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

Playing it again: What Sam Pitroda said & status of inheritance tax in India, abroad

Estate taxes are levied on the net value of property owned by a deceased person on the date of death



New Delhi Indian Overseas Congress chairman Sam Pitroda's comments on inheritance tax triggered a political slugfest on Wednesday with PM Modi attacking Congress for planning to impose higher taxes and not wanting people to pass on their hard-earned income to their heirs. Congress distanced itself from Pitroda's remarks, and party spokesman Jairam Ramesh said former PM Rajiv Gandhi had, in fact, abolished estate duty in 1985. Here's what the hullabaloo's all about: **What did Pitroda say?**

He backed the idea of an inheritance tax and cited the example of the

US. "Nothing wrong in accumulating wealth but to what point? Let me tell you, in America there's an inheritance tax. So, if let's say one has \$100 million worth of wealth, and when he dies he can transfer probably 45% to his children, 55% is grabbed by govt. Now that's an interesting law. It says you, in your generation made wealth, and you are leaving now, you must leave your wealth for the public - not all of it, half of it, which to me sounds fair. In India you don't have that. If somebody is worth \$10 billion and dies his children get \$10 billion. The public gets nothing. So these are the kinds of issues that people will have to debate and discuss."

Why the controversy? Pitroda's comments on inheritance tax come against the backdrop of the Congress manifesto talking about addressing "growing inequality of wealth and income through suitable changes in policies" and Rahul Gandhi's speeches pushing for economic and institutional surveys, along with caste census. BJP has cited Rahul's speeches to claim that the surveys would be a prelude to "redistribution" of wealth.

WHAT IS INHERITANCE TAX? This is a tax which is levied on property inherited when a person dies. According to Tax Foundation, a think tank on taxation, estate and inheritance taxes are

broadly similar because both are generally triggered by death. Estate taxes are levied on the net value of property owned by a deceased person on the date of death. In contrast, inheritance taxes are levied on the recipients of the property, according to the foundation's definition.

Tackling inequality... Inheritance tax has in some cases been justified to ensure "equality of opportunity". An OECD paper says that by breaking down the concentration of wealth and correcting for factors that are beyond the recipients' control, inheritance and gift taxation can contribute to levelling the playing field across individuals, and thereby increase equality of opportunity and improve social mobility. It cites Thomas Piketty, Saez and Zucman, who have argued that from a meritocratic perspective, inherited wealth should be taxed at higher rates than earned income and self-made wealth.

Congress manifesto hints at religious quota in armed forces: Rajnath Singh

VISAKHAPATNAM: Defence minister Rajnath Singh echoed PM Modi's recent remarks and alleged Wednesday that Congress's manifesto for ongoing LS polls suggests covert attempts to introduce religion-based reservation even within the armed forces. Addressing a gathering of intellectuals in support of BJP-TDP-Jana Sena alliance in Visakhapatnam, senior BJP politician accused Congress of drawing from Sachar Committee report, which proposed conducting a religious census within the armed forces. Singh expressed concerns that such a move could potentially lead to religion-based reservations, including in the armed forces, posing a threat to the unity and integrity of the nation. "Minority appeasement and vote-bank politics runs in the DNA of Congress," he



said. Singh alleged that undivided Andhra Pradesh served as a "communal laboratory" for Congress to experiment with minority quota by reducing reservations of SC, ST, and OBC communities, which were eventually thwarted by the judiciary. "Ranganath Misra Commission, established during UPA govt, recommended 6% reservations for Muslims and 2% for other minorities within the 27% quota designated for OBCs," he said.

Singh accused Congress of attempting to introduce backdoor reservations, citing sections of their manifesto aimed at providing opportunities for minorities in various sectors without legal provisions. "When PM Modi accused Congress of backing minority reservations in their manifesto, they began attacking PM," he alleged. According to him, Congress halted reservations for SC and ST communities in Jamia Millia Islamia and Aligarh Muslim University.

US President Joe Biden signs bill to 'ban' Tiktok

US President Joe Biden signs bill to 'ban' Tiktok. Tiktok ban is almost official. The US President Joe Biden today (April 24) signed a bill into law to ban Tiktok if its China-based parent company, ByteDance, does not divest the app within a year. The bill, which addresses national security concerns, grants ByteDance a nine-month window to sell its stake in Tiktok. The bill was part of a broader package that included military aid for Ukraine, Israel.

Won't go by 'Marxist interpretation' of wealth redistribution, says SC

NEW DELHI: With the political slugfest over redistribution of wealth escalating, Supreme Court on Wednesday said it will not adhere to Justice V R Krishna 1977 Marxist interpretation of Article 39(b) of the Constitution that a community's "material resources" would include private properties for reallocation to subserve the common good. Engaged in interpreting the ambit of Article 39(b) of Directive Principles of State Policy in the Constitution, a nine-judge bench of CJI D Y Chandrachud and Justices Hrishikesh Roy, B V Nagarathna, S Dhulia, J B Pardiwala, Manoj Misra, R Bindal, S C Sharma and A G Masih, which had on Tuesday categorically said that it would not



go into the controversy relating to Article 31C, changed tack and asked, "Is it not desirable that Article 31C's validity is put to rest by an authoritative pronouncement from the nine-judge bench?" Solicitor general Mehta said the seven-judge bench in its Feb 2002 order referring interpretation of Article 39(b) to a nine-judge bench had consciously Article 31C from the ambit of consideration.

The capitalist view puts importance on individual rights. And there is the Gandhian view of holding resources in trust for protecting inter-generational equity." Speaking for the bench, the CJI indicated community property would include natural resources, exploitation of which is governed by the SC-defined sustainable.

'High-energy finales' bring Phase-II campaign to an end

T'PURAM/JAIPUR/BE NGALURU: Curtains were drawn Wednesday on a fervent campaign for phase two of the seven-stage LS polls slated for April 26 across 88 constituencies in 13 states, including all 20 seats in Kerala, 14 in Karnataka, 13 in Rajasthan, & eight each in Maharashtra and UP. Among the notable contestants in this round are



Union minister Rajeev Gandhi, Congress MPs Rahul Tharoor, BJP's Tejasvi Surya, Hema Malini, Arun Govil, former Karnataka CM HD Kumaraswamy of JD(S), and Karnataka deputy CM DK Shivakumar's brother DK Suresh. Other

states where polling is scheduled include six seats in MP, five each in Assam and Bihar, three each in Chhattisgarh and Bengal, and one each in Manipur, Tripura, & J&K. Polling in MP's Betul has been postponed to May 7 following the death of BSP candidate. Voting will conclude in Kerala, Rajasthan, and Tripura after Friday's round of polling.

Court mulls whether 9-Judge bench can put Article 31 validity to test

NEW DELHI: Supreme Court on Wednesday witnessed an engrossing debate over the existing architecture of Article 31C, added to the Constitution in 1971 to shield legislations furthering objectives of Article 39(b) & 39(c) in Directive Principles of State Policy from court scrutiny for alleged violation of fundamental rights under Articles 14 (equality) and 19 (freedoms). A nine-judge bench of



Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices Hrishikesh Roy, B V Nagarathna, S Dhulia, J B Pardiwala, Manoj Misra, R Bindal, S C Sharma and A G Masih, which had on Tuesday categorically said that it would not

'We're going to disrupt': US warns Pakistan of sanctions over Iran ties

NEW DELHI: In a stark warning from Washington, the US has cautioned Pakistan about the potential risks of sanctions after recent agreements signed with Iran, particularly amid President Ebrahim Raisi's visit to Islamabad. The US State Department highlighted concerns about proliferation networks and weapons of mass destruction as Islamabad looks to deepen its security and economic ties with Tehran. US state department principal deputy Vedant Patel emphasized the risks associated with engaging in business with Iran. "We're going to continue to disrupt and take actions against proliferation networks and concerning weapons



of mass destruction procurement activities wherever they may occur...Just let me say, broadly, we advise anyone considering business deals with Iran to be aware of the potential risk of sanctions. But ultimately, the government of Pakistan can speak to their own foreign policy pursuits," Patel said during a press briefing. This statement follows recent US sanctions imposed on entities from China and Belarus accused of supporting Pakistan's ballistic missile program. **Pakistan-Iran bilateral agreements** Pakistan is seeking to restart a longstanding project to construct a gas pipeline from Iran, a project that has been repeatedly postponed due to potential US sanctions. In a congressional hearing last month, assistant secretary of state Donald Lu affirmed that "the Biden administration will uphold all sanctions related to Iran" when queried about the Pakistan-Iran pipeline. Despite intentions to apply for

a sanctions waiver regarding the pipeline, it was not discussed during President Raisi's recent visit to Pakistan. During President Raisi's visit, Pakistan and Iran inked eight bilateral agreements aimed at enhancing political, economic, trade, and cultural ties. These accords included cooperation in sectors such as veterinary and animal health, judicial support in civil cases, and security matters. The visit is the first by an Iranian president to Islamabad in eight years. The recent developments have raised eyebrows in international circles. Shaista, a professor at the University of Karachi, told Bloomberg:

ED attaches Rs 74cr assets of Sanjay Raut associate in Patra Chawl case

NEW DELHI: ED on Wednesday said it had attached properties worth Rs 74 crore of Pravin Raut, a close associate of Shiv Sena (Uddhav) Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Raut, in a money laundering case related to the redevelopment of Patra Chawl. in Goregaon, Mumbai. Both Pravin Raut and Sanjay Raut were arrested in the case in 2022 and are out on bail. Total attachment in the case has gone up to Rs 117 crore. The latest attached properties consist of several land parcels of Pravin Raut and his close associates in and around Palghar, Dapoli, Raigad and Thane. ED had earlier attached properties worth Rs 11 crore, including a flat in Dadar belonging to Varsha Raut.

Getting threats from international phone numbers, says Gyanvapi judge

BAREILLY: Additional sessions judge Ravi Kumar Diwakar has raised concerns over receiving "malicious calls and death threats from international numbers". The judge, who was in the news for his directive for a videography survey of the Gyanvapi complex in 2022, has sought an investigation on the threats to him. Earlier, following similar threat concerns raised by the judge soon after the Gyanvapi judgment, high court had ordered Y-category security for him and his family, which was later downgraded to X-category. Recently transferred to Bareilly, Justice Diwakar had initiated suo motu action on the 2018 Bareilly riots case, summoning senior cleric

Tauqeer Raza to face trial for being the alleged mastermind. In a letter to the SSP, the judge said this week he was receiving malicious calls from international numbers, "which is deeply concerning." He said he conveyed his apprehensions to Bareilly SSP Sushil Chandrabhan Ghule. The judge's current security detail includes two security personnel. One of his associates said the security is not sufficient as the two personnel are not equipped with weapons to combat terrorists, who carry automatic guns and modern weapons. A Popular Front of India (PFI) agent was arrested near the judge's residence in Lucknow last year.

