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In Brief

If you vote for Babu, there will be no schemes: Jagan

Mancharla: AP CM Jagan Mohan Reddy said that if you vote for CM Jagan, the schemes will continue and there will be development at home. He said that if you vote for TDP chief Chandrababu Naidu by mistake, there will be no schemes, if you trust Chandrababu, Chandramukhi will sleep again, he will knock on your door saying laka laka, Babu is coming again with impossible promises. CM Jagan Mohan Reddy conducted election campaign in Manchar. People flocked to Jagan's campaign meeting. The roads of Manchar were crowded with people. Jagan spoke on this occasion. He explained that these elections will tell the future of five years. He said that by pressing the button 130 times, he has done good through various schemes, 2.7 lakh crores have been deposited in the accounts of the poor, more than 2.3 lakh jobs have been created and revolutionary changes have been brought in 59 months. He clarified that the manifesto was considered as Bhagavad Gita, Quran and Bible and 99 percent promises of the manifesto have been fulfilled. Jagan stated that we have seen the days when the manifesto was thrown in the trash bin, we have changed the face of government schools through Nadu-Nedu and brought English medium in government schools. He said that TOEFL classes are being conducted in government schools from class three, digital teaching is available from class six in government schools, bilingual text books and bijus content will be provided to students, and arrangements have been made through Vidyakanuka, Gorumudda, Ammaodi Jagananna Vidyadeevana, and accommodation beena before the schools opened. Did the development in the field of education happen during Babu's reign? He asked. He said that there is support, zero interest, hand-out, cash interest and ABC interest for sisters.

Religion Cannot Be Basis For... Providing Reservation

New Delhi: As the battle over reservations for Muslims continues to escalate in the run-up to the Lok Sabha elections with the BJP registering its dissent over religion-based quota, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that religion cannot be the basis of providing reservations as it goes against the Constitution. The Prime Minister said that the poor in the country include all Hindus, Christians, and Parsis and all should get the benefits of reservations. "I have never said that Muslims won't get reservations. All I'm saying is that religion cannot be the basis of providing reservation. Poor in the country include all Hindus,

Christians, and Parsis; all should get the benefits of reservations. Dalits and tribals for long have faced injustice for thousands of years, and there is a special reason that the makers of our constitution have taken the right decision, and we are grateful for that. No political party opposes this," the PM said. When asked about the dangers associated with allowing reservations based on religion to Muslims, PM Modi said that the maker of the Constitution, after a lengthy discussion during its drafting, decided that reservation based on religion would be detrimental to society and would not be good for

the long term. "When the Constitution was written at that time, leaders like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Babasaheb Ambedkar, and Rajendra Babu were all there; there was no one from the RSS or BJP and there were also representatives from all communities. After a lengthy discussion, it was decided that reservation based on religion would be detrimental to society and would not be good for the long term. Social evils were faced by communities of tribals and Dalits for years. Untouchability and discrimination took place. Injustice was done to a very large section of society on the basis of birth. It was necessary to undo the

wrongs, and it is important to note that this was done by Sanatanis, apart from Nehru ji, who may think of himself above them," the PM said. PM Modi assured that the Muslims will benefit equally from the central schemes if his government is voted into power. "...we need to atone the sins and give reservations to those who deserve. I am also connected to the same sentiments. I want to live in the spirit of the Constitution. I want to raise the prestige of the Constitution. I have been saying from Day 1 that reservations based on religion go against the Constitution, but it doesn't mean that Muslims



won't get the benefit. We raised in Parliament a 10 percent reservation for the poor in the general category; there was no objection, nobody fought, and no loot happened," he said. The PM also said that he is committed to completing all government schemes in which every community and religion will be covered marking the fulfilment of his 'guarantee of social justice, a guarantee of secularism'.

Rythu Bandhu... FUNDS RELEASED



Hyderabad: Good news for Telangana farmers. State government has released funds of Rs.2

thousand crores under Rythu Bandhu (Bharosa). Till now, the government has released funds to those who have less than five acres.. today (Monday) has released funds to farmers who have more than five acres. It is known that CM Revanth Reddy has announced on many occasions that he will deposit the Rythu Bharosa funds in full by the 9th of this month. In addition to these, with the permission of the Election Commission, the government has also released funds of Rs. 10 thousand per acre under crop loss compensation.

Vote for BRS to have KCR back: KTR

Rajanna-Sircilla: BRS working president KT Rama Rao on Monday said if the people wanted BRS chief K Chandrashekhara Rao back in power, they should vote for the BRS candidates in the Lok Sabha polls on May 13. Chandrashekhara Rao would reach a position to dictate terms in the State if the BRS won a majority of MP seats, he said while participating in corner meetings in different places of Sircilla town on Monday. Stating that the Congress party came to power by cheating the public with false promises, Rama Rao said the ruling party had implemented only one promise as against six guarantees. Moreover, the State government had created a conflict between men and women by introducing the free traveling facility for women in RTC buses. "Were the six guarantees implemented? Did farmers get their farm loans waived and did aged people get pen-



sions?" he asked, stating that the double standards of the Congress party were exposed as it changed its stand after the assembly polls. In the present digital era, it was possible to catch one lying within minutes, he said. Condemning the filthy language used by Congress leaders to abuse Chandrashekhara Rao, who had achieved a separate Telangana State by putting his life at risk, Rama Rao also said the BJP was doing politics in the name of religion.

MODI'S GUARANTEE HAS NO WARRANTY: CM REVANTH REDDY

Hyderabad: TPCC Chief and Chief Minister Revanth Reddy complained that Modi's guarantees have run out of warranty and people are not in a position to trust the BJP, which has been branded as a religious party across the country. He criticized that the BRS party, which has no chance for a seat except competition, has become an invalid rupee. The Chief Minister organized a roadshow in support of Congress candidate Danam Nagender from Amberpet Tilaknagar under Secunderabad Lok Sabha constituency to Fever Hospital.

Activists chanted Jai Congress slogans amidst the crowd. Speaking on this occasion, CM Revanth said that even in the past, the state has developed under the Congress rule and all the evidences are visible in front of the people. He said that outer ring road and pharma industries have come in Hyderabad. He said that Krishna and Godavari waters have been brought to Hyderabad in the past. Revanth Reddy explained that Congress party is the reason for coming of metro train too. "Even though Modi has been in power for ten years, why

hasn't Kishan Reddy completed the Amber Pate Bridge? When there is a flood in Hyderabad city, they did not give anna paisa to the poor. If the cart goes missing, there is no trace of the half-hearted people who would give a cart.. Even if Kishan Reddy is MP again, Hyderabad city and Amber Pate have nothing to do with it. The outer ring road and the international airport were built during the Congress regime.. Amber Pate means Hanumanthanna.. Hanumant hanna means Amber Pate.. My responsibility is to ensure that the next Bathukamma festival



takes place in Amber Pate Bathukamma Kunta.. India alliance is sure to come to power at the center.. Rahul is sure to be the Prime Minister" The CM expressed confidence.

BJP's Manoj Tiwari Richest Lok Sabha Contender In Delhi

New Delhi: Bhojpur singer-turned-politician Manoj Tiwari (53) is the richest among the prominent candidates from the BJP, AAP and the Congress in fray for the Lok Sabha elections in Delhi with total assets worth Rs.28.05 crore. Second in line is Ramvir Singh Bidhuri (71), the BJP's candidate in South Delhi, with total assets of Rs.21.08 crore. According to his 2022-23 Income Tax returns, Bidhuri had an income of Rs.14.93 lakh. The third richest among poll contenders is Mahabal Mishra (69), the AAP's candidate from West

Delhi. He has declared Rs.19.93 crore. Mishra's highest qualification is pre-university certificate from LS College Muzaffarpur, Bihar obtained in 1971. Oxford-returned lawyer Bansuri Swaraj (40), daughter of former external affairs minister late Sushma Swaraj, with total assets worth ? 19 crore, stands fourth in the row, followed by former AAP leader Raaj Kumar Anand who jumped ships to the BSP and owns assets worth Rs.17.87 crore. Ms Swaraj, who is the BJP's debutant contender from the

New Delhi seat, owns two vehicles, including the high-end Mercedes Benz purchased in 2023, according to her self-sworn affidavit. She possesses one-sixth of joint property in Palwal, Haryana valued at Rs.99.34 lakh and three flats in Delhi's posh areas -- two at Jantar Mantar and one at Hailey Road. In her election affidavit, Ms Swaraj revealed her income at Rs.68.28 lakh in her Income Tax return filed for the year 2022-23. She is a lawyer by profession who earned her Barrister-at-Law from Inns of Inner Temple, Lon-

don, in 2007 and completed Master of Studies from St Catherine's College, University of Oxford, in 2009. Mr Tiwari, who is contesting from the North East Delhi seat from the BJP third time in a row, declared his income to be Rs.46.25 lakh in his Income Tax returns filed for 2022-23. He stated that his sources of income are singing and acting, and as an MP. He completed BA (Honours) from the Banaras Hindu University (BHU) from where he also did a masters in physical education in 1994. Mr Anand is the BSP's can-

didate from the high profile New Delhi seat. He declared in his poll affidavit that he has vehicles worth Rs.51 lakh including that of his wife. Congress' Kanhaiya Kumar from North East seat contesting against Tiwari has a total asset of Rs.10.65 lakh. He has a PhD from JNU that he completed in 2019. BJP's Kamaljeet Sehrawat from West Delhi seat declared her movable assets worth ? 1.30 crore and immovable assets worth Rs.27.60 lakh in her poll affidavit. She is a Masters in Commerce from Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla.

Praveen Khandelwal (64), the BJP's Chandni Chowk candidate, declared assets worth Rs.6.62 crore. According to his Income Tax returns of 2022-23, he had an income of Rs.4.56 lakh. He completed his graduation from Delhi University' Ramjas College. Udit Raj (66), the Congress' North West Delhi candidate, completed his MA from Osmania University in 1988 and LLB from MMH College, CCS University, Meerut, in 1995. He received an honorary doctorate from Bible College and Seminary, Kota, in 2003. He has shown an income of about



Rs.1 crore in his 2022-23 Income Tax returns. He has movable assets worth Rs.5.54 crore. Rajan Singh (26), the first third gender candidate in the Lok Sabha polls in Delhi, also filed his papers from the South Delhi seat.

Sunita Williams' 3rd Mission To Space Called Off Hours Before Liftoff

The launch of the Boeing Starliner, which was set to take astronaut Sunita Williams to space for a third time, has been postponed due to a technical glitch. No new date has been announced for the launch. Ms Williams, poster girl for women aspiring to fly into space, was set to reach for the skies again today in a brand-new spacecraft. The Boeing Starliner was set to lift off from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida's Cape Canaveral at 8.04 am India time.

However, just 90 minutes before the lift-off, the launch of the Atlas V rocket was called off. US space agency NASA has announced there was an off-nominal condition on an oxygen relief valve, which led to the postponement. Ms Williams and NASA's Barry Wilmore, who were to fly the Starliner to the International Space Station, have safely exited the spacecraft. This would have been the third space travel for the Indian-origin astronaut, who has already spent 322 days in space and held a record for the maximum hours of spacewalk by a woman, before being overtaken by



Peggy Whitson.

This time, she would have made history as the first woman to fly on a maiden crewed mission of a new space shuttle. Ms Williams went on her first space voyage on December 9, 2006, which lasted till June 22, 2007. While onboard, she established a world record for women by going on four spacewalks that added up to 29 hours and 17 minutes.

Her second voyage was from

July 14 to November 18, 2012. The 59-year-old admitted to being a bit nervous but said she had no jitters about flying in a new spacecraft. She had helped design the Starliner, working with engineers from NASA and Boeing. "When I reach the International Space Station, it will be like going back home," she said. Ahead of the flight, she had told that she intended to carry an idol of Lord Ganesh on this journey, since

he is her "good luck charm". Earlier, she had carried a copy of the Bhagwad Gita. An enthusiastic marathoner, she had even completed a triathlon in space, competing with athletes back in the US.

