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Mood of joy as lotus blooms in TG

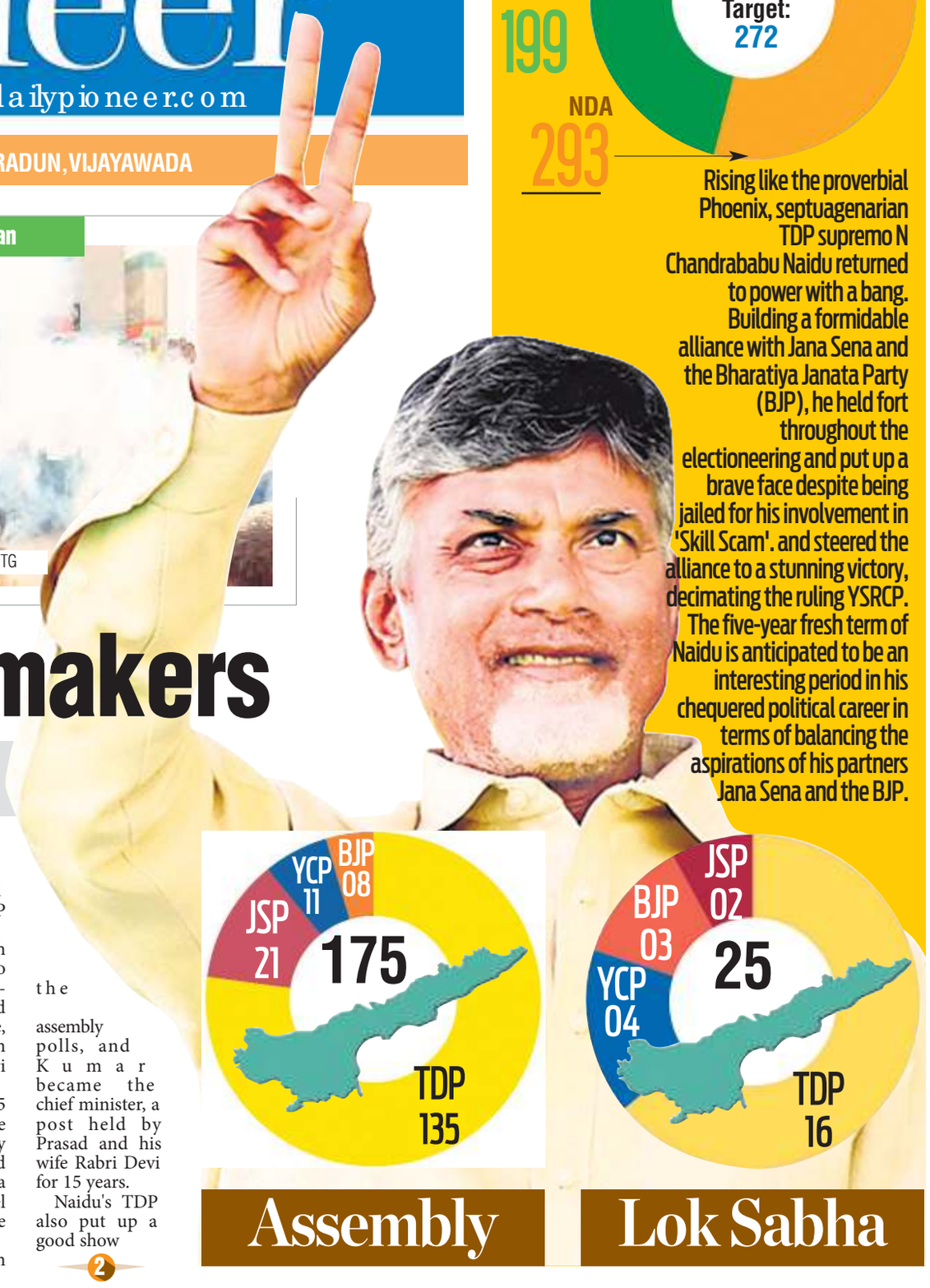


BJP activists celebrate party's victory in LS poll

A celebration of victory at Gandhi Bhavan



Congress leaders celebrate as party wins eight LS seats in TG



Naidu, Nitish emerge kingmakers

With BJP falling short of majority, south may rescue NDA

PNS ■ PATNA

With the BJP falling short of a majority in the Lok Sabha and needing the NDA allies to form the government at the Centre, Bihar Chief Minister and JD (U) head Nitish Kumar and TDP's N Chandrababu Naidu have emerged as potential kingmakers.

While Kumar's party was leading or had won 12 seats, the TDP was leading or had won 16 Lok Sabha seats, according to the latest election commission data.

The NDA was stirred into life mostly around elections in the last 10 years as the BJP's big majority and shrinking opposition in Lok Sabha made its allies mostly redundant but with the saffron party expected to win about 240 seats in the 543-member Lok Sabha this time around, allies will matter more than ever.



Kumar's relationship with BJP goes back to the mid-1990s when Kumar had collaborated with veteran socialist leader late George Fernandes to float the Samata Party, as a revolt against Lalu Prasad, the then chief minister of Bihar, who had acquired an overbearing presence in the Janata Dal founded by former prime minister V P Singh.

The alliance with BJP, which ruled the country from 1998 to 2004, also provided much-needed exposure to Kumar who held key portfolios like agriculture, railways and surface transport in the cabinet of late Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

However, it was not until 2005 that the moment of glory came for Kumar, whose party was by now known as JD(U), formed after the merger of the Samata Party with yet another rebel Janata faction headed by late Sharad Yadav.

The JD(U)-BJP combine won the assembly polls, and Kumar became the chief minister, a post held by Prasad and his wife Rabri Devi for 15 years.

Naidu's TDP also put up a good show

2

BRS OUT FOR A DUCK

BJP & Congress win 8 each

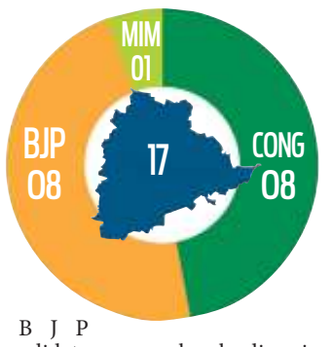
PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The BRS could not open its account in the Lok Sabha elections in Telangana. This is possibly the first time since its inception that the party didn't get even a single seat. Making big inroads in Telangana, the BJP won eight of the 17 Lok Sabha seats.

The Congress was ahead in eight LS constituencies in the state. The All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen's (AIMIM) Asaduddin Owaisi won in Hyderabad.

The BJP which had won four LS seats in 2019 appears to be heading to a win in them. It has also taken the lead in four other constituencies. The party's candidates established clear leads in Karimnagar, Secunderabad, Nizamabad and Adilabad which it had won in the 2019 elections.





BJP candidates were also leading in Chevella, Malkajgiri, Mahbubnagar and Medak.

2

TDP creates electoral history in AP

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Chandrababu Naidu-led Telugu Desam party (TDP) on Tuesday created history by winning 135 Assembly seats, leaving only 11 to the ruling YSRCP.

The ruling YSRCP has also created a history by winning a meagre 11 seats. It won 151 seats in the 2019 elections.

Except for Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy and Energy Minister Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy, all the Cabinet Ministers, including Assembly Speaker Tammineni Sitaram were defeated.

Among the Cabinet Ministers who lost elections were Botcha Satyanarayana, Seediri Appala Naidu, Dharana Prasada Rao, Dadisetti Raja, Vishwaroop Pinipe, Gopala Krishna Chelluboyina, Kottu Satyanarayana, Home Minister Taneti Vanita, Jogi Ramesh, Vidadala Rajini, Ambati Rambabu, Merugu Nagarjuna Audiulapu Suresh, Kakani Govardhan Reddy, Finance Minister Buggana Rajendranath Reddy, Amzath Basha SB, RK Roja and Assembly Speaker Thammineni Seetaram.

Many Stalwarts of YSRCP including V Vijayasai Reddy, Balineni Srinivasa Reddy, Avanti Srinivasa Rao and Kodali Nani had to bite the dust. Since the very first round, the TDP candidates established clear leads which continued till the end. The TDP-JSP and BJP registered a landslide victory by registering a clean sweep from Srikakulam district to Chittoor district. Except for Kadapa district where the YSRCP won three seats including Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, the ruling party failed to win a few seats in any other district.

The ruling party which won 151 seats in the last election, was restrained to only 11 seats and that is unprecedented, a TDP leader commented.

Meanwhile, the Jana Sena has won all the 21 Assembly seats it contested while the BJP has won 8 seats. The TDP-JSP-BJP contested the elections in alliance.



2

Congress gains but CM fails in Malkajgiri, Mahbubnagar

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Congress has gained big in Telangana except in constituencies connected to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy.

Despite campaigning half a dozen times Revanth couldn't get votes in Mahbubnagar for Congress candidate Challa Vamshi Chand Reddy. BJP candidate DK Aruna won here with a slim margin. Recently, the Congress lost the MLC elections in Mahbubnagar local bodies quota.

In Malkajgiri, Eatala Rajender won big.

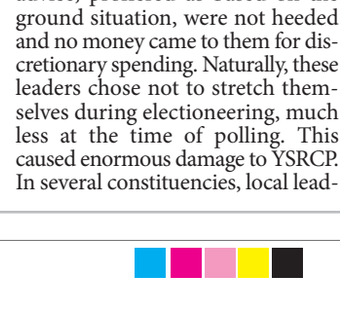
2

People endorsed 100 days of Congress rule: CM

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy said that the people have endorsed 100 days of Congress rule. "My heartfelt thanks to the Telangana people for endorsing our 100-day rule. The people gave a big mandate to the Congress by enabling the party to win eight Lok Sabha seats and the Secunderabad Cantonment Assembly seat," he said.

"The people's support gave us a big boost and has increased our confidence. This will encourage us to provide effective governance. The election results have once again proved that the people of the state are with the



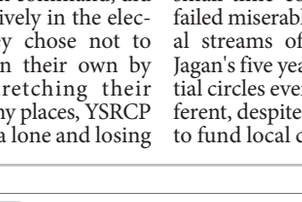
2

INDIA bloc leaders to meet today on plans of govt formation

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After the Lok Sabha election results, the INDIA bloc leaders will meet at Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge's residence on Wednesday evening to decide on their further strategy and whether to reach out to their former allies Nitish Kumar and Chandrababu Naidu for government formation.

Sources said top opposition leaders of the alliance would be meeting at 6 PM at the 10, Rajaji Marg residence of the Congress president where they would discuss their way forward.The leaders will deliberate on the Lok Sabha poll results and on whether to bring on board the JDU and TDP in moving towards government formation.



Opposition leaders including Sharad Pawar, Mamata Banerjee, M K Stalin, Champai Soren, Uddhav Thackeray, Akhilesh Yadav, Sitaram Yechury, D Raja and others are likely to attend the meeting, along with top Congress leaders

2

BRS will rise again like a phoenix: KTR

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS Working President KTR responded to the Lok Sabha election results by expressing disappointment. However, he said that he was confident that the BRS would bounce back soon.

He recalled the party's 24-year-long journey and highlighted that it had seen many ups and downs. The party has experienced both victories and setbacks, he said. He said they will work harder in the coming days and rise again like a Phoenix. KTR emphasized that achieving the state of Telangana is the BRS's highest honour. He said that despite setbacks the BRS has often regained public support and surged back.

He pointed out that apart from achieving Telangana, the BRS, as a regional party, came to power twice with a significant majority, 63 seats in 2014 and 88 seats in 2018. Currently, the BRS is the main opposition with a substantial number of seats in the Assembly, he said.

He also reminded that the BRS had narrowly lost in the 2023 Assembly elections. Despite the disappointment of the Assembly election defeat, BRS workers worked tirelessly during the Lok Sabha election.

2

Arrogance, disconnect proved costly for YSRCP

BY B KRISHNA PRASAD

What gave the alliance of the Telugu Desam Party, Jana Sena Party and the Bharatiya Janata Party this stunning victory? How come Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress Party (YSRCP) has been washed out from almost all districts in Andhra Pradesh? What are factors that worked in favour of the alliance to create an all-time record in the polls?

Two things proved very costly for YSRCP. Firstly, arrogance of its leadership that had percolated to the ward level, with almost all YSRCP leaders in between behaving like monarchs. They started threatening people around them and in some places they even attacked or filed cases against common people for questioning or not following their diktats. This resulted in a build-up of animosity among large sections of people towards YSRCP. Particularly in Godavari districts and most of the north coastal Andhra region, YSRCP leaders had started behaving like kings and created mayhem in public life. Filing of cases against political detractors, 'settlements' made by even petty leaders of the party, and open extortions by power-drunk local leaders had become rampant in some districts. All of these pushed people to think twice before they voted, despite having been pampered with dollops of welfare benefits by the Jaganmohan Reddy government. Adding fuel to the fire, the unconvincing official narrative on the bogey of pitfalls of the Land Titling Act raised by opposition parties created panic among voters in coastal districts, where most people depend on small holdings of less than 2 acres. The opposition's propaganda on the Land Titling Act had exacerbated fears about the YSRCP's designs, with some senior bureaucrats openly detailing the travails they themselves had faced with regard to their ancestral lands.

Secondly, there was palpable lack of coordination within YSRCP during electioneering. Everyone knows TDP chief Chandrababu Naidu is a past master at electioneering. Unfazed by this, YSRCP had left its electioneering to political advocacy group Indian Political Action Committee (I-PAC). It was I-PAC that had determined distribution of money and finalization of the poll strategy at many places, leaving locally influential party leaders in disarray and disbelief. Their bits of advice, proffered as based on the ground situation, were not heeded and no money came to them for discretionary spending. Naturally, these leaders chose not to stretch themselves during electioneering, much less at the time of polling. This caused enormous damage to YSRCP. In several constituencies, local leaders, peeved at not getting anything from the party high command, did not participate actively in the election process. They chose not to spend anything on their own by unnecessarily stretching their finances. So, at many places, YSRCP candidates fought a lone and losing battle, with no support from the cadre, leave alone the high command. They were left to their own devices and forced to lean on I-PAC as their sounding board without knowing whether their problems would be ultimately addressed. This disconnect between the party high command and its Assembly candidates proved very costly for YSRCP.



During his five-year stint, Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy had ensured corruption-free disbursement of benefits under various welfare schemes. The mounting bills related to the plethora of welfare schemes left the Jagan government with little or no money for tangible developmental works. Besides, small-time contractors in YSRCP failed miserably to get any additional streams of income during YS Jagan's five year term. Such influential circles eventually became indifferent, despite having rich potential to fund local candidates during the elections as traditional money bags.

The wheel turned full circle, when, riding high a day after World Bicycle Day (June 3), the Telugu Desam Party (whose election symbol is bicycle) created history in the Andhra Pradesh Assembly elections by winning a record number of seats. The landslide victory of the TDP-Janasena-BJP combine is clearly the result of TDP chief Chandrababu Naidu's perseverance and Janasena chief Pavan Kalyan's political shrewdness. They both deftly steered the alliance to make it a game changer not just in AP, but also at the national level.

All told, Chandrababu Naidu is once again going to play a key role in national politics. He was part of the NDA government between 2014 and 2019. He left the NDA before the 2019 Lok Sabha polls and joined the Congress-led UPA alliance to lose in both Lok Sabha and Assembly polls. Soon after the loss, he had distanced himself from the Congress. He became a part of the NDA in March 2024, perceptibly as an underdog, just a few days before the national elections were announced. Today, he has gained an upper hand over BJP, the dominant partner of the alliance.

During these elections, unlike YSRCP, both TDP and JSP showed utmost patience till they achieved their target. They remained calm and composed against massive trolls in the social media about their 'compromised' seat-sharing process. Pavan in particular proved to be lot maturer than any other 'inexperienced' political leader by accepting fewer seats to pave way for a formidable alliance before the elections. His extraordinarily down-to-earth approach against all odds paid rich dividends to the fledgling Jana Sena Party, which won 100 per cent of the seats it contested.

the pioneer
HYDERABAD | WEDNESDAY | JUNE 5, 2024

National parties crush regional party in TG

SNCN ACHARYULU
HYDERABAD

In Telangana, in the Lok Sabha elections two national parties crushed the regional party BRS. Being the main opposition party the BRS was confined to third position in almost all constituencies. As expected the people of Telangana have given importance to national parties than the regional party in the Lok Sabha elections. In the recent Assembly elections, though the BRS was defeated it has won a respectable number of seats. Out of total 119 Assembly seats, the BRS won 39 seats. But in the Lok Sabha elections out of total 17 seats BRS was not able to win even a single seat. The Congress won 8 and the BJP won 8 seats. The AIMIM won one seat. The people of Telangana have given equal importance to the Congress and the BJP.

Now the BRS is in a dangerous situation because the Congress, which is in power in the State and the BJP which is again going to form the government at the Centre will target the BRS. In the power politics it will be very difficult to the BJP to protect its leaders from switching over to other parties. BRS president and former chief minister K Chandrasekhar Rao is facing many charges, including phone-tapping. Both the Congress and the BJP will try to weaken the BRS. The Congress feels once the BRS is weakened there will be no strong opposition to it. The BJP feels once the BRS weakens it can occupy its place in Telangana. In the previous Lok Sabha elections, the BJP won 4 seats and in the current Lok Sabha elections it has won 8 seats. The Congress won 3 seats in the previous Lok Sabha elections and now it has won 8 seats. The BRS won 9 seats in the previous elections and it was not able to open its account in the current Lok Sabha elections. During the election campaign KCR commented over the winning seats of the BJP in Telangana as "one or none." But after the results it has applied to the BRS only. In several Lok Sabha constituencies the BRS was failed in giving a tough fight to the Congress and the BJP. In the BRS MLAs' constituencies also, BRS did not get majority votes. Sitting BRS MPs were also defeated with huge margins. Some BRS candidates may lose their deposits also.

Khammam, Nalgonda districts give record win to Congress

- Raghuveer beats Jagan's record by bagging a majority of 5.51 lakh votes
- Ramasahayam Raghuram wins with 4.56 lakh votes

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

One again the erstwhile Nalgonda and Khammam districts have stood by the Congress. The two districts ensured the victory of four Congress LS candidates.

Moreover, the people of Nalgonda Lok Sabha constituency gave a record victory to Congress candidate Kunduru Raghuveer Reddy, who is the son of senior leader K. Jana Reddy.

Raghuveer won with a majority of 5.51 lakh votes defeating BJP candidate Sanampudi Saidi Reddy. He surpassed the record of former AP Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy who won with a majority of 5.43 lakh votes from Kadapa Lok Sabha constituency in the year 2011.

The in-charge Minister, Irrigation Minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, said much before the elections that the Congress candidate will win with a record majority. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy did not campaign in Nalgonda.

Uttam's office said that Raghuveer bagged a majority of more than one lakh votes in Huzurnagar Assembly constituency, which is the constituency of Uttam Kumar Reddy, and a majority of 90,000 votes in Kodad Assembly constituency which Uttam's wife Padmavathi represents.

Uttam said the hard work of Congress workers made possible the record victory of Raghuveer.

Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy won with a majority of 2.22 lakh votes defeating his nearest BJP rival Dr Boora Narsaiah Goud.

Congress candidate Ramasahayam Raghuram Reddy also won with a record 4.56 lakh votes from Khammam Lok Sabha constituency. Raghuram registered defeated BRS candidate Nama Nageshwara Rao.

Congress candidate Porika Balaram Naik won from Mahbubabad with a margin of 3.24 lakh votes defeating nearest BRS rival Maloth Kavitha.

The Congress candidate in Warangal, Kadiam Kavya, won with a majority of 2.02 lakh votes against BJP candidate Aroori Ramesh.In Zaheerabad, Congress candidate Suresh Shetkar defeated .

Phone tapping linked to nation's security: HC

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hearing the phone tapping case on Tuesday, the HC said that it is a matter concerning the privacy of individuals and the security of the nation.

The Bench comprising Chief Justice Alok Aradhe and Justice T. Vinod Kumar was dealing with a suo motu case over the tapping of the phones of High Court Judges.

Chief Justice Alok Aradhe said that this is a 'serious concern' and Justice T. Vinod Kumar said that this is a matter concerning 'privacy' and the 'security of the nation.'

The Union Home Secretary and the Union Ministry of Home Affairs were represented by the Deputy Solicitor General of India, Gadi Praveen Kumar, and the Chief Secretary of Telangana, the DGP, the Principal Secretary of the Home Department, ADGP (Intelligence) and the Commissioner of Police were represented by Additional Advocate General Imran Khan.

The court allowed them to file counter affidavits in three weeks. The court will hear the case on July 3.

The court took suo motu notice of the case based on a newspaper report. The report said that Justice Sarath Kaja of the Telangana High Court appears to be one of the targets of the illegal phone-tapping operation conducted during BRS rule according to the confessional statement of Bhujanga Rao.

It also revealed that the phones of student leaders and journalists were also tapped. They also tapped the phones of the family members of opposition leaders. Phones were tapped during the by-elections in the Dubbaka, Huzurnagar and Munugode Assembly constituencies.

Hema Malini gets 3rd term in Mathura

Kangana, Govil also emerge victorious

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Indian film stars shone brightly in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections with voters showing their trust in newcomers Kangana Ranaut and Arun Govil as well as returning MPs Hema Malini, Manoj Tiwari, and Ravi Kishan.