DEO instructed to plan specific activities to raise voting percentage IN BOOTHS WITH LOW VOTING PERCENTAGES

PRAYAGRAJ: In view of the upcoming Lok Sabha General Election-2024, under the chairmanship of District Election Officer/District Magistrate Shri Navneet Singh Chahal, on Wednesday, timely preparation of election related works as per the guidelines of Election Commission of India and Chief Electoral Officer, Lucknow and successful conduct of elections was organized. To ensure independent and impartial execution, a meeting was held with the Nodal Officer and Assistant Nodal Officers. In the meeting, the District Election Officer obtained information from each nodal officer about the progress of work related to their responsibilities and gave necessary guidelines. In the meeting, Chief Development Officer Shri Gaurav Kumar, while giving information about all the works

related to appointment, randomization, data feeding and training of polling personnel, said that if the account number and IFSC code of any polling personnel is wrongly entered, then he should inform the same through his head of office. Get it rectified. The District Magistrate, after getting information from the District School Inspector about the sweep programs being run for voter awareness in the district, has asked to run a special awareness campaign in coordination with the officials of the High Court and District Bar Association.

He has directed that an election school must be organized to provide information related to voting at every booth through Anganwadi workers and BLOs and the minutes of the programs organized in the election school must be



recorded in the register. Along with distributing voter slips to every house through BLOs, he has also asked to make voters aware of the need to exercise their franchise. The District Election Officer has given instructions to organize special programs for voter turnout by identifying the booths with low voting percentage in the last elections.

The District Election Officer, taking information about the arrangements for basic minimum facilities at the polling places, has given instructions to each Instructions have been given to ensure timely arrangement of shade, drinking water, toilet, lighting, medical kit, ramp and other necessary arrangements at the booth.

He has asked all Sector Magistrates/Sub-District Magistrates to visit their respective areas and ensure all necessary arrangements at the polling stations. He has directed the concerned nodal/assistant nodal officers to ensure arrangement of charging points at the booths identified for web costing and to get the details related to the booth painted. He has given instructions to the officials of the Water Supply Department in Mandi to ensure the arrangement of drinking water. The District Election Officer has asked the Additional District Magistrate Nazul to discuss the complete arrangements of the polling party departure point, map, preparation of strong rooms of assembly constituencies, arrangement of strong rooms. Necessary guidelines have been given after getting in-

formation about marking works etc. for keeping EVMs inside. The District Election Officer has asked all the nodal/assistant nodal officers present in the meeting to ensure all election related work is done in a timely manner as per the prescribed guidelines. He said that any kind of negligence or indifference in election work will not be forgivable. On this occasion, Chief Development Officer Mr. Gaurav Kumar, Deputy District Election Officer Mrs. Pooja Mishra, Additional District Magistrate Finance and Revenue Mr. Vinay Singh, Additional District Magistrate Nazul Mr. Pradeep Kumar, Additional District Magistrate City Mr. Madan Kumar, Chief Revenue Officer Mr. Kunwar Pankaj, all the Sub-District Magistrates. Including other concerned officials were present.

First randomization of EVM machines completed In the presence of District Election Officer and representatives of political parties

PRAYAGRAJ: In the presence of District Election Officer/District Magistrate Shri Navneet Singh Chahal and representatives of political parties, Lok Sabha General Election-2024 was held safely, fair and transparent in Sangam Auditorium on Wednesday. To ensure proper completion of the work, the first randomization of EVM machines was done. On this occasion, Chief Development Officer Mr. Gaurav Kumar, Deputy District Election Officer Mrs. Pooja Mishra, Additional District Magistrate Finance and Revenue Mr. Vinay Singh and other concerned officers were present.

Meritorious students rewarded in Sarvarya Teacher Parents Association formed

Prayagraj: Meritorious student felicitation and parents conference concluded in Sarvarya Mahavidyalaya Inter College of the city. Students who performed excellently in high school and intermediate board examinations were rewarded on this occasion. Keeping in mind the all-round development of the students, Teacher Parents Association was formed and the office bearers were announced. An appeal was made to the parent representatives present to contribute their best in the development of the students and the school. In this program held in the presence of Mr. Arun Kumar Mishra, Joint Manager of the Management Committee, Principal of the school, Dr. Murarji Tripathi said that this oldest school of the city has its own glorious history. All the teachers and parents are thankful to all the teachers and parents for creating its golden future. We will have to make joint efforts. Expressing satisfaction over the good results of the school, the Principal congratulated the hardworking teachers and talented students for this. Joint Manager Arun Kumar Mishra said that every possible effort will be made to make the students capable citizens by providing all the best facilities in the school. The program was conducted by Mathematics teacher Vimal Kumar Pandey, senior lecturer Ramchet Gautam, Dr. Rudra Pratap Vashishtha, Ashok Singh, Basantlal etc. guided the students. Teachers like Ankit Jaiswal, Shivkumar Rai, Shailendra Kumar Shukla, Kamshan Bahadur, Deepak Rajak, Lakshmi Narayan etc. contributed immensely in making the program successful.

Resonance and Rhythm National Art Exhibition touched heights of success

Prayagraj: Four-day Resonance and Rhythm (Pratidhwani and Laya) National Art Exhibition organized by Bharat Fine Art Academy Kanpur concluded on Wednesday Gandhi Kala Veethika North

critic Mukesh Baranwal, who had come from Delhi, captured these golden moments in his camera and also shared it on his own named channel. Thousands of visitors appreciated this exhibition in four days. 50 newspapers and media of the country gave excellent coverage to it and thus the exhibition touched the high level of success. The chief guest of the closing ceremony, Piyush Pandey, Director of Gurukul Convent, praised the artist



Central Region Cultural Center In Prayagraj, senior artist Ravindra Kushwaha, outgoing executive member of the State Academy of Fine Arts, Sumit Thakur, director of Bharat Fine Art Academy, exhibition coordinator Archana Pandey and senior artist Dr. Kaveri Viz removed the portrait of renowned artist Professor Dr. Sunil Saxena from the exhibition.

Archana Pandey, who is organizing this grand national art exhibition, and said that the director of the institution, Sumit Thakur, has brought this magnificent exhibition from Kanpur to Prayagraj and has made it among the artists of Prayagraj. Filled with enthusiasm for art. Exhibition patron Ravindra Kushwaha thanked the public and media.

Nyaya Patra being propagated door-to-door by 'Grand Old' outfit

Prayagraj: The City Congress Committee reached door to door with Nyaya Patra and conducted a massive public campaign in various areas of the southern part of the city. In the campaign, Congress's Nyaya Patra containing five Nyayas and 25 guarantees was given to the people and they were duly informed about its guarantees. In the same sequence, under the leadership of Congress President Pradeep Mishra Anshuman, by holding meetings in Kidganj Peeli Kothi, Mutthiganj, Mohatsimganj and Bahadurganj, the unrestrained talks being made by Narendra Modi on the Congress Nyayapatra were described as ridiculous and childish. Speakers said that instead of talking on issues

related to the public, the ruling BJP cannot do anything other than create fear and division in the society. Issues of farmers, labourers, women and other social sections including inflation

gress candidate Ujjwal Raman Singh was receiving. On this occasion, Pradeep Mishra Anshuman, Itikhar Hussain, Ravindra Yadav, Anoop Tripathi, Ramesh Jaiswal, Santosh Agrahari,



and unemployment are not their priority. Speakers said that only the Congress government can give a secure future to the people of this country. People were expressed gratitude for the widespread support Con-

Nurul Huda, Kamal Sharma, Ramesh Mishra, Nishant Rastogi, Praveen Gupta, Satish Kesarwani, Irshad Ullah, Shakeel Ahmed, Saurabh Chaudhary, Shubham, Shukla etc. leaders were present.

Youth died after being hit by train

Karchana, Prayagraj: A young man died after being hit by a train on the Delhi Howrah railway line near Bhirpur railway station of Karchana police station area. According to the information, 29-year-old Rohit, son of Anil Kumar, resident of Basahi village of the area, had left the house around 10:30 pm on Tuesday night without informing his family. Meanwhile, he was hit by a train near Bhirpur railway station and died. On getting information about the incident, local police along with GRP police reached the spot, where the deceased youth was identified from the people present. After giving information about this to the family members, the police took possession of the body and sent it for post-mortem. Anil Kumar stays at home and does farming work.

3 accused arrested with illicit firearms

Prayagraj: Three wanted accused arrested by police station Uttaraon, 02 illegal pistols, 02 cartridges, 01 knife and 01 stolen motorcycle recovered from their possession. 03 wanted accused related to IPC No. 90/2024 Section 394 registered at police station Uttaraon 1. Surendra Kumar Bhartiya son of Radheshyam Bharatiya resident of village Dhokri (Zalim ka Pura) Police station Handiya 2. Aman Kumar son of Ramesh Bharatiya resident of village Dhokri police station Handiya 3. Anshu Bharatiya son of Ramsurat Bharatiya resident of village Saraimansur Hakim Patti police station Handiya. They were arrested by the team on 23.04.2024 near Nagnathpur culvert under Uttaraon police station area. 02 illegal pistols, 02 cartridges, 01 iron knife and 01 Pulsar motorcycle and a total of Rs 1900/- from the loot related to the above mentioned accused were recovered. On the basis of the above arrest/seizure, advance legal action was taken as per rules by increasing Section 41/413/120 (B) of IPC, Section 3/25 Arms Act and Section 4/25 Arms Act in the above mentioned case. It is noteworthy that the above accused, along with their associates, conducted recce of people from far-flung areas traveling on the highway at night, threatened and assaulted them with pistols and knives, snatched motorcycles, mobiles, money and recovered the looted goods from them by selling them. The money was divided among themselves.

