



Election Commission of India

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Election Commission of India

India receives highest FDI from Singapore in 2023-24, Mauritius follows

ceived the highest foreign direct investment (FDI) from Singapore in 2023-24 even as overseas capital inflows into the country contracted by about 3.5 per cent due to global economic uncertainties, according to the latest government data.

Though FDI from Singapore has dipped by 31.55 per cent to \$ 11.77 billion in 2023-24, India has attracted the maximum inflows from that country, the data showed. During the last fiscal, FDI equity inflows decreased from major countries, including Mauritius, Singapore, the US, the UK, UAE, Cayman Islands, Germany, and

However, investments increased from the Netherlands and Japan. Since 2018-19, Singapore has been the largest source of such investments for India. In 2017-18, India attracted the maximum FDI from

According to experts, after the India-Mauritius tax treaty amendment. Singapore has emerged as the preferred jurisdiction for investment in India. Rumki Majumdar, Economist, Deloitte India, said that as one of the world's prominent financial hubs, Singapore attracts global investors who want to invest in Asia.

"Recently, India's initiatives such as amendments by the SEBI to the REIT Regulations 2014 have created new opportunities for Singapore-based investors, which is why India is likely seeing high FDI

from Singapore," Majumdar said. She also hoped that FDI into India would pick up in the latter half of 2024-25. Sanjiv Malhotra, Senior Advisor, Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas & Co, said that Singapore and Mauritius are jurisdictions used by global investors to route their money into developing economies such as India.



"While there are many geo-economic and political factors why Singapore has gained more prominence in the recent past, the primary reason for it topping the FDI charts for India is tax," Malhotra said, adding Singapore has a very competitive domestic tax regime and efficient regulatory set-up.

Historically, the double tax avoidance agreement between India and Singapore provided for many beneficial provisions including capital gains exemption in India for investments made from Singapore and even though this provision has been amended. Singapore still is a credible place to create operations with substance to invest further in South-East Asia (including India), he added.

Malhora added that in 2023-24, India witnessed a drop in FDI primarily due to the global uncertainty on account of the disturbances in the Middle-East and Europe. "Hopefully FDI inflows to India may improve in 2024-25 (from 2023-24) but they may still remain below 2022-23 levels. A stable government post elections surely will help the cause of more FDI into India but I see the global headwinds to be too strong as of now," he said.

Anindya Ghosh, Partner, IN-DUSLAW, too said that prior to 2016, Mauritius was a preferred jurisdiction for foreign investment in India due to the significant tax advantage it offered as a low-tax jurisdiction for routing invest-

However, in 2016, India amended its tax treaty with Mauritius to introduce a source-based taxation regime for capital gains, eliminating the tax advantage and reducing the attractiveness of Mauritius as an investment hub for India. After the India-Mauritius tax treaty amendment, Singapore has emerged as the preferred jurisdiction for foreign investment in India due to various factors, Ghosh said.

She added that many multinational companies have their regional headquarters or holding companies based in Singapore, making it a convenient location for channelling investments into India.

She added that global economic conditions, geopolitical tensions, and domestic policy developments may influence the overall FDI inflows in 2024-25.

FDI equity inflows in India declined 3.49 per cent to \$44.42 bilbillion in 2022-23.

The total FDI -- which includes equity inflows, reinvested earnings and other capital -- declined marginally by one per cent to \$ 70.95 billion during 2023-24 from \$ 71.35 billion in 2022-23.

In 2021-22, the country received the highest ever FDI inflows of \$ 84.83 billion. Sectorally, inflows contracted in services, computer software and hardware, trading, telecommunication, automobile, pharma and chemicals.

In contrast, construction (infrastructure) activities, development and power sectors registered a healthy growth in inflows during the period under review.

FDI from Mauritius dipped to \$ 7.97 billion in the last fiscal from \$ 6.13 billion in 2022-23.

The US is the third largest investor in India in 2023-24 with \$ 4.99 billion foreign investments, though it is down from \$ 6 billion in 2022-23. It was followed by the Netherlands (\$ 4.93 billion), Japan (\$ 3.17 billion), the UAE (\$ 2.9 billion), UK (\$ 1.2 billion), Cyprus (\$ 806 million), Germany (\$ 505 million), and Cayman Islands (\$ 342 million). As per the data, Mauritius accounts for 25 per cent of the total FDI which India has received during April 2000 to March 2024 (\$ 171.84 billion), while Singapore's share is 24 per cent (\$ 159.94 billion). The US accounted for 10 per cent of total overseas investments with \$65.19 billion dur-

ing the period. Foreign investments are crucial for India to overhaul its infrastructure such as ports, airports and highways to push growth. FDI also helps improve the country's balance of payments situation and strengthen the rupee value against other global currencies, especially the US dollar. (PTI)

Contd. from Page 3...

Lotus blooms in 'Land

We shall continue with greater vigour to work for Sabka Sath, Sabka Vikas." Khandu himself won uncontested from the Mukto assembly constituency. Nine other BJP candidates also tasted victory unopposed. "The people of the state has repaid to the contribution of Prime Minister (Narendra Modi).....The development witnessed under the BJP-led NDA regime in the state is the major factor for the party's win in the state," Khandu

The development witnessed in Arunachal Pradesh under the BJP-led central government is a major factor for the party's win in the state, the chief minister asserted. To a question regarding the formation of the new ministry, Khandu said that after the Lok Sabha polls counting on June 4, all the winning candidates of the party would convene a meeting where the chief ministerial candidate would be decided.

"BJP is a disciplined party. The party will select the leader with consensus from all elected candidates," Khandu said. While the BJP's vote share is 54.57 per cent, as many as 14 party candidates including Education Minister Taba Tedir, were defeated this time. The minister was defeated by NCP nominee Toko Tatung, a greenhorn, in the Yachuli constituency. A total of 20 first-timers tasted victory in the northeastern state. Eleven of them are from BJP, four from NPP, two each from PPA and NCP and one independent.

The opposition Congress which fielded 19 candidates in the 60-member assembly managed to bag only one seat, Bamang, where former state home minister Kumar Waii won by a slender margin of 635 votes defeating BJP's Doba Lamnio. State Congress president NabamTuki said the party was "disappointed but not demoralised" by the election results. "We will introspect about the causes of the defeat and work on the organisation in the coming days," he added.

The National People's Party (NPP) which won five seats, annexed 16.11 per cent while the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) gained a vote share of 10.43 per cent and won three seats. The regional People's Party of Arunachal (PPA) which managed to win two seats had a vote share of 7.24 per cent. Kiren Rijjiju, Union minister and Lok Sabha poll candidate from Arunachal Pradesh, said the credit for this assembly polls results goes to the people of the state, the BJP workers and the leadership of PM Modi.

'The development that took place in Arunachal Pradesh in the last 10 years, didn't happen when the Congress was in power there for 60 years... This victory will inspire us to work more in the future," Rijiju said. On the other hand the Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM) returned to power by sweeping the assembly polls in the Himalayan state, winning 31 of the 32 seats.

The opposition Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF), which ruled the state for 25 years in a row till 2019, could manage only one seat, while its president and former CM Pawan Kumar Chamling, who is Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang's mentor-turned-adversary, lost in the two seats he contested. The 73-year-old eight-term legislator will not be seen in the assembly for the first time since 1985. Tamang, however, won from two seats, and his party bagged 58.38 per cent of the votes polled. The SKM had won 17 seats in the 2019 assembly polls. The Prime Minister hailed Tamang and the SKM for the victory. (With inputs from PTI)

Delhi CM Kejriwal surrenders

temple in Connaught Place and addressed workers and leaders of the AAP before surrendering. Kejriwal's wife Sunita Kejriwal was seen accompanying him. AAP leaders, including Atishi, Kailash Gahlot and Saurabh Bharadwaj, Rajya Sabha MPs Sanjay Singh and Sandeep Pathak, and party leaders Durgesh Pathak,

Rakhi Birla and Reena Gupta were also present. (PTI) Cong, INDIA bloc trying

The BJP delegation urged the EC to ensure enhanced monitoring and security measures are put in place during counting of votes to prevent "any attempts at violence or unrest"

Earlier in the day, a delegation of opposition INDIA bloc leaders, including Congress's Abhishek Singhvi, met the commission and urged it to ensure that all the guidelines are followed on June 4, including declaring the postal-ballot results before the outcome of the EVMs is announced.

Union minister Goyal said, "I think the mandate given by the people of India both in 2014 and 2019, and the likely mandate of the 2024 general elections, expected on June 4, has unnerved the opposition parties and certain non-governmental organisations, so called civil society groups, who can not accept a popular leader of the masses who has delivered for the wellbeing of 1.4 billion Indians." Exit polls on Saturday predicted that Prime Minister Modi will retain power for a third straight term, with the BJP-led NDA expected to win a big majority in the

Terming the exit polls "bogus", the Congress on Sunday said they were a "deliberate attempt to justify rigging' of the elections and part of "psychological games" being played by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to lower the morale of the INDIA bloc workers. Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi dubbed the exit polls as "Modi media poll". (PTI)

Exit polls 'bogus, 'deliberate

the ruling alliance and 152-182 seats for the INDIA bloc. Slamming the exit polls, Ramesh said that in some states the NDA has been given more seats than the number of seats available in that state. "It flies in the face of all political feedback. The INDIA 'janbandhan' parties met yesterday, we went through state-wise analysis and there is no way INDIA janbandhan is going to get less than 295 seats," Ramesh said.

"This is a deliberate attempt to justify rigging, this is a deliberate attempt to justify manipulation of EVMs and this is also psychological ops to lower the morale of the Congress workers and the INDIA janbandhan workers. We are not going to be frightened, we are not going to be intimidated and you will see that the actual results on June 4 will be completely different from what these exit polls show," the Congress general secretary said. These are political exit polls and not professional exit polls, he added.

