

# AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

Title Code - UPENG04488

NATIONAL ENGLISH DAILY

MORNING EDITION PRAYAGRAJ

Tuesday 28 May, 2024

UNIQUE GIFT OF KRIYAYOGA ASHRAM AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE TO GIVE IMPETUS TO WORLD BUILDING AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT.

## INDIA bloc calls strategy meet on June 1, TMC to stay away

**NEW DELHI/KOLKATA:** The opposition INDIA bloc has called a strategy meeting on June 1, the last day of voting for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. The meeting will discuss the various post-poll scenarios and also pool in the estimates of regional players to assess the performance of the opposition alliance against BJP. The meeting has been called by Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge. Sources said the meeting would focus on counting day, with instructions to be given to counting agents and booth agents on the various aspects to be taken care of, and on how to handle the returning officers' "objectionable overreach". Trinamool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee announced that she would not attend the meeting, saying the state was still dealing with the aftermath of cyclone Remal and the final phase of polling was scheduled on June 1. While the reasons



given by Banerjee are seen as understandable, many view it as the West Bengal CM positioning herself for the post-poll scenario. She struck an independent line during the polls by refusing to tie up with Congress in Bengal and then issuing statements that she would only extend outside support if INDIA bloc forms the govt. While she later revised her statement to say that TMC would join any opposition govt, she created doubts in the minds of many about her future plans. A senior TMC MP said it was "impractical" to

expect the party to attend the meeting. "CM Banerjee is a voter in Bhowanipore. She will vote on June 1. Party general secretary Abhishek Banerjee is a candidate in Diamond Harbour, which goes to polls on June 1. The party's Rajya Sabha leader Derek O'Brien is also a Kolkata South voter. These three were part of INDIA meetings earlier. Party's leader in Lok Sabha Sudip Bandyopadhyay is a Kolkata North candidate. We have conveyed this to Congress."

### Supreme Court junks BJP appeal against HC bar on ads against TMC

**NEW DELHI:** The Supreme Court on Monday said prima facie BJP's newspaper advertisements targeting TMC early this month were disparaging and refused to entertain BJP's appeal against a Calcutta high court order stopping publication of such pamphlets in media against TMC. A vacation bench of Justices J K Maheshwari and K V Viswanathan also questioned the EC for not acting promptly on TMC's May 15 complaint against BJP's advertisements. The EC had issued notice to BJP three days later on May 18. The HC on May 20 had stopped BJP from publishing such advertisements. "Why did the EC not do anything even after the HC passed the order? Even after this order from HC, did EC do something? It is a question of the independence of EC. We are not inclined to interfere with this order."

## Threatened by Maoists, Bastar's 'Vaid' to return Padma Shri

**RAIPUR:** Under relentless threats from Maoists, Padma Shri Hemchand Manjhi, a traditional medicine practitioner in Bastar's Narayanpur district, has announced that he will return the award and discontinue medical practice. Manjhi's nephew Komal was murdered by Maoists six months ago, and the 72-year-old has been getting death threats too. Manjhi, affectionately called 'Bastar's Vaidyraj' for his lifelong medical service to tribals, was given the Padma Shri only last month. "Maoists have killed (relatives) Komal, Sagar and Dukaan, and two others. We are living in fear. My family has asked me to stop distributing medicines and to return the award," Manjhi said Monday. The breaking point came Sunday when Maoists torched two mobile towers in Chameli and Gardand villages in Chhotedonger region (40km from Narayanpur district headquarters



### 51, including 30 bike riders, killed in Karnataka in 24 hours

**BENGALURU:** Karnataka witnessed 51 deaths in different road accidents within a span of 24 hours, from Saturday morning to Sunday, marking the state's highest single-day toll reported in the recent past. Alok Kumar, ADGP and commissioner for road safety, Bengaluru, said most deaths were due to reckless driving. Tumakuru district topped the chart with seven deaths, followed by (6), Bengaluru city and Bengaluru rural (4 each), and Karwar (3), according to police records. On a usual day, the number of road fatalities in the state is between 30 and 35, said another senior police official. Murmu and stated: "Manjhi has been contributing to the commissioning of Aamdai mining project and has also been receiving a lot in return." This is not the first time that Maoists have levelled such an allegation and threatened Manjhi.

### No respite yet, north India to see more heatwave days: IMD

**NEW DELHI:** Sticking to its April forecast, India Meteorological Department Monday predicted 'above normal' monsoon rainfall across the country in general, and over the monsoon core zone (which depends on rain-fed agriculture) in particular, during the June-Sept rainy season, giving a positive signal to the economy. There is a forecast probability of 61% for the country to get 'above normal' monsoon rainfall. However, most parts of northwest India will not get respite from the scorching heat in June even as there is a brief relief after three days due to western disturbances with IMD expecting a minimum four to six days of heatwave in the region next month. Many other parts of the country too will face normal to above normal.

## Cyclone Remal leaves 6 dead, trail of destruction in Bengal

**KOLKATA/GUWAHATI:** Six people were killed due to Cyclone Remal's impact, which brought heavy rain and high winds to Bengal and several northeastern states. The cyclone, which made landfall between Sagar Island in Bengal and Khepupara in Bangladesh Sunday night, left a trail of destruction, including damaged homes, uprooted trees, and disrupted power lines. In Kolkata, three people died. Mohammad Sajib, 51, was killed when the cornice of a house in Entally collapsed on him. Gopal Barman, 47, and Tapasi Das, 53, died of electrocution in Panihati and Nungi, respectively. In the Sundarbans, 75-year-old Renuka Mandal was killed by a falling tree on Mousuni island. In East Burdwan's Memari, Forde Singh and his son Tarun Singh died of electrocution while cutting down an uprooted banana tree. Kolkata received 189.5mm of rain over 24 hours, causing waterlogging in several areas. More than 350 trees were uprooted in the city, blocking roads and damaging vehicles. Power disruptions affected the districts, with over 60 transformers tripping and more than 5,000 poles uprooted, impacting lakhs of residents. Suburban train services from Sealdah were partially suspended for three hours due to the cyclone. Flight services at Kolkata airport, which had been suspended for 21 hours, resumed Monday morning, but disruptions continued with 12 flights diverted and several others delayed. A Bengal govt preliminary report indicated that over 2 lakh people were evacuated to relief camps, with more than 1,400 camps distributing cooked meals to affected residents. As Cyclone Remal moved north into Bangladesh and towards the North-East, it caused heavy rainfall in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram, and Manipur. No significant damage or casualties have been reported in these states.

## Nato states propose 'drone wall' on Russian border

**NEW DELHI:** The interior ministers of six Nato countries have agreed to construct a unified "drone wall" defense system along their borders with Russia and Belarus. This proposal was discussed in a meeting held in Riga, involving officials from Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland,



Finland, and Lithuanian Interior Minister Agne Bilotaite emphasized the urgency of the project, saying, "We see constant threats from Moscow and Russia and Belarus to destabilize our countries' internal security and public order, to create panic and distrust in institutions." She accused the two nations of "weaponizing migration, cyberattacks, disinformation, sabotage of critical infrastructure, and other hybrid threats."

## At 58.5%, J&K records highest overall turnout in 35 years

**NEW DELHI:** The 58.5% overall turnout in Jammu & Kashmir, where polling concluded on Saturday, was the highest in 35 years. While the turnout in Srinagar parliamentary constituency this time rose to 38.5% from 14.4% in 2019, it climbed to 54.9% from 9% in Anantnag-Rajouri seat and to 59.1% from 34.6% in Baramulla seat over the same period. The 2024 polling percentages were however lower in Jammu region as compared to 2019, showing a slight dip of 0.3 percentage points for Jammu and 1.9 percentage points for Udhampur. As regards Kashmir Valley, three parlia-



mentary constituencies - Srinagar, Baramulla and Anantnag-Rajouri - recorded the highest combined turnout of 50.9% in three decades. Data shared by the EC on Monday put the 2019 combined turnout figure for the three Valley seats at a mere 19.2%, which is 30 percentage points lower than 2024. The comparison may however not be perfect as the geographical limits of Anantnag had

undergone some significant changes during delimitation in 2020-21, with parts of Jammu division's Rajouri district added to it. EC on Monday termed the high turnout in J&K a testament to robust democratic spirit and civil engagement of its people. "The voter turnout of 50.86% from the three seats in Kashmir Valley echoes the faith of the people in the democratic process," it said in a statement.

## Govt plans dedicated two-wheeler lanes, over bridges to reduce road accidents

**NEW DELHI:** Road transport ministry is working on a plan to build dedicated lanes for two-wheelers on the state highways and urban roads, and pedestrian foot over bridges (FOBs) or underpasses along major urban arterial roads. Non-segregation of traffic is the main cause of high number of crashes in India. As per govt statistics, nearly 44% of the road crashes and fatalities in India



involve two-wheelers. Similarly, around 17% of road crashes and 19% fatalities involve pedestrians. Pedestrians, cyclists and two-wheeler riders are categorised as vulnerable road users (VRUs) and over half of the people killed on road fall under this category.

### Silver outshines gold, but pace lags in India

**MUMBAI:** Silver has outperformed gold in domestic and international markets by a margin of around 10 percentage points over a year. However, returns from silver in the domestic market are lagging the international ones even as the rupee has weakened, while returns on gold are nearly identical. Silver prices rose nearly 33 per cent in a year, while gold rates increased by 21 per cent in international markets. In India, silver returns stood at just over 29 per cent against gold's nearly 20 per cent. The difference in returns in silver emerged as Indian importers are using the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement route - a bilateral trade channel India.

### Ground radar survey begins at Bhojshala complex

**MHOW:** Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) deployed ground penetrating radar (GPR) to identify structures buried in the Bhojshala / Kamal Maulana mosque compound as the court-ordered survey entered the 67th day. The GPR, brought from Hyderabad, is being used in the inner side of the main hall - considered to be the sanctum sanctorum of Waghdevi temple - and 'Hawan Kund' outside it, Ashish Goyal, representative of petitioner Hindu Front for Justice, told TOI. He is accompanying the ASI team on the survey, as is a Muslim representative. It was also used on the eastern side of the complex, near the main gate, he said, adding: "GPR survey

is good as it will limit excavation." The GPR machine is scanning the complex in grids of one square metre each, Goyal added. Excavation continued in the northern side, outside the Bhojshala main monument. Three stone artifacts have been unearthed. One of them is made of white marble and resembles a broken idol, Goyal said, adding the other two look like 'simple stones', but ASI has taken all three for further examination. A similar idol-like stone artifact was recovered during excavation inside the main hall last month. The ASI team went to Kamaal Moulana dargah in the afternoon and studied the structure. The dargah premises are likely to be scanned on Tuesday.



# 'Conspiracy of Cong and Samajwadi Party exposed'

Prayagraj: On May 24, just a day before the voting for the proposed Lok Sabha elections in Prayagraj, a message was circulated on Shankargarh Naribari Chakghat News, a group on the social media platform WhatsApp. In the message, talking about the political neglect of Uttar Pradesh Government Cabinet Minister Nand Gopal Gupta Nandi and his wife

Mrs. Abhilasha Gupta Nandi (former Mayor of Prayagraj), it was asked to respond through voting. As soon as this matter came to his notice, the Cabinet Minister Nandi, showing prompt action, lodged an FIR against the administrator of the said group, Pramod Babu Jha, and the person concerned who circulated the message, in Prayagraj Kotwali police

station. He also said that his political opponents were conspiring to tarnish his image and asked the police to immediately expose the matter and take strict legal action. The police detained the group's administrator Pramod Babu Jha at 1 am. During investigation, the person who posted was identified as Pappu. During inquiry and investigation the following facts came to

light. 1- Pappu takes care of the business etc. of Shankargarh Congress leader and former block chief Yagya Narayan Mishra. 2- Yagya Narayan Mishra's son Pramod Mishra is a Congress party councilor in Raipur, Chhattisgarh. 3- Background of the person who posted: Congress is related to the party. 4- Advance investigation is prevalent in

the case. The person who made the post is absconding after switching off his phone, for whose arrest the police is conducting raids at various places. Police is tracing the location of the absconding accused, whose last location is shown to be in Jharkhand. With the arrest of the person concerned, other aspects of this political conspiracy will also come to

light. It is clear from the facts that have come to light so far that this post was made with the aim of taking electoral advantage at a very sensitive time, just a day before the voting. Congress party and people associated with it are involved in the matter. This entire incident was conspired to influence the image of Minister Nand Gopal Gupta Nandi.

## Kite makers endure exploitation for generations; hope for better days

Prayagraj: The kite makers of Prayagraj craft kites of vibrant hues painting the evening sky, but their own lives are veiled in darkness and hardship. Across generations, these artisans in the old city area of Prayagraj persist in toiling under harsh conditions, earning a meagre income that barely sustains them.

