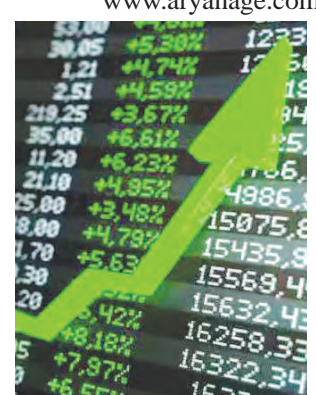


# Aryan Age

The Age of Truth

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## Congress, SP have done nothing for economic upliftment of Muslims: PM Modi

**Aligarh** : Slamming Congress and Samajwadi Party, Prime Minister Narendra Modi alleged that these political parties have always done "politics of appeasement" and have never done anything for the social and economic upliftment of Muslims.

Addressing an election rally for the Lok Sabha Elections at Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh Prime Minister Modi said "The people at the top reaped the benefits and the Pasmanda Muslims were forced to live in their conditions".

"Riots, murders, gang wars, extortion, etc. were the trademark of the SP government, this was their identity and their politics also ran on this".

He said, "Now in Yogi Ji's government, criminals do not dare to disturb the peace of the citizens".

The Prime Minister said, "The lives of so many daughters were ruined due



to triple talaq. Now Modi has made their lives safe by making a law against triple talaq".

"Today not only has India's Haj quota increased but visa rules have also been made easier. The government has also allowed women to go to Haj without a Mahram" he further

added.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi also lashed out at the Congress, accusing it of trying to Amend a law to 'snatch' assets of the citizens.

"Congress and its allies have an eye on your income and assets. The Congress's 'Shehzada' said

that if his government is formed, they will find out what all you have. It will be probed and all these assets will be taken under government control and distributed," the Prime Minister said at a rally in Aligarh".

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday hit out at INDIA alliance

members Samajwadi Party and Congress and took a veiled 'shahzada' (prince) jibe at their leaders Akhilesh Yadav and Rahul Gandhi.

"Last time when I came to Aligarh, I had requested all of you to lock the factories of nepotism, corruption, and appeasement of SP and Congress. You put such a strong lock that the two princes have not been able to find its key to date" he said.

He also attacked the I.N.D.I.A alliance members and alleged that they are so pessimistic that they have no courage to look towards the future.

"They ask why Modi talks about developed India, why Modi talks about making India the third largest economic power?... These people do nothing except for the greed of their family and power and keep dividing the public" he said.

## BJP has 'match-fixed' Surat LS seat: Cong

**New Delhi** : The Congress while reacting sharply to the rejection of nomination of its Surat Lok Sabha seat candidate on Monday said that the "match-fix" of the seat by BJP only showed that the party was scared of its defeat. In a post on social media X, general secretary in-charge communication, Jairam Ramesh said, "The distress and anger faced by MSME owners and business people in Modi's Anyay Kaal has spooked the BJP so badly that they are attempting to "match-fix" Surat Lok Sabha, which they have won consistently since 1984 Lok Sabha elections!"

He said, "Surat District Election Officer rejects @INCIndia's candidate for Surat Lok Sabha, Nilesh Kumbhani's nomination for "discrepancies in verification of signatures of three proposers". On similar grounds, officials rejected the nomination of Suresh Padsala, the INC's substitute



candidate from Surat. Congress Party is left without a candidate". The senior Congress leader said that only the BJP candidate Mukesh Dalal was left in the fray as other candidates have withdrawn their nomination.

"BJP candidate declared "elected unopposed" from Surat Lok Sabha seat on April 22nd, 2024, nearly two

weeks before polling on May 7th 2024," Ramesh said.

Stating that democracy is under threat, the Rajya Sabha MP said, "Our elections, our democracy, Babasaheb Ambedkar's Constitution – all are under a generational threat. This is the most important election of our lifetime!"

## Centre's Action After Indian Spice Brands Banned In Hong Kong, Singapore



**New Delhi** : The government has ordered food commissioners to collect samples of spices from all the manufacturing units in the country, sources said, after food regulators in Hong Kong and Singapore red-flagged a cancer-causing ingredient in certain products of two popular Indian spice brands - MDH and Everest.

"All the food commissioners of the country have been alerted. The process of

collecting samples of spices has been started. The order has been given. In three to four days, samples will be collected from all the spice manufacturing units of the country," top government sources have said.

"Not just MDH and Everest, samples will be taken from all the spice manufacturing companies. The report will come from the lab in about 20 days," they added.

## Yechury seeks ECI action against PM for 'indulging in hate speech'

**New Delhi** : The Communist Party of India (Marxist) has written to the Chief Election Commissioner of India, Rajiv Kumar, urging proceedings against Prime Minister Narendra Modi for allegedly indulging in hate speech directed against a community, while campaigning during the 2024 Lok Sabha election.

Party General Secretary Sitaram Yechury in a letter to Rajiv Kumar on Monday said that the PM has given 'highly inflammatory speech' while addressing a public meeting in Banswara, Rajasthan, on April 21 and it has been carried in some newspapers on their front page.

The Left leader said,:

"While addressing a public meeting in Banswara, Rajasthan, on April 21, the Prime Minister alluding to Muslims reportedly also said that "should your hard-earned money be given to those with more children, infiltrators?... the speech has been widely reported in mainstream media and social media outlets".

He said that targeting of any particular community is a total violation of Section 123 (3) of the Representation of People's Act and the Model Code of Conduct, adding, "This is as brazen as it could get in indulgence in hate speech directed against a community. We have earlier precedents of banning leaders for such hate speeches".

"We would urge upon the ECI to take cognizance of this latest complaint also and immediately launch proceedings against Narendra Modi and the Bharatiya Janata Party. An FIR also needs to be lodged against him for inciting communal passions and hatred. Immediate action is called for to stop public debates and discussions from plummeting further," Yechury said.

The CPI(M) leader said that any failure on the part of the ECI to take suitable action will further undermine its credibility as an autonomous institution and lead to further vitiation of the environment for a free and fair poll.



## Mehbooba joined INDIA alliance just to get seat: Omar Abdullah



**Srinagar** : National Conference Vice President Omar Abdullah on Monday hit out at Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) President Mehbooba Mufti for joining the INDIA alliance just to get the seat. The former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister is campaigning for his party candidate Mian Altaf who is contesting from Anantnag-Rajouri Parliamentary seat against Mehbooba Mufti, Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) Mohammad Saleem and Apni Party leader Zaffar Manhas.

"Mufti selfishly tried to get a seat through the doors of Peoples Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) and INDIA alliance", Omar said during a public rally at south Kashmir's Kulgam district.

He said "If we were to have been selfish than Congress and CPI(M) leader Taragami could have gone with the PDP". "Let me accept for a minute that I am a selfish, is Taragami also selfish".

The former CM said efforts are being made to create hatred among the

people and to spread an atmosphere of fear in Kashmir valley.

The NC Vice President said that "there were no compulsions for NC to join the INDIA alliance or to fight elections together with congress and others. It was just as we were aware about the situation and the dangers we are facing".

He said "our aim was never to get a seat but unfortunately some people had joined us who just worked to weight the alliance for the seat".

Omar blamed Mufti for helping others instead of the people who were in dire need of her to represent them during her tenure as Chief Minister.

"NC and Congress urged late Mufti Mohammad Sayed to accept their support to keep BJP out of Kashmir. However, Mufti Sayeed accused NC of trying to enter their government through backdoor", he alleged.

Omar said that "in 2016 when Mehbooba Mufti's government was in shambles, NC went to Raj Bhavan and urged

the Governor not to allow breaking the government as NC was aware by such tactics of distorted manners what repercussions it prevails on the people. Was that our selfishness?", he questioned.

He said "In 2018, Mehbooba Mufti sent her party's leader Altaf Bukhari to us for our support, proposing as CM, it was Farooq Abdullah who swiftly endorsed and signed the document without hesitation, was that our selfishness?".

"We still remember your speeches when you said there is only Narendra Modi who can solve Kashmir's issue but where is the solution, is there anything left without catastrophe. Our identity and existence is in danger", he said.

Omar said when Mufti could have represented the people of Kashmir instead she jeered at them. People have not forgotten whom you rubbed the salt on their wounds. "What you did during your tenure as Chief Minister, bring some courage to apologize to the people for that", the NC Vice President asked.

## Bukhari's Apni Party to support Sajad Lone from Baramulla LS seat

**Srinagar** : Apni Party led by Altaf Bukhari on Monday announced unconditional support to Peoples Conference Chairman Sajad Lone from Baramulla Parliamentary seat.

Lone had urged Bukhari on Saturday to extend support and defeat the National Conference from the Baramulla Lok Sabha constituency.

Sajad Lone is contesting from Baramulla Parliamentary seat against the National Conference Vice President Omar Abdullah.

Addressing a press conference, Bukhari announced unconditional support to the PC chairman Lone in Srinagar on Monday.

"Apni Party has decided to support Sajad Lone who is presenting new politics and I urge the people to vote Apni Party and its alliance partners during the parliamentary election", Bukhari said and added "I assure the people of Jammu and Kashmir that nobody will be deceived".

Spread over 18 assembly segments, the Baramulla Lok Sabha seat would be one of the keenly watched contests as electoral dynamics in the constituency have changed after delimitation.

"I urge people that there is a need to change the traditional and emotional politics



in Kashmir valley. I believe somewhere we are also responsible for what happened on August 5, 2019, if we forget the past 70 years of wanderer politics but nobody can forget what happened in the last 5 years in the role of political leaders in Jammu and Kashmir", Bukhari said.

He said the government of India abrogated Article 370 by which the jobs of our youth were directly affected as these were to share with the other aspirants of India. There was land row as no outsider could purchase the land here so that the cultural and regional identity could be integrated.

"I met the PM and HM in daylight and brought the protection of jobs and land

without asking people for any vote", he said adding "we are not power hungry. But the traditional politicians played an abusive role with the people even during these past five years".

He said people have sent three National Conference members to the Parliament during these five years. But on August 5, 2019 when the article 370 was abrogated there were five members – three NC and two PDP – from Jammu and Kashmir, no one resigned. "If they could have resigned at that time, maybe the need to float the Apni Party could not have arisen", he remarked.

"If they could have resigned, a message could have been sent to the world

that members from Jammu and Kashmir in Indian Parliament are protesting against the abrogation of special status", he said.

"I suggest the traditional political leaders retire and let the people live peacefully", Bukhari said and appealed "don't put in the minds of youth that we have to fight 100 years of war".

The AP President said "people don't have to fight a war...our destiny has been decided in 1947 to live with India.

I will repeatedly say that Delhi has caused us injuries and they will also provide treatment and the treatment neither we will get in London nor in Washington or Islamabad", he added.





## Dalits, Muslims deprived of development due to BJP's policies: Mayawati



**Bulandshahr (UP) :** Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) supremo Mayawati on Monday said that due to the casteist, communal, and capitalist thinking and policies of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the poor, tribals, Dalits and Muslims of the country have not been able to develop.

While addressing an election rally here in Secunderabad in support of party candidate Rajendra Solanki from the Gautam Buddha Nagar area and Girish Chandra Jatav from Bulandshahr seats, Mayawati said that the outline of the Airport in Jewar was formulated in her government of which the BJP is counting as its achievement.

She said that due to the casteist, communal, and capitalist thinking and policies of the BJP, the poor, tribals, Dalits, Muslims and other religious minorities of the entire country have never been able to develop. "The reservation quota for Dalits, tribals, and other backward classes in government jobs in the country has not been filled yet. Reservation in promotion, especially for SC and ST government employ-

ees, is largely ineffective," she said.

The former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister said that farmers are also agitating because the agricultural policies of the BJP are not right. "Wrong economic policies are hurting the country's economy and the small business class is also facing a lot of trouble. Even the borders of the country are not safe," she said.

She said that for the last few years caste-based op-

pression of the Muslim community has been at its peak under the BJP governments in the states and at the centre due to which the condition of the Muslim community is worsening at every level.

Mayawati said that BJP's theatrics, rhetoric, or any other argument will not work because now the people of the country have understood that her party has made tempting promises and other empty papers of showing

good days to the weak and middle class. "So far, not even one-fourth of the guarantee given has been completed in reality," she said.

She also took the Congress party to task and said that since independence, there were governments of Congress and its allies in many states of the country and the centre, but in most of the cases, due to their wrong policies and wrong working system, the party lost power and many other places.

## Ayodhya, Kashi achieved their targets, now it's turn of Braj region: Yogi

**Agra (UP) :** Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday emphasised the cultural significance of the Braj region with its deep-rooted connection to the revered Giriraj Maharaj and the Lord Krishna Kanhaiya and said that after Ayodhya and Kashi, it was Braj's turn for a face lift.

Addressing an election rally in Kirawali to seek votes for BJP Kisan Morcha's national president sitting MP from Fatehpur Sikri and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate Rajkumar Chahar, the CM said, "Ayodhya and Kashi have achieved their targets and now, it's Braj's turn. No one will be able to deprive you of development. An airport is being built in Agra while Ganga water is also available to the residents of the city."

He denounced the actions of Congress, Samajwadi Party (SP) and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) accusing them of jeopardizing citizens' safety by cosyng up to mafia elements and appeasing criminals.