Ramesh pointed out that Congress treasurer and senior leader Ajay Maken has raised the issue of candidates' counting agents at the Assistant Returning Officer (ARO) table not being allowed. "He (Maken) has raised this issue, there has been some response from the CEO of Delhi but the fact of the matter is that he raised this issue based on legitimate fears that had been expressed by the candidates. We have raised the issue of the counting of postal ballots and the effort of the Election Commission to change the methodology that has been part of the law,' Ramesh said. He said the Congress has raised all such issues before the poll watchdog and had filed 117 complaints to it over the last 77 days, 14 of which are against the PM. (PTI)

CID, forensic experts to probe

who visited the victim's residence, also assured of stern action, claiming that there was evidence that Gogoi was killed. "Visited the residence of late Sunil Gogoi who has been brutally killed by unknown criminals last night. He was a popular and bold leader of BJP. Visited the crime site which bears proof of pre planned ghastly murder,' he said. Pegu added that he has spoken to chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma over the matter and requested him to ensure speedy investigation to nab the culprits. (PTI)

Pijush Hazarika visits flood-

this endeavor, emphasising that the dam will be vital for their protection and welfare. "I have instructed the engineers and officials of the Public Works Department and Water Resources Department to initiate the preliminary steps for the dam's construction, with the support of local MLAs and the District Administration," he added. Accompanying Hazarika were Ramkrishna Ghosh, Local MLA, Lachit Kumar Das, district commissioner, the

superintendent of police, BJP district president, and several other officials. Meanwhile, as per officials, the flood situation in Assam remained unchanged with more than six lakh people in 10 districts reeling under waters. Heavy rains in different parts of the state led to the swelling of river water

level, forcing affected people in many areas to evacuate to safety. Kopili, Barak and Kushiyara rivers were flowing over the danger level. Altogether 6,01,642 people in Hailakandi Hojai, Morigaon, Karimganj, Nagaon, Cachar, Dibrugarh, Golaghat, Karbi Anglong West and Dima Hasao districts remained affected due to the floods. The death toll in floods and storm since May 28 is at 15, the officials said. Nagaon remained the worst-hit district with over 2.79 affected population, followed by Hojai (1,26,813 affected population) and Cachar (1,12,265). More than 40,000 displaced people were taking shelter in relief camps across various districts. Rescue and relief operations were being carried out by multiple agencies, including NDRF, SDRF, local administration and people. Road and rail communication in several parts of the state remained disrupted, of-

Ensure postal ballots counted first,

given a go-by. They have repealed the practice," he added. In a letter to the EC, the leaders said the number of postal ballots has gone up significantly in this Lok Sabha election as senior citizens (aged 85 years and above) and differently-abled persons were allowed to cast their votes through this process.

They quoted various rules and guidelines of the EC, including provisions of the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961 and Handbook for Returning Officer and Counting Agents (August 2023), that said the counting of postal ballots shall be done first.

Another letter, signed by 13 opposition leaders, including Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, Nationalist Congress Party (SP) president Sharad Pawar and CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury, said even as political parties have put in a lot of effort to train their counting agents, the counting officials often fail to fully understand all aspects of the counting process. Elaborating on the opposition's demands, Yechury said the leaders have requested the EC to ensure that its own guidelines are implemented. The guidelines include ensuring that the control units of the EVMs are moved through CCTV-monitored corridors and a verification of the date-and-time display of the control units is done.

"This verification is important because unless it is done, there is no authenticity that it is the same control unit that came from the polling booth, that it has not been changed," he said. The Communist Party of India (Marxist) leader also said the start and end time and the date of the polling process should be checked on the control unit.

The slips and tags that are put when an EVM is sealed should be shown to all the counting agents for verification. After pressing the button for the results, reconfirming the date of polling is not done ... that has to be ensured," he said. The opposition parties have asked their agents to monitor the vote-counting process closely on Tuesday and ensure that form 17C, which contains the number of votes recorded at each polling station, is shared with them. Polling for the seven-phase parliamentary election was concluded on Saturday. (PTI)

Undercurrent in favour of

us in Assam. Although I will not say the number I will assure you that both vote percentage and seat will increase for the Congress in the state," he added. Meanwhile, the senior Congress leader also said that the fight against the BJP will continue till the saffron party is ousted from power in the state.

Union minister Sonowal stresses

the social life of Assam," he added. The Union minister stressed the significance of mastering global knowledge through modern technology, underscoring the need for continuous learning and adaptation in today's competitive world. The event served as a platform to celebrate the achievements of meritorious students while reaffirming the commitment to nurturing the youth as the driving force behind India's progress.

GST collection rises 10% to ₹ 1.73 trn in May on higher revenues

NEW DELHI, June 2: The country's gross GST collections rose to ₹ 1.73 trillion in May, growing 10 per cent year on year driven by increased revenues from domestic transactions, the finance ministry said on Saturday. GST collections had touched a record high of ₹ 2.10 trillion

"The gross Goods and Services Tax (GST) revenue for the month of May 2024 stood at ₹ 1.73 trillion," the ministry said in a statement.

The 10 per cent year-on-year growth in May collection is driven by a strong increase in revenues from domestic transactions (up 15.3 per cent) amid slowing of imports (down 4.3 per

After accounting for refunds, the net GST revenue for May 2024 stood at ₹ 1.44 trillion, reflecting a growth of 6.9 per cent compared to the

The gross GST collections in FY25 till May 2024 stood at ₹ 3.83 trillion, which is a 11.3 per cent year-on-year growth, driven by a strong increase in domestic transactions (up 14.2 per cent) and marginal increase in imports (up 1.4 per cent). After accounting for refunds, the net GST revenue in the FY 2024-25 till May 2024 stood at ₹3.36 trillion, reflecting a growth of 11.6 per

Deep tech startup policy likely in forthcoming Budget

NEW DELHI, June 2: The commerce and industry ministry may propose a dedicated policy for deep tech startups to promote innovation, for the forthcoming Budget to be announced by the new government, an official said. Voting for the Lok Sabha polls is over and the counting is scheduled for June 4. The new government is likely to take oath this month. The new government may announce the full Budget for 2024-

The official said that startups have to convert their innovation into intellectual property rights and for that extensive R&D is required. The policy is in the final stages and the ministry may forward this proposal for the full Budget announcement, the official said. In July last year, a draft National Deep Tech Startup Policy (NDTSP) was released for stakeholders' comments. It is aimed at addressing the challenges confronting deep tech startups through definitive policy interventions to create a conducive ecosystem. It also aims to harness the transformative potential of technological advancement across diverse sectors, serving as a catalyst to stimulate ripple effects throughout the econ-

ruptive nature, they have the potential to solve India's most pressing societal issues. According to the draft, the priority is to strengthen the research and innovation ecosystem leading to scientific breakthroughs and technological advancements, boosting India's knowledge-driven economy. The main elements which are required to promote R&D and innovation include the creation of intellectual property rights, funding, infrastructure, standards and certification, and capacity building.

In March at a Startup Mahakumbh programme, Secretary in the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) Rajesh Kumar Singh stated, "The Government of India is in the process of creating a separate dedicated deep tech startup policy. The policy paper is now in the final stages of inter-ministerial discussion. We hope to bring it forward soon." "We will move towards creating funds of funds. Hopefully, you will see a separate window for deep tech startups", Singh had said. The Prime Minister's Science, Technology, and Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC), in its 21st meeting on July 7, 2022, recommended the creation of a national consortium and a working group to propose a comprehensive policy framework to address the needs and strengthen the Indian deep tech startup ecosystem. (PTI)

omy and laying the groundwork for new industry creation. Deep technology refers to innovations founded on advanced scientific and cent compared to the same period last year. (PTI) technological breakthroughs. Due to their dis-Monetary policy: RBI unlikely to cut interest rate on June 7, say experts

Bank of India (RBI) is unlikely to cut the benchmark interest rate at its upcoming monetary policy review meeting, taking place soon after the announcement of the Lok Sabha election results, amid inflation challenges, said experts.

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) may also refrain from rate cut as economic growth is picking up, notwithstanding the elevated interest rate of 6.5 per cent (repo) prevailing since February 2023. The meeting of the Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das headed MPC is scheduled for June 5 to 7. The decision will be announced on June 7 (Friday). Results of the Lok Sabha elections will be announced on June 4.

The central bank last hiked the repo rate to 6.5 per cent in February 2023 and since then it has held the rate at same level in its previous six bi-monthly policies.

If the interest rate remains untouched again on June 7, it would be the eighth time for the RBI to maintain the status quo on the benchmark repo rate.

On expectations from the June policy, Madan Sabnavis, Chief Economist, Bank of Baroda, said economic conditions have largely remained unchanged since the last policy. High-frequency indicators like PMI and GST collections do show that growth is on course.

He further said concerns on inflation remain even though the last couple of numbers have come at less than 5 per cent. The ongoing heat wave has affected prices of vegetables in particular and while the IMD has predicted a normal monsoon, it would be prudent to wait and monitor how it pro-

"Under these conditions, a status quo on policy rate and stance may be expected. It would be interesting to see, however, if RBI changes forecasts of GDP and inflation for FY25," Sabnavis opined.

Sanjay Nayar, President of industry body Assocham, too said the central bank is expected to keep the repo rate unchanged in the ensuing MPC meeting as retail inflation remains above the target of 4 per cent.

"Though inflation has started receding, the macros would become clearer only after the monsoon season plays out in September. To get a sustainable balance between cyclical consumption-driven growth and inflation, investment growth to propel the supply side...," he added. The government has mandated the Reserve Bank to ensure the consumer price index (CPI) based inflation remains at 4 per cent with a margin of 2 per cent on either side.