Prayagraj Division ensuring availability of drinking water at all stations CONTINUOUS MONITORING BEING DONE

Prayagraj: Divisional Railway Manager/Prayagraj, Himanshu Badoni, along with concerned officers for regular monitoring and providing good facility of clean drinking water at all stations. And instructions have been given to the employees. Prayagraj Division has appointed nodal officers for uninterrupted supply of water, cleanliness of drinking water points and arrangement and monitoring of adequate water coolers and water vending machines at all major stations. Prayagraj Division has always been ready to provide better facilities to its re-

spected railway passengers. In view of the current summer season, Prayagraj Division is continuously monitoring to ensure adequate provision of water at all its stations. In Prayagraj division, adequate staff has been provided at water filling stations for trains and the system is being closely monitored to ensure availability of adequate water in all trains.

Prayagraj Division has provided the facility of water vending machines at various stations. Drinking water is being made available to railway passengers at low prices through water vending machines. In Prayagraj

division, 10 water vending machines at Prayagraj Junction, 9 water vending machines at Kanpur Central, 5 water vending machines at



Aligarh Junction, 5 water vending machines at Tundla Junction, 4 water vending machines at Etawah station,

3 water vending machines at Mirzapur station. is employed. Prayagraj Division has also provided the facility of water cooler at the sta-

able at various stations in Prayagraj division through which passengers get cool drinking water. Adequate availability of drinking water as well as 'Rail Neer' through water coolers/water vending by Prayagraj Division at other stations including Prayagraj Junction, Prayagraj Chhivki, Kanpur Central, Etawah, Mirzapur, Fatehpur, Firozabad, Tundla, Aligarh, Khurja, Shikohabad and Manikpur. It is being ensured.

In order to ensure the availability of drinking water at other stations, North Central Railway has also started selling water of

Kinley, Uplife, Elvish, Betwa Neer, Yes, Health Plus, Himalaya, Omaxe Executive and Dravayam brands along with 'Rail Neer'. Permission has also been granted to sell at the same price as Rail Neer. Co-operation of various social organizations, scouts-guides and other support groups is also being taken to provide easy drinking water to the railway passengers. Railway passengers can seek assistance from the railway administration for any need or complaint during their journey by contacting 'Rail Madad App' or railway helpline number 139.

tioned the examinations of all the four districts. The examination centers are being constantly monitored. This entire process is being inspected and guided by the Honorable Vice Chancellor himself. In Prayagraj, Kaushambi, Fatehpur, Pratapgarh districts, a total of 71131 (1st shift boys-36374/girls-15359 and 2nd shift boys-14303/girls-5095) candidates appeared in the examination in which 231 candidates remained absent and 02 students were sent to flight. The parties were caught using unfair means.

Woman to be engaged found dead in neighbour's house

Prayagraj: A 21-year-old woman was shot dead on the eve of her engagement. The body of the woman, who was missing from her house since Tuesday evening, was found on a bed in the neighbour's straw shed on Wednesday morning, police said. She was killed by a shot to the head, police added. The police took the body into custody and sent it for a post-mortem examination. SHO of Antu Police station

Jitendra Singh said that the victim, Shalu, was the daughter of Tulsiram Verma, a resident of Chhatapur Raghana village, under the Antu police station area of Pratapgarh. She had stopped studying after passing intermediate. Her father fixed her marriage with one Shubham Verma, a resident of Mohanganj, about six months back and Shubham along with his family members was to come to her house for the engagement on Wednes-

day.

However, Shalu went missing on Tuesday evening, the SHO said. Family members kept searching for her till late at night. At around 1 am, the family informed the police about Shalu's disappearance. A police team arrived in the night and went back after the investigation. On Wednesday morning, the missing woman's blood-soaked body bearing a gunshot injury to the head was found in a straw hut constructed for storing

animal feed and grass of a neighbour's house by locals who then raised an alarm and informed the police, the SHO shared.

The SHO said that a case of murder has been registered against four people: Jaichandra Verma of the same village, his mother, Shanti Devi, cousin, Karamchand and Karamchand's wife, Meera Devi, on the complaint of the victim's brother, Santosh Verma, and a search for the accused is on, he added.

Annual exam going on in Prof. Rajendra Singh (Rajju Bhaiya) Univ

Prayagraj: It was conducted in two shifts in 219 examination centers of Prayagraj, Kaushambi, Fatehpur, Pratapgarh districts, cheating-free and clean. During the examination, the Vice-Chancellor of the University conducted a surprise inspection of the colleges and ordered them to conduct fair and cheating-free examinations. Along with the surprise inspection of the examination centers by the flying teams formed by the University, the high-tech control room established in the campus of the University also moni-



tored the examinations of all the four districts. The examination centers are being constantly monitored. This entire process is being inspected and guided by the Honorable Vice Chancellor himself. In Prayagraj, Kaushambi, Fatehpur, Pratapgarh districts, a total of 71131 (1st shift boys-36374/girls-15359 and 2nd shift boys-14303/girls-5095) candidates appeared in the examination in which 231 candidates remained absent and 02 students were sent to flight. The parties were caught using unfair means.

Editorial

West Asian 'brinkmanship': Why Iran, Israel avoided crossing red lines

Rewriting the rules of engagement is challenging, but undoubtedly both Iran and Israel have made a symbolic statement and managed the escalation cycle wherein they have played to the gallery as far as their domestic audience is concerned. AFP On April 14, Iran launched its first direct military offensive against Israel. The attack consisted of over 300 Shahed drones, cruise missiles, and ballistic missiles. The launch was detected immediately, and the Israeli forces on high alert had approximately two hours of response time before the drones reached Israeli airspace. The strike was then taken apart as it moved across the Middle East by members of the US-led Middle East Air Defence Alliance, which included jets from the RAF, the Jordanian Air Forces, and the US Air Force. Most of the surviving munitions were then intercepted by Israel's Air Defence Systems, which include the Iron Dome, David's Sling, and Arrow 2 and 3. At least five penetrated through these defences and struck targets in and around an Nevatim Air Base in the Negev Desert. These five hits resulted in no casualties and caused only structural damage. The world was on edge, and there was danger that a threatened Israeli retaliation would result in a regional, if not wider, conflict. Crude prices spiked, markets dropped across the globe, and gold reached new heights. For India, one of the major dangers of escalation was the blocking of the Straits of Hormuz, as it would result in disruption of both crude and natural gas.

Israeli response

The Israeli reaction took place within the week. On April 19, they struck a military airbase near the city of Isfahan, and Iranian officials also claimed to have shot down small drones near the northern city of Tabriz, but this was downplayed. Isfahan Province, in the centre of Iran, is home to significant Iranian military infrastructure, including a large air base, a major missile production complex, and nuclear facilities. As per reports in the Jerusalem Post, the Israelis were targeting an air defence radar site near Isfahan that's part of the protection of the Natanz nuclear facility. The choreography of missile strikes once again ensured that there were no casualties and, moreover, no targeting of Iranian nuclear facilities. Iranian media and officials described a small number of explosions, which they said resulted from air defences hitting three drones over Isfahan. They referred to the incident as an attack by "infiltrators" rather than by Israel, obviating the need for retaliation. The Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian, downplaying the attack, said, "They're ... more like toys that our children play with, not drones." He also added, "As long as there is no new adventurism by Israel against our interests, we are not going to have any new reactions." With Israel remaining deadlocked in Gaza, where around 130 Israeli hostages remain but have inflicted more than 34,000 civilian casualties, including women and children, the Iranian strikes must have seemed like a welcome relief as the narrative shifted from the humanitarian crisis Israel is causing in Gaza. Further, in a timing that cannot be a mere coincidence, the US House of Representatives quickly passed an aid package of \$26.38 billion for Israel. With no hostage deal or ceasefire mechanisms apparent, the risk of miscalculation remains high. The region remains in a uniquely dangerous position, in which Prime Minister Netanyahu may feel that he has little choice but to escalate with Iran in order to maintain public support. But responses to the strike within Israel have exposed the country's political fissures. Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir described the strike on Iran as "feeble" or "lame".

Iran's Pakistan outreach: Analysing Raisi's Islamabad visit and its impact on India

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi began an important three-day official visit to Pakistan on April 22, against the backdrop of greater tensions surrounding the Israel-Iran dispute. International attention was immediately diverted by Raisi's surprising diplomatic optics. Raisi is well-known for his unwavering political position and is largely seen as a strong candidate to succeed Khamenei as Supreme Leader. During his visit, President Raisi underscored the critical importance of regional cooperation and diplomatic engagement by engaging in substantive discussions with key Pakistani dignitaries, including President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. Their deliberations have paved the way for an ambitious trade agreement, committing both nations to conduct ten billion dollars in trade over the next five years, marking a significant milestone in their economic relationship.

Why is Raisi's visit to Pakistan important?

What adds an intriguing dimension to Raisi's visit is his distinction as the first foreign leader to initiate diplomatic relations with Pakistan, particularly against the backdrop of the recent contentious general elections held in the country on February 8. This context imbues Raisi's visit with heightened significance, revealing the intricate



nuances and delicate balancing acts inherent in regional diplomacy. President Raisi's diplomatic journey warrants careful consideration, occurring amidst the backdrop of his designation as a target of sanctions under Executive Order 13876 by the US Office of Foreign Assets Control. This layer of complexity adds a nuanced dimension to his diplomatic engagements, underscoring the delicate balancing act required in navigating international relations. Moreover, Raisi's trip is shadowed by grave allegations of human rights abuses, with numerous international bodies and United Nations special rapporteurs highlighting these concerns. Such allegations have previously led to the cancellation of his planned trip to Geneva in 2023, indicating the significant scrutiny surrounding his diplomatic activities and the challenges they entail.

Recent developments in

Iran-Pakistan diplomacy

The Iranian president's visit to Pakistan arises against a background of recent hostility amid talks covering religious, cultural, investment, and diplomatic spheres. Iran reportedly launched missile strikes on two strongholds of the anti-Iranian rebel organisation Jaish al-Adl (Army of Justice) on January 16 in the province of Baluchistan, Pakistan. A major actor in the ongoing tensions between Iran and Pakistan is Jaish al-Adl, which was founded in 2012 by Abdul Rahim Mollazehi as a breakaway faction of Jundullah. As an "unprovoked violation" of its airspace, Pakistan denounced the bombing. The assault posed a threat to Pakistan's formidable army chief, Gen Asim Munir, whose reputation for toughness and resolve has been a point of contention in his relations with other nations as well as at home. This made political

analysts wonder if Iran respected Pakistan's sovereignty. Retaliating quickly, Pakistan launched a surprise attack two days later using fighter jets and missiles directed at the purported hideouts of anti-Pakistan ethno-nationalist insurgents in the Sistan-Baluchistan region who were allegedly operating from Iranian soil. In light of worries about regional security, these incidents do highlight the complex and unstable dynamics that define Iran and Pakistan's relationship, especially as root causes of terrorism, smuggling, and border infiltration are not addressed.

