial consumers from 6 p.m. on Tuesday to 7 a.m. on Saturday to partially offset the electricity shortage, Xinhua news agency reported. Meanwhile, it has also been importing electricity for the past two days from European Union countries to cover the do-



mestic deficit. Russia has already carried out five major attacks on Ukraine's energy system this year, Ukrenergo said. On Wednesday, Russia fired 55 missiles and 21 drones targeting power generation and transmission facilities in six Ukrainian regions, according to the Ukrainian authorities.

UN General Assembly to vote on granting Palestine increased status

New York, May 14 (IANS/DPA) : The UN General Assembly is scheduled to vote on Tuesday on granting Palestinians greater representation and participation rights in the UN's largest body. The draft resolution grants Palestine significantly extended rights to participate in the sessions of the General Assembly but does not give it regular voting rights. Adoption of the resolution would also likely increase pressure to grant Palestine full membership. The UN General Assembly recognised Palestine as an observer state in 2012 despite resistance from the United States. Palestine and the

Vatican are the only two non-member states with observer status in the body. The resolution, which was introduced by the United Arab Emirates but drafted by the Palestinians, has been the source of disagreements at the UN headquarters in New York for weeks. The text states that the General Assembly has determined that the "State of Palestine (...) should be admitted to membership of the United Nations." It also recommends that the UN Security Council, which holds decisive power over UN membership, "reconsider the matter favourably." Dpa has obtained the text of the draft resolution, although the provisions and language of the resolution could still change as nego-



tiations continue.

The move by the 193-member UN General Assembly in New York, which comes against the backdrop of the ongoing war in the Gaza Strip, is also a reflection of international opinion on the Middle East conflict. UN diplomats believe that the resolution will easily achieve the

necessary two-thirds majority of all votes cast in the General Assembly.

The influential United States and China, as well as Russia fear a loss of control in upgrading the regions whose statehood is disputed. All three countries hold veto powers at the Security Council.

Man injured after knife fight at Australian shopping centre

Sydney, May 14 (IANS) : A man sustained injury and two others were on the run after getting involved in a knife fight at a Western Australian (WA) shopping centre. At around 3:30 p.m. local time on Tuesday, police received multiple reports of an incident at Westfield Carousel Shopping Centre in Cannington, a southern suburb of Perth. A physical altercation unfolded at the scene involving up to three males and two of them were armed with knives, Xinhua news agency reported. "During this fight, two knives were produced. One of the males, a man in his 20s, received an injury to his face," WA Police Force Inspector Geoff Desanges said at a press conference. "Both knives have been secured at the scene with the assistance of an off-duty police officer. I want to reassure the community that the incident has been contained," Desanges added, confirming that there is no ongoing threat to the public or further cause for alarm. A large police presence remains at the scene, with investigations underway to identify and locate the other two people who fled the shopping centre following the incident. "There is no place for knives in our society when they are used in violent circumstances such as this. It will not be tolerated.



South Korean ministry voices regret on Japan's 'pressure' over Line messenger

Seoul, May 14 (IANS) : The science ministry on Tuesday expressed regret over the Japanese government's "pressure" over the Line messenger app, saying that Seoul would "strongly and sternly" take measures against Tokyo's move against the popular app developed by Naver, South Korea's biggest internet company. Second Vice Science Minister Kang Do-hyun made the remarks a day after Japan's SoftBank confirmed it has been in talks with Naver over its capital relationship in LY Corp., the operator of Line messenger, Yonhap news agency reported. Kang told reporters that his ministry "expresses regret over what is perceived as pressure on a Korean company to sell a stake," referring to an administrative guidance by Japan to LY over a data leak incident last year. South Korea will "respond strongly and sternly to discriminatory measures against our company," Kang said, noting the government has been in close communications with Japan over the matter. The government will respect Naver's decision, and if it decides to keep its stake in LY, the ministry will provide necessary help to Naver to strengthen its security system, Kang added.