The country went to the polls from April 19 to June 1 in seven phases to elect the 543 members of the 18th Lok Sabha.

Assembly elections were also held simultaneously in Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Odisha, and Sikkim. The counting of votes took place on Tuesday.

In her first election, Ranaut defeated her rival, Congress' Vikramaditya Singh by 74,755 votes in Himachal Pradesh's Mandi. She polled 5,37,002 votes against 4,62,267 votes polled to King of erstwhile Rampur state, who is also the sitting state Public Works Minister and son of six-time chief minister Virbhadra Singh and state Congress chief Pratibha Singh.

Hema Malini was elected for a straight third term in Lok Sabha from Mathura (Uttar Pradesh) by securing 5,10,064 votes against her nearest rival, Mukesh Dhangar of the Congress, whose vote count of 2,93,407 votes.

Tiwari, a former Bhojpuri cinema star and BJP's candidate from North East Delhi, trounced Congress rival Kanhaiya Kumar by a margin of over 1.38 lakh votes.

This is Tiwari's third win in a row from the seat. In the 2024 general elections, he secured 8,24,451 votes. He was the only sitting MP from Delhi retained by the BJP for the 18th Lok Sabha polls.

Kishan, the BJP contender from Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh, was elected for a second consecutive term, securing 5,85,834 votes. He defeated Kajal Nishad from the Samajwadi Party by 1,03,526 votes to retain his constituency.

"Ramayan" star Govil, another newcomer fielded by the BJP besides Ranaut, emerged victorious in the Meerut seat in Uttar Pradesh earning 5,46,469 votes. While early trends were in favour of Sunita Yadav, Govil eventually bested the Samajwadi Party by a margin of 10,585 votes.

Actor-turned-politician Suresh Gopi, another BJP candidate, registered victory in Kerala's Thrissur constituency by gathering 4,12,338 votes. Gopi defeated VS Sunilkumar of the Communist Party of India by 74,686 votes. This is the BJP's first-ever Lok Sabha seat in the state.

Veteran actor Shatrughan Sinha, who was fielded as the Trinamool Congress candidate from West Bengal's Asansol, defeated his nearest rival S S Ahluwalia of the BJP by a margin of 59,564 votes. Sinha secured 6,05,645 votes, whereas Ahluwalia garnered 5,46,081 votes.

Sinha, who has had political stints under the BJP and Congress, joined the TMC in 2022 to contest in the by-election for the Asansol Lok Sabha constituency. Actor-BJP politician Dinesh Lal Yadav, better known by his stage name Nirahua, lost in Uttar Pradesh's Azamgarh seat by a margin of 1,61,035 votes to his nearest rival Samajwadi Party candidate Dharmendra Yadav

Protect nature to ensure survival, says Surekha

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Konda Surekha, the Minister of Forests, Environment and Devadaya Charities, said that humanity can survive only if we protect nature. She was speaking on the occasion of World Environment Day which is being observed on June 5.

She said that we must protect the earth which is the only planet suitable for us in this universe with its unique climatic conditions. Considering the natural disasters that the world is facing, everyone must be aware of environmental pollution, climate change and pollution prevention measures, she said.

"Uncontrolled human activities are leading to natural calamities. Adverse conditions like untimely rains, droughts, floods, extinction of species, global warming, rise in sea levels and changes in seasons are endangering humanity," she said. She warned that if these disasters continue the day when humanity will face destruction is not far away. Reflecting the spirit of the 'World Environment Day' throughout the year, Surekha called upon people to protect the environment.

TG voters teach all parties a lesson, reject parachute candidates

K VENKATESHWARLU
HYDERABAD

The voters of Telangana taught a lesson to all political parties in the state by not giving them double-digit seats. The parties, the ruling Congress, the opposition BJP and the BRS, had claimed that they would win double-digit seats.

TPCC President Chief Minister Revanth Reddy had claimed that these elections are a referendum on the Congress people's government and that the Congress will win 10 to 14 seats. However, the people gave only eight seats to the Congress.

On the other hand, the BJP claimed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's wave will ensure them more than 10 seats. But the people gave only eight seats to the BJP. However, the BJP managed to double its tally from four to eight LS seats.

Shockingly, the people of Telangana did not allow the BRS to open its account in the state. The party lost all the 17 LS seats it contested. As usual, the AIMIM retained its Hyderabad seat for the fifth time.

Both the Congress and the BJP found that people ensured the victory of only their original leaders and had rejected their parachute candidates who had joined these parties recently.

The people gave their verdict indicating that political parties should be careful and must play their role dutifully.

Telangana rejects BRS candidates in toto

K VENKATESHWARLU
HYDERABAD

It seems that the people of Telangana are still angry with BRS leaders. The people of Telangana totally rejected not only BRS candidates but also the BRS leaders who joined the BJP and the Congress and contested the Lok Sabha elections.

The people defeated BRS candidates in all the 17 LS constituencies without giving them a chance.

The people also rejected sitting BRS MPs BB Patil, Gaddam Ranjith Reddy, Rangareddy ZP Chairperson Sunitha Mahender Reddy, former BRS MLAs Aroori Ramesh, Sanampudi Saidi Reddy, BRS sitting MLA Danam Nagender, former BRS MP Seetharam Naik and BRS sitting MP Pothuganti Ramulu's son, P. Bharat.

BB Patil, who joined the BJP much before the Lok Sabha elections, contested on a BJP ticket in Zaheerabad and lost to Congress candidate Suresh Shetkar.

Gaddam Ranjith Reddy, who joined the Congress before the Lok Sabha elections and contested from Chevella, lost to the BJP's Konda Vishweshwar Reddy.

Rangareddy BRS ZP chairperson Sunitha Mahender Reddy, who joined the Congress before the LS polls, lost to BJP candidate Eatala Rajender in Malkajgiri.

Former BRS MLA Aroori Ramesh, who joined the BJP dramatically before the LS polls, lost to Congress candidate Kadiam Kavya in Warangal.

The people showed some consideration towards BRS MLA Kadiam Srihari, who joined the Congress before the LS polls and his daughter Kadiam Kavya, who joined the Congress along with her father even after BRS chief K. Chandrasekhar Rao allotted a party ticket to her.

Former BRS MLA Sanampudi Saidi Reddy, who joined the BJP before the LS polls, lost to Kunduru Raghuveer Reddy in Nalgonda.

Former BRS MP Seetharam Naik, who joined the BJP before the LS polls, lost in Mahbubabad to Congress candidate Porika Balaram Naik.

Siting Khairatabad BRS MLA Danam Nagender, who joined the Congress before the LS polls, was defeated by BJP candidate G. Kishan Reddy in the Secunderabad LS constituency. BRS MP Pothuganti Ramulu's son, P. Bharat, who joined the BJP along with his father, and contested from Nagarkurnool, lost to Congress candidate Mallu Ravi. One political analyst said the BJP and the Congress would have won more seats if they had given tickets to their activists instead of BRS leaders.

Congress gains but CM fails in Malkajgiri, Mahbubnagar

Continued on Page 1

Malkajgiri was represented by Revanth Reddy in the LS earlier. Political analysts believe that in both constituencies the Congress didn't field strong candidates.

Former MPs like Uttam Kumar Reddy and Komatireddy Venkat Reddy who are now Ministers helped the Congress to retain their seats. The only face-saving development is the victory in the Secunderabad Cantonment Assembly constituency.

Senior leaders of the Congress won big in Nalgonda, Bhongir and Khammam with huge majorities. However, the CM's predictions came true. He had said the BJP may win a maximum of 240 LS seats and that the BRS will not win even a single LS seat.

People ...

Continued on Page 1

Congress," Revanth said.

He thanked all Congress activists and well-wishers who worked hard for the party. "It is a victory of all Congress activists. The party will recognize their hard work. The election code will be lifted on Wednesday. The people's government will start working hard. We will provide excellent governance. We will deliver praja palana in the coming days and win the hearts.

INDIA bloc leaders..

Continued on Page 1

Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi.

While the BJP on its own fell short of a majority of its own, the BJP-led NDA which includes TDP, JDU and other parties has won or is ahead in around 290 seats.

The TDP and JDU have already dismissed suggestions about defecting to the opposition alliance and have clearly stated that they would remain with the NDA grouping, but the INDIA bloc wants to explore possibility of government formation.

Sources said the Congress and some other leaders are already in touch with them and are making their best efforts to win them over.

The opposition grouping may offer an olive branch to their erstwhile partners in wooing them back, which will help strengthen the INDIA grouping in staking their claim on government formation.

Rahul Gandhi has already stated clearly that they would not take any decision or say anything on government formation without holding consultations with the INDIA bloc partners. He also refrained from commenting on whether they would reach out to TDP and JDU, saying it would be decided at the Wednesday meeting of the opposition INDIA Bloc.

BRS..

Continued on Page 1

KTR thanked everyone on behalf of the party and reiterated that victories and defeats are natural in politics.

KCR always says not to get overjoyed with wins or disheartened by losses, and the BRS sticks to this principle. KTR said the current results disappointed them, but they will not be disheartened.

Regardless of the results, the BRS will continue to fight for the people of Telangana. The BRS will serve as the voice of Telangana and will continue to fight for the state's interests with the Centre and the ruling Congress in the state.

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham:	Krishna Paksha
Tithi: Chaturdashi:	Jun 04 10:01 PM to Jun 05 07:55 PM
Amavasya:	Jun 05 07:55 PM to Jun 06 06:07 PM
Nakshatram:	
Krithika:	Jun 04 10:34 PM to Jun 05 09:16 PM
Rohini:	Jun 05 09:16 PM to Jun 06 08:16 PM
Rahukalam:	12:14 PM to 1:52 PM
Yamagandam:	7:22 AM to 8:59 AM
Varjyam:	12:36 PM to 02:08 PM
Gulika:	10:37 AM to 12:14 PM
Amritakalam:	07:00 PM to 08:31 PM
Abhijit Muhurtham:	Nil

HYDERABAD WEATHER

Forecast: Scattered Thunderstorms
Temp: 32°c
Humidity: 71%
Sunrise: 5:41 AM
Sunset: 6:49 PM

Updated: June 4, 2024 5:00 PM

BRS OUT FOR A DUCK ...

Continued on Page 1

The Congress is ahead in Nalgonda, Khammam, Mahbubabad, Peddapalle, Zahirabad, Nagarkurnool, Bhongir and Warangal constituencies.

State BJP President G. Kishan Reddy was leading in Secunderabad by 49,944 votes. BJP General Secretary Bandi Sanjay Kumar took a huge lead of over 2,25,209 votes. The BJP's Vice-President, DK Aruna, was ahead in Mahbubnagar by 4,500 votes.

In Malkajgiri, which is India's largest constituency, the BJP's Eatala Rajender was leading by over 3,91,475 votes.

In Nizamabad, BJP Dharmapuri Arvind secured a majority of 1,09,241. In Medak, Raghunandan won a majority of 39,139, and Godam Nagesh had a majority of 90,652. In Chevella, Konda Vishweshwar Reddy secured a majority of 1,72,897.

Congress' Kunduru Raghuveer was leading by over 5,59,905 votes in Nalgonda. In Nagarkurnool, Mallu Ravi got a majority of 94,414 votes and in Zahirabad Suresh Shektar got a majority of 46,174 votes.

In Khammam, Congress' Raghurami Reddy was leading by 4,67,847 lakh votes.

In Mahbubabad, Congress candidate Balram Naik had taken a lead of 1.13 lakh votes.

In Peddapalle, Congress's Gaddam Vashmi has a lead of 1,31,364 votes. In Bhongir, Chamala Kiran got a majority of 2,22,170 votes and in Warangal, Kadiyam Kavya got a majority of 2,20,339 votes.

AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi, who is seeking re-election from Hyderabad for a fifth consecutive term, was leading by over 34,000 votes. In Secunderabad Cantonment Assembly constituency, where a by-election was held along with the Lok Sabha polls, Congress candidate Sri Ganesh was leading by 5,113 votes.

A voter turnout of 65.67 per cent was recorded in the polling held on May 13.

In the 2019 elections, the then ruling BRS had bagged nine LS seats, the BJP four seats and the Congress three LS seats. AIMIM had won one LS seat.

Naidu, Nitish...

Continued on Page 1

in the Lok Sabha polls, leading or winning in 16 of the total 25 seats in the state, with allies BJP and Janasena Party ahead in three and two constituencies respectively.

In the process, he also has emerged as a possible kingmaker, being the second largest party in the ruling NDA alliance behind the BJP.

This is the latest turn of fortune for the veteran politician who is credited for turning Hyderabad, the capital of undivided Andhra Pradesh, into a technology and computer software hub.

Born on April 20, 1950, at Naravaripalli in the undivided Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh, Nara Chandrababu Naidu started his more than four-decade-long political career on the student politics platform at Sri Venkateswara University in Tirupati.

Following that solid foundation, Naidu joined the Congress party and went on to become a cabinet minister.

However, he later jumped ship to the TDP, founded by his late father-in-law and legendary actor N T Rama Rao. Naidu first became the chief minister in 1995 and went on to have another two terms as CM.

His first two terms as chief minister were at the helm of united Andhra Pradesh, beginning in 1995 and ending in 2004, nine years at a stretch while the third term came post-bifurcation of the state. Telangana was carved out of Andhra Pradesh 10 years ago.

During the late 90s, Naidu played a key role in forming the Central Government of that time and the first NDA government formed by Atal Bihari Vajpayee was supported from outside by the TDP.

In 2014, Naidu emerged as the first chief minister of the residuary state of Andhra Pradesh and served it until 2019.

In his third term as CM, he championed Amaravati to be the capital city of the southern state, but losing power left his brainchild as an unfulfilled promise.

In 2019, he suffered a humiliating defeat at the hands of a much younger Jagan Mohan Reddy of the YSR Congress Party, who also dealt a debilitating blow to the Amaravati project.

TDP creates..

Continued on Page 1

Meanwhile, the TDP also won 16 Lok Sabha seats, the Jana Sena two seats and the BJP three seats. The ruling YSRCP has won four LS seats.

In a video message to the people, Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy wondered why the people rejected the elections in such a big way despite the implementation of many welfare schemes by spending lakhs of crores of rupees during the last five years. YS Jagan Mohan Reddy announced that the party would stand with the people despite the debacle. He assured the people that he would stand with with them despite the debacle.

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UoH among top varsities in Citations per Faculty indicator

PNS ■ HYDERABAD



The University of Hyderabad (UoH) has been ranked in world's top universities as per the 2025 edition of QS World University Rankings on Tuesday. The varsity ranked in the range of 801-850 in the world. QS World University Rankings 2025 evaluated 5,663 institutions and featured 1,503 institutions across 106 locations, including 46 in India.

Prof. BJ Rao, Vice-Chancellor, UoH said, "The University of Hyderabad is ranked 335 in the 2025 edition compared to 372 in 2024 in the world in 'Citations per Faculty' indicator. Though this is good progress, we need to improve in the other parameters as overall ranking is also linked with global visibility, perception etc."

The rankings are based on the paper count over a five-year period and citations count for six years. To reflect the growth in data availability and changing priorities of students and society at large over the past two decades, QS has implemented the largest methodological enhancement since its inception, introducing three new metrics: Sustainability, Employment Outcomes and International Research Network, and adjusting the weighting of some existing indicators, namely Academic Reputation, Employer Reputation and Faculty-Student Ratio.

Three held for disturbing communal harmony

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Chilkalguda Police on Tuesday arrested three persons, including two juveniles for disturbing communal harmony in the area.

The incident occurred on June 3 when the accused Noel Shobith Raj and the two juveniles shared an Instagram post targeting a religious community. In his complaint, the complainant said that he came across a derogatory post on an Instagram handle 'Hyderabadi Jamesbond'.

The post contained an audio in which unparliamentary language was used with regards to a particular community. Based on the complaint, a case was registered under Sections 153(A), 153(B), 295, 295(A), 504, 506 IPC & Sec 66 of IT Act.

Etala expresses gratitude to people for voting him

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Etala Rajendra expressed gratitude to the public for voting him, at the media point after the counting at Keesara Holy Mary College on Tuesday.

He said, "I am a native of Malkajgiri. They trusted me and made me win. Votes were cast without losing the majority in any round. If you vote for me, there will be a safeguard. I was voted so that the foundation of progress will be laid. Cantonment roads, renovation of ponds, youth employment, housing for the poor, industrial corridor, all will be fulfilled. I will always be available to the people. Thanks to all the associations that have supported me. Thank you to all the Congress and BRS workers too who are in the party and voted for me."



Votes were cast without losing the majority in any round. If you vote for me, there will be a safeguard

He also said that he has two duties. "We will fight for the guarantees given by the State government and will bring funds to the State from Modi's government. We will participate in the development of the State. We are continuing to dominate by winning eight seats out of 17. Modi has reduced the gap between the rich and the poor in these 10 years. Job opportunities have been added to the youth. Infrastructure has been established. India's self-esteem increased. People of the country will want Modi even after 10 years and that is why the admiration towards him can be understood."

Owaisi wins Hyd LS seat for the fifth time

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

All India Majlis-e-ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) president Asadauddin Owaisi on Tuesday defeated Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) Kompella Madhavi Latha to secure the Hyderabad Lok Sabha seat for the fifth time.

Owaisi defeated Madhavi Latha by a margin of 3,38,087 votes; the AIMIM president secured 6,61, 981 votes whereas his BJP counterpart secured 3,23,894 votes. Owaisi has been the Hyderabad MP since 2004.

In the 2019 Lok Sabha election, he defeated BJP's Bhavant Rao by 2,82,186 votes. As compared to the previous Lok Sabha elections, Owaisi secured 55,901 more votes this time. In 2014 too, the AIMI president defeated Rao to retain the Hyderabad Lok Sabha seat.

It is to be noted that Hyderabad has been a stronghold of the AIMIM for four decades. Asaduddin's father Sultan Salahuddin Owaisi was elected to Parliament in 1984-1989 as an independent candidate. He then represented the constituency as a leader of the AIMIM from 1989 -2004.

Following his victory, Owaisi said, "I would like to thank the people as they have given success to Majlis for the fifth time. I would like to thank the people of Hyderabad, especially the youth, women, and first-time voters...who have given a historic success to the AIMIM party."



AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi receives winning certificate from the District Election Officer

Narayana students excel in KCET 2024

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Students of Naryana Educational Institutions secured top ranks in the Karnataka CET (KCET-2024) that was announced on Tuesday.

They have secured first and fourth ranks in engineering, while they secured second, third, sixth and ninth ranks in B Pharma and Pharma D examinations. Harsha Karthikeya Vutukuri secured the first rank in the KCET exam.

The students also secured second, fourth, seventh, and tenth ranks in B.VSc and B.Sc Nursing and fourth rank in Bachelor in Naturopathy and Yoga Sciences (BNYS). Overall, they secured 19 ranks in the top 10, a total of 92 ranks in the top 100, and as many as 399 ranks in the top 1000 across all streams.

Directors of Narayana Educational Institutions, Dr P Sindhura and P Sharani, said, "Our comprehensive educational approach, which emphasises in-depth conceptual understanding, performance evaluation, continuous feedback and encouragement, ensured the finest preparation for KCET. Our rigorous error analysis system provided students with valuable insights into their strengths and limitations.

The in-house learning application, nLearn, enabled teachers to monitor students' progress and provide tailored assistance. Rigorous assessments allowed students to evaluate their standing among competitors and our dedicated staff and tech-enabled framework were the pillars of our success."

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

Minister Konda Surekha urges people to protect nature

PNS ■ HYDERABAD



Konda Surekha, Minister of Forest, Environment and Endowments said, "If we love nature, protect nature and live together with nature, humanity can survive, on the occasion of World Environment Day (June 5)."

The Minister said that it is our duty to carefully protect the Earth, which is the only planet suitable for living in this universe with unique climatic conditions. In view of the natural disasters that the world is currently facing, it is necessary for everyone to be aware of environmental pollution, climate change and pollution prevention measures.

The activities aimed at meeting one's needs by forgetting discretion are leading to natural calamities. Adverse conditions such as untimely rains, drought, floods, extinction of many species, global warming, rise in sea levels and unwanted changes in seasons are putting humanity in danger. She also warned that if these disasters continue like this, the day when the entire humanity will be heading towards destruction is not far away.

She said that the expected goals will be possible only when the people also commit to environmental protection in addition to the government's activities. Reflecting the spirit of 'World Environment Day' throughout the year, Minister Surekha called upon the people to come together to promote greenary and protect the environment.

City police files FIRs against pubs based on complaints from PPL India

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad Police have filed FIRs against several pubs based on complaints from Phonographic Performance India Limited (PPL), a collective rights management organisation, which accused a popular DJ and several pubs in the city of using copyrighted music without a proper licence.

In response to PPL's complaints, the police are investigating the alleged unauthorised use of copyrighted music. The FIRs were registered on well-known establishments including Babylon Kitchen & Bar, Amnesia Lounge and Insomnia Lounge.

The police informed that despite their high profiles, these venues failed to pay the required royalties to PPL, leading to take legal action.

According to PPL, the Indian Copyright Act provides both civil and criminal protection against copyright infringements, allowing copyright owners to seek police intervention for ongoing violations.

PPL's legal team noted that despite multiple warnings, the DJ and pubs continued to use copyrighted music without obtaining licences from the PPL.