With no organisation or registration with the labour department, kite makers are exploited by big kite traders who earn hefty sums by selling kites locally and sending them to other states on demand. Many have left their ancestral profession for other trades, but many still make kites for their survival. Families engaged in kite craft reside in the narrow lanes and bylanes of Syed Wada, Rasulpur, Dariabad, Akbarpur, Daira Shah Ajmal, and Garhi Sarai localities of the old city. These areas are densely populated and lack amenities. There is no record of how many people are engaged in kite manufacturing, but it is estimated that over 1,000 people, including women, make kites and other accessories for kite flying in the old city areas. Never approached by any politician or leader, kite makers have no expectations from them. However, they hope for better days if they get attention from local authorities.

Busy making kites at his small workshop in the Daira Shah Ajmal area, 55-year-old Abdul Qadir says that his family has been engaged in kite making for the past four generations. Qadir makes kites for big

kite traders and gets Rs. 400 per day. However, their employers pay Rs. 250 only to the women workers. Qadir and his kin also make kites to sell to customers for additional income. "My family and I are engaged in making kites. However, we do not want to continue it anymore as survival is getting tougher each day on this meager income. The income is only enough to make ends meet somehow. The cost of material used in making kites has increased, and so has the price of kites in the market, but wages have remained the same for many years," Abdul Qadir complained.

Working throughout the day and even during the night, the kite makers toil hard to complete the orders while ensuring the quality of the kites. Besides daily wages, some kite makers get money for each kite they make.

Roshan Bua, 60, and her daughter make kites for their living. Residing in a rented room in the Syed Wada locality, Roshan Bua gets Rs. 1 for a small kite and Rs. 2 for a larger one. The material is provided by the bigger traders who sell the same kites at higher prices in the market and earn hefty sums. "Many have left the profession as survival is becoming hard on this meager income. It is not that people are now less interested in kite flying, but the passion for this old entertainment is increasing. However, kite makers are being exploited in the absence of any organisation and due to the negligence of the concerned authorities," says Mohd Mallu, another kite maker.

## Birth anniv of Gorakshpeethadhishwar Mahant Avaidyanath to be celebrated today Under auspices of Hindustani Academy

Prayagraj: On the occasion of the birth anniversary of Gorakshpeethadhishwar Mahant Avaidyanath, under the auspices of Hindustani Academy, Prayagraj, on 28th May 2024, Tuesday, 3:30 pm Gandhi A seminar on 'Contribution of Nathpanth in social harmony' has been organized in the



auditorium of Hindustani Academy, Uttar Pradesh, Prayagraj. The program was presided over by Prof. Alok Chauhan - Director. It will be held in the dignified presence of Meerut Institute of Technology, Meerut and chief guest Dr. Shikha Darbari, IRS - Chief Commissioner of Income Tax, Prayagraj. Prof. Amit Kumar Upadhyay, Department of Political Science, Deendayal Upadhyay University, Gorakhpur, Dr. Arun Kumar Tripathi, senior litterateur, Prayagraj, Dr. Suryakant Tripathi, Assistant Professor, Department of Sanskrit, Deendayal Upadhyay University, Gorakhpur will participate as honored speakers of the seminar.

## Children showcasing their talent in ongoing summer workshop at NCZCC

Prayagraj: With the aim of physical and mental development of children and making them extrovert, North Central Zone Cultural Centre, Ministry of Culture, Government of India is working on creating interest in culture and art among children and The children selected in the 30-day summer children's workshop being organized for the internal development of children are learning the intricacies of art with great enthusiasm. On Monday, un-



der the direction of senior instructor Sundar Lal Chhabra, children learned how to present dialogues and make facial expressions under acting. While Richa Pandey taught the children the initial steps of the classical dance Kathak, the children are learning painting and sketching under the guidance of Anand Prakash. Apart from this, Phool Singh is giving training in craft. Women are also participating enthusiastically in the 15-day Haryanvi folk dance.

## Displeasure among SP leaders over brutal lathicharge by police on advocate Rehan Ahmed

Prayagraj: For protesting against the detention of former Rajya Sabha MP Kunwar Revati Raman Singh. The dictatorship of Karaili police station and former Rajya Sabha MP Kunwar Revati Raman in allowing voters to cast their votes during the voting on 25th May. The manner in which the SP leaders and workers, who were enraged by the news of Singh being taken into custody by the Karaili police, were tortured and brutally beaten with sticks has become a mockery of democracy. India Alliance candidate Ujjwal Raman Singh strongly condemned the lathicharge and barbaric marks and arrest of advocate and former state secretary and sector in-charge Rehan Ahmed, say-



ing, "I am aware of the way the Karaili Police has played the role of animals with our workers." Said this is a blatant violation of the constitution and law of

Karaila Police. According to Metropolitan Media In-charge Syed Mohammad Askari, Rehan Ahmed has got blue marks on his back and legs due to police lathi

charge. He was neither given treatment nor took any medicine. He kept groaning in pain. On the initiative of Sandeep Yadav, who was a candidate in the Legislative Assembly elections of City North, City General Secretary Ravindra Yadav, Ravi Advocate and Irshad Ahmed Advocate tried to get the release of Rehan Ahmed. Whereas SP leaders accused the police of dictatorship. He alleged that the police administration was working as an agent of the BJP. People were inclined towards the India Alliance, so in the anger of the defeat, advocate Rehan Ahmed, who had raised his voice in support of Kunwar Revati Raman, was targeted at the opportune moment.

## Monthly meeting of All India Retired Railway Men's Federation North Central Railway Division tomorrow

Prayagraj: Under the auspices of All India Retired Railway Men's Federation North Central Railway Division Prayagraj, meeting of railway pensioners and all pensioners including ex-

servicemen Suhagan Palace Bhavpur It will be held on Thursday, May 30, 2024, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm in Prayagraj, next to Kareli Kali Temple, which will be presided over by Raj Kumar

Tripathi, Board President, Operation Rajbali Sharma, coordination Shesh Mani Tripathi, Arjun Singh etc., Railway pensioners and all pensioners. An action plan will be prepared after dis-

cussing with the ex-servicemen and passing the proposal. United Forum officials and other union leaders are invited as key speakers in the meeting who will be present.

## REVIEW MEETING Regarding preparations for possible floods and excessive rainfall

Repair of dams and sluice gates, arrangement of sand bags in embankments/cut areas, arrangement of drains/sewers/waterlogging and drainage and other points discussed in detail

Prayagraj: A review meeting was organized on Monday under the chairmanship of the District Magistrate regarding preparations for possible floods and excessive rainfall. In the said meeting, repair of dams and sluice gates, arrangement of sand bags in embankments/eroded areas, arrangement of drains/ sewer/waterlogging and drainage, arrangement of

food grains in flood affected areas, vaccination of animals and arrangement of medicines, bleaching, fog-



ging, spraying of pesticides and anti-larvae, progress of repair of roads and culverts,

arrangement of hand pumps and tube wells, arrangement of boats/motorboats, police patrolling in flood af-

ected areas and availability of adequate quantity of MALATHION, PYRE-

THRINS, anti-larvae. Preparations and proceedings were discussed in detail on related points. During the said meeting, Vinay Kumar Singh, Additional District Magistrate (V/R), Prayagraj, Additional District Magistrate (NA), Prayagraj, Assistant Commissioner of Police (Traffic), District Malaria Officer, Executive Engineer, Flood Work Division, District Fire Officer, Health Department, Animal Husbandry Department, Panchayat Raj Department, Municipal Corporation Department etc. senior officers and employees were present.

## Asst Profs of Botany Dept AU helping progressive farmers

Prayagraj: In the face of global warming and climate change, Indian agriculture is struggling with altered rainfall patterns. Traditional farmers, dependent on crops like wheat and rice, are suffering significant losses and are compelled to abandon their fields for small jobs in cities. To address this crisis, many state governments are encouraging a shift to alternative crops that require less water and offer higher profits. Among these, dragon fruit, a superfood with high global demand, stands out. Across the country, progressive farmers are successfully cultivating dragon fruit and reaping high incomes. One such farmer is Mr. C. L. Gautam, cultivating dragon fruit on 3-acre land on Rewa Road in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh. A research team from the Department of Botany, University of Allahabad visited Mr. Gautam as part of an outreach programme. Comprising assistant professors Dr. Sunil Kumar Singh, Dr. Pradeep Kumar Yadav, Dr. Manoj Kumar Singh, and Dr. Rikky Rai, the team discussed with Mr. Gautam to understand and address the challenges of dragon fruit farming. Their scientific and sustainable solutions promise to inspire more farmers to embrace dragon fruit cultivation, paving the way for higher incomes and meeting the goals of sustainable agriculture.

## 15-day summer drama workshop going on at NCZCC

Prayagraj: On Monday was the sixth day of the 15-day summer drama workshop under the "Let's Play Drama" campaign of the Indian Folk and Modern Art Academy in collaboration with The Quinch. Today was the sixth day of the 15-day summer drama workshop at



B.S. Public School, Tagore Town. Today, children were treated to folk dances by Bharatendu Harishchandra. The script of the play Andher Nagari was taught by the chief instructor Ramesh Kashyap and the first scene of this play was rehearsed. Children liked the story of Andher Nagri very much.

## Aniket's game gave unassailable lead to VBPS Sports

Prayagraj: Thanks to Aniket Kumar Pal's all-round game (61 runs and three wickets), Vishnu Bhagwan Public School defeated Indirapuram Cricket Academy by 93 runs to become 2nd in the three-match cricket series. Took an unbeatable lead of -0. In the second match of the series played on Monday at Vishnu Bhagwan Public School ground, Indirapuram Cricket Academy scored 210 runs for 9 wickets in 35 overs (Aniket Kumar Pal 61, Rudra Pratap Singh 36, Razauddin 34, Mohammed Chavez 32, Mohammad Tanveer 2/32, Karan Singh 2/40, Arsh, Shivaji Yadav and Ajay Nishad took one wicket each. In reply, Indirapuram Cricket Academy team scored 117 runs for 9 wickets in 35 overs (Abhijeet Kaushal 25, Ayush Yadav 20, Aniket Kumar Pal 3/18, Amav Garg 2/12, Razauddin 2/16, Priyam Singh and Ujjwal Sharma one each. Could only make wickets. The third and final match of the series will be held on Tuesday. After the match, Krida Bharti Kashi Province Minister Virendra Nath Upadhyay will distribute the awards at 1 pm.



## Vi Launches 'Vi Guarantee' Program for Smartphone Prepaid Customers

Varanasi: Vi, a leading telecom operator, today announced the launch of the 'Vi Guarantee Program', a limited period offer for prepaid users. This new initiative ensures uninterrupted high-speed data for all 5G and new 4G smartphone users. Under the Vi Guarantee program, Vi users will get 130GB of guaranteed extra data over a period of one year, implying that 10GB of data will be credited to their account automatically on every 28th day for 13 consecutive cycles.

Avneesh Khosla, Chief Marketing Officer at Vodafone Idea Limited said, "In today's digital world, consumers need more data to stay connected, productive, and entertained. The 'Vi Guarantee' program is designed to address this growing demand by providing users with an uninterrupted, high-speed data experience. This initiative underscores our commitment to offering a truly unlimited data experience, ensuring our customers can do more on the internet without worrying about data constraints."

To avail this extra data offer, Vi users will need to be on a daily data unlimited plan of Rs 239 and above. The user will be able to use this extra data only once their existing data quotas get exhausted. This offer is valid only for Vi subscribers with 5G smartphones or who have recently upgraded to a new 4G smartphone. Many smartphone users in India do not maximise the potential of their 4G/5G mobile devices due to a lack of sufficient data. With this offer, users can continue to binge on their favourite content even after their daily quota gets exhausted without any extra cost by using the data from their Vi Guarantee quota. Vi Guarantee, a limited period offer was thus designed to meet the growing data needs of users and encourage them to explore the full capabilities of their devices for better productivity and connectivity.



# 1 yr of PMC full of achievements: Mayor

Prayagraj: Municipal Corporation, today in the new hall of Municipal Corporation, the achievements of one year were discussed in detail with all the councilors. On this occasion, all the honorable councilors Praising the Mayor, he said that this time efficient leadership has been established, this time the fourth development of the city is taking place. Addressing the occasion, Mayor Ganesh Kesarwani said that today is a historic day for all of us. People had taken an oath of public service, fulfilling the wishes and aspirations of the people, we all worked together for the basic development of the city.