Why does Iran need Pakistan?

Pakistan serves as Iran's primary regional ally against adversaries such as Saudi Arabia and other Western powers. Iran's keen interest in joining China's economic corridor initiative aligns with Pakistan's close ties to Beijing. Notably, over 70 per cent of the electricity in Pakistan's Gwadar port city is sourced from Iran. The proposed gas pipelines, including the "peace pipeline" intended to supply Iranian gas to India via Pakistan, have faced setbacks, notably India's withdrawal in 2009 due to US sanctions on Iran. However, Iran and Pakistan remain committed, signing a separate gas supply agreement. Notably, in June of that year, both nations entered into a multibillion-

dollar agreement to develop a gas pipeline. However, while Tehran successfully completed construction of a 900-kilometre pipeline on its side by 2011, Islamabad still grapples with the task of installing 80 kilometres of pipeline on its territory. This discrepancy has sparked tensions, with Tehran issuing warnings of potential legal action and threats of an \$18 billion fine due to missed deadlines.

Despite Islamabad's recent pledge to finalise the project by September of this year, doubts linger over its feasibility. The primary obstacle remains Pakistan's apprehension of invoking U.S. sanctions, a concern that has consistently hindered progress, echoing previous justifications for delays.

Why does Pakistan need Iran?

Conversely, assuming a hostile stance towards Iran upsets the delicate equilibrium of Pakistan's already complicated neighbourly ties. Tensions with India continue despite a current cease-fire along the border. The Taliban's support for the TTP's anti-Pakistan insurgency has caused relations between the two parties to deteriorate dramatically on Pakistan's western border. The recent deportation of Afghan refugees from Pakistan has further caused tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Defence spending shoots up as conflicts rise globally: What it means for India

As Ukraine and West Asia remain in active conflict and countries in Europe, East Asia, and also South Asia continue to feel threatened, global military expenditure is expected to continue to rise. Many states announced record military expenditure increases in the last year. The significant increases reflect high security concerns and the need for improving military strength and deterrence. The Stockholm

International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) has begun releasing data for the year gone by. India remains among the highly threatened nations. It has two nuclear-armed neighbours, and with both, it has had serious boundary disputes and fought wars. Yet, the emerging global power has main-

tained a balance between military spending and developmental expenditure. The figures showcase global tensions and hotspots.

Global defence expenditure 2023

Total global military expenditure reached an all-time high of \$2443 billion in 2023, an increase of 6.8 per cent in real terms from 2022. This was the steepest year-on-year increase since 2009. The 10 largest spenders in 2023 were led by the United States, China, and Russia, all of whom increased their military spending. It was the ninth consecutive year of a rise in military spending. Also, it was the first time since 2009 that military expenditure went up in all five of the geographical regions. Particularly large increases were

seen in Europe, Asia, Oceania, and West Asia. Clearly, there is a deterioration in peace and security. As the states prioritise military expenditure and strength, there is a risk of a spiral effect in the neighbourhood. Russia's military spending increased by 24 per cent to an estimated \$109 billion in 2023, marking a 57 per cent rise since 2014, the year that Russia annexed Crimea. The Russian 2023 military expenditure was 16 per cent of total government spending and 5.9 per cent of GDP. Russia's military and war-related spending is set to rise sharply in 2024 under new federal budget plans for 2024-26 signed into law by President Vladimir Putin in November 2023. The plans suggest that the Russian government.

It's time America stopped running with pro-India hare and hunting with anti-India

India has not just become the "only bright spot" economically, as the IMF wants us to believe, but also diplomatically and geostrategically, the country has started behaving like a global power. Image: REUTERS In 2021, The New York Times posted an online advertisement for the job of a South Asia business correspondent based in New Delhi. One of the requirements sought for the position even startled the staunchest of NYT supporters. For, the American newspaper, quite categorically, sought the candidate to be critical of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his "muscular nationalism". Explaining its stand, the newspaper wrote, "India's future now stands at a crossroads. Mr (Narendra) Modi is advocating a self-sufficient, muscular nationalism centred on the country's Hindu majority. That vision puts him at odds with the interfaith, multicultural goals of modern India's founders." Interestingly, the NYT has never put such preconditions for postings in Hong Kong or in mainland China. It has never asked the applicants to prove their pro-democratic credentials for a position in Hong Kong, or to publicly criticise Emperor Xi Jinping for a job in Beijing. If one thought the problem was NYT-centric, then hang on. Others in the West, too, aren't behind in targeting Prime Minister Modi and India. The Time magazine, for instance, just when Prime Minister Modi landed in Washington, DC, for his first official state visit in June 2023, questioned the very idea of India being an American ally. "India is not a US ally, and has not wanted to become one," a Time article thundered on 21 June. Interestingly, an even more scathing article appeared in the magazine a day earlier—on 20 June: "India's Worsening Democracy Makes It an Unreliable Ally." The Economist isn't behind either. It has often reproached Prime Minister Modi for stoking "divisions in the



world's biggest democracy". It has singled out the Modi government for its "flagrantly biased approach to citizenship" and delivering "collective punishment" for the people of the Kashmir Valley. It goes on to say that the "electoral nectar for the BJP" has become "political poison for India". It would, however, be wrong to assume that Western prejudice is only Modi-centric. Although it is today largely influenced and inspired by anti-Modism, prejudice is deeply entrenched against India and its rising global influence. This explains why the West has very rarely celebrated India's dance with democracy in the past seven decades. This despite the fact that India since Independence has been a case of democratic miracle—the only genuine democracy in the region between Israel and South Korea. Moreover, no other country, despite socio-political advancements and economic prosperity, comes even closer to India's democratic successes. What the country could achieve in 75 years, it took Britain and the United States centuries to reach there. Interestingly, in the given timeframe, the US found itself amid the Civil War which almost tore the country into two halves, but for Abraham Lincoln's sagacious leadership. It took the US another 50 years to make voting gender neutral and 100 years to give the Blacks the basic voting rights—something that India bestowed upon its citizens in one go in 1947 despite unprecedented poverty and astounding illiteracy.

Maryam Kartarpur Sahib overture points at new Pak thinking

In an extraordinary, if not unprecedented, step, Pakistan's Punjab chief minister (CM) Maryam Nawaz went to Kartarpur Sahib on April 18, i.e. on the occasion of Baisakhi to greet the Sikhs, especially the 'jatha' from India. She gave a brief speech and also joined the langar. Despite the Lok Sabha elections the Indian media took note of Maryam's gesture. It largely interpreted it as a pointer to Pakistan wanting to normalise ties with India after the elections are over. There may be an element of truth in such thinking, but a deeper analysis of Maryam's Kartarpur foray is needed. However, first the basic points that Maryam conveyed to the 'sangat' and the manner

in which she did so and a few words on Maryam herself and what led her to the CM's chair in Punjab. Maryam is former prime minister and PML(N) party supreme leader Nawaz Sharif's chosen heir. Shehbaz Sharif, Nawaz Sharif's younger brother and current Pakistani prime minister is therefore her uncle. Earlier, while Nawaz Sharif was prime minister Shehbaz was Punjab CM. He administered the province, Sharif's power base, ably and has always had a line open with the army leadership. Shehbaz was assisted in handling the province by his son Hamza Sharif who also briefly became the province's CM in 2022 when the army and then prime minis-

ter Imran Khan had locked horns. After Nawaz Sharif's return from a four-year exile in London in October last year it was largely anticipated that he would become prime minister with Shehbaz returning to Lahore to run the province as CM. It became increasingly clear in the run up to the February 2024 Pakistani national elections that Nawaz Sharif's health had deteriorated and he did not possess the vigour to be prime minister at a time the country was mired in multi-dimensional crises. The election results also showed that Imran, despite all that the army and the People's Democratic Movement government had thrown at him,

retained a substantial measure of support in Punjab. At the same time the Pakistan Peoples Party did well in Sindh. Very difficult PML(N)-PPP negotiations, clearly overseen by the army, from behind the scenes, followed. The arrangement that emerged saw Shehbaz Sharif as prime minister forming the government with outside PPP support, Asif Zardari becoming president of Pakistan, and Maryam becoming the first woman CM of the Punjab. In this the person who has temporarily lost out is Hamza Sharif but the final word has not been said on how the reconciliation of political interests between Maryam and Hamza will eventually occur.

Jawa Yezdi Motorcycles brings its Mega Service Camp in Faridabad



Faridabad : Jawa Yezdi Motorcycles is set to extend its highly successful Mega Service Camp to Faridabad, Haryana. Following the successful phase I of service camps across states, the phase II of service camps will further expand to more cities. This event will take place in Faridabad from April 26th to April 27th, exclusively catering to Jawa motorcycle owners of the 2019 and 2020 models in the region. The service camp will be held at:

o Northern Motors - A-5, Neelam Bata Rd, Nehru Ground Haryana - 121001

As part of the camp, owners of 2019-2020 Jawa motorcycles are entitled to a comprehensive vehicle health check-up and a free replacement of select parts. Leading original equipment suppliers, including Motul, Amaron, and Ceat Tyres, will be actively participating to assist customers. In a continued commitment to long-term customer satisfaction, Jawa Yezdi Motorcycles is offering complimentary extended warranties based on the motorcycles' health evaluation.

Additionally, a designated zone will be set up for owners interested in upgrading their motorcycles to

assess the exchange value. Building on the success of phase I service camps, which have already serviced over 6250 Jawa motorcycles, Jawa anticipates servicing around 10,000 bikes by the end of June. Looking ahead, Jawa will organize Mega Service camps (Phase II) in multiple cities across the country in the coming months. The next camp will be organized in Jammu, Haldwani, Magalore, Siliguri and Jodhpur. This initiative reaffirms the brand's commitment to prioritizing customer satisfaction and providing an unmatched ownership experience.

Supreme Court: Can't pass order on EVMs on suspicion of manipulation

NEW DELHI: Supreme Court on Wednesday expressed its unwillingness to pass any order regarding electronic voting machines (EVMs) only on the basis of suspected hacking and manipulation, while stating that it would not flinch from ensuring steps for improvement if it saw the need for any.

A bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta said the court was not the controlling authority of another constitutional body (Election Commission) which should take independent decisions pertaining to the poll process. When advocate Prashant Bhushan insisted there was still a possibility of a malicious programme being lodged in EVMs to alter the election results, the SC said. "The report you are relying on says there is no incident of hacking yet. We are not the controlling authority of another constitutional authority. We cannot control the election.



The judgment of the court did say VVPAT... but where is the direction to increase the paper count? Can we issue mandamus on the basis of suspicion?" India (1) The SC, on the previous hearing on April 18, had virtually ruled out the possibility of returning to ballot paper. The bench, on the previous hearing on April 18, had virtually ruled out the possibility of returning to ballot paper, and said there was a huge drawback with the system and use of EVMs had stood the test of time with increasing voting percentage reflecting voters' faith in

it. Though the court had reserved its verdict earlier, it held another hearing on Wednesday to clear doubts regarding the technical functioning of EVMs and a deputy election commissioner, like on the last occasion, answered the court's queries. Asked whether micro-controller was installed in the controlling unit or the VVPAT (Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail) unit, the commission told the bench that all three units - control unit, ballot unit and VVPAT unit - had their own microcontrollers which were one-time programmable.

CAPSULES

CDRI leads the call for action to accelerate investments in resilient infrastructure

GURUGRAM :

The International Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (ICDRI) opened today at Bharat Mandapam, New



Delhi. ICDRI is the flagship event of Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), an international organization launched by Prime Minister of India in 2019. CDRI currently has 46 members. The theme of ICDRI 2024 is 'Investing today for a more resilient tomorrow.' ICDRI is a two-day event that brings together governments, the global infrastructure community, multilateral development banks, the private sector, and the media to support the development of disaster resilient infrastructure. Inaugurating the event virtually, Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, highlighted that damages to infrastructure systems caused by disasters are reported in dollars, but the true impact is felt by people and communities. The Prime Minister congratulated CDRI on its rapid growth since 2019, and its programmes which are supporting the development of resilient infrastructure, including across 13 Small Island Developing States. He closed his remarks with the hope that ICDRI would catalyze action to help achieve 'shared global resilience'.

HDFC Bank Educated over 2 Lakhs Citizens on Safe Digital Banking Practices PAN India in FY24

AMBALA/HISAR: HDFC Bank as a part of digital banking awareness drive, conducted a series of secure banking workshops pan India. The Bank organized over 16,600 workshops sensitizing over 2,00,224 citizens on safe digital banking practices. These workshops were aimed at educating school and college students, law enforcement agencies, senior citizens, self-help groups, customers and employees. Through these interactive sessions, participants gained valuable insights on safe digital banking practices so



that they don't fall prey to cyber frauds. Commenting on this Mr. Manish Agrawal, Executive Vice President - Credit Intelligence and Control - HDFC Bank said, "Cybercrime is a serious threat to indi-

viduals and organisations alike. Lack of awareness among the citizens so that they do not share confidential banking data or click on unverified links. The

objective of these workshops is to educate participants on various modus operandi used by fraudsters and the secure banking practices that they need to follow so that they do not become victims of such online frauds. These awareness workshops are in line with HDFC Bank's philosophy and core value i.e. Customer Focus." The workshops included real life examples, stories and videos which helped participants understand various Modus Operandi used by fraudsters and tips on how to stay safe from such frauds.

Tata Motors celebrates 4 lakh happy customers of the Magic; introduces first-in-its-segment, Magic Bi-Fuel

GURUGRAM / FARIDABAD : Tata Motors, India's largest commercial vehicle manufacturer, celebrates the remarkable milestone of 4 lakh happy customers of the Tata Magic - India's most preferred van. On the momentous occasion, the company has introduced a new variant, the Magic Bi-Fuel, to further increase the convenience of its customers. Renowned for its reliability, efficiency and affordability in the last-mile transportation, the 10-seater Tata Magic has



been the ideal choice of commuters and operators. The sleek design, safety and passenger comfort of the Tata Magic have been pivotal to its continued successes over the years. The Tata Magic comes equipped with an array

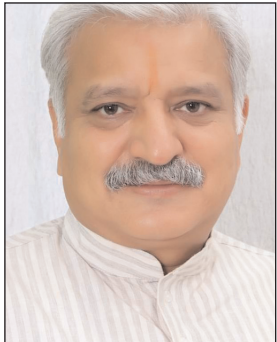
of value-added features such as an Eco switch, gearshift advisor and enhanced driver ergonomics, all aimed at reducing the total cost of ownership.

The Magic is perfectly suited for student and staff transportation, and last-mile mobility. The Magic-Bi-Fuel is powered by a 694cc engine and comes with 60-litre CNG tank along with 5-litre petrol tank, with a cumulative range of ~380 kilometres on a single fill. Offering unparalleled performance and

low maintenance costs, the Magic comes with an exceptional warranty of 2 years or 72,000 km. Commenting on the milestone, Mr. Anand S, Vice President & Head - Passenger Business, Tata Motors Commercial Vehicles said, "We are elated to achieve the milestone of 4 lakh happy customers for the versatile Magic brand. Celebrating 4 lakh journeys of trust, efficiency and comfort, the Magic continues to be the heartbeat of India's bustling mass mobility.

BJP leader Amarjeet Chhabra campaigned vigorously in favor of Naveen Jindal and sought votes

Kaithal: State President of Haryana Rice Millers Dealers Association and senior BJP leader Amarjeet Chhabra said that under the able leadership of the country's successful Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the country has set a new direction and our country is being recognized all over the world. Has been named. Modi government has created a new India. He said that the Modi-Nab government has been working well in the public interest for the last 10 years. The development and beneficial policies of the BJP government have proved to be a boon for the upliftment and welfare of every section of the society. Amarjeet Chhabra was appealing for votes by campaigning in various



areas of the district in favor of BJP candidate Naveen Jindal from Kurukshetra Lok Sabha constituency. Amarjeet Chhabra said that today the policy of the country's government is right. The work that Modi government has done in empowering women has not been done by any government till date. The country has to be made a developed nation by 2047 and BJP will form the government for the third time with the blessings of the public

with the slogan of 400 crosses and for the third time Narendra Modi will be crowned the Prime Minister. The wave of BJP is going on in the country and the state and the people of Haryana will work to bloom lotus flowers on 10 Lok Sabha seats. He claimed that BJP candidate from Kurukshetra Lok Sabha constituency Naveen Jindal is getting full support from people of every section day by day and with the blessings of the public, Jindal will win the elections with record breaking votes. BJP leader Amarjeet Chhabra said that today Congress is not even getting candidates to contest the Lok Sabha elections and the family of BJP is continuously increasing.

Eraaya Lifespaces Ltd. Acquires Luxury Staycation Property and Commercial Retail Spaces

CHANDIGARH : Eraaya Lifespaces Ltd. (BSE: 531035) is pleased to update the developments taking place in its hospitality business (i) acquisition of luxury Staycation property at Lonavala with an investment of about INR 30 Million, and (ii) acquisition of commercial retail spaces with an investment of about INR 470 Million in the largest mall located near the International Airport at Mohali, the satellite city of Chandigarh, the heart of the richest state in India, Punjab, which demonstrates its strong commitment to expanding its hospitality business and diversifying its portfolio in the growth potential business



areas. Eraaya of locations for its Designer, Luxury Staycation properties demonstrates an intense understanding of the booming leisure tourism market and a strategic approach to meeting the needs of discerning travellers. The Destination Lonavala: Situated amidst the lush greenery of the Western Ghats and conveniently located near major urban centres like Mumbai and Pune, Lonavala

is a popular destination for weekend getaways and leisure trips. The serene surroundings, pleasant climate, and range of recreational activities make it an ideal location for a luxury Staycation property. Eraaya Lifespaces' investment in a Luxury Cottage located at the pristine allows it to cater to the demand from urban dwellers seeking a luxurious escape from city life without having to travel far. By ensuring that

its Boutique Staycation property in Lonavala will be ready and operational by this current mid-year, Eraaya Lifespaces demonstrates its commitment to meeting the demands of travellers eager to explore exceptional destinations. Whether guests are seeking a serene retreat amidst nature or an indulgent urban escape, Eraaya Lifespaces' properties will be designed to offer unforgettable experiences tailored to their preferences and desires. The Hospitality Industry in India Market size is estimated at USD 247.31 billion in 2024, and is expected to reach USD 475.37 billion by 2029.

PM Narendra Modi on said he would be a "shield for the Constitution"

RAIPUR: PM Narendra Modi on said he would be a "shield for the Constitution" and attacked Congress over a remark by its South Goa candidate Captain Viriato Fernandes (retired) that the Indian Constitution was "imposed on Goa" after its liberation from the Portuguese rule in 1961. At a rally, Fernandes had said that while pressing for the demand for dual citizenship, he had explained to Rahul Gandhi in 2019 how the Constitution was 'imposed' on Goans. Attacking Congress at a rally in Chhattisgarh, Modi said: "A Congress candidate in Goa is saying that the Constitution of India will not work there. Isn't this a disrespect of Babasaheb? Isn't this a disrespect of the Constitution Babasaheb's Constitution is working in J&K." "This is a deliberate move to break the country.

PM Modi, Rahul Gandhi escalate Lok Sabha fight day after phase 1



Delhi: Senior leaders across the political spectrum stepped up their campaigning a day after over 100 million people voted across 21 states in the first phase of the Lok Sabha elections. Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the Congress has accepted defeat, while former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi accused the BJP-RSS of threatening democracy. Modi told a gathering in Nanded, Maharashtra, for Nanded and Hingoli Lok Sabha candidates

that the Congress is a hindrance to development and cannot be trusted to advance the nation. The Parbhani public meeting was also his. The PM called Gandhi "Congress's shehzade" and predicted he will lose Wayanad like he did Amethi in 2019. The Congress's shehzada sees a Wayanad issue. Gandhi is running for a second term in Wayanad against Communist Party of India's Annie Raja and NDA's K Surendran in the second phase on April

26. They're not campaigning. Congress can't find candidates either "No leader was named. He added the INDIA bloc lacks a face the people can trust with their future. He said Congress leaders have conceded loss before polls, notwithstanding their claims. "After June 4, INDIA bloc members will fight like hell. "Teach them a lesson in elections," Modi said, adding that INDIA bloc parties are competing for 25% of Lok Sabha seats.