LY is controlled by A Holdings, a 50-50 joint venture between Naver and SoftBank. Kang also noted that SoftBank had practical management control over LY since 2019, citing the composition of LY's board. He also mentioned that Naver has been considering various possibilities regarding its stake in LY as it experienced difficulties implementing its technologies and business insights in the Japanese company. Earlier Friday, Naver also confirmed it is in talks with SoftBank and is "open to all possibilities," including shedding its shares in LY. In a statement, the Korean company said it "feels sorry" to LY users over the data leak incident and will work with LY and SoftBank to improve the service.

UN chief calls for action on escalating climate crisis, conflicts in Africa

Nairobi, May 14 (IANS) : United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has renewed a call for the global community to support action on the climate crisis and civil strife undermining the quest for peace, stability, and sustainable growth in Africa. Guterres said at a briefing on the sidelines of the UN Civil Society Conference, which concluded on Tuesday in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi, that Africa remains the epicentre of climate emergencies despite its negligible contribution to the emission of

planet-warming gases, Xinhua news agency reported. "This continent is being blasted by extreme weather, turbocharged by a climate crisis it has done next to nothing to create: From lethal floods in the East to deadly droughts in the South," he added. He stressed that Africa can overcome climatic vagaries once the continent receives a fair share of investments in renewable energy and other adaptation measures. "Africa could be a renewables giant," Guterres said, noting that the continent is home to 30 per cent of the minerals critical to green energy transition and 60 per cent of the

world's solar resources. Stressing that the United Nations will press for climate justice in Africa, Guterres observed that the continent has received only two per cent of investments in clean energy in recent decades. The UN Chief called on major economies to honour their commitment to finance climate action in Africa, while increasing their contribution to the newly established Loss and Damage Fund. In addition, Guterres said the reform of multilateral development banks is urgent to enhance capital flows to climate action in developing countries, the majority of which are



in Africa. He urged the G20 nations to lead in slashing greenhouse gas emissions while accelerating a just global phase-out of fossil fuels that are responsible for worsening planetary warming. African governments should establish ambitious national climate plans by next year to help attract investments required to enhance the resilience of communities on the front line of the cli-

mate crisis, he added. On the ongoing conflicts in Africa, Guterres said the UN has rallied behind the African Union's call for silencing the guns and restoring peace in several hotspots, including Sudan, eastern Congo.

Philippines says Iranian forces free 1 of 4 Filipino hostages

Manila, May 14 (IANS) : The Philippines' Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) on Tuesday said that one of the four Filipino sailors taken hostage by Iranian forces last month has been freed. The DFA said the Philippines welcomes the "good news," adding that the sailor is expected to arrive in Manila later Friday, Xinhua news agency reported.





Ali Fazal on how it's humbling to work with Kamal Haasan and Mani Ratnam

Actor Ali Fazal, who is making his debut in the South Indian film industry with Mani Ratnam's 'Thug Life' starring Kamal Haasan, said that working with two stalwarts of Indian cinema is a humbling experience for him. Ali said: "I am genuinely thrilled to be a part of Mani's vision for 'Thug Life.' I hope to bring something of significance to this canvas. It's an honour to collaborate with Kamal Haasan and exchange ideas with him." "Working with two stalwarts of Indian cinema is a humbling experience. I am deeply grateful to Mani for entrusting me with this role, and I am eagerly looking forward to bringing it to life on screen."

Vijay Deverakonda shares glimpse of 'VD14' set in 19th century

After unveiling the first look of his film with director Ravi Kiran Kola, actor Vijay Deverakonda again treated his fans on his birthday with a glimpse of his tentatively titled film 'VD14', set in the 19th century. Vijay took to X and shared a poster featuring a sculpture of a king. The poster has "The Legend of the Cursed Land. 1854-1878" written on it. The actor captioned it: "The Legend of the Cursed Land' Rahul Sankrityan X Vijay Deverakonda @MythriOfficial." The production company, Mythri Movie Makers, shared the poster on their official X handle. The film is directed by Rahul Sankrityan. It is reported that the film stars Sreeleela. Other details of the film are still under wraps.