Yogi underscored the collective duty of the residents to serve the nation, while assuring them that the



era of neglecting their developmental needs was over and the future was bright.

He urged people to visit door to door to increase voting percentage, emphasising each individual's pivotal role in shaping the region's political landscape.

Hitting out at the opposition for reading 'Fatihah' on the graves of mafias and gangsters, the CM appealed to people to give them a break of five years to continue doing so as much as they could. Asserting the power of democratic choice, he said that people would overwhelmingly support the 'lotus', effectively granting

them a five-year sabbatical to reflect on their actions.

Drawing parallels between the spiritual sanctity of Ayodhya's Ram Lala and the end of mafias with 'Ram Naam Satya', he celebrated the fortuitous alignment of a BJP-led administration, emphasising its dedication to nationalist principles over divisive caste politics.

He criticised family-oriented parties and those trying to perpetuate caste-based divisions in society, arguing that such efforts only serve to weaken the fabric of the nation. Yogi said that despite the Prime Minister's physical absence from Ayodhya

on Ram Navami, his thoughts were wholly dedicated to the sacred city.

He also mentioned the divine spectacle of Surya Tilak of Lord Ram on the occasion of Ram Navami, criticising the opposition parties including Congress, SP, and BSP for questioning the very existence of Lord Ram and Krishna as part of their appeasement politics. He said, "They spoke as though they had been born before life itself began on Earth. However, owing to Prime Minister Modi's steadfastness, the temple of Ram Lalla was constructed in Ayodhya," he said.

## No alternative leader to Modi in opposition parties: Kishan Reddy



**Hyderabad :** Union Minister and BJP Telangana President G Kishan Reddy asserted that there is no alternative leader to Modi within the opposition parties.

During an election campaign held at Amberpet in the city on Monday, Reddy praised Modi's decade-long commitment to serving the nation without a single day off. He urged the electorate to re-elect Modi as Prime Minister, emphasising his leadership qualities and dedication.

Reddy highlighted Mo-

di's efforts in ensuring the welfare of the country during the COVID-19 pandemic, including the distribution of free rice to prevent hunger. He emphasised Modi's vision for the nation, citing achievements ranging from sanitation initiatives to space exploration with Chandrayaan.

Under Modi's leadership, Reddy noted, the country has experienced peace and stability, with no instances of mafia or hooliganism, curfews, or riots. He emphasised the importance

of entrusting the nation's safety to Modi. Reddy also criticised the performance of regional leaders, citing the absence of Telangana former Chief Minister KCR from office during his tenure and accusing the Congress of failing to fulfill its promises to the people of the state. In urging voters to support Modi's leadership once again, Reddy emphasised the need to strengthen the BJP's presence and solicited their blessings for his own candidacy as MP of Secunderabad.

## Put 'Aligarhi lock' on the fate of Cong, SP, BSP: Yogi

**Aligarh (UP) :** Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said on Monday that Samajwadi Party (SP), Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and Congress neglected the development of Aligarh, manipulated faith, tried to breach security and said that now is the chance to put 'Aligarh lock' on their fate and entrust the country's leadership to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the third term.

Seeking votes in favour of Aligarh MP and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate Satish Gautam and Anup Valmiki 'Pradhan' from Hathras, the Chief Minister said, "By doing so, India will emerge as a major global power.

The entire nation's voice is uniting with the Prime Minister's vision for a self-reliant and developed India. Echoes of 'Phir ek bar, Modi Sarkar, Abki bar 400 paar' are coming from all parts of the coun-



try."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was also present during this address. He urged the public to simply look for the lotus symbol and show appreciation for Modi's decade-long efforts by casting their vote.

Emphasising that the first phase of elections has

been completed, Yogi said, "There was immense excitement and enthusiasm among the people across 102 Lok Sabha constituencies. Prime Minister Modi's decade-long contributions are garnering overwhelming support from the people. Opposition parties are unlikely to

get even a single seat in Uttar Pradesh. I urge voters to maintain this momentum into the second and third phases as well."

He highlighted that the developmental initiatives, in addition to heritage preservation efforts and welfare schemes implemented over the past de-

cade are unparalleled and praiseworthy. "We have all been granted the chance to play a significant role in shaping India into a developed nation," he said.

The Chief Minister said that Prime Minister Modi has fulfilled the long-standing demands of the people of Aligarh and Hathras. "Living up to the expectations of the common people, Prime Minister Modi himself came here to set up a university in the name of the great freedom fighter Raja Mahendra Pratap Singh. Now the university is ready and the session has also started," he said.

He said, "Aligarh has also got the Defence Corridor.

The Surya Tilak ceremony for Lord Ram was conducted in Ayodhya on Ram Navami. Prime Minister Modi has blessed us with these extraordinary opportunities, bringing both joy and pride."

## Neha murder case to be handed over to CoD: CM Siddaramaiah

**Shivamogga :** Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has announced that the investigation into the tragic murder case of Neha Hiremath in Hubballi will be handed over to the Corps of Detectives (CoD) for a thorough probe.

Addressing the media here on Monday, Siddaramaiah stated, "The case will be handed over to CoD for investigation. A special court will be set up, and the trial will be conducted in a time-bound manner."

The tragic incident has sent shockwaves across the region, prompting swift action from the state government to ensure that justice is served.

On BJP's allegations that the CM has not paid a visit to Neha's family at Hubballi till now, Siddaramaiah stated that the Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister HK Patil has already visited them along with Congress party workers and leaders.

"I will meet the parents when I go to Dharwad," he said, emphasising that the state government is deeply committed to the investigation and takes the matter



very seriously.

Additionally, Siddaramaiah reached out to Dingaleshwar Mahaswami and urged him to withdraw his candidature from the Dharwad Lok Sabha constituency. He requested the spiritual leader to extend his support to the Congress party instead.

"I have requested Dingaleshwar Mahaswami to withdraw his candidature from Dharwad Lok Sabha constituency and support Congress," Siddaramaiah told reporters here.

Dingaleshwar Mahaswami's response to this request remains awaited, and it will be interesting to see how this development impacts the political landscape

in Karnataka. The Dharwad Lok Sabha constituency is expected to witness intense competition, and any shift in support could have significant implications.

Siddaramaiah also defended the ruling party's recent advertisement campaign against the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The campaign depicts the BJP's contribution to the state and Kannadigas as zero or 'chembu', meaning an empty pot.

"The Modi rule has been a total failure as the BJP has not implemented any of its promises during the last 10 years. We strongly condemn the step-motherly attitude of the Centre and Modi against Karnata-

ka," he said.

He further emphasised that the BJP should first rectify the injustice in the devolution of funds and grant approvals to all pending projects before criticizing the Congress party's campaign.

Siddaramaiah also denounced BJP National President JP Nadda's statement accusing the Congress of being the fountainhead of corruption. He countered the allegations by labeling the BJP as a washing machine, claiming that those facing Enforcement Directorate (ED), Income Tax (IT) raids, and corruption charges often find refuge in the BJP, leading to their cases being "washed off."

Expressing skepticism over the BJP's claims of honesty and integrity, he questioned the absence of ED and IT raids against prominent BJP leaders.

He specifically mentioned names like BS Yediyurappa, BY Vijayendra, Shobha Karandlaje, R Ashok, and Basavaraj Bommai, asking why investigations are not taking place against them if they are truly non-corrupt.

## BJP has politically disrobed Constitution : Congress

**Dehra ( Kangra ) :** Himachal Pradesh Congress Spokesperson Sapan Sood on Monday alleged that the Power-hungry BJP has politically disrobed the Constitution by resorting to an undemocratic process for the election to Rajya Sabha and Chandigarh Mayor posts.

Sood in a statement blamed the BJP for hatching a conspiracy to destabilize the Congress government led by Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu, who had a majority, by transacting

crores of rupees with the help of the MLAs expelled from the Congress party. The expelled Congress MLAs joined the BJP and are now contesting the by-elections being held for six assembly seats of the state.

He described Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu's statement to save democracy from the hands of the BJP in the interest of the country and the state, as a holistic statement.

Sood demanded the Election Commission that the entire expenditure of

the by-elections being held for six Assembly seats be recovered from the BJP as the need for the by-election arose due to the alleged conspiracy of the BJP.

The Congress leader said the BJP leaders should clarify where they had disappeared during the natural calamity that hit the state in June last year leaving the people of the state in a lurch. He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who calls Himachal Pradesh his home, turned a blind eye to the loss of life and property in the state during the tragedy.

## Bengaluru police registers FIR in Kannada actor Harshika assault case

**Bengaluru :** The Pulakeshi Nagar police have registered an FIR under several sections of the Indian Penal Code. The sections invoked include mischief causing damage (Section 427), wrongful restraint (Section 341), unlawful assembly (Section 143), attempt to robbery (Section 393), and voluntarily causing hurt (Section 323).

A shocking incident had surfaced in Pulakeshi Nagar, formerly known as Frazer Town, where the actor and her husband Bhuvan Ponnanna were allegedly assaulted by a group of individuals at a restaurant's parking lot, reportedly for speaking in Kannada.

The incident occurred on April 2 but gained public attention after Poonacha shared a video of the assault on April 19.

The police have regis-

tered an FIR under several sections of the Indian Penal Code. The sections invoked include mischief causing damage (Section 427), wrongful restraint (Section 341), unlawful assembly (Section 143), attempt to robbery (Section 393), and voluntarily causing hurt (Section 323).

Addressing the delay in filing the complaint, Ponnanna explained that they initially overlooked the incident but decided to take action following suggestions from their well-wishers. He clarified that their primary concern is for the safety and well-being of the general public and is not motivated by any political

agenda. According to Ponnanna's account narrated to the Bengaluru City Police Commissioner B Dayananda, the altercation began when a stranger at the Karma restaurant's parking lot picked a fight with him for speaking in Kannada. The situation quickly escalated as a group of 20-30 people, speaking in Hindi, Dakhini Urdu, and broken Kannada, joined in the altercation.

Poonacha attempted to call a police officer for assistance, but the gang allegedly assaulted him, attempted to snatch his gold chain and mobile phone, and then fled the scene. Despite reporting the incident to an assistant sub-inspector near a

mosque, they were directed to proceed to the nearest police station to file an official complaint.

Expressing her concerns over the safety of speaking Kannada in Karnataka, Poonacha questioned the current state of affairs, asking whether they are living in Pakistan or Afghanistan due to such incidents. She emphasized the need for safety and respect for all languages and cultures in society.

The incident has sparked outrage among the public, with many demanding strict action against the perpetrators to ensure such incidents do not recur in the future.





## Briefs :

**'308 hectares on Southern Ridge still encroached upon'**

**New Delhi:** The forest department has notified the National Green Tribunal (NGT) that around 308 hectares of land in the Southern Ridge area are still encroached upon. In a recent report submitted to the tribunal, the department mentioned its lack of encroachment data for other forest areas and ridge areas in Delhi and requested four weeks' time to identify the encroached areas. Dated April 18, the report stated, "The department is collaborating with other land-owning agencies and departments to gather encroachment details on forest land under their possession." Delhi encompasses four primary ridge areas, covering approximately 7,784 hectares in total. Earlier this year, the NGT initiated suo-moto action after a media report highlighted encroachment issues nationwide, prompting the tribunal to request reports from states on the matter. Subsequent to an NGT directive to eliminate encroachments from the Southern Ridge, the forest department has been conducting anti-encroachment campaigns in the region since 2019. As per the report submitted to the NGT on April 18, approximately 91.1 hectares out of the total encroachments spanning around 398.6 hectares have been cleared thus far. Encroachments have been identified across 19 villages.

**Cong names Subhash Chopra as poll committee chief**

**New Delhi:** Deepak Babaria, the Congress' Delhi in-charge, disclosed that former MLA Subhash Chopra would lead the party's election management and coordination committee for the upcoming Lok Sabha polls in Delhi. Chopra will helm an 18-member committee responsible for supervising campaign activities for the elections. Delhi Congress chief Arvinder Singh Lovely praised Chopra's extensive experience in strategizing for parliamentary elections, noting that his expertise would greatly contribute to effectively managing the Lok Sabha elections in Delhi.

**9 years after arrest, first pic of don Chhota Rajan from Tihar is out**

**New Delhi:** After nearly a decade since his dramatic arrest at Bali airport and subsequent extradition to India, the first photograph of underworld don Chhota Rajan has emerged, depicting him in good health. Currently incarcerated in a high-security cell in Jail No. 2 of Tihar Jail, the release of this photograph has put to rest rumors surrounding Rajan's purported demise during the Covid pandemic or his ill-health. However, its dissemination has also reignited concerns within intelligence circles about potential threats to Rajan's safety in prison. Chhota Rajan remains under threat from adversaries such as Dawood Ibrahim and Chhota Shakeel, with the latter allegedly issuing threats of harm to him while in jail on multiple occasions. Since his extradition to India in October 2015, Rajan has been housed in Tihar Jail, yet the prison administration has never officially commented on his status. In May 2020, a fellow inmate accused of rape contracted the virus while incarcerated, and Bihar's notorious mafia don-turned-politician Shahabuddin succumbed to it. Despite these incidents, authorities have remained tight-lipped about Rajan's well-being. During the 1990s, Rajan played a central role in the underworld, particularly during the peak of D-Company's influence.