The 10-day mission will help the Starliner prove its space-worthiness. It would also prove the team's readiness to achieve NASA certification and fly long-duration missions for the US space agency.

"Enjoyed Seeing Myself Dance": PM Modi Reacts To Viral Meme

New Delhi: It was Narendra Modi versus Mamata Banerjee again, in identical memes that showed them dancing. What made the difference was the reaction. While the Bengal police started a hunt for the creator -- and gathered much scorn from netizens -- PM Modi applauded the "creativity" and said he "enjoyed" seeing himself dance. "Like all of you, I also enjoyed seeing myself dance. Such creativity in peak poll season is truly a delight!" he posted, retweeting the meme that portrayed him shaking a leg to a popular Bengali number. The meme on Ms Banerjee, that showed her dancing to her own speech, was met with a strong reaction from the Bengal police.

"You are directed to immediately disclose your identity including name and residence. If the information sought is not revealed, you shall be liable for legal action u/s 42 CrPC," read a post from the Kolkata Police responding to the tweet.

The reaction on social media was stronger, with most people censoring the police. Many said that PM Modi has not reacted to the many jokes and cartoons

and memes on him in this election season. The meme on PM Modi had a caption that read, "Posting this video cuz I know that 'THE DICTATOR' is not

founder Bal Thackeray and former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa. In Bengal, it started in 2012, with a professor of Kolkata's premier Jadavpur



going to get me arrested for this". For decades, elections in India have been accompanied by a laughter riot as cartoonists starting with RK Laxman poked fun at political leaders and the common man. In the age of social media, it was replaced by cartoons and memes, which brought crackdown from time to time. In recent years, many have faced legal action across the country for posting content on leaders including Shiv Sena

University, Ambikesh Mahapatra, getting arrested for allegedly forwarding an email containing a cartoon of Ms Banerjee. In 2019, a BJP youth wing member was arrested for posting a morphed photo of Ms Banerjee on Facebook. In 2022, a 29-year-old YouTuber was arrested from Nadia district for allegedly creating memes on the Chief Minister. Calling the memes "derogatory", the police said the complaint named seven other content creators.

NIA Probe Against Arvind Kejriwal? Lt Governor's New Claim, AAP's Rebuttal

New Delhi: In an explosive turn of events, Delhi Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena has called for an anti-terror probe into allegations Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal received political funding from the banned Sikhs For Justice group founded by wanted terrorist Gurbhawan Pannun. Mr Kejriwal's Aam Aadmi Party hit back swiftly via senior leader Saurabh Bhardwaj, who dismissed the call for a probe by the National Investigation Agency as a "conspiracy" against the party and its leader. "LG sir is an agent of the BJP... This is another big conspiracy

against Chief Minister Kejriwal at the behest of the BJP," he said in a brief statement. The allegations - the latest in a long-running and fierce war between the AAP and the Bharatiya Janata Party in power at the centre - come less than three weeks before the national capital votes in the general election. In 2019 the BJP won all Delhi's seven seats. In a detailed letter to the Union Home Secretary, Mr Saxena referred to a video (which he said was enclosed with the missive) in which Pannun declares Arvind Kejriwal's Aam Aadmi Party

"received a staggering amount of \$16 million in funding from Khalistani groups..." "... Kejriwal purportedly promised to facilitate release of Devender Pal Bhullar, in return for substantial financial backing from Khalistani factions to Aam Aadmi Party..." the LG's letter said, citing a complaint from a Hindu religious body and tweets by a former AAP worker. The AAP boss also reportedly received money to "espouse pro-Khalistani sentiments". Bhullar, a former professor, was convicted in the 1993 Delhi bomb blasts case. In 2001 he was given the death



sentence but that was later commuted to life imprisonment. Arvind Kejriwal is already in jail over corruption charges linked to the alleged Delhi liquor policy scam that is being investigated by the

Enforcement Directorate and Central Bureau of Investigation. Mr Kejriwal and the AAP have denied all charges, labelling them acts of "political vendetta" by the BJP ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha election.

Probe Agency Arrests Jharkhand Minister's Aide After Rs.35 Crore Cash Recovery

Ranchi: The Enforcement Directorate arrested Jharkhand minister Alamgir Alam's personal secretary Sanjiv Lal and the latter's domestic help following a recovery of over Rs.32 crore cash from them, official sources said. The duo have been taken into custody under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) following their overnight questioning, the sources said. The ED on Monday had raided a 2BHK flat in the city that is allegedly occupied by Lal's domestic help Jehangir, as part of a money laundering investigation into alleged irregularities in the state rural development department, they said. It had recovered over Rs.32 crore cash apart from Rs.3 crore from some other premises that were searched by the central agency. The total cash recovery stands at Rs.35.23 crore, the sources said. Jharkhand rural development minister and Congress leader Alam had denied any wrongdoing on his part.

Mama vs Dada, Cricketer's Debut, Family Feud: Key Battles In 3rd Phase

New Delhi: Mama vs Dada in Madhya Pradesh and a cricketer making his poll debut against a political veteran in West Bengal - the third phase of the Lok Sabha elections today will encompass 95 constituencies spread across 11 states. The Betul constituency in Madhya Pradesh, originally slated for Phase 2, has been rescheduled for Phase 3 due to the death of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) candidate. All 26 constituencies of Gujarat will cast their votes in a single phase, along with two constituencies in Goa. The remaining 14 constituencies in Karnataka, predominantly situated in north Karnataka, are also scheduled for polling on the same day, marking the conclusion of voting in the state.

Ahead of the polls, here is a look at some of the key battles:

Gandhinagar: Amit Shah vs Sonal Patel

Gujarat's Gandhinagar Lok Sabha constituency is a key stronghold for the BJP. Since 1989, it has consistently deliv-

ered victories to the party, spanning six terms for BJP veteran Lal Krishna Advani and, and most recently in 2019, for Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who secured a comprehensive win by over 5 lakh votes. As the elections approach this year, the Home Minister faces Congress candidate Sonal Patel, aiming to maintain the constituency's allegiance to the BJP.

Mainpuri: Dimple Yadav vs Jaiveer Singh vs Shiv Prasad Yadav

The incumbent Mainpuri MP, Dimple Yadav, faces a formidable opponent in Jaiveer Singh of the BJP. While initially perceived as a head-to-head battle, the entry of Shiv Prasad Yadav from the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) has presented a third contender. Dimple Yadav, who clinched Mainpuri in a bypoll following the death of Mulayam Singh Yadav in 2022, secured victory with a surge of sympathy votes. This upcoming election poses as the primary litmus test for her. In the

2019 Lok Sabha elections, the contest was confined to the BJP and SP, with Mulayam Singh Yadav emerging victorious against BJP's Prem Singh Shakya.

Baramati: Supriya Sule vs Sunetra Pawar

In Maharashtra's Baramati, all eyes are fixed on the Pawar family rift as the stage is being readied for a clash between Supriya Sule, representing the Sharad Pawar faction of NCP, and her cousin Ajit Pawar's wife Sunetra Pawar, the NCP candidate. Since 2009, Supriya Sule, Sharad Pawar's daughter and the incumbent MP, has consistently won in this constituency. Baramati has long been a stronghold of the Sharad Pawar-led NCP, dating back to his tenure as an MLA in 1967. Throughout subsequent Lok Sabha elections, candidates backed by him have emerged victorious in Baramati, including Ajit in 1991. Sharad Pawar himself held the parliamentary seat from 1996 until Supriya succeeded him.

Shivamogga: BY Raghavendra vs Geetha Shivarajkumar vs KS Eshwarappa

In the Shivamogga Lok Sabha constituency in Karnataka, KS Eshwarappa, the suspended BJP leader has announced his intention to run as an independent candidate, challenging the incumbent MP, BY Raghavendra, son of former Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa, and Geetha Shivarajkumar, the Congress candidate, spouse of Kannada superstar Shiva Rajkumar and daughter of another Karnataka Chief Minister Sarekoppa Bangarappa.

This parliamentary area, consisting of eight assembly segments, has been firmly under the control of the Yediyurappa family since 2009. In the 2009 general elections, BY Raghavendra secured victory with a margin of over 4.82 lakh votes and a vote share of 50.58 per cent. In 2014, he relinquished the seat to his father, BS Yediyurappa, who triumphed with a commanding



lead of over 6 lakh votes and a 53.69 per cent vote share. Returning to Raghavendra in 2019, he secured a landslide victory with over 7.29 lakh votes and a vote share of 56.86 per cent.

Berhampore: Yusuf Pathan vs Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury

Berhampore in West Bengal has long been a stronghold for the Congress party. Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, the current MP, has held this position since 1999. In both the 2019 and 2014 Lok Sabha elections, Mr Chowdhury secured victory over candidates from Trinamool Congress (TMC) by considerable margins. As the 2024 Lok Sabha elections approach, Berhampore is in for a contest between Mr Chowdhury, Nirmal Kumar Saha of the BJP and ex-cricketer Yusuf Pathan of the TMC. Mr Chowdhury has represented the Congress party in Berhampore for three consecutive terms from 2009 to 2019. The Congress veteran also triumphed in the 2016 As-

sembly elections across all seven Assembly segments falling within the constituency. Vidisha: Shivraj Singh Chouhan vs Bhanu Pratap Sharma In Madhya Pradesh's Vidisha, it will be a contest between Mama and Dada. Since 1967, the Jana Sangh has predominantly held the Vidisha Lok Sabha constituency and subsequently the BJP, with only two exceptions in 1980 and 1984 when the Congress candidate, Pratap Bhanu Sharma, secured the seat. From 1989 onwards, BJP representatives have consistently won the Vidisha seat. Shivraj Singh Chouhan, who served five terms from 1991 to 2004, is now making a comeback after nearly two decades to vie for the seat. He faces Mr Sharma, the sole Congress victor in this constituency's history. Mr Chouhan's rapport with voters affectionately referred to as "Mamaji," has only strengthened since

his tenure as Chief Minister ended.

Guna: Jyotiraditya Scindia vs Congress' Rao Yadendra Singh Yadav

More than four years after joining the BJP from the Congress, Jyotiraditya Scindia is set to make his debut as a BJP candidate in the Lok Sabha, aiming to regain his family's historical stronghold in Guna. Mr Scindia's grandmother, Vijayaraje Scindia, had secured the Guna seat in 1957 under the Congress banner. Subsequently, she aligned with the Bharatiya Jan Sangh and later the BJP. She served the constituency for five additional terms, including one under the Swatantra Party in 1967, followed by four consecutive terms with the BJP from 1989 to 1998. The Congress has put forth Rao Yadendra Singh Yadav, seeking to unite the influential Yadav community in opposition to Mr Scindia.

Rythu Bandhu, who had stopped, was hit by me

Nizamabad: BRS leader and former Chief Minister KCR said that Rythubandhu, who stopped because he had clenched his fists and walked on the road, became a demon. He spoke at a road show held at Nehru Park in Nizamabad city on Monday night. He commented that because the Chief Minister was born to

Vanu, Rythubandhu was born. He said that the



government moved because he roared even though his

leg was broken and he was limping. Out of the six guarantees announced by the government, none of the guarantees have been fully received, he asked whether the women were given Rs.2000. He said that there is no situation in which the Modi government will come to the center in the parliamentary elections, the leaders of that party are talking about 400 seats, but

there is no situation in which it will come more than 200 seats. He said that the coalition government will come to power at the center. He assured that if BRS wins 14 seats in the state, they will start all the stalled schemes. Ten years ago, Modi came to power at the center and said sabka saath sabka vikas, but the country has been destroyed, he said.