The retail inflation based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) was 4.83 per cent in April this year.

Aditi Navar, Chief Economist, ICRA, said the recent inflation data and the outlook for prices of food and commodities had suggested a status quo on the rates and stance in the upcoming June 2024 monetary policy review.

"This has been further cemented by the higher-than-forecast expansion in the Indian economy in Q4 FY2024, which led to the full year GDP growth printing above 8 per cent. As a result, the likelihood of a stance change in August 2024



followed by a rate cut in October 2024 has eased, unless an abundantly well distributed monsoon quells food prices in a sustainable fashion," she added

The MPC is entrusted with the responsibility of deciding the policv repo rate to achieve the inflation target, keeping in mind the objective of growth.

Ranen Banerjee, Partner and Leader Economic Advisory, PwC India, opined that given the uncertainty and risks on the inflation front, commodity prices and oil prices trending higher, the MPC will be constrained to have a status quo on the policy rates.

"There is no urgency on rate action too as the growth is sustaining and the US economic data also suggests that the US Fed will not cut rates before October 2024. The yields have softened without any rate action given the expected lower borrowings by the government from the high dividends from RBI," he said

There could however be some action by way of reduction in the CRR given the liquidity challenges, Banerjee added. Manish Jaiswal, Group COO, Eldeco, also expects the RBI to keep the repo rate steady at the forthcoming monetary policy meeting.

"This policy aims to stabilize the real estate market, make homes more affordable, and sustain growth. Stable home loan rates improve consumer confidence and enable more informed investment decisions. This favourable environment enables us to launch new projects and encourages buyers to invest confidently, thereby driving real estate sector growth and contributing to India's economic progress," he said.

The MPC consists of three external members and three officials of the RBI. External members of the rate-setting panel are Shashanka Bhide, Ashima Goyal, and Jayanth R Varma. In an offcycle meeting in May 2022, the MPC raised the policy rate by 40 basis points and it was followed by rate hikes of varying sizes, in each of the five subsequent meetings till February 2023. The repo rate was raised by 250 basis points cumulatively between May 2022 and February 2023. (PTI)

China's Chang'e-6 successfully lands on rarely explored Moon's far side

Zelenskyy accuses China of pressuring other countries

Exit polls: Cong's state leaders confident of much better returns

LS polls: EC asks Cong's Ramesh to share details of claim

Vol.No.XXV

Issue No. 143

RNI-ASSENG/2000/12862

DIPHU, KARBI ANGLONG, MONDAY, JUNE 3, 2024

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PRICE ₹8

SKM retains Sikkim winning 31 out of 32 seats • PM congratulates Khandu, Tamang • New ministry after LS poll results: Arunachal CM

Lotus blooms in 'Land of the rising sun' again

GUWAHATI, June 2: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Sunday retained in Arunachal Pradesh, while the ruling Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM) secured a second term in Sikkim. Voting was held for 60 assembly seats in Arunachal Pradesh and 32 assembly seats in Sikkim on April 19.

The saffron party returned to power in Arunachal Pradesh for the third time in a row after winning 46 seats in the 60-member assembly, and bagging four more seats compared to its 2019 tally.

In sweeping the assembly elections, the counting of which was held during the day, the BJP decimated the opposition parties, especially the Congress which was relegated to the fifth position with only one seat after NPP (5), NCP

HTBRIEFS

Dry Day

DIPHU: The district adminis-

tration of Karbi Anglong has de-

clared Dry Day on June 4, the

day of counting for Lok Sabha

other establishment settings or

serving liquor will remain

Heroin recovered

BOKAJAN: The police in

Karbi Anglong recovered heroin

and arrested one in this connec-

tion. The police intercepted a car, AS 23 AG 0299, carried out

a thorough searched during which 24 identical plastic soap cases were recovered. The cases

were filled with heroin which was concealed inside the front bonnet of the car. The contraband weighing 271.16 grams

was seized in presence of the in-

dependent witnesses. The driver

of the car identified as Pranab

Baruah, son of Puful Boruah,

resident of Kaupatoni, Mahade-

vpur police station, Namsai dis-

trict in Arunachal Pradesh has

Seven held

GUWAHATI: Seven persons

have been arrested and contra-

band drugs recovered from them

in separate operations in Assam's

Barak Valley, chief minister Hi-

manta Biswa Sarma said on Sun-

day. The operations were carried

out on Saturday, he said. Sharing

details on X, Sarma said the op-

erations were conducted based on

the police's 'strong intelligence

been apprehended.

network'

closed during the dry day.

(3) and PPA (2). Three seats went to Independent candidates.

Chief Minister Pema Khandu asserted that the momentum of what happened in the 'Land of the rising sun', a sobriquet for Arunachal



of the country on June 4 when votes for the Lok Sabha elections will be counted.

"This is a historic occasion for the BJP and entire Arunachal Pradesh. The people of Arunachal Pradesh have declared that they

next five years. This time, the mandate is more than what we got in 2019. In the 2019 Assembly polls, BJP won 41 seats, while we have won 46 seats this time," Khandu said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated the people of Arunachal Pradesh for the landslide win.

"Thank you Arunachal Pradesh! The people of this wonderful state have given an unequivocal mandate to politics of development. My gratitude to them for reposing their faith in @BJP4Arunachalyet again. Our Party will keep working with even greater vigour for the state's growth," Modi said in a post on X. In response, Khandu said, 'Your guidance and vision have played a monumental role in our success. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Delhi CM Kejriwal surrenders at Tihar jail

NEW DELHI, June 2: Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday surrendered at the Tihar jail here after his interim bail granted by the Supreme Court in the excise policylinked money laundering case ended on June 1.

He was granted the relief for campaigning in the Lok Sabha elections. Before surrendering, Kejriwal paid homage to Mahatma Gandhi at the Raj Ghat, offered prayers at the Hanuman temple in Connaught Place and addressed AAP leaders and workers at the party office.

During his address, Kejriwal said, "I am going back to jail not because I was involved in corruption but because I raised voice against dictatorship," he said.

"I was given a 21-day (relief) by the Supreme Court. These 21 days were unforgettable. I did not waste even a minute. I campaigned for saving the country. The AAP is not important, it is secondary. The country comes first," he said.

Kejriwal also asserted that all exit polls predicting a third term for the BJP-led NDA at the Centre were "fake". Exit polls on Saturday predicted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will retain power for a third straight term, with the NDA expected to win a big majority in the polls. "They are not forming government on June 4. These exit polls are mind games to drive you into depression," Kejriwal told AAP workers and leaders.

Before Kejriwal arrived at the Tihar jail, traffic movement was restricted in the areas around the prison and security arrangements heightened with deployment of deployment of police personnel.

The chief minister paid homage at Mahatma Gandhi's memorial at the Raj Ghat, offered prayers at the Hanuman (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

ment (CID) has been entrusted to probe the suspected murder of a contractor and local BJP leader in Dhakuakhana in Assam's Lakhimpur district, whose half-burnt body with the head missing was recovered in a field, a top police officer said on Sunday

NORTH LAKHIMPUR, June 2:

The Criminal Investigation Depart-

CID, forensic experts

to probe Dhakuakhana

murder: DGP

Another officer said foul play is suspected in the case as per prima facie investigation.

The body of Sunil Gogoi, a government contractor and local BJP leader, was found with the head missing and in a half-burnt condition in an open field near his residence on Saturday evening.

Lakhimpur superintendent of police Aparna Natarajan said, "It appears to be a case of murder, prima facie. But we cannot say anything more at the moment. Investigating agencies are coming from Guwahati and only then the picture will be

Director General of Police GP Singh, in a post on X, said a team of CID and Forensic Science Laboratory has been sent to Dhakuakhana to take forward the investigation.

"Reference murder Dhakuakhana, North Lakhimpur - A team of @AssamCid and FSL led by IGP CID has been sent to the spot from Guwahati to associate in the investigation with @lakhimpurpolice We shall leave no stone unturned to identify the perpetrators and bring them to face the justice,' he said. State education minister

Pradesh, will spread to other parts Cong, INDIA bloc trying to undermine

electoral process: BJP election. It has prohibited the possession of any intoxicants by any person or group of persons and banned the sale of liquor, **NEW DELHI, June 2:** The Conmemorandum to the Election Comgress and other INDIA bloc congiving or distribution of alcohol, stituents as well as certain civil fermented or intoxicating society groups are trying to underliquors or other substances of a mine the integrity of India's eleclike nature at a hotel, eating toral process, the BJP alleged on houses, tavern, shop or any Sunday and urged the Election other place, public or private. Commission to prevent any at-All Bonded warehouses, IMFL tempts of "violence and unrest" Retails OFF / ON shops includduring counting of Lok Sabha poll ing Club ON, Hotel ON, Star votes on June 4. Hotels, country spirit shops,

The poll panel was also urged by a BJP delegation comprising Union ministers Nirmala Sitharaman and Piyush Goyal to take cognisance of the "systematic attempts" being made to undermine the process and initiate stringent action against those responsible.

The delegation submitted a

mission (EC) in this regard. Their efforts against India's

"very robust" electoral process are a direct attack on the country's democratic institutions and pose a risk to public order and trust in the electoral system, Goyal told reporters after meeting the officials of the commission. "We had to call upon the Election Commission today in light of the repeated attempts by a section of political parties, like the Congress and their INDI alliance partners, and also by certain motivated civil society groups and NGOs who are trying their level best to undermine the integrity of India's electoral process,"

he said. (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

"These are mind games -- 'I am coming back, I am going to be the

River. During his visit, Hazarika in-

teracted with the affected residents

and assured them of full assistance.

emphasised the importance of the

proposed construction of a 13 km

long embankment dam, announced

by chief minister Himanta Biswa

"Due to technical issues, the proj-

Sarma in 2023.