The PPL India was established in 1941, representing the rights to over 7.9 million songs from more than 400 music companies. It is a non-profit organisation dedicated to protecting intellectual property rights by ensuring that its members' music is used legally and by taking action against unauthorised use.

Revanth congratulates CBN, Pawan

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy congratulated Chandrababu Naidu and Pawan Kalyan for winning the elections in Andhra Pradesh.

In a message on X, he said, "My congratulations to TDP chief Chandrababu Naidu and Janasena chief Pawan Kalyan for winning the Andhra Pradesh elections. Let us continue our good relations, solve problems and move towards development." BRS chief KCR also congratulated TDP chief Chandrababu Naidu and Janasena chief Pawan Kalyan who are going to form the government after winning the Andhra Pradesh Assembly elections.

BRS Working President KTR said, "Congratulations to Chandrababu Naidu and Pawan Kalyan on their landslide victory."

TSMC chief Mahesh Kumar in panel to form anti-quackery guidelines

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana State Medical Council (TSMC) chairman Dr K Mahesh Kumar on June 3 was appointed member of the committee constituted by the National Medical Commission to frame anti-quackrery guidelines.



In a letter, the Ethics and Medical Registration Board said, "In partial modification of the ERMB's number R12013/03/2024, the composition of Committee of Experts to form procedural guidelines pertaining to provisions under the Section 34 read with Section 54 of the National Medical Commission Act, 2019 on quackery. The six-member commission includes Dr Yogenra Malik, Member of ERMB has been appointed chairman of the committee; Dr K Mahesh Kumar , chairman of the TSMC has been appointed member of the committee. Other members of the committee are Purnima Tudu, Deputy Secretary of the EMRB; Dr Santhil who is member of the (PGMEB); Dr Anupama Goel, Professor at NLU, Delhi and Dr Brahmdeep Sandhu, Chief Medical Officer of Jhajjar district in Haryana.

Rainfall forecast for next 4 days

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Rainfall was witnessed across Telangana with gusty winds, while Hyderabad experienced dry weather and a sudden downpour in the evening on Tuesday.

As per the IMD, the next four days are very likely to have thunderstorms with rain, lightning and gusty winds at isolated places across various districts of Rangareddy, Hyderabad, Medchal Malkajig iri, Vikarabad, Sangareddy, Mahabubnagar, Nagarkurnool, Wanaparthy, Narayanpet and, Jogulamba\ Gadwal districts with wind speeds of 40-50 kmph.

Thunderstorms with rain, lightning, and gusty winds are also very likely to occur at Nizamabad, Jagital, Rajanna Sirsilla, Karimnagar, Peddapalli, Jayashankar Bhupalapally, Mulugu, Bhadradri Kothagu dem, Khammam, Nalgonda, Suryapet, Mahabu babad, Warangal, Hanamkonda, Jangaon, Siddipet, Yadadri Bhuva ngiri, Medak, Kamareddy with wind speeds of 30-40 kmph.

WINNING SPREE



Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy felicitates Mallu Ravi on his victory as the MP of Nagar Kurnool

Whether I win or lose, I will be among people: Nama

PNS ■ HYDERABAD



BRS party Khammam MP candidate Nama Nageswara Rao has made it clear that whether he wins or loses, he will always be among the people of the constituency, in a press statement here on Tuesday.

He said, "People of my constituency like me as much as my own mother. There is nothing to be proud of if you win. I will always be available to the people of the constituency, be the voice of their questioning and work for the solution of their problems. I will fight for the minimum facilities of the people. As an MP, I have served the people with a spotless personality without any opportunity for corruption. I am thankful to the party workers, leaders, fans, well-wishers and voters who have supported me in every way and led me forward."

He made it clear that people have courage and with the same goal, he will always be available to them and work for the welfare of public problems. It is natural to win elections and whether he wins or loses, his life is with the people. "I was born and brought up here and here I am among my people. The doors of my house are always open for people," he added.

Notices issued to restaurants at Uppal, Lakdikapul

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Food Safety Commission conducted inspections at various establishments in Uppal and Lakdikapul and found multiple violations.

The Task Force team has conducted inspection in the Swiss Central at Uppal and found expired Green Moong Dal (3kg) and baking soda (2kg) which were disposed of. Biscuits, jaggery, kaju and other items worth Rs 2.7 lakh were seized for not following FSSAI labelling regulations. Packaged drinking water (600 bottles) were seized for having low TDS of only 27 ppm.

The officials found positive observations like food handlers not wearing hair caps, gloves and aprons. Pest control records were not available. Water analysis report for RO water was not available. FSSAI licence was not displayed at the entrance.

The Task Force also conducted inspections at Hotel Ashoka (Kitchen Of Moonlight bar) and found expired food articles like chicken leg boneless (5kg), liquid caramel colour and green gram dal (10kg) were found infested with black beetle and disposed of immediately.

Cashew (24 packets) were seized for not following FSSAI labelling regulations.



Cockroach infestation was found near the red meat storage area.

The officials found a few positive observations like semi-prepared food articles not being properly covered and labelled in the refrigerator. Medical fitness certificates for food handlers and pest control records were not available. FSSAI licence was displayed at the premises.

The officials continued their inspection at the Hydrate-The Bar in Lakdikapul and found expired food articles like chilled chicken wings (10kg), Amul peanut spread (0.9kg), and Pasta/Macaroni (5kg) which were disposed off.

BBQ Sauce (4 units) were found without an importer label and seized. Dustbins were found open without proper lids and medical fitness certificates for food handlers were not available.

Semi-prepared food articles were covered, not labelled properly and FSSAI licence was not displayed.

The officials found positive observations that pest control records and water analysis reports for RO water were available.

More than 1 lakh voters chose NOTA in LS polls

PNS ■ HYDERABAD



A total of 1,02,654 voters chose None of the Above (NOTA) as their option In the parliamentary elections for the 17 seats in the Telangana State. A total of 0.47 per cent voters have chosen NOTA as their option in the elections. But in the 2019 elections a total of 1.03 per cent voted for NOTA.

In the Adilabad constituency NOTA got 11, 762 votes, in Karimnagar 5438 voters chose NOTA, in Nizamabad 4,483 votes polled, in Medak 4,617 votes polled, in Malkajgiri 13,366 votes polled, in Secunderabad 5,166 votes polled, in Chevella 6,423 votes polled and in Mahbubnagar 4,330 votes were polled.

In Peddapalle constituency 5,711 voters chose NOTA, in Nalgonda 6,086 voters, in Bhongir 4,646 voters, in Warangal 8,380 voters, in Khammam 6,782 voters, in Zahirabad 2,976 voters, in Nagarkurnool 4,580 voters, in Mahabubabad constituency 6,591 voters chose NOTA in the elections.

In Hyderabad constituency 2,906 voters have not chosen any candidates but chose NOTA.

Cong government will fulfil all its promises: Komatireddy

PNS ■ NALGONDA

Minister for Roads and Buildings Komatireddy Venkat Reddy on Tuesday thanked the voters of Nalgonda Lok Saba constituency for electing the Congress candidate Kunduru Raghuveer Reddy with a majority of over 5.50 lakh votes.

The Minister also said that Congress candidate from Bhogir Lok Sabha seat secured a majority of over 2 lakh votes.

He assured the people that the Government would implement every promise made by the Congress to the people and maintained that the Congress is forging ahead with its development agenda.

He said that he in association with Minister for Irrigation N UttamKumam Reddy would develop the district in all respects.



Minister for Roads and Buildings Komatireddy Venkat Reddy speaking to the media in Nalgonda on Tuesday

Further, he said that the Congress predicted winning 9-12 Lok Sabha seats. But the people got Raghuveer elected with a huge majority, he said and attributed it to the hard work of the party workers.

Raghuveer Reddy said that he is indebted to the people of Nalgonda constituency people. He thanked the party leader and workers for working hard for the electoral victory of him.

The people of the state voted Cong to power in elections due to opposition towards the BRS. But the people of the state blessed him due to the credibility they have had for the six-month-old Congress government in Telangana, he said.

He vowed strive for development of Nalgonda constituency putting the opportunity to given to him for better use. He also vowed to work for development of Dindi and Brahmana Vellamla irrigation projects.

He said that he would live up to the expectations of all the people.

Man sentenced to 10 years in jail for raping minor girl

PNS ■ KUMRAM BHEEM ASIFABAD

A court in Asifabad on Tuesday convicted and sentenced a man to 10 years in jail, besides imposing a fine of Rs 6,500 for raping a girl four years ago.

District Sessions Court principal judge MV Ramesh pronounced the verdict, awarding the term and fine on Rebbena Sudhakar. He came from Rollapahad in Rebbena mandal after finding him guilty of raping a girl of Gopalnagar in Thandur mandal under the guise of marrying her in 2020.

According to prosecution, Sudhakar raped a minor girl four years ago. The prosecution requested the court to impose rigorous imprisonment on him.

Parents protest exorbitant fee in corporate schools

PNS ■ RANGA REDDY

As June arrives, the poor and middle-class families brace themselves for the daunting task of paying school fees. The start of the school year brings significant financial stress with parents growing increasingly worried. Enrolling a four-year-old in lower kindergarten (LKG) now costs around Rs 25,000 in admission fees. When factoring in additional expenses like donations, building funds, registration fees, admission fees, transport, uniforms, books, and stationery, the total cost exceeds Rs. 50,000.

As children progress to higher classes, these fees escalate with families spending over Rs. 1 lakh for a tenth-grade education. The commercialisation of education by corporate schools continues unchecked, placing immense pressure on parents. Each June, families allocate nearly 59 per cent of their income to pay school fees, which rise by more than 10 percent annually.



Corporate schools charge Rs 25,000 for LKG and demand at least Rs 50,000 from sixth grade onwards. Consequently, many parents belonging to poor and middle-class families are forced to spend half their monthly income on school fees. As schools prepare to reopen on the June 12 of this month, many middle-class families are already seeking loans to cover these expenses.

Beyond tuition, private and corporate schools impose additional costs for uniforms, diaries, ties, belts, and shoes. This mounting financial strain has led to calls for government intervention to regulate these fees. Despite the existence of parent committees in schools, managements often manipulate these bodies by appointing members who support their action and bypassing proper consultations before effecting fee hikes. It is yet to be seen whether the government will lend it ears to the pleas being made by parents times and again.

Hyderabad student found safe after being reported missing in US

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

After days-long search, 23-year-old Nitheesha Kandula, a California State University San Bernardino student, was found safe after she was reported missing. She hails from Hyderabad.

She was last seen in Los Angeles on Tuesday, May 28, and was reported missing.

On Monday, July 3, authorities said she was located and found safe

John Guttierez, chief of Cal State San Bernardino Police noted she had been located and is safe.



Nitheesha Kandula

Earlier, Police had sought the public's help to find Nitheesha, reportedly from Hyderabad, urging people with information on her whereabouts to contact authorities.

She was described as 5 feet 6 inches tall and around 72.5 kgs in weight with black hair and black eyes in the police's written statement.

The circumstances around her disappearance and the events leading up to her location by authorities have not been released.

There is a sigh of relief after d Nitheesha has been found safe.

This marks another case in a troubling pattern for the Indian community in the US, who has recently experienced multiple missing student incidents.

Recently, the Indian community in the US has grappled with a string of such incidents involving students.

Cong leader builds temple for Sonia

PNS ■ SIRCILLA

Showing his respect for UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi, who granted statehood to Telangana, a Congress leader built a temple for her using marble stone.



It is pertinent to note here that some people, to show off their highest regard for their leader or film actors or actresses, build temples. Some people derive satisfaction by getting their leaders' names tattooed on their arms. Some others display large photos of their leaders. In case of yet others, they get the stickers of names and photos of their leaders stuck to their vehicles.

In a latest development, a Congress leader, former sarpanch of Yellareddypeta in Sircilla district Nevru Venkat Reddy and his spouse Mamata, built a temple for Sonia Gandhi using marble stone.

They installed a huge photo of Sonia Gandhi in the temple. In connection with the Telangana State formation day on Sunday, the Congress leader along with the local Congress leaders inaugurated the temple.

BJP activists celebrate Vishweshwar Reddy's victory

PNS ■ RANGA REDDY

Celebrations erupted in Chevella constituency after BJP candidate Konda Vishweshwar Reddy secured a decisive victory. He defeated his nearest rival Gaddam Ranjith Reddy of the Indian National Congress (INC), by a substantial margin of 1,65,461 votes. Dr. Ranjith Reddy garnered 6,02,696 votes, while Kasani Gnaneshwar Kasani of the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) received 1,65,928 votes.

Chevella Lok Sabha constituency, one of the 17 Lok Sabha seats in Telangana, is situated in the Rangareddy district, approximately 40 km from Hyderabad, the state capital.

Formed in 2008 following a reorganisation of Lok Sabha constituencies, Chevella comprises seven Assembly segments, such as Maheswaram, Rajendranagar, Serilingampally, Chevella, Parigi, Vikarabad, and Tandur. The area is renowned for its government institutions, numerous temples, and substantial carrot production



Konda Sangeetha Reddy, wife of Chevella BJP candiate Konda Vishweshwar Reddy celebrating her husband's victory along with BJP activists on Tuesday.

The BJP cadre and Vishweshwar Reddy's followers celebrated the victory by distributing sweets.

Suryapet district SHGs first in producing school uniforms

PNS ■ NALGONDA

Suryapeta district stood first in producing school uniform to the students of government schools.

During this academic year, the State government has decided to entrust the responsibility of producing school uniform to Self-help Groups (SHGs).

There are 17,474 SHGs in Suryapet district and 1,81,636 members. In this, 1,212 members who received sewing training were selected for school dress stitching. For this, the government will pay Rs 50 per pair as stitching charge. With this government decision, the stitching job not only provided employment to the SHG members but also enable the administration to ensure uniform to students at the beginning of the academic year.



Women belonging to Self-help Groups stitching school uniforms in Suryapet

The women members who have been facing difficulties due to lack of employment opportunities for the past few months are expressing happiness over the government's decision. There are 950 government schools, KGBV, model schools in the district. About 43,245 students are studying in those schools. About 86,490 pairs of school dress are being stitched for them at the rate of two pairs each.

The first installment, a pair of dresses will be handed over to the respective schools by June 6, the officials said.

Meanwhile, an SHG member N Kumari from Suryapet mandal said that they had lost their jobs due to the arrival of ready-made dresses in the market. The SHG members appealed to the government not to buy readymade dress in the market.

NEWS FROM ANDHRA PRADESH

Undeterred PK helps JSP grow from 1 seat to 21

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Undeterred by the humiliating debacle in the 2019 elections, Jana Sena chief K Pawan Kalyan has continued his efforts to bolster the party and infuse courage in the demoralised cadres.

Being busy acting in cinemas, Pawan Kalyan devoted time to interacting with party workers, holding meetings and touring the state. Pawan Kalyan earlier actively participated in the Praja Rajyam party, floated by his elder brother megastar Chiranjeevi. However, against his wishes, Chiranjeevi merged the PRP in the Congress.

Later, Pawan Kalyan launched the Jana Sena party but did not contest in the 2014 elections. However, it supported the TDP-BJP alliance and helped contribute to the alliance. However, in 2018, Pawan Kalyan differed with the TDP leadership especially Chandrababu Naidu and his son N Lokesh.

In 2019, the Pawan Kalyan-led Jana Sena party went to the elections solely but tasted a humiliating rout as it won only one seat. Later Pawan Kalyan also became the victim of YSRCP's policies. Pawan Kalyan was prevented from taking part in a party programme in Visakhapatnam which angered him. Moreover, he was also confined to a room in a hotel

Pawan Kalyan helped some of the families of tenant farmers and those who ended life due to financial problems by extending Rs 1 lakh from the party fund. The generous act of Pawan Kalyan helped him to earn goodwill among the farming community. The AP politics took an interesting turn on the 10 foundation day programme of JSP as Pawan Kalyan indicated that he would strive to ensure that the anti-YSRCP votes would not split.

Pawan Kalyan was prevented by the police at the AP-Telangana border when he was coming to Vijayawada. In protest against the police harassment, he squatted on the national highway.

Pawan Kalyan turned AP politics again by announcing the TDP-JSP alliance after meeting Chandrababu Naidu in Rajahmundry Central Prison. Pawan Kalyan vehemently resented the arrest of Naidu and termed it as unjust.

Pawan Kalyan made maximum efforts to convince the BJP leadership to join the TDP-JSP alliance. After a series of meetings, Pawan Kalyan succeeded in convincing the BJP leadership to join the TDP-JSP alliance. Pawan Kalyan even sacrificed Anakapalli's LS seat for the BJP. Pawan Kalyan's elder brother K Nagababu planned to contest for LS from Anakapalli.

Overcoming all hurdles in seat sharing, and not yielding to provocative statements and allegations by the YSRCP leaders for accepting only 21 seats, Pawan Kalyan went to the 2024 elections. He shared the dais with TDP chief Naidu and BJP chief Purandeswari to address many election meetings. The tenacity of Pawan Kalyan to make the YSRCP bit the dust in the elections, yielded results as the YSRCP tasted an unprecedented rout by winning only 10 seats.



Jana Sena chief Pawan wins Pithapuram seat

VIJAYAWADA: Jana Sena chief Pawan Kalyan won the Pithapuram Assembly seat defeating his YSR Congress Party rival Vanga Geetha by a margin of over 70,000 votes. The Janasena party, which contested 21 Assembly and two Lok Sabha constituencies, has performed well by winning or leading in all seats. Kalyan polled 1,34,394 votes while his nearest rival Geetha secured 64,115 votes, according to Election Commission data.

RSP thanks BRS leadership, voters of Nagarkarnool constituency

PNS ■ NAGARKARNOOL

BRS candidate from Nagrkarnool Lok Sabha seat RS Praveen Kumar on Tuesday thanked BRS leadership for having fielded him from Nagarkarnool t reposing a lot of faith in him.

He said that inability to live up to the expectations of the BRS leaderships causing him despair, but he was proud to be a member of BRS party.

He thanked the BRS leaders for facing all trials and tribulations during the electioneering and help him reach out to the people not to be cowed down by the antagonistic measures of the ruling party.



RS Praveen Kumar

He thanked personally former MLA of Wanaprthy S Niranjan Reddy, former MLA of Nagarkarnool Marri Janardhan Reddy, former MLA of Atchampeta Guvvala Balaraju, former MLA of KalwakurthyJaipal Yadav, Kollapur former MLA BeeramHarshavardhan Reddy, Gadwal MLA Bandla Krishna Mohan Redy, Alampur MLA Vijayudu, MLC challaVenkatrami Reddy and part activists, coordinators, social media warriors and others.

He thanked all voters of the constituency who supported him.

Despite spirited campaign, Sharmila faces disappointment in Kadapa LS seat

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The outcome in the Kadapa Lok Sabha segment in Andhra Pradesh delivered a significant blow to AP Congress chief YS Sharmila, as she faced a defeat at the hands of her cousin and present YSR Congress MP Avinash Reddy.

Avinash clinched victory with a commanding margin of over 62,000 votes, beating his nearest rival CB Subbarami Reddy of TDP in the Kadapa Parliamentary constituency.

Sharmila, despite a spirited campaign, found herself relegated to the third position in the electoral race, marking a profound disappointment in her political aspirations.

Kadapa witnessed a fierce contest after APCC chief Sharmila challenged Avinash Reddy, who is embroiled in the case relating to the murder of former minister and Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's late uncle, Vivekananda Reddy.



Kadapa holds significant historical resonance for the YS family, having been represented by Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy himself, his late father former CM YS Rajasekhar Reddy and Vivekananda Reddy on various occasions over several decades.

Sharmila's decision to contest from Kadapa highlighted the family feud, evolving into a full-fledged political battle with brother Jagan.

Communist Party of India (CPI), Congress and CPI (M) are INDIA alliance partners in Andhra Pradesh.

the pioneer
HYDERABAD | WEDNESDAY | JUNE 5, 2024

INDIA CORNER

Assam flood: 7 dead, over 4.23 lakh people affected

The flood situation in Assam remained critical on Tuesday with seven more people losing their lives due to drowning, while more than 4.23 lakh people are reeling under the deluge across nine districts, an official bulletin said. According to the daily flood report of the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA), four people at Sonai and one person at Silchar revenue circles of Cachar district died due to flood.



Besides, one person each died in Raha circle of Nagaon district and Dispur of Kamrup Metropolitan due to the deluge, it added. With this, the total number of people losing their lives in this year's flood, landslide and storm increased to 30. The report said that more than 4,23,000 people were hit due to the floods in Cachar, Dhemaji, Dima Hasao, Hailakandi, Hojai, West Karbi Anglong, Karimganj, Morigaon and Nagaon districts.

'CPI(M) will analyse factors behind defeat in Kerala'

Facing a severe drubbing in the Lok Sabha polls in Kerala, the CPI(M) on Tuesday said the party and the Left Front would examine all the factors that led to their defeat. Talking to reporters here, CPI(M) State Secretary M V Govindan said that although the LDF had suffered a similar drubbing in the 2019 LS polls, it later won the local self-government polls and the assembly election. When reporters asked whether an anti-incumbency wave against the second Pinarayi Vijayan government was the reason for the mass drubbing of the Left candidates in the state, he trivialised the question and said it alone was not the factor.