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EDITORIAL

A fantasy by those who have never lived in a village

Naturally trained to be a sniffer dog, of the kind that likes to spot codes, the semiotician in me was slightly thrilled to discover that something was happening beneath the obvious plot in Laapataa Ladies. Right after the two newly-wed brides are lost on the train, the mistake discovered only when a bride lifts her veil to reveal her face, and her husband, in a state of shock, says that this is not his Phool, I begin to notice the pattern. Deepak's bride's name is "Phool", flower. The bride who's mistakenly been brought to this village says that her name is "Pushpa" — that means flower as well. Her husband's name, she says, is "Pankaj", meaning lotus. Phool, young, innocent of the ways of the world, is unable to remember the name of her husband's village. It's named after a flower, she says. Her new companions at the railway station supply her with names of flowers from time to time. "Gulab, Champa, Chameli, Matiya, Kaner, Dhatura?" asks Chhotu helpfully. No, Phool shakes her head; neither "Parijat" nor "Nalini"; not "Mogra" either. "You've turned us all into bees," Manju Mai, the woman who sells tea and bread pakoras, tells Phool playfully. We eventually discover that the name of the village is Surajmukhi. It seems appropriate, even if it comes only as an afterthought, that Deepak's village should be named sunflower — Deepak, meaning lamp, a source of light. To remain alive, Phool — flower — would need this source of light, even if it's not the sun. The bus that gets Deepak and Jaya to Surajmukhi village is called 'Pushpa Travels'; Jaya praises the lotus stem dish made by Deepak's mother. These cues and clues about plant life are smuggled into the film even though they might not be directly related to the film's "meaning" or experience.

I found myself thinking frequently of a Mahasweta Devi story as I watched the film. It's called "Seed". Unlike Laapataa Ladies, which is set in the fictional state of Nirmal Pradesh — "nirmal" means pure and clean — Mahasweta Devi's story is set in a violent time and space, in Kuruda village, around the time of the Emergency, where landlords could kill farm workers without worrying about punishment. Mahasweta Devi's village is harsh and brutal, casteist and hostile. The little "politics" we are given in Laapataa Ladies is how names of villages change with changes in governments: Indirapur to Atalnagar to Mayaganj; how similar the village is to a woman, whose name is changed after her marriage. It is possible that it was Jaya's passion for "organic farming" that set off the comparison with Mahasweta Devi's story in my mind. "Organic farming" is an imagined vocation for Jaya — it's also a feel-good phrase and upper-class aspiration for the urban audience of Kiran Rao's film, one that allows us to feel correct, equitable, and nurturing of the planet and ourselves. In Mahasweta Devi's story, Dulan Ganju's land, not allowed to be farmed for years because the landlord Lachman Singh has buried corpses of the men that he's killed there, begins to show signs of fertility: The dead "Karan and Bulaki are now those putush bushes and aloe plants". Even Dulan's son Dhatua, who protests against the landlord, is buried there. After managing to kill the landlord, Dulan plants paddy on the land: "I won't let you be just aloe and putush. I'll turn you into paddy, Dhatua ... When the seedlings appear... Lachman, Makhan or Ramlagan's fertiliser-fed seedlings are nothing in comparison... Tall, strong, healthy plants." It was of this manner of "organic farming" I found myself thinking of as I watched Laapataa Ladies, where the only killings that are mentioned are a wife who has died by suicide and insects that are killing the crops. The flower-like sweetness of the film (Phool adds rose petals to her kalakand in a barely functional kitchen; the police inspector's name is Manohar, meaning "lovable"), with its handbook feminism that has made it endearing to all of us, is made possible not because it's a "comedy", but because it's a fantasy, an Aamir Khan Productions version of the utopian Indian village imagined by those who have never lived in a village. ("When I would see these villages from a train, I'd wonder about what happens there," Rao said in an interview for Netflix), where patriarchy can be defeated with as much cinematic ease as winning a game of cricket helps a village get rid of land tax in Lagaan. I do not remember a single mention of any flower in Mahasweta Devi's story. Dulan's son will never be found — he is under the soil, his rotting flesh and bones now manure for the paddy plants. "Dhatua, I've turned you all into seed," says Dulan, the farmer-father. Organic farming indeed.

KTR denounces BJP's politics of religion

Hyderabad: BRS working president KT Rama Rao voiced strong opposition to the BJP's politics of religion, stating that Prime Minister Narendra Modi was attempting to destroy the secular fabric and communal harmony in Hyderabad for political mileage. He reminded that the BJP government at the Centre repeatedly neglected Hyderabad's developmental needs over the last 10 years.

Addressing a roadshow in Kondapur under Chevella Parliamentary constituency on Monday, Rama Rao reminded that in the decade-long rule of the BRS-led by K Chandrashekhara Rao, the secular atmosphere of Hyderabad was preserved. All efforts were made to promote brotherhood among religions apart from attracting huge investments for employment generation by maintaining a peaceful atmosphere and keeping communal politics away.

"Hyderabad is one of the most harmonious cities in the country, but Modi is attempt-

ing to destroy the friendly environment and cosmopolitan culture," he said.

Dismissing BJP's temple construction agenda as insufficient grounds for electoral support, he emphasised on Chandrashekhara Rao's inclusive governance, which transcended religious divides to prioritise the welfare of all citizens. He cited Greater Hyderabad's overwhelming support for Chandrashekhara Rao as evidence of his popularity and effectiveness in governance. He pointed out that though the former Chief Minister renovated Yadadri temple, he never sought votes for it.

Recalling BJP's electoral promises in 2014, Rama Rao criticised the party's failure to fulfill commitments, highlighting the discrepancy between rhetoric and reality. He questioned Modi's leadership, accusing him of betraying public trust and neglecting Hyderabad's development needs, particularly in the IT sector, by denying establish-



ment of IT Investment Region. "The Modi government which provided Rs 1,000 crore to Gujarat during floods, did not release even a rupee when Hyderabad suffered its worst floods in its history," he added. Rama Rao also rebuked the claims of Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy and other Con-

gress leaders that the BRS colluded with the BJP. "If it is true, why was my sister and MLC K Kavitha arrested in a false case and kept in prison for last 50 days?" he asked, stating only leaders like Chandrashekhara Rao, Arvind Kejriwal and MK Stalin could stop the BJP in national poli-

tics, but not the likes of Rahul Gandhi and other Congress leaders.

He urged voters to rally behind the car symbol on May 13 to secure a victory that would pave the way for Chandrashekhara Rao's return to dictate terms in the State politics.

KCR'S BUS TOUR ALL SET TO ENTER FINAL PHASE

Hyderabad: The bus tour of BRS president and Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao, which has now entered the fourth consecutive day after the 48-hour ban by the Election Commission of India, is all set to move into the final phase, as the Leader of Opposition plans to cover more constituencies in the last week of campaigning.

On Monday, accompanied by a convoy of vehicles carrying hundreds of leaders and activists, Chandrashekhara Rao interacted with the people and listened to their grievances and sorrows, reassuring them to take up their issues. After a Sunday night halt at the residence of MLC L Ramana in Jagtial, he met the party leaders and activists. He patiently listened to their suggestions and issues at the ground level, besides posing for photographs. Later, Chandrashekhara Rao visited his teacher and noted poet Jaishetty Ramanaiah in Jagtial at the latter's residence and took his



blessings. The duo spent about 15 minutes recalling the old days when Ramanaiah taught history to Chandrashekhara Rao and others at the government junior college in Siddipet.

On the occasion, Ramanaiah expressed his happiness about the achievements of his student who had not only led the Telangana movement and

achieved Statehood, but also drove the State on a development path within a short span. Later, the former Chief Minister left for Nizamabad. Enroute to Nizamabad, the BRS activists and people extended a warm welcome to Chandrashekhara Rao at several locations including Medipalli, Kortula, and Metpalli, among others. They performed

"Mangala Harathi" and showered flowers, wishing his a great success in the Lok Sabha elections. After addressing the roadshow in Nizamabad on the 13th day of his tour, the BRS supremo is scheduled to make a night halt in the town before heading for Kamareddy. He will address roadshows at Kamareddy and Medak on Tuesday.

Egg prices in Hyderabad burn a hole in pocket

Hyderabad: Savoring your favorite kind of omelet is going to prove costly as the prices of eggs in the city are on an upward trend. With a shortage in supply of these protein orbs in Hyderabad, the prices have shot up compared to last summer. While the cost per 100 units of eggs was Rs 420 on May 4 last year, this year it has gone up to Rs 445. Market experts attribute this to the increasing temperatures and higher chicken mortality rates.

In the last one month, the prices of eggs have been rising, albeit in small increments. And over the month, between April 5 and May 4, the cost per unit went up by 70 paise. If the



price of an egg on April 5 was Rs 4.35, a month later, on May 5, an egg was costing Rs 5.25. However, the sharp rise has been in the last five days with the price of a single egg going

up on daily basis in the month of May starting at Rs 4.25 on May 1 and touching Rs 5.25 on May 5. Moreover, given the summer heat, if you want your eggs home delivered, be pre-

pared to burn a hole in your pocket as the price on delivery platforms is around Rs 70 per six units. "In the last four days, the price per 100 units has increased by around Rs 95 in the market. This is happening because the production has come down due to the summer heat. Last year there were rains in parts of the country which kept the rates low," says Abdul Raos, a third-generation egg retailer in the city. In the month of April, prices increased steadily until it touched Rs 400 on April 16. Within the next two days, the price was Rs 410. However, there was a decline of Rs 20, with the price dropping down to Rs 390 on April 21.

Rains bring respite from heatwave in Telangana districts

Hyderabad: Several districts in the State witnessed a significant respite from the scorching heatwave. The drop in temperatures brought relief from the prolonged intense heat, albeit accompanied by disruptions in various areas.

Nalgonda, Suryapet, Mulugu, and Mahabubabad districts experienced gusty winds and rainfall. The Telangana State Development Planning Society reported that the highest rainfall of 46.4 mm was recorded at Atmakur in Suryapet district.

Heavy rains accompanied by gusty winds were observed in many places in

Nalgonda district, leading to the falling of trees and power outages. Tragically, reports



indicate that livestock also succumbed to lightning strikes during the storm. The

rainfall persisted for about two hours, causing chaos in Damarawai village in Mulugu

blocked the Katapur Mangapet road, halting traffic. In Mahabubabad district, Narasimha Peta and Chinna Gudur mandals experienced gusty winds and hailstorms. The weather department has issued warnings of thunderstorms accompanied by lightning and gusty winds likely to occur at isolated places in Jayashankar Bhupalpally, Mulugu, Bhadradi Kothagudem, Khammam, Nalgonda, Suryapet, Mahabubabad, Warangal, Hanamkonda, Yadadri Bhuvangiri, Rangareddy, Mahabubnagar, Nagarkurnool, Wanaparthy, Narayanpet, and Jogulamba Gadwal districts.

ISRO developing semi-cryogenic engine working on liquid oxygen kerosene

Bengaluru: ISRO said it is developing a 2,000 kN (kilonewton) thrust semi-cryogenic engine working on a Liquid Oxygen (LOX) Kerosene propellant combination for enhancing the payload capability of Launch Vehicle Mark-3 (LVM3) and for future launch vehicles. Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC) is the lead centre for the development of semi-cryogenic propulsion systems with the support of other launch vehicle centres of ISRO. The successful ignition of a semi-cryo pre-burner is a major accomplishment of ISRO in the development of semi-cryogenic propulsion systems, the space agency said.

The assembly and testing of the propulsion modules were done at the ISRO propulsion complex (IPRC), Mahendragiri. As part of the engine development, a pre-burner ignition test article, which is a full complement of the engine power head system excluding the turbopumps, is realised, it said, adding, the first ignition trial was conducted successfully on May 2, at semi-cryo integrated engine test facility (SIET) at IPRC, Mahendragiri. Smooth and sustained ignition of the pre-burner is demonstrated, which is vital for the starting of the semi-cryogenic engine, it added.

According to ISRO, semi-cryogenic engine ignition is achieved using a start fuel ampule which uses a combination of Triethyl Aluminate and Triethyl Boron developed by Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) and used for the first time in ISRO in the 2000 kN semi-cryogenic engine.