Speaking to the media, Hazarika

Exit polls 'bogus, 'deliberate attempt' to justify rigging: Cong NEW DELHI, June 2: Terming guaranteed on June 4".

the exit polls "bogus", the Congress on Sunday said they were a "deliberate attempt" to justify rigging of the elections and part of "psychological games" being played by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to lower the morale of the INDIA bloc workers.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh also hit out at Prime Minister Modi for holding several meetings, including a long brainstorming session to review the 100day agenda of the "new government", saying these were "pressure tactics" to send out a signal to the bureaucracy and the administrative structure that he is coming back



ministrative structure of the country and we hope that the civil servants who have been entrusted with the responsibility of ensuing a fair counting of votes will not be intimidated and not be frightened by these pressure tactics," Ramesh told PTI at the AICC headquarters here.

He also said that the exit polls that came out Saturday evening are "completely bogus" and have been "orchestrated and masterminded by

"These are all part of the psychological games being played by the

outgoing prime minister (Narendra Modi) and the outgoing home minister (Amit Shah). The outgoing home minister calls up 150 District Magistrates and collectors yesterday. The results that the exit polls have come up with bear no relation to reality," the Congress leader said.

Exit polls on Saturday predicted that Prime Minister Modi will retain power for a third straight term, with the BJP-led NDA expected to win a ig majority in the Lok Sabha polls. While India Today-Axis My

India has forecast 361-401 seats for the BJP-led alliance and 131-166 seats for the opposition INDIA bloc in the 543-member Lok Sabha, the ABP-C Voter predicted 353-383 seats for (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Ensure postal ballots counted first, guidelines followed: INDIA bloc to EC

NEW DELHI, June 2: Leaders from the INDIA opposition bloc urged the Election Commission (EC) on Sunday to ensure that on June 4, the postal ballots are counted and their results declared before the outcome of the EVMs is announced, and stressed that the poll panel should issue clear guidelines on the counting process and ensure that those are implemented.

A delegation of leaders from the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) met the full bench of the EC on Sunday, ahead of Tuesday's counting of the votes polled in the Lok Sabha elec-

Briefing the media after the meeting, Congress leader Abhishek Singhyi said this was the third time that a delegation of opposition leaders visited the poll panel during the



things, urged the officials to ensure that the postal ballots are counted and their results declared before the results of the electronic voting machines (EVMs) are announced.

"This is the third multi-party delegation visiting the EC during this process.... We spent time with the EC on two-three major issues. Most important was counting the postal ballots and declaring the results first. This is a very clearly stated statutory rule, which specifically says that you should take up the postal ballots first," Singhvi said. "Our complaint is that this guideline has been (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Pijush Hazarika visits floodaffected areas in Hojai

Over 6 lakh people affected in 10 districts



HT Correspondent HOJAI, June 2: Minister for Water Resources, Pijush Hazarika, conducted a visit to the flood-affected

areas of Hojai district on Sunday to

assess the situation.

Several areas, including Raikata, Dighalbari, and Bishnupur, have witnessed severe flooding due to the rising water levels of the Kopili

ect was delayed. A detailed study was conducted by IIT Guwahati, and last month they submitted their report to us," he added. Hazarika also announced that

construction work on the dam is scheduled to commence from November 2024. He appealed to the people to cooperate with the government in (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

IIM in Assam gets Centre's nod

HT Bureau

GUWAHATI, June 2: The proposal for the establishment of a new Indian Institute of Management (IIM) near Assam's capital Guwahati has been approved by the Union Education Ministry, said chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Sunday.

Sarma said the state government had been pursuing the matter with the Centre for last 18 months, and the new institute will be a "game changer" for higher education in the state.

"Sharing a BIG NEWS! Following our request in 2023, Hon PM Shri @narendramodi ji has given a spcl gift to the people of Assam by approving an Indian Institute of Management near Guwahati, making it among the few cities to house an IIT, AIIMS, Nat'l Law Univ & now IIM," Sarma wrote on

micro=blogging site X. The Assam chief minister said the state government had presented its case before education minister Dharmendra Pradhan and his min-

istry, besides writing to PM Modi. Sarma said the state government has offered land and logistical support for the new institute, which will be mentored by IIM Ahmed-

"This will be game changer for Assam, making the State an education hub in Eastern India and also help fulfill our economic aspirations." he said.

"As evident from the letters, the swift transformation from idea to execution illustrates the power of a Double Engine government," he added, sharing the letters written by him to Modi and Pradhan, and another from the Education Ministry.

As per the letter written by joint secretary in the education ministry PK Banerjee to the director of IIM-Ahmedabad, the new institute will come up on a plot of land measuring 76.8332 hectares at Marabhita in Kamrup district near Guwahati.

With IIM-Ahmedabad to be the mentor institute, it has been asked to initiate the preparation of a detailed project report, in consultation with the Higher Education Department and the Assam government, and submit it to the Education Ministry for further necessary action.

Undercurrent in favour of Congress in Assam: Borah

HT Bureau
GUWAHATI, June 2: Assam Congress president Bhupen Borah has disagreed with the predictions of exit polls and asserted that there was an undercurrent in the state in favour of the opposition party.

"There is no doubt that there was an undercurrent in our favour. This is known to many; however, the media will not accept it publicly," he said on Sunday.

Borah claimed that the exit polls were published to impress the government. "Many of the agencies do exit polls to keep the government happy. Moreover, in exit polls, only a small sample size is considered which cannot give the whole picture. Every 3-4 kilometres, the mood of the people changes in the country," he added.

Borah questioned the efficacy of the exit polls. However, he also mentioned that the exit polls have given the Congress party a relatively good number in Assam. "Exit polls have predicted at least 3-4 seats for (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Union minister Sonowal stresses on youth's empowerment in Dibrugarh HT Correspondent

DIBRUGARH, June 2: Union Minister of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways, as well as Ayush, Sarbananda Sonowal, emphasised the critical importance of enabling youth with wisdom, empowering them with opportunities, and energising them with vision.

Addressing a gathering organised by the Dibrugarh District Committee of All Assam Sonowal Kachari Students Union (AASKSU) at Kacharibari, on Sunday, Sonowal underscored the transformative potential of the nation's youth when equipped with the right tools and

The event also saw Sonowal felicitating students who excelled in the recently announced results of 10th and 12th standard exams from both state and central boards, acknowledging their hard work and achievements

In his speech, Sonowal invoked India's rich heritage and emphasised



Sarba highlighted the role of PM's vision in galvanising collective efforts toward national progress

the need to harness its power to pave the way for a brighter future. He further highlighted the role of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision in galvanising collective efforts toward national progress.

"I want to take this opportunity to highlight the innate power that our rich heritage has. Our youth must be enabled with wisdom, empowered

with opportunities & energised with vision to effect changes that we desire to bring. India, for a long time, reeled under tumultuous misrule which affected our idea of the nation," Sonowal added.

Sonowal also urged the youth to draw inspiration from Swami Vivekananda's ideals of wisdom and service, emphasising the importance of building a strong nation through collective endeavor.

Recognising the pivotal role of young students in shaping the country's future, Sonowal expressed confidence in their ability to drive the nation-building process forward with wisdom, strength, and determi-

Speaking specifically about the Sonowal Kachari community, Sonowal lauded its contributions to Assamese nation-building, emphasising the importance of preserving its dynamic culture and spiritual traditions. He called upon the youth of the community to actively engage in education, culture, and sports to up-

hold this legacy. "The Sonowal Kachari community has played a pivotal role in the broader Assamese nation-building process. The values of the dynamic culture and spiritual traditions have profoundly shaped the personalities of the Sonowal people, significantly impacting (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

THE HILLS TIMES

VOL. XXV, ISSUE 143, DIPHU, MONDAY, JUNE 3, 2024

QUOTE OF THE DAY If you want a thing done well, do it yourself

- Napoleon Bonaparte

Indian economy: **Upward ride**

India's latest GDP figures, revealing an impressive growth rate of 8.2% for 2023-24, couldn't have come at a better time for the ruling BJP. As the final phase of parliamentary voting concludes, this robust economic performance stands to bolster the BJP-led NDA's chances of victory. If they secure the win, a soaring financial market seems a likely outcome. While much of the global economy faces turbulence—China grappling with a potential financial meltdown and the US maintaining high policy interest rates despite dodging recession predictions—India stands out. Understanding the factors behind this remarkable growth requires a closer look at investment dynamics, consumption trends, export performance, and overseas fund flows. A pivotal driver of India's economic surge is investment, particularly public investment. Government-led initiatives in infrastructure and social capital have propelled the economy forward, with public investment now approaching 29% of GDP. This investment boom is underpinned by strong revenue collections, with GST receipts consistently exceeding ₹ 1 lakh crore monthly, contributing to stable public finances and a manageable fiscal deficit of 5.6%. Additionally, the Reserve Bank of India's unprecedented dividend transfer of ₹ 2.11 lakh crore to the central government, along with substantial surpluses from public sector banks, has further bolstered public expenditure capabilities within pru-

On the consumption front, private final consumption remains a major pillar, accounting for approximately 60% of GDP's expenditure side. Recent high-frequency data indicate robust growth in urban sectors like auto sales, housing loans, and fuel consumption, although rural demand lags slightly despite forecasts of a normal monsoon. Exports are showing signs of recovery, with merchandise exports returning to positive territory after a previous decline. Rising imports also reflect strong domestic demand. Services exports remain buoyant, though some uncertainties loom with the rise of new AI products. Inflation remains benign, offering further comfort to policymakers. CPI inflation was at 4.8% in April 2024, down from 4.9% in March, continuing a downward trend since January. The primary deflationary pressure stems from petroleum-related commodities and transport services. For the incoming government, the challenge will be to sustain this economic momentum. Continued focus on infrastructure development, leveraging buoyant public resources, can catalyse larger private sector investments. Business confidence surveys suggest a positive shift in sentiment, with significant private investments anticipated, particularly in sectors like semiconductor manufacturing.