812 roads, streets and drains were constructed, 8

ghats are being constructed, 37 toilets are being constructed, two cow sheds have been constructed, 387 parks have been renovated, two Amrit Sarovars have been built, two Saudagrahas are being built, 17 smart schools. Through this, education is being provided to the poor children of the city and along with this, Prayagraj got the title of second prize in Ganga Town City in the cleanliness survey across the country. This is done by the people of Prayag, the Chief Councilor of the Municipal Corporation and the Municipal Corporation Administration. This is the result of collective role and along with this, the wonderful work of encouraging the



players of Prayagraj through Khelo Prayagraj Mayor Cup has also been done in the last one year by the Municipal Corporation.

We all together take a pledge that the historical traditions of Prayagraj will be carried forward in this manner. In sequence, a huge

statue of Lord Brahma ji is being installed in Prayag, the land of Yagya, along with the importance of Yagya, as well as a huge

statue of Maharishi Valmiki ji is being installed with the importance of Ramayana. Kumbh Gallery is being installed which will depict the history of Kumbh in various forms every day. This will satisfy the curiosities, let the pride of Prayagraj increase, let Prayagraj become an ideal city and the society should play a role in it. Therefore, we all should be successful in making the society a historical city by awakening the society, connecting it with cleanliness, connecting it with development, all of you, Honorable. Councilor, Municipal Corporation Administration, Mayor expressed his heartfelt greetings to the people of Prayagraj and expressed his gratitude.

## BJP's claim regarding victory in both Lok Sabha seats of Prayagraj

\* Organization will reward workers who ensure victory at their booths

\* Despite voting pc in city, BJP successful in getting their voters out: Rajendra Mishra

Prayagraj: Regarding the voting held on May 25, Bharatiya Janata Party Prayagraj Mahanagar has claimed victory in both the Lok Sabha seats of Phulpur and Allahabad with huge votes. Prayagraj Mahanagar President Rajendra Mishra said that Bharatiya Janata Party's booths, sectors and the workers of the Mandal and the regional public representatives used all their strength in this scorching heat and succeeded in getting the voters of their ideology at the booths and conducted the voting and said that definitely the Bharatiya Janata Party will win one to one and a half seats in both its Lok Sabha seats. Will win with a margin of Rs. lakh and said that the booths where the workers got 370 plus votes and won as per the organization will be rewarded and the booths where the voting is less will be reviewed after the election results and action will be taken accordingly. District spokesperson Rajesh Kesarwani said that even though the voting percentage in the City Southern Assembly of the Allahabad Lok Sabha and the Northern Assembly of the Phulpur Lok Sabha is less as compared to the last Lok Sabha elections, out of all the votes cast, 70 were cast by the Bharatiya Janata Party. Because the booth workers were successful in getting the voters associated with the ideology of BJP to cast their votes and the opposition failed.

## Cong pays homage to Nehru on death anniv

Prayagraj: District Congress Committee members paid homage to the architect of modern India, Bharat Ratna Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru on 60th death anniversary. Partymen reached Anand Bhawan the ancestral

and non-aligned movement.

Former Spokesman of UPCC Kishore Varshney conducted the Sabha. Later they also garlanded the life size statue of Nehru at Balson crossing.

UPCC General Secre-



abode of Nehrus and garlanded his portrait and recalled his contribution in nation building.

On this occasion a Shridhanjali Sabha held with DCC president Suresh Yadav. They said Nehru was the prime architect of modern India who established the basic structures in his 17 years long tenure. He was the leader of common wealth

tary Mukund Tiwari, Kishore Varshney, Fuzail Hashimi, Shekhar Bahuguna, Irshad Ullah, Javed Urfi, Harikesh Tripathi, Rajnish Vishram Das, Rakesh Patel, Gaurav Pandey, Manoj Pasi, Haseeb Ahmed, Raj Bahadur Gupta, Manas Shukla, Parvej Siddiqui, Suresh Kushwaha, Ajay Srivastav and others were present.

## Rotary Club Allahabad Academia launches 'Udaan' project

Prayagraj: Rotary Club Allahabad Academia launched its 7th regular project 'Udaan' in the field of community service today at 3 pm. The objective of this project is to make women self-reliant and empower them economically. This sewing embroidery center, which was started with 10 sewing machines in the courtyard of WITI located in Bakshi Bazar, was inaugurated by Sunil Bansal, the divisional president of Rotary Division 3120. On this occasion, former divisional president Anil Agarwal, Dr. Avindra Agarwal, co-division president Tariq Khan, and Dr. Afroz Jahan, Chairperson of the Academia, were also present. In the 'Udaan' centre, along with the education of tailoring and embroidery, provision has also been made to earn a living by stitching clothes, which will help women to become self-reliant. Rotary Academy has been taking similar initiatives for the last four years to bring positive change in the society. Looking forward to. Under this, a school named 'Pankh' is

also being run for poor children in Karailabagh, where 100 children are getting good education free of cost. Through such social initiatives, Rotary Academia has created a distinct identity

and embroidery. He appreciated the enthusiasm of the women and the step taken by them. Many members of the Academia were also specially present on the occasion, including Dr.

take it forward. This initiative of Rotary Club Allahabad Academia is an important step towards women empowerment and self-reliance. Through the 'Udaan' project, not only will



for itself in the society. After the inauguration, Mandal President Sunil Bansal inspected the center and interacted with the women present there, who had come to the center with the aim of learning sewing

Nazim, Aftab Ahmed, Saeed Ashraf, Meena Khan, Ahmed Makin, Alina Khan, Shams Tabrez, and Rizwani Khan. Everyone together resolved to make this project successful and expressed their commitment to

women get a new platform, but they will also be empowered financially, which will also benefit their families. Such initiatives are an important contribution towards bringing comprehensive change in the society.

## Two youths drowned while bathing in Yamuna River

Prayagraj: Two youths, who had gone to take bath with friends to get relief from the heat at Jogi Ghat in Prayagraj, drowned in Yamuna river. On receiving information about the incident, Atarsuiya and water police reached the spot and with the help of divers took out the bodies of the two youths. Both the youths who drowned were residents of Alata area and both were from very poor families. According to the information, this tragic incident happened on Sunday afternoon when 16-year-old Roman and 14-year-old Saif had gone to take a bath in the Yamuna river with their friends. According to eyewitnesses, while bathing, both the youths suddenly went into deep water and started drowning. The friends present with him immediately raised an alarm and requested for help. As soon as information about the incident was received, teams of Atarsuiya police station and water police reached the spot. The police immediately called divers and started the rescue operation. After about an hour of hard work, the divers first recovered Roman's body. After some time, Saif was also taken out of the river, but his condition was critical. Saif was breathing lightly, seeing which he was immediately taken to the hospital. However, upon reaching the hospital, doctors declared Saif dead. There was chaos in the families of both the youth after hearing the news of their death. Both Roman and Saif belonged to poor families. This accident has wreaked havoc on their families.



## Present time is the era of revolution of photographs

Prayagraj: In a program organized in the Department of Anthropology of Allahabad University. We are in the time of Post Truth. This is the era of photo revolution. On one hand, there is a competition going on to create ideas beyond the truth through photography, on the other hand, through 'Communication Designer' and 'Communication Architect', photographs are being hybridized and used in cyber war. Despite all this, a photograph remains of distinct importance in ethnographic research. In anthropology, on one hand, photographs are helpful in understanding the views of the community and making factual research statements in their context, while on the other hand, they help in presenting descriptive models for analyzing and interpreting research data. Photographs are an important link in documentation. They have great importance both as physical evidence and as a mechanism to pave the way for new research. These things were said by Dr. Dhananjay Chopra, course coordinator of Center of Media Studies, Allahabad University. Dr. Chopra was delivering a special lecture on "Use of Camera during Anthropological Fieldwork: A Scientific Basis of Documentation" organized by the Department of Anthropology, Allahabad University.

Dr. Chopra was delivering a special lecture on "Use of Camera during An-

thropological Fieldwork: A Scientific Basis of Documentation" organized by the Department of Anthropology, Allahabad University. Dr. Chopra said that unlike the earlier decades of sixties and seventies, photographs are no longer just a means of per-

ception. Today, just a picture circulated in newspapers or on social media has the potential to change the political scenario of nations. An example is a pic-



ture of our Prime Minister's visit to Maldives and the collapse of the tourism economy of a country. Photographs are also helpful in understanding the political agenda, deconstructing any established opinion or principle and critically examining the ideas and under-

standing the intentions of those who create the ideas. Students and researchers need to understand that photo composition is a very important part of photographic documentation. While taking photos, keep in mind that instead of capturing everything, focus on your subject. Because the photograph establishes the interrelationship between the researcher and the study area and its subject. It is the evidence of fieldwork and determines the authenticity of the research essay and helps the researcher in underlining the field observations. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to their quality. While taking photos, you can use the "Rule of Thirds" as a technical guideline to add some charm to the photo. Dr. Chopra said that during anthropological research, you can establish yourself as an experienced photographer only when you keep 'empathy' at the core instead of 'sensitivity'. Dr. Chopra advised the students to consider photographs as a part of the document and not to judge the society in the field to understand it by their own standards, that is, to maintain the perspective of cultural relativism. Make sure

that the pictures tell their own story and the audience understands what you want to say as soon as they see it. He also answered the questions of researchers and students.

At the beginning of the program, Head of the Department, Professor Rahul Patel introduced the topic. In the welcome address, he highlighted the importance of photography in anthropological research and inspired the students to improve their presentations with the help of photographs. The session was moderated by Dr. Sanjay Kumar Dwivedi, Post Doctoral Fellow, ICSSR, New Delhi. Head of the department and other teachers of the department, Dr. Prashant Khatri and Dr. Khirod Moharana expressed their gratitude to Dr. Chopra by presenting him 'Shrimad Bhagwat Geeta'. The vote of thanks was given by Dr. Khirod Moharana. On this occasion, researchers of the department Vinay Kumar Yadav, Sakshi, Deepshikha, Prabhakar, Prashant, Anand, Yadendra, entire student Harshit and all the students of the study group going to Uttarakhand of BA and B.Sc third year were present. The program ended with the national anthem.

## Railway Protection Force/Manikpur caught two accused while stealing at the station

Prayagraj: Assistant Sub Inspector of Railway Protection Force/Manikpur Vimlesh Kumar and Inspector in-charge of Government Railway Police/Manikpur in Prayagraj Division Dilip Kumar Mishra, in a joint operation, two accused were caught stealing luggage of passengers on platform 04 of Manikpur station. On interrogation by the Railway Protection Force, the accused revealed their names as Karan Ahirwar, son of Swamidin, age about 20 years, residence Madhya Pradesh, Pritam Call, son of late Sumit Lal, aged about 20 years, resident of Madhya Pradesh. During investigation by Railway Protection Forces, 03 stolen mobile phones worth approximately Rs 40,000/- were recovered from the accused. And 2-Railway Protection Force/Mirzapur got the injured passenger admitted to the hospital. On 26.05.2024, Assistant Sub Inspector Narendra Dubey and Constable Akhilanand Kushwaha of Railway Protection Force/Mirzapur, on the basis of information received from Deputy Station Superintendent/Mirzapur, platform no. Attended to an injured passenger at the west end of Route 3. Sub

Inspector Narendra Dubey and Constable Akhilanand Kushwaha noticed that the injured passenger was bleeding from an injury on

travelling in train number 20801, Islampur-New Delhi Magadh Superfast Express. After first aid to the injured passenger by Assistant



his left toe. On being interrogated by the Railway Protection Force, the passenger revealed his name as Vikas Kumar, son of Ramdas Prasad, age-34 years, Aurangabad, Bihar. The said passenger was traveling from Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay to Kanpur Cen-

Yogesh Kumar of Railway Hospital/Mirzapur present at the spot, Constable Akhilanand Kushwaha He was referred to Mirzapur District Hospital by ambulance for observation. Passenger Vikas Kumar has spoken to his family members and informed them about the incident.