Vishwak Sen's gangster tale 'Gangs of Godavari' to release on May 31

Mass Ka Das Vishwak Sen has earned the name with his big blockbuster 'Falaknuma Das'. Now, he is coming as a gutsy gangster Lankala Rathna, in his upcoming gangster flick, 'Gangs of Godavari'. Interestingly, the makers have chosen to release the film on the same date as 'Falaknuma Das', on May 31. Makers have revealed with utmost confidence that this movie will create history at the box-office for Vishwak Sen and become a blockbuster for sure. Vishwak has also expressed

similar confidence in the movie and he believes that 'Gangs of Godavari' will be a milestone film in his career. Popular composer Yuvan Shankar Raja is composing music for the film and the melodious single, 'Suttamla Soosi', from the album has already gone viral. On May 10, the team released the theme song of 'Gangs of Godavari', titled 'BAD'. With the recently released teaser, makers have been able to showcase the attitude and grey world of Lankala Rathna, which captured the imagination of moviegoers. The anticipation towards the

film has grown huge after the teaser. Krishna Chaitanya is writing and directing the film, while Suryadevara Naga Vamsi, Sai Soujanya of Sithara Entertainments, Fortune Four Cinemas, respectively are producing it. Venkat Upputuri and Gopichand Innumuri are co-producing the film and Srikara Studios is presenting it. Gorgeous actors Neha Sshetty and Anjali are playing the female leads in the film. Anith Madadi is handling cinematography for the film while National Award-winning editor Navin Nooli is editing it.

Vishnu Manchu to unveil teaser of his pan-India film 'Kannappa' at Cannes

Actor-director Vishnu Manchu, who predominantly works in Telugu cinema, will unveil the teaser of his upcoming pan-India film 'Kannappa' at the Cannes Film Festival, which opens on May 14. It will be presented as 'The World of Kannappa' at Cannes. Manchu, who has both acted in and helmed the film, will release the teaser at the Olympia Theatre on the French Riviera. Talking about launching the highly anticipated film's trailer at Cannes, Vishnu said, "We are thrilled to unveil the teaser of 'Kannappa' on the esteemed stage of the Cannes Film Festival." He added, "Cannes serves as the ideal platform to showcase our production to a global audience. By bringing our rich Indian history to the global platform, we aim to enlighten audiences worldwide about the timeless tales and cultural heritage that our film encapsulates." The film also features Akshay Kumar, Malayalam megastar Mohanlal, Telugu star Prabhas and his Kannada cinema counterparty, Shiva Rajkumar. A legendary figure from religious folklore, and the in-



spiration for the film, Kannappa was a hunter and devoted follower of Lord Shiva. As the story goes, he gouged out an eye as an offering to a lingam in his bid to meet the Lord in person. He was about to sacrifice his second eye when Shiva appeared in front of him and blessed him. Kannappa continues to be worshipped as one of the 63 Shaivite saints known as the Nayanars.

Manoj Bajpayee shows up as desi action hero at 'Bhaiyya Ji' trailer launch

The trailer of the upcoming film 'Bhaiyya Ji', starring Manoj Bajpayee, was unveiled at a multiplex in the Andheri area of Mumbai. The film marks Manoj's 100th film and showcases him in a new avatar, excelling in action-packed sequences. The trailer of the film begins with Suvinder Vicky's character asking who Bhaiyya ji is and what's the magnitude of his power. The trailer then establishes the