AAP establishes Ram Rajya website

Delhi: The Aam Aadmi Party launched "AAP ka Ram Rajya" website before the Lok Sabha elections to exhibit its Delhi and Punjab governments' work that they compare to "Ram Rajya". At a joint press conference, AAP officials invited voters to visit the website and evaluate their governments' performance. They said chief minister Arvind Kejriwal had built good schools, mohalla clinics, free water and electricity, and free bus rides for women in the last 10 years to realize "Ram Rajya" and that the Bhagwant Mann government had done similar work in Punjab in the last



two years. In March, the Delhi AAP government invoked Lord Ram to submit its budget in the Delhi Assembly, declaring "Ram Rajya" impact-evaluated its policies. On Ram Navami, aapkaramrajya.com launched. Sanjay Singh, a senior AAP Rajya Sabha member, said the world was learning from Kejriwal and the AAP during the event. In the past, people said "learn from America," but today the US President's wife wants Arvind

Kejriwal to build schools. He remarked, "Now, Americans learn from Kejriwal's work," referring to Melania Trump's 2020 visit to a Delhi government school. The website and its YouTube channel feature AAP government projects and policies in Delhi and Punjab and people's favorable feedback. In Arvind Kejriwal's 'Ram Rajya', no one is big or small and everyone works for the common good.

Congress names 3 LS and 16 assembly Odisha candidates

Delhi: The All India Congress Committee (AICC) named Odisha candidates for 16 assembly seats and three parliamentary constituencies. The party, which had announced 17 Lok Sabha candidates, added two new names and modified one con-

stituency's candidate. The party named Dulal Chandra Pradhan for Sambalpur Lok Sabha, where Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan is running for the BJP and Pranab Prakash Das for the BJD. Debakanta Sharma was nominated for Aska Lok Sabha, while

Binod Bihari Nayak replaced Mohan Hembram in Keonjhar. The party announced 16 assembly constituency candidates and Lok Sabha nominees. Sipra Mallik for Kendrapara Sonali Sahoo, a BJP convert to Congress, was nominated for Khurda.

Voters get handmade presents and selfie points in Noida, Greater Noida model booths

Delhi: Nearly 15 model polling booths are at schools and colleges in Noida and Greater Noida, and educational institutions are using unique methods to make voting day fun. Of the 51 model polling booths in the district, 15 are in educational institutions, according to Atul Kumar, additional district magistrate. Model polling booths will be installed in eight Noida schools and two Dadri schools and one university. In Jewar, four schools will have model stalls. Kumar said educational institution workers



and management are making voting day unique. Sharda University officials in Knowledge Park-3, Greater Noida, said international students will greet and assist voters on election day. The university has

picked 27 international students to help voters at replica polling stations on campus since Indian students will vote at home. "By being closely associated with the elections, the international students, who are mostly

from central Asia, Africa and Europe, will get a first-hand experience of voting day in the biggest democracy in the world," stated., Noida, will give first-time voters red flowers and 'I Voted' badges. Our pupils prepare to support the electoral management team when the school becomes an election booth. "We are having students make "I Voted" badges and a "Proud Voter" selfie point where voters can take pictures," Tricolor balloons and banners will beautify the school.

Akhilesh promises 'wind of change from West UP'

Delhi: At a joint gathering of the opposition INDIA bloc in Amroha Samajwadi Party leader Akhilesh Yadav and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi attacked the ruling BJP and articulated their agenda. Akhilesh Yadav told fans, "The winds of change emerging from western UP will sweep across the nation, ushering in a transformation that will not only reshape Uttar Pradesh but will also sweep the BJP out of power." He criticized the BJP's failure to improve farmers' livelihoods and reduce unem-

ployment. "BJP's first-day display yesterday was a disaster. Their deception film failed." BSP MP Danish Ali, who joined Congress, was supported at the event. Did any farmer quadruple his income? Youth unemployed. BJP's traditional voters are rallying against it. They hold panchayats and vote against the BJP. I applaud their political awakening against the BJP "Yadav referenced western Uttar Pradesh's 'Kshatriya dissatisfaction' Recent caste Mahapanchayat in protested BJP ticket

allotment that under-represented Thakurs. Respect for communal heroes like Raja Mihir Bhoj was also questioned. Yadav reiterated the opposition's claim that the BJP wanted a two-thirds majority in Lok Sabha elections to rewrite the Constitution. , saying, "We want Dr. Ambedkar's Constitutional guarantees, not the BJP's. We want to protect the Constitution." Rahul Gandhi echoed Akhilesh Yadav's comments about the INDIA bloc's ideological conflict with the BJP-RSS.

BJD 'Doubles Down' on Odisha Assembly Polls

Delhi: Naveen Patnaik, seeking a sixth term, will run in two assembly constituencies. These constituencies are Hinjili in southern Odisha's Ganjam district and Kantabanji in western Odisha's Balangir district. The Biju Janata Dal's 2019 strategy saw the chief minister contest from two assembly constituencies: his hometown Hinjili and Bijepur in western Odisha's Bargarh district. In a video message, CM Patnaik announced the BJD's fifth list candidates, including his own, with a 'namaskar' and 'juhar' to greet western.

Feedback focuses on pollution and infrastructure: BJP

Delhi: In its Delhi-specific manifesto consultation, BJP has received over 15,000 public proposals. Prior to the Lok Sabha elections, the party's campaign last month sought public opinion on Viksit Bharat. A Delhi vision document from the BJP is expected in the first week of May after analyzing the ideas. Sources in the party claimed the ideas include reducing pollution and improving road and metro infrastructure. The most common accusations were about registering illegal colonies and shutting local shopping centers. On March 1, 4.75 lakh unlicensed colonies applied to the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) for PM Uday Yojana house ownership rights. 22,034 conveyance deeds and authorisation papers have been



granted, whereas 56,306 have been disposed of. Officials said the remaining applications are in various stages. DDA said it had taken recent steps to encourage approximately 40 lakh individuals living in 12.5 lakh unauthorised colonies to join the four-year-old plan. But the numbers aren't good. Residents reported attaching a power of attorney was difficult. They argued the system guarantees ownership rights but lacks recreation places and parks. Another issue was about local malls being sealed. Over six years, a moni-

toring committee shuttered thousands of properties in the national capital. Until last year, 5,639 properties were closed. After a judicial committee ordered de-sealing, the civic body appealed to the Supreme Court, claiming revenue loss. They proposed more city flyovers and expressways. People also urged the Delhi government to manage pollution more strictly. A BJP official said 30% of complaints were over civic concerns like overflowing drains, substandard neighborhood roads, or inconsistent water supplies..

Local representation for small traders in Jammu's development effort in Election

Delhi: The Jammu region is bustling with central government infrastructure and education projects ahead of the Lok Sabha elections. After fulfilling promises to establish prominent institutions like IIT and IIM, the central government has pledged a 32,000 crore infrastructural drive to modernize the region. In laying the foundation stone for the new Jammu airport terminal, Prime Minister Narendra Modi stressed the need for a well-developed, connected, and educated Jammu. Sankalp of 'Viksit Jammu & Kashmir' was taken. I believe in you and know we will create Jammu & Kashmir 'viksit' "Prime Minister Modi



summed up the government's aim for the region. Local companies worry about Jammu's conventional markets despite these massive infrastructure investments. President of the Apsara Road Traders Association Anil Kohli decried the lack of attention to underground wiring, water problems, and traffic management. To help traders and

shoppers, he advocated for more accessibility and local representation. A lack of state government and local representation has hurt small enterprises in Raghunath Bazaar, Gandhi Nagar, and Apsara Road marketplaces. Local shopkeeper Indu Bhushan Sharma said elected locals would better understand and handle community concerns than officials.

NHAI Is Seeking to Raise Rs. 45,000 Crore by Selling 33 Projects

Delhi: The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has revealed its intentions to raise Rs 45,000 crore in the current fiscal year by selling off 33 of its projects. This goal represents a noteworthy rise of about 12% over the numbers from the prior year. The projects that have been identified have a total length.

Subhash Chopra will serve as the head of the party's election management

Delhi: Deepak Babaria, the Congress's Delhi in-charge, declared that former MLA Subhash Chopra will serve as the head of the party's election management and coordination committee for the Delhi Lok Sabha elections. Chopra will serve as the chairman of an 18-person group that will manage the poll campaigns. Delhi Congress head Arvinder Singh Lovely stated, "Subhash Chopra has considerable experience in planning for parliamentary elections, and his experience will be hugely beneficial in managing the Lok Sabha elections in Delhi." Under the direction of Prasad Harichandan, the TNNC Congress forms a 26-person committee for the Odisha elections, with a focus on dissident management, candidate coordination, and strategy planning. AICC wants to use influential people to help run a successful campaign.

Nitish Kumar criticizes Lalu for dynastic politics

Delhi: In reference to Prasad's huge family, the Bihar CM questioned the need for so many children and said that after boosting his sons, his girls should enter politics. At an election rally in Katihar, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar criticized RJD president Lalu Prasad for pushing his family in politics. Kumar's statements seemed to target Prasad's political dynasty, including his wife Rabri Devi and son Tejashwi Yadav, who have held high-profile political posts. In reference to Prasad's huge family, the Bihar CM questioned the need for so many children and said that after boosting his sons, his girls should enter politics. The state had no roads and no development by RJD. Growth began after I became CM "Kumar stated. Tejashwi Yadav told Patna media, "With folded hands, I say Nitish can say whatever he wants. Respect him and call him my guardian. I always pray for his health. However, would personal attacks help in the Lok Sabha elections? Personal attacks—what will Bihar's people gain? This is not a family conflict." Why doesn't he mention Bihar's special package and status? Why is he mute on improving health and education? What about giving state kids government jobs?" Yadav said Misa Bharti, Lalu Prasad's daughter and RJD leader, stated, "What can I say about Chacha Ji (Nitish)'s comment? He knew this while the JD(U) was in Bihar's 'grand alliance'." "Why is Nitish not invited to BJP rallies addressed by prominent leaders? We know the reason, but the CM should inform the public".

Not Tej Pratap, Samajwadi Party declares Akhilesh Yadav as Kannauj candidate

LUCKNOW: After a series of flip-flops, Samajwadi Party declared on Wednesday Akhilesh Yadav as the party's candidate for Kannauj Lok Sabha seat, replacing his nephew, Tej Pratap Singh Yadav, whose candidature was announced on April 22.