## Delhi HC dismisses law student's plea seeking 'extraordinary interim bail' for Kejriwal

**New Delhi:** The Delhi High Court on Monday dismissed a petition filed by a law student seeking "extraordinary interim bail" for Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in all criminal cases registered against him in connection with the alleged irregularities in the now-scrapped 2021-22 Delhi excise policy and imposed a fine of Rs 75,000 on the petitioner.

A bench comprising acting Chief Justice Manmohan and Justice Manmeet Pritam Singh Arora said that the plea was not maintainable since the petitioner, a law student who filed it on behalf of "We the People of India", had not challenged judicial orders under which Kejriwal was in custody.

The bench said that the court in writ jurisdiction cannot grant "extraordinary interim bail" in pending cases initiated against a person holding high office.

The court also said that the plea is non-maintainable as Arvind Kejriwal is in judicial custody in pursuance of judicial orders which have not been challenged.

The petitioner said that Delhi was being adminis-



tered in a headless manner, and since Kejriwal has chosen not to resign despite his arrest, his government and Cabinet ministers "are in a jammed mode."

The plea said Kejriwal is required to issue orders and directions on different issues and problems daily, which is impossible from judicial custody.

The petitioner also said that Kejriwal is confined in Tihar Jail with "hardcore criminals" facing prosecution in cases such as rape, dacoity, murder, and bomb blasts so his life is also at risk.

The bench said Kejriwal has the means to exercise his legal rights and that he has approached the Supreme Court against the high court's order rejecting his plea for release.

Senior advocate Rahul Mehra, who appeared for Kejriwal, called the plea an "ambush and said his client has taken steps to enforce and protect his legal rights."

Kejriwal was arrested on March 21 in connection with a money laundering case related to alleged irregularities in Delhi's New excise policy. He was sent to six-day ED custody.

On March 23, Kejriwal approached the high court saying that his arrest was politically motivated and violates his fundamental rights.

The high court on April 9 rejected his plea saying that ED has "sufficient" material to justify Kejriwal's arrest. Kejriwal then challenged the Delhi High Court order in the Supreme Court.

The Apex Court will hear Kejriwal's plea challenging his arrest on April 29. It may be noted that Kejriwal has not filed any bail application in any court so far.

## ED misled court on Kejriwal's insulin requirement, alleges Atishi



**New Delhi:** Alleging that the Enforcement Directorate (ED) has misled the court about consulting specialists from AIIMS over whether Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal needs insulin, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Atishi on Monday asserted that CM's diet chart was also not prepared by a specialist but by a dietician.

Addressing a press conference here, Atishi said, "ED and jail administration openly lied in the court and misled the country regarding Arvind Kejriwal's visit to AIIMS and his chart. They said specialists from AIIMS were consulted and they have said that no insulin is needed."

"The diet chart they presented in the court was not prepared by an endocrinologist or diabetologist, but by a dietician. We all know that dieticians are not MBBS doctors," she said.

"On the basis of that diet chart, they have been saying in court that Kejriwal does not need insulin," Atishi alleged.

Kejriwal on Friday filed an appeal in the court seeking consultation with his physician but this was opposed by BJP's ED and the jail administration, the Delhi Minister claimed.

## Excise case: Delhi court reserves order on BRS leader K Kavitha's bail plea in CBI case

**New Delhi:** The Rouse Avenue court in Delhi has deferred its decision on the bail plea filed by Bharatiya Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leader K Kavitha concerning a CBI case linked to the excise policy matter. Special Judge Kaveri Baweja has scheduled May 2 for the pronouncement of the verdict.

In the plea, it is asserted that the ruling party at the Centre is exploiting investigative agencies to publicly implicate the petitioner in the Delhi excise policy, potentially paving the way for further coercive measures against her. However, the petitioner contends that there is no substance to these allegations and believes that the investigation is solely aimed at tarnishing her image and that of her father, the former Chief Minister of Telangana, for political gain in the upcoming 2024 general elections.

BRS leader K Kavitha was taken into custody by the Central Bureau of In-



vestigation (CBI) last week, while she was already in judicial custody in connection with the Enforcement Directorate (ED) case.

Advocate Nitesh Rana, along with Deepak Nagar and Mohit Rao, represented K Kavitha in court.

The CBI, in its remand application, argued that Kavitha Kalvakuntla's arrest was necessary for her custodial interrogation to uncover the larger conspiracy behind the formulation and execution of the Excise Policy and to trace the money trail of illicitly ac-

quised funds. Earlier, the Directorate of Enforcement (ED) had arrested K Kavitha, a Member of the Legislative Council (MLC) in the Telangana Legislative Council, in connection with the alleged liquor policy scam.

The CBI inquiry was initiated based on the recommendations of a report by the Delhi Chief Secretary, which highlighted prima facie violations of various acts and rules related to the excise policy.

Both the ED and the CBI alleged irregularities in the modification of the

excise policy, favoritism towards license holders, improper fee waivers, and unauthorized extensions of licenses. These actions purportedly led to financial losses to the exchequer, with alleged diversions of funds to accused officials and falsification of records to evade detection.

## Delhi CM Kejriwal's Health Not Serious; AAP Protests at Jail

**New Delhi:** The Tihar administration clarified on Sunday that senior specialists from AIIMS provided online consultation to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, following allegations from AAP that he was not receiving adequate medical care as part of a supposed conspiracy by the Centre to harm him.

In a statement released by Tihar authorities, it was affirmed that after a thorough consultation, Kejriwal was reassured that there were no serious concerns regarding his health. He was advised to continue with his prescribed medication, which would be monitored and reviewed regularly.

The statement came amidst protests by senior AAP members outside the prison, with Delhi minister Saurabh Bharadwaj highlighting a letter from Tihar Jail's director-general requesting AIIMS for a diabetologist, contradicting claims by the central government and Tihar about the availability of sufficient medical facilities for Kejriwal inside the jail. Tihar authorities clarified that the issue of insulin was neither raised by Kejriwal nor suggested by the doctors during the consultation. Kejriwal's wife,

Sunita, had arranged the video consultation with a senior specialist from AIIMS, lasting around 40 minutes, during which Kejriwal's complete medical records were provided, including glucose monitoring data, dietary details, and medication information. Earlier in the day, Bharadwaj accused the central government of plotting to harm Kejriwal by denying him adequate medical treatment, suggesting that organ failure could occur without proper care. He criticized the Tihar administration's report, claiming that random sugar measurements were meaningless and accusing them of deliberately concealing Kejriwal's health status. Protests outside Tihar, led by cabinet minister Atishi and MLA Sanjeev Jha, demanded insulin for Kejriwal, alleging a conspiracy against him. Responding to these claims, Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva dismissed them as political drama, stating that Kejriwal's health was stable as he did not request insulin during the consultation, and asserting that Delhiites were poised to reject the AAP-Congress alliance in the upcoming elections.



## Editorial

Once again...!

Who has the right to be the Prime Minister of this country? BJP has been in power at the center for the last 10 years and as it is recognized as the largest political party in the world, the election manifesto of this party attracts the attention of not only the country but also the world. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, BJP National President J. P. Nadra is the high command of BJP. His views and stance are reflected in the party's election manifesto. BJP was formed in 1980 and the party contested its first Lok Sabha election in 1984. BJP's election manifesto released from that year is a subject of study. The ideological meeting of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and Jan Sangh and their program is the core of BJP's election manifesto. It can be seen from the last 10 years of administration that the Modi government has carried out the work of completing the agenda of the Sangh-Jana Sangh in a phased manner.

But the opposition party is shouting that 30 lakh posts are vacant in government jobs. There is no mention of it in BJP's resolution. In the promise given earlier, it was said that 2 crore jobs will be provided every year, but no one is talking about this. It is said in the resolution that global hubs will be created in various fields. But 2047 is a dream after 23 years. No one says how many jobs have been created through PM Vishwakarma, Mudra, Make in India, Made in India, Start Up India schemes etc. The resolution does not say how many smart cities have been built in the country in the last ten years. The BJP's resolution is Modi's guarantee, the party emphasizes. In the manifesto of the party in 2014, the word Modi was used 3 times, in this year's manifesto it is 65 times. The 2009 manifesto had pictures of Vajpayee, Advani and Rajnath Singh on the cover. In 2014, 10 prominent leaders along with Modi were featured on the front page. In 2019, only Modi's photo was on the resolution. In 2024, Modi and Nadra are seen behind him. The 2009 manifesto promised good governance, development and security. The manifesto of 2014 said 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat'. The 2024 resolution says 'Phir Ek Bar Modi Sarkar' along with 'Modi Ki Guarantee' on the cover.

Most importantly, the Modi government has been successful in preventing terrorist incidents or activities in the country in the last ten years. The main reason for this is the provenance of the security forces and the modern weaponry. However, it cannot be said that there has been 100 percent success in preventing infiltration from the country's borders. The promise to set up 14 new integrated check posts by 2024 has not been fulfilled. The fact that Prime Minister Narendra Modi effectively raised the issue of terrorism on the international platform and all major countries responded positively to it at the global level, it has to be called a great success of the Modi government.

The Union Home Ministry has recently released a statistic. In 2018, there were 228 incidents of terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, 43 in 2023. 189 encounters took place in Kashmir 5 years ago, 48 last year. The defense budget of the country has been increased to 6.21 lakh crore this year. India borders seven countries namely Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bhutan, Nepal, China, Myanmar and Bangladesh. Their length is 15,106.7 km. In 2018, the work of smart fencing started on the India-Pakistan border. Fencing work on the border of Myanmar started this year. 5223 km so far. I. The work is done.

When the BJP contested its first elections in 1984, its manifesto promised to abrogate Article '370' of the Constitution, which gave special privileges to Jammu and Kashmir. It was completed by the Modi government in 2019. In the 1996 elections, the Modi government had promised to give reservation to the economically weaker sections, which was implemented in 2019. In 1989 election, BJP had promised to implement 'Uniform Civil Act', in 2024 BJP government started its implementation in Uttarakhand and showed a glimpse that 'Uniform Civil Act' will be implemented in the country in next 5 years. In 1991, BJP had said in its manifesto to build a grand Ram temple in Ayodhya. In 2024, the Modi government made the dream of crores of people of the country come true. In 1991, BJP had said to bring the 'Citizenship Amendment Act'. It was implemented in 2024.

On November 9, 2019, the Supreme Court allowed the construction of a Ram temple in Ayodhya. On February 5, 2020, Prime Minister Modi announced the formation of the 'Ram Janmabhoomi Trust' to build the Ram Temple. The foundation stone was laid on August 5, 2020. On January 22, 2024, the statue of Ramlalla was inaugurated. Lakhs of Ram devotees visited Ramlalla on 17th April on Ram Navami.

On December 10, 2019, the 'Citizenship Amendment Bill' was introduced and passed in the Lok Sabha and the next day in the Rajya Sabha. On December 12, 2019, the 'CAA' Act was enacted. It came into effect from 11 March 2024. Before December 31, 2014, non-Muslims from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan became eligible for Indian citizenship. Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis, Christians from 3 countries can now get citizenship of India.

On August 5, 2019, Parliament decided to repeal Article '370' and '35' (A) applicable to Jammu and Kashmir. This region was divided into Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. The government's decision was upheld by the Supreme Court after 4 years i.e. on 11 December 2023.

The issue of 'one country, one election' is on BJP's agenda. Atal Bihari Vajpayee and LK Advani also felt that Lok Sabha and Assembly elections should be held simultaneously. In 1999, during the Vajpayee government, a report was submitted in this regard. On September 2, 2023, the Modi government appointed a committee headed by former President Ram Nath Kovind. The committee submitted an 18,626-page report to the government on 14 March 2014. The committee approached 62 political parties on the issue of holding Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha elections together. 47 parties presented their position. 32 parties expressed positive opinions. 15 parties opposed.

A bill providing 33 percent reservation for women in Parliament and Legislature was introduced in Parliament in 1996. After almost 27 years, this bill was introduced and approved by the Modi government on 20 September 2023 in Parliament. It was signed by the President on 28 September 2023. Women's reservation will come into effect after 2029. In the last 8 years, the Modi government has succeeded in saving Rs 2 lakh crore, which was distributed to the wrong people. Also, the government has declared 10 persons like Vijay Mallya, Nirav Modi, who defrauded the banks of more than 40 thousand crores as fugitives. His property worth Rs 15 thousand crores has been seized.

Ayodhya to Zhanki Hai, Kashi, Mathura Baki Hai. Such an announcement was made to give an edge to the agenda of Hindutva. But Kashi, Mathura are not mentioned in the resolution. Every person above 70 years will be brought under Ayushman Yojana, free ration will be given to 80 crore poor by 2029, houses will be given to 3 crore poor. 'One country, one election' and uniform electoral roll system will be introduced. BJP has prepared the manifesto 'Viksit Bharat 2047' after considering the 1.5 lakh suggestions received from the public.

# 'India's Progressive Path in the Administration of Criminal Justice System'

The Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice, organised a day-long Conference on Saturday, the 20th April, 2024 on the theme of 'India's Progressive Path in the Administration of Criminal Justice System' at Dr. Ambedkar International Centre, Janpath, New Delhi. The Conference was attended by a large audience and eminent guests comprising of judges of various High Courts, President and Vice President and Members of ITAT, advocates, academicians, representatives of law enforcement agencies, police officials, public prosecutors, District Judges and other officials and law students.