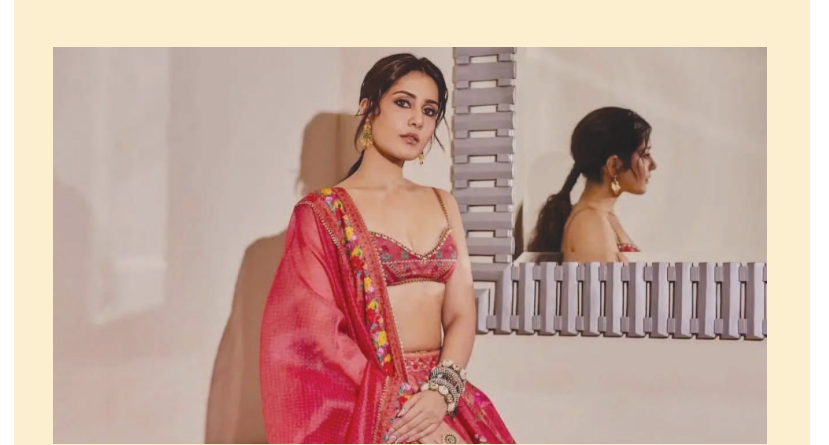


titular character in the classic third-person monologue by the character of a Pandit. Manoj then makes a stunning entry into the frame, showcasing numerous high-speed shots and action sequences that closely resemble the ones executed in Telugu cinema. In fact, the director of the film, Apoorv Singh Karki, told the media stationed at the venue that his vision was to bring the best elements of Bhojpuri and Southern cinema.



Jr NTR wraps up 'War 2' first schedule after shooting for action sequences

Star Jr NTR has wrapped up the first schedule of his upcoming film 'War 2' starring Hrithik Roshan. A source close to IANS shared that the actor wrapped up the first schedule on May 12. "NTR Jr wrapped the first schedule of 'War 2' on May 12. He shot for some extensive action sequences over a schedule of 30 days in Mumbai, before heading back to Hyderabad," said the source. Jr NTR was pictured casting his vote in Hyderabad on Monday.



Raashii Khanna talks about working on 'Aranmanai 4': 'It was the easiest set to be on'

Actress Raashii Khanna is over the moon with the response her latest release 'Aranmanai 4' has received. Talking about her experience working on the film, she described it as the easiest set to be on. Raashii said: "I have worked in 'Aranmanai 3', so when offered 'Aranmanai 4', I signed on without a script or narration. I had faith in our director, Sundar C. He is a master of the horror-comedy genre, and I just dived in with that trust." "When a filmmaker is so clear about what he wants, it becomes very easy for the actors. We just had to follow his vision. It was the easiest set to be on."

Talking about the response, she said it has been overwhelming. "After the first press screening, several media members messaged me that it's a blockbuster and it would revive the Tamil film industry from the dry spell. I am so glad that the audience gave it so much love, and apparently, the theaters are going housefull every day!" The actress added: "I also got a lot of love for the 'Achacho' song. I have never done a song like that before, but I think I should now." In 'Aranmanai 4', Raashii es-says the role of Dr Maya. She is set to star in 'The Sabarmati Report' alongside Vikrant Massey. The film is slated to hit the theatres on August 2.

Rashmika Mandanna will now be seen with Salman Khan in 'Sikandar'

Actress Rashmika Mandanna, who is currently experiencing a dream run in the movies, will be portraying the female lead in the upcoming Salman Khan-starrer film 'Sikandar'. This marks the first collaboration between Salman and

Rashmika. 'Sikandar' is directed by A.R. Murugadoss, who is known for films like 'Ghajini' and 'Holiday: A Soldier Is Never Off Duty'. On Thursday, the makers of the film made the announcement about Rashmika joining the cast. They posted on X: "Welcoming

the fabulous @rashmika_mandanna to star opposite @beingsalmankhan in #Sikandar! Can't wait for their on-screen magic to unfold on EID 2025! #SajidNadiadwala's #Sikandar Directed by @a.r.murugadoss Releasing in cinemas EID 2025."

The film is produced by Sajid Nadiadwala of Nadiadwala Grandson Entertainment, marking the reunion of Salman with Sajid after 'Kick', which was released in 2014. The film, which is currently in pre-production, will soon go on floors and is scheduled for release on Eid 2025.