However, some technical criticisms merit attention. Economists have raised concerns about the GDP deflator, suggesting it overly relies on WPI inflation figures, which have been low, rather than CPI numbers. This methodological choice could inflate the perceived growth rate. Despite these technical debates, the resilience and robust recovery of the Indian economy in a post-COVID world are undeniable. India's economy has demonstrated remarkable resilience and growth in a challenging global environment. With careful policy management and strategic investments, the nation is well-positioned to maintain its economic vitality. As the new government takes charge, the emphasis should be on maintaining the current growth trajectory, ensuring that the financial markets continue to reflect this positive trend.

Renowned writer Jhumpa Lahiri is opposed to Narendra Modi's notion of India

By: Arun Kumar Shrivastav

s the world is on a boil with wars raging between Russia and Ukraine and the Israeli onslaught on Palestinians, world leaders and intellectuals are hard-pressed to comprehend and rationalize the gruesome developments. In an interview with The Guardian Pulitzer prize-winning writer author Jhumpa Lahiri has taken a stance on the obsession to identify oneself with a particular land or language. She finds this trend dangerous and blames the ill-conceived idea of nationalism for this. Jhumpa Lahiri mentions Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to say that she doesn't believe in his "notion of what India

She has not taken a discordant note though, as some writers would, take, for example, Arundhati Roy. Like her writings, Jhumpa Lahiri says she does it for herself, and not for the audience. This time, too, she seems to have spoken to and for herself and not to the world at large.

She is trying to protest the "increasingly nationalist sentiment" that has grown to a dangerous level across the world.

The interview starts with a question that she faces too often and she must find it both hard and irritating to answer: Where are you really from? Jhumpa Lahiri born to Indian parents in London who moved to the US when she was 3, now lives in the US and Italy, and writes in English and Italian, thinks she has too many pieces to herself, making it difficult to say which one is she.

"I've never had that claim to any place and I think that we should try to think about the fact that we really are all passing through," she said.

"I understand that we don't want things to be false, we want things to be true, but then there's the leap from authenticity to the idea of purity, and therefore, what is not authentic or pure is somehow corrupt, and that's the danger

"What does Make America Great Again mean? What is this 'again' that we're talking about? What are we trying to get back to?" she asks, pointing to the Donald Trump phenomenon in the US politics.

An identity rooted in place or language is dangerous, she says, "because identity is not fixed, and rootedness should not be tied to

things like language and place". In The Guardian report, Jhumpa Lahiri says Narendra Modi's "notion of what India is" is an example of an "increasingly nationalist sentiment" that comes from "believing that you have, you know, some sort of non-negotiable right to belong to a place... I don't believe that."

Jhumpa Lahiri has three master's degrees including in English literature and creative writing. She has a PhD, too. As eloquent speeches and powerful war pitches are making headlines, it's worth taking note of what the writers have to say about the sit-

Kaja Kallas has studied law like Russia's Vladimir Putin, the United States' Joe Biden, Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskyy, France's Emmanuel Macron and Poland's Andrzei Duda.

According to him, the full picture is like this: you have a group of law professionals with tanks, missiles, nuclear hardware, and millions of armed soldiers at their disposal. They are trying to solve conflicts between them while the judges have gone on leave.

The Chinese President, Xi Jinping, who has been reportedly planning to invade Taiwan for years but could not find the right time yet, has studied chemical engineering.

Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu has studied architecture. His obsession with demolishing Gaza homes by incessant bombardment appears similar to Osama bin Laden's grand vision of demolishing the American Twin Towers. Osama Bid Laden, too, studied architecture. Both Netanvahu and Bin Laden deserve PhDs for flattening concrete structures in record time.

Jhumpa Lahiri shot to fame with her story collection. The Interpreter of Maladies. Now that we know most burning problems in the world right now have been caused by lawyers and architects, should not we ban studying these subjects and allow more students to study other subjects? As an interpreter of malady, Jhumpa has once again shown her caliber at this critical juncture in contemporary world. (IPA Service)

Bamboo revolution: Transforming Khamasom from poppy cultivation to sustainable prosperity

hamasom's people are known for their warmth and hospitality, a community where every visitor is treated like family. The local dialect, Khamasom Tui, is a melody that carries the stories and wisdom of generations. It is a language that has developed a sense of identity and belonging among the villagers, binding them together in their shared heritage and aspirations. Khamasom Village, Ukhrul District, is a place where the whispers of the past meet the promise of the future. Home to the Tangkhul Naga tribe, the village is a hub of rich traditions and strong, enduring spirits. The geographical canvas of Khamasom is as diverse as it is picturesque. It is a land where the earth reaches up to touch the sky, with rolling hills that are adorned with a quilt of greenery. The village is situated approximately 38 kilometres from the district headquarters of Ukhrul, partially connected by the National Highway 202, which winds its way through the rugged terrain.

Agriculture forms the backbone of Khamasom's economy, with the villagers' hands nurturing the soil to yield crops that sustain their families and communities. The fields and forests of Khamasom are not just sources of sustenance but also sanctuaries of biodiversity. The village boasts a vast forest that stretches up to the international boundary with Myanmar, rich in flora and fauna, and is arguably the only village in northeastern India to possess such a thick virgin forest in the Indo-Burma border stretch.

World War II plane crash mystery about virgin forest

The Virgin Forest of Khamasom, a dense and unexplored expanse, is home to a wealth of cane (rattan), a resource that has remained largely untapped. The abundance of rattan and bamboo, with its high species diversity and vertical size structure, presents an opportunity for the village to harness this resource for economic gain without compromising the ecological integrity of the forest. In the dense and mysterious Virgin Forest of Khamasom in Manipur's Ukhrul District, many secrets and stories have shaped the village's history.

One of the most intriguing tales is about plane crashes during World War II. The thick forest, with its challenging terrain, kept the wreckage sites hidden and largely unexplored. A brave villager named Sorei, a jungle man who stayed whole his life in virgin forest. He discovered plane-like structures and personal items, including a ring and a watch. These items, seemingly ordinary, turned out to be very valuable and triggered a series of events filled with greed, fear, and tragedy. However, Sorei did not know the value of these items.

Another villager from Khamasom Phungthar, K. Nelson, brought the ring and watch from Sorei by paying ₹ 800 for them. William, a person from Nagaland seen the ring and watch and after knowing the value, he paid ₹ 10,000 to K. Nelson. K. Nelson was thrilled with the money, thinking the items were cheap and worried that K. Nelson would ask for his money back once he realised the truth. William ran away, fearing Nelson would demand a refund.

On the other hand, William knew the true worth of the ring and watch. Nelson would discover their real value and ask for them back, William also disappeared. Both men vanished from the spot in a humorous twist, each thinking the other would come after them. William fled to Nagaland, where he sold the ring and watch for a huge sum, becoming a wealthy man. Years later, K. Nelson and William met

the change in his life, William gave K. Nelson an additional ₹ 50,000, acknowledging how the ring and watch had transformed his fortune.

The villagers, filled with fear and superstition, believed the forest was cursed. They sought help from outside to solve the mystery. Many tried to find the place where the plane crashed during World War II. However, anyone who found the place would die shortly after.

The historical context of the plane crashes in Khamasom's Virgin Forest is significant not only for its impact on the village's past but also for its influon the

ries of bravery,

greed, loss, and

redemption are intertwined with Khamasom's identity. They serve as a reminder of the village's resilience and the enduring spirit of its people. The virgin forest, once a source of fear, has now become a symbol of hope and transformation. As Khamasom embarks on its journey from poppy cultivation to sustainable bamboo and cane farming, the lessons from its history guide its path. The villagers' commitment to change and development is evidence of their ability to overcome the shadows of the past and strive for

In embracing bamboo as a sustainable alternative, Khamasom is not only securing its economic prosperity but also honouring the memory of those who were lost. The bamboo stands tall in the Virgin Forest, a living tribute to the village's history and an inspiration of its aspirations. It represents the cycle of life and death, growth and decay, and the promise of renewal.

a brighter, greener future.

The challenges of poppy cul-

tivation In the abundant hills of Manipur, the village of Khamasom has long been ensnared in the web of poppy cultivation-a practice that has brought with it a myriad of challenges. The prevalence of this crop, while a source of quick income for some, has cast a shadow over the community, leading to a cascade of adverse effects that have rippled through the social fabric and the environment alike.

Poppy cultivation in Khamasom Village has been a complex issue, deeply rooted in the socioeconomic conditions of the region. For many villagers, the cultivation of poppy has been seen as a necessary evil-a means to eke out a living in the absence of viable alternatives. The illicit nature of poppy farming has tied the community to cycles of illegality and dependency, with the lure of immediate financial gain overshadowing the dire consequences.

The environmental impact of poppy cultivation has been profound. The slash-and-burn techniques often employed to clear land for poppy fields have led to deforestation, soil erosion, and a loss of biodiversity. The delicate ecological balance of Khamasom's natural landscapes has been disrupted, threatening the very resources upon which the community depends for its survival. Moreover, the social implications have been equally severe. Poppy cultivation has been linked to a rise in drug addiction within the community, tearing at the social structure and undermining the health and well-being of its members. The illegal trade associated with poppy farming has invited crime and violence, placing the villagers in a precarious position, both legally and morally.