The Conference was set on the backdrop of the enactment of three Criminal Laws, namely Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita 2023 and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam 2023 given their being brought into effect from 1st July, 2024.

The Chief Justice of India, Dr. Justice D.Y. Chandrachud graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. The other dignitaries who were present were Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for the Ministry of Law and Justice, Shri R. Venkataramani, Ld. Attorney General for India, Shri Tushar Mehta, Ld. Solicitor General of India and Shri S. K. G. Rahate Secretary, Department of Justice in the Ministry of Law & Justice.

At the outset, Dr. Anju Rathi Rana, Additional Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs, outlined the objectives of the Conference and briefly highlighted the importance of the three Laws, which symbolise a break from the shackles of colonial legal legacy.

In his welcome address, Dr. Rajiv Mani, Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice, highlighted the background of the enactment of the three criminal laws and how it unshackles the legal structure and framework created by the Britishers and meant to perpetuate the British rule in India on the ostentatious ground of establishing Rule of Law. The existing criminal laws which trace their origin to the colonial era need to come out and define the State-Citizen relationship not based on colonial prejudices and practices but on the principles of access of justice to all. The three laws have hence been enacted to overhaul the criminal justice system in the country to make it citizen-centric.

Delivering his keynote address, the Chief Justice of India, Dr. Justice D.Y. Chandrachud said that the new Bharatiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) provides a holistic



approach to deal with crimes in the digital age. The BNSS also stipulates that criminal trials must be completed in three years, and judgments must be pronounced within 45 days of being reserved. This would help in clearing the vast backlogs and faster delivery of justice. The Hon'ble CJI particularly mentioned that it is very heartening to notice that Section 530 of the BNSS allows all trials, inquiries, and proceedings may be conducted in electronic mode, which is in keeping with the need of the present time. He also invited attention to the importance of protecting privacy in the digital age, especially when dealing with the digitisation of proceedings and of matters pertaining to digital evidence.

The Chief Justice of India further highlighted that while the three criminal laws create provisions which are synchronised to our times, there is a need for creation of adequate infrastructure for all stakeholders to derive benefit from these laws fully. He highlighted the creation of digital court infrastructure to create technologically equipped court systems for efficient case management for all. The CJI concluded by stating that laws and their implementation are an ever-evolving area. There is no finality to any law or the manner of its implementation. However, one must be willing to embrace positive changes to meet the needs of the times.

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of Law and Justice pointed out the need for changes in the Criminal Justice system, which was initially brought into effect from the perspective of colonial rulers and lacked Indian spirit and ethos.

Other speakers who addressed the Conference included Shri R. Venkataramani, Ld. Attorney General for India, and Shri Tushar Mehta, Ld. Solicitor General of India and Shri S. K. G. Rahate, Secretary, Department of Justice, Ministry of Law & Justice. Shri Venkataramani, Ld. Attorney General for India stressed on the importance of willingness and commitment to change is essential for building a dynamic legal system. Shri Tushar Mehta, Ld. Solicitor General of India, spoke about the historical necessity of change and the need for visionary leadership to appreciate and bring about such changes. He highlighted landmark provisions of the three Criminal Laws and how they would revolutionise the Criminal Justice System.

Shri S. K. G. Rahate, Secretary, Department of Justice, Ministry of Law & Justice, said that there is a need for the creation of a unified justice delivery system based on e-courts, adoption of AI-based technology, etc. to ensure effective implementation of the three new Criminal Laws.

The Conference comprised three technical sessions on Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita 2023 and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023 respectively. These sessions explored the legislation's impact on new age crimes, procedural changes affecting the judiciary and law enforcement agencies, and the pivotal role of evidence admissibility in the legal process.

The first Technical Session held in-depth discussions on adopting a comparative approach to assess the implementation of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023 (BNS) and addressing futuristic needs. The session was

chaired by Hon'ble Justice Anoop Kumar Mendiratta, Judge, Delhi High Court.

The second Technical Session delved into the ramifications of the procedural changes introduced by the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita 2023 (BNSS) and how the judicial and police officers are to deal with them and its practical implications for the functioning of the judiciary and law enforcement agencies. Hon'ble Justice Ashwani Kumar Mishra, Judge, Allahabad High Court, chaired the session.

The third Technical Session discussed the salient aspects of Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam 2023 (BSA), like recognising electronic and digital documents/evidence, facilitating electronic summons etc. Hon'ble Justice C. D. Singh, Judge, Delhi High Court, chaired the session. The event concluded with a valedictory session graced by Hon'ble Justice P. S. Narasimha, Judge, Supreme Court of India as the Chief Guest. Also, Hon'ble Justice Sanjay Karol, Judge Supreme Court and Hon'ble Mrs. Justice Rekha Palli, Judge, Delhi High Court, Shri Chetan Sharma, Ld. Additional Solicitor General, Delhi High Court and Ms. Chhaya Sharma, Special Commissioner (Trg) of Delhi Police were Guests of Honour. In his address, Hon'ble Justice P. S. Narasimha emphasized on the need of putting in place an institutional mechanism for successful implementation of the three criminal laws. Hon'ble Justice Sanjay Karol expressed optimism that the focus of BNS on technology and its citizen centric approach would ensure timely and effective dispensation of justice. Hon'ble Mrs. Justice Rekha Palli stated that the new acts provide clear definitions, ensure accessibility, and promote gender equality. Shri Chetan Sharma, Ld. ASG highlighted that the new laws are a transition from the colonial legacies towards a system of justice based on Dharma and Bharatiya values. Ms. Chhaya Sharma, Special Commissioner (Trg) of Delhi Police underscored the transformative potential of the new laws and the initiatives to train the police officers. She welcomed the provisions in the law regarding compulsory videography during any search and seizure and the distinction made between organized and unorganized crime.

Dr. Rajiv Mani, Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs summed up the deliberations of the technical sessions and highlighted the points which emerged therefrom. The Valedictory Session concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. Anju Rathi Rana, Additional Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs.

## EPFO adds 15.48 lakh net members during February 2024



EPFO's provisional payroll data released on 20th April, 2024 highlights that EPFO has added 15.48 lakh net members in the month of February, 2024.

The data indicates that around 7.78 lakh new members have been enrolled during February, 2024. A noticeable aspect of the data is the dominance of the 18-25 age group, constituting a significant 56.36% of the total new members added in February 2024 indicating the majority of individuals joining the organized workforce are youth, primarily first-time job seekers.

The payroll data highlights that approximately 11.78 lakh members exited and subsequently rejoined EPFO. These members switched their jobs and rejoined the establishments covered under the ambit of EPFO and opted to transfer their accumulations instead

of applying for final settlement thus, safeguarding long-term financial well-being and extending their social security protection.

Gender-wise analysis of payroll data unveils that out of 7.78 lakh new members, around 2.05 lakh are new female members. Also, the net female member addition during the month stood at around 3.08 lakh. The female member addition is indicative of a broader shift towards a more inclusive and diverse workforce.

Month-on-month comparison of industry-wise data displays growth in the members working in establishments engaged in the industries viz. establishments engaged in manufacture, marketing servicing & usage of computers, companies/societies/assc/clubs/troups for performances, road motor transport, automobile servicing, Textiles etc. Of the

total net membership, around 41.53% addition is from expert services (consisting of manpower suppliers, normal contractors, security services, miscellaneous activities etc.).

The above payroll data is provisional since the data generation is a continuous exercise, as updating employee record is a continuous process. The previous data hence gets updated every month. From the month of April-2018, EPFO has been releasing payroll data covering the period September, 2017 onwards.

In monthly payroll data, the count of members joining EPFO for the first time through Aadhaar validated Universal Account Number (UAN), existing members exiting from coverage of EPFO and those who exited but re-joining as members, is taken to arrive at net monthly payroll.

## Indian Railways operates Record Number of additional Trains in Summer Season 2024

To ensure the convenience of passengers and manage the anticipated surge in travel demand during summers, Indian Railways is operating a record-breaking 9111 trips during summer season.

This marks a substantial rise compared to the summer of 2023, where a total of 6369 trips were offered. This translates to an increase of 2742 trips, demonstrating Indian Railways' commitment to meeting passenger demands effectively. The additional trains have been meticulously planned to connect key destinations across the country, ensuring seamless travel on major railway routes. All zonal railways spread across India have geared up to operate these additional trips, catering to the summer travel rush from states like Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Odisha, West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Delhi.

Planning and running of additional trains is a continuous process for which inputs are taken from all the communication channels 24x 7 like media reports, Social media platforms, Railway Integrated helpline number 139, apart from details of waitlist passengers in PRS system, to assess demand of trains on a particular route. Based on this require-

ment, number of trains and number of trips are augmented. Neither the number of trains nor the number of trips run by additional train(s) is static for the entire season.

During the summer season, Zonal Railways have been instructed to ensure availability of drinking water at Railway stations. Elaborate crowd control arrangements are made at all major and important railway stations. Senior officers are stationed at these stations to monitor all the activities to regulate the crowd in a systematic manner.

RPF personnel have been deputed at originating stations to ensure Queue system for entry in General Class coaches. Skilled RPF staffs are deployed in CCTV Control Room to keep a close watch on the crowded areas and render real time assistance to passengers.

Government Railway Police (GRP) & Railway Protection Force (RPF) staffs are deployed at foot-over bridges to regulate crowd smoothly in order to avoid stampede like situation during the heavy rush period.

Indian Railways remain committed to providing a convenient and comfortable travel experience for all passengers. Passengers can book their ticket in these additional trains through Railway Ticket counters or IRCTC website/app.



## Consumer Affairs Secretary reviews availability of pulses, holds meetings with pulse industry stakeholders

The Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs, Smt. Nidhi Khare during a series of interactions with representatives of pulses industry in the run up to operationalisation of online stock monitoring from 15th April, 2024 emphasised that anyone found to be indulging in forward trade of pulses would be dealt with firmly as per various provisions of Essential Commodities Act.

The feedback from the industry and inputs from market intelligence

relating to the stock position with various market players have been collated for further verification.

She also discussed with Indian Mission in Yangon on issues relating to pulses imports from Myanmar such as import prices in the wake of revised exchange rates and stocks held by importers in Myanmar. The Indian Mission apprised that Rupee Kyat Settlement Mechanism has been operationalised from 25th January, 2024 to simplify trade transactions and to make them

more efficient. The Central Bank of Myanmar has released guidelines for payment procedures under Special Rupee Vostro Account (SRVA) on 26th January 2024. The new mechanism will apply for both sea and border trade and for trade in goods as well as services.

Adoption of the mechanism by traders will reduce costs associated with currency conversions and eliminate complexities related to exchange rates by eliminating the need for multiple currency conver-

sations. Dissemination about the operationalization of this mechanism among trading communities esp pulses importers is being separately done wherein they are being requested to utilize Rupee/ Kyat direct payment system using SRVA through the Punjab National Bank.

The importers and other industry players like millers, stockists, retailers etc have been asked to honestly declare their stock of pulses, including imported Yellow Peas, on

a weekly basis on the portal <https://fcainfoweb.nic.in/psp/> from 15th April, 2024. The States and UTs have also been asked to enforce weekly stock disclosure by all stockholding entities and verify the stocks declared by them.

Stocks in warehouses located in major ports and in pulses industry hubs should be verified from time to time and strict action should be taken on stockholding entities found to be reporting false information on stock disclosure portal.





## Briefs :

### Sonepat: Father Accused of Son's Alleged Murder

**Sonepat :** A man has been accused of the murder of his son in Bohla village, prompting police action. The police responded to information about the incident while the family was present at the cremation ground. The half-burnt body has been sent to a forensic laboratory, and an investigation is underway following the registration of a case. The deceased, identified as Rohit, son of Jai Prakash from Bohla village, was the subject of a complaint filed by Sarpanch Raj Singh with the Mohana police. Initially reported as a fall from stairs, suspicion arose later regarding Rohit's death, allegedly due to his father's assault. Inspector Arun Kumar stated that upon receiving a tip-off, the police intervened, discovering that Rohit had been cremated after allegedly being murdered.

### Online Nomination Submission App Launched

**Chandigarh :** To streamline the electoral process in Haryana during the Lok Sabha elections, the Election Commission of India has introduced several mobile applications aimed at enhancing convenience for voters and candidates alike. One such app is eVIGIL, which allows citizens to report any violations of the model code of conduct by uploading photos or videos. Complaints submitted through this app are addressed by the election office within 100 minutes. Additionally, the Commission has launched an app called Candidate Nomination, enabling candidates to submit their nomination forms online. This app also facilitates online payment for depositing the security amount and allows candidates to track the progress of their application. Furthermore, for returning officers, the Commission has developed software named Encore, which contains essential candidate data. Another tool, the Affidavit Portal, provides online access to details regarding candidates' movable and immovable property, as well as their affidavits.