A post from the party's official X handle said the SP national president would "file his nomination papers for Kannauj at noon tomorrow (April 25)". The seat is currently held by BJP. Senior SP politicians said the decision to field Akhilesh was taken following mounting pressure from district-level functionaries in Kannauj. District-level functionaries were of the view that SP chief Akhilesh Yadav's candidature would not only ensure an SP win in Kannauj but also consolidate the party's position in at least four adjoining constituencies, according to senior Samajwadi politi-



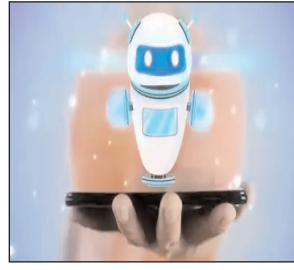
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"More than 100 functionaries and office-bearers of SP from Chibramu, Tirwa and Kannauj assembly segments, along with those from Bidhuna and Rasoolabad assembly segments of Kannauj parliamentary constituency, had called on Akhilesh in the past 48 hours insisting that he must contest from the seat," said a senior politician. "Most of them felt Tej Pratap's candidature may not be enough," he said. Some senior SP workers were also of the view that Tej Pratap's candidature from Kannauj may be a repeat of what the

party had strategised while fielding Dimple Yadav from the seat in 2019. "Tej Pratap Yadav was not a wrong choice, but Akhilesh's candidature is a better option," a senior SP politician said. There were reports that the SP chief was inclined to contest from Kannauj from the beginning but decided to field Tej Pratap due to the latter's work for the party in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls in Mainpuri and 2022 assembly polls in Karhal. Unconfirmed reports said Tej Pratap's father-in-law, RJD chief Lalu Prasad Yadav, too, had recommended Tej Pratap.

AI inside most apps you use

AI is being used by nine in 10 internet users in India, thanks to the enormous computing capabilities on their phones, connectivity, and cloud infrastructure, finds a study by marketing data and analytics firm Kantar. The current AI user base of the country stands at 724 million and is poised to grow at 6% on a year-on-year basis. These are users who have used any of the AI features like image filters, personalised recommendations, and smart devices. Social media and fitness apps are taking the lead in terms of driving AI adoption, with the highest number of AI-led features embedded in



related applications. Entertainment apps are a close second. AI is also touching digital commerce and pharmacy apps. Kantar anticipates that many more digital commerce and entertainment apps will adopt AI features to enhance the quality of customer experience and stay in line with emerging trends. Adoption remains slow in BFSI, job search and short video apps segments, the study

showed.

Usage of AI tech is expectedly higher among the youth (19-24 years). But those who are 45 and above are also keeping up, with usage for the cohort at about 81%.

Even as consumers embrace AI, the technology's usage is not as rampant among marketers due to privacy and safety concerns, Deepender Rana, executive MD (insights), South Asia and Puneet Avasthi, senior ED (insights), South Asia, at Kantar told TOI in an interaction. About 60% of the organisations surveyed by the firm said that they rarely or never use AI.

Masala row: Govt inspects facilities of spice makers, regulator says

NEW DELHI: Following the suspension of sales of certain products by spice makers MDH and Everest in Hong Kong and Singapore due to alleged high levels of a cancer-causing pesticide, the government has now initiated inspections of their facilities to

ensure compliance with quality standards. The spices export regulator has confirmed that inspections are underway at the facilities of MDH and Everest to verify adherence to regulatory standards. The move comes as a response to concerns

raised regarding the quality of spices produced by these companies. In a statement, the spices export regulator said that they are collaborating with the companies to identify the root cause of the issue and propose corrective measures.

Conspiracy against PM amounts to treason: Delhi high court

NEW DELHI: Conspiracy against the Prime Minister amounted to treason and a person cannot be accused of such a serious offence irresponsibly without any cogent material, the Delhi high court Wednesday said.

The court was hearing a lawsuit filed by BJD MP Pinaki Misra against lawyer Jai Anant Dehadrai, seeking to restrain him from making "false and defamatory" tweets and statements. Dehadrai had alleged that Misra, along with expelled TMC MP Mahua Moitra, had conspired



against the Prime Minister. Pulling up Dehadrai, Justice Jasmeet Singh orally observed: "When you say conspiracy against the Prime Minister, it is troublesome. You can't be trigger happy... Conspiracy against the Prime Minister is an

offence against the state, (it is) treason... It has serious repercussions on the general public." The court said that Dehadrai should await the outcome of his complaint to the authorities before he makes such allegations. "The allegation of con-

spiring against the prime minister cannot be made irresponsibly and needs to be based on cogent and substantive reasons," the court further said. Following Justice Singh's remarks, Dehadrai and his counsel assured the court that he would not make further statements in relation to Misra "conspiring" against the Prime Minister till the next date of hearing. The court said CBI was already looking into the allegations, and the dispute between Dehadrai and Moitra was also pending before the HC. Taking the statement.

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 Damar, 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.

Bengal govt goes to SC, says Calcutta HC's jobs scam order

KOLKATA: Arguing that the Calcutta high court order scrapping all 2016 teaching and non-teaching staff appointments would "paralyse" schools in Bengal, leading to a "complete collapse of the education system", state govt filed a special leave petition (SLP) in Supreme Court on Wednesday challenging it. The state also urged an interim stay of the high court order. Along with the state, School Service Commission and Bengal's primary education board have also moved the SC. Bengal govt submitted that the HC order "utterly disregarded" that unless a new selection process was completed by SSC, there would be a huge vacuum of staff in state schools that would adversely impact students. The state argued that "even though as per the CBI enquiry report



and the affidavit by the SSC irregularity in appointments were only found for 4,327 teachers and non-teaching staff, the order in its own wisdom strikes at the legal and valid selections of 23,123 teachers, which was not found to be riddled with any anomaly as per the chargesheet filed by CBI concluding the investigation". Bengal said the HC had "mechanically directed" SSC to begin fresh selections a fortnight after the election process ended on June 4, but till then schools would be "seriously understaffed". The state pointed out that

the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 prescribed that govt was bound to maintain a 40:1 student to teacher ratio at the elementary level, and the same was practised at the secondary level. Bengal submitted that the HC's decision asking CBI to investigate the cabinet's move to create supernumerary posts "overreached" SC verdicts. Bengal govt questioned how the HC could "transgress issues before it" and ask CBI to look into a "policy decision taken by the cabinet". The state called it "strange"

30 India-based foreign journalists slam govt over reporter's claim

NEW DELHI: After another run-in with the foreign press, which saw senior ABC journalist Avani Dias alleging she was forced out of the country for not toeing the govt line, 30 India-based foreign journalists hit out at the govt for pushing out Dias at a time it was claiming to hold the largest democratic exercise in the world. Backing Dias' assertion that her journalism visa wasn't renewed because, as she was told by the govt, her reporting on the Sikh separatist movement had "crossed a line", the journalists in a letter called upon the Indian govt to facilitate the vital work of a free press in line with India's traditions. "Foreign journalists in India have grappled with increased restrictions on visas and journalism permits for



those holding the status of Overseas Citizen of India. The circumstances of Ms Dias' departure are further cause for concern," they said in an open letter, in which they also registered a strong protest against how Dias was treated. Govt sources had responded to Dias on Tuesday by claiming her contention that she was not allowed to cover elections and was compelled to leave the country is not correct, misleading and mischievous. They said her visa had been renewed two days

before her departure, while also accusing her of violating visa rules while undertaking her "professional pursuits". The journalists said in their letter, however, that though her visa was extended for two months just before her departure, she was told that she would not receive accreditation to cover the elections. "Thus, though not technically expelling her, Indian authorities have effectively pushed out a foreign correspondent on the eve of an election that the govt describes

as the largest democratic exercise in the world". "Ms Dias, who has covered India since January 2022, left the country on Friday, the first day of the election. She departed after the govt told her that her reporting on the Sikh separatist movement (reporting that has since been blocked in India) had "crossed a line" and they would not renew her journalism visa," read the letter. Indian govt sources had also said that Dias had actually left for personal reasons and because she wanted to take up a new job offer. On Wednesday, The Australia Today said in a report Dias had returned "driven by a new professional opportunity and personal milestone, rather than any alleged intimidation by the Indian govt".

19 years on, 20 get life imprisonment for double murder in poll violence

VILLUPURAM: Villupuram additional district judge S Rajasimmavaran sentenced 20 people to life imprisonment on Tuesday for murdering two people in violence during local body polls at a village near Villupuram in 2005. Those sentenced include an advocate, a police constable, and a government servant. The judge fined them Rs 50,000 each. The families of the two victims were awarded compensation of Rs 5 lakh each. Six others accused of the double murder died during trial. According to the prosecution, enmity prevailed between Kulasekaran (59) and Nakkeeran (49) over enjoying poramboke land (unassessed land, owned by govt) in the village. Nakkeeran had contested 2005 local body polls and another villager, Sekar, contested against him. Kulasekaran supported Sekar.

Pant, Axar Patel shine as Delhi Capitals beat Gujarat Titans in last-over thriller

NEW DELHI: Rishabh Pant's unbeaten 88 powered the Delhi Capitals to a tense IPL victory over the Gujarat Titans on Wednesday, bolstering his chances of securing a spot in India's T20 World Cup squad.

Delhi set a formidable total of 224-4, courtesy of a 113-run partnership between Pant and fellow left-hander Axar Patel, who scored 66, after the team found themselves at 44-3 within the first six overs at their home ground, the Arun Jaitley Stadium.

The hosts held Gujarat to 220-8, securing victory by four runs despite David Miller's 23-ball 55 and an unbeaten 21 off 11 balls from Rashid Khan.

Mukesh Kumar held his composure in the final over, ensuring Delhi's fourth win in nine matches and keeping their playoff hopes alive in the T20 tournament.

Pant, 26, marked his third half-century of



the season after a 14-month hiatus from top-level cricket due to a severe car accident in December 2022, which caused multiple injuries and required surgery.

Not only has Pant excelled with the bat in the IPL, but his sharp skills behind the stumps have led Delhi's director of cricket Sourav Ganguly and coach Ricky Ponting to support his return to the national team for the upcoming World Cup in June.