Many injector elemental level ignition tests were conducted at the Propulsion Research Laboratory Division (PRLD) facility of VSSC for characterisation, it said, adding, the ignition process is one of the most critical parts in the development of liquid rocket engine systems. With the successful ignition of the semi-cryo pre-burner, a major milestone in the semi-cryo engine development has been achieved, it said. "This will be followed by development tests on the engine powerhead test article and fully integrated engine. The development of a semi-cryo stage with 120 tons of propellant loading is also under progress," it added.

Enthusiastic response to KCR continues as he calls for Telangana reconstruction

Karimnagar: There was huge response from the public and party workers when BRS president and former Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao said the Telangana movement was not over yet and emphasized on the need for reconstruction of the State. The meeting premises reverberated with whistles and applause when the BRS chief mentioned local MLA Padi Kaushik Reddy. Chandrashekhar Rao, who stayed in Kaushik Reddy's residence in Veenavanka last night, on Sunday participated in the BRS Atmeeya Sannamela wherein 20,000 party workers from the mandal and important leaders from Huzurabad constituency took part. About 200 Oggudolu artists and women carrying bonalu took part in a rally from the MLA's residence to the bus-stand.



Later, party leaders and workers gave a warm welcome to Chandrashekhar Rao when he reached Karimnagar town on his way to Jagtial to participate in his road show.

Hyderabad Police ensure foolproof security for upcoming Lok Sabha elections

Hyderabad: The Hyderabad police will be pulling out all stops to make fool-proof security arrangements for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections to be held on May 13. Hyderabad Commissioner of Police, K Sreenivasa Reddy, addressing media persons said that a total of 14,000 personnel including Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) will be deployed in the city during the polling. As per the guidelines of the Election Commission of India (EC), the CAPF personnel will be deployed at polling stations in the city.



Shifted and Dead) voters at particular polling booths in Hyderabad have been classified as critical places and adequate security arrangements have been made.

Apart from that, police pickets, FST/SST teams, Quick Response Teams (QRT), Special Striking Force (SSF), intelligence collection teams, will be

deployed during the polling process. The Hyderabad CP said at the distribution, reception and counting centres tight security will be maintained in accordance with ECI guidelines. The police, so far seized Rs. 18 crore cash and Rs. 12 crore worth gold, silver, liquor, drugs etc during the vehicle checking, he added.

Queer Indie Film and Lit Festival to be hosted in Hyderabad on May 19



Hyderabad: Hyderabad is gearing up to host a celebration of inclusivity with the Queer Indie Film and Lit Festival (QIFLIF) on May 19 from 10:30 am onwards. Organized by the Queer Women Collective India, this event promises a dynamic showcase of talent and storytelling within the queer community. The festival aims to serve as a beacon

of unity, welcoming voices from all walks of life. With a line-up featuring Indie Queer Film screenings, live music performances, stand-up comedy, spoken word sessions, a bustling flea market, and much more.

QIFLIF's volunteer-driven initiative has left an indelible mark on the community, touching the lives of over

1000 individuals, fostering connections, and empowering artists to share their narratives and talents within the world. Tickets for the festival are available on Paytm Insider, offering donation passes priced at Rs. 299 for individuals and Rs. 499 for a donation pass for two. The venue for the festival is yet to be announced.

Four involved in investment fraud arrested by Hyderabad Cybercrime police

Hyderabad: The Cybercrime unit of Hyderabad police arrested four persons who are all linked to an investment fraud case. The arrested persons are Mangilal Godara, Bajanal alias Bajan, Kamlesh Kumar alias Mahesh Kumar and Prakash Chand, all residents of Suchitra in the city and natives of Rajasthan. "The four persons opened

bank accounts through fraudulent means and provided them to fraudsters who paid them a hefty commission on each transaction done," Hyderabad police said. The officials explained that a total of 52 bank accounts of as many shell companies were opened by the cyber fraudsters and an amount of Rs. 16 crore collected from different victims was

credited in those accounts. The Cyber fraudsters duped many victims assuring huge profits over investment in the online stock trade. Across the country 92 cases were registered against the fraudsters including 10 in Telangana. The police seized 25 cheque books, 24 debit cards, six stamps of shell companies, 141 grams of gold ornaments, 12 mobile phones and a laptop.

PROMISE AND FORGET: Congress hai toh aisa ich hota

Hyderabad: Congress MP Rahul Gandhi's claim, that the State government was depositing Rs.2,500 into bank accounts of women in the State and that the Congress had implemented all of its six guarantees, have turned the focus on the authenticity of his claims, and in turn, the very credibility of the Congress party.

For the record, the Congress released its manifesto for Telangana ahead of the Assembly elections on November 17 last year. Apart from five declarations, including Warangal Rythu Declaration, Hyderabad Youth Declaration, Chevella SC, ST Declaration, Minority Declaration and Kamareddy BC Declaration, the manifesto also included the six guarantees titled Abhaya Hastham.

The six guarantees also had 12 sub-category assurances. Apart from these, one major promise was the crop loan waiver for up to Rs.2 lakh, which Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy had promised would be launched on December 9. The latest date given by him is August 15.

As for another vote puller, the Rs.4,000 monthly honorarium for the unemployed, made as part of the Hyderabad Youth Declaration, Congress leaders are in denial mode, with Mallu Vikramarka Bhatti even denying such a promise in the State Assembly.

Promise it, forget it:

The Congress Model The promises by the Congress, the Six Guarantees in particular, were a major factor behind the party's victory in the Assembly polls. However, the enthusiasm with which the promises were made appears to be missing when it comes to keeping the promises and implementing them.

To begin with, under the Mahalakshmi scheme, women were promised a monthly financial assistance of Rs.2,500, LPG cylinders at Rs.500 and free travel in TSRTC buses.

Though the free bus travel and Rs.500 LPG cylinder schemes were launched, the Rs.2500 monthly financial assistance is pending. But according to Rahul Gandhi, Telangana's women have been getting Rs.2,500 per month!

The LPG cylinders were promised to all households but later conditions were imposed limiting it to white ration card holders only. Among those pending are Rythu Bharosa, a tweaked version of K Chandrashekhar Rao's Rythu Bandhu. Under the scheme, the Congress had promised Rs.15,000 per acre to farmers, tenant farmers, besides Rs.12,000 a year to agriculture labourers.

This apart, a bonus of Rs.500 per quintal of paddy was assured. However, let alone the bonus, even the procurement



of paddy has been in such a way that farmers from different areas are complaining

As for Gruha Jyothi scheme, under which 200 units of free power supply were promised to all households, conditions were imposed restricting it to white ration card holders. One of the few schemes that were launched was the Indiramma Indlu scheme, which Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy launched at Bhadrachalam on March 11. After the launch, during which he promised 4.50 lakh houses with a financial outlay of Rs.22,500 crore for the homeless poor, nothing much has progressed. Rajiv Arogyasri was also launched, formally, by announcing that the health insurance was increased from Rs.5 lakh to Rs.10 lakh. Among the unkept prom-

ises that have triggered emotional outbursts from the intended beneficiaries was the one promising all Telangana movement fighters a 250 square yard house site. Not one fighter got the house site even after the Congress government being in power for almost five months Under Vidya Bharosa Card, financial assistance of Rs.5 lakh was assured to students. Telangana International Schools were to be built in every mandal. The scheme is yet to take off. As part of Cheyutha, a monthly pension of Rs.4000 was to be provided to senior citizens, widows, disabled persons, beedi workers, single women, toddy tappers, weavers, AIDS and Filaria patients and kidney patients undergoing dialysis. Status: Still on paper.

Telangana movement is still on: KCR

Hyderabad: Leader of Opposition and BRS president K Chandrashekhar Rao said the Telangana movement was still on. "In just five months, the State administration has gone topsy-turvy, with a growing opposition against the Congress rule across the State. The fight for Telangana is very much on. The onus is on the BRS to continue the reconstruction of Telangana," he said, while addressing the BRS Atmeeya Sannamela at Veenavanka in Karimnagar district on Sunday.

Chandrashekhar Rao, who made a pitstop at Veenavanka before his roadshow in Jagtial to compensate for the 48 hour loss to poll campaign due to the ECI ban, recalled the struggles to mend the damage caused to Telangana in erstwhile Andhra Pradesh and said the BRS government had toiled to bring investments to the newborn State. Still, within a short span, Telangana attracted huge investments making even Prime Minister Narendra Modi envious of the State's progress.

"I came to know that a company with Rs 1,000 crore investment potential left Telangana for Tamil Nadu. Similarly, aluminum, plastic and other industries are unhappy with power holidays and are planning to

shift base to other States," he said, adding that the BRS would have to start all over again when it returned to power.

Exuding confidence that the party would emerge victorious regardless of when polls to the State Assembly were held, after which the State's reconstruction would be taken up, the BRS president slammed the Congress government for undoing the good work done by the previous BRS government within such a short span.

Taking a dig at Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy's assurance that Rythu Bharosa (Rythu Bandhu) amount would be credited into every farmer's bank account by May 9, the Opposition leader reminded that the financial assistance to farmers was meant to be deposited during crop sowing, and not after harvesting.

"What sort of governance is this?" he asked, asserting that the State government should give confidence and hope to farmers about their livelihood. He pointed out that the previous BRS government had not only implemented Rythu Bandhu and hand-held farmers through different initiatives, but also procured their entire paddy crop. Questioning the current administration's failure to maintain the progress achieved in



the past, particularly with regard to drinking water supply and agricultural support, he said the Congress came to power in Telangana by deceiving people in the name of six guarantees. Now, lack of command of governance and empathy towards the common man had failed the Congress government in the State. Also questioning the Chief Minister's silence on Prime Minister

Narendra Modi's proposal for diverting Godavari River water to Tamil Nadu, Chandrashekhar Rao said though Modi had tried the same with him, he had asked the former to finalise Telangana's share in Godavari River before speaking anything in this regard. BRS Karimnagar MP candidate B Vinod Kumar, Huzurabad MLA Padi Kaushik Reddy and other senior leaders were present.

Power cuts, burning motors are 'changes' brought by Congress: Harish Rao

Rajanna-Sircilla: BRS senior leader and Siddipet MLA T Harish Rao said power cuts and agricultural motors going up in fire was the change brought in by the Congress party. 24 hours of uninterrupted power was supplied to the agricultural sector during the BRS government led by the former Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao. Now, power cuts and burning of agricultural pump sets have become a common practice. If a motor was burnt, the farmer has to spend Rs 10,000, he said at a BRS Ashirvada Sabha in Chandurthi mandal. Stopping the supply of KCR kits to lactating women in government hospitals, irrigable and drinking water scarcity were also the changes brought by the Congress. Besides Rs 1 lakh as cash, one tola of gold was also promised under the Kalyana Lakshmi scheme by the ruling party. Forget about gold, the Rs 1 lakh was also not being given. Except using abusive language or vowing on gods, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy was not saying anything, he said, asking the Chief Minister not to utilize gods for his fake promises. Farmers would get benefit if Rythu Bandhu was provided at the time of tilling the land and removing weeds. However, what was the purpose of giving the money when the crop was about to be harvested, he asked, pointing out that the previous BRS government had ensured payment of Rythu Bandhu even during the Covid pandemic.



HPS students excel in ISC and ICSE examinations

Hyderabad: The Hyderabad Public School (HPS) announced 100 percent pass percentage of all its students in the recently released results of ISC and ICSE examinations. In the ISC Examination, the HPS girls have secured top positions across all three streams, HPS Begumpet in a statement said. Kaki Harshitha emerged as the school topper with 93.80 percent (469/500) in the ISC Science stream. Mylapalli Rani Dhanya Roopa topped the Humanities stream with 93.40 percent (467/500) and Bhavya Garg came a close second with 93 percent (465/500). Vanshika Sancheti topped the Commerce stream with 91.40 percent (457/500). In the ICSE examination, a total of 183 students out of 236 from HPS have managed to secure distinction. The top position was clinched by Arjun Rao with 98.3 percent, Yarlagadda Harsha Sri Vishnu, Shriyans Ball, and Siddhi Baheti followed closely with 97.2 percent and Grandhi



Achyuta Surya Ankit secured 97 percent. "The remarkable achievements of our students reflect the commitment to excellence and the spirit of perseverance ingrained in the ethos of The HPS, Begumpet.