### Plans for Delhi-Gurugram e-air taxi announced

**Gurugram :** InterGlobe Enterprises, the parent company of IndiGo, has unveiled plans to introduce an all-electric air taxi service in India in collaboration with Archer Aviation by 2026, aiming to significantly reduce travel time from Delhi to Gurugram to just seven minutes. The proposed service will initially link Connaught Place in Delhi to Gurugram in Haryana, providing a swift commute option. Archer Aviation intends to deploy 200 electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) aircraft, each capable of accommodating four passengers and a pilot. These aircraft promise a quieter and safer alternative to conventional helicopters. Moreover, the joint venture aims to extend the service to Mumbai and Bengaluru in the future. Executives at Archer Aviation suggest that the cost of a seven-minute flight from Connaught Place to Gurugram could range between Rs 2,000 and Rs 3,000.

## Empty chairs at Haryana CM Nayab Singh Saini's poll rally for Kataria in Raipur Rani

**Panchkula :** A noticeable number of seats remained unoccupied as BJP leaders, including Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, delivered speeches at the Vijay Sankalp rally in support of the party's candidate, Banto Kataria, for the Ambala Lok Sabha constituency in Raipur Rani, Kalka, on Sunday. The rally was held over a month after the announcement of the late MP Rattan Lal Kataria's wife as the candidate for the Ambala constituency.

The Chief Minister, slated to arrive at Netaji Stadium by 5:30 PM, eventually reached at 7 PM. He was joined by Banto Kataria, party district president Deepak Sharma, former Kalka MLA Latika Sharma, Panchkula MLA and Assembly Speaker Gian Chand Gupta, and others.

Approximately 600-700 individuals attended the rally. However, by the time Banto Kataria, fol-



lowed by the Chief Minister, commenced addressing the audience, many had already departed from the venue.

CM Saini urged the crowd to vote for Banto Kataria, highlighting his local roots in Raipur Rani, where he had initiated his political

journey. "I remember visiting every household in the area," he reminisced.

"We are confident of securing all 10 Lok Sabha seats in Haryana, thanks to the diligent efforts and initiatives of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his government," Saini assert-

ed. He underscored the government's achievements in enhancing the nation's infrastructure, providing essential amenities such as gas and electricity connections, ration, and ensuring equitable opportunities in government jobs.

## Naveen Jindal backs Hisar BJP nominee Ranjit Singh

**Hisar :** Naveen Jindal, the BJP candidate from Kurukshetra and a prominent industrialist based in Hisar, voiced his full support for Ranjit Singh, the BJP nominee from the Hisar Lok Sabha constituency. Jindal emphasized that the Jindal family is actively contributing to ensure Ranjit Singh's victory in the upcoming elections.

During a press briefing at the BJP office in Hisar, Jindal highlighted the active involvement of his mother, former Haryana minister Savitri Jindal, and their supporters in campaigning for Ranjit Singh.

He emphasized the familial bond shared with Singh, citing his late father's close relationship with him. Jindal expressed confidence in Singh's capabilities as an experienced politician and stressed that his victory would accelerate development initiatives in the region.

Jindal further commended Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for a developed India, asserting that Modi's leadership is crucial

for the nation's progress. He predicted a clear mandate for Modi in the upcoming elections, underscoring the public's trust in Modi's ability to lead India towards prosperity.

Regarding allegations of joining the BJP under pressure due to his involvement in the coal scam, Jindal refuted such claims, attributing his decision to join the BJP to his admiration for Modi's vision.

In response, Ranjit Singh acknowledged the efforts to persuade Naveen Jindal to re-enter politics and join the BJP. He revealed that despite Jindal's initial reluctance due to business commitments, he eventually agreed to join the BJP, leading to both their candidatures being announced shortly after joining the party.

Both Jindal and Singh have a history of political involvement, with Jindal previously serving as a two-time MP for the Congress from Kurukshetra, and Singh winning as an Independent from the Rania Assembly segment.

## Locals in Jhajjar Express Concern Over Hazardous Partially Covered Drain

**Jhajjar :** Residents of Jhajjar, particularly those traversing the road leading to Palda village from Dubaldhan (Kirman) in the Beri subdivision, are facing considerable inconvenience due to a partially covered drain, which has become a cause for concern.

The drain, which runs alongside the road, is only partially covered, contrary to safety standards. Ajay Kumar, SDO of PWD, acknowledged the issue, stating, "We are aware that only 70 per cent of such drains are covered. I have solicited feedback from villagers regarding accident-prone spots to ensure adequate coverage and mitigate potential mishaps."

According to locals, the exposed drain has already resulted in several accidents and poses a health hazard. Recent incidents include a cow falling into the drain, requiring significant efforts from villagers to rescue the animal, and a cyclist sustaining injuries after a similar mishap. Such incidents have occurred frequently in the past.



Dharmendra, a resident, criticized the inadequate covering of the drain, attributing it to negligence on the part of the contractor. He remarked, "Despite repeated complaints to the district administration, the drain remains uncovered, compelling us to escalate the matter to higher authorities for prompt action."

Another villager, Dharampal, expressed frustration, suggesting that authorities appear indifferent until a major accident occurs.

Raj Kumar, husband of gram panchayat sarpanch Anita, confirmed that they had notified PWD officials about the issue and demanded proper coverage of the drain.

Responding to concerns, PWD SDO Ajay Kumar clarified that a portion of the drain remains uncovered to facilitate cleaning.

He reiterated the adherence to norms while assuring prompt action based on villagers' feedback to address accident-prone areas and ensure safety.

## Farmers' Protest Impacts Goods Train Operations on Eastern Freight Corridor

**Ambala :** The ongoing farmers' agitation on the Ambala-Sahnewal section at Shambhu under the Ambala division not only disrupts Northern Railway's train traffic but also affects the goods train operations of the Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor.

Reduction in Train Numbers

As a precautionary measure, the goods train traffic on this section has been halted, with a few trains being rerouted through alternative paths. Prior to the agitation, approximately 40 trains per day were operational. Presently, the Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India Limited (DFCCIL) is managing 11 to 20 trains daily via diverted routes, according to Pankaj Gupta, the chief general manager of the Ambala unit of DFCCIL.

Although farmers haven't obstructed the tracks of the freight corridor, given their proximity to the blocked site, goods trains have been suspended on this section. The Pilkhani-Sahnewal section, spanning 182



kilometers, was inaugurated last month, facilitating the operation of around 40 goods trains daily.

Approximately 100 kilometers of the 175-kilometer main line remains inactive due to the agitation, with the remaining 75 kilometers still in operation.

During a previous protest when farmers blocked Northern Railway tracks, some demonstrators also approached the freight corridor tracks upon sighting a goods

train. To prevent such incidents, traffic on the route has been suspended, and alternative routes are being utilized for goods train operations.

Pankaj Gupta assured that essential supplies like coal for Nabha Power Limited and food grains are being transported via alternative routes to mitigate any disruptions in the supply chain. Efforts are underway to resume normal operations on the Dedicated Freight Corridor once the Northern Rail-

way tracks are cleared. Meanwhile, passenger train services continue to be impacted, with cancellations, diversions, and short-termination of trains. Mandeep Singh Bhatia, Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) of Ambala Division, stated that around 115 trains were affected today, and measures are being taken to minimize inconvenience to passengers by adjusting routes and reducing cancellations.

## Farewell party at Guru Nanak Khalsa College, Yamunanagar

**Yamunanagar :** The MCom first-year students at Guru Nanak Khalsa College, Yamunanagar, orchestrated a heartfelt farewell for their seniors. Principal Dr. Harinder Singh Kang and Vice-Principal Dr. Kamalpreet Kaur commended the students for their thoughtful gesture in organizing such a memorable event. After careful consideration, Supriya was crowned Miss Farewell, while Rahul earned the title of Mr. Farewell. Lalit Kumar was honored with the title of Mr. Eve, and Pooja was bestowed with the honor of Miss Eve.

**Mahendragarh :** The Department of Physics and Astrophysics at the Central University of Haryana

(CUH) hosted a vibrant two-day academic fest titled 'IGNITE-2024'. Vice-Chancellor Professor Tankeshwar Kumar, addressing the gathering, underscored the significance of such initiatives and stressed the importance of students' participation in co-curricular activities for holistic development. Head of Department Professor Sunita Srivastava highlighted that prizes were awarded to winners of various competitions including talk room, quiz ball, face art, furious crafts, mystery, mansion, and camera shorts.

**Kurukshetra :** A team of final-year students from the Institute of Law, Kurukshetra University, including Tajwinder Singh, Divyansh

Dhiman, and Shubham Rana, represented the university at the 2nd International Moot Court Competition and clinched the Second Runners-Up Title along with a cash prize of Rs 30,000. The team also received the Best Memorial Team Award. The competition, themed 'Commercial Arbitration', witnessed participation from 26 teams, including six international teams, from law universities worldwide. Vice-Chancellor Professor Som Nath Sachdeva lauded the team's achievement, acknowledging their hard work and determination in formulating and presenting arguments throughout the competition.

Hisar: Chaudhary

## Unemployed Youth in Karnal Organize Protest March

**Karnal :** On Saturday, groups of unemployed youth staged a procession titled "berozgaron ki baraat" (procession of the unemployed) to advocate for employment opportunities in the city. The procession, named "Berozgar weds Recruitment of CET Group C," commenced from the old bus stand and traversed various city roads before concluding at the Mini-Secretariat.

Former Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) state president Naveen Jaihind spearheaded the procession, with several youths adorning "wedding sehra" (turbans) and dancing to music as part of the demonstration. They presented a memorandum to Red Cross secretary Kulbir Malik, underscoring the concerns of the unemployed youth.

A special invitation card, designed in the form of a wedding card, was circulated on social media platforms to encourage maximum participation from unemployed youths. Criticizing the government's handling of unemployment, Jaihind highlighted similar events organized in Rohtak and Jind.

"The objective of the procession is to remind the government of its commitment to



providing employment opportunities for the youth. Former CM Manohar Lal Khattar had pledged 50,000 jobs, yet no significant recruitment has materialized in the past six years. Legal disputes persist regarding recruitments, ranging from TGT posts to the CET examination," remarked Jaihind.

He emphasized that the procession aimed to amplify the demands of job-seeking aspirants who participated in the event. Additionally, Jaihind extended an offer to CM Nayab Singh Saini to organize a "langar" (community kitchen) following the conclusion of the recruitment process.

## 15 Units of Central Forces Deployed for Election Security in Haryana

**Chandigarh :** Ensuring the integrity and fairness of elections is a top priority for the Election Commission of India (ECI), stated Haryana Chief Electoral Officer Anurag Agarwal, who also chairs the state committee responsible for the deployment of Central Armed Police Forces during elections. "In line with this commitment to conducting impartial and transparent elections, preparations are underway to deploy Central Armed Police Forces alongside the Haryana Police to ensure peaceful and equitable voting across the state. Currently, 15 units of central forces have been stationed in Haryana," Agarwal confirmed.

He outlined the deployment plan, stating, "For the Ambala, Hisar, Sirsa, and Rohtak Lok Sabha constituencies, two units each of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) will



be stationed. Additionally, two units of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) will be deployed for the Sonepat Lok Sabha segment."

Agarwal continued, "Further, one unit of the ITBP will be stationed in each of the Kurukshetra, Karnal, Bhiwani-Mahendragarh, Gurgaon, and Faridabad Lok Sabha constituencies to bolster security measures during the electoral process."

## Rao Inderjit has nothing more than 'jumlebaazi' to offer: JJP candidate

**Gurugram :** "Gurgaon needs a leader who is deeply connected with grassroots issues and can advocate for the constituency and its people. The BJP minister and current MP, Rao Inderjit, has nothing substantial to offer beyond rhetoric, and the public is now aware of this and seeks change," remarked rapper Rahul Yadav, also known as Fazilpuria, the JJP candidate for the Gurgaon constituency.

Fazilpuria, renowned for his vibrant style and credited with popularizing Haryanvi rap in Bollywood, has been chosen by the party to engage with young voters and Ahirs, a significant vote bank in the area.

His candidacy has sparked curiosity, as the 34-year-old rapper defies conventional political norms and competes against one of BJP's strongest Lok Sabha candidates, Rao Inderjit Singh, a five-time MP from the region.

Fazilpuria ventured into politics in 2020 after connecting with JJP leader and former Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant

Chautala. Since then, he has actively participated in protests advocating for a separate Ahir regiment in the Army and has spoken publicly about local issues such as road conditions in the NCR city, irrigation water supply, and unemployment.

"There are numerous pressing issues that demand attention. I have consistently advocated for the formation of an Ahir regiment and have stood with my community on the ground.

The people recognize who will genuinely fight for their interests and who merely makes empty promises," Fazilpuria emphasized.

According to JJP leaders, Fazilpuria's popularity among Yadav community youth is expected to be a game-changer, as they perceive him as more connected to voters than Inderjit. However, Fazilpuria finds himself embroiled in controversy. On March 30, Gurugram Police filed a case against the rapper and YouTuber Elvish Yadav over a music video featuring snakes, allegedly shot in a city mall.



## Hisar, Sirsa: Farmers' Concerns at the Forefront of Election Campaign

**Hisar** : The ongoing Lok Sabha election campaigns are significantly shaped by farmers' issues, particularly in rural areas. Despite assertions to the contrary by the ruling BJP, there's palpable discontent among the populace regarding the government's handling of agricultural matters.

**Police Action**  
A police report (kalandra) has been filed against 11 farmers under Sections 107 and 150 of the CrPC for protesting against a BJP candidate in Narand town on April 11.