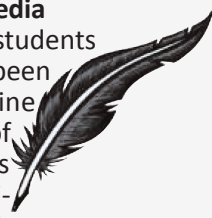


## Editorial

### Anti-Semitic protests in the US

As the world witnesses anti-Semitic protests erupting across universities in the United States, numerous questions regarding Western media reporting have ignited among free thinkers. This isn't the first instance of the Western media's hypocritical behaviour coming to light; rather, it signals the onset of the worst credibility crisis the Western media has faced since its inception. With the advent of digitalisation and the rise of social media, previously unheard voices are now gaining prominence and challenging the established credibility of hegemonised media outlets. Numerous articles and books have been penned with the aim of exposing and debunking the orchestrated agenda of the Western media. The worst phase of the credibility of the Western media reached its zenith when it tried to create a perception regarding the possession of WMD (Weapon of Mass Destruction) in Iraq under the reign of military general Saddam Hussain without giving any evidence to their claims. There have been allegations in the Western media pertaining to the reporting of the possession of WMD by Iraq that it favoured the narrative that justified the NATO-led invasion of Iraq. The United Nations Monitoring, Verification, and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) Chief Weapons Inspector Hans Blix said in January 2003 that Iraq had cooperated well with the investigation team, and after the completion of the investigation on whether Iraq possessed WMD, they did not find any evidence pertaining to the alleged claims of the presence of WMD. Was it the first instance or the last, when the United States and the Western media accepted its mistake and tendered an apology? The answer to this question is no. There have been several instances in history where the US acted as the aggressor and participated in the killings of innocents, more than what we know about Hitler-led Germany. In the context of India, there have been various instances in history when the Western media have shown hypocrisy in covering similar issues through two lenses and tried to present different perspectives catering to their interests. In the pandemic era, the Western media left no stone unturned to criticise India for the number of deaths due to COVID-19, labour migrants, vaccines, etc., ignoring all the efforts of the Indian government that micromanaged the crisis with a population of around 1.3 billion people (approximately). Similarly, during the Russia-Ukraine war, there was a huge influx of negative reporting in the context of India, especially when she abstained from voting in a UN General Assembly that condemned Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the oil was purchased from Russia despite calls for sanctions on India. Assessing the level of anti-India reporting by the Western media, India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said while addressing a joint press conference with his German counterpart Annalena Baerbock in December 2022, "Our trade with Russia is at a very small level—\$12–13 billion, in comparison to European countries." "I would urge you to look at these figures. There is a website called 'Russia Fossil Fuel Tracker' that would give you country-by-country data of who is really importing what, and I suspect that might be very, very helpful," he added. The statement was made during a period when the Western media sparked a controversy about India by asserting that it was providing financial support to Russia for the war.

**The hypocrisy of Western media**  
Recently, more than 100 students and faculty members have been arrested in a pro-Palestine protest at the University of California, Berkeley, which is yet another centre of anti-Asian and anti-Semitic activities in the United States.



## Government's outreach ties need renewed

India has enjoyed historical, cultural and civilisational links with Central Asia for several millennia. Brisk trade of goods, ideas and thoughts took place from India to Central Asia and beyond over the Silk Road from 3rd century BC to 15th century AD. Buddhism travelled to Afghanistan, Central Asia and western China from India over this route. India and the Central Asian Republics (CARs) viz. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan shared vibrant economic, people-to-people and cultural ties till recent times when the latter were a part of the Soviet Union. India has not been able

to take full advantage of its close ancient linkages with this region after their independence from the erstwhile Soviet Union in 1991 because it does not share a de facto land boundary with any of these countries (although de jure it shares a border with Tajikistan through the Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir). To overcome this obstacle, several initiatives which have been in the pipeline for many years have now been fast-tracked. Two of the most significant are the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and the Chabahar port.

### Evolution of relations

In current times, Central Asian

Republics constitute the extended neighbourhood of India. Peace and security in Central Asia is critical to peace and stability in India. This is intimately connected with peace and security in Afghanistan. Three Central Asian Republics — Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan — share borders with Afghanistan. India and Central Asia need to collaborate with other regional powers like Russia, Iran, China and Pakistan as also with the US and the EU to promote security and stability in Afghanistan. The advent of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in August 2021 after the sud-

den and unceremonious withdrawal of the US and NATO troops has introduced further complications in promoting connectivity between India and Central Asia. In addition to the above, the region is also richly endowed with natural and mineral resources like oil, gas (Turkmenistan contains the world's fourth largest reserves of natural gas), uranium (Kazakhstan is the world's largest producer of uranium ore and has the world's second largest reserve of this mineral), lead, iron ore, coal, rare earths, water, etc. The region can contribute to India's energy security through fossil fuels and hydro-power.

# This year forest fire has created mass destruction in Uttarakhand

This year forest fire has created mass destruction in Uttarakhand. Visitors touring the hill state are shocked by the sight of smoke coming out from the forest. The smoke has affected the air quality and visibility. The local people are looking at the sky and praying to the rain god to come for their rescue in controlling and defusing the forest fire. Forest fire remains a major problem for the Uttarakhand forest department, especially during summer. This year over one thousand incidents of forest fire have been reported from different parts of the hill state. The raging fire has affected 1,318 hectares of land (data till 8 May). The forest department assesses a loss of over Rs 29 Lakh due to forest fire. Heavy deployment of forest staff, local people and others has been made to help douse the flames. Even the Indian Air Force choppers are in operation. On the grave situation, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Dhami said, "Our government is working on every front to control forest fires. Along with taking the help of the army, forest officers have also been instructed to reach ground zero and control the forest fire. Our government is also ensuring strict action against the miscreants who are causing damage to forests by setting them on fire." The forest fire



is an annual phenomenon in Uttarakhand. Some years the loss is high and sometimes low. This year a record number of incidents have taken place and this again demands active involvement of the local community in controlling the forest fire. **Why do forest fires take place?** More than 99 per cent of the forest fires are man-made. Less than one per cent of fires take place due to natural reasons or accidentally. Like a power grid falling due to heavy storms and other odd instances. This year the forest fire is raging in Uttarakhand due to low rainfall received during winter. The grass is dry and due to low moisture the fire has become rampant in different areas. Many allege

that the forest department staff set fire to hide their failed plantation projects.

### Why do villagers set fire?

Villagers set fire for many reasons. To get new grass in monsoon the dry bushes are burned. Local people also clear bushes from the village area to remove hiding places of leopards and other wild animals. Miscreants also set up fires for fun. Very recently three youths from another state were arrested at Gairsain (Chamsoli) for promoting forest fire by shooting reel for social media. Many times the villagers set fire as a precautionary measure. They set fire near their village when they see the forest fire approaching their habitat area. This is done to avoid forest fires causing harm in

the village and clearing the dry grass in advance.

### Role of local community

The role of the local community is big as even after receiving information about any fire the forest department staff will take some time to reach the affected area. On the other hand, local villagers can instantly reach the affected area and help in early intervention. Renowned environmentalist Chandi Prasad Bhatt says, "Forest department alone can't control forest fire. They need active support and cooperation from the villagers. Groups should be formed in the village and they should be provided all support. Awareness should be created at grassroots level about fighting forest fires."

### High casualty this season

Four persons have lost their lives and four others have sustained high burns this forest fire season (till 8 May) in Uttarakhand. The state forest department claims that no loss of animal life was reported from any part of the state. Plantation in over 16 hectares of land was affected and 427 trees were destroyed in the forest fire.

Pine needles are considered to play a major role in spreading fire. Social activist Vijay Jardhari says, "Villagers should be involved and they should be provided equipment and other support. Only villagers can tackle forest fires as they understand their forest well. Efforts should be made to utilise the pine needles for power generation and making other products." It is generally observed that the forest fire gets controlled by occasional rains in Uttarakhand. Bageshwar and Pithoragarh districts received much awaited showers on Wednesday.

Most of the forest fires in these two districts were doused. The Indian Meteorological Department has predicted rainfall in many districts in Uttarakhand in the coming days.

People are praying for the weather forecast to turn true and extinguish the forest fire to turn their life normal.

## With Taiwanese President set to assume office, China's woes will only exacerbate

Given that there is no let-up in either Taiwan's defence preparedness posture or the US' backing of the island, China is likely to dig into its coercive toolkit to respond to Lai's swearing in. Image: REUTERS  
With newly elected Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te set to assume office on May 20, there is intense speculation surrounding China's potential response to the event. In anticipation of an aggressive response, Tsai Ming-yen, Director-General of Taiwan's National Security Bureau, announced on May 1 that island authorities will be implementing measures to strengthen national critical infrastructure. Aiding the island's overall defence posture, on April 24, United States President Joe Biden has also

signed a bill to mobilise \$8 billion in defence aid to the Indo-Pacific in general and Taiwan in particular. With neither the US nor China backing down on their respective positions on the Taiwan issue, these developments add fire to the already deteriorating cross-strait dynamics.

### US' proactive role worries China

During the recently concluded meeting between US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing, Xi conveyed that the very first "red line" the US should not cross in its relations with China is the Taiwan issue. However, the US' decision to continue to provide political and military support to Taiwan is motivated by two key factors: shared values

and national security interests. While from a values-based perspective, the US sees its role in the Taiwan Strait as a defender of democracy and a provider of net security, from a national security interests perspective, it sees immense value in deterring China, preventing undue escalation, and securing supply chains in critical sectors such as semiconductor chips, wherein Taiwan plays a vital role. Hence, in the run up to Lai's assumption of the presidential office, the US has embarked on a mission to demonstrate commitment to Taiwan. In addition to quickly signing the above-mentioned Indo-Pacific Security Supplemental Bill into law, over the past week, the Biden administration has also engaged with counter-

## Myanmar, there seems to be no signs of the conflict

Three years after the military coup in Myanmar, there seems to be no signs of the conflict abating between the junta and the various Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs) across the country. Especially after the successful launch of Operation 1027 against the military junta by the Three Brotherhood alliance members comprising the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) from the Kokang region of the Shan state, the Ta'ang National Liberation Army also from the Shan state, and the Arakan Army (AA) based in the Rakhine state. After the success of Operation 1027, the rebellion quickly spread across Myanmar and by November 7, 2023, with the launch of Operation 1107 in support of Operation 1027, many other insurgent groups across the country joined hands. This was perhaps one of the rare occasions in the troubled history of Myanmar where EAOs from a variety of ethnic groups had come together in a meticulously coordinated attack against the junta. Subsequently, many Myanmar observers debated the pushback by the rebel groups as a victory for democracy, with some reports stating only 30-40 per cent of Myanmar was under

the control of the junta. However, whether that means it is a victory in the real sense for the disparate groups that are fighting the junta is arguable. The junta has been relentless in its own offensive against EAOs. Not only does the junta have larger access to weapons but also has decades of experience in dealing with EAOs. It was evident in the recapture of Myawaddy, a border town and entry point for Thailand. A town destined to be a full international crossing as part of the Asian Highway Route Network AH1, that will extend to Tokyo, Japan. It also is a route for border trade of over \$1 billion. There were various reports that claimed that the strategic town of Myawaddy was actually never captured by the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA). Though KNLA didn't claim it in explicit terms, through videos and strategic perception building, it gave the impression that it had captured the whole town. On the contrary, the truth might be that the town is actually under the control of the Border Guard Force (BGF), a Karen-dominated pro-junta militia group. And if not entirely pro-junta anymore, it is still playing a neutral role as the junta pays the salaries of its soldiers. Earlier this week the BGF

warned, saying: "All foreigners who are doing online business around the Kayin state, Myawaddy township, must leave between May 1 (1-5-2024) and October 31 (31-10-2024). Foreigners who illegally cross the border must leave the country by the way they came. If found after October 31 (31-10-2024), effective action will be taken." This warning was aimed at online scammers and gambling operations that have found place in Shwe Kokko Myaing, the "new city" that is a short distance from Myawaddy funded by Chinese money and BGF partnership. The notice was posted in Burmese, Chinese and English. The statement in itself is reminiscent of the fate of the "four families" of Laukkaing in the Shan state who were involved in cyber-crime, cyber slavery and gambling operations that adversely impacted China. With the launch of Operation 1027, Tatmadaw looked towards the Chinese for support and in return withdrew support from the "four families".

Operation 1027 was launched by the Three Brotherhood alliance that included the China-backed MNDAA. Today, trade between Myanmar through the northern Shan state has resumed.



## Bungle in Banswara: Why Congress is opposing its own man

**BANSWARA:** Known as Rajasthan's tribal heartland, Banswara likely stands out as the only constituency nationwide where Congress is campaigning against its party nominee, and in favour of a fledgling Bharat Adivasi Party (BAP). Internal conflicts within the grand old party, lack of coordination between its state and central units, and high command's hesitance compelled it to tie up with the five-month old BAP on the latter's terms. Congress' own candidate, Arvind Damor, remains in the fray as well. A similar scenario is unfolding in the bypolls to the Bagidora seat, an assembly constituency under Banswara LS segment. Here, Congress workers are engaged in door-to-door campaigning for BAP candidate Jaikrishn Patel, opposing their own nominee

Kapur Singh. Both seats go to polls on April 26. After defeat in the 2023 assembly elections, Congress initiated talks to form an alliance with BAP, a party that secured three seats in the tribal region. The talks hit a roadblock as BAP insisted on three LS seats — Udaipur, Banswara and Chittorgarh — for its candidates in exchange for backing Congress candidates in the remaining 22 parliamentary seats. Former CM Ashok Gehlot, state president Govind Singh Dotasra, Sachin Pilot and local office-bearers, sources said, were wary of a tie up with BAP, with a section labelling the tribal party as "ambitious". Congress decided to bet on four-term MLA and former cabinet minister Mahendrajeet Singh Malviya as its LS nominee from Banswara. and in the first week of Feb, the

party's core committee in Banswara and Dungarpur endorsed his candidacy. However, on Feb 19, Malviya defected to BJP, allegedly bitter over not being made leader of the opposition in the assembly. "Upon his crossing over to BJP, it became evident that Malviya would be picked as the saffron party's candidate in Banswara. Congress not only bid farewell to a prominent figure, but also a chunk of voters. This led to a renewed debate on the need to discuss an alliance with BAP," a party source said. By Feb, BAP had made it clear that its founding member and two-term MLA, Rajkumar Roat, would contest the parliamentary election from Banswara. "Poor coordination between state office-bearers and central decision makers delayed alliance talks," Roat.