We are immensely proud of the accomplishments of our students and remain steadfast in our commitment to nurturing future leaders and achievers," a statement from HPS BEgumpet said.

My fight will continue, says arrested BRS leader Krishank

Hyderabad: BRS leader Krishank Manne said he would continue his fight for justice and truth, notwithstanding his arrest. Expressing his willingness to undergo punishment if proven guilty, he demanded that Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy step down from his post, if the latter was proved to have posted a forged circular and misled the people of Telangana.

Krishank was arrested on May 1 on charges of forging a circular pertaining to Osmania University hostel on summer vacation and is currently lodged in Chanchalguda Central Prison. He was also taken into police custody for one day for interrogation. In a hand-writ-



ten letter in English released to the media on Monday, Krishank reiterated that he posted the original circular. "If it is proven that I have forged it, I am ready to face severe punishment. But if it is proven that CM Revanth Garu posted a forged circular

and misled the people of Telangana State, then he must step down as Chief Minister for violating the oath of office," Krishank said in his letter. The BRS leader thanked those who supported him and spoke against his arrest. "I thank all BRS leaders with the utmost gratitude for speaking out against my arrest and the fabricated charges. It is overwhelming to have the immense support of BRS social media warriors, which has kept me strong during these tough days. I must thank all the advocates defending my sincerity, and especially the journalists who have been covering this story. My fight shall continue," he said.

How Wayanad Voters Reacted To Rahul Gandhi's Raebareli Move



Thiruvananthapuram: With Rahul Gandhi deciding to contest the Raebareli Lok Sabha seat in Uttar Pradesh as well, there were mixed reactions from people in Kerala's Wayanad.

Elections were held in Wayanad Lok Sabha seat on April 26. While some people said there was nothing wrong for him to contest Raebareli too, there were some who said it was wrong on his part.

At a wayside shop in Wayanad, one person said there was nothing wrong with Mr Gandhi's decision to contest from two seats. "He is leading the INDIA bloc and hence there is nothing wrong in it," while another said, "if he wins from both the seats, it's most likely that he will vacate the Wayanad seat."

"If he does that, then it might not look good for us. Anyway let us wait," said another.

However, veteran Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) leader PK Kunhalikutty said

there was nothing wrong at all in his decision to contest from Raebareli as well.

"The fact of the matter is we (IUML) requested the Congress party's national leadership that Rahul should contest from one more seat other than Wayanad. Did not PM Modi contest from two seats in the

past? We feel that this decision will be a boost for the INDIA bloc," said Mr Kunhalikutty.

Rahul Gandhi won the 2019 polls from Wayanad but lost the Amethi seat in Uttar Pradesh. This time at Wayanad, he was pitted against CPI leader Annie Raja and state BJP president K. Surendran.

ABCL announces acquisition of Denzong Brewery, Odisha

Hyderabad: Hyderabad-headquartered American Brew Crafts Private Limited (ABCL), a leading brewing company, announced its recent acquisition of Denzong Brewery located in Odisha. ABCL intends to invest upwards of Rs. 80 Crore for the acquisition and renovation of the brewery. The brewery has a capacity to produce 2 Lakh cases of beer per month. With this acquisition, ABCL will now operate three state-of-the-art breweries equipped with the latest German Technology located in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Odisha to provide the best brews. "We are thrilled to strengthen our presence with the addition of Denzong Brewery into the American Brew Crafts family. The acquisition will help us expand our production capacity and cater to the increasing consumer demand across the region," Nagendra Tayi, Director and Chief Executive Officer of American Brew Crafts Private Limited said.

Garry Kasparov Issues Clarification After Post On Rahul Gandhi Goes Viral

New Delhi: Russian chess great Garry Kasparov hoped that his "little joke" on Indian politics does not pass for "advocacy or expertise" after his social media post on Congress MP Rahul Gandhi's love for the game went viral. Within hours of asking Rahul Gandhi to "first win Rae Bareli before challenging for the top", the 61-year-old said it was just a joke and should be seen as one. "I very much hope my little joke does not pass for advocacy or expertise in Indian politics! But as an 'all-seeing monster with 1000 eyes,' as I was once described, I cannot fail to see a politician dabbling in my beloved game!" the former world champion, who retired in 2005, wrote in response to a post by actor Ranvir Shorey. Ranvir Shorey's comment appeared to be a dig at Rahul Gandhi's recent assertion that he was the best chess player among all Indian politicians. Mr Kasparov gave the same reply to a few other accounts which commented on his original post. The Congress recently shared a video of Rahul Gandhi playing chess on his mobile phone while on the Lok Sabha election campaign trail. The MP



from Wayanad named Mr Kasparov as his favourite chess player and drew parallels between the game and politics. A user on X made a cheeky comment on his page, which read "feel so relieved that @Kasparov63 and @vishy64theking retired early and didn't have to face the greatest chess genius of our times." Mr Kasparov, rather unusually, originally responded to that post. "Traditional (sic) dictates that you should first win from Raebareli before challenging for

the top," wrote the fierce critic of Russian President Vladimir Putin who is based in Croatia after fleeing his country. Rahul Gandhi, while naming Mr Kasparov as his favourite chess player, described him as a "non-linear thinker" in the Congress video. "...once you get slightly better at it, the opponent's pieces actually operate almost like your own," he said, drawing comparison between chess and politics. He filed his nomination from Rae Bareli in Uttar Pradesh on Friday and is also contesting from

Wayanad. A former world number one for a record 255 weeks, Mr Kasparov became the youngest-ever undisputed world champion at the age of 22 in 1985 and is a political activist now. The iconic player is a contemporary of Indian great Viswanathan Anand. Recently, when 17-year-old D Gukesh bettered his record of becoming the youngest challenger to the world title by winning the Candidates Tournament in Toronto, Mr Kasparov had put out a congratulatory post on X.

KTR slams Rahul Gandhi, Revanth Reddy over false promises for women

Hyderabad: BRS working president KT Rama Rao gave a strong retort to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, asking whether the two would wear a saree for deceiving women in Telangana.

He ridiculed Rahul Gandhi's claim of the Congress government providing Rs.2,500 every month to women here and the Chief Minister's claims of implementing five out of six guarantees within five months of the Congress rule and dared him to prove the same. Rama Rao, taking to social media, posted a video of Rahul Gandhi claiming that the Congress government was providing Rs 2,500 monthly financial assistance to women in Telangana under the Mahalakshmi scheme.

Ridiculing the claim, he questioned where and whom did the State government provide Rs 2,500 to. "Show us a woman in Telangana who received Rs 2,500 after the Congress came to power. Why such blatant lies? Revanth Reddy or Rahul Gandhi, who

will wear saree for making such false claims?" he asked.

The BRS working president pointed out the disappointment among the 1.67 crore women in Telangana who are aged above 18 years and were raring to bury the Congress for not delivering its promises within the promised 100 days.

He said Revanth Reddy who promised to run Indiramma Rajyam was busy passing time chanting Sonia Gandhi's name and failing in women's welfare.

Rama Rao pointed out that the State government halted numerous initiatives of the previous BRS government including KCR Kits, Nutrition Kits, Kalyana Lakshmi and other benefits. While the Congress leaders tout the free bus service for women as a great accomplishment, he said the buses were overcrowded and women were fighting each other for seats due to the Congress government's failure to run additional services.

"Except for rhetoric, people realised that the inept Congress shelved its promises and lacks substance to speak about its



achievements. The party which failed to deliver its promises, lost the right to seek votes from women," he added. Several BRS leaders including former Ministers T Harish Rao, G Jagadish Reddy, S Niranjan Reddy and others also condemned Rahul Gandhi's and Revanth Reddy's statements.

While Harish Rao dared him for an open debate on the implementation of the six guarantees promised by the Congress government, Jagadish Reddy offered to rub his nose on the ground if Revanth Reddy proved that Rythu Bharosa was paid to all the farmers in the State.

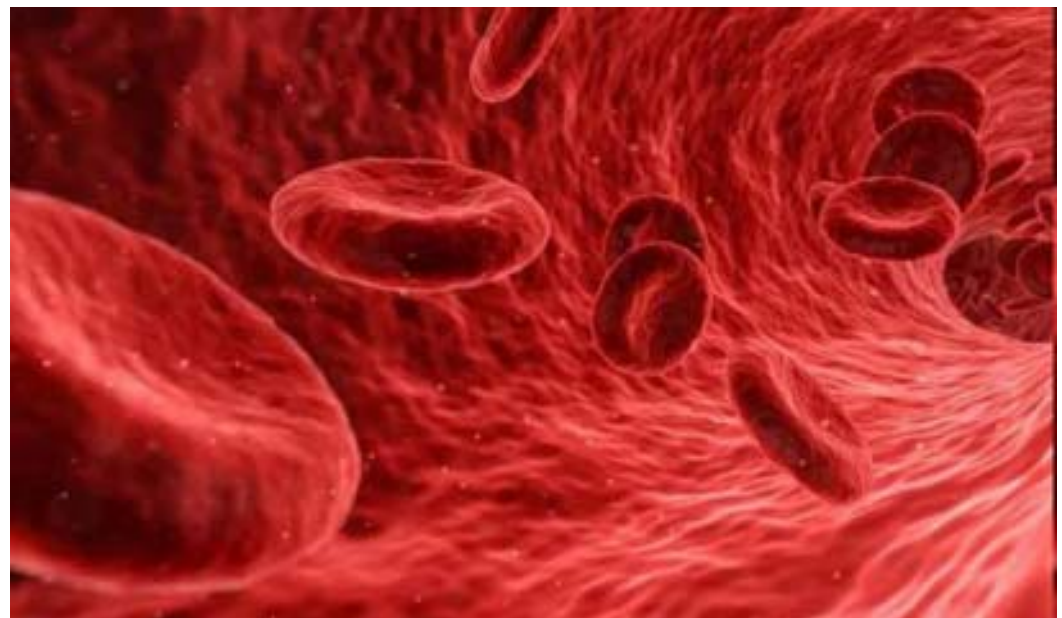
Naturopathy can help treat blood clots

Hyderabad: A century-old alternative method of natural therapy (Naturopathy) developed in India could well be the ideal modality to treat patients with severe blood clots, Hepatitis B, and C, ailments related to compromised immunity and numerous viral infections.

The treatment, which includes a combination of autohemo and ozone therapies to boost immunity is often overlooked but holds a lot of promise in the treatment of various ailments, including blood clots, which many might have suffered during the Covid-19 pandemic.

According to Ayush specialists in Hyderabad, autohemo therapy is a process wherein blood is drawn from a vein and reintroduced into a muscle in injection forms.

The injection creates a tiny inflammatory response that acts like a wound. Due to this, tissues release inflammatory proteins, thus activating the immune system. During this process, any foreign proteins in the blood will be dealt with by the immune system of the body. "These alternative therapies have not



been explored properly in India, especially during Covid when a lot of people struggled with compromised immunity. There are certification programmes on Ozone therapy offered by the National Institute of Naturopathy in Pune. Unfortunately, not much support is available for such treatments," says senior pulmonologist and allergy specialist Dr Vyakaranam Nageshwar. While defining

Ozonia therapy, NIN Pune says: "Modern lifestyle brings in a lot of chemicals, toxic and unavoidable metals through polluted air, contaminated water and food into the body. Ozone helps reduce healing time in bringing down morbidities and helps patients and clinicians address a plethora of noncommunicable and infectious diseases." These therapies drawn from Naturopathy can be adjuncts, i.e. additional treatment

options to the existing treatment modalities for blood clots and other major ailments that are related to body immunity. "Unfortunately, the Ayush department has been hesitant to explore the possibility of taking such treatments to the masses. One also has to be wary of charlatans, who are always on the lookout to launch some fancy treatment and make money at the expense of the gullible," Dr Nageshwar points out.