Recognising the gravity of the situation, the Government of Manipur launched the "War on Drugs" campaign, a concerted

again in their village. Grateful for effort to combat the scourge of drugs and poppy cultivation in the state. This campaign has been a multi-pronged approach, combining law enforcement actions with initiatives aimed at providing alternative livelihoods to poppy farmers

The "War on Drugs" has seen the government take aggressive measures to eradicate poppy fields, with security forces being deployed to destroy crops and dismantle the infrastructure supporting this illicit trade. These actions have sent a clear message that the government is serious about tackling the issue head-on. However, the campaign has

not been without its challenges. The targeting of present. The sto- **DEGREE OF THOUGHT** poppy fields has ometimes led to Dr. Atom Sunil Singh

tensions between

the government and the local communities, who have felt the immediate economic impact of such actions. The need for a sensitive approach that addresses the underlying causes of poppy cultivation-such as poverty and lack of economic opportunities-has become increasingly apparent.

Cane and Bamboo as Sustainable Alternatives

Amidst the challenges posed by poppy cultivation, the village has found hope in the form of sustainable alternatives-cane and bamboo. These natural resources. deeply ingrained in the cultural and ecological framework of the region, offer a path to prosperity that aligns with the community's values and the environment's

The Khamasom Phungdhar Village Committee, recognising the detrimental impact of poppy cultivation, made a bold declaration to adopt bamboo cultivation as part of their long-term strategy. This decision was not made lightly; it was the culmination of a collective vision to safeguard the village's future while preserving its natural resources and cultural heritage. The committee understood that encouraging and aiding alternative forms of livelihoods was essential to deter poppy farming and foster a sustainable economy for Khamasom

Phungdhar. Bamboo, often referred to as "green gold," has been a major source of livelihood for rural communities across Asia for centuries. In Khamasom, the potential of bamboo goes beyond its economic value; it symbolises a guiding light of environmental stewardship. Bamboo releases 35% more oxygen than other plants and sequesters 20% more carbon dioxide from the environment, making it a powerful ally in the fight against climate change. Its ability to control soil erosion and improve soil quality further underscores its role as a guardian of the planet.

Environmental, economic, and social benefits of bamboo

Bamboo, seen as a representation of resilience and adaptability, has become a shining example of environmental sustainability, especially in the narrative of Khamasom's transition from cultivating poppies to cultivating bamboo. This remarkable plant offers a plethora of benefits that extend far beyond its economic value, playing a crucial role in improving soil health, preventing erosion, supporting biodiversity, enhancing air quality, and mitigating climate change.

Environmental benefits Bamboo's environmental ben-

efits are significant. Its rapid growth and ability to sequester carbon make it a powerful tool in the fight against climate change. Bamboo also helps prevent soil erosion, improve soil health, and support biodiversity. These benefits are particularly important for the hilly terrain of Khamasom, where soil erosion is a **Economic benefits**

Economically, bamboo presents numerous opportunities. It can be used to produce a wide range of products, from traditional handicrafts to modern construction materials. diversification allows Khamasom's residents to tap into new markets and create value-added products. The economic potential of bamboo can help build a resilient and sustainable local economy, reducing dependency

on unsustainable agricultural

practices. Social benefits

Socially, the transition from poppy to bamboo cultivation has far-reaching benefits. Poppy farming is often associated with crime and social issues, whereas bamboo cultivation promotes a healthier and more cohesive community. The shift also fosters a sense of pride and ownership among the villagers, as they work together to build a sustainable future.

Local perspectives

In the heart of Khamasom, a village in the Ukhrul District of Manipur, the transition from poppy cultivation to bamboo is not just an agricultural shift but a profound transformation of the community's way of life. Augustine A.S and Awungshi Philip Soso, local residents of Khamasom, have been at the forefront of this change, offering unique insights into the journey towards sustainable cultivation. Awungshi Philip Soso, a sea-

soned farmer, has seen the detrimental effects of poppy cultivation on the land and the people. "Poppy farming was like a quick fix for our financial woes, but it was never a solution," he reflects. The immediate economic benefits were overshadowed by long-term environmental damage and social issues. Philip's perspective changed when he learned about bamboo's potential. "Bamboo is not just a plant: it's a lifeline. It offers us a chance to heal our land and build a future for our children," he says

Augustine A. S. shares this sentiment. He has been instrumental in advocating for the switch to bamboo. "We needed a crop that would protect our hills from erosion and provide us with a stable income. Bamboo was the answer," Augustine explains. He emphasises the importance of community involvement in this transition. "It's not just about planting bamboo. It's about changing our mindset and working together for the betterment of Khamasom

The insights from Augustine and Philip highlight the multifaceted benefits of bamboo cultivation. Bamboo's rapid growth rate and minimal need for fertilizers make it an environmentally friendly alternative to poppy. Its extensive root system helps prevent soil erosion, a significant concern in the hilly terrain of Khamasom.

Moreover, bamboo supports a wide range of biodiversity, providing habitats for various species and contributing to the ecological balance of the region. Augustine further stated that the health benefits of bamboo are also noteworthy. Unlike poppy, which is associated with the production of narcotics, bamboo offers a safe and healthy option for cultivation. It does not attract the same level of crime and social issues that poppy farming does, leading to a more peaceful and cohesive community.

Philip further said that economically, bamboo presents numerous opportunities for Khamasom's residents. It can be used to make a variety of products, from traditional handicrafts to modern construction materials, offering avenues for entrepreneurship and job creation.

revolutionise our economy," says Philip. "It's not just about selling raw bamboo. We can create value-added products and tap into markets we never thought

The transition to bamboo cultivation aligns with the global movement towards sustainable practices. It contributes to climate change mitigation by sequestering carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen at a higher rate than most trees. This shift not only benefits Khamasom but also sets an example for other communities facing similar chal-

The journey of Khamasom from poppy to bamboo is a story of resilience and hope. It showcases the power of local perspectives in driving sustainable development. Augustine A.S and Philip A Soso, along with the rest of the Khamasom community, are not just cultivating a crop; they are cultivating a new futureone that is green, prosperous, and sustainable. Their journey is a reminder that even the smallest change at the grassroots level can have a profound impact on the environment, society, and the

Training programme and community engagement

The "Three Days Training Programme on Bamboo Nursery Raising and the Commercial Plantation" to be held from June 6th at Khamasom Phungdharis, a transformative event for the community of Khamasom, marking a significant stride towards sustainable development.

This programme is a collaborative effort that brings together the expertise and resources of the North East Cane and Bamboo Council Development (NECBDC), Guwahti and Athia Integrated Rural Development Organisation (AIRDO) and supported by the under the North Eastern Council (NEC), Government of India, Shillong.

The training programme is meticulously designed to cover all aspects of bamboo nursery raising and commercial plantation. It aims to equip the participants with the knowledge and skills necessary to establish and manage bamboo nurseries, understand the nuances of bamboo cultivation, and explore the commercial potential of this versatile plant. The curriculum is expected to include topics such as bamboo propagation, nursery management, species selection, harvesting techniques, and intercropping models.

Conclusion

The journey of Khamasom is a narrative of resilience, a testament to the indomitable spirit of its people who have decided to turn away from the ephemeral allure of poppy fields to the enduring promise of bamboo groves. This shift is not merely a change in agricultural practice but a profound reimagining of Khamasom's relationship with its land. its economy, and its future.

The "Three Days Training Programme on Bamboo Nursery Raising and the Commercial Plantation" is a clarion call to action. It is an invitation to learn, to grow, and to lead. The collaboration between AIRDO, NECBDC, and the NEC is a model of partnership, a demonstration of what can be achieved when organizations come together with a common vision. The story of Khamasom's journey from poppy to bamboo is a narrative of transformation, a chronicle of a community's determination to chart a new course towards sustainability. It is a story that deserves to be told and retold, a story that should inspire all of us to take action for a better, greener, and more prosperous future. Let us all answer the call to action, for Khamasom, for our-

Integrated approach to wellness in Ayurveda

By: Er. Rajesh Pathak

uring Covid I continued to chant 'Shriram Raksha Strot'. This was felt as a strong safeguard, and still today I regularly chant it. For mental health the power of mantra has always come out to be very effective.' Sharing her views on Yoga and Avurveda, this Dr Tanuja Nesri, Director of Akhil Bhartiya Ayurveda Sansthan, said. She further adds, the episode of Lakshman-Hanuman and Sanjivnibooti narrates that the remedy of even so-called incurable ailment is there in the nature. Thus, Ramavana also

establish the significance of Ayurveda. India accounts for more than half of the herbs produced in the world over. But attention in real sense toward this was paid for the first time only when in the year 2000 a separate national policy was drafted under Atal Bihari Vajpayee led NDA government for the Indian medical therapies. Under which unprecedented work of bringing Ayurveda and other indigenous therapies under the category of Harituddhog [Green organic-industry] was done.

And then only National Medicinal Plant Board grew conscious about the chalking out specific policy for the conservation and breeding of Aanwla, Chandan [sandalwood], Ashwagandha and such others herbs and plants to be used in Ayurveda. And it is only during Atal's government that the first 'Global Ayurveda and Herbal Fare' was organised, which made the world medical fraternity know what an unique asset of its own India has to offer them. In the event 2500 representatives of 50 countries including USA, Switzerland, South Africa,

Denmark, Canada took the participation. In Ayurveda balanced consideration for both physical and spiritual aspect of human life is made. With the healthy body, the control over the mind and spiritual consciousness is, therefore, taken care of in that. And that's why Yogasanas are seen to be ingrained with Ayurveda. This only is the integrated approach to the wellness that Ayurveda is known for. Vegetarianism has great role to play in gaining immunity, which Ayurveda integrated in its way of treatment promi-

On the other hand the world now is no longer unaware of the property of enhancing immunity consists in Giloy, Shatavari, Ashwagandha, Tulsi, Kali Mirch such other herbs to be used in Ayurveda. And therefore such a boost in the export of Ayurveda medicines is there to see. Today

in around 90 countries that the people have started adopting Ayurveda treatment for the health care.