## Supreme Court refuses to hear plea on voter turnout data in midst of polls

**NEW DELHI:** Supreme Court on Friday refused to entertain an NGO's plea for a direction to Election Commission to declare authentic voter turnout figures at the end of each phase of polling and said it was not inclined to issue any interim order amid electioneering. Hearing an application filed by NGO 'Association for Democratic Reforms' (ADR) in its PIL pending since 2019 and seeking identical mandamus to EC, a vacation bench of Justices Dipankar Datta and Satish Chandra Sharma said, "We are prima facie not inclined to grant interim relief as prayed for in the application as the prayer is similar to that in the 2019 petition. Grant of interim relief would amount to grant of final relief." The Justice Datta-led bench said the voter turnout app was a voluntary step taken by EC to inform the public about approximate voting percentage. "EC is not statutorily required to upload preliminary data. Sometimes a good initiative is like 'aa bail mujhe maar' (counter-productive)," it said,

agreeing with EC's contention that it was not mandated to put out voter turnout figures after polling for each phase and that it decided to provide the figures on its voter turnout app on its own. Appearing for EC, senior advocate Maninder Singh took the wind out of the application by claiming that it was based on "suspicions, apprehensions and falsehood" and urged the bench not to entertain such a plea as the "so-called public interest petition" was causing grave harm to the electoral process. "Low voter turnout could possibly be due to the continuous attempts by certain elements to create an atmosphere of suspicion around the electoral process," he said. Singh said the court, in its April 26 judgment, had scrutinised every ADR allegation and dismissed it while questioning its bona fide. "But the PIL factory, within hours of the pronouncement of the judgment, filed this application raising another set of apprehensions based on suspicions. No fact is pleaded to sub-

stantiate the allegations," Singh said, adding that as per Article 329(b) of the Constitution, no court shall call into question a parliamentary election except on filing of an election petition after the conclusion of the poll process. Terming false ADR's assertion that there had been a variation of 5-6% in the final voter turnout data from the preliminary statistics released by EC, Singh said the figure registered on the voter turnout app, which was based on preliminary assessment, varied from the final turnout data only by 1-2%. A vacation bench of Justices Dipankar Datta and Satish Chandra Sharma SC repeatedly asked why ADR did not take steps for early hearing of its 2019 petition in the last five years and how it could seek interim relief which was similar to the relief sought in its 2019 petition. Senior advocate Dushyant Dave, for ADR, admitted that the NGO was damned by SC but reminded the court that ADR had over the years played an important role in assist-

## CAPSULES

### ED arrests one more in TDS refund fraud case

**MUMBAI:** The Enforcement Directorate (ED) arrested another accused, Purshottam Chavan, in a money laundering case connected to a Rs 263 crore Income Tax Refund fraud on Monday, following the arrest of his accomplice Rajesh Batreja last week. This case involves the former Income Tax (I-T) inspector, Tanaji Adhikari, who gained the confidence of his seniors while working in the Income Tax department and cleared fraudulent TDS refund claims into the account of his accomplices. The ED said Chavan was involved in possessing part of the Proceeds of Crime (POC) and he was in regular contact with Batreja for the diversion of cheated money through hawala transactions. Chavan and Batreja had shared incriminating messages, which are part of the ED's findings. The ED mentioned that Chavan attempted to hamper the investigation by destroying evidence and during the search of his premises, they found many property documents and foreign currency. Earlier, the ED had arrested former income tax inspector Tanaji Adhikari, and businessmen Bhushan Patil and Rajesh Shetty in the case, who are currently in jail custody. The ED alleged that Batreja assisted Tanaji Adhikari in diverting POC of Rs. 55.50 Crore into three shell companies to convert the same into cash for sending it outside India via the hawala channel. Afterward, he brings part of the money to India as an investment in two companies. Until now, the ED has seized or attached properties worth Rs 168 crore in the case and last year had already filed a chargesheet against Tanaji Adhikari and 10 others in the case. Adhikari, who was the senior I-T tax assistant at the Income Tax office handling the refund of tax deducted at source.

## Healthcare, illegal betting ads most violative, says ASCI

**NEW DELHI:** Healthcare emerged as the most violative sector in India with respect to advertising rules in 2023-24, with the majority of overall violations on account of misleading claims, an annual analysis of Advertising Standards Council of India says. Among the violators, healthcare ads contribute 19% of cases, followed by illegal offshore betting (17%), personal care (13%), conventional education (12%), food and beverage (10%), and realty (7%).

Baby care emerged as a new contender in the top violators category, with influencer promotions contributing to 81% of baby care cases. In 2023-24, the analysis studied 10,093 complaints and 8299 advertising campaigns. Nearly half of the advertisements picked up by ASCI were not contested by the advertisers, it adds. The majority of violations were on account of misleading claims at 81%, followed by ads that promoted harmful situations or products at 34% (the same ad can be processed for multi-

ple objections). Manisha Kapoor, CEO & Secretary General of ASCI, said, "2023-24 has been a truly challenging year, and ASCI stepped up to this by focusing our efforts on digital. About 3200 advertisements were shared with various regulators, such as MIB, Ayush, and MahaRera, for direct violations of the law. We see this as a continuing area of focus. With the highest number of violative ads seen online, advertisers and platforms must work more closely with regulators and self-regula-

tors to keep consumers protected". Further, digital media remained the primary source of violations, accounting for 85% of ads processed, and had a lower compliance rate of 75%, compared to 97% for print and TV. This raises serious questions about the online safety of consumers, a point highlighted last year as well, the report notes. In 2023-24, the number of complaints regarding misleading and violative ads was 12.75% higher over 2022-23. Saugata Gupta, ASCI chairman said, "As

digital emerges as a dominant media in which advertisements thrive, ASCI has geared up to the challenges through constant investment in technology'. Significantly, celebrities continued to appear in ads that were in violation of the ASCI code. ASCI processed complaints against 101 ads featuring celebrities, 91% of which required modification, the analysis said. About 104 celebrities appearing in these 101 ads were found to be in violation of the celebrity guidelines.

## 'What is your compulsion?': Rahul Gandhi accuses PM Modi of 'protecting' Prajwal

**NEW DELHI:** Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Thursday slammed Prime Minister Narendra Modi and accused him of protecting Prajwal Revanna's facing charges of multiple instances of sexual abuse of women. Taking to X, former Congress president wrote, "Why are you protecting a mass rapist, Prime Minister? What is your compulsion?" Gandhi's remarks comes hours after Karnataka chief minister Siddaramaiah



urgently requested the cancellation of the diplomatic passport belonging to JD(S) MP Prajwal Revanna, along with concerted efforts to ensure his return to India. Earlier in the day, former Prime Minister and JDS patriarch HD Deve Gowda issued a warning to his grandson Prajwal Revanna to

return to India and instructed him to submit himself to the legal process. The FIR against Prajwal Revanna includes grave charges such as rape, sexual assault, disrobing women, and forcibly video-graphing sexual acts to intimidate the victims. Siddaramaiah emphasizes the urgency of the situation, stressing the need for decisive action by the central government to ensure the accused's cooperation with legal proceedings.

## 'International Khan Market gang': Jaishankar on Western media's portrayal of India

**NEW DELHI:** External affairs minister S Jaishankar slammed the Western media and called the anti-India ecosystem the 'international Khan Market gang'. On the portrayal of India by the Western media, Jaishankar said we must ask "why they are doing it". He said that just like there's a 'Khan Market gang' in India, there also exists a global extension of it, 'international Khan Market gang'. "In the country today, there is a certain thought process, or entitlement process for which the metaphor of 'Khan Market gang' is a very good description. TOP PICKS FOR YOU article show 110125113 Countries which have to go to court to decide result of polls are giving us lectures

about how to conduct elections: EAM Jaishankar 'My lowest turnout is higher than your highest,' EAM Jaishankar slams Western media I want to tell you there is an international Khan Market gang as well," Jaishankar said in an interview to news agency ANI. "These are people who are sort of linked, you know, to the entitled people out here. They are socially comfortable with them. They feel like they advance similar viewpoints. They are essentially a kind of an elitist left-lib thought process. So there's a symbiotic relationship between the two," he said. Talking about how they openly endorse leaders and parties, he said, "When the sales are down in the domestic Khan Market,

the International Khan Market gang feels like, I need to pep up these guys and give them support and you can actually see which stories they play up, how do they slant things and in previous elections perhaps even in this one they've actually openly endorsed parties and will openly endorse leaders and openly said that this party or this leader is bad for India." Jaishankar also claimed that attempt is being made to influence the choices of voters. "I believe it is election influence certainly... And it's not just them, you know, there's a... See, it's a... press, university, think tank, and in some cases maybe some degree of officialdom at some kind of medium level because the guys up there are very smart.

## ICICI Prudential Life Insurance launches its First ULIP with Fund Value-based distributor payouts – ICICI Pru Platinum

**KARNAL/HISAR,** May 24, 2024: ICICI Prudential Life Insurance launched ICICI Pru Platinum, the Company's first unit-linked product which aligns distributor payouts to their customers' fund value – the distributor commissions are linked to their customers' Assets under Management. This unique product incentivises distributors to encourage their customers to stay invested for the entire policy tenure. Notably, it offers customers a cost and tax-efficient route to build wealth over the long-term. ICICI Pru Platinum provides unlimited free switches between asset classes, without any cost or tax implications. Customers can choose from an array of 21 funds under this

product, comprising 13 equity and four each in the debt and balanced categories, besides offering an option of four portfolio strategies. Announcing the launch, Mr. Amit Palta, Chief Distribution Officer, ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, said, "ICICI Pru Platinum, our Company's first unit-linked product designed to make distributor payouts aligned to their customers' fund value, promoting the long-term interests of both. We endeavour to continuously innovate and introduce products and processes which are simple. This is in line with our philosophy of ensuring right product to the right customer at the right price and through the right channel. We have introduced pioneering prod-

ucts on the annuity and pension savings platform. These include an annuity product which offers a 100% refund of all premiums paid from the date of purchase. We also offer a traditional product which allows customers to make partial withdrawals to meet liquidity requirements. Notably, we are the only life insurer in the country to payout commissions to distributors on the same day. Besides, achieving the milestone of issuing ~45% of our savings policies on the same day in FY2024." He further added "Life insurance is all about claims and as a customer friendly brand we aim to settle all claims speedily. This is reflected in our industry leading claim settlement.

## Wrong section, delay in blood sample: The lapses in Pune Porsche crash

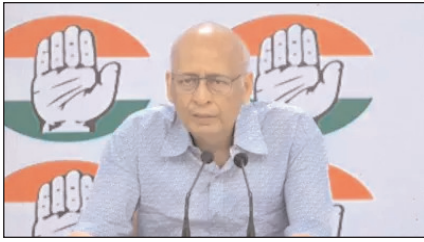
**NEW DELHI:** As the investigation into the Pune Porsche car crash intensifies, several lapses in the police investigation have come to light. This includes allegations of the teen accused of driving the luxury car under the influence of alcohol getting preferential treatment, being served pizza at the police station, and more. Commissioner of police Amitesh Kumar on Friday said the authorities are determined to ensure a thorough investigation and a 'watertight' case against the accused. **Who is Vishal Agarwal?** All you need to know about father of teen involved in Pune Porsche crash case 'Sent driver with son': Father of Pune crash accused on why he should get bail Meanwhile, two officials from the Yerawada police station have been suspended for neglecting their duties. The case has

also now been transferred to the crime branch. So what were the lapses in the initial investigation of Pune police? 1. Late reporting: Two officials from the Yerawada police station were suspended on Friday for neglecting their duties related as they failed to inform the wireless control room about the accident on May 19. Inspector Rahul Jagdale and assistant police inspector Vishwanath Todkari were suspended for "late reporting" and "dereliction of duty". 2. Delay in collection of blood sample: Commissioner of police Amitesh Kumar on Friday admitted that there was a delay in blood sample collection of the teen accused in this case. He confirmed that though the juvenile was sent to Sassoon General Hospital around 9am on May 19, his blood samples were collected at 11pm.