FIR Against Madhya Pradesh Congress Chief Over Remarks Against BJP Leader



Bhopal: In 2020, then Madhya Pradesh Congress chief Kamal Nath referred to former cabinet minister Imarti Devi as an "item" and now more off-the-cuff remarks about Ms Devi, Jyotiraditya Scindia's loyalist, have placed the state Congress chief Jitu Patwari in a major political storm. An FIR has been lodged against Mr Patwari in Gwalior over his "rass-chaashni (sugar syrup)" remark against Imarti Devi.

A video that went viral last night is the genesis of the political whirlpool. In the video, as a journalist asks Jitu Patwari

about reports of Imarti Devi reportedly telling voters to support Congress candidates in the Gwalior-Chambal region, he says, "Dekho aisa hai ab Imarti ji ka ras khatam ho gaya - jo andar chaashni hoti hai. Unke liye mai kuch baat nahi karoonga (Imarti Devi has lost her vigour. I won't talk about it anymore)." The video kicked up a major political outrage, forcing Jitu Patwari to clarify and subsequently apologise for his controversial remark.

"I was in Gwalior on Thursday, where journalists asked me a question. But I tried to ignore

it. My statement has been distorted and presented wrongly. Imarti Devi is my elder sister and an elder sister is like a mother. I want to make it clear that my sole intention was to ignore the question. Still, if my words have hurt anyone's sentiments, I apologise for it. There was no negativity in my statement. It was only aimed to ignore the media queries," he told the media today.

However, it wasn't enough to prevent his comments from snowballing into a major political controversy.

While the former minister, Imarti Devi, lodged an FIR against Jitu Patwari under Section 509 of the Indian Penal Code for insulting the modesty of a woman and under the provision of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 2015 in Gwalior, the ruling BJP's other leaders, particularly the women politicians, announced an agitation against Mr Patwari wherever he goes in the state.

Madhya Pradesh minister Krishna Gaur, terming Mr Patwari's remarks "anti-women" and "anti-Dalit", said

the state Congress chief's remarks expose what Congress and its leaders feel about women.

She questioned the Congress leadership for its silence over Mr Patwari's remarks and said, "We want to know what Sonia Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra have to say about Jitu Patwari's remark. Their silence over the issue means they are supportive of Jitu Patwari's remarks. We demand his resignation as the state Congress chief. The BJP will protest against him wherever he goes in the state."

Mr Patwari, who was in Betul to campaign for Congress candidate Ramu Tekam, had to face noisy protests by BJP workers, who came face to face with Congress workers before the police intervened.

Imarti Devi has been a minister in the state government twice and was a four-time Congress MLA before joining BJP with Jyotiraditya Scindia. Condemning Mr Patwari's statements, Imarti Devi demanded that the Congress leadership sack him as the party's state chief immediately.

Man Throws Shoe At Swami Prasad Maurya Over Remarks Against Ramcharitmanas, Arrested

Agra: A man hurled a shoe at the national president of Rashtriya Shoshit Samaj Party Swami Prasad Maurya during a rally here on Friday.

The man, identified as Dharmendra Dhakrey, has been and further action is being taken against him, Dauki SHO Rampal Singh said. A spokesperson of the Akhil Bharat Hindu Mahasabha (ABHM) claimed that Dharmendra Dhakrey is associated with the organisation. Mr Maurya in February left the Samajwadi Party and formed the Rashtriya Shoshit Samaj Party. The incident happened this evening when Mr Maurya was addressing a rally in support of the party candidate from Fatehpur Sikri in Dauki. Talking to news agency PTI, ABHM spokesperson Sanjay Jaat said, "One of our members hurled a shoe at Mr Maurya when he was



delivering his speech in Dauki. We were against the leader over his remarks against Ramcharitmanas." Mr Maurya struck a controversy by alleging that certain verses in the Ramcharitmanas, a sacred text in the Awadhi language based on the epic Ramayana, "insult" a large section of the society on the basis of caste and hence, those should be banned. "We have also written letters in

blood and appealed to admit him in a mental asylum for disrespecting the Hindu saints and Ramcharitmanas," Mr Jaat said.

The members of the mahasabha also threw ink on Maurya's cavalcade and brandished black flags when it was passing from Fatehabad.

The members threw black ink on the cavalcade and chanted 'Jai Shri Ram' slogans.

"We have been following Mr

Maurya's cavalcade from the Fatehabad toll on Agra-Lucknow Expressway. Some of the members protested at Fatehabad and showed black flags when it was passing. Besides, they also threw ink on his car," Mr Jaat said. While leaving the party, Maurya accused the SP leadership of discriminating against him and not defending him over his statements on the Ramcharitmanas and the Ayodhya temple consecration ceremony. He had joined the Samajwadi Party leaving the BJP ahead of the 2022 assembly polls, contesting the elections unsuccessfully from Fazlignagar. Before joining BJP in 2016, Swami Prasad Maurya was in the BSP and was leader of opposition in the Akhilesh yadav regime. Recently, Maurya announced to contest the elections from Kushinagar Lok Sabha seat.

A Year On, Prayer Meets, Protests Keep Security Forces On Edge In Manipur

New Delhi: A year after ethnic violence erupted in Manipur, the border state remains tense. Prayer meets and protests kept the security forces on the edge.

"Many protests are still going on. People are remembering their near and dear ones, but so far no violent incident has been reported," a senior government officer told NDTV.

He said the cases of arson, firing, injuries and deaths are slowly declining. "The situation is better, but is complex," he added.

As per a report sent to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), the state government said a lot of work has been done to stop drugs smuggling, but the issue of illegal immigrants is still a cause of worry. The Centre has asked the state authorities to be on specific alert after the state started the process of first phase of deportation of illegal immigrants from Myanmar. "We fear backlash and we alerted state police accordingly," another official stated. So far 77 have been deported back. "The state government is continuing the identification of illegal immigrants and at the same



time biometric data are being recorded. Let's keep our borders and country secure," Chief Minister N Biren Singh posted on X.

Meanwhile, a year after ethnic violence erupted in Manipur, the clean-up of records has brought down the total number of violence-related first information reports (FIRs) from over 11,000 to around 3,000.

"Many duplicate cases were registered. Now we have amalgamated the records and that's why numbers have come down," a government source said.

He said many zero FIRs were filed when violence erupted, irrespective of jurisdiction. "They all were later transferred to the police stations where the crimes took place," the officer said, adding looted weapons are still a cause of worry.

"Around 6,000 weapons were looted but despite various efforts about 1,800 have been recovered or surrendered by the civilians," he said. "Violence will keep erupting. The force alone cannot control the situation. It needs to be handled sensitively," a

senior officer said. He said the present regime in the state has not been able to assure communities rather have stoked fault lines. "The debate of insider vs outsider is more vocal in the region," he adds. "It's a complex situation and political leaders and various communities need to start speaking to each other to bridge gaps then only we can move forward," a serving officer told NDTV, requesting anonymity. As many as 220 lives have been lost in Manipur violence; 50,000 have been displaced.

Ex Cop, Wife Brutally Murdered In Gujarat. Killers Hired By Daughter-In-Law



In a shocking double murder, a woman along with her minor son got her parents-in-law killed in their home in Gujarat's Himmatnagar on April 30. She offered Rs.10 lakh to two contract killers to carry out the killing and robbery. Retired police constable Vikram Singh (65) used to live in Himmatnagar's Ram Nagar society with his wife Manhar Kunwarba (62), his son Vanraj Singh, daughter-in-law Mittal Kumari and grandson. On the noon of April 30, when Vanraj Singh was out for work, two unknown men barged into the home. They looted Rs.35 lakh cash and gold jewellery worth Rs.42,25,000

from the locker in the house. The men then attacked the couple, killed them by slitting their throats. They also looted the jewellery worn by Manhar Kunwarba and ran away with bags full of cash and jewellery. After the murder, Mittal Kumari informed her husband that his parents had been killed. Vanraj Singh then reported the crime to police. After interrogation, the police suspected the involvement of the daughter-in-law in the double murder. Later, the police found out that Mittal Kumari was not happy with her mother-in-law's behaviour towards her. Frustrated with this, she decided to get the couple

killed. She gave Rs.10 lakh to two contract killers - Het Patel and Vipul Singh - to carry out the murder and robbery. The police have solved the crime and recovered the stolen cash and jewellery. "In Himmatnagar town of Sabarkantha, on April 30, a retired cop and his wife were found dead. The police reached the spot and three teams to investigate the case. One of the accused is the daughter-in-law of the couple. A Rs.10 lakh deal was done to commit the murder. We have recovered cash worth over Rs.30 lakh and jewellery worth Rs.83 lakh," said police.

Delhi High Court Denies Parole To Jaish Terrorist To Visit Jammu And Kashmir

The Delhi High Court has denied parole to a convicted terrorist, who has been in jail for more than 20 years and was seeking the relief to go to Jammu and Kashmir, saying there is an apprehension that his presence in the area would be detrimental to the larger security interest. The convict had sought parole to visit his parents and get married. The court, however, directed the jail superintendent here to make a one-time arrangement for a video call for Feroz Ahmed Bhatt, a member of terror outfit Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), with his parents. "This may to some extent bring solace to him as a son that he could see his parents and speak to them, even if virtually," Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma said.

"This court is of the opinion that the factum of the petitioner being convicted in a heinous offence and there being an actual apprehension regarding his presence in the area being detrimental to the larger security interest, coupled with the fact that one of his co-accused had

again joined a terrorist organisation after being released on parole and was later neutralised in an encounter, are the factors which would come in the path of the petitioner's application for parole.

"Therefore, considering the aforesaid facts and circumstances, this court does not find it a fit case for grant of parole," the judge said.

Feroz Ahmed Bhatt was arrested in 2003 in a terror case and was sentenced to life imprisonment for offences under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, Indian Penal Code and Explosive Substances Act.

His counsel submitted that Feroz Ahmed Bhatt, presently about 44 years of age, has been in judicial custody for more than 20 years and wishes to get married. Since his aged parents are looking for a bride for him, the lawyer prayed that he be released on parole.

However, the plea was opposed by the State's counsel, who contended that in cases involving terror activities and waging war against the coun-

try, the convicts should not be granted parole.

He said a co-accused in the case absconded and joined a terrorist organisation after being granted parole. The court noted that according to Rule 1211 of the Delhi Prison Rules, those convicted for sedition and terrorist activities should not be granted parole except in discretion of the competent authority and in special circumstances. It pointed out that co-accused Noor Mohammad Tantry was released on parole and instead of returning to jail, he joined a terror outfit again and was neutralised in an encounter with security forces in 2017. The court said a report received from the Avantipura Police in Jammu and Kashmir, where Feroz Ahmed Bhatt wanted to reside, also mentioned that there is a reasonable apprehension that if he is released, he will abscond and join terror ranks. The report said Feroz Ahmed Bhatt's release on parole will be detrimental to the overall security scenario in the area.