Farmer activists in Hisar and Sirsa districts have been actively engaging BJP candidates, questioning the government's promises and its measures to deter farmers from participating in protests in Delhi.

During a campaign event in Nalwa village, BJP candidate Ranjit Singh



faced opposition from local youths when he mentioned plans for constructing water channels for irrigation. A viral video captured the confrontation, illustrating the depth of frustration among farmers.

Wazir Singh, a Milakpur village resident, commented, "Farmer activists are raising legitimate con-

cerns at a crucial juncture. Farmers have endured adverse conditions for years, despite promises from the BJP government to double their income by 2022."

Anil Gorchi, an activist from the farmers' organization Pagri Sambhal Jatta, asserted, "Questioning leaders is our democratic right, and we will continue

to exercise it." Moreover, there are plans to hold former BJP MP Brijendra Singh, now with the Congress, accountable for his role in endorsing the controversial farm laws.

This election cycle marks a notable shift where farmers' issues are authentically shaping the political landscape.

## Stray Animals Pose Concern at Sirsa Grain Market

**Sirsa** : As wheat and mustard procurement surges in mandis across the district, the Sirsa grain market grapples with additional challenges despite claims of efficient administration from authorities.

**Peak Wheat Arrival**  
Wheat arrivals at mandis have peaked, with a staggering 35 lakh quintals received at 70 mandis within five days. This surge indicates a potential record-breaking crop production, offering a much-needed relief to farmers.

However, congestion and space constraints in mandis have led to traffic snarls, complicating the situation. Adding to the chaos is the presence of aggressive stray animals, which pose a threat to public safety.

The constant hustle and bustle in the market exacerbate the risk of accidents, prompting calls for immediate action from the district administration and market committee to address the stray animal issue. Farmers, labor unions, and associations have urged swift intervention to ensure safety amid the bustling harvest season.

Local farmer Raj Kumar Beniwal, voicing his concerns, emphasized the



escalating danger posed by stray animals in the grain market. He urged authorities to promptly address the issue to prevent accidents.

Mahendra Pal echoed similar worries, emphasizing the need for urgent action to tackle the rising number of stray animals during the harvesting season.

Manohar Lal Mehta, president of the Sirsa Arthiya Association, highlighted the seriousness of the situation, noting the presence of aggressive bulls alongside cows in the market. He em-

phasized the need for immediate action from the market committee and administration.

Virendra Mehta, secretary of the Sirsa Market Committee, acknowledged the labor shortage hindering efforts to enhance security at the market. However, he assured that measures would be implemented to prevent stray animal incursions.

Efforts are underway to address labor shortages and bolster security measures to mitigate risks at the grain market.

## Authorities Crack Down on Illegal Liquor Trade, Seize 218 Crates in Four-Day Operation

**Yamunanagar** : Law enforcement officials have intercepted two vehicles and confiscated 218 crates of illicit liquor over a span of four days.

The seized alcohol was being distributed in contravention of regulations set forth by the Excise Department.

Acting on a tip-off, a task force from the CIA-II apprehended a utility vehicle transporting crates of beer unlawfully near Jagadhri bus stand on the evening of April 19.

During the operation, 103 crates of beer were retrieved from the vehicle, intended for delivery to a liquor vendor in Yamunanagar. Anish Kumar, head of



the CIA-II unit, disclosed that the vehicle's driver, Arun Kumar, was found to be utilizing a single-use permit for the second time, lead-

ing to the initiation of legal proceedings.

In a separate incident, authorities seized 101 crates of locally brewed liquor and

14 crates of foreign-made liquor near Nagli Ghat, situated within the Jathlana area of Yamunanagar district, on April 18.

## Farmer Alleges Fraudulent Transaction, Three Individuals Face Legal Action

**Yamunanagar** : In response to a farmer's complaint alleging a monetary loss of Rs 21 lakh due to fraudulent activities, the police have initiated legal proceedings against three individuals.

Rohit, a resident of Sherpur village, lodged a complaint with the authorities, prompting the registration of a case against Yashin Mohammad from Ledi village, Laaldin from Kot Mustarka village, and Manfooldin from Fakir Majra village. The case was filed under sections 406 and 420 of the IPC at Chhachhrauli police station on April 19.

The complainant, who works as a farmer, recounted his interaction with Yashin Mohammad, Laaldin, and Manfooldin regarding the



purchase of agricultural land. He claimed that an agreement was reached with Yashin and Laaldin for the sale of 23 kanal and 12 marla of land in Salempur village at a rate of Rs 27 lakh per acre.

"On February 22, 2023, I provided them with Rs 21 lakh as earnest money. However, when I visited Chhachhrauli tehsil on June

20, 2023, to finalize the sale deed, they failed to appear," he stated. Furthermore, he alleged that the accused individuals not only refused to reimburse the money but also issued threats against him.

Authorities are actively pursuing the case to ensure justice for the aggrieved farmer.

## Road Conditions Remain a Concern in Hisar's HSVP Sector

**Hisar** : Despite repeated appeals from residents, the road infrastructure in Haryana Shahari Vikas Pradhikaran (HSVP) Sector 4 of Hisar continues to deteriorate. The main thoroughfare and many interior roads within the sector are in poor condition, causing significant inconvenience to locals.

Residents have voiced their frustrations over the prolonged neglect of road maintenance in Sector 4 and its environs. Despite staging protests and engaging with higher officials to address the issue, residents assert that

little progress has been made.

Sube Singh, a resident, highlighted the dire state of the main road from Jindal Chowk to the sector's main entry point, citing potholes and scattered gravel as persistent hazards. "The situation is even worse on interior roads, which serve nearly 500 households," Singh lamented, emphasizing their repeated appeals to HSVP officials for repairs and upkeep.

Another resident, Rameshwar, expressed dismay that even roads leading to

agricultural fields in nearby villages were better maintained than those within the sector. He noted that the crumbling roads not only posed inconvenience but also introduced dust pollution into homes.

Last year, the Resident Welfare Association (RWA) of Sector 1 and Sector 4 jointly presented concerns to the HSVP chief administrator at the organization's headquarters in Panchkula. RWA General Secretary Saaludeen Kagdana recounted presenting seven issues to the administration, including

the condition of roads.

While some progress has been made, Kagdana emphasized that significant challenges remain unaddressed. He disclosed ongoing resurfacing efforts in Sector 1, with an allocated budget of Rs 59 lakh. However, he noted that administrative approval for the estimated Rs 4.29 crore needed to resurface roads in Sector 4 is still pending.

An HSVP official assured that once administrative approval is obtained, road re-carpeting works will commence promptly.

## BJP Plans to Engage NRIs to Connect with Voters

**Gurugram** : In a bid to bolster voter confidence in the BJP, the state unit of the party has devised a strategy to involve Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) in endorsing Prime Minister Modi's initiatives.

Scheduled for the upcoming month, the NRI cell of the Haryana BJP will organize a special 'Udghosh Yatra'. This initiative, set to be inaugurated by Chief Minister Nayab Saini, will traverse all 10 Lok Sabha constituencies in the state. NRIs participating in the yatra will not only highlight the transformative changes implemented by the Modi government over the past decade but also emphasize In-



dia's enhanced global stature.

Sandeep Deswal, President of the NRI Cell BJP Haryana, expressed that NRIs, despite not being eligible voters, are keen to contribute by showcasing how the Modi government has elevated India's global stand-

ing and positively impacted the lives of NRIs. Deswal outlined that the yatra will utilize a specially equipped campaign vehicle featuring LED screens and audio systems for effective communication. Although the date is pending finalization, CM Saini will ceremoniously

launch the yatra.

Each district's Udghosh yatra will be led by the district convener, co-convener, and the entire NRI Cell team. A significant number of Haryanvi NRIs are expected to participate in the yatra across various districts. Sar-taj Singh Sekhon, the American convener of the NRI Cell, will serve as the key coordinator, with additional coordinators appointed for Canada, the United Kingdom, the American East Coast and West Coast, Finland, and Indonesia. Leveraging social media, the cell aims to engage successful Haryanvi NRIs, encouraging their participation in the yatra, even if remotely.

## Families of Dharuhera Factory Blast Victims to Receive Compensation

**Rewari** : The management of M/s Life Long Auto Private Limited, the site of the tragic blast in Dharuhera on March 16, has committed to providing a total compensation of Rs 17.5 lakh to the nominee of each deceased worker.

Though more than a month has elapsed since the incident, no arrests have been made yet. Jagdish Chand, SHO of Dharuhera police station, confirmed that the investigation is ongoing.

The Assistant Labour Commissioner of Rewari disclosed this information in a letter addressed to the Rewari Deputy Commissioner, following a notice issued by the National Green Tribunal (NGT) concerning media reports on the incident.

The blast resulted in injuries to 39 workers, out of which 16 tragically lost their lives. Many of the workers hailed from different states and were the primary breadwinners for their families.

The Assistant Labour Commissioner clarified that the affected workers, not covered under the Employ-



ee's State Insurance (ESI), are eligible for the compensation provided by the company on humanitarian grounds. Some of the compensation has already been disbursed, with the remainder to be paid in due course.

Relatives of one deceased worker from Uttar Pradesh confirmed receiving Rs 7 lakh as compensation from the company, with assurances of the remaining amount to be provided soon. Additionally, they mentioned receiving financial assistance from the state government.

In response to the incident, district administrative authorities have requested the Director-General of the National Safety Council

(NSC) India to form a senior-level committee to conduct a thorough safety audit of M/s Life Long Auto Private Limited.

Additionally, a comprehensive inquiry into the dust collector explosion has been urged. Preliminary findings suggest the explosion may have been triggered by a spark, possibly from an electric short circuit or metal grinding polishing, in the presence of a significant amount of fine metal dust in the collectors.

Various other violations were also noted in the report submitted by a joint committee of district officials formed by the Deputy Commissioner on March 17.

## HSPCB Seeks Action on Electricity Supply to Illegal Dyeing Units

**Faridabad** : The Haryana State Pollution Control Board (HSPCB) has requested an action-taken report (ATR) from the Dakshin Haryana Bijli Vitran Nigam (DHBVN) regarding the disconnection of electricity supply to illegal dyeing units. The board is obligated to respond to the National Green Tribunal (NGT) within nearly eight weeks concerning compliance with directives for shutting down these unlawful operations in the city.

The NGT's interest in power connections Sandeep Singh, Regional Officer at HSPCB, stated that a report has been sought from DHBVN regarding the status of power connections to units for which closure orders were issued, enabling submission to the NGT.

"In reference to the subject and the NGT order, it is noted that the tribunal has summoned DHBVN, respondent number five, over complaints of water-polluting units in Dheeraj Nagar and Surya Vihar having unauthorized power connections," reads a recent letter from HSPCB to DHBVN. The board had issued closure orders to these units and directed the MD of DHBVN to disconnect their electricity

supply. The letter enumerates details of 20 such units that received closure orders from the Pollution Department in the last 24 months.

"You are requested to submit an ATR to this office after disconnecting electricity supply to the mentioned units. GPS coordinates have been provided for easy identification," added the board.

This initiative follows NGT directives issued on April 5, mandating HSPCB to submit a report within eight weeks, according to sources familiar with the matter.

Last year, a complaint by resident Varun Gulati alleged the operation of highly polluting 'red category' dyeing units in Dheeraj Nagar and Surya Vihar without proper sewage or effluent treatment plants, posing health risks. Despite closure orders, fresh complaints this year indicate continued operation of these units due to ease of electricity connections and administrative inaction.

Sandeep Singh reiterated the request for a report from DHBVN on the status of power connections to units subject to closure orders, necessary for submission to NGT.

## Haryana Diary: Dissidence in BJP cause for concern

**Faridabad** : The early announcement of candidates in the BJP seems to have stirred up a hornet's nest, particularly for one contender grappling with dissent within certain pockets. Notably, the absence of key party figures at campaign rallies could pose a significant challenge for the BJP candidate, despite their initial lead in the election drive, suggests a political observer.

The lukewarm turnout observed at recent public gatherings might directly reflect the internal dissidence among some leaders in the constituency.

**Local Representation Crucial:** Digvijay

Kurukshetra: With a rallying cry of "local versus outsiders," the Jannayak Janta Party (JJP) is gearing up to field a homegrown candidate for the Lok Sabha election in the Kurukshetra constituency. The party intends to nominate a candidate from the area to contest against BJP's Naveen Jindal, INDIA bloc's Sushil Gupta, and INLD's Abhay Singh Chautala. Recently, JJP leader Digvijay Chautala emphasized the importance of hav-

ing local representation, asserting that candidates from rival parties would vanish after the polls, leaving the locals unattended for the next five years.

**Opposition Candidates' Delay**

Panipat: While BJP's candidate and former Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar strides ahead in campaigning, opposition parties are yet to unveil their contenders. The delay in candidate announcements by the Congress, INLD, and JJP has dampened the spirits of party workers. During his Panipat visits, Khattar took a swipe at the opposition for their tardiness, suggesting that a lack of competition might dampen public interest in the electoral process.

**Mixed Emotions Among Ticket Hopefuls**

Mahendragarh: The prolonged suspense over the Congress candidate for the Bhiwani-Mahendragarh seat has left aspirants in a state of flux, affecting party supporters' morale.