"We will examine all the factors, including the selection of candidates, government-related matters, and so on. If there is anything to be corrected, we will surely correct it. People are the final judges," Govindan added.

One of six cubs born to cheetah Gamini found dead at Kuno Park in MP

One of the six cubs born to South African cheetah 'Gamini' earlier this year was found dead on Tuesday at the Kuno National Park (KNP) in Sheopur district of Madhya Pradesh, an official said. The cub was found dead close to its mother, an official release said. Around 4 pm, a team of veterinarians saw one of the cubs lying still close to its mother while the remaining five cubs were playing around. Following this, the cub was approached for further investigation, but was found dead, it said. The cause of the cub's death will be known once the post-mortem of the carcass is conducted, it said. Gamini had given birth to six cubs on March 10 this year. After the death of this cub, there are now 26 cheetahs at the KNP, including 13 cubs born in India. All the remaining 13 cubs that were born on Indian soil and 13 adults are fine, the official said.



Poll mandate against PM Modi: Kharge

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Tuesday said the outcome of the Lok Sabha elections was a mandate against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and a political and moral defeat for him.

Addressing a press conference here, he termed the results as victory of the people and of democracy.

The BJP-led NDA was ahead in over 290 seats, while the opposition INDIA bloc was leading in 232 parliamentary seats.

"This is the victory of the people and that of democracy. We had been saying that this was a fight between the people and Modi. We humbly accept the people's mandate," Kharge told reporters at the AICC headquarters flanked by Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi.

Kharge said the voters had not given a complete majority to any single party, particularly the BJP that sought votes on the basis of 'one person, one face'.

"The voters have not given a clear mandate to any single party. This mandate is against Modi. This is his political and moral defeat. It is a big defeat for a person who sought votes in his own name. He has suffered a moral setback," he said.

Kharge said Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra and Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra reached out to lakhs of people and supported the election campaign.

He said the Congress and INDIA bloc contested the elections in adverse circumstances and accused the BJP-led government of capturing constitutional institutions to create hurdles in the path of the opposition.

"Our bank accounts were seized and a campaign was launched against our leaders. Yet, the Congress carried out a positive election campaign raising issues such as inflation, unemployment, farmers' and workers' distress, misuse of Constitutional institutions," Kharge said.

He said people connected with the Congress on these issues and clearly understood the campaign launched by the prime minister.

"People very well understood the lies spread by Modi about the Congress manifesto," Kharge said.

He said the arrogance of the BJP led to the capture of constitutional institutions, which were used to target political opponents.

"Those who felt the pressure joined them, while those who resisted found their parties in disarray and leaders in jail," he said.

"People were confident that if Modi was given another term, the next assault would be on the Constitution and democracy," Kharge said, adding that the evidence of this will be seen in the upcoming Parliament session.

He thanked the INDIA bloc partners for standing together, campaigning jointly and helping each other.

"In the coming days, we have to fight to protect the rights of the people, to protect the Constitution and democracy, the progress of the country and to secure the borders. We have to ensure that Parliament runs smoothly and issues raised by the opposition get priority, they are discussed in parliament," Kharge said.

Modi must resign immediately: Mamata

PNS ■ KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi should immediately resign "accepting the moral defeat" because he campaigned in the Lok Sabha polls claiming that the BJP would win over 400 seats but in reality, it failed to get a majority on its own. Addressing a press conference, Banerjee said she would try to ensure that Modi is out of power from the Centre, and the "INDIA bloc is in".

"PM Modi has lost all credibility, he should immediately resign. India has won, Modi has lost. The PM broke many parties and now people have broken his morale. Modi is now falling at the feet of TDP and Nitish (Kumar) to form the government," she said.

"Atrocities and misuse of central agencies stand defeated today.

Negative LS poll results compound AAP's woes

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



The AAP's poor performance in the Lok Sabha polls further deepens the crisis it is battling since the arrest of its tallest leader and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, as the party now stares at probably the most challenging phase in its 12 years of existence.

Of the 22 seats it contested across Punjab (13), Delhi (4), Gujarat (2), Assam (2) and Haryana (1), the party tasted success only in Punjab where it won three seats.

It had high hopes from Delhi too, where the party was formed in 2012, but it drew a blank, losing all the four seats it contested, even though it managed to narrow the margin of defeat compared to the 2019 elections.

The results proved the AAP's alliance with the Congress in Delhi, Gujarat and Haryana might not have helped Kejriwal's party.

The three seats the AAP got in Punjab -- Gurmeet Singh Meet Hayer won from Sangrur, Raj Kumar Chabbewal from Hoshiarpur and Malvinder Singh Kang from Anandpur Sahib -- are an improvement from the 2019 when it won only Sangrur.

However, this result is not what the party was expecting. Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann had said they would win all the 13 seats Punjab, a state which voted for his party overwhelmingly in the 2022 assembly polls.

In Gujarat, where the AAP contested Bharuch and Bhavnagar seats, the party's prospects were dented as their star campaigner and crowd-puller Kejriwal was in jail. In Kurukshetra (Haryana), AAP candidate and state president Sushil Gupta went down to the BJP's Naveen Jindal.

His defeat also means the AAP will be going into the state elections later this year with momentum not on its side.

Hamstrung by the arrest of its convener Kejriwal on March 21, a week after the announcement of the Lok Sabha poll schedule, the party had launched its campaign around the theme 'Jail ka jawab vote se' to generate a sympathy wave.

However, the voters were not swayed by the strategy of presenting Kejriwal as a leader who has been wronged for fighting against alleged "dictatorship" of the BJP.

India's thriving, flourishing democratic process wins big in UK

PNS ■ LONDON

As the results of India's mammoth general election were tallied on Tuesday, the overwhelming theme among UK-based strategic experts and poll watchers was one of high praise for the country's "thriving and flourishing" democratic process.

While Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Bharatiya Janata Party is on course for a historic third term, the strong performance of the Opposition INDIA alliance and other regional parties was a theme that stood out for most.



On the India-UK front, the July 4 UK general elections are expected to fully set the future course for bilateral relations, resulting in a few new sets of factors playing out amid a broad sense of continuity.

"There were initial concerns over the electoral process in India and these concerns have now been overcome by the results that we've seen – that there is a thriving and flourishing electoral democratic process in India," said Rahul Roy-Chaudhury, Senior Fellow for South and Central Asian Defence, Strategy and Diplomacy at the London-based think tank International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) told PTI here.

"Within the Indian political setup, the Opposition parties have done better than anyone expected, and they will provide a strong Opposition to the Modi 3.0 government. In bilateral terms, this means there will be more attempts at checks and balances on India's foreign policy, including in relation to the UK," he said.

"So, what we have today is a relatively new set of factors that will be influential and impactful in determining the relationship between India and the UK, though we'll have to see what patterns and decision-making structures take place on the UK side after the fourth of July," he noted.

A key aspect to be watched under the two newly elected governments would be the India-UK free trade agreement (FTA), which the strategic expert believes will be on the top of the in-trays for both amid a "large degree of continuity" for the wider Indo-Pacific region.

No fight against EVMs: Digvijaya

PNS ■ BHOPAL

With the INDIA block putting up a good show against the BJP-led NDA on the day of the counting of votes for Lok Sabha elections, senior Congress leader Digvijaya Singh on Tuesday said there is no fight against EVMs.

Notably, Singh has been consistently raising questions over the reliability of Electronic Voting Machines in the tallying of votes.

"Had there been any problem in EVMs, Uttar Pradesh would not have produced such results.

"...We have no fight with the EVMs. We advocate for the assurance that our votes are cast securely in our hands. We lack trust in the software utilised in EVMs," Singh said, adding that his struggle concerning EVMs would persist.

As per trends and results available on the Election Commission of India website, the Samajwadi Party is leading in 35 seats and leading in 3 others. BJP is heading in 26 seats and won six.

Running as the Congress candidate from the Rajgarh constituency, Singh is trailing by over 1.40 lakh votes against his BJP rival Rodmal Nagar.

Replying to a query, Singh said, "Possibly, the people of Rajgarh like an MP who sits at home and does not work for them.

Mamata 'magic' continues in West Bengal, BJP misses target

PNS ■ KOLKATA



Defying all exit-poll predictions, the Trinamool Congress (TMC) has surged ahead in 29 of West Bengal's 42 Lok Sabha seats, dealing a blow to the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) target of securing 35 seats as they just managed to reach just double digits.

The BJP was leading in 12 seats according to the EC website.

Three years after putting a halt to the BJP's advances in Bengal, the TMC, led by Mamata Banerjee, again proved its mettle by thwarting the BJP's formidable campaign, spearheaded by PM Narendra Modi himself.

Despite facing a barrage of challenges including corruption allegations and internal conflicts, the TMC stood strong, even after opting to go solo post its withdrawal from the INDIA bloc in the state.

Political observers note that the BJP in West Bengal had set an ambitious goal of securing 35 Lok Sabha seats, banking on the implementation of the CAA as a potential game-changer and leveraging Hindu polarisation, which fell flat on their face.

Despite their fervent efforts, they failed to gain substantial ground, primarily due to internal divisions, organisational frailties, and the formidable impact of the Left-Congress alliance, analysts said.

"Internal divisions, organisational weaknesses, and the impact of the Left-Congress alliance all contributed to the BJP's difficulties in garnering anti-TMC votes," political analyst Maidul Islam said.

The BJP's tally is likely to decline by six seats, with its vote share dropping by three percentage points to 37.

BJP vote share slumps while Cong, SP garner more votes than in 2019 LS polls

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP's vote share suffered a decline this time while the Congress and the Samajwadi party garnered more votes compared to what they did in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, according to Election Commission data on Tuesday.

The BJP, which contested more seats this time than in 2019 but is likely to fall short of the magic figure of 272, garnered 36.91 per cent of the total votes polled, a drop of around 0.39 percentage points as of 6.15 pm.

On the other hand, the Congress' vote share increased by 2.22 percentage points to reach 21.68 per cent and it was also reflected in its seat tally. The party is set to win 99 seats.

The main opposition party saw its electoral fortunes improve in Rajasthan, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, the key north Indian state where its ally the Akhilesh Yadav-led Samajwadi party almost doubled its vote share to 4.66 per cent.

West Bengal's ruling Trinamool Congress saw its vote share increase from 4.06 per cent in the 2019 elections to 4.25 per cent this time.

On the other hand, the vote share of the Mayawati-led Bahujan Samajwadi Party (BSP) reduced by 1.55 percentage points to settle at 2.07 per cent.



Political families make big gains in Lok Sabha polls

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Political families with multiple members in the fray are having a good run in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections with most of them either winning or leading in their respective constituencies.

Most prominent among them are the family members of the two former chief ministers -- Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) supremo Lalu Prasad Yadav in Bihar and Samajwadi Party (SP) founder Late Mulayam Singh Yadav in Uttar Pradesh -- and former prime minister and JD(S) chief H D Deve Gowda in Karnataka.

Lalu's two daughters, Misha Bharti and Rohini Acharya, are contesting from Patliputra and Saran, respectively.

According to the latest Election Commission trends, Bharti has achieved a comfortable margin of around 56,000 votes over BJP's Ram Kripal Yadav from Patliputra.

Acharya is trailing against BJP's Rajiv Pratap Rudy by over 12,000 in Saran.

In Uttar Pradesh, five members of Yadav's family are contesting the elections with four of them leading over their nearest rivals by a good margin.

Yadav's son and SP chief Akhilesh Yadav is leading with 1.7 lakh votes in Kannauj against BJP's Subrat Pathak.

Akhilesh's wife Dimple Yadav has secured a comfortable winning margin of 2.2 lakh in Mainpuri against her nearest rival BJP's Jayveer Singh.

The SP chief's three cousins -- Akshay Yadav, Dharmendra Yadav and Aditya Yadav -- are also contesting the elections.

While Akshay is leading with over 89,000 votes against BJP's Vishwadeep Singh in Firozabad, Dharmendra too has achieved a decisive margin of over 1.6 lakh votes in Azamgarh.

Distinct blue ant species discovered in Arunachal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A distinct, stunning blue-coloured ant species was discovered in Siang Valley, a "biodiversity hotspot" of Arunachal Pradesh, in a new research from India.

Accompanying the 'Abhor' expedition in 1911-12, a punitive military one against the indigenous people of Siang Valley, was a team of researchers to document its natural history and geography.

After exploring and mapping large parts of the valley, the team catalogued every plant, frog, lizard, fish, bird and mammal and insects they found. Their discoveries were published in several volumes from 1912 to 1922 in the Records of the Indian Museum.

Now, a century later, researchers from Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE) and a documentation team from Felis Creations Bangalore embarked on a series of journeys to the valley, a "Himalayan biodiversity hotspot", under the banner 'Siang Expedition'. They wanted to resurvey and document the region's biodiver-sity.

While exploring a tree hole about 10 feet up in a steep cattle track in the remote Yinku village one evening, something sparkled in the twilight. With the dim light available, two insects were sucked into an aspirator. To our surprise,



we later found they were ants, the researchers explained. The findings are published in the journal ZooKeys.

Named Paraparatrechina neela, the species is "nothing like the common red, black, or brown ants," according to ATREE researchers. 'Neela' means blue in many Indian languages, which they said was a "fitting tribute" to the ant's unique colouration.

Paraparatrechina neela, the researchers described, is a small ant and less than two millimetres long, with a predominantly metallic blue body, except for the antennae, mandibles, and legs. The metallic blue is distinct from any other species in its rare genus, Paraparatrechina, they said.

While blue colouration is commonly observed in some insects like butterflies, beetles, bees, and wasps, the authors said it is relatively rare in ants, with only a few out of the known 16,724 ant species and subspecies displaying the colour. The ant's head is subtriangular with large eyes and has a triangular mouthpart (mandible) featuring five teeth, they said.

Representing the unique biodiversity of the Eastern Himalayas, the researchers said that the discovery of the 'Paraparatrechina Neela' contributed to the richness of ant diversity.

Cong's KL Sharma emerges giant killer

Defeats Smriti Irani from Amethi by 1.67 lakh votes

PNS ■ AMETHI (UP



Congress candidate Kishori Lal Sharma emerged as a giant killer by defeating Union minister and BJP candidate Smriti Irani by a margin of over 1.67 votes from Amethi, the bastion of the Nehru-Gandhi family in Uttar Pradesh, on Tuesday.

According to the Election Commission, Irani bagged 3,72,032 votes, while Sharma polled 5,39,228 votes. The BSP candidate got 34,534 votes.

Reacting to his win, Sharma expressed his gratitude to the people of Amethi and the Congress party, saying the 18th Lok Sabha election in Amethi will be the biggest example of a strong and empowered democratic country.

Speaking to reporters here, Sharma said the political harmony of Amethi on the national stage and the beloved people of Amethi was very amazing, exemplary and at the peak. "This victory is not of Kishori Lal Sharma, but of the entire Amethi family. I thank the people of Amethi, the Congress party, Sonia Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge, and assure you all that I will always follow the orders, instructions and suggestions of the common people of Amethi.

"With dedication, sacrifice, love, affection and respect for all of you, I will continue to work in public interest with your support. Now, the relationship between the people and the public representative in Amethi is not only re-established with respect, but every Amethi resident will feel proud of this," Sharma said.

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PAPER WITH PASSION

Nation wins

A smooth power transition demonstrates the strength of democratic values in the country, and people's will

The Lok Sabha elections 2024 have concluded, and all eyes are now on the formation of a new Government. It is often said that India is the world's largest democracy, and it is not a cliché. With a population exceeding 1.4 billion and an electorate of over 900 million, the nation's democratic processes are a colossal undertaking. But more significant are the democratic ideals that provide a rock-solid foundation for democracy. For over 75 years, we have not had a single instance when the transition of power was not smooth or when the parties fought after the announcement of results. Despite the immense diversity and complexity involved, India's democracy thrives, exemplifying how smooth elections facilitate the change of Government, ensuring that people's will prevails. It is made possible by several institutions and frameworks that provide India with a robust democratic setup The Election Commission of India (ECI), for instance, plays a pivotal role in ensuring free and fair elections. Through meticulous planning and the deployment of technology, the poll panel ensures transparency and efficiency, minimising electoral fraud and ensuring compliance with the model code of conduct. Though it is not above controversy by and large it does a decent job election after election.



Though the voter turnout this time was marginally lower than in the previous elections, the general level of voters' participation is high. Citizens from diverse backgrounds, including urban centres and remote villages, exercise their franchise with enthusiasm. This mass participation underscores the faith of Indian populace in the democratic process and their belief in the power of their vote to effect change. However, the biggest credit for the wellbeing of democracy in India must go to the political parties. Despite ideological differences, they have generally displayed a commendable level of maturity in accepting poll results. This acceptance is crucial for maintaining political stability and public trust. The peaceful transition of power, whether from one party to another or within a coalition, highlights the commitment of political institutions in upholding democratic values. If one institution stands out as the vanguard of the Constitution without bowing to the powers that be, it would be the Supreme Court of India. The Indian judiciary acts as a guardian of the Constitution, ensuring that electoral laws are adhered to and disputes resolved impartially. Landmark judgments and interventions by the Supreme Court have often strengthened electoral integrity and reinforced democratic norms. While India's democratic machinery functions effectively, it is not without challenges. Issues such as electoral violence, money power and misinformation campaigns occasionally taint the electoral process. India's democracy flourishes due to the strength of its institutions, the active participation of its citizens and the maturity of its political parties. It is both fragile and resilient, and its survival depends on our collective consciousness.

PICTALK



A man protects himself and his son from scorching heat at the Taj Mahal in Agra PTI

Modi's grand claims fall short



KUMAR **CHELLAPPAN**

Despite Modi's bold predictions of a sweeping majority, the results reveal a different story. The BJP is poised to form the Government with a simple majority alongwith its NDA allies

Even as I write this column, TV news channels are airing the news that the BJP led by Narendra Modi has crossed the halfway mark of the 543 seats in the Lok Sabha but is fighting a see-saw battle with the rejuvenated Congress to establish a safe lead. Narendra Modi is likely to form a government with a simple majority with the support of BJP's other allies in the NDA. But the result indicates that Modi's claim of 400+ seats for the NDA and 370+ for the BJP has come a cropper.What has happened in the 2024 Lok Sabha election is a political tsunami. The BJP which had hoped to make a clean sweep in Uttar Pradesh fell by the wayside. The Hindutva party's dream of winning Maharashtra too failed. These are signalling the harsh reality that the electorate in Maharashtra and UP were taken aback by the BJP's decision to align with the breakaway faction of the NCP and the RLD led by Jayanth Choudhry. The BJP forgot history and how Choudhry Charan Singh topped the Morarji Desai-led Janata Party Government in his bid to become the Prime Minister. Ajit Singh, Choudhry Saheb's son too stabbed V P Singh, Chandrasekhar and A B Vajpayee from the back.

What made the BJP align with RLD at this juncture remains a mystery.Equally strange is the BJP's decision to bring on board Ajit Pawar and Praful Patel, which the former had described as embodiments of corruption. The eagerness of a leader from Maharashtra to occupy the Prime Minister's chair is being seen as a faux pas by the BJP. The same leader had shocked the nation immediately after the last assembly election by swearing in as chief minister Ajit Pawar, only to submit his resignation in an ignominious manner.

Usually, politicians learn from past failures and correct themselves so that they do not fall into the same abyss again. What has happened is that the Prime Minister has lost whatever goodwill he had enjoyed with the electorate. Ram Temple alone would not satisfy the mind of the people. The voters had set a benchmark for Narendra Modi and it is his hitherto appreciated integrity, honesty and patriotism. The moment political turncoats like Satyapal Mallik were accommodated in the BJP and were offered important positions like the governorship of Kashmir, the BJP's fortunes took a beating for the worse.

Similarly, the alliance with the family-controlled JD(S) in Karnataka boomeranged on the BJP.Immediately after his election as the leader of the NDA following the 2014 impressive win, Modi had assured the constituents of his front that he would approach them with a progress card at the end of the five-year tenure. He was given all A+ by the electorate and also elevated the BJP with an absolute majority in the 2019 Lok Saba polls, a rare feat in the last 35 years of India's electoral history. No party has got an absolute majority of its own since the 1984 election in which Rajiv Gandhi-led Congress scored more than 400 seats on its own. The 2019-2024 tenure of Modi as Prime Minister outperformed its track record by beating the COVID-19 pandemic and a synchronized attack by the Opposition parties and the media. "A corruption free government" was what Modi gave the country during his two tenures. But the clueless manner in which they forged alliances with every Tom, Dick and Harry who sang paeans to Modi did the job that the Congress and other Opposition parties could not do for the last decade. Nobody would deny the fact that Modi delivered what he had promised. More than 11 crore toilets and nearly five crore robust houses for the poor coming under the benchmark of BPL, the Ayushman Bharat medical aid which has more than 50 crore beneficiaries, the Mudra Loan scheme for artisans and small and medium entrepreneurs had a direct bearing on common man's life.