'If Someone Is Named Rahul Gandhi...': Court's 'No' To Ban On Poll Namesakes

New Delhi: Rejecting a request for a ban on namesake candidates in elections, the Supreme Court today said it cannot stop people from contesting polls if they are named after political leaders. Petitioner Sabu Stephen had moved a public interest litigation, arguing that namesake candidates are propped up in high-profile seats to mislead voters. The petitioner stressed that the presence of such candidates has often led to heavyweight candidates losing by a slim margin. The petition sought a direction to the Election Commission of India to take urgent steps to stop this trend in the interest of a free and fair elec-

tion process. Refusing to hear the matter, Justice BR Gavai said, "If parents have given similar names to candidates, how can they be prevented from contesting polls? Like Rahul Gandhi and Lalu Prasad Yadav." The court allowed the petitioner to withdraw the petition. Namesake candidates are part of an age-old election trick in which candidates with names similar to that of a heavyweight are propped up by rival parties. The idea is to confuse voters and get them to vote for the namesakes, effectively harming the heavyweight. A case in question is the Ramanathapuram Lok Sabha seat in Tamil Nadu. Former Chief Minister O Panneerselvam, also

known as OPS, is contesting as an Independent this time. Besides the former AIADMK leader, there are four other Panneerselvams in the list of candidates. They are Ochappan Panneerselvam, Oyya Thevar Panneerselvam, Ocha Thevar Panneerselvam, and Oyyaram Panneerselvam -- all of them Independent candidates. The experiment is being attempted in other states too. In Maharashtra's Raigad seat, Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) has fielded Anant Geete. He is up against NCP's Sunil Tatkare. But two more Anant Geetes have signed for the poll fight as Independents.

Owaisi criticizes Amit Shah over 'Razakars occupying Hyderabad' remark

Hyderabad: AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi took exception to Union Home Minister Amit Shah's remarks made at a roadshow, asking him what he was doing if Razakars were occupying Hyderabad for 40 years. Addressing an election rally, he said by stating that "Razakars are occupying Hyderabad, HM Amit Shah insulted India's first home minister Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and rubbed salt into the wounds of all those who made sacrifices and who suffered hardships". Owaisi also wanted to know from the Union Home Minister if Hyderabad is not an integral part of India. He said HM Amit Shah should know that Razakars have escaped to Pakistan but 'Wafadars' (loyalists) have stayed back. The AIMIM chief, who is seeking re-election for a fifth consecutive term, reacted strongly to HM Amit Shah's remarks made at a roadshow in Hyderabad on Wednesday. Addressing the roadshow at Lal Darwaza in the old city in support of BJP candidate K. Madhavi Latha, HM Amit Shah had said that representatives of Razakars have been sitting in Parliament for the last 40 years. "There are no Razakars here. The Razakars have escaped to Pakistan. The Wafadars stood here," Owaisi said.

SPORT

Sporting Lisbon Win Portuguese League After Benfica Stumble

Sporting Lisbon were crowned champions of Portugal for only the second time in 21 years after second-placed Benfica lost. Last season's victors stumbled 2-0 at Famalicao to complete Sporting's triumph after Ruben Amorim's triumphant side thrashed Portimonense 3-0 on Saturday. Sporting, the division's top scorers by far with 92 goals in 32 matches, are eight points clear of Benfica with just two games remaining. Amorim's side have lost just two times this season on the way to securing the club's 20th league title, trailing Porto on 30 and record winners Benfica on 38. Swedish forward Viktor Gyokeres' goals have powered Sporting's title success and he netted his 27th of the campaign on Saturday to wrap up their victory. The striker signed from Coventry City last summer for a club record fee of 20 million euros (\$21.5 million) plus add-ons. It is the second league trophy brought to the club by former Benfica player Amorim, who led Sporting to glory in the 2020/21 season. Sporting will face Porto in the Portuguese Cup final on May 26, aiming to secure a double.

Preity Zinta Asked To Describe Rohit Sharma In 1 Word. Her Reply Wins Hearts



One of the finest batters in Indian cricket history, Rohit Sharma is a name that doesn't need any introduction. However, the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024 hasn't gone as planned for the Hitman. With Mumbai Indians all but out of the playoffs race, Rohit is starting at an early elimination of his team. A number of MI players have underperformed this campaign, and even Rohit hasn't been able to lift the team's spirits with his performances. While troubled times have undoubtedly encircled Rohit, he received a huge word of praise from Punjab Kings co-owner

and Bollywood star Preity Zinta. Asked by a fan to share one word on Rohit, Zinta called the Mumbai Indians and Team India star "a powerhouse of talent". Plumbing the depths of the points table with just 3 wins in 11 matches, the only direction Mumbai Indians can now go is climb up the standings when they take on Sunrisers Hyderabad. Considering the way their campaign has unfolded so far, getting things their way seems as good as impossible for Hardik Pandya's side as they have suffered defeats in eight of the 11 matches they have played so far this

season. They have failed to stitch together a complete performance in most of their matches, losing games after excelling in one department of the match. With six points from 11 matches, Mumbai Indians will hope to win their remaining three matches and salvage their pride even if other results do not go in their favour and help them make it to the Play-offs. Mumbai Indians are going into the match with four successive defeats and considering their up-and-down form, Hardik Pandya's team will have to pull up their socks to restore some pride.

"Not Very Happy. Lost Four Games...": IPL 2024 Play-offs Chances Hit, Owner's Blunt Take On Team

The Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024 is heading towards an interesting finish in the league stage with all teams having played 10 or more games. While two teams Kolkata Knight Riders and Rajasthan Royals (with 16 points each) have put one foot in the play-offs, there is a tight contest going on the remaining two spots. Chennai Super Kings, SunRisers Hyderabad and Lucknow Super Giants hold the third, fourth and fifth spots with 12 points each. Delhi Capitals are sixth in table with 10 points. Royal Challengers Bengaluru, Punjab Kings and Gujarat Titans hold the seventh, eighth and ninth spots with eight points each. Mumbai Indians are bottom-placed with six points. Punjab Kings, one of the four teams which are yet to win the IPL, has had some heartbreaks. Their season was marred by injury to regular captain Shikhar Dhawan, while they lost a few close games too.

A fan on X asked Punjab Kings co-owner Preity Zinta about their season so far.

"Obviously, not very happy. We lost four games in the last ball. We lost our captain to injury. Some games was



spectacular and some were not up to the mark. We will only do well in the future if we win our home games. Big thank you our fans for always supporting us through thick n thin," Preity Zinta wrote in reply to that post.

On a different query, Zinta said that she wanted her team

to do better at the stunning Mullanpur Stadium.

"It's a stunning stadium & hopefully we will have more cover for shade next year for the people. Just hope we can figure out the pitch as it's our home ground so we can win more matches there and have home advantage,"

she wrote on X.

She was also asked to comment on Virat Kohli. To which, she replied: "I love his on field aggression and his will to win! I also love the way he loves family & his dance moves. I used to see a lot of his dance moves when he first came to the IPL."

Matthew Hayden's "Fireworks" Remark On Virat Kohli Amid Sunil Gavaskar's Criticism

Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) stalwart Virat Kohli and Indian cricket legend Sunil Gavaskar engaged in an unexpected battle of words over the batter's 'strike-rate' in the ongoing Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024. Gavaskar has been regularly criticising Kohli over his inability to get into ultra-attacking mode and rescue RCB's campaign. However, Virat decided to hit back at all those criticising him over his strike-rate, but little did he expect that the cricketer-turned-commentator Gavaskar would be sharp with his reply too.

As there continues to remain a back-and-forth between Kohli and Gavaskar, former Australia opener Matthew Hayden jumped into the debate, saying he expects nothing but fireworks from Virat at the T20 World Cup 2024.

"That strike rate is trending in the right direction, it's trending up. Look at the IPL over the last four years, it's gone from mid and around that 120 then it goes 130 and then 140 and 150.



So 150 for me is kind of that sweet spot that starts in and everyone having conversation well where you bat? Is it three, is it open? You know those first six overs, it doesn't matter if Kohli is in those first six overs. You know that there's going to be fireworks," Hayden said on Star Sports. Hayden feels the support Kohli would have in the Indian team would be much better in comparison to the squad he has at RCB. Hence, there shouldn't be doubt over Kohli's

potential performances in the T20 World Cup. "You also know that these conditions that are going to be in the West Indies. They're not so sure about those conditions in New York. I've seen that overlaid venue and it looks magnificent. But certainly through the West Indies, they're going to be benign conditions and Kohli is going to come in and look to strike away knowing that he has a superb batting side that also has a great strike rate," Hayden added.

India's first-ever 'hybrid pitch' was unveiled at the Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association (HPCA) stadium in a grand ceremony on Monday. The event was attended by IPL Chairman Arun Dhumal and cricket dignitaries including Paul Taylor, a former England cricketer and SIS's international cricket director. "The introduction of hybrid pitches is set to revolutionize cricket in India, following their success in iconic venues like Lord's and The Oval in England," said Dhumal, who hails from Himachal Pradesh.

The hybrid pitch, which combines natural turf with synthetic fibres, promises enhanced durability and consistent playability, reducing the

strain on ground staff and maintaining quality playing conditions.

With only 5% synthetic fibres, the pitch ensures that the natural characteristics essential for cricket are preserved.

Taylor expressed gratitude towards the HPCA for their collaboration on this pioneering project. "With the ICC's approval, we're excited to see the positive impact these pitches will have on the sport, starting with installations in Mumbai and Ahmedabad next," he said.

The 'Universal Machine', a critical component in installing the hybrid surface, was developed by SISGrass in 2017 and has been instrumental in the rollout of similar pitches across England's county cricket



grounds. This innovation aligns with the ICC's recent sanctioning of hybrid pitches for T20 and one-day international matches, with plans to expand their use in four-day county championships starting this year. The integration of tech-

nologies like SISAir, a root aeration system, further underscores the commitment to enhancing cricket infrastructure in India. This system improves the pitch's health and resilience, benefiting players with better and safer playing conditions.

"Not Sure If It's Great": Ex-RCB Star's Blunt Take On IPL 'Impact Player' Rule

Australia speedster Josh Hazlewood is not sure whether the "Impact Substitute" rule, which was introduced in the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024 is a "great rule" or not and believes the rule might need a bit of tinkering. The Impact Player rule allows the IPL teams to name five substitutes, one of whom could come on as a sub for a player who has been named in the playing XI. With the rule, teams have been able to deepen their batting line-up which has led to high-scoring games throughout the season.

Sunrisers Hyderabad have broken the record for the highest score in the history of the competition twice in the current edition. Even a target of 262 was chased down by the Punjab Kings at the iconic Eden Gardens with eight balls remaining against the Kolkata Knight Riders. Hazlewood gave his take on the new rule and the high-scoring games in the current season and said, as quoted from cricket.com.au, "I think it's just purely down to that impact (rule). Batting lineups just seem

to be never-ending now. I'm not sure it's a great rule. The conditions have come into play a little bit lately with bowlers having a bit of impact, but I mean, you've got (batters) like Tim David at number eight, sometimes number nine." "You don't really feel like you attack and try and get wickets in the Powerplay because what's the point when you've got those guys coming in at those eight, nine spots? Obviously, the crowd loves it - there are 200-plus scores nearly every night - and it's good for batters, but it might need a bit of tinkering. I'm certainly not (keen for it to be used elsewhere)," Hazlewood added. Hazlewood missed the ongoing season due to the birth of his child. He was selected as a part of Australia's 15-player T20 World Cup squad. The marquee event will kick off on June 1 in the USA and the West Indies. The Baggies are placed alongside England, Namibia, Oman and Scotland. Australia will kick off their campaign on June 6 against Oman Kensington Oval, Barbados.