## Congress says EC withholding voter data; poll panel says application 'misleading'

**NEW DELHI:** The Congress criticised the Election Commission (EC) on Thursday for withholding voter data from the public and accused the poll panel of failing to fulfill its constitutional obligations as well as exhibiting a biased inclination. Congress spokesperson Abhishek Singhvi accused the EC of attempting to act as the "election department" of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) by not addressing complaints of model code violations by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and home minister Amit Shah. Instead, the EC has been issuing generalized directions to political parties, which Singhvi referred to as "false equivalences." Singhvi's remarks followed the poll panel's submission of an affidavit to the Supreme Court, in which the commission stated that the "indiscriminate disclosure" of polling station-wise voter-turnout data and its publication on the EC website would lead to chaos in the ongoing Lok Sabha election machinery. Singhvi argued that the EC's actions regarding complaints against top BJP leaders and its refusal to disclose voter data are not befitting of a high-level constitutional institution. "This is against the constitutional responsibilities of the institution. This is the Election Commission, not the election agent of any party. When a constitutional institution does not follow the



Constitution and shows inclination towards power, then it should be understood that this is the end of democracy," Singhvi said. "We are not asking the EC about EVMs (electronic voting machines) but about disclosure of data. Through this stand in its ridiculous affidavit, the EC is falling into the BJP's trap to orchestrate decimation and destruction of electoral democracy," he added. Singhvi alleged that the reply filed by the EC in the apex court is just an 'escape mechanism'. "This reply of the Election Commission is just an escape mechanism. Whereas anyone can get this data by paying money to the Election Commission," Singhvi alleged. "Will cause chaos; application is misleading, false and based on mere suspicion." Earlier, EC had filed a counter affidavit in the Supreme Court, opposing the demand made by an NGO to upload polling station-wise voter turnout data on its website within 48 hours of the conclusion of polling for each phase of the Lok Sabha elections. The NGO, 'Association.

## 'Not giving clean chit to anyone ... CM Kejriwal was at home': Swati Maliwal

**NEW DELHI:** Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Rajya Sabha MP Swati Maliwal on Thursday recounted her ordeal of May 13, stating that she was assaulted by Bibhav Kumar, personal aide of Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal. In an exclusive interview with ANI, Maliwal described the incident in detail.

"On May 13 at around 9 am in the morning, I went to meet Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal at his residence. The staff asked me to sit in the drawing room and told her that Arvind Kejriwal ji was at home and he was coming here to meet me. After that the PA of Arvind Kejriwal ji Bibhav Kumar came in a state of aggression and I asked 'Kya Hua Kejriwalji aa rahe hai. Kya hogya?' I said this much, after which he slapped me. He (Bibhav Kumar) slapped me 7 to 8 times. When I tried to push him, he held my legs and mujhe ghaset diya. Ensuring that my head bumped into the center table. I fell to the floor and he (Bibhav) started beating me with his legs. I was



screaming and begging for help but no one came there," Maliwal said. Maliwal stated that she is unsure whether the assault was carried out on someone's instructions or if Bibhav acted on his own accord, emphasizing that this is a matter of investigation. She expressed her cooperation with the Delhi Police and clarified that she is not giving anyone a clean chit, as the incident occurred while she was in the drawing room and Arvind Kejriwal was at home. "Everything is a matter of investigation. I am very cooperative with the Delhi Police. I am not giving anyone the clean chit. Because the fact is I was

in the drawing room and Arvind Kejriwal was at home and I was beaten up very badly. I was literally screaming very badly but no one came to help to out. I never thought what will happen to me and my career. What will they do with me? I just thought that 'Jo cheez maine saari mahilao ko bola hai ki hamesha sach ke saath khade raho, aap sachi sachi complain karo and jo bhi aapke sath kuch galat Hua hai toh uske liye jarur ludo, toh aaj mai kaise nhi ladh sakti,' she said with tears in her eyes. Maliwal has accused Bibhav of assaulting her at the CM's residence.

## CAPSULES

### 32-year old man killed after being hit by minor's motorcycle in Mumbai

**NEW DELHI:** A 32-year-old man was killed on Thursday after a 15-year-old boy allegedly hit him with a motorcycle in Mumbai. Irfan Nawab Ali Shaikh, the victim sustained severe injuries from the crash and was immediately rushed to JJ Hospital for medical attention. However, he succumbed to his injuries. In response to the incident, Mumbai Police have taken the minor into custody and sent him to a juvenile home. Additionally, the minor's father has been detained by the authorities. A case has been registered under section 304(2) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and sections 3 and 4 of the Motor Vehicle Act. This comes following a similar incident in Pune where a Porsche crash involving a minor that killed two people. The 17-year-old driver, initially granted bail within 15 hours by the Juvenile Justice Board (JJB), faced lenient bail conditions that sparked widespread public anger. The bail terms, which included writing a reflective essay and working with traffic police, were perceived as too lenient given the gravity of the charges. In response to the backlash, the Juvenile Justice Board in Pune revoked the minor's bail and ordered him to be held in an observation home. Furthermore, the board is now contemplating whether to try the teenager as an adult, which could result in a more severe sentence if he is convicted. The father of the minor involved in the luxury vehicle accident has been sent to police custody until May 24.

## Chhattisgarh has high number of stateless individuals

**RAIPUR:** Chhattisgarh is the second state with the maximum estimated number of 62,890 stateless, refugee persons. In India, there are a total of 2,89,394 as per the last public statistics released in the year 2014. In the state capital Raipur, authorities have received a total of 52 applications for citizenship from January one to April 30 this year of which 23 have been forwarded to the district magistrate's office while 29 applications are under process in the police stations for fur-

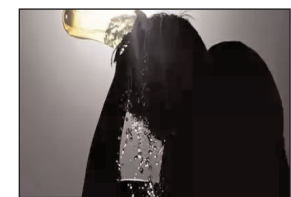


ther verification, Rapur senior superintendent of police Santosh Singh said. Between the formation of the state and December 31, 2023, 841 citizens were granted citizenship in the state capital district. This year, from the first of Jan to April 30, a total of 56 stateless people have been granted citizenship. Most of the citizenship applications are from Pakistanis while a

single applicant is from Nepal. In Bilaspur, within the last 10 years only a single applicant has been granted the naturalization certificate, said an official from administration. Raj Kumar Khetwani is a 39-year-old individual who along with a family consisting of wife, two girls children and an elderly mother for the first time applied for Indian citizenship in the year 2021. Khetwani told, it was the year 2012 when on a tourist visa my family had the privilege to visit India to my relative's place and while on the grounds of ill-treatment in the then home country Pakistan, the family finally decided to stay back in India. "When we came here, my children were 10 and 12 years old and somehow were admitted to a school. Since then, I have been striving to obtain citizenship", he said. All this while, I've been surviving on dependency. It's been 10 years but still, I live in a rented house and survive on a rented shop, which is now my source.

## Urbanization led to overall 60% enhancement in warming in Indian cities: IIT study

**BHUBANESWAR:** Urbanization alone has led to an overall 60 percent enhancement in warming in Indian cities, with eastern tier-II cities leading the way. It was revealed through a study conducted by the researchers from IIT Bhubaneswar. This research provides a science based quantitative ranking of urbanization for Indian cities. The study titled 'Urbanization and regional climate change-linked warming of Indian Cities' published in the journal



'Nature Cities' provides insight by carefully separating regional climate change and urbanization in multiple cities. Sethi Vinoj\_NatCities2 024 (1) (1) (1) The researchers investigated the contributions of local-scale urbanization and regional climate change to the warming in 141 major Indian cities over the

past two decades. They took 18 years of high-resolution land surface temperature data from NASA's Aqua satellite for the period between 2003 and 2020. They also compared urban and rural warming trends. The study found that Tier II cities in eastern India showed stronger urbanization-driven warming compared to larger metro cities like New Delhi and Mumbai. "This disparity underscores the importance of targeted urban planning.

## Non-recovery of cash not prima facie proof no graft took place: HC

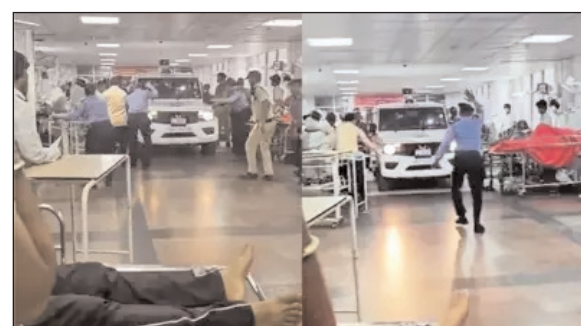
**NEW DELHI:** Non-recovery of ill-gotten money can't be prima facie proof that no corruption has taken place because a person now uses new technologies to commit offences without leaving behind any trace, Delhi high court has observed, while denying bail to AAP's Manish Sisodia in the city excise policy case. In its order pronounced Tuesday and uploaded Wednesday, HC said "recovery of cash from a person may not necessarily be a mandatory requirement in a money laundering case where allegations are part of a conspiracy comprising multiple accused." It added the liquor policy case involves commission of "serious offence" of corruption in public

office and laundering, which "strikes at the heart of economic and social systems, undermining the rule of law and eroding public trust in institutions." HC rejects plea of no money being recovered from Sisodia. Delhi High Court rejected the argument that no money was recovered from the former deputy chief minister while pointing out to statements of some hawala dealers and other witnesses recorded in course of the probe. "This court is of the view that the prosecution has made out a prima facie case of commission of money laundering under Section 3 of Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) against Manish Sisodia at this stage," high court observed. HC said the form "of cor-

ruption which has the tendency of stealing legitimate resources of the poor ordinary people and giving it to the rich can be one of the worst." It noted that the new excise policy has "eradicated" the common and small-time businesses and gave the entire playing field in the liquor business to those who had "money, power and had created a cartel" on the basis of financial gains to those formulating a policy, which adds to the seriousness of the offence. "The courts of law may be considered as constant thorns in the way of free-flowing corruption and, even if that be so, and are termed as thorns, it scores the victory for the masses," Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma said.

## Uttarakhand cops drive into AIIMS building to nab accused

**DEHRADUN:** Days after a junior doctor on duty at AIIMS-Rishikesh was allegedly sexually harassed by a nursing officer, a video of a police team driving into the hospital premises to nab the accused, who was admitted in the psychiatric ward of the hospital, surfaced on social media on Thursday. In the widely circulated video, a police vehicle can be seen being driven into the ward (situated on the hospital's 4th floor) with patients' stretchers being hurriedly moved away to give passage to the vehicle. Soon after the video was circulated, cops swung into damage control and proffered an explanation for the action. SSP (Dehradun), Ajai Singh termed the action as "appropriate for the serious situation which had developed inside the hospital." Was emergency



measure, none affected: AIIMS Rishikesh chief. Sources said police action had been necessitated since it was feared that those protesting against the accused's presence in the hospital may cause him bodily harm. Referring to "protest by around 250-300 people, including several junior doctors", SSP said the accused "could have been lynched". About the video, the SSP said the clip was of Tuesday, and clarified that "it was not of the emergency ward" as claimed by many on social media. "It was in

the triage area on 4th floor, where patients usually wait before being admitted. Also, the police vehicle was guided through that passage by the hospital's security guards. In a joint inspection undertaken with the AIIMS director, it was concluded that the action was necessary to tackle the tense law and order situation on that day," he added. Director of AIIMS-Rishikesh, Dr Meenu Singh, said: "Police used their vehicle to get the accused out since junior doctors who were on protest were getting restless.

## Cyclone 'Remal' to impact West Bengal, adjoining Bangladesh, IMD

**NEW DELHI:** A low-pressure area over the southwest & adjoining west-central Bay of Bengal moved northeastwards and is likely to concentrate into a depression over central parts of the Bay of Bengal by the morning of May 24 and is expected to intensify further into a cyclonic storm over the east-central Bay of Bengal by May 25, according to India Meteorological Department. And subsequently, it would move nearly northwards and reach near Bangladesh and adjoining West Bengal coasts by 26th May evening as a severe cyclonic storm, it added. If the cyclone is formed, it will be named 'Remal', and it will be the first cyclone in the Bay of Bengal this pre-monsoon season. Heavy rainfall warning According to the IMD, a light to moderate rainfall at most places with heavy to very rain.