> THE PRIME MINISTER SAID IN HIS MEDIA INTERACTIONS THAT SIX CRORE PERSONS FOUND EMPLOYMENT IN THE ORGANISED SECTOR WHICH THE OPPOSITION BELITTLED AS 'JUMLA'

The Prime Minister said in his media interactions that six crore persons found employment in the organized sector which the Opposition belittled as "jumla". But they did not have any response when he pointed out that the Employees Provident Fund saw an increase of 400 per cent which means that he was not on his version. The US economy which had been ruined because of the Great Depression (1929-1941) and the Second World War (1939-1945) got a new lease of life during the tenure of David Dwight Eisenhower as President (1953-1961). President Eisenhower ordered the construction of the Interstate Highway System, which remains to date the largest construction of roadways. Giant transport aircraft could be landed and taken off from these highways. This is what Modi was doing in India. But one man's greed for power has cost the BJP a comfortable majority. The only lesson the Opposition should learn from this exercise is that the "Janata Janardhan" would love the leader who treats them as equals and not as alms seekers. Yet another lesson for the Opposition is that it is time for them to come out of the demolition and destroy Modi at any cost. A request to the winners and losers would not be out of place at this juncture. "In War: Resolution. In Defeat: Defiance. In Victory: Magnanimity. In Peace: Goodwill". These are the words of the person who covered the First World War for The Pioneer, Sir Winston Churchill.

(The writer is a special correspondent with The Pioneer; views are personal)

Bengaluru becomes 'Garden City' again



ASHWINDER R **SINGH**

Amidst rapid urbanisation and environmental challenges, the city is embracing green initiatives such as rooftop gardens and vertical farming

Bangalore, India, is rapidly developing its infrastructure with a focus on sustainability, innovation and environmentally friendly initiatives. As the city grows, it faces challenges such as urbanisation and environmental issues. To combat these problems, businesses are promoting initiatives like rooftop gardens and vertical farms. Once known as the Garden City of India, Bangalore is now reclaiming its legacy by promoting sustainable living practices and incorporating green spaces into its urban landscape.



Rooftop gardens are becoming increasingly popular in Bangalore, providing various environmental and social benefits. They help reduce the urban heat island effect, provide natural insulation that reduces energy consumption and improve air quality. Residents and businesses are transforming their rooftops into green spaces, combatting pollution and promoting biodiversity.

Many commercial and residential complexes in the city are now promoting rooftop gardening, turning barren rooftops into lush green havens. This initiative not only contributes to biodiversity but also serves as a recreational space for residents.

Vertical farming is another concept that fosters sustainability in Bangalore's urban spaces. This innovative practice involves growing crops in vertically stacked layers that maximise space utilisation and minimise water consumption. By bringing food production closer to urban centres, vertical farms help reduce carbon emissions and offer several benefits over conventional farming practices, such as higher crop yields, reduced water usage and year-round production.

Community gardens have also emerged as a vital initiative to bring communities together and grow their food. These gardens contribute to food security, promote healthy eating habits and strengthen social ties among residents. Additionally, they serve as an educational platform for sustainable agriculture practices and provide opportunities for residents to reconnect with nature.

The government has constructed several laws and initiatives to support sustainable initiatives. The city has accepted green building certifications like LEED and GRIHA to combat environmental issues and ensure eco-friendly development that abides by environmental concerns while effectively meeting the needs of investors. These initiatives improve locals' quality of life and aid in ecological preservation. The government has also released a toolkit and manual for the green index that will evaluate, analyse and rank environmental conservation initiatives of various infrastructure projects and programmes.

By rewarding rooftop garden development, supporting vertical farming efforts and allowing the formation of community gardens, the government is paving the way for a greener, more sustainable Bangalore. Collaboration among government agencies and the commercial and public sectors is essential for overcoming obstacles such as lack of knowledge, land availability and regulatory barriers. As Bangalore embraces sustainability and environmental management, the city is sowing the seeds for a greener, more liveable future.

(The writer is Co-Chair of CII NR Real Estate & CEO-Residential, Bhartiya Urban; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

RESPITE AFTER THE DUST STORM

Madam — Regarding the news story "Muggy, parched, blacked-out Mungeshpur dances in the rain," published on June 3, here are my thoughts. As a regular reader of the newspaper, it's heartbreaking to read about the struggles faced by the residents of northwest Delhi's Mungeshpur. The recent dust storm, followed by a brief rainfall, offered a fleeting respite from the oppressive heat, which soared above 50 degrees Celsius. The severe water scarcity and prolonged power cuts exacerbated the residents' plight. It's shocking to learn that some people don't even have a fan to combat the scorching heat and the water supply is limited to just 10 minutes a day.

Despite the hardships, the resilience of the community is admirable. Children eagerly playing in the rain and families sitting on pavements to catch the cool breeze reflect a spirit that refuses to be dampened by adversity. The poignant accounts of individuals like Santoshi Devi and the father-son duo highlight the harsh realities they endure daily. It's a stark reminder of the urgent need for better infrastructure and support for these vulnerable communities.

Pritam Sharma | *Lucknow*

DMRC KEEPS COMMUTERS COOL

Madam — Apropos the news story "DMRC ensures cool commutes at 24 deg C; daily ridership hits 60.17 lakh in May," published on June 3, this is my response. The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) has taken commendable steps to enhance commuter comfort amidst soaring summer temperatures. By maintaining trains at a cool 24 degrees Celsius and boosting ridership to a record 60.17 lakh in May, the DMRC has effectively transformed the travel experience. With over 4,200 daily train trips covering 1.40 lakh kilometres, the metro provides a refreshing reprieve from the heat.

Additionally, the DMRC has demonstrated a strong commitment to its workforce's well-being. Breaks during peak heat hours and provisions for water and medical facilities are vital measures. Their comprehensive maintenance strategy for AC units and the advanced monitoring systems for station temperatures highlight their dedication to ensuring optimal performance and safety. By prioritising passenger comfort and employee welfare, the DMRC sets a high standard for urban transit systems. Regular infrastructure inspections and robust fire safety mechanisms further underscore their proactive approach to managing the challenges of extreme weather conditions.

Kajal Arora | *Ujjain*

PROTECTING YOUTH FROM TOBACCO

Madam — Apropos the article, "Tobacco addiction grows steadily among the youth", published on June 3, this is my response. The World No Tobacco Day, observed on May 31, emphasises the need for governments and tobacco companies worldwide to take strong actions to reduce tobacco use and promote a smoke-free lifestyle. For long, tobacco has been one of the leading causes of death worldwide. As for India, there has been a consistent demand from sections of society for a higher tax burden on tobacco manufacturers since a lot of revenue is generated from the sale of tobacco products.

Increasing excise duty on all tobacco products can be an effective policy measure, which will not only help the central government generate more revenue but at the same time enable curbing tobacco use to a large extent. Reports reveal that tobacco use claims the lives of 13 lakh Indians every year. Therefore, it is more critical than ever before to keep tobacco products out of the reach of our youth. Maybe catchy slogans like "Quitters always win, winners always quit" and "desist from running the white train in your lips" can help in the fight against cigarette smoking. Cigarette smoking, no doubt, is a clear social menace and if smokers are unconcerned about their health, let them at least not harm the health of non-smokers.

Ranganathan Sivakumar | *Chennai*

Connecting with the soul of Bharat



Regarding the news story "New Sankalp from the Sadhana in Kanyakumari," published on June 3, here are my thoughts. As a daily newspaper reader, the conclusion of the 2024 Lok Sabha Elections feels like the climax of an epic saga. The journey described—from Kanyakumari to Delhi, with stops in historical and spiritual hubs like Meerut and Kashi—reflects the vibrant tapestry of our nation. The mixture of spirituality, political fervour and personal reflection resonates deeply, highlighting the unique emotional and cultural depth of our democratic process.

Witnessing the sheer energy, the "blessings from our Nari Shakti," and the profound meditative state amidst the political storm paints a vivid picture of the election's significance. It's not just about the votes; it's about connecting with the soul of Bharat, a blend of ancient wisdom and modern aspirations. The vision of a 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047 is ambitious, but the collective enthusiasm and the historical context provide a compelling framework for this journey. This election has been more than a political exercise; it has been a reaffirmation of our shared dreams and values.

Neha Gupta | *Delhi*

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

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FIRST COLUMN

GOOD LEADERSHIP PREVENTS BURNOUTS

Leadership stems from actions and integrity, not mere titles



SAKSHI **SETHI**

A true leader has the confidence to stand alone, the courage to make tough decisions and the compassion to listen to the needs of others. He does not set out to be a leader but becomes one by the equality of his actions and the integrity of his intent. "?

Leadership is a key controllable factor that humans can learn and implement in their organizations. It is something that is not defined by position and has a large impact on the productivity of an organization. A leader in an organization must balance various roles, from visionary to manager, mentor and even change agent as people in general are diverse and have distinct components that make them unique and set them apart from the next person. The ability to wear these multiple hats distinguishes great leaders from merely competent ones the ones possessing the necessary skills and knowledge.

'Organizational leadership' the term often talked about is a multifaceted and dynamic endeavour that requires a blend of vision, integrity, empathy, decisiveness, resilience, effective communication, accountability and adaptability. The impact of strong leadership extends beyond the confines of management, influencing the very fabric of the organization. Leadership is a strength that inspires and guides the cooperation and attitudes of others on the way to set vision. Effective leaders understand that a well-defined vision aligns teams, fosters a sense of belonging and motivates individuals to contribute their best. They are aware that they must take into consideration the responsibilities of all the decisions they believe are necessary to provide strong bonds and foster competent collaboration between members of their organization. They influence the



followers in such a way that they put more effort into the accomplishment of organizational goals and objectives.

At its core, organizational leadership is about steering the organization towards its vision while managing its resources effectively. It encompasses the ability to make strategic decisions, motivate its employees and create an environment conducive to growth and development.

Burnout, which is often characterized by chronic stress, exhaustion and a sense of ineffectiveness, is a pervasive problem that can significantly impact both individuals and organizations. Effective leadership can be a key factor in preventing burnout and promoting a healthy, productive workplace for it influences every aspect of the organization, from employee morale and productivity to innovation and financial performance. A leader in an organization should embody various qualities and exhibit behaviours that inspire, motivate and guide their team towards achieving common goals.

By embodying attributes such as cultivating a positive and inclusive work culture where everyone feels valued and respected; delegating tasks and trusting team members with responsibilities; establishing and communicating clear, achievable goals; inspiring and motivating the team by setting a positive example, providing encouragement and recognizing achievements can a leader effectively guide their organization towards success and foster a supportive, productive and positive work environment.

There is no denying the fact that organizational leadership has a profound impact on workplace burnout but, leaders who prioritize employee well-being, foster a supportive work environment and implement strategies to manage stress can significantly reduce the incidence of burnout. By understanding the factors that contribute to burnout and adopting a proactive, empathetic approach, leaders can enhance employee satisfaction, productivity and overall organizational health. The relationship between leadership and burnout is complex, but with the right practices and mindset, leaders can steer their organizations towards a healthier and more sustainable future.

(The writer is an educator; views are personal)

BJP moves mountains to win Mandi seat



K S **TOMAR**

The BJP is determined to regain the prestigious Mandi seat in Himachal Pradesh. The contest has become a battle royal between former royalty and a film star



Sunny Deol could not uproot any 'hand-pumps' in the domain of politics but it could not desist the 'Jhansi Ki Rani' Kangana Ranaut to jump into the electoral fray from her hometown Mandi, in Himachal Pradesh. It is a prestigious seat for the BJP high command which gave a ticket to a 'parachute' by ignoring the genuine claim of the senior leaders hence Prime Minister, Narender Modi addressed a huge rally at Mandi town on May 24.PM established a new relationship with being elder brother of Kangna which may benefit her as it sends a signal of her closeness to Modi. She is a die-hard devotee (Bhakt) of Modi and felt extremely elevated when the PM described her as Behan(sister) which may send a clear signal of her closeness and create positive vibes amongst the electorate.

Many of the box-office hits have bombed in the political arena of north India except the 'dream girl' Hema Malini, who is still going strong as a 'Jat bahu' from Mathura in western Uttar Pradesh and late Vinod Khanna, who seamlessly turned into astute politicians after being a 'heartthrob' in the 1980s. Northern political winds in India blow in different patterns and that is why superstars like Amitabh Bachchan could not handle the gruel of politics while his 'sharabi' heroine Jaya Prada needed the umbrella of a mentor like Amar Singh always by her side, till he breathed last.

Back to a 'novice politician' Kangana. She is being haunted during the election campaign owing to two pejorative issues. First, Kangana's absence during the catastrophe in July/August last year has become handy for Congress which is exploiting it to the hilt. All 17 assembly segments of the Mandi Lok Sabha seat were hit due to natural disaster but she remained confined to her abode in Mumbai. The political opponents are accusing her of being an absentee resident of Mandi and affected people will have to hanker in the business capital, Mumbai for the redressal of grievances if she wins.

> DESPITE THE ODDS, KANGANA IS FULLY PINNING HER HOPE ON THE HIGH POPULARITY AND CHARISMA OF PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI. BJP HAD WON ALL FOUR LOK SABHA SEATS IN HIMACHAL IN 2019 AND POLLED OVER 69.11 PER CENT VOTES

The second, the Bollywood actress took to Twitter and shared a video of the Dalai Lama with his tongue out, standing next to US President, Joe Biden and the caption read "The Dalai Lama receives a warm welcome at White House" She had to apologise later and clarified that she did not mean to hurt feelings of anyone. But followers of the spiritual leader have not pardoned her hence Buddhists recently organised a demonstration at Kaza, a part of Lahaul Spiti which falls in the Mandi constituency and showed black flags and placards "Go Back" which was condemned by BJP state leaders.

The parliamentary election of the Mandi constituency has become a lively affair this time as film star Kangana is pitted against Public Works Minister, Vikramaditya Singh, the son of six-time chief minister, late Virbhadra Singh. Kangana is a native of a small village in the Mandi district and her phenomenal rise as a little girl from the non-descriptive village of Bhambala in the Mandi district in Himachal Pradesh, can be attributed to her sheer determination, commitment and willpower. She is trying to create an emotional connection with voters thereby citing her struggle and subsequent achievements in the film world. The crowds are thronging to her rallies but it is extremely difficult to predict whether she will be benefited when they go to polling booths on June 1.

Despite the odds, Kangana is fully pinning her hope on the high popularity and 'charisma' of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. BJP had won all four Lok Sabha seats in Himachal in 2019 and polled over 69.11 per cent votes.BJP nominee established lead in all 17 segments of the Mandi constituency hence it is a big challenge to retain it, especially in the face of local issues of unemployment, price rise, state's economic crisis etc.

BJP's vote share had dwindled during state assembly elections in 2022 which came down to 43 per cent, a drop of 16.11% when compared with previous parliamentary polls. Touring all the seventeen assembly segments in the Mandi parliamentary constituency has posed a huge challenge for Kangana as she is unaware of the topography, especially the far-flung tribal areas of Bharmour, Lahaul & Spiti and Kinnaur.

Experts say that the film actor is facing a horde of challenges in her current role which cannot be synonymous with fairy tales or films. On a mandatory basis, the voters would expect her to be a full-time politician and make Mandi parliamentary constituency; she is promising to make Mandi her permanent abode for an easy approach to getting their work done. Kangana also has the luxury of the support of disciplined BJP party cadres, vast resources and the well-oiled machinery of RSS in her groundwork.

Congress nominee, Vikramaditya enjoys the inherent advantages of having acquaintances with the voters which have become meaningful as his family has represented Mandi seat six times and his mother Pratibha Singh, the state party chief is sitting MP. Vikramaditya is focussing on local issues including the centre's failure to announce a special package to help victims of last year's catastrophe and the inaccessibility of Kangana.

In the final assessment, Hindutva rhetoric may have an impact though the rival candidate has strong Hindu credentials, He had attended the Ram Temple Pratishthan ceremony despite the Congress high command's directive to keep away. Modi's personal appeal and governance record could disrupt conventional political dynamics.

Ultimately, Kangana's success hinges on her ability to navigate these challenges while leveraging BJP's organizational strength and Modi's popularity coupled with his ten-year association with Himachal as BJP in-charge from 1990 to 2001 may give a special twist to the political scenario in any seat in this hilly state.

(The writer is a political analyst and senior journalist based in Shimla, views are personal)

Rajasthan village girls struggle for sports opportunities

Girls in rural India face challenges accessing sports and education due to limited spaces, family restrictions and gender disparity



MEERA **NAYAK**

In our village, there is no field for girls to play on. The entire village has only one school with a usable field, but it's dominated by boys, forcing us to practice in a corner, said 16-year-old Sonu from Ghadsisar village in Churu district in Rajasthan, who practices kho-kho daily with her teammates in a corner of the village's only high school ground.

17-year-old Aarti, who practices kho-kho with Sonu, said, "Our team has only traveled once to Sardarshahar tehsil and once to Foga village to participate in the game. After that, we haven't gone anywhere. We don't get the chance because our performance isn't good enough. How can we perform well without proper practice opportunities? Having a field for practice is essential, but we don't have one." Girls do not receive support from their families to go outside the village to practice.

Ghadsisar village, located about 254 km from Jaipur in Churu district, has a population of around 3,900. Within this small population, there is a significant disparity in literacy rates between men (62.73%) and women (38.8%). This reflects the discrimination that girls face in terms of education. Within this smaller group, girls who are challenging the social norms, are further discriminated against due to a lack of a dedicated sports field for girls. Consequently, their practice sessions are disrupted, negatively affecting their performance.

"This village has about 800 houses. The girls who study at the village school still get practice opportunities during school days, but where should the girls who no longer study here go for practice?" said Kanta, another young girl from the village. "The boys can play



anywhere or in fields in other villages, but our families don't allow us to go far from home for practice. Therefore, our village needs a dedicated field for girls to play," she added.

With years of negotiations, they did manage a corner space in the field but even that becomes unavailable during vacations. "The boys often climb over the school wall to play on the field, but we girls can't do that," informed Kanta.

Regarding this issue, the village sarpanch, Manoj Kumar, acknowledged that there is no separate field for girls in the village, which causes difficulties for them in practice. He mentioned that the gram panchayat had submitted a proposal to the tehsil headquarters, but the tehsil authorities indicated that while there is vacant land in Ghadsisar, it belongs to the johad paytan (water reservoir) and the mining department. Allocating this land for a sports field is beyond the tehsil's jurisdiction.

Understanding the situation, the panchayat selected a different site and submitted a new proposal to the tehsil. However, due to the code of conduct imposed for the Lok Sabha elections, no action has been taken. The panchayat will make another attempt after the election process is completed to ensure a sports field is available for the girls.

Social worker Heera Sharma emphasized the importance of sports for all children, stating, "Whether it's a boy or a girl, playing sports is crucial for physical and mental development. It not only keeps the body healthy but also enhances mental well-being. Denying girls the opportunity to play would be unjust. Playing sports boosts girls' confidence, allowing them to run freely on the field and contributing significantly to their physical development."

She added, "Sports are excellent for fitness and can also provide a career path, with athletes bringing honor to the country. This is why the government is promoting sports and athletes through initiatives like 'Khelo India.' Many girls from rural areas have emerged to represent India at district, state, Olympic and Commonwealth games, winning medals for the country."

This year, at the sixth Khelo India Youth Games held in Tamil Nadu, athletes from Rajasthan delivered outstanding performances across various events, earning the state a place in the top 5. Both girls and boys excelled. Yet despite these successes, many rural areas in the country continue to deprive girls of the chance to participate in sports, even though access to sports fields is essential for all adolescents, regardless of gender.

(The writer is a grassroots writer from Lunkaransar, Rajasthan; views are personal. Charkha Features)

the pioneer
HYDERABAD | WEDNESDAY | JUNE 5, 2024

MONEY MATTERS

Rupee plunges 45 paise to close at 83.59 against US dollar

The rupee tumbled 45 paise to close at 83.59 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday as the ruling BJP is unlikely to muster an absolute majority in the Lok Sabha elections. Besides, a massive sell-off in domestic equities and a strong greenback against major currencies overseas added to the gloom, forex traders said. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened weak at 83.25 and oscillated between a high of 83.23 and a low of 83.59 against the greenback during the session. The domestic currency finally closed at 83.59 (provisional) against the dollar, registering a fall of 45 paise from its previous close. On Monday, the rupee closed at 83.14 against the US dollar. Counting of votes on Tuesday indicated disappointing results for the BJP-led NDA in the Lok Sabha elections, which appears to be losing heavily in its strongholds of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Rajasthan although it is expected to form the government with about 290 seats.



Gold jumps Rs 450; silver climbs Rs 200

Gold prices jumped Rs 450 to Rs 72,900 per 10 grams in the national capital on Tuesday in line with strong trends internationally, according to HDFC Securities. In the previous session, the precious metal had closed at Rs 72,450 per 10 grams. Additionally, silver prices climbed Rs 200 to Rs 93,100 per kg. It had settled at Rs 92,900 per kg in the previous session. "Spot gold prices (24 carats) in the Delhi markets are trading at Rs 72,900 per 10 grams, up by Rs 450 against the previous close," Saumil Gandhi, senior analyst of commodities at HDFC Securities, said. In the global markets, spot gold at Comex was trading at US$ 2,335 per ounce, up US$ 15 from the previous close. Gold rose on Tuesday as disappointing US manufacturing data raised hopes that the Federal Reserve will have room to lower borrowing costs this year, Gandhi said. In addition, silver went up to US$ 30.25 per ounce.