In recent time the export of Ayurveda products worldwide has increased to 45%, which is enough to understand that how extent world showed its trust on Ayurveda. Behind the making of Ayurveda globally popular the role of NDA government will always be appreciated. When NarendraModi came to hold the post of PM, Ayurveda got separate Ayush ministry.

Where ever Modi went in the world he struck deal for the promotion of Indian traditional medicines. Besides he initiated Ayush call centres in Indian embassies. All this efforts collectively brought the day when in the year 2021 WHO recognised India being the 'Centre for Global-Wellness'.

THE HILLS TIMES 5 Revolutionary methods for conquering the urge to smoke

By: Dipak Kurmi

MONDAY, JUNE 3, 2024

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Nobacco use poses significant health risks, a fact well-known to everyone. Despite this awareness, many tobacco users find themselves irresistibly drawn to it, unable to overcome the powerful cravings it induces.

In response to the rising global tobacco consumption, the WHO has designated May 31st as World No-Tobacco Day, an annual observance since 1987. Despite this initiative, many tobacco users find the urge to smoke nearly impossible to re-

To combat these cravings, it's essential to remember that they patches or non-nicotine cessa-

usually pass within 10 minutes, whether you give in or not. Let's delve into some innovative and effective strategies to help you resist the temptation to smoke or use tobacco when these cravings

Consider Nicotine Replacement Therapy: This method includes several options such as nicotine nasal sprays or inhalers available by prescription, overthe-counter nicotine patches, gum, and lozenges, as well as prescription non-nicotine medications like bupropion (Wellbutrin SR, Wellbutrin XL) and varenicline. These fast-acting treatments can be safely combined with long-acting nicotine



tion medications for enhanced

Avoid Triggers: Recognizing what prompts your urge to smoke is crucial. Tobacco crav-

ings are often strongest in situations where you typically smoke or chew tobacco, such as at parties, bars, during stressful moand create a strategy to steer clear of them.

Building Social Networks: Connecting with individuals who have successfully quit smoking and receiving their encouragement can provide significant psychological support for those currently trying to quit.

Harness the Power of Delay: When a tobacco craving hits, challenge yourself to delay indulging for 10 minutes. Use this time to distract yourself with other activities. Try moving to a smoke-free area nearby. These straightforward yet powerful strategies can help you overcome the urge.

Redirect Your Chewing

bacco cravings. Chew on sugar-free gum, enjoy a piece of hard candy, or munch on raw carrots, nuts, or sunflower seeds to keep yourself distracted.

Don't Fall for the "Just One" Trap: It's tempting to think that smoking just one cigarette will satisfy your craving. However, don't trick yourself into believing that stopping at one is enough. Usually, smoking one cigarette will only lead to wanting another.

Tap into the Benefits of Exercise: Engaging in physical activity can effectively distract you from tobacco cravings. Even short bursts of movement,

thing else to do to combat to- taking a brisk walk or jog, can help diminish the urge to smoke.

Quitting smoking is a significant step towards better health, and there are various innovative methods available to suit individual preferences. Some may opt for nicotine replacement therapy, while others may choose to quit abruptly.

Support groups can also provide valuable assistance to those looking to quit. Regardless of the approach, patience and perseverance are key, as quitting smoking is challenging but undoubtedly worthwhile for your well-being. (The writer can be reached at dipakkurmiglpltd

Understanding sudden cardiac death What are the different and preventative measures

By: Dr Bimal Chhajer

udden cardiac death has garnered significant attention, and there is an urgent need to shed light on this pressing issue and raise awareness among the public. Far too often, individuals succumb to this silent threat without any warning, leaving families and communities devastated. While events such as natural disasters capture the news, sudden cardiac death demands equal if not greater attention.

Unlike accidents, which can happen within moments, sudden cardiac death is often a result of heart-related conditions. The leading cause of Sudden Cardiac Death is heart disease, particularly blockages in the heart's arteries.

Shockingly, about 95% of adults who suffer from sudden cardiac death have these blockages. When these blockages re-

By: Jonathan Melville

& Matthew Slater

unning is a great form of exercise

that has numerous benefits for our

health. For instance, people who

consistently run at least an hour a week

throughout their lives tend to live three

years longer and have fewer chronic ill-

nesses; compared with people who don't

But some people are taking their love

of running up a notch – running every

day for as many days in a row as possi-

ble. This trend is being referred to online

as a "run streak". The rules of the run

streak trend are simple: runners must

(1.6km) every day, either on road, trail

There are some remarkable streaks

currently ongoing. Jim Taylor is said to

have the longest streak among runners in

Britain, having completed at least a mile

a day for over 30 years. Globally, the

longest streak is held by Jon Sutherland,

a US runner who has reportedly run at

These are certainly incredible feats –

Whether you're an amateur or profes-

but what are the effects on the body of

sional runner, in order to get fitter you

need to follow a training regime that

places just the right amount of stress on

the body so it can adapt. This is usually

done through low-intensity runs and in-

terval training, followed by periods of

When this cycle is consistently re-

peated over months, runners will notice

many changes in their fitness. These in-

clude a 5%-10% improvement in maxi-

mal oxygen consumption (the maximum

amount of oxygen the body can use and

transport to its working muscles), re-

duced heart rate during low-intensity

runs, and improved ability to use fat for

All of these improvements help run-

running every day? Is it actually safe?

least mile a day for over 50 years.

do any exercise.

or the treadmill.

a heart attack, ultimately leading to sudden cardiac death.

Several other factors can also contribute to sudden cardiac death, including accidental incidents, intense physical exercise, excessive alcohol consumption, and drug overdoses. However, it is important to highlight that the majority of cases are closely associated with heart disease.

The heart's arteries play a critical role in supplying blood to different parts of this vital organ.

Among these arteries, the left artery is responsible for providing blood to around 70% of the heart. Blockages in this artery can lead to a severe heart attack, culminating in sudden cardiac death.

Preventive measures are of utmost importance, particularly for individuals with a history of heart disease or those with risk factors such as high cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes, smoking, obesity, strict blood flow to the heart, it can trigger or a family history of heart disease. Regu-

What are the effects on the body of

running every day?

But a key element to becoming a better

runner is taking rest periods. This allows

the joints and ligaments to recover from

the stress that running places on them.

Rest also permits the body to replenish

carbohydrate stores in the muscles, en-

suring the body has energy for subse-

quent training days. Rest days can also

help improve a runner's recovery time

means there are no days off. This could

have many potential pitfalls that runners

rest can cause many harms to the body.

durance running – mild scarring of the

It can also weaken the immune system

by reducing the function of immune

cells. This can increase risk of respira-

tory infections and cause drastic changes

in hormones, such as an up-to-40% re-

duction in adrenaline and testosterone.

This may lead to poor recovery between

runs and symptoms of overtraining - in-

cluding changes in mood or muscle dam-

Runners must also be mindful of po-

tential overuse injuries. These affect up

to 70% of elite and recreational runners

and could derail a run streak. One of the

leading causes of overuse injuries is poor

hip-muscle stabilisation in runners. This

type of injury is more likely to happen as

To complete a run streak safely, pay at-

tention to your training load – a combi-

nation of the volume, frequency and

intensity of your workouts. It's pivotal to

manage this – taking particular care with

the intensity of your runs, since the fre-

quency of training is daily and the dura-

High-intensity runs – such as intense

sprint intervals – place more stress on the

body and take longer to recover from,

tion of runs is at least one mile.

the training volume increases.

Safe way to run

But the nature of the run streak trend

Continual training without adequate

between workouts.

should know about.

heart can occur.

complete a minimum of one mile In extreme cases - such as ultra-en-

lar check-ups, including coronary angiography, can effectively identify blockages and potential risks, enabling timely interventions and treatments.

Sudden cardiac death is a serious concern that demands our attention. Understanding the risk factors and prioritizing regular check-ups can significantly reduce the likelihood of this unfortunate event.

Embracing a healthy lifestyle, engaging in regular exercise, and managing risk factors can collectively protect our hearts and decrease the risk of sudden cardiac death.

Our mission should be to educate and empower individuals to adopt healthier lifestyles, preventing cardiac incidents and urge the people to spread awareness about sudden cardiac death to help save lives.

Remember, knowledge is power, and together, we can combat this silent threat and ensure a healthier future for all. (The author is the Director, SAAOL Heart Cen-

There's also a window when the im-

mune system is suppressed after high-in-

tensity running of up to two hours.

Keeping most of the runs easy will not

only help you stay consistent, it will also

reduce the chances of illness and in-

When starting a run streak, consider

simply completing the minimum dis-

tance required (one mile per day) before

gradually increasing the amount of run-

If you're worried about taking days

off, active recovery may be useful. This

involves doing light exercise on your

easier run streak days – such as a very

light jog. Or, if you're willing to break

your streak but don't want to take time

off from exercise, you could always go

muscles to recover from the stress of run-

Rest days are still strongly recom-

mended, however. Even elite runners

have periods away from running or in-

corporate rest blocks during a week of

In fact, passive recovery) – which in-

volves doing no exercise at all - is gen-

erally considered better than active

recovery for helping the body to repair

itself and adapt to the stress of training.

to every day could also result in obses-

sive behaviour towards exercise – and in

turn, have negative effects on your body.

Before starting a run streak, evaluate

whether it's really in line with your fit-

your health, both physically and men-

tally. But runners should proceed with

caution if they're thinking of going for a

run streak, to prevent overtraining and

Keep in mind things such as intensity

and be sure to properly fuel after each

run. This will reduce the likelihood of in-

jury and health complications, and

should ensure a more enjoyable run

other risks to their health.