Jasprit Bumrah's Special Guest: Son Angad Spotted During IPL Game - Pic Goes Viral

The Mumbai Indians vs SunRisers Hyderabad match on Monday had a special guest. On her birthday, Jasprit Bumrah's wife Sanjana Ganesan brought along their son Angad to watch the match. Star Indian pacer Jasprit Bumrah wrote a heartfelt post for his wife Sanjana Ganesan on her birthday. Bumrah, who is currently playing for the Mumbai Indians in the IPL 2024, came up with a loving caption as he shared wishes for his "favourite person". "happy birthday to my person, the one who completes me and with her by my side the world is a wonderful place. Angad and I wish you have the best

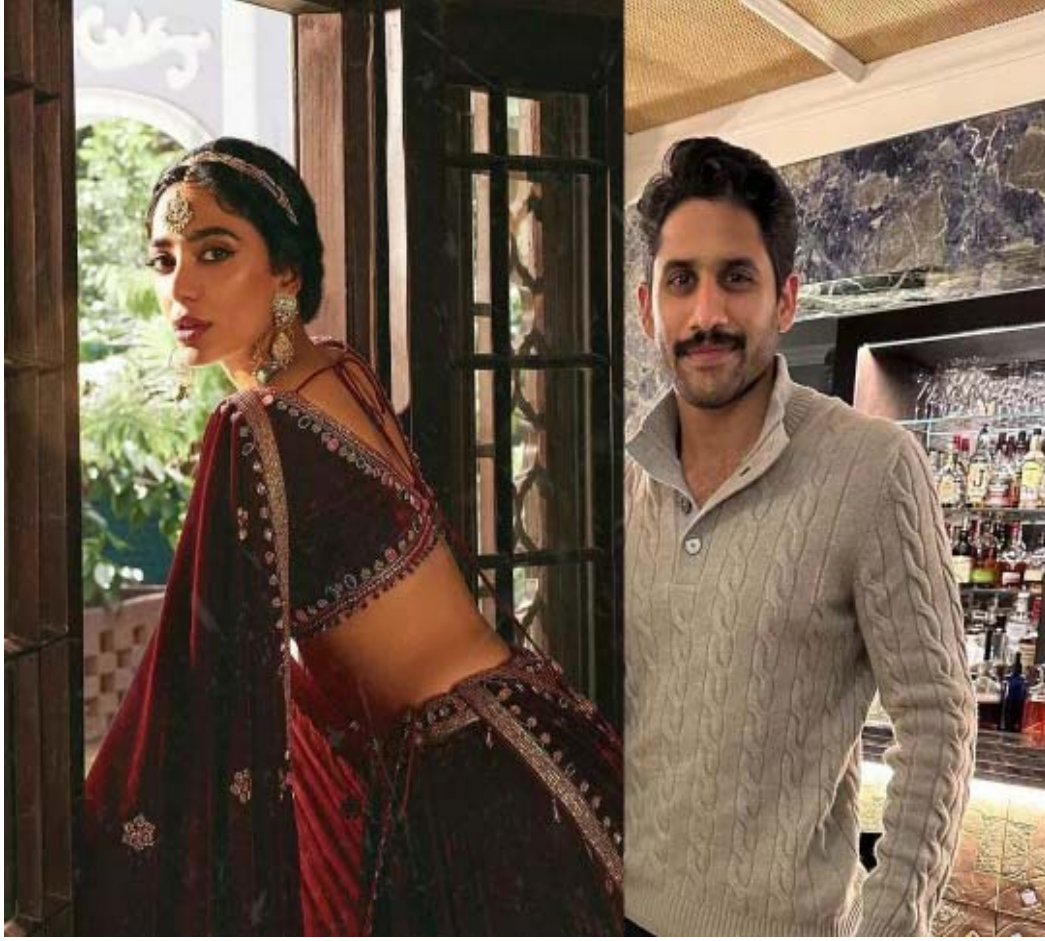


birthday, with lots of love and cuddles from us," Bumrah shared on his Instagram handle. Sanjana replied with a red heart emoji in the post that

garnered over 28k likes. The couple got married on March 15, 2021 in Goa. The photo of Bumrah's son and wife went viral on social media.

Naga Chaitanya and Sobhita are liking each other's posts frequently

Everyone knows Naga Chaitanya and Sobhita Dhulipala are dating. Reports about their love affair have circulated for months. They are slowly moving ahead to make their relationship public. Naga Chaitanya is not particularly active on social media. He rarely uses his Instagram account, whereas Sobhita is an avid user, posting pictures almost daily and responding to posts from her friends and other celebrities. But now, Naga Chaitanya has started frequently responding to Sobhita's posts. She has been liking his posts for a long time, but the fact that he is also doing in similar way has led everyone to believe that he no longer wants to hide their dating details. Naga Chaitanya is currently working on "Thandel" and Sobhita Dhulipala has a number of Bollywood projects, the majority of which are web dramas. Naga Chaitanya has more than 7 million Instagram followers, and Sobhita has 5 million.



Keerthy Suresh expresses her love for mangoes

We are in the height of the summer season. While the heat is uncomfortable, the summer season provides us with delicious pleasures such as mangoes. Everyone must be savouring delicious mangoes. Actress Keerthy Suresh is no exception. She has already started to enjoy the king of fruits. On Monday, the actress uploaded a photo of herself enjoying the delicious Pandoori mangoes. She declared them the best dessert. Pandoori mangoes are a delicious variety from Northern India. Here's what she wrote when posting a photo of herself eating mangoes on her Instagram story: "There can't be a better summer desert!" She thanked her friend and stylist, Shravya Varma, for providing Pandoori mangos. Keerthy Suresh is currently filming her Hindi projects.



Vijay Deverakonda's period drama shoot resumed

A film starring Vijay Deverakonda in the direction of Gowtam Tinnanuri was launched last year. However, the film's shoot was halted after its first schedule because Vijay Deverakonda believed Parasuram's "Family Star" will have a better chance at the box office. The outcome was bad. The film bombed at the box office. Now, Vijay Deverakonda moved on the project of Gowtam Tinnanuri of "Jersey" fame. The filming for Vijay Deverakonda and Gowtam Tinnanuri has resumed. The nearly month-long schedule began today in Vizag. Vijay Deverakonda plays a cop in what is being billed as a period crime drama. Sithara Entertainments is producing the film. This is an important film for his career. Vijay Deverakonda must deliver a huge hit to regain lost position.



Is Nayanthara getting only half of Kareena's paycheck?

Bollywood actress Kareena Kapoor was set to make her debut in a south Indian film with Kannada superstar Yash's new film "Toxic." Her presence in the cast of "Toxic" was highly covered by the media. However, Kareena Kapoor is no longer expected to appear in the film. The makers of "Toxic: A Fairy Tale For Grown-ups", directed by Geetu Mohandas and produced by KVN Productions, have decided to cast Nayanthara in place of Kareena Kapoor. According to reports, Nayanthara has not only agreed to portray the role originally meant for Kareena, but she has also given her call sheets. Then why did Kareena decline after initially agreeing to? There are speculations that the producers thought Kareena Kapoor's salary was too high. They apparently believed that such hefty pay for the role of a hero's sister was untenable. So Nayanthara, who has the highest remuneration in South India, is stepping in. Although Nayanthara receives the highest salary for a South Indian movie heroine, Kareena charges nearly double what Nayanthara charged. Yash plays the lead in the film "Toxic" aka "Toxic: A Fairy Tale For Grown-ups". Kiara Advani portrays the female lead.



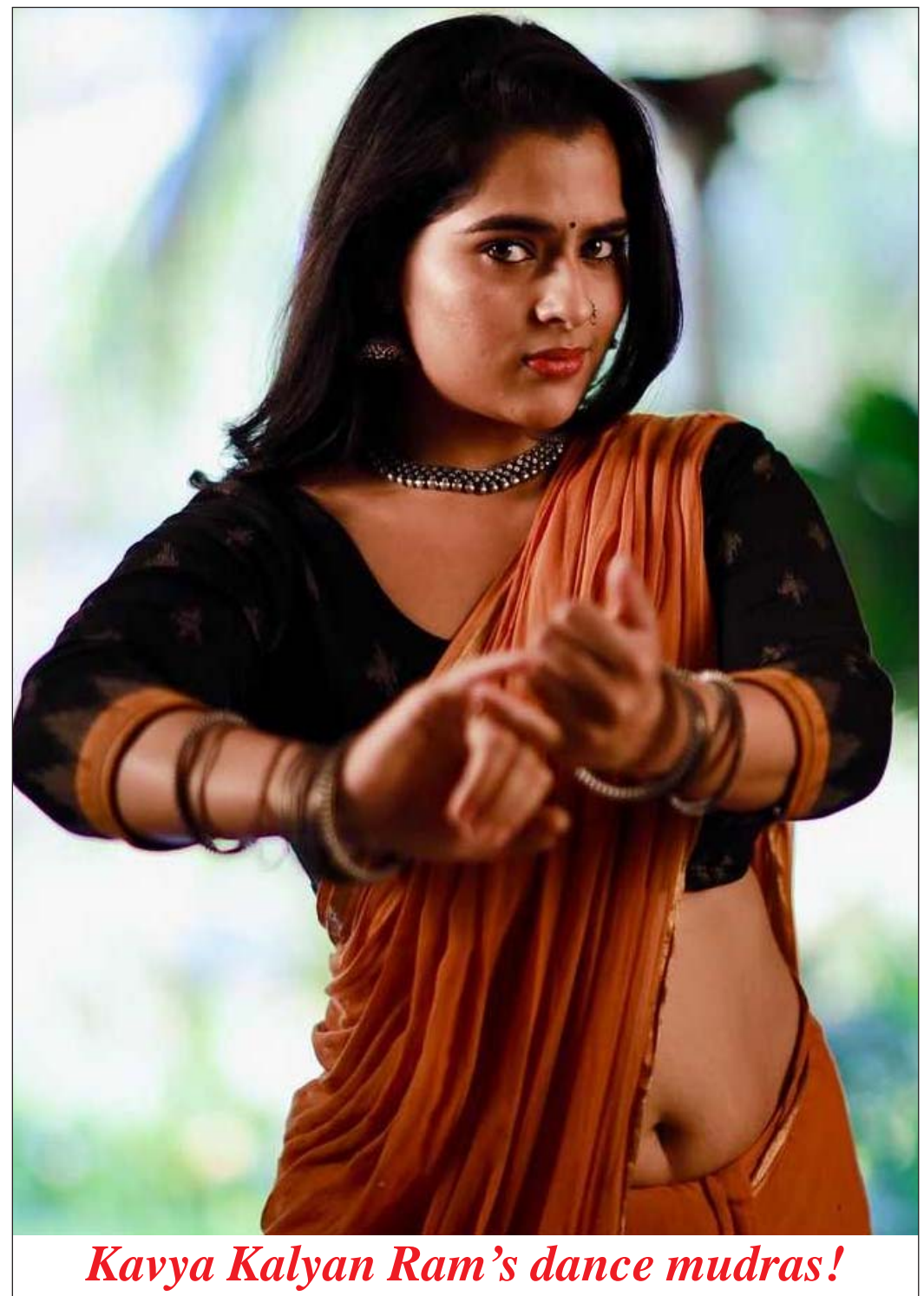
Aditi Rao: Love and respect are important



Actors Aditi Rao Hydari and Siddharth got engaged in March of this year at a temple near Wanaparthy, Telangana. Their wedding date is not yet set. Aditi Rao, who is currently promoting her web series Heeramandi, has also revealed details about their relationship. She stated that their relationship had not changed significantly because they had been dating and living together for a long time. She explained that the engagement ceremony only added a sacred aspect to their relationship. She also stated that love and respect are the most important factors in a relationship. She stated that she and Siddharth are always laughing, and that true love is laughing together. Aditi Rao played Manisha Koirala's daughter in "Heeramandi," directed by Sanjay Leela Bhansali. She received praise for her portrayal of the role.

Priyamani begins 'The family Man 3'

Priyamani's acting career took a completely different turn after she starred in the web series "The Family Man," which became one of the most successful stories in the Indian OTT space. She became popular throughout India. She was trying to receive new offers before the launch of "The Family Man" because her prime career had ended in Telugu and Tamil. But this web series put her in demand. She went on to star in a number of high-profile films in multiple languages including Bollywood and Tollywood. The third season of "The Family Man," nicknamed TMF3, began rolling today. Manoj Bajpayee plays the principal male character in the web series. Priyamani reappears as his wife in the series. Raj and DK devised the series. She expressed gratitude to the creators for giving her another chance.



Kavya Kalyan Ram's dance mudras!