PNB to sell 10 per cent stake in Canara HSBC Life

Punjab National Bank (PNB) on Tuesday said it will sell 10 per cent stake in Canara HSBC Life Insurance Company by listing the insurer on the stock exchanges. Currently, PNB holds 23 per cent in the insurance firm. PNB's board in its meeting held today has accorded its approval for initiating the process of diluting 10 per cent stake of the bank in Canara HSBC Life Insurance Co Ltd, an associate company of the Bank, by listing the Company in Stock Exchanges (BSE/NSE) through Initial Public Offer (IPO). The decision is subject to regulatory approval, PNB said in a regulatory filing. HSBC and public sector Canara Bank are promoters of the life insurance company holding 26 per cent and 51 per cent, respectively. PNB is a shareholder with 23 per cent stake. Shares of PNB fell 15.80 per cent to close at Rs 115.35 on the BSE



Industry pins hope on continued push for deep-tech, digital, AI from new govt

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With AI and new-age technologies set to drive transformation agenda across sectors, the new government would need to steer ahead with unwavering focus on tech and digital innovation to sustain robust growth and to realise ambitions of a 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047, experts say.

Analysts believe that Centre will continue to build on its storied success around electronics and semiconductor manufacturing, as well as digital public infrastructure while according high-priority to AI, and deep-tech domains, notwithstanding a weaker mandate for the BJP-led NDA.

Given past impetus on technology-led development, the momentum on digital payments, tech-based startups, entrepreneurship and innovation could continue, despite the likely return of coalition politics.

As such, India's tech achievements have scaled new highs, be it digital public goods, or fintech, AI or drones for various use cases.

India Electronics and Semiconductor Association (IESA) President Ashok Chandak said that over the past five years, the Modi government has implemented economic reforms fostering growth, particularly in the semiconductor and electronics sectors. He expects that the "trend will continue, contributing to the Viksit Bharat vision and making India a developed nation by 2047".

"IESA will present a blueprint to the new ministry, emphasising incentives and initiatives for these sectors over the next five years. The goal is to enhance local value addition, reduce import dependence, and position India as a global leader in semiconductor and electronics production," Chandak said.



Analysts believe that Centre will continue to build on its storied success around electronics and semiconductor manufacturing, as well as digital public infrastructure while according high-priority to AI, and deep-tech domains, notwithstanding a weaker mandate for the BJP-led NDA.

According to IESA, key focus areas are job creation, education, talent development, manufacturing, startup support, global collaborations, and IPR development, supported by tailored government incentive schemes. All eyes would also be on crucial regulations that are awaiting the next logical steps -- the rules for Digital Personal Data Protection, as also crafting the framework for Digital India Act to replace the archaic IT Act, 2000.

"We expect the new government to facilitate further expansion of the digital ecosystem while addressing key challenges such as interoperability, policy frameworks, cybersecurity, financial literacy, and the digital divide.

DoT defers spectrum auction to June 25

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



The Department of Telecom (DoT) on Tuesday postponed the spectrum auction by 19 days to June 25, as per information available on its website.

According to amendments made in the notice inviting applications for bids on Tuesday, the new date for "start of the live auction" has been changed to June 25 from June 6.

The government will auction eight spectrum bands for mobile phone services at a base price of about Rs 96,317 crore. All the available spectrum in the 800 MHz, 900 MHz, 1,800 MHz, 2,100 MHz, 2,300 MHz, 2,500 MHz, 3,300 MHz, and 26 GHz bands are part of the auction.

Reliance Jio has deposited the highest earnest money of Rs 3,000 crore for the spectrum auction, which gives the company the potential to bid for maximum radiowaves.

According to pre-qualified bidder details released by the DoT, Bharti Airtel has submitted the earnest money deposit (EMD) of Rs 1,050 crore and Vodafone Idea (VIL) of Rs 300 crore.

Companies get points based on the EMD amount they have deposited, which enables them to bid for the number of circles and quantity of spectrum they want. Higher points mean a higher capability to place bids.

The spectrum will be assigned for a period of 20 years and successful bidders will be allowed to make payments in 20 equal annual instalments.

The DoT has provided an option to surrender the spectrum acquired through the upcoming auction after a minimum period of 10 years.

PSU stocks tumble up to 24%

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Shares of public sector enterprises and state-owned banks tumbled up to 24 per cent on Tuesday as vote counting trends showed the BJP may not have a clear majority in the Lok Sabha polls.

The Nifty PSE Indices witnessed a steep decline of 1,856.70 points, or 16.38 per cent, to close at 9,475.10, with the share price of REC tumbling 24.07 per cent to settle at Rs 459 apiece, PFC nosedived 21.62 per cent, Container Corp of India tumbled 19.43 per cent, Bharat Electronics Ltd (BEL) declined 19.21 per cent.

Also, ONGC slumped 16.23 per cent, Coal India declined 13.54 per cent, NTPC went lower 14.52 per cent, and Power Grid slipped 11.98 per cent.

New govt must bring policy reforms in realty sector: Builders

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



Realtors body NAREDCO on Tuesday demanded that the new government should bring policy reforms for growth in real estate sector and provide tax incentives to home buyers as well as developers to boost housing demand.

The association also sought streamlining of getting approvals to develop projects.

Reacting on the results of the Lok Sabha elections 2024, NAREDCO National President G Hari Babu said, "The real estate sector is at a crucial point, with great growth potential but significant challenges. To reach a market size of US$ 1 trillion by 2030 and become a net-zero carbon industry by 2047, we need government support."

Addressing rising home loan EMIs, implementing key policy reforms, and introducing sustainability incentives are essential, he said.

Additionally, making affordable housing more accessible by adjusting financial limits and providing incentives for builders is critical for the progress, Babu said.

"We are seeking specific actions from the government to address the rising home loan EMIs and interest rates. The increase from 6.25 per cent before COVID-19 to around 8.75 per cent today has made monthly EMIs very expensive, particularly for middle-class families. We urge the government to provide relief by offering lower interest rates for affordable housing loans.

"This can be achieved by setting the first Rs 20 lakh or Rs 25 lakh of a home loan at a 5 per cent interest rate for the first five years," the NAREDCO President said.

Babu said specific policy reforms are necessary to stimulate growth in the real estate sector, particularly in affordable housing.

"We expect the government to implement policy reforms and incentives to support the growth and sustainability of the real estate sector.

New govt to inherit strong economy, focus on making India developed nation

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



India's world record beating economic growth rate together with robust tax revenues, a fast expanding digital and financial infrastructure and a strong manufacturing sector will give the new government a base for unleashing next generation reforms that may make the country a developed nation by 2047.

The new government will however have to tackle with problems like unemployment and rural distress, which seemed to have played a major role in voting pattern in states like Uttar Pradesh, while also keeping inflation under control.

Given that no party, including BJP, have a clear majority of its own, tough reforms like big ticket privatisation and labour law reforms may take a backseat.

As per the available trends, BJP is likely to win about 240 seats in a 543- member Lok Sabha. It would have to rely on its allies like TDP and JDU to form the next government.

The new government will have to build upon the 8.2 per cent GDP growth recorded in 2023-24 and carry on with the reforms to make India a US$ 5 trillion economy in the next couple of years and a developed nation by 2047.

Policy experts are unanimous in their view that the government is likely to continue its focus on infrastructure-led growth, investor-friendly policies, enabling reforms, and facilitating ease of doing business.

Last week, S&P Global Ratings had said that historically India has been on a high growth path with national consensus on key economic policies.

IATA flags concerns over probe against foreign airlines

PNS ■ DUBAI

Global airlines' grouping IATA on Tuesday raised concerns about an Indian agency probing some foreign carriers with respect to certain charges related to Goods and Services Tax (GST).

The Directorate General of GST Intelligence (DGGI) has started probes against some of the foreign airlines having operations in India. At a briefing here, IATA Country Director for India Amitabh Khosla said that for now, 10 foreign airlines have been picked up for investigation and that the move was "unprecedented".

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has submitted a detailed representation to the Indian government on the issue, he said.

'Indian aviation market seeing both domestic, international growth'

PNS ■ DUBAI

Indian aviation is growing in terms of domestic as well as international traffic, and can show how to deal with challenges in a fast-growing market, IndiGo CEO Pieter Elbers said on Tuesday.

At a briefing on the conclusion of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) Annual General Meeting here, Elbers said it will be an important moment for India to host the AGM next year in Delhi.

Elbers is also the Chair of the Board of Governors of IATA.

IATA, a grouping of more than 330 airlines, at the just concluded AGM also discussed sustainability and net zero carbon emission target.

"We are completely aligned on (efforts to achieve) net zero emissions," IATA Director General Willie Walsh said at the briefing.

According to the grouping, Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) is expected to account for up to 65 per cent of the total carbon mitigation needed to achieve net zero carbon emissions in air transportation by 2050.

Reliance Industries shares tank over 7.50%; mcap erodes by Rs 1.54 L cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



Shares of Reliance Industries on Tuesday tumbled over 7.50 per cent, wiping out Rs 1.54 lakh crore from its market valuation, in line with a massive correction in the equity market as the Lok Sabha poll results and trends showed the BJP was set to become the single-largest party but would fall short of the magic figure of 272.

The bellwether stock tanked 7.53 per cent to settle at Rs 2,793.60 on the BSE. During the day, it plunged 10 per cent to Rs 2,719.15. RIL was the major contributor to the decline in Sensex, accounting for 686.45 points of total loss of 4,390 points in the benchmark index.

At the NSE, RIL slumped 7.48 per cent to Rs 2,794.55.

The company's market capitalisation (mcap) eroded by Rs 1,54,020.99 crore to Rs 18,90,063.85 crore. Reliance Industries is the country's most valued firm in terms of market valuation.

Erasing the record-rally of the previous trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex cracked 4,389.73 points or 5.74 per cent to settle at 72,079.05. During the day, the benchmark tanked 6,234.35 points or 8.15 per cent to hit a nearly five-month low of 70,234.43.

Markets had previously declined by over 13 per cent on March 23, 2020, when lockdown was imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Shares of Reliance Industries Ltd on Monday jumped nearly 6 per cent to hit a record high level.

Merger of Tata Motors Finance with Tata Capital gets board approval

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The merger of Tata Motors Finance with Tata Capital has been approved by their respective boards, according to a filing.

Tata Motors Finance Ltd is step-down wholly-owned subsidiary of Tata Motors Ltd.

The auto major in the filing stated that its board has also approved the merger of Tata Motors Finance Ltd with Tata Capital Ltd.

"The Board of Directors of Tata Motors Limited (TML), Tata Capital Limited (TCL) and Tata Motors Finance Ltd (TMFL) have today approved a merger of TMFL with TCL through an NCLT scheme of arrangement," the filing said.

As consideration for the merger, TCL will issue its equity shares to the shareholders of TMFL resulting in Tata Motors effectively holding a 4.7 per cent stake in the merged entity, it said.

The transaction is also in line with the automaker's stated objective of exiting non-core businesses and focusing its capital spends on emerging technologies and products, it added.

The scheme of arrangement will be subject to the approval of Sebi, RBI, and NCLT amongst others and all shareholders and creditors of TCL and TMFL and will take 9-12 months to complete, Tata Motors said

NCLT rejects JAL's claim of liquidity crunch due to delay in govt approvals, litigations

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The NCLT, which on Monday ordered initiation of insolvency proceedings against Jaiprakash Associates Ltd (JAL), rejected the company's contention that it faced a liquidity crunch and defaulted on debt repayments mainly due to delays in government approvals and prolonged litigation concerning land acquisition for Yamuna Expressway and change in government policies.

It has been held by the Supreme Court that if there is a debt and default in repayment of debt and application filed by a financial creditor under section 7 of Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code, then the insolvency plea is to be admitted, the NCLT's Allahabad bench said.

The insolvency tribunal also rejected the submissions of JAL pleading not to initiate insolvency on grounds such as the feasibility of initiating CIRP, overall financial health and viability of the company and receivables which may go to meet the outstanding debts.

"The reason cited by the counsel of JAL is liquidity crunch due to delays in government sanctions /approvals, prolonged litigation with respect to land acquisition for Yamuna Expressway, economic slowdown, change in government policies, etc. which is always present when a business is carried out and that cannot have any bearing on initiation of proceeding under Section 7 of IBC, when there is a debt and default in repayment of such debt as provided under Section 7 of IBC," said NCLT in its 120-page order.

It has been held by the Supreme Court that if there is a debt and default in repayment of debt and application filed by a financial creditor under section 7 of Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code, then the insolvency plea is to be admitted, the NCLT's Allahabad bench said.

JAL has submitted that it is an "asset rich company", even after sale of cement plants to resolve the loans under Bucket 1 and Bucket 2A, assets like Real Estate Business – Noida and Greater Noida (about 11,000 flats) will remain with the company.

Govt revises upwards wheat output to record 112.92 mn tonne

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government has revised upwards wheat production at record 112.92 million tonne for the 2023-24 crop year (July-June) in its third estimate.



The output, which has been revised upwards by 0.91 million tonne from the second estimate, is also higher than the previous record high of 110.55 million tonne achieved in the 2022-23 crop year, the agriculture ministry said on Tuesday.

Wheat, the main rabi (winter) crop, has been harvested and over 26 million tonne has already been procured by the central government at minimum support price.

In its third estimate, the agriculture ministry has projected increase in rice output to 136.7 million tonne for 2023-24 from 135.75 million tonne in the previous crop year. However, the total foodgrain output is estimated slightly lower at 328.85 million tonne as compared to the level achieved in 2022-23 but higher by 21.1 million tonne from the last five years' average of 307.75 million tonne.

Among pulses, tur output is pegged higher at 3.38 million tonne from last year's 3.31 million tonne. Lentil output is estimated at 1.75 million tonne as compared with 1.55 million tonne in the previous year.

the pioneer
Hyderabad

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Wednesday
June 5, 2024

'Ustad Zakir Hussain has made me who I am today'

SHRADDHA NEWARE

V Selvaganesh, commonly known as the 'Indian Kanjira Master', is preparing to bring the entire music aficionados together for an extraordinary Carnatic musical voyage called 'Masters of Music'. His work spans borders and elicits intense emotions anytime he performs onstage! And this show is going to do just that. Let's learn more about what motivates the outstanding Selvaganesh.

THE INDIAN KANJIRA MASTER, V SELVAGANESH, WHO IS PREPARING TO BRING THE ENTIRE MUSIC AFICIONADOS TOGETHER FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY CARNATIC MUSICAL VOYAGE, SPEAKS TO *THE PIONEER* ABOUT PERFORMING AT THE ADITYA BIRLA MASTERS OF MUSIC, BALANCING TRADITIONAL PARTS OF CLASSICAL MUSIC, AND ALSO SHARES SOME NOTEWORTHY MOMENTS FROM HIS CAREER.

EXCERPTS FROM THE INTERVIEW

In your opinion, what is the significance of having many generations of percussionists perform together at Aditya Birla 'Masters of Music'?

It is critical that the next generation understands the concept of music and heritage, as well as how to approach it on stage. There will be three generations. One is my father, L Shankar Ji, from the fusion band *Shakti*, with whom we grew up. Then came the next generation, which included Fazal and I. We've performed in numerous performances together, and we were also a part of Ustad Zakir Hussain's *Masters Of Percussion*. That is the one method we learned a lot about. And the third generation, my son, will accompany us. And for him to comprehend my father's generation, the music they listened to, and myself and Fazal, how we dealt with everything, this is the most important lesson for that generation.

In what ways do you think the collab between various percussion types and global influences has improved the worldwide view of Indian classical music?

Collaborating with new genres of music is always a learning experience. When I used to play with *Masters of Percussion* with Ustad Zakir Hussain, he was always willing to take me to a different jamming session with a different type of percussion art, especially because they were so popular on *Planet Drum*. Zakir Bhai once took me to a jam session where I had a terrific time jamming with Mickey Hart and Giovanni, learning what is Latin, what is pop, and what is rock. Everything!

How has touring with John McLaughlin's trio influence your musical development?

Playing with the band *Shakti* is the best experience. And it is always, as I have said before, a learning process. I couldn't believe it when I was in fifth grade and they came to India on a tour. And they held a concert in Chennai, where *Shakti* performed alongside John McLaughlin, L Shankar, Ustad Zakir Hussain. My cousin and I were standing behind the stage while they did a soundcheck. I have no idea what music they played, but I was standing behind and enjoying the percussion section, where my father and Zakir Bhai engaged and played. I was liking it. I stated, "This is the music I wanted to do." I couldn't imagine.

Could you tell us more about your role in operating the Sri JGTV school?

Sri Jaya Ganesh Tala Vadya Vidyalaya is a school established by my grandfather in the 1960s. And then, of course, my father took over, followed by my uncle Subashchandran Ji, and eventually TH Gurumurthi. So we continue to administer the school, which is overseen by my brother, Uma Shankar. I'm now busy with a lot of concerts, but I also teach. We usually meet with students at least twice a month. We used to jam, but after three years of lockdown, I believe we were unable to do so. So I'm merely expanding my role in this schooling. We've already launched a lineup in America, followed by Japan. So my role is to push things to the next level.

How do you balance retaining the traditional parts of Carnatic music with contemporary influences?

It is not my responsibility to maintain Carnatic music; it has already been done. The only thing left to do is maintain. That is more significant. So, for me, music is more divine.



What encouraged you to pursue a profession in percussion?

My father influenced me. That is more significant. Every person's primary role model is his or her father. And, of course, my father joined the band called *Shakti*. That was in the 1970s. So I was born and grew up with that music. My father used to tour in 1973 and 1974, and when he returned, he brought back the records from his tape-recorded, live recording. And then he used to play to my grandfather, as if it were the concert I had performed, and I began listening to it. It's in my blood.

Can you talk about your approach to making music for films versus solo albums?

Composing for movies is like having a vision. You see and compose. You see the scenes. So you compose for that, particularly the background score. And for the songs, they have a situation where they say, 'This is the way', so the song has to fit in. It is already prepared. So it is not easy, and it is really difficult to do. Doing an album requires me to feel, be creative, and create my own vibe. So there is a difference. And composing is my passion! It's like my yoga or meditation.

What challenges have you encountered when juggling your jobs?

Challenges are always present. Especially while performing in a concert, you must sense the audience's attitude to know what they want. So, once again, it's a problem for the performer. And being an educator is not a challenge; it is a learning experience. Even when I teach, I learn from them because they ask questions that my teacher did not ask me, which means that if the question is asked, I must answer it, which requires me to improvise. Music is usually like that. So, when I improvise, I learn.

Could you tell us about a noteworthy incident in your career?

I guess I joined Ustad Zakir Hussain Ji's *Masters of Percussion* in the 90s, around 1992. So that was my first concert and my first time on stage with him. And I witnessed how he performed alone to get the audience involved. He constantly assigned them a role and encouraged them to participate in whatever it was. After that, I worked with them for nearly ten years, and anytime I played with him, he always changed; he always found the audience's mood and went with it. That has been the most valuable experience for me to learn. That's his presentation, and it's the largest source of inspiration for me. As an artist, I should understand how to present, convey, and set the tone. Ustad Zakir Hussain has made me who I am today.

What advice would you provide to your target audience, aiming to build a name for themselves in the music industry?

The audience may expect 70s music from the best fusion band, which has paved the way for any collaboration music known as *Shakti*. So, we'll be doing a bunch of *Shakti* pieces. And, of course, my father and Zakir bhai have done a number of albums, one of which is called *Ragam Tanam Pallavi*, and we're going to perform one of those pieces.

Turning his make-up brush into a magical wand

TEJAL SINHA

Bharat Godambe has that magic wand that has the ability to change actresses into fairies. From Madhuri Dixit and Sridevi to Priyanka Chopra and Rani Mukerjee, he has turned generations of beautiful women into movie deities through his make-up brush. You name them, and he has worked with them.

Initially, when he began his journey as a make-up artist, there was nothing such as inspiration but to work hard and earn some earnings. Well, so was it for him too.

After 40 years in the industry, the much-celebrated make-up artist takes us through his journey as he begins, "I started my journey in the industry when I was 16 and a half, when I just finished my SSC exam, and just after 2-3 months, I joined the industry's biggest make-up artist, Pandhari Juker, as an assistant around 1976. He was one of the biggest makeup artists in the industry and has worked with many big production houses. It was a plus point for me since I'd assisted him, and I feel grateful for that."

But how did a young Bharat get in touch with the renowned make-up artist of yesteryear? Well, let's hear from him: "There was this neighbour of mine, who was also a hairdresser, who introduced me to him. The reason I got into this industry was because, back then, there were financial issues that my family was going through. After my SSC, I didn't want to join the college but wanted to work. So with Usha Hazare, the hairdresser, I used to make these greeting cards and other craft work. She suggested that we see about the job, but till then, there's this opportunity to work with Pandhari *Dada*, and it would be good for me to also start something. It's also in the film line, so it would be a much-deserved chance for me."

Though he began his journey at quite a young age, he recalls how he was bombarded with some big projects around 2006 and 2007. "One amongst them was *Saawariya* with Sanjay Leela Bhansali, and then Farah Khan's *Om Shanti Om* for Deepika's looks got famous. Both Dorris and I got the IIFA award. It was overwhelming, but giving our whole day on the sets used to get very challenging, due to which we didn't take up more of the films back then. But it was a whole new experience working with them."

A movie star's mannequin-like image is the result of various factors, from perfectly coiffed hair to concealing even the smallest flaw. Bharat and Dorris Godambe would know. Ultimately, the pair has adorned a generation of film idols in real life as well as on film.