Former MP Shruti Choudhry and Mahendragarh MLA Rao Daan Singh are strong contenders

for the ticket, leading to fluctuating emotions among their supporters. However, the uncertainty persists, with no end in sight.

**Candidate Meets with Advocates**

Hisar: BJP candidate Ranjit Singh's visit to the Bar Association in Hisar evolved into a candid exchange with some advocates, delving into issues like farmer concerns, electricity bills, and per capita income in India. While activist-lawyer Arjun Rana raised questions on certain matters, Singh was able to engage freely on most topics.

**Demand for Substance Over Showmanship**

Yamunanagar: In the Lok Sabha election fervor, candidates are pulling out all the stops to woo voters. However, their theatrical gestures, such as BJP candidate Naveen Jindal loading wheat bags onto a truck at the Radeau grain market, and INDIA bloc candidate Sushil Gupta riding a horse carriage, have left the public unimpressed.

Voters voiced their desire for practical solutions to unemployment and inflation instead of theatrical displays.





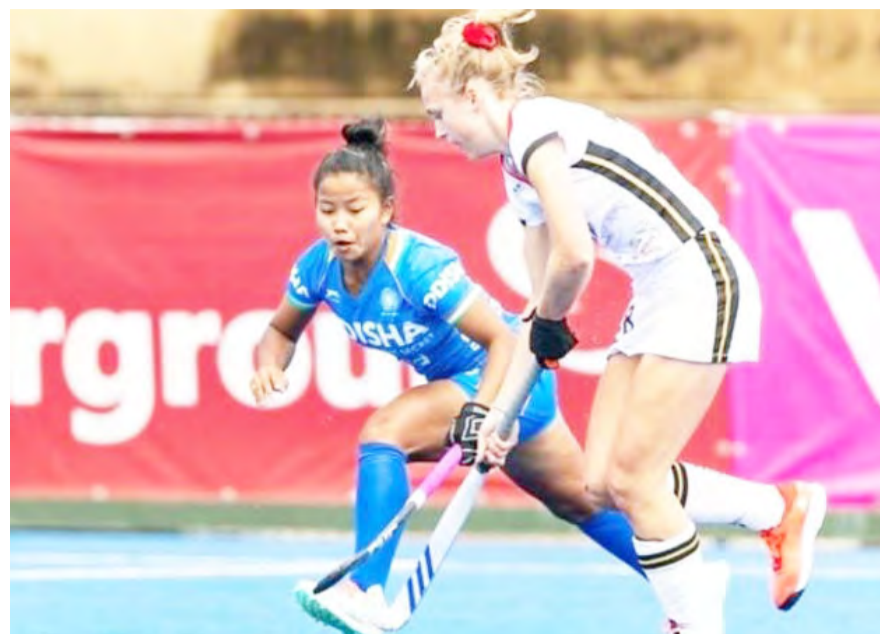
## RCB captain du Plessis fined for slow over-rate



**Kolkata :** Royal Challengers Bengaluru Captain Faf du Plessis has been fined after his team maintained a slow over-rate during Match 36 of the TATA Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024 against Kolkata Knight Riders at the Eden Gardens here on Sunday. As it was his team's first offence of the season under the IPL's Code of Conduct relating to minimum over-rate offences, du Plessis was fined INR 12 Lac, an IPL media advisory on Monday said.

## I had confidence in my abilities: Marina Lalramnghaki

**New Delhi :** Marina Lalramnghaki, the young and energetic midfielder from Mizoram, recently made it to the 33-member Indian Women's Hockey Team core group, which is currently undergoing training at the Sports Authority of India (SAI) in Bengaluru. Her selection came after thorough evaluations of a 60-member assessment squad during intense trials conducted on 6th and 7th April 2024. Her outstanding display of skill and unwavering determination stood out prominently, securing her position among the nation's top hockey players. The 22-year-old midfielder, a product of Hockey Mizoram, displayed outstanding performance during the 14th Hockey India Senior Women National



Championship in Pune, in which she netted three goals thus garnering attention for her agility and strategic play on the field. Marina's journey in

hockey has been marked by numerous accolades, including participation in the FIH Hockey Women's Junior World Cup 2021 and the U-21 3 Nations Invitational Tournament in Australia in 2019. Reflecting on her selection, Marina shared, "I was overwhelmed with joy when I received the news of my selection in the core group. It was a dream come true moment for me, and tears of joy filled my eyes. I always had confidence in my abilities, and the successful trials reaffirmed my belief." With her sights set on upcoming tournaments, Marina is determined to earn a place in the 18-member Indian squad for the challenges ahead, the Hockey India sources said.

## Odisha FC take on Mohun Bagan SG in ISL semi-final

**Bhubaneswar :** Odisha FC and Mohun Bagan Super Giant will clash at the Kalinga Stadium here in the first leg of their semi-final encounter of the Indian Super League (ISL) match on Tuesday at 7:30 pm IST. The Mariners qualified for the last-four by virtue of emerging as the ISL 2023-24 Champions courtesy of finishing at the top of the points table at the end of the league stages.



On the other hand, Odisha FC edged past Kerala Blasters FC in the playoffs to make it to the semi-final. Both these teams have squared off multiple times this season, both in the ISL as well as the AFC Cup where they were pitted in the same group. The Juggernauts will take confidence from having optimised their home advantage against the Yellow Army in the previous match, hoping for a similar outcome this time around. Similarly, Mohun Bagan Super Giant will be riding high on confidence after they beat Mumbai City FC in the title-winning clash at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan in Kolkata last week. They will be raring to take on an Odisha FC unit that has historically not fared well against them in the ISL.

For a large portion of the season, Odisha FC were in the reckoning for the top-two positions in the table. However, they didn't enter the playoffs with a good run of results behind them, hence settling for the fourth spot in the standings with 39 points to their name. Contrastingly, the Mariners produced a late surge, taking Mumbai City FC heads on, winning four out of their last five games to edge past the Islanders and emerge as the ISL 2023-24 League Winners in an emphatic fashion in their home ground on the final day of the league stages. Odisha FC are winless in their nine ISL encounters against the Mohun Bagan Super Giant. They have drawn five games and lost four in this time period. Both their matches in the ISL this season resulted in a draw, and only against FC Goa (10) have Odisha FC played more matches without recording a victory in the league. Simultaneously, Sergio Lobera has managed to build a bastion at the Kalinga Stadium in his first season in-charge of the club. They are unbeaten in their 12 matches at home in the current campaign, and Bengaluru FC are the only side to have played more consecutive matches in their home turf without losing

(19 matches from January 2018-November 2019). However, Odisha FC had defeated the Mohun Bagan Super Giant by 5-2 in their AFC Cup fixture earlier this season, showing that they have it in them to get the better of the might Mariners across 90 minutes. Lobera will want to leave no stone unturned to get his side at least a slight goal advantage before the high-octane action shifts to Kolkata for the second leg. Mohun Bagan Super Giant have been on a terrific run of form both at home and on the road in this campaign. They have won each of their last four away matches and kept a clean sheet in two of them. In fact, the club has dropped points away from home only twice this season, which suggests that Odisha FC cannot completely bank on their strengths. Moreover, they are unbeaten in their last five playoff games in the competition, keeping a clean sheet

in four of these matches. Arguably, their biggest strength is the ability to unlock the opposition in different ways, having won 57.05% of their aerial duels, which is the highest such rate of any team in ISL 2023-24. Whilst Odisha FC have Mourtada Fall to guard their backline from any such threats, it's important that they counter every such facet of the game where the Mariners are ahead of them. Having scored 47 goals from their 22 league matches, the Mohun Bagan Super Giant can turn the intensity on in the frontline, keeping them in the fray of things in all phases of the match. Isak Vanlalruatfela of Odisha FC came in clutch by clinching the winner against Kerala Blasters FC in the knockouts. He has had a breakout season this time around, scoring four goals and notching three assists in 22 appearances. He has averaged 26 passes per game at 75% accuracy, making 11 key passes, creating 14 goal-scoring

## Our mentality is to win: Mohun Bagan head coach Antonio Habas

**Bhubaneswar :** Mohun Bagan Super Giant head coach Antonio Lopez Habas is preparing for a tough challenge as they travel to face Odisha FC in the first leg of the semi-final of the Indian Super League (ISL) at the Kalinga Stadium here on Tuesday.



The Mariners finished off the league stage at the top of the table in the ISL 2023-24 season excelling in both their offensive and defensive displays. With 48 points from 22 matches, Habas' men bagged the League Shield winning the last match of the league stage against Mumbai City FC. The Kalinga Warriors, on the other hand, finished fourth on the league table, and having overcome a play-off challenge against Kerala Blasters FC, made it to the semi-finals in top form. With both their league stage encounters concluding on level terms, the two teams will be set to deliver their best and make it through to the grand finale. The head coach is ready for a tough challenge ahead against Odisha FC. "They're a very difficult opponent because they have a good coach (Sergio Lobera), they have players with experience of winning titles. Not easy. It will be a difficult match for us, but we have to prepare for the match," stated Habas in the post-match press conference. Sharing insights into his mindset ahead of the match, he added, "We have to play the match with the same responsibility as if it's one match of the league. 90 minutes, we have to win to be first in the League and finished. And to win, that has to be the mentality for us." Mohun Bagan SG will

take the pitch fresh from a thrilling 2-1 win over Mumbai City FC, which sealed them the League Shield. On being asked whether the Shield success has had any negative impact on the players, Habas responded, "I have the responsibility to activate the player in this situation. This is my work now. Because now the training is practically impossible to improve them on the field." He continued, "Now, the most important thing is the intelligence of the players playing this match." Odisha FC talisman Roy Krishna will face his former team, and former coach with a place in the final at stake. During his tenure under Habas, Krishna bagged himself the Hero of the Season prize for his exceptional performance in the 2020-21 season. The Spanish tactician is still full of affection towards the Fijian forward but believes, that in football, they are not friends but opponents. "Surely, I will give him one hug before and after the match. But now my interest is in my team. In football there are no friends, there are opponents," shared Habas. Midfielder Sahal Abdul Samad is back in the squad making his return from an injury. The 27-year-old has scored a goal and assisted four in his 13 appearances so far in the league. Giving an injury update on his players, he shared, "He (Sahal) is perfectly 100% fine. All I have to say now, is we have all the squad available for playing this match." "I'm very happy because the commitment to the project until now is 100%," he commented. Forward Liston Colaco accompanied the head coach to the press conference. Contributing to eight goals so far this season, including four goals and four assists, Colaco was instrumental in Mohun Bagan SG's League Shield success. Sharing his insights about the upcoming semi-finals, he said, "They are also a very good team. I can say I have seen them also. They just play to win. Obviously, every team plays to win, so I expect the same from the opponent. But, it's a semi-final and anything can happen. So we are also ready to play against Odisha." The 25-year-old stated that he would give his best for the team wherever needed. "My goal for the semi-final is to help my team in all possible ways. Maybe I can help my team in scoring a goal.

## I-League best Goalkeeper Padam Chettri vows to improve every day

**New Delhi :** Only a year back, goalkeeper Padam Chettri was guarding the citadel of a club, who failed to save themselves from relegation. His then club, Mumbai Kenkre FC, managed only three wins and conceded 40 goals from 22 matches in the 2022-23 I-League season and lost the rights to play the I-League this season. Fast forward one year, the 26-year-old is now easily one of the most important members of the I-League champions Mohammedan Sporting and has even been awarded the Best Goalkeeper of the Season. The boys from Shillong, who only started his senior career in football just four years back, however, learned valuable lessons when his side were down and out.

"I spent two seasons at Kenkre, and the expectations were completely different in that kind of scenario. We struggled to save our existence in the I-League for two seasons," said Chettri. "It helped me grow as a person and as a player too. I had belief in my own abilities when I joined Mohammedan Sporting. I did not think about the past and worked every day to improve myself," he said. From conceding 27 goals in 15 appearances with just one clean sheet, Padam Chettri has gone on to be a part of one of the most stable back-lines in the 2023-24 I-League season, conceding only 18 goals in 22 appearances, with eight clean sheets to his name. The Best Goalkeeper of the season said, "I am very

happy that my efforts have finally been recognised. We have all worked hard this season and won the league, which was the most important thing. But the individual honour is also special. I am thankful to my teammates and coaches." The 26-year-old remained humble, attributing the stellar performances to the defenders who operated in front of him. "I made some good saves, which is again my duty, but I had some fine defenders in front of me too. It was a team effort. I always wanted to improve and would like to thank our goalkeeping coach (Lalit Thapa) too, for his work with me," said Chettri. For Chettri, who had started his career at Rangdajied United FC in Shillong,

before moving to Rynth S&C, and eventually to Mumbai Kenkre FC, it was a unique experience to play for a club, which has a rich history of 133 years. "It's not easy to live up to the expectations of our fans, but it's all about the mentality. It is added pressure, but if you take it the right way, it can help you stay focussed and work harder," said Chettri. "We must understand their emotions. They are our 12th man on the pitch. We try our best, but sometimes the results are not what we expect. As a player, one needs to understand the emotions of the fans in such cases and work according to that," he said. "I don't know how many expected us to win, but we believed in ourselves from the start," said Chettri.