Emerging Australian batsman Jake Fraser-McGurk provided Delhi with a strong start, scoring 23 off 14 balls, but medium-pacer Sandeep Warrier claimed three wickets, including two

in one over. Patel, promoted to number three in the batting order, reached his half-century with a boundary off Rashid Khan before being caught at long-on by another Afghan spinner, Noor Ahmad.

Pant brought up his half-century in dramatic fashion with a six off Mohit Sharma and later plundered the medium-pacer in a 31-run 20th over, finishing with a six, a four, and three sixes, electrifying the crowd. South African Tristan Stubbs watched Pant's onslaught from the other end, contributing an unbeaten 26 off seven balls, including a blistering over in the 19th that yielded 22 runs.

'Coach and captain wanted one over when...': Kuldeep Yadav



NEW DELHI: Skipper Rishabh Pant showcased his brilliance with an unbeaten 88 runs, steering Delhi Capitals (DC) to a thrilling four-run victory over Gujarat Titans (GT) in the Indian Premier League (IPL) encounter on Wednesday.

Invited to bat first, Pant's explosive innings, combined with Axar Patel's composed 66 off 43 balls, propelled DC to a formidable total of 224 for 4. Despite a valiant effort from Sai Sudarshan (65 off 29) and David Miller (55 off 23), GT fell short, finishing at 220 for 8 in their allotted 20 overs.

Axar and Pant's pivotal 113-run partnership

resurrected Delhi's innings after Sandeep Warrier's early strikes. Pant's exceptional performance, including eight sixes and five boundaries, sealed the victory for DC, with Tristan Stubbs adding a quickfire 26 off just 7 deliveries.

A visibly relieved Kuldeep Yadav, who picked 2/29 in his four-over spell, said after the win that he just focused on his line and length and saw what the batters were trying to do. "Happy to get the win. These two points are very important. Amazing game. When we went into the last over, I knew it was going to be very tight. We had

a plan, coach and captain wanted one over when Tewatia came into bat. Luckily it worked out," Kuldeep said after the match. "You have to read the batsmen and see what they are trying to do. We batted well, 225 is a good total.

I didn't want to try too much when I came into bowl. Just focused on my lines and lengths and saw what the batters were trying to do. (On Tewatia's wicket) I bowled a few balls into the wicket to him, thought he might slog-sweep, it was a good plan from the 'keeper and we got the wicket," Kuldeep added.

CAPSULES

Manipur CM asks AIFF to stay state's clubs' relegation from I-League

NEW DELHI: In what could be unprecedented in Indian football, a sitting chief minister has formally requested the All India Football Federation to waive off relegation of two clubs from his state due to year-long ethnic violence and unrest in his area. In a March 8, 2024 letter addressed to AIFF president, Kalyan Chaubey, a copy of which is with TOI, Manipur chief minister N Biren Singh wrote seeking retaining TRAU FC and NEROCA FC from the I-League First Division. "I feel that the situation that both clubs face themselves in is a very unique one and something beyond anyone's control. I shall be very grateful if you could kindly consider retaining TRAU FC and NEROCA FC in the First Division of the I-League," the Manipur CM wrote. "The past year has been a challenging one on account of the unrest seen in Manipur starting May 3, 2023. Due to this unrest, the change in home ground (of TRAU FC and NEROCA FC) with minimal home support and also that many family members of the players were affected by the unrest, had severely affected the performance of both teams," read the letter. Terming the matter as "delicate and one that could set a wrong precedent," sources within the AIFF said that the League Committee would be consulted and further discuss it with the Executive Committee. Biren Singh's letter precedes the March 26 series of correspondence between the Manipur clubs and the AIFF seeking playing their away ties against Aizawl FC at a neutral venue, due to fears arising from the "open support of the Mizos to the Kuki Jo group," and that "tensions between Meiteis and Kukis are not yet stopped."

'No point in talking...': Gill after Gujarat Titans defeat vs Delhi Capitals

NEW DELHI: Rishabh Pant's unbeaten 88 propelled the Delhi Capitals to a four-run victory over the Gujarat Titans in the Indian Premier League match on Wednesday. After being invited to bat first, Pant (88* off 43 balls) and Axar Patel (66 off 43 balls) posted contrasting half-centuries, guiding Delhi Capitals to a formidable total of 224 for 4.

In response, Sai Sudarshan (65 off 29) and David Miller (55 off 23) reached half-centuries for GT but fell short of the target, ending their innings at 220 for 8 in their 20 overs. Delhi Capitals ultimately secured victory and snatched two crucial points, but the game went down to the wire, leaving everyone on the edge of their seats. GT's star



batter David Miller shone as a bright spot for Gujarat, showcasing his aggressive batting in the 17th over, where he consistently found the boundaries and revived Gujarat's hopes. Unfortunately, Miller's untimely departure proved costly for the Shubman Gill-led side. Despite Rashid's determined efforts in the final over, Gujarat Titans

ultimately fell just four runs short. Gujarat Titans captain Shubman hailed his team's fighting efforts in the mammoth chase. "I think we played some really good cricket, disappointing to lose in the end, but great character shown by everyone. Great fight till the end and we never thought we were out of the game at any point. When you're chasing 224, there's no point in talking about plans, just go out and score runs. I think impact player has a bit of a role (in making the matches high scoring), even if you lose extra wickets, extra cushion is there for the batters to keep going and it gives the license for the batters to keep going till the end," Shubman said after the match.

We're world champions, we're confident': Adil on England's World Cup preparations

NEW DELHI: Veteran spinner Adil Rashid remains confident in England's ability to bounce back from their disappointing performance in last year's ODI World Cup, asserting that the defending champions possess the team, players, and mindset to defend their title in the upcoming T20 World Cup 2024.

England faced challenges in their attempt to defend their title in 2023, finishing in seventh place with just three wins from nine matches. The highly anticipated tournament



begins on June 1 in the USA and the West Indies. Rashid is optimistic that England can reclaim their crown in the tournament and defend their title. "The 50 overs was a completely different format," Rashid said, speaking at ECB's launch

of a national tape-ball competition as quoted from ICC. "We had a poor run or whatever. It is what it is. We didn't have the best tournament. We didn't play well: bat, ball, as a team, as a unit - everything. But I think this is a completely different format

where currently we're world champions at that. We're confident. We've got the team, we've got the mindset, we've got the players, we've got the experience. If we go out there having the same belief, I think we'll - hopefully - go all the way," he added. In 2022, en route to their title triumph, England suffered just one defeat throughout the tournament which came against Ireland. They defeated tournament favourites India in the semi-final and went on to claim a comfortable victory.

Gill makes comment on Impact Player rule after Titans loss

NEW DELHI: Gujarat Titans captain Shubman Gill believes the Impact Player rule contributes to the high-scoring nature of the matches by providing batters with the additional support needed to play aggressively against

the bowlers. This ongoing IPL season has seen its 12th score over 200 runs as the Delhi Capitals amassed 224 for 4 against the Gujarat Titans on Wednesday.

"I think impact player has a bit of a role (in making the matches high scoring), even if you lose extra wickets, extra cushion is there for the batters to keep going and it gives the license for the batters to keep going till the end," Gill said after GT's four-run loss.

Despite starting strong, GT bowlers allowed DC to make a comeback as Rishabh Pant and Axar Patel stitched a 113 run-stand and

Gill felt his side was guilty of giving away a few extra runs.

"At one stage we thought we will be able to restrict them around 200-210. We gave away a few extra runs in the last couple of overs," Gill said.

"But the good thing about chasing is that you know what you are chasing. It's a small ground, and it's chaseable. Execution becomes very important [for bowlers]. If there's nothing in the wicket for the bowlers, then you have to execute your plans - or your yorkers."

Gujarat Titans will next face Royal Challengers Bengaluru on Sunday.

'It's about instincts as a captain': Pant reveals why he chose Rasikh Salam

NEW DELHI: Delhi Capitals (DC) skipper Rishabh Pant shed light on his tactical decision to entrust Rasikh Salam with the 19th over under testing circumstances instead of seasoned pacer Anrich Nortje. Pant's blistering unbeaten knock of 88 steered DC to a nail-biting four-run victory over Gujarat Titans (GT) in the IPL clash on Wednesday, bolstering his chances for selection in India's T20 World Cup squad.

Despite a shaky start at 44-3, Pant's dynamic partnership with Axar Patel, who contributed a crucial 66, propelled DC to a formidable total of 224-4 at the Arun Jaitley Stadium. GT fought back with David Miller's explosive 55 and Rashid Khan's late blitz, but fell short at 220-8. Mukesh Kumar's composed final over



ensured Delhi's fourth win in nine matches, keeping their playoff aspirations alive in the T20 tournament. The DC skipper cited Salam's skill set and composure under pressure as critical factors in his selection for the crucial over. By entrusting Salam with a pivotal moment in the game, Pant showcased his astute captaincy and belief in the squad's depth, ultimately contributing to DC's triumph.

"(On choosing Rasikh

for 19th over) Nortje was having a tough time. T20 is a funny game, after 14-15 overs the ball was coming on nicely. So we wanted to trust Rasikh, always trust someone who is bowling well in a game. I think it is about instincts as a captain, it will come off sometimes. Happy it worked today," Pant, who was named player of the match, said at the post-match presentation.

"Surely at 43/3, we

wanted to just keep going and target their main spinners. If we get something, we will take it on and keep rotating the strike. Everyday that I'm in the middle, I feel better. Every hour on the field matters, I love being on the field. I try to give it my 100% and it takes some time sometimes. I think the first six in the match gives me confidence in the game. The more time I spend in the centre, the better I feel," Pant added.

Tristan Stubbs' Superman effort seals victory for Delhi Capitals

NEW DELHI: In cricket, the outcome of a match is not solely determined by the performance of batters and bowlers. Fielders also play a crucial role in influencing the result of the game. The impact of fielding on a cricket match cannot be understated. A well-executed catch, a precise throw to the wicket, or a swift run-out can turn the tide of the game in favour of the fielding team. Delhi Capitals' thrilling four-run victory over Gujarat Titans in the IPL 2024 came on the back of stunning fielding effort by Tristan Stubbs in the penultimate over of the match. Stubbs' acrobatic display turned what could have been a six into just a single, ultimately proving to be the decisive moment in the match's outcome. When GT batter Rashid Khan lofted a delivery from Delhi bowler Rasikh Salam down the ground towards long-off, Stubbs sprang into action.