Back in the 80s and 90s, the make-up artist scene was quite different than it is today. Basically, he recalls that if one spoke about make-up artists, it was only men who were in the profession, while women were into the hairstyling profession. But now, as he looks back, he shares, "Since the past decade, there have been girls who have been coming up in the make-up line. Back then, there were barely any make-up artists, so we didn't face many challenges. I got to use the most of the opportunities I got."

If working on films is a task for the actors, directors, producers, and other technicians, then so is it for the make-up artists and hairstylists too. At least that's what we understood during this chat with him as he shares, "Working in films was quite a hectic job, and so we preferred working on magazine shoots. However, our work was pretty well known in the film fraternity. Thus, we were called for the special songs in the films."

Bollywood celebrity make-up artist, Bharat Godambe, who has not only worked but shares a close association with the B-town divas, takes ***The Pioneer*** memory down the lane, as he shares his journey, and working with actresses of different generations.



Godambe and his wife, Dorris, share a much-closer association with Madhuri Dixit and Neena Gupta, Juhi Chawla, Urmila Matondkar, Mamta Kulkarni, Rani Mukerji, and Aishwarya Rai. Known for their impeccable ability to create the "flawless look," Bharat and Dorris are revered as the ultimate authorities in makeup artistry today.

"It felt like going on a picnic when working with Madhuri. She loves eating, seafood, in particular. We used to go really crazy at lunch break," recalls Bharat. However, he further recalls, "Parveen Babi used to be picky about what she consumed. She had egg whites, a glass of juice, and a slice of brown bread for lunch every day. She used to get the cook to prepare a complete meal for us; at one point, our team consisted of four people," he remarks.

Over the years, he feels grateful for the support he and his wife, along with their team, have been receiving from celebrities of any generation, right from Sridevi to Rani Mukerji, Dia Mirza, or Sonam Kapoor, be it even in their debut, and it's been no less than an honour. They have recently also worked with Hollywood star Cyathi Duglos.

"Every task and every phase was a challenge. However, how you handle the situation is important, so there wasn't a single bad experience that he has had, and the ones who used to create chaos, we'd always stay away," he shares on a funny note as he goes on to share a few of his special moments in his career, "It was our special moment when India got the Miss Universe crown by Sushmita Sen, Priyanka, Aishwarya, and Lara; we remember and we felt very fulfilling for the country. Meanwhile, on the other hand, it was challenging to work with Sridevi because she used to do her makeup herself, and when i did the make-up and Dorris did the hair, she loved it. She praised us so much that we cherish to date, and was undeniably a special moment for us."



Holistic approach for optimal development in managing ADHD

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is one of the most common disorders of childhood with symptoms of hyperactivity, impulsivity, and/or inattention.

The symptoms affect cognitive, academic, behavioral, emotional, and social functioning prevalence of ADHD in children has been increasing higher among children living in non-metropolitan areas compared with large central metropolitan areas.

ADHD affects more men than women, with a ratio of 4:1

Children and adolescents with ADHD frequently have comorbid psychiatric, sleep and neurodevelopmental disorders like oppositional defiant disorder (ODD), conduct disorder, depression, anxiety disorder, autism spectrum disorder (ASD), learning disorders, obstructive sleep apnea, restless leg syndrome and parasomnias.

Oppositional defiant disorder is seen in approximately 50 to 80 percent of children. Excessive activity, impulsive response style, and unrestrained emotional expression frequently resulted in conflict with parents and siblings. The increased conflict may lead to increased discipline and less positive reinforcement for the child (the oppositional acts bring parental attention, which is reinforcing for the child who rarely receives parental praise).

Obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) is a common cause of daytime sleepiness, as well as cognitive and behavioral symptoms similar to ADHD. Overt difficulty waking or drowsiness are less common in children than in adults. Restless legs syndrome (RLS) and periodic limb movement disorder (PLMD) in children can both be characterized by behavioral symptoms such as hyperactivity, inattention, and difficulty focusing. Pathogenesis of ADHD is not definitively known. A genetic imbalance of catecholamine metabolism in the cerebral cortex appears to play a primary role increased risk of ADHD in first-degree relatives of patients with ADHD.

ADHD diagnosis

- Be present in multiple settings (eg, school and home)
- Persist for at least six months
- Manifest before the age of 12 years
- Interfere with academic, social, or occupational functioning,
- Exceed the expected developmental level of the child
- Not result from other mental disorders

A small subset of children may exhibit mild adverse behaviour or inattention when eating diets high in food additives, artificial colors, excess sugar, or low in essential fatty acids and minerals such as iron and zinc. Insufficient sleep may exacerbate symptoms of ADHD.

Prenatal exposure to certain medications like antidepressants, valproate for epilepsy and acetaminophen are associated with increased risk of ADHD. Smoking in pregnancy increases risk of ADHD.

Prematurity and low birth weight are linked to ADHD.

Most ADHD symptoms fluctuate between childhood and young adulthood, with intermittent periods of remission and recurrence.

ADHD diagnosed in childhood is associated with an increased risk of intentional and unintentional injury, substance abuse, and motor vehicle crashes among drivers.

Children with ADHD may require changes to their educational program, such as tutoring, resource room support, classroom modifications, or direct skills training for adolescents.

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) treatment involves education of patients, caregivers, and teachers regarding the diagnosis and treatment. Coexisting conditions must be treated in conjunction with ADHD. Psychosocial interventions, medication, and/or educational approaches may be used separately or in combination. Patients and caregivers should make therapy decisions.

(The author, Dr. Shiva Kumar R, is a Head and Senior Consultant – Neurology, at Manipal Hospital.)

the pioneer
Hyderabad | Wednesday June 5, 2024

what's brewing?

PARTY


Srinivas Unnath Reddy


Fracspace announced the successful launch of its cutting-edge mobile application. This milestone event, held at T-Hub in Hyderabad's Hitech City, marked a significant step in revolutionising the accessibility and affordability of real estate ownership. The launch of Fracspace's app was spearheaded by Unnath Reddy, the Managing Director of Fracspace.


Abha Tiwari


Shefi


Akhila and Shivani


Manvita

Photos by- SV Chary


IMT Ghaziabad has announced its strategic partnership with the National Institute of Securities Markets (NISM) to unveil a first of its kind Student Immersion Program. This initiative is meticulously crafted to provide hands-on experience to students enrolled in the Post Graduate Diploma in Management – Banking and Financial Services (PGDM-BFS). It offers them unparalleled exposure to the dynamic and rapidly evolving Indian securities markets.


Yokogawa India Limited announced that its parent company Yokogawa Electric Corporation of Japan has completed the acquisition of Adept Fluidyne Pvt. Ltd. ("Adept"). Company officials present for the announcement included Sajiv Nath, Vice President, Yokogawa Electric-Japan, Regional Chief Executive - South Asia, Managing Director Yokogawa India Limited, and Vinayak Gadre, Managing Director for Adept Fluidyne Pvt Ltd.

LISTINGS

iQOO celebrates one million community members

iQOO announced that their dynamic iQOO Connect - the official iQOO community has reached the one million members mark today. From organising a multitude of engaging events and activities, including sneak peek sessions, community-first events, product launches, BGMI gaming sessions, photo walks, to product feedback sessions, it has ensured deep connections with the Questers, understanding their needs, and providing exceptional experiences. To deeply connect with its community members and Questers, iQOO conducts multi-city meet-ups to better understand their needs and provide exceptional experiences.

realme teases with realme GT6

realme launched the latest device in its highly anticipated GT Series. The return marks a strategised focus on the high-end market segment, two years after the last GT Series launch. Sky Li, realme Founder and CEO, is determined to make a significant impact on the high-end market with the all-new GT 6 Series. As the new member of GT 6 Series, realme GT 6 is positioned as the "AI Flagship Killer", blending advanced technology with a state-of-the-art AI experience.

Shopsy ventures into the kids' segment

Shopsy by Flipkart has unveiled an exciting collection for kids, adding to the excitement of the upcoming summer break. With an extensive array of products ranging from fashion to entertainment, utility items, and beyond, it encompasses everything from fashion wearables to toys alongside 100+ verticals including toys, school essentials, and party decorations. Prices offered by sellers listed on Shopsy start at attractive prices such as Rs 25/-, ensuring affordability for all. Top categories include learning toys starting at Rs.49/-, kids dresses from Rs. 150/-, kids ethnic wear from Rs. 129/-, soft toys from Rs. 85/-, school essentials from Rs. 25/- and much more to meet every need of the consumer.

Virat Kohli brings TIDL to India

TIDL, America's fastest-growing pain relief brand, will shortly enter the Indian market with cricket superstar Virat Kohli to offer next-generation pain relief solutions. This partnership, in association with the Baidyanath Group, will change the way India understands pain. TIDL's range of innovative products are formulated to not only address pain effectively, but also empower consumers to take control of their own pain management. In 2021, Conor McGregor, World-Class UFC Champion, joined hands with team TIDL. In response to the upcoming India launch, McGregor said "TIDL isn't just about pain relief; it's about changing the game. Bringing TIDL to India with Virat Kohli is an incredible honoir. The energy, passion, and resilience of the Indian people remind me of my own journey. We're here to show India what real recovery looks like. Get ready because we're just getting started!"

Truecaller surpasses 400 million active users

Truecaller announced the very significant milestone of 400 million users monthly. It continues to grow rapidly in many different geographic markets and has grown since 31 March this year with 10.1 million users. "Reaching 400 million active users each month is something we are, of course, very proud of, but at the same time, we know that the need for a solution like Truecaller is significantly greater. The problem of unwanted communication, spam, and fraud over the phone is unfortunately only growing for both individuals and businesses. New technology and increased opportunities for fraudsters to make money are driving this development. We continue to develop our app and add new functionality to protect our users before, during, and after a phone call or SMS," says Alan Mamedi, co-founder and CEO of Truecaller.

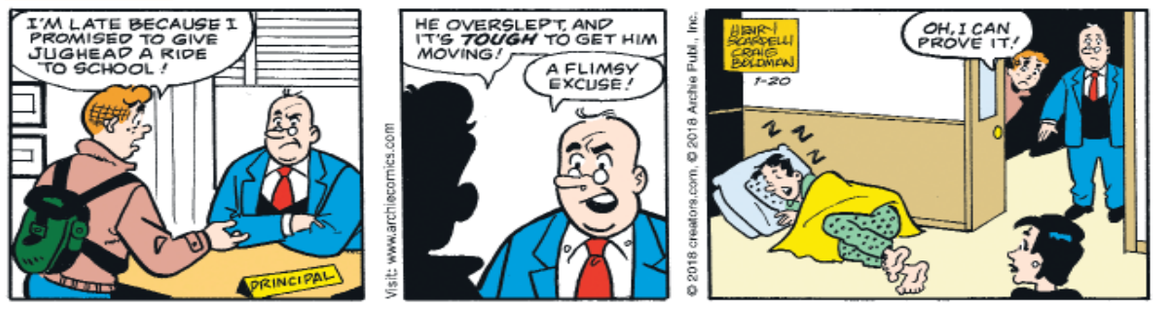

The Hyderabad Super League, presented by Sreenidhi Deccan FC, wrapped up its exhilarating 8th season at the Leo 11 venue. The tournament culminated in a nail-biting final, with Clusters seizing victory with a narrow 1-0 lead, showcasing the spirit and competitiveness of the teams involved. Organised by Hyderabad Little Stars Soccer Academy, the league aimed not only to provide thrilling entertainment but also to foster youth development in football.

Ezykle, celebrated World Bicycle Day with an inspiring event that brought together cycling enthusiasts, community leaders, and distinguished guests to promote the benefits of cycling for health, sustainability, and community well-being. The event organised at Prestine Prime Mall, Gachibowli, featured an impressive lineup of guests, including Mir Mothesham, World Silver Medalist and Srinivas D, CEO of Ezykle. The celebration highlighted the role of bicycles in fostering a greener and healthier future.



FUN

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBES



GARFIELD



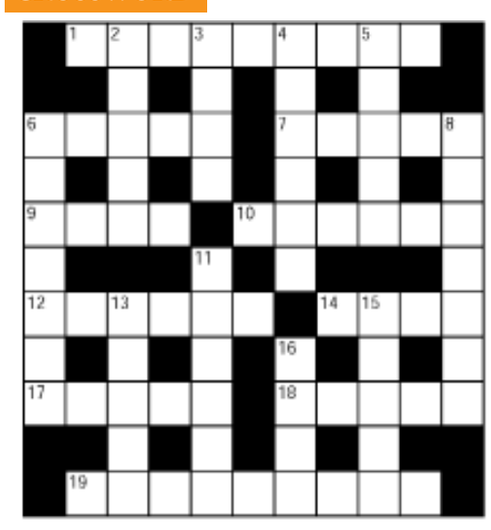
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1 Not sure
6 Meadow
7 A measuring stick
9 The colour made by mixing black and white
10 Nearly
12 Say again
14 A hired car
17 A feared sea creature
18 Telling fibs
19 Carried on

DOWN

2 A female relation
3 Comes to a finish
4 An animal with a shell
5 A house made of snow
6 Numbers
8 Decaying
11 A short type of coat
13 A keyboard instrument
15 Similar
16 A drawing of a building showing all the rooms

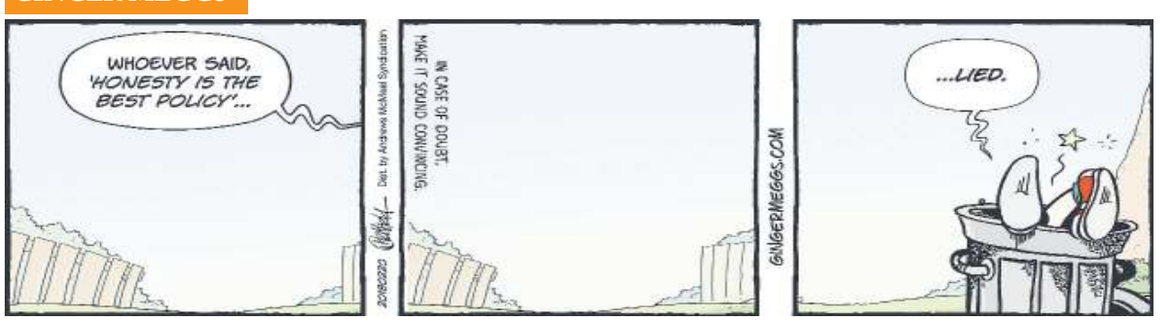
SOLUTION

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NANCY



GINGER MEGGS



SUDOKU

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	7	2				3	8	
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	2			3				

Yesterday's solution

3	4	7	6	8	9	1	5	2
8	1	2	3	5	7	4	6	9
6	9	5	4	1	2	3	8	7
2	7	9	5	3	4	8	1	6
4	5	8	9	6	1	7	2	3
1	6	3	7	2	8	5	9	4
5	3	1	2	4	6	9	7	8
7	2	4	8	9	5	6	3	1
9	8	6	1	7	3	2	4	5

Rules

- Each row and column can contain each number (1 to 9) exactly once.
- The sum of all numbers in any row or column must equal 45.





AYESHA KHAN, WHO HAS NOW BECOME A HAPPENING ACTRESS IN TINSELTOWN, SPEAKS TO *THE PIONEER* IN AN EXCLUSIVE CHAT ABOUT SHAKING A LEG WITH VISHWAK SEN IN *MOTHA* AND MAKING A NAME FOR HERSELF IN TELUGU FILMS.

'I was absolutely confident having no chemistry issues with Vishwak'

SHIKHA DUGGAL

Ayesha Khan is currently having her limelight days! When the makers of Vishwak Sen's *Gangs of Godavari* released their second single, *Motha*, we all observed the latest *Bigg Boss* superstar suddenly making a name for herself in Telugu films.We were astounded by a delightful surprise.

M.M.Manasi sings *Motha*, a popular dance song with a rustic melody and powerful bass-driven sounds. Ayesha, who is on a new journey to become the next trendy and happening actress in Tinseltown, spilled the beans during an exclusive interview with ***The Pioneer.***

"What could be better than having my first special song written by Chandrabose, the most popular composer? I looked into him and discovered how he adds a particular flavour to all of the Telugu songs that are becoming chartbusters in Tollywood! I have witnessed the great amount of appreciation he receives throughout the twin states. However, the cultural insights he wrote for *Motha* made it much more remarkable," Ayesha thought of the Academy Award winner Chandrabose, who wrote the lyrics for *Motha*.

The junior artist turned lead actress adds, "However, language was becoming a barrier for me. Bhanu Master helped me understand the lines. I had to memorise the lyrics (she laughed). I was a pain on the *Gangs of Godavari* sets because I was so obsessed with questioning the entire team about the meaning of every line (she giggles again). If not, I wouldn't have been able to make those seductive expressions with Vishwak!"

Taking center stage and dancing her heart out in *Motha*, Ayesha realised, "Working on a special song in Tollywood was a lot of joy. I didn't expect it to be so festive! After each shot, I looked into my choreographer's eyes for approval. I merely wanted him to admire my shot, which fired me up on the sets of *Gangs of Godavari*! His expressions will tell you whether I've mastered the step or need to improve."

The film *Gangs of Godavari*, starring Vishwak Sen, has been in production for quite some time. And then Ayesha remembers, "I was absolutely confident that there would be no chemistry issues between Vishwak and I—we didn't even rehearse together. We met on the day of the shoot. Can you believe it? We did not have to "prepare" for that chemistry! I'm hoping to share screen space with Vishwak Sen anytime soon. I won't forget to add that I said "yes" to *Motha* because I was appearing opposite Vishwak!" Furthermore, "the energetic and strong composition of the song was another factor that influenced me to say yes and shake a leg in *Motha*. I recall listening to the song and knowing right away that it was going to trend."

More on the popular and catchy song, *Balveer Returns* fame explains, "The complete song is still not in the film as the audiences must have already noticed; however, it's going to be released on YouTube soon because there's more of that "gruff" avatar." Even she agrees with us and says, "Indeed, I am new to the Telugu language, but I have placed all of my expectations in the Telugu film industry. I want to keep going back to Tollywood movies!"

She also has a nice memory of *Motha* happening in an urgent manner: "I immediately flew down to Hyderabad. So at first, I felt pressured because no one had ever expected me to dance to a special song, let alone in a regional language! I can't wait to show the audience this step when the whole song is out. Now, I have a back issue, and that step required a lot of core strength. So I'm glad that I was able to complete that without any scheduling delays."

On a closing note, the potentially forthcoming sensation in the South Indian industry, Ayesha Khan, adds, "I understand that doing *Motha* was a risky choice for me, but as soon as the song came to me, I was excited to explore this aspect of myself as well! In addition, I'd love to sign a full-fledged commercial movie. So, fingers crossed!" Suryadevara Naga Vamsi and Sai Soujanya produced the film. Krishna Chaitanya, a writer-director, is helming the film!



'Satyabhama highlights a woman's achievement of an extraordinary feat'

PNS | HYDERABAD

Kajal Aggarwal starrer *Satyabhama* is making a lot of noise now. The film, directed by Suman Chikkala, is all set to hit theatres on June 7. While we recently brought to you an interview with director Suman, we have with us today the producers of the movie, Bobby Tikka and Srinivas Rao Takkalapelly, who highlighted key aspects of the movie during an interview with us.

During our interview with director Suman, he credited director Sashi Kiran for the place the movie is in right now. Sashi Kiran happens to be Bobby Tikka's brother, and for Bobby, this is his debut as a producer. He shared, "We ventured into production after being involved in the industry for some time. *Satyabhama* marks our debut under the banner of Aurum Arts. Our goal is to deliver compelling content to audiences while providing opportunities for emerging talents. Suman, our director, makes his debut with this film. We identified singers from music bands and granted them opportunities to perform two songs."

He continued, "Although we didn't collaborate on Sashi's films, he often consulted my father and I. We shared some ideas. Following the completion of *Major*, we decided to establish our own production house. We believed that having our own banner would enable us to bring our preferred stories to the screen and leverage our distribution experience."

On the other hand, Srinivas Rao Takkalapelly expressed, "When we conceptualised *Satyabhama*, we considered three or four options for the heroine. Kajal was our initial choice. Upon hearing the story, she immediately agreed. Typically, she takes a few days to respond, but this time, she expressed her enthusiasm right away. Kajal shared our excitement for the storyline. Naveen Chandra embraced his significant role enthusiastically."

According to the producers, the storyline of *Satyabhama* draws inspiration from a real incident that occurred in the UK around twenty years ago. "However, we adapted the narrative to our cultural context. When we announced *Satyabhama*, some questioned why we were pursuing a heroine-oriented film instead of a hero-centric one. We believe Kajal's performance in *Satyabhama* is remarkable. An elderly viewer described it not as a heroine-oriented film but as one with heroism. Any character could assume the role of the hero in our story, but the highlight is the woman's achievement of an extraordinary feat. Sashi shared our perspective," they added. The film will be released in the Nizam area by Mythri Movie Makers, while Dheeraj Mogilineni Entertainments will oversee the release in AP.

Additionally, the producers added that the women on the censor board praised *Satyabhama*. "Additionally, we're incorporating the She Safe app, which has seen 5,000 downloads, into the film. We're inviting the women who have the app and their families to a special screening. Sashi is occupied with his projects, but we aim to feature his stories under Aurum Arts. Sricharan's classical music has elevated the cinematic experience," they added.