## Bellingham gives Real Madrid win over Barca

**Madrid :** Jude Bellingham's injury time goal gave Real Madrid a 3-2 win at home to FC Barcelona to leave his side 11 points clear at the top of La Liga with just six games left to play. Bellingham popped up at the far post to score from Lucas Vazquez's low cross after Real Madrid twice came back from behind against a rival that needed to win to have any chance of denying them the title. Andreas Christensen headed Barca into an early lead, but Vinicius Jr equalized with an 18th-minute penalty after Vazquez was judged to have been fouled by Pau Cubarsi. Fermin Lopez put Barca back in front with just over 20 minutes left to play after a cross from the impressive Lamine Yamal, but poor defending from Joao Cancelo allowed Vazquez to nip in and level just four minutes later to set up Bellingham's grandstand finish. Atletico Madrid's dreadful away form continued as they were beaten 2-0 away to Alaves, with Carlos Benavidez curling a lovely shot home in the 15th minute, before Luis Rioja's stunning goal in injury time gave the home side three points that should assure their top-flight survival.

On Saturday, Girona virtually assured a place in next season's UEFA Champions League with a 4-1 win at home to Cadiz. Eric Garcia and Ivan Martin put Girona 2-0 up by the 22nd minute, with Artem Dovbyk and Portu adding further goals after the break. Real Betis striker Ayoze Perez scored twice as his side won 2-1 away to Valencia and climbed above them into seventh place in La Liga in a tight battle to qualify for Europe next season. Perez opened the scoring in the 19th minute after a brilliant pass from Ischo and although Pepelu equalized for Valencia from the penalty spot after 66 minutes, his deflected shot in the 77th minute decided the match. Real Sociedad remains sixth after being held 1-1 away to Getafe, with Juanmi Latasa's 29th-minute goal cancelling out Ander Barrenetxea's 13th-minute effort for Real Sociedad. The visitors will be worried after losing defender Robin Le Normand in the closing minutes due to a knee injury. Villarreal rode their luck to win 2-1 away to bottom side Almeria and keep their European hopes alive, with Alexander Sorloth scoring a 92nd-minute winner just five minutes after Almeria's

Largie Ramazani was sent off after lashing out while being held back. Winger Ilias Akhomach had put Villarreal ahead in the 25th minute, and Anthony Lozano leveled for the home side five minutes later. Sorloth's goal rounded off a good day for the Norwegian, whose daughter had been born earlier in the morning. Celta Vigo moved six points clear of the relegation zone with a 4-1 win at home to Las Palmas, with Iago Aspas scoring twice and setting up Tago Douvikas, after Juan Herzog put the visitors ahead in the 11th minute. Williot Swedberg also scored as Celta claimed a vital win. Rayo Vallecano also moved closer to safety with late goals from Pep Charvarria and Isi Palazon overturning Moi Gomez's first-half opener for Osasuna. Athletic Bilbao's hopes of a top-four finish suffered a setback on Friday night as they were held 1-1 at home to second from bottom Granada, who opened the scoring with Inaki Williams' own goal, before Gorka Guruzeta equalized with his 14th league goal of the season. Athletic is three points behind Atletico Madrid ahead of next weekend's visit to the Metropolitan Stadium.





## BSE Sensex

Close	73,648.62	Percent change	0.77%
Previous close	73,088.33	Open	73,666.51
High	73,767.80	Low	73,227.32

## Nifty 50

Close	22,336.40	Percent change	0.86%
Previous close	22,147.00	Open	22,336.90
High	22,375.65	Low	22,198.15

## Nifty 500

Close	20,574.85	Percent change	0.93%
Previous close	20,385.20	Open	20,566.20
High	20,604.10	Low	20,468.10

## Nifty Next 50

Close	62,683.65	Percent change	1.29%
Previous close	61,887.90	Open	62,514.15
High	62,759.35	Low	62,204.95

## Nifty 100

Close	23,078.90	Percent change	0.96%
Previous close	22,859.80	Open	23,067.30
High	23,115.65	Low	22,934.35

## Nifty Bank

Close	47,924.90	Percent change	0.74%
Previous close	47,574.15	Open	48,145.70
High	48,146.30	Low	47,628.45

## Nifty Midcap 100

Close	49,096.40	Percent change	0.82%
Previous close	48,696.95	Open	49,118.10
High	49,215.85	Low	48,916.15

## Top Gainers

Company	Current	% Gain
BPCL	603.45	3.01
TATA Cons. Prod	1,170.95	2.89
Eicher Motors	4,466.95	2.83
Larsen	3,612.70	2.68
Shriram Finance	2,424.65	2.46

## Top Losers

Company	Current	% Loss
NTPC	342.90	-2.18
HDFC Bank	1,512.20	-1.25
JSW Steel	854.80	-1.16
IndusInd Bank	1,477.50	-0.31
Tata Steel	161.85	-0.15

## Commodities

Commodity	Price	Change (%)
Gold Jun 05	71,419.00	-1,387.00 -1.91
Silver May 03	81,173.00	-2,334.00 -2.79
Crudeoil May 20	6,835.00	-62.00 -0.90
Naturalgas Apr 25	148.70	1.90 1.29

## Sensex surges 560.29 pts



**Mumbai** : The BSE Sensex on Monday rallied another 560.29 pts to close strong at 73648.62 as renewed buying was seen in Consumer Durable, Industrials, Capital Goods and BSE services stocks amid positive Asian Market.

The National Stock Exchange (NSE) rose 189.40 pts at 22,336.40.

The equity market remained in green throughout the session as the Sensex opened strong at 73666.51, up 578 pts. It was

sputted 679 pts at 73767.80, days high, before closing at 73648.62, advancing 560.29 pts from its previous close. The NSE registered days high and low at 22,375.65 and 22,198.16 pts respectively.

In stocks, Consumer Durable was up by 2.53 pc followed by Industrials by 1.93 pc, Capital Goods by 1.65 pc and BSE services by 1.53 pc.

In 30 scrips, 25 advanced, while 5 declined.

The gainers were L& T by

2.67 pc to Rs 3613.30, Axis Bank by 2.38 pc to Rs 1054, Bajaj Finserv by 2.36 pc to Rs 7290.70, Ultracemco by 2.09 pc to Rs 9563.10 and Wipro by 2.01 pc to Rs 461.95. The losers were NTPC by 1.82 pc to Rs 343.05, HDFC Bank by 1.24 pc to Rs 1512.30, JSW Steel by 1.17 pc to Rs 855.10 and IndusInd bank by 0.46 pc to Rs 1476.40.

In Asian Market, Strait Times rose by 1.51 pc, Hang Seng by 1.74 pc and Kospi by 1.43 pc.

## Jio Infocomm net up 13% at Rs 5337 cr in Q4

**Mumbai** : Riding on consistent growth in its subscriber base, Jio Infocomm, the telecom arm of Reliance Industries on Monday reported 13 per cent jump in net profit at Rs 5337 crore in the fourth quarter of FY24 compared to Rs 4716 crore in the same quarter in 2022-23 fiscal year.

The net profit for the full year 2023-24 stands at Rs 20466 crore compared to Rs 18207 crore in 2022-23.

The Company is mainly engaged in the business of providing Digital Services and is setting up 5G network and continues to augment its existing wireless and wireline network capacity through out the country.

Jio's revenue from operations registered a growth of 11 per cent at Rs 25959 crore in the Q4 of 2023-24 compared to Rs 23394 crore in the same quarter in the previ-



ous financial year. The company will reveal its Average Revenue Per User (ARPU) and other de-

tails about subscriber base in the consolidated result of its parent company Reliance Industries Limited.

## Plain gold jewellery exports jump 62 pc to \$6.79 billion in FY24

**New Delhi** : Plain gold jewellery exports surged 62% to US\$6.79 billion in financial year 2023-24 as compared to US\$ 4.19 billion in financial year 2022-23.

"Total gold jewellery (plain & studded jewellery), which experienced a 10.47% decline between April 2023 to September 2023, rebounded strongly in the latter half of the year, achieving a growth of 46.91%," said Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC).

As per GJEPC data released on Monday, the UAE emerged as a significant market for plain gold jewellery exports from India.

The plain gold jewellery shipments to the UAE was more than doubled in FY24 to US\$ 4.52 billion as compared to US\$ 2.18 billion in the previous year.

"Markets of UAE and



Bahrain accounted for over 85% of India's plain gold jewellery exports," GJEPC said.

Australia also witnessed a growth of 37% in plain gold jewellery exports attributing its growth to India-Australia free trade pact.

Speaking about the increase in plain gold jewellery exports, GJEPC Chairman Vipul Shah said, "The increase in plain gold jewellery exports may be attributed to the pragmatic foreign trade agreements by the government." He further said, "The

implementation of India-UAE CEPA couldn't have come at a better time, especially when the industry faced various challenges with economic downturns in major export markets and escalating geopolitical concerns, all of which led to the decline in demand."

## Payroll Data: EPFO adds 15.48 lakh net members during February 2024

**Mumbai** : The recent provisional payroll figures disclosed by the EPFO on April 20th, 2024, indicate a noteworthy increase of 15.48 lakh net members during February 2024, as reported by the press information bureau.

Within this data, it is evident that approximately 7.78 lakh individuals were newly enrolled in February 2024. Notably, the 18-25 age bracket constitutes a significant majority, representing 56.36% of the total new members, suggesting a trend towards a younger workforce, predominantly comprising first-time job seekers. Furthermore, the payroll data highlights that roughly 11.78 lakh members underwent job transitions, opting to switch employers covered by the EPFO and transferring their accrued benefits instead of seeking final settlements. This decision underscores a focus on long-term financial security and social protection. A gender



analysis reveals that out of the 7.78 lakh new members, approximately 2.05 lakh are female, with a net addition of around 3.08 lakh female members for the month. This trend signifies a broader movement towards a more inclusive and diverse workforce. Examining the month-

on-month comparison of industry-specific data, there is observable growth in membership within sectors such as manufacturing, computer-related services, entertainment, transportation, automobile servicing, and textiles. Notably, around 41.53% of the total net mem-

bership increase is attributed to expert services, encompassing various fields like manpower supply, contracting, security services, and miscellaneous activities. It's important to note that this payroll data is provisional, as the process of updating employee records is ongoing.

## Sona Comstar opens factory in Mexico



**Chennai** : Sona BLW Precision Forgings, known as Sona Comstar, has officially opened its latest manufacturing facility in the Fipasi Industrial Park located in Silao, Mexico. This move, as stated by the company, highlights its dedication to meeting the increasing need for top-tier driveline solutions, particularly for battery electric vehicles (BEVs), within the North American market.

The newly inaugurated plant will specialize in the production of differential assemblies and reduction gears specifically tailored for battery electric vehicles. According to the company's announcement, the facility will adapt its product offerings over time to accommodate the evolving technological landscape of electric vehicles.

For Indian companies, establishing a presence in Mexico serves as a pivotal manu-

facturing hub, granting smoother access to the North American market.

"Sona Comstar recognizes the pivotal role of North America, which constitutes a significant 40% of its revenue. The strategic location of the new manufacturing plant in Mexico is poised to bolster the company's supply chain efficiency and responsiveness to customer demands in the region," the statement highlighted.

Vikram Verma, CEO of the driveline business at Sona Comstar, expressed, "Our objective is to cement our position as the preferred provider of driveline solutions for automakers in North America by establishing our new manufacturing base in Mexico. This expansion is aligned with our overarching growth strategy, aimed at leveraging the escalating demand for electric vehicles."

## Greenply gets into plantation drive to ease raw material supply

**New Delhi** : Greenply Industries, a prominent player in the wood panel industry, is intensifying its efforts to bolster its plantation initiatives across various states, including Nagaland, West Bengal, and Gujarat, with the aim of ensuring a steady supply of raw materials for its production facilities nationwide.

The company's eco-restoration and plantation initiative, known as the Green Rise project, commenced in 2014 and now spans an impressive 52,983 acres of land, with over 42 million saplings planted to date.

J K Jain, Vice President of Projects at Greenply, expressed, "Our objective is to plant 50 million saplings by 2025, expanding our green footprint to cover more than 60,000 acres of land. We are committed to becoming a zero-waste company and are implementing wastewater management systems across all our manufacturing plants in the country.

Timber accounts for approximately 70% of our raw material requirements,



hence, we are actively promoting plantation on marginal and degraded lands to ensure a sustainable supply chain while conserving nat-

ural resources." Aligned with the company's eco-forestry principles, Greenply involves local communities in

nurturing and maintaining trees for five years before harvesting them for plywood manufacturing. "For every lakh trees harvested,

we ensure that three to four lakh trees remain standing," Jain emphasized.

In Tizit village, Mon district, Nagaland, over 15 saplings have been planted across 3,300 acres of land since 2014. "In Nagaland, our plantation initiative includes local species like eucalyptus, neem, and khokan, as well as species developed in collaboration with the Rain Forest Research Institute, which are suitable for our manufacturing needs. Our plantation unit in Nagaland has been certified by the Forest Stewardship Council, and approximately 7,475 local farmers are actively involved in the project," Jain elaborated.

Beyond Nagaland, Greenply is conducting plantation activities in Kripampur, South 24 Parganas, West Bengal, Baripada, Odisha, and Bamanbore, Gujarat. Additionally, the company is gearing up to launch another plantation project for a forthcoming medium-density fiberboard (MDF) unit in Vadodra.