Bay of Bengal at 0830 hrs IST of today, the 23rd May, 2024. It is very likely to continue to move northeastwards and concentrate into a Depression over central parts of Bay of Bengal by morning of 24th May, 2024." "Thereafter, it is very likely to continue to move northeastwards, intensify further into a cyclonic storm over east-central Bay of Bengal by 25th May morning. Subsequently, it would move nearly northwards and reach near Bangladesh and adjoining West Bengal coasts by 26th May evening as a severe cyclonic storm," it added. If the cyclone is formed, it will be named 'Remal', and it will be the first cyclone in the Bay of Bengal this pre-monsoon season. Heavy rainfall warning According to the IMD, a light to moderate rainfall at most places with heavy to very rain.



## KCR ordered phone taps to save Kavitha in excise case, says former DCP

HYDERABAD:

Telangana's former CM K Chandrasekhar Rao allegedly wanted to use the 2022 MLA poaching case to force BJP to arrive at a compromise and, in turn, bail out his daughter and MLC K Kavitha in the Delhi liquor scam case. This is mentioned in the confession report of Radha Kishan Rao, former DCP of Hyderabad police's task force who is accused in the illegal phone tapping case. The BRS chief and then CM, on getting wind of the alleged poaching bid, ordered a technical surveillance, which led to a failed attempt by police to arrest senior BJP functionary B L Santhosh, according to Rao's confessions. However, KCR's bid to trap BJP came unstuck as the matter reached Telangana



HC, which transferred the case to CBI. Referring to KCR as "peddayana" (elder), Rao said in his confession that the then CM was upset the plan did not work out. "Peddayana was angry for not completing the 'work' as per his expectation. I will not disclose further details as I owe a lot to Peddayana who had re-appointed me twice and posted me in the city task force after my retirement in 2020," he said. Rao disclosed that in Oct last year, then Special Intelligence Bureau

(SIB) chief T Prabhakar Rao told him that KCR was informed by then Tandur MLA Pilot Rohith Reddy that some persons claiming to be influential in BJP were in touch with him (Rohith Reddy) and were trying to convince him to join the saffron party after leaving BRS along with some other MLAs. At KCR's behest, SIB's (former) deputy SP D Praneeth Rao intercepted the phones of some private persons and the MLA, and submitted an audio clip.

## 'Unwell' CM Kejriwal seeks interim bail till June 9 for medical tests

NEW DELHI: With the deadline for him to return to Tihar Jail a week away, Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal on Monday moved Supreme Court seeking extension of time to surrender till June 9 on the ground that he needed to undergo a comprehensive medical examination to identify whether his "unusually high blood sugar level, rapid weight loss and bouts of dizziness, coupled with palpitation", were life-threatening. Arrested by Enforcement Directorate on March 21 in a money laundering case relating

to the alleged excise policy scam and released on interim bail by the apex court on May 10 for campaigning, the 54-year-old Kejriwal said a senior physician from Max Hospital clinically examined him on May 25 and suggested whole body PET-CT to rule out malignancies and Holter monitor test, both of which would take 5-7 days. Kejriwal said since elections in Punjab were scheduled for June 1, he would be busy campaigning till May 30, and would not be able to undergo these tests in a day. Assuring that he had and would scrupu-

lously abide by the interim bail conditions, Kejriwal requested SC to extend his interim bail period by a week till June 9 to enable him to undergo the tests. The CM said he suffered from "an aggressive form of diabetes mellitus, which is very volatile and undergoes a wide range of swings in blood glucose, including episodes of high sugar, that is hyperglycemia, and low sugar, that is hypoglycemia". He claimed that during his incarceration from March 21 till his release on May 10, the "negligent and callous.

## 'Taware's removal was recommended in the past too'

Maharashtra government's DMER set up a committee to probe misconduct by two doctors at Sassoon General Hospital, Ajay Taware and Shrihari Halnor, arrested for manipulating blood sample reports of a teenager in a Porsche car crash.

'Taware's removal was recommended in the past too' Two doctors of the Sassoon General Hospital being taken into police custody after their arrest for alleged manipulation of blood samples and destruction of evidence in the case of a car accident involv-

ing a 17-year-old boy, in Pune. Maharashtra government's Directorate of Medical Education and Research (DMER) on Monday set up a three-member committee to probe the 'misconduct' by two doctors of Sassoon General Hospital.

## CAPSULES

### Amit Shah's June 4 prediction for Congress after 'NDA victory'

NEW DELHI: Home minister Amit Shah on Monday predicted what will happen on the day of Lok Sabha election results on June 4, after the 'NDA victory'. Shah, speaking at an election rally in Uttar Pradesh's Kushinagar asserted that "Victory of Modiji, BJP and NDA is certain on June 4". He also predicted what the Congress leaders will do after the results are announced claiming the party will blame the EVMs for the loss. "On 4 June, the victory of Modiji, BJP and NDA is certain. You will see that on the afternoon of 4th June, Rahul baba's people will hold a press conference and say that they have lost because of EVMs," home minister said. Shah also claimed that the blame for the loss will be put on Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge. "The blame for the defeat will also fall on Kharge sahib," the BJP leader said. Shah added that Kharge will lose his job after the Lok Sabha results. Taking a dig at Congress star campaigners Rahul and Priyanka Gandhi, Shah said both of them will not be blamed for the defeat. The home minister also claimed that the NDA has already crossed 310 seats in first five phases of polling. "I have the details of the first five phases. In five phases of the Lok Sabha polls, PM Modi has crossed 310 seats. Rahul will not cross 40 and Akhilesh Yadav will not get even 4 seats on June 4," he said at the election rally in Uttar Pradesh. "Rahul will not cross 40, Akhilesh will not get even 4 seats on June 4," Shah said. He also said that opposition parties will snatch reservation of Dalits, backwards and tribals and give it to Muslims but the BJP will not let it happen.

## 'After June 4, if ED asks PM about corruption, he will say ...': Rahul's dig at PM

NEW DELHI: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday took a jibe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "sent by God" remark and said in jest that if the Enforcement Directorate questions PM Modi about corruption after the elections, he might attribute his actions to divine intervention. The context of Gandhi's remark was in reference to PM Modi's interview on the banks of the Ganga, where he stated that he felt he was not "born biologically" but rather "sent by God." While addressing a rally in Bihar, Rahul Gandhi confidently asserted that Narendra Modi would not be able to



secure another term as prime minister, citing a strong wave of support for the INDIA bloc throughout the country. "You know why PM Modi has brought this story of Parmatma? Because, after the election when this ED

will ask Narendra Modi about Adani, he will say, I don't know, it was asked to me by Parmatma ... Modi ji, stop giving long speeches and dividing the country. First, tell this to the people of Bihar, of the country, how

many jobs you have given to the youth of the country?" he said. He challenged the Prime Minister to focus on addressing the nation's issues, such as unemployment, rather than delivering lengthy speeches and sowing division. Gandhi also highlighted the INDIA bloc's plans to support women financially, promising a monthly deposit of Rs 8,500 into their accounts starting from July, if the alliance forms the government at the Centre. "When the INDIA bloc will form the government, the Agnipath scheme will be withdrawn," Gandhi said.

## Medvedev warns of World War if US strikes Russian targets in Ukraine

NEW DELHI: Former Russian President Dmitry Medvedev has issued a stark warning that any US attack on Russian targets in Ukraine would inevitably trigger a global conflict. Medvedev, who currently serves as Deputy Chair of Russia's Security Council, made this statement following comments by Polish Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski. Sikorski claimed that Washington would strike Russian targets if Moscow resorted to using nuclear weapons



in Ukraine. In a post on X (formerly Twitter), Medvedev criticized Sikorski, saying, "Apparently, [he] has decided to scare his masters." Medvedev suggested that Washington, unlike Warsaw, has been more cautious and has not

made such threats publicly. He added, "Americans hitting our targets means starting a world war, and a Foreign Minister, even of a country like Poland, should understand that." Medvedev also referenced Polish President Andrzej Duda's recent remarks about Poland's willingness to host US nuclear weapons if offered the opportunity under Nato's sharing mechanism. He warned that in the event of a nuclear confrontation, "Warsaw won't be left out."

## Did Ajit call Pune police commissioner after Porsche accident?

NEW DELHI: Maharashtra deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar on Monday confirmed that he had called the Pune police commissioner after the Porsche accident. Speaking to reporters in Mumbai, the deputy CM said, "As a people's representative, we receive calls regarding such accidents. I police commissioner and told him that the accused boy was from a wealthy family and there was a chance police might be pressured. I told him not to succumb to any political pressure." Earlier, Anjali Damania, a social activist, had claimed that he had called the Pune police commissioner after the Porsche accident. Blaming the parents of the teen accused in the crash, Pawar said the parents ignored his behaviour which resulted in the death of two young profes-



sionals. "The minor's conduct in the Pune accident is highly irresponsible. It happened because the teenager's parents ignored his behaviour. The son is in an observation home and his father and grandfather have been arrested," he said. Asked about his party MLA Sunil Tingare, who had visited Pune's Yerawada police station hours after the accident in the Kalyani Nagar area, Pawar said, "Tingare himself has clarified his stand. He later met me in Pune and presented his version. I have asked top police officials to take strict

action against cops or doctors who tried to dilute the probe." Meanwhile, two doctors from Sassoon general hospital, arrested for destruction of evidence against the minor were sent to police custody till May 30. Another arrested employee of the hospital was also sent to 3-day police custody. The arrested individuals include the head of the hospital's forensic department. The accident, which occurred in the early morning of May 19, resulted in the deaths of two IT professionals when their motorcycle was struck by a speeding Porsche.

## For Kapadia, before her triumph at Cannes was trouble at FTII

FTII graduate Payal Kapadia won the Grand Prix at Cannes for her film 'All We Imagine as Light'. She faced backlash for protesting against Gajendra Chauhan's appointment at FTII. For Kapadia, before her triumph at Cannes was trouble at FTII. Kapadia had protested in 2015 against Gajendra Chauhan's appointment as FTII chairperson. Nine years are all it took for FTII graduate Payal Kapadia to go from "anti-national" to toast of the nation. The young filmmaker, whose 'All We Imagine as Light' clinched the Grand Prix at Cannes Saturday, was a student at the country's cradle of cinema and TV when she braved chants of "go to Pakistan" for participating in a 139-day protest in 2015 against the appointment of actor Gajendra Chauhan as the insti-

tute's chairperson. She, along with 34 other former students, continue to wage a legal battle over a case filed by the then institute's director, Prashant Pathrabe, alleging their involvement in gheraoing him and vandalising his office that year. But a day after conquering Cannes, there was not a trace of rancour in Payal's words. All she reflected was the afterglow of an unprecedented triumph that she gracefully shared with fellow filmmakers from India. "It's a great feeling to receive this prize because there are so many good films from India alongside ours, and we feel a part of the larger family of filmmakers. We have three films from FTII directors this time. My FTII batchmate Maisam Ali's film 'In Retreat' is the first Indian entry to Cannes' ACID sidebar

(Association for the Diffusion of Independent Cinema)," she told TOI from the French Riviera. Payal's film on 2015 FTII stir had also won Cannes laurel. Also, an FTII student's (Chidananda Naik) film, titled 'Sunflowers Were the First to Know', won the main prize in La Cinef section. It's fantastic for us and FTII." Payal's batchmates and other alumni recall that the 2015 protest was "against the appointment of people who had no achievement in filmmaking" but were allegedly included in FTII's governing council for political reasons. Harishankar Nachimuthu, ex-president of FTII Students' Association and spearhead of the agitation, said Payal always had a vision about where she wanted to go and was willing to fight it out.

## 2 convicted of murder even in absence of victim's body

MUMBAI: Over six years after 28-year-old BBlunt salon executive Kirti Vyas went missing, a sessions court on Monday held two of her colleagues - Siddhesh Tamhankar and Kavita Sidhwani (name changed), in whose company she was last seen - guilty of her murder, making it a rare conviction in the absence of the victim's body. Special judge MG Deshpande said, "The offence against both of you has been proved." The judge will pronounce the quantum of sentence on Tuesday. While the maximum punishment is death, the minimum is life imprisonment. The trial was conducted in-camera at the behest of Sidhwani's lawyer to protect her identity. Vyas went missing on March 16, 2018, after leaving home for work. Tamhankar and

Sidhwani were arrested on May 5 that year. A police inquiry found that the two strangled her in a car and dumped her body at Mahul. A prolonged search for the body did not yield results. The prosecution had said in court that Tamhankar had been afraid of losing his job after being put on notice by Vyas over his poor performance at work, and of his relationship with a married Sidhwani being exposed. Sidhwani (48), who had been granted bail by Supreme Court in 2021, broke down after the verdict and was taken into custody. Tamhankar (42), who has been in jail since his arrest in 2018, made repeated attempts to calm her down. IPS officer Sanjay Saxena, who was the then JCP (crime), credited.