Sivakarthikeya welcomes HIS THIRD CHILD



Tamil actor Sivakarthikeyan, has shared some good news with his followers on social media. The actor and his wife, Aarthy, just welcomed their third child. His admirers have been overjoyed by the news.

Announcing the news on his X handle, the actor wrote, "Dear all, Our hearts are overflowing with joy as we welcome our baby boy born on June 2nd Our family has grown a little bigger and a whole lot happier. We need all your love, support, and blessings, as always -Gugan, Aaradhana, Aarthy and Sivakarthikeyan." He also assured his fans that his wife and the newborn child were doing fine (sic)."

On the work front, Sivakarthikeyan was last seen in *Ayalaan*. He is now busy with *Amaran* and director Rajkumar Periasamy. The film is said to be released in September; however, an official confirmation is awaited.

TEAM *OG* CELEBRATES PK'S WIN WITH NEW POSTER



As Power Star Pawan Kalyan was leading by a large margin, making his election as the MLA in Pithapuram, the makers of *They Call Him OG* have unleashed an exciting poster that has enthralled fans. Celebrating his win, the makers released a flamboyant poster, which features Pawan Kalyan radiating elegance and swagger. Congratulating the actor, the director of the film, Sujeeth, released the same on social media. Everyone's attention has been drawn to the poster, which also quietly alludes to the Power Star's resounding victory in the AP assembly elections.

Now that the election season has come to an end with results being put in place, the filming of *OG*, which was on hold because of the elections, will begin now. Along with Pawan Kalyan, the film also stars Priyanka Arul Mohan as the female lead, while Bollywood star Emraan Hashmi is making his Tollywood debut as a villain in this movie. The movie is being mounted on a large scale by DVV Danayya of DVV Entertainment. Thaman was the composer of the music.

'Put logic aside and experience *Namo* in cinemas'

In the forthcoming film *Namo*, which is produced by A. Prasannath under the auspices of Sri Netra Creations and Arms Film Factory, Viswanth Duddampudi and Anuroop Katari play the heroes, while Vismaya plays the heroine. This movie marks Aditya Reddy Kunduru's directorial debut. The release of *Namo* is scheduled for June 7th. In the meantime, the film's pre-release event took place on Monday.

The main attendees on this occasion were Bhimaneni Srinivasa Rao and Bekkem Venugopal.

While speaking at the event, Bhimaneni Srinivasa Rao said, "I have known Aditya for a long time. I'm happy that Aditya is debuting as a director with this film. He is very talented and works hard. He seems to prove himself in this film. The hardships of the characters in the film are going to provide laughs to the audience. It is great to bring such films with new concepts to theatres. I hope this effort made by the young team will be successful."

Viswanth Duddampudi said, "*Namo* is not just a movie for me. It's an emotion for me. The entire team worked together very happily. We worked together like a family. The characters written by Aditya are amazing. Put logic aside and experience the magic in cinemas. Everyone will like this movie. It will definitely be a *paisa vasool* entertainer. Anuroop is very talented. Vismaya acted well. Thanks to our director and producers for giving me a chance."

Meanwhile, Vismaya Sri said, "We shot the film amid tough circumstances in the forest area. I have done two films under the production of Prashanth. We are also going to do our third film together. Aditya is not as silent as he appears (laughs). Vishwanth is always smiling on the sets. Anuroop became a good friend. Our film is coming on June 7th. I think everyone will like it."



Alia discusses the major choices that influenced her fame on a global scale

Over the years, Alia Bhatt has made a name for herself as a successful actor, businesswoman, and style icon. In a recent interview, the actor discussed the major choices that have most influenced her fame and attractiveness on a global scale. When asked what elements contributed to her success in making the move from a Bollywood actor to a well-known figure worldwide, Alia replied, "It's difficult to pinpoint what factors worked. However, I've always thought that when anything is considered to have international appeal, it crosses boundaries and languages. Emotion is in my opinion, the universal response to that. I'm not paying attention to the language while I consume German, Korean, or Malayalam material. I identify with the core narrative and the feelings it portrays. Early in my career, I had the great fortune to play roles with a wide range of emotional complexity. I'm totally absorbed in the role I'm playing. My goal is to always portray distinct personas, and I hope that the audience has understood that. I have no desire to be limited to a particular genre of movies. I push myself to see what kinds of films I can make."

The actor claimed that obstacles in her professional life frequently motivate her. In closing, Alia stated that viewers will immediately connect with a "buffet of emotions" if they are presented with one.



the pioneer
HYDERABAD | WEDNESDAY | JUNE 5, 2024

India open against Ireland in renewed quest for World Cup glory

PTI ■ NEW YORK

Sceptics call them 'old wine in new bottle' but a clutch of superstar Indian cricketers would leave no stone unturned to break away from their archaic template when they take on a plucky Ireland in their opening game of the T20 World Cup here on Wednesday.

The team knows that it is a touch undercooked with a lot of confusion still persisting about what could be the best combination on a drop-in virgin strip. As is clear from the games so far, scoring won't be a walk in the park like it was during the Indian Premier League the last couple of months.

But the bigger concern is the baggage of being favourites who don't really make it count in the end.

Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli have individually laid their hands on global silverware but an assortment of some other 'once in generation' cricketers, including Jasprit Bumrah and Ravindra Jadeja, have not and they would be eager to finally lift one.

This Indian cricket team wouldn't want to be the Brazil football team of 1982 and 86 when global stars like Socrates, Zico, Careca, Falcao and Alemao couldn't win the FIFA trophy.

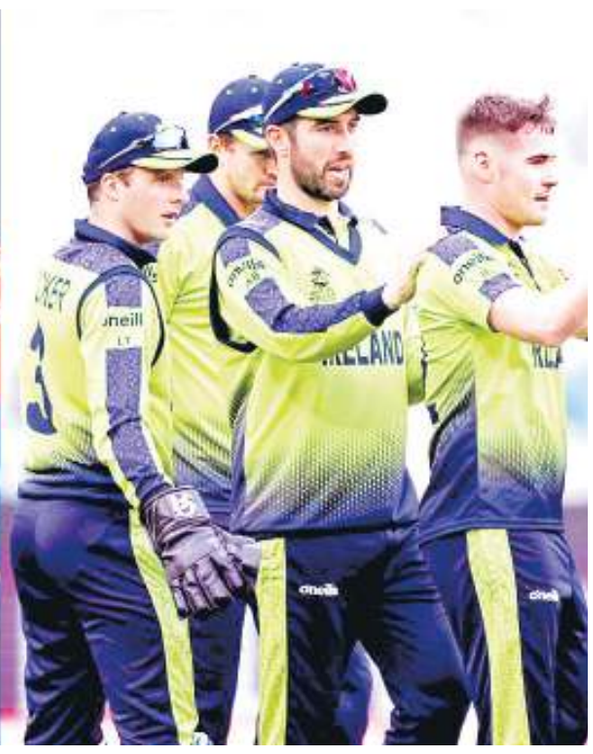
The most poignant sight of last year's ODI World Cup was a forlorn Rohit, after the final, desperately trying to hide his welled-up eyes from the TV cameras as he quietly climbed the steps of the Narendra Modi Stadium dressing room.

There was also Kohli, who after scoring those 765 invaluable runs, could only get a fleeting blank gaze towards the podium where the trophy was kept.

The best players sometimes don't add up to become the best team and while India have put faith in their most experienced lot, it can't be simply wished away that this current batch has faltered at the final two hurdles way too many times.

At 37, this could safely be termed as Rohit's last World Cup in the white-ball format as one doesn't have to be Nostradamus to predict that





he won't be around for the next T20 World Cup in India and the 50-over World Cup in South Africa in 2027.

A very gutsy Irish team with some quality T20 players like Paul Stirling, Josh Little, Harry Tector, Andy Balbirnie, awaits India in the lung-opener.

On a slow track and a sub-standard outfield at the Nassau County ground, how India plays against Irish left-arm spinner George Dockrell will be interesting.

Where India hold the advantage is their spinners who are way better compared to what the Irish team have though the pace attack, aside from Bumrah, looks a bit weak in absence of the redoubtable Mohammed Shami.

Often having too many options isn't the best option just like Indians have at the top. To fit in skipper Rohit and team's most elite batter in Kohli, they have to probably sacrifice Yashasvi Jaiswal. Rishabh Pant's batting at No.3 in the practice game was like a breath of fresh air and Hardik Pandya's bowling form will indicate how India fares in this competition.

At the Cantiague Park nets on Monday, Pandya spent considerable time bowling to Kohli, Suryakumar Yadav and Rohit.

If he can bowl at least three overs every day, the Indian team can also look to play Shivam Dube and include an extra spinner in the line-up.

Like earlier days, Ireland isn't exactly a minnow in this format and very recently, they have beaten Pakistan in their own den in the run-up to the World Cup.

Little has more than little experience of playing IPL for Gujarat Titans and the troika of Balbirnie, Stirling and Tector can more than chance their arms.

The 'Green Shirts' will be the banana peel that Rohit and his men can ill-afford to slip on before they meet the more famous 'Green Jerseys' at the weekend.

Teams (from):

India: Rohit Sharma (captain), Virat Kohli, Rishabh Pant (wk), Suryakumar Yadav, Hardik Pandya, Shivam Dube, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav, Jasprit Bumrah, Arshdeep Singh, Mohammed Siraj, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Sanju Samson, Yuzvendra Chahal.

Ireland: Paul Stirling (captain), Mark Adair, Ross Adair, Andy Balbirnie, Curtis Campher, Gareth Delany, George Dockrell, Graham Hume, Josh Little*, Barry McCarthy, Neil Rock (wk), Harry Tector, Lorcan Tucker (wk), Ben White, Craig Young.

Gavaskar picks Kohli to open for India against Ireland





PTI ■ NEW YORK

Batting legend Sunil Gavaskar feels Virat Kohli should open alongside skipper Rohit Sharma in India's T20 World Cup game against Ireland on Wednesday with Yashasvi Jaiswal dropping down to the number three position.

There has been a lot of debate around Kohli's batting position in the T20 World Cup. Kohli has been India's designated number three batter in the white-ball format for a long time. He heads to the marquee event on the back of an excellent IPL season.

"Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli to open the batting along with Yashasvi Jaiswal at three,Gavaskar said on 'Star Sports while giving his preferred line-up for the game here.

Opening for the Royal Challengers Bengaluru, Kohli piled up 741 runs in 15 matches at an average of 61.75 and a strike rate of over 154. He struck a century and five fifties during the prolific run.

Gavaskar picked the flamboyant Rishabh Pant ahead of Sanju Samson for wickeeping duties and Mohammed Siraj ahead of left-arm pacer Arshdeep Singh.

"Suryakumar Yadav at four, Rishabh Pant at five. At number six, I would have Hardik Pandya, number seven would be Ravindra Jadeja, number eight, not necessarily in that batting order, Shivam Dube. Number nine Kuldeep Yadav, number 10 Jasprit Bumrah and number 11 will be Siraj," he said.

After the game against Ireland, India will take on arch-foes Pakistan here on Sunday.

T20 form best in a decade following IPL success: Cummins

PTI ■ BRIDGETOWN (BARBADOS)

Australia pace spearhead Pat Cummins feels his T20 game is at its best in a decade as he heads into the World Cup high on confidence after a successful Indian Premier League campaign.

Cummins reached Bridgetown on Saturday. He enters the World Cup after a hectic IPL campaign where he led the Sunrisers Hyderabad to a runner up finish.

"Probably as well as I have for the last 10 years really," Cummins told cricket.Com.Au of his T20 bowling. Having never played in he Caribbean, the Australian Test and ODI captain had his first-ever training session in the West Indies on Monday.

But Cummins is confident of how he's placed ahead of the World Cup, having continuously played T20 cricket since March in the IPL.

"We played 17 games straight (at the IPL). For the most part, international T20s are after the Test series, and you've got to try and hit a yorker or a slower ball, and then go back to a Test series," Cummins said.

"So just getting the pace of the game and executing some of those balls that you need more in T20 cricket than in other formats, I feel really



well placed."

Cummins feels that sticking to the same format significantly impacts the tactical side of bowling.

"A lot of T20 bowling in particular is about thinking through your sequencing of which ball to bowl or when, and I think over the course of the season you get to learn pretty quickly what's working and what isn't," he said.

"Even if it doesn't work first game, and you feel like it's never going to work every game, but you know that if you zoom out over the course of the tournament it's going to work for you. So it's nice coming in here with that confidence."

Sri Lanka players criticise their T20 WC schedule citing lengthy travel time

PTI ■ NEW YORK

Sri Lanka captain Wanindu Hasaranga and spinner Maheesh Theekshana have lambasted the scheduling of their team's matches in the ongoing T20 World Cup, saying the roster is "unfair" and has already forced them to cancel one practice due to the long travel time.

Sri Lanka lost their group D opener to South Africa and Theekshana spoke out on the scheduling which he believes has negatively impacted the team.

"So unfair for us, we have to leave every day (after the match) because we are playing (at) four different



venues," Theekshana said.

"The flight we took from Florida, from Miami, we had to wait like eight hours in the airport to get the flight. We were supposed to leave at 8pm but we got the flight at 5am. It's really unfair for us, but it doesn't matter when you play," he added.

South Africa, on the other hand, will be playing two more games here while India, who will start against Ireland on Wednesday, will also play three matches in the city before their last group match in Florida.

"...Even from the hotel, it (the practice venue) is one hour and 40 minutes. Even today (for the match against South Africa), we had to wake up around 5am to come here," Theekshana pointed out.

And that's why the island nation was forced to cancel a training session ahead of the South Africa match.

"Yeah, that's why," Theekshana said.

Theekshana refused to take names but did mention that a few teams "have got the opportunity to stay in the same place but their hotel is only 14 minutes to the ground."

Everything about this place suits me: Phil Salt revels in Caribbean homecoming

PTI ■ BRIDGETOWN (BARBADOS)

It was a homecoming of sorts for England opener Phil Salt when he touched base here for the T20 World Cup.

Salt lived in Barbados for five years after moving to the island as a 10-year-old and was there in the stands when England won the 2010 T20 World Cup.

He eventually moved back to England and as an emerging player was eligible to play for the West Indies as well.

"Everything about the place suits me. Pretty laid back, a lot of cricket, a lot of sport and I've still got a lot of friends on the island," Salt was quoted as saying by the ICC's official website for the World Cup.

He is back as one among England's defending champion team which will open its campaign against Scotland later on Wednesday.

The right-hander made his T20 International debut in January 2022, six months after padding up for the first time in ODIs.

"I watched England here, watched them win it. I think every kid in the crowd would have gone, that's going to be me one day, or I'd like that to be me one day, but you never believe it," he said.

"So now to be here in an England shirt, with the opportunity to do something special in the next month is incredible really. I got a touch of the trophy that day.

All-round Afghanistan trounce Uganda by 125 runs for winning start in T20 WC

PTI ■ PROVIDENCE (GUYANA)

Pacer Fazalhaq Farooqi produced a fiery spell after Rahmanullah Gurbaz and Ibrahim Zadran struck half centuries in a solid opening partnership as Afghanistan began their T20 World Cup campaign with a comprehensive 125-run victory over debutants Uganda here.

Kolkata Knight Riders opener Gurbaz (76 off 45 balls) and his partner Zadran (70 off 46 balls) registered the second highest opening partnership (154) in the men's T20 World Cup as Afghanistan posted a challenging 183/5 after being asked to bat.

Left-arm pacer Farooqi (5/9) then knocked the wind out of the Ugandan batting line-up with his maiden five-wicket haul. The debutants were shot out for 58 in 16 overs.

"The kind of start we wanted as a team. Does not matter who we play, it is about the mindset," skipper and country's biggest cricket icon Rashid Khan said after the match.

"The hard work we have done in the last few weeks, the way the openers started and the way our bowlers bowled - it was a great overall team effort," Rashid, who polished



off the tail, added.

"That is the beauty of this team. We have so many options and that makes it easy as a captain," world's premier T20 spinner gushed.

Seamer Farooqi was twice on the brink of claiming a hat-trick. He was lethal with the new ball.

After being hit for a four off his first delivery, he bowled a brilliant in-swinger which clipped Ronak Patel's bat before crashing onto the stumps. He then trapped Roger Mukasa leg before wicket with a similar delivery.

"I have missed it (getting the hat-trick) a few times (smiles). Something that is not under my control and if I get a chance again, I will try to get that hat-trick," Farooqi said while collecting his 'Player of the Match' award.

Naveen-ul-Haq also picked up two wickets in his first over, leaving Uganda in dire straits at 18/5.

Farooqi then returned in the 13th over to snare three more wickets to register his career-best figures in T20 Internationals.

He first deceived Riazat Ali Shah with a slower delivery to bowl him out before forcing skipper Brian Masaba to nick the ball with an eager Gurbaz collecting it.

He missed out on a hat-trick again but claimed is fifth victim in the last ball of the over.

"I kept it simple and wanted to hit the wickets. Playing franchise cricket helps you improve and helps on the big stage as well.

"Playing with so many big players, it helps in dealing with pressure and in bowling in the right areas," said Farooqi, who has played for SRH in previous editions of IPL.

Earlier, with the ball coming onto the bat nicely and a fast outfield, Afghanistan's openers started strong.

Gurbaz assumed the role of the aggressor first as he smacked the second ball of the innings for a six. Zadran quickly followed suit, hitting four consecutive boundaries in the sixth over off Dinesh Nakrani.

By the end of the first powerplay, Afghanistan were scoring at an impressive rate of 11 runs per over.

Gurbaz, who four boundaries and as many sixes, raced to his fifty off just 28 balls in the ninth over.

Gambhir is a shrewd tactician, will make a good coach for Indian team: Lalchand Rajput

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Former India coach Lalchand Rajput says Gautam Gambhir is the right candidate to take Indian cricket forward since he is a shrewd tactician, a no-nonsense guy and someone who adds value to the set up being a two-time World Cup winner.

Although it is not known if Gambhir has officially applied for the India coach post, it is being speculated that he may replace Rahul Dravid in the high-pressure position after the T20 World Cup. The deadline to apply for the job ended on May 27.

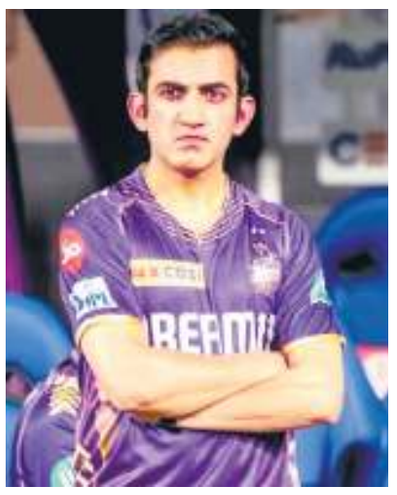
"Gambhir is a no-nonsense guy, he has played cricket the hard way and he reads the game well and that has been seen for KKR (Kolkata Knight Riders) as well," Rajput, who coached India to T20 World Cup win in 2007, told PTI in an exclusive interaction on Tuesday.

Rajput cited the example of Kolkata Knight Riders's winning run at the IPL.

"KKR was the same team last year and you see the difference that he made this year. He is a shrewd tactician as well," said Rajput, the director of cricket for Jabalpur Lions in the upcoming Madhya Pradesh T20 League (MPT20) the Scindia Cup.

Rajput said Gambhir's experience as a two-time World Cup winning Indian player would also come handy.

"I am sure with all his experience — he has won two World Cup (wins) as a player — that will really add value. He is a good candidate, but it all depends upon BCCI who they want. He will be the right



candidate to take Indian cricket forward," Rajput added.

The former India opener drew comparisons between India's squads from the 2007 World T20 winning side with the current squad in the Americas, saying having experienced players in the side is paramount.

"You got to have some experience as well. We can't just go with the fairly new (side) because in World Cup, pressure is also there," he said.

"You should have some senior guys and along with that the juniors because they have to complement each other. Even if you look at our 2007 squad, there were seniors like (Virender) Sehwag, Gambhir, Irfan Pathan, Harbhajan (Singh), RP Singh, Yuvraj Singh…"

"Yes, there were youngsters like Rohit Sharma, Robin Uthappa and even Dinesh Karthik — there was a good mixture (and) it complemented well," he said.

Rajput said it would be a headache to select India's playing XI but backed Rishabh Pant as the wicketkeeper-batter and Virat Kohli as the opener.

"It is a headache to get to the final XI because everybody has been performing well. But wicket-keeping choice, definitely, Pant is the frontrunner because there is no other second thought," he said.

"It is the only thing that who will open, if (Yashasvi) Jaiswal opens, then your balance becomes a little bit (off), then you can't play both Hardik Pandya and Shivam Dube."

"Looking at the balance, Virat Kohli opens, then you can have Suryakumar (Yadav) at No. 3, then No 4. Can be Pant. At five, Hardik Pandya, No. 6 will be Shivam Dube," he added.

Rajput urged the Indian team to think positively and not about the end result as they chase an elusive ICC trophy.

"The main thing is that you don't have to take any pressure because in T20 format you got to go there and express yourself."

Rajput said Madhya Pradesh having its own league, starting June 15, would bring more opportunities to the players of the state.

"The tournament is very good because every state association has got their own premier league. It gives the opportunity for the players to showcase their talent," he said.