## RANGE ROVER CUSTOM MADE IN INDIA: CURATED LUXURY AT RANGE ROVER HOUSE

**KARNAL :** Range Rover House has arrived in India with an exclusive, modern luxury experience designed to reflect the tastes and desires of the discerning and affluent clientele of the region. Range Rover House India makes its debut in the luxurious coastal town of Alibaug, displaying some of the first Range Rover and Range Rover Sport vehicles which will now be produced in India, exclusively for the Indian market. With sustained client demand in India on the rise for Range Rover's luxuriously appointed large SUVs, both the elegant Range Rover and the dynamic, modern performance SUV, the Range Rover Sport, will be locally manufactured in Pune, India, for the first time. The move will enable the clientele in India to benefit from shorter wait times for Range Rover's pinna-



cle vehicles, expanding JLR's ability to offer a modern luxury client journey. India will be the first country to locally manufacture Range Rover and Range Rover Sport, which will join Range Rover Velar, Range Rover Evoque, Jaguar F-PACE and Discovery Sport which are already locally manufactured at JLR's facilities in Pune. Lennard Hoornik, Chief Commercial Officer, JLR, said; "Over the last few years, India has witnessed steady and spectacular economic growth and is poised to grow consistently in the near

future as well. This growth has resulted in tremendous opportunities to localise product offerings for the discerning Indian clientele. Local manufacturing of the Range Rover and Range Rover Sport in India is the next significant step towards the brand consolidating its position as the most desirable modern luxury SUV family, in the country." Geraldine Ingham, Managing Director of Range Rover, said; "Across the globe, we're seeing the highest levels of client demand for Range Rover, in our 53-year history.

## EaseMyTrip posts Highest-Ever EBITDA

**HISAR / PANIPAT:**

EaseMyTrip.com, one of the leading online travel tech platforms in India, sustained its momentum during this quarter. For Q4FY24, the Revenue from Operations was INR 1,640 million, up by 41% Y-o-Y. EBITDA was INR 577 million, up by 24% Y-o-Y and the Profit Before Tax was INR 551 million, a Y-o-Y growth of 24%. Furthermore, the Gross Booking Revenue (GBR) was INR 20,900 million in Q4FY24. In Q4 FY24, our non-air segment saw robust growth wherein the total hotel night bookings were 1.4 Lacs which grew by 39% and the other bookings were

2.7 Lacs by 53%. For FY24, the hotel night bookings and the other bookings were 5.2 Lacs by 49% and 10.4 Lacs by 67%, respectively. For FY24, the Revenue from Operations was INR 5,906, growth of 32% Y-o-Y. The EBITDA was INR 2,282 million, a 19% of Y-o-Y growth and the reported Profit Before Tax of INR 2,151 million, growth of 16% Y-o-Y. This strong performance underscores EaseMyTrip's continued momentum and further strengthens its position as one of the few profitable new-age tech companies in the industry. Additionally, the company recorded a GBR of INR 85,126 mil-

lion in FY24, further strengthening its market position. In addition to achieving strong financial performance this quarter and FY24, EaseMyTrip initiated significant collaborations to position itself as a growth-oriented company. Following a significant event in Indian history, the company acquired a 50% stake in Jeewani Hospitality and partnered with the Radisson Hotel Group to develop a 150-room Radisson Blu Hotel in Ayodhya City. This strategic move positions the hotel near the recently established Ram Mandir, enhancing ability to 1.5 Lacs per day visitors.

## Sweden's EQT raises \$1.6 billion for Asia fund

**MUMBAI:** Sweden-based private equity firm EQT has closed a new \$1.6 billion Asia-focused fund, and India is expected to get the largest share of capital allotment from it, the company said in response to queries. The PE firm raised more capital than its initial estimated target of \$750 million. EQT plans to bet on the

healthcare, financial services and technology sectors in India and the market has bagged two of the fund's four investments so far. In Dec last year, EQT had acquired a majority stake in Chennai's Indium Software from existing shareholders. The broader strategy will be to invest in high-growth mid-market companies

across Asia. Private markets in the region remain relatively underserved - in 2023 only 9% of the capital raised went to Asia-focused funds. "This dedicated strategy aims to help address this financing gap. The region is the epicentre of global growth, expected to contribute 60% of global GDP by the end of 2024," EQT said in a statement.

## F-Real Estate by FashionTV partners with Glenworld Realtors

**Gurgaon/Faridabad:** FashionTV is the world's largest fashion and lifestyle, media television channel, with a presence in 196 countries and over 2 billion viewers, has been a pioneer in the real estate licensing/partnership business called F-Real Estate by FashionTV. FashionTV has announced its partnership with Glenworld Realtors, a dynamic real estate company from North India. F-Real Estate by FashionTV is doing several projects across the globe. In India, F-Real Estate by FashionTV is currently



targeting real estate projects in 50+ major cities like Hyderabad, Delhi, Kolkata, Pune, Ludhiana, Chandigarh Tricity and many more, and the mission of F-Real Estate by FashionTV is to reach

100+ cities across India by the end of 2025. With this partnership F-Real Estate by FashionTV in association with Glenworld Realtors is planning to bring F-Towers by FashionTV in North

India soon. This will be an ultra-premium luxury residential project having at least 20+ F-branded amenities like F-Lounge, Mini Golf Course, Swimming Pool, Gymnasium, F-Salon etc. Kashif Khan, Managing Director, FashionTV said, "We are very happy to announce our partnership with Glenworld Realtors, a dynamic real estate company in North India. With this partnership, we will soon bring a luxurious ultra-premium, international standard residential property, F-Towers by FashionTV, to North India.

## Dr. Sunil Sharma of AYUSH Wing raised awareness to protect from heat

**Kaithal:** The intense heat and heat waves have badly affected the normal life. The maximum temperature of district Kaithal was recorded at 47 degrees Celsius on Monday. Feeling the heat of the month of June, the heat of the month of May has made life miserable. For the past several days, fire has been raining from the sky with the appearance of the Sun God at the break of dawn. In this summer people use AC. Taking help of coolers. The roads and markets looked deserted during



the day. The heat is such that people are finding it appropriate to go out of their homes in the morning and evening only for essential work. According to the Meteorological Department, generally monsoon will hit Kerala on June 1 and there is a possibility of monsoon arriving here in the last week of June, but

before that there will be heat wave with increasing heat and humidity. Since morning, people were suffering due to the scorching sun and the stinging heat. Not only in the evening, the heat wave continues to persist. To protect themselves from the heat, people are sheltering in their homes and resorting to cold drinking water. Since this morning, the effect of heat was increasing as the cycle of time was turning and the roads were burning like an oven. There was silence in the major roads and

markets and shopkeepers were also seen sitting idle, waiting for customers. Due to the extreme heat, people's lives have also been affected. On the other hand, Panchkarma Specialist District Civil Hospital Ayush Wing Doctor Dr. Sunil Sharma, while making the general public aware to avoid heat and sunstroke, said that in the heat, do not go out of the house without any need and in case of extreme need, wear a mask on your head while leaving the house.

## Vi Launches 'Vi Guarantee' Program for Smartphone Prepaid Customers

**GURUGRAM / HISAR :** Vi, a leading telecom operator, today announced the launch of the 'Vi Guarantee Program', a limited period offer for prepaid users. This new initiative ensures uninterrupted high-speed data for all 5G and new 4G smartphone users. Under the Vi

Guarantee program, Vi users will get 130GB of guaranteed extra data over a period of one year, implying that 10GB of data will be credited to their account automatically on every 28th day for 13 consecutive cycles. To avail this extra data offer, Vi users will need to be on a daily data unlimited plan of Rs 239 and above. The user will be able to use this extra data only once their existing data quotas get exhausted. This offer is valid only for Vi subscribers with 5G smartphones or who have recently upgraded to a new 4G smartphone. Avneesh Khosla, Chief Marketing Officer at Vodafone Idea Limited said, "In today's digital world, consumers need more data to stay connected, productive, and entertained. The 'Vi Guarantee'

program is designed to address this growing demand by providing users with an uninterrupted, high-speed data experience. This initiative underscores our commitment to offering a truly unlimited data experience, ensuring our customers can do more on the internet without worrying about data constraints." Many smartphone users in India do not maximise the potential of their 4G/5G mobile devices due to a lack of sufficient data. With this offer, users can continue to binge on their favourite content even after their daily quota gets exhausted without any extra cost by using the data from their Vi Guarantee quota. Vi Guarantee, a limited period offer was thus designed to meet the growing data needs.

## Realme announced the launch of realme NARZO 70 Series 5G

**HISAR :** realme, the most reliable smartphone service provider, today announced the launch of realme NARZO 70 Series 5G, the newest addition to the realme NARZO line-up. The series unveiled two breakthrough smartphones: realme NARZO 70x 5G & realme NARZO 70 5G. realme NARZO series is a stylish line of smartphones that delivers a comprehensive user experience. With a massive user base exceeding 16 million in India, the realme NARZO series epitomizes the future of smartphone technology. These devices are designed with advanced technology and premium features, enabling users to stay at the forefront of trends while expressing their unique style. realme & Amazon have strategically engaged to



bring the realme NARZO line-up and to provide consumers with an enhanced shopping experience. realme NARZO series is exclusively available on Amazon.in and has been committed to bringing advanced technology to its users. In line with realme's dual-platform strategy, realme launched its first online store on Amazon in March 2023. Commenting on the launch, a realme spokesperson said, "We are thrilled to announce the launch of the realme NARZO 70 Series 5G, a testament to our commitment to deliver-

ing cutting-edge technology and premium features to our users. This series embodies the future of smartphones, designed to offer an all-encompassing user experience that keeps pace with the ever-evolving digital landscape. With its advanced and powerful features, the realme NARZO 70 Series 5G is set to redefine the smartphone experience. As we continue to expand our footprint, reaching over 16 million users in India, we believe the realme NARZO 70 Series 5G will set new benchmarks in the smartphone indus-

try. Join us as we usher in a new era of connectivity and performance with the realme NARZO 70 Series 5G." The realme NARZO 70x 5G houses a massive 5000mAh Battery and supports a 45W SUPERVOOC Charge, allowing for quick charging and long-lasting battery life. The 120Hz Ultra Smooth Display provides vibrant colors and deep contrast, ensuring a stunning visual experience. The phone's aesthetic appeal is heightened by the Segment's Thinnest 7.69mm Ultra-slim Horizon Design and a light body weighing just 188g. At its core, the smartphone is powered by a MediaTek Dimensity 6100+ 6nm 5G Chipset, coupled with a VC cooling system for superior performance and heat dissipation during intense usage.

## Sensex hits 76,000 for first time, gives up gains amid volatility

**MUMBAI:** In volatile trades on Monday, the sensex and Nifty scaled new life highs early in the session. Even as the sensex hit the 76,000-mark for the first time, strong selling in late trades pulled both indices to close in the red. Market players said that ahead of the Lok Sabha poll results on June 4, investors are booking profit and taking some money off the table - hence the barrage of selling at every rise in the leading indices. In Monday's market, after the initial rally, volatility jumped and the sensex lost over 800 points from the day's high due to all-round selling. Finally, it settled flat, just 20 points down at 75,391 while Nifty closed 25 points down at 22,932. As volatility spiked, the India VIX scaled a new multi-year peak at 26.2.

CAPSULES

## Latest Fixed deposit interest rates in May 24: 7 banks revise FD rates - earn up to 9.1% interest; check details

According to report, DCB Bank has updated its fixed deposit interest rates for amounts below Rs 2 crore, effective from May 22, 2024. The bank now provides the highest FD interest rate of 8% for general customers and 8.55% for senior citizens on tenures ranging from 19 to 20 months. The maximum savings account interest rate offered is 8%, the report said.

**IDFC First Fixed Deposit Rates:**

IDFC FIRST Bank has also revised its fixed deposit interest rates for amounts less than Rs 2 crore, with the new rates taking effect from May 15, 2024. The bank now offers interest rates ranging from 3% to 7.90% on deposits maturing in 7 days to 10 years for general citizens. Senior citizens receive an additional spread of 0.50% p.a. over the standard rate, with interest rates varying from 3.50% to 8.40%. The highest interest rate of 8% for general customers and 8.40% for senior citizens is offered on a tenure of 500 days.

**SBI Fixed Deposit Rates:**

The State Bank of India (SBI) has increased its fixed deposit interest rates for specific tenures on retail deposits (up to Rs 2 crore) and bulk deposits (above Rs 2 crore). According to the SBI website, the new FD rates have been in effect since May 15, 2024. Utkarsh Small Finance Bank has updated its fixed deposit interest rates for amounts under Rs 2 crore, effective from May 1, 2024. The bank now provides interest rates ranging from 4 percent to 8.50 percent for general citizens and 4.60 percent to 9.10 percent.