Running is a great way to improve

Not taking any rest and attempting run

ning and can reduce muscle soreness.

ning you do.

types of stroke?

By: Zawn Villines

stroke occurs when there is a sudden disruption to the blood and oxygen supply to a part of the brain. Most strokes are ischemic strokes. They occur when a blockage prevents adequate blood flow to the brain cells.

Around 10-20% of strokes are hemorrhagic strokes. About half of all hemorrhagic strokes are subarachnoid hemorrhages, when bleeding occurs around the brain. The other half are intracerebral brain hemorrhages, when bleeding occurs inside the brain. A person may also experience a transient ischemic attack (TIA), or ministroke. These usually last only a few minutes, but can be a warning

sign of a major stroke to follow. This article looks at the different types of stroke. It will also explore what causes each type of stroke, the potential symptoms of each, and some treatment options.

What is FAST, and what are the symptoms of a stroke? Ischemic stroke

A person may have a stroke when there is a sudden disruption to the blood and oxygen supply to the brain.

An ischemic stroke is the most common type of stroke. It occurs when a clot in a blood vessel interferes with adequate blood flow to the brain. This can happen when a person has

A blood clot that travels from the heart or the carotid arteries to a blood vessel in the brain may also cause an ischemic

atherosclerosis, for example.

Symptoms

Symptoms of an ischemic stroke include:

 sudden numbness in any area of the body

· weakness on one side of the body

• drooping on one side of the face due to hemifacial paralysis · vision changes in one field of vision, for example, the left side of both eves

· dizziness or a loss of coordination • balance problems and diffi-

culty walking confusion

 a sudden, verv intense "thunderclap" headache with no known cause

Risk factors

Anyone can have an ischemic stroke, but certain groups have a higher risk. Some risk factors include:

 being female, as females live longer and are therefore more likely to live long enough to have a stroke

 high blood pressure high cholesterol

untreated diabetes

having atherosclerosis, when fatty plaques build up in the walls of arteries

• smoking • a high alcohol intake

 limited exercise • being over the age of 65

• having atrial fibrillation (Afib), a heart condition that causes a rapid or irregular heart

· having vasculitis, a type of blood vessel inflammation **Treatment**

There is currently no cure for ischemic stroke. Instead, urgent treatment focuses on removing the clot and preventing further brain damage. The first line of treatment ide-

ally includes a tissue plasminogen activator (TPA) or alteplase. Administering this treatment through a vein in the arm can help quickly dissolve the blood clot and improve blood flow to the affected area of the brain.

In some situations, it may be necessary to surgically dissolve or remove the clot using a procedure called a thrombectomy. Thrombectomy works best within 6 hours of stroke symptoms appearing, but it may improve outcomes up to 24 hours after a stroke.

During the first few days after an ischemic stroke, doctors will provide care that aims to reduce the likelihood of permanent damage, such as:

fluid management

 blood pressure management • glucose management

· anti-inflammatory medication, in some cases

A person will receive this care whether or not they have TPA or a clot removal.

A doctor may also give blood thinners, such as heparin, if the time window for TPA or surgical intervention has passed or if it is not suitable for the individ-

What are the first-line medications for a stroke? Recovery

To help a person regain func-

tioning and cope with the stress of having a stroke, they may need a variety of supportive treatments. These may include:

speech therapy

• occupational therapy physical therapy

psychological therapy

A doctor may also recommend making certain lifestyle changes, such as reducing the fat in their diet or exercising more often, to reduce the risk of experiencing another stroke.

Hemorrhagic stroke

A hemorrhagic stroke occurs when a blood vessel either ruptures or leaks, causing bleeding into the brain. The blood that accumulates from the bleed

brain tissue. Like other strokes, a hemorrhagic stroke can cause rapid

tissue death.

Symptoms The symptoms of a hemorrhagic stroke are similar to those of an ischemic stroke and

include: numbness

 loss of function, especially on one side of the body

drooping on one side of the

• trouble speaking

 loss of consciousness confusion

 severe headache · seizure

Risk factors

Two possible causes of hemorrhagic stroke are aneurysms and arteriovenous malformations (AVMs). An aneurysm is an enlarged, ballooning blood vessel. This change in a blood vessel's size and shape increases the risk of it rupturing and bleeding. Many people with aneurysms do not have symptoms, and most aneurysms will appear after the age of 40.

An aneurysm can be congenital or hereditary, or it may result from risk factors such as: high blood pressure

smoking

• a high alcohol intake

· using drugs, such as cocaine being female

· head trauma or traumatic brain injury

An AVM, on the other hand, is a misshapen blood vessel. An AVM is usually present from birth. The misshapen blood vessel may rupture or bleed, causing a hemorrhagic stroke.

Treatment

Sometimes, a health professional can surgically remove the blood and repair the blood vessel. However, it is often necessary to manage hemorrhagic strokes with fluid control and monitor for effects such as seizures. To reduce the risk of brain damage, a doctor may also give medication to control blood pressure.

Transient ischemic attack A transient ischemic attack (TIA), sometimes called a ministroke, is similar to an ischemic stroke because it temporarily blocks blood flow to the brain. Treatment aims to prevent a recurrence, as a person who experiences a TIA has a higher risk of a major stroke in the future.

Symptoms TIAs may cause symptoms similar to those of an ischemic stroke, including:

confusion

• trouble walking • drooping on one side of the

• tingling or numbness

However, the symptoms tend to be less severe and last just a few minutes. Unlike an ischemic stroke, a TIA resolves on its own, when the clot either moves or dissolves.

The risk factors for a TIA are the same as those for an ischemic stroke and include:

· being older

Risk factors

 smoking • getting little exercise

· having cardiovascular dis-

• having A-fib

TIAs occur before about 15% of strokes. This means that many people who experience a TIA will experience an ischemic stroke in the future. **Prevention**

A person who has a TIA should talk with a doctor about lifestyle changes, medications, and other treatment options that can reduce the risk of experiencing an ischemic stroke.

Other types of stroke

When a health professional cannot determine the cause of disrupted blood flow to the brain, they call it a "cryptogenic" stroke. A doctor may make this diagnosis if extensive tests have not shown any stroke risk factors. The symptoms of a cryptogenic stroke are similar to those of other strokes. However, treatment can be challenging because there is no clear underlying risk or cause.

For this reason, a doctor may perform a wide variety of diagnostic tests. They may also recommend lifestyle changes to reduce the risk of experiencing another stroke.

Brain stem stroke

A brain stem stroke is not a specific type of stroke, but it is an ischemic or hemorrhagic stroke that occurs in the stem of the brain. It can cause complex symptoms and be difficult to di-

Some symptoms of a brain stem stroke include:

• dizziness confusion

numbness

trouble walking

Most strokes cause symptoms on only one side of the body. Brain stem strokes, however, may cause symptoms on both sides of the body. In some cases, they may even lead to

paralysis. Treatment for a brain stem stroke will be the same as for other strokes. It aims to remove the clot or stop the bleeding, depending on the likely cause.

A brain stem stroke can also affect breathing, so emergency respiratory support may also be necessary.

Summary

Health professionals recommend using the acronym "FAST" to recognize and quickly intervene when someone is having a stroke. FAST

stands for: **F:** face drooping

A: arm weakness **S:** speech difficulties

T: time to seek emergency medical attention

A stroke is a medical emergency. The person must begin treatment as soon as possible. (Courtesy: Medical News Today)

ners get faster or run further with less fastreak experience. (Courtesy: Scroll.in) Metabolic footprints of cancer cells may help in early diagnosis, shows study

By: Preetha Banerjee

study of hydrogen atoms in cells may pave the path for early de-Ltection of cancer in people, a group of scientists have claimed.

Fast-growing cells such as cancer cells have a different balance of hydrogen atom variants than healthy cells, researchers from the University of Colorado Boulder and Princeton University found.

This "atomic marker" may serve as an

indicator for detecting cancer in individ-

uals before the disease advances, they claimed in the report published May 6, 2024 in the journal PNAS. This tool, which is commonly used in geosciences, was derived from studying the metabolism of yeast cells and healthy

and cancerous mouse liver cells. "Fermenting yeast cells, the kind that resemble cancer, contained roughly 50 ated with cellular biochemical composi-

per cent fewer deuterium atoms (a heav- tion are also recorded in lipid hydrogen ier and stable hydrogen variant) on average than the normal yeast cells, a startling change.

Cancerous cells exhibited a similar but not quite as strong shortage in deuterium," the researchers observed, according to a story on science news website Phys.org.

They tracked a chemical called nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide phosphate (NADPH), which is a reducing agent in anabolic reaction in cells. During synthesis of glucose, NADPH draws hydrogen and moves them to other molecules. But the source of the hydrogen may be

bolic origins of NADPH were found to differ to some extent in fast-growing cells and cancer cells, compared to "Changes in NADPH demand associ-

any of the element's isotopes. The meta-

isotope ratios," the researchers observed. The researchers pulled the fatty acids from the cells under observation and used a mass spectrometer to identify the ratio of hydrogen atoms within, according to Phys.org.

These results provide promising tools to characterise eukaryotic metabolism, thus helping to elucidate the role of NADPH in health and disease," the authors stated in their report. Although the research is at a nascent stage, the findings are particularly im-

portant because it can help save many lives that are lost to cancer, merely because it was not diagnosed early enough. If the isotopic variation shows up in simple diagnostic processes like blood tests, it will ensure the disease has a better prognosis than what is observed in later stages, the researchers claimed. (Courtesy: Down To Earth)

Zelenskyy accuses China of

pressuring other countries not to attend

upcoming Ukraine peace talks

Chang'e-6 landed at the designated landing area at 6:23 am (Beijing Time) in the South Pole-Aitken (SPA) Basin for the first time in human history

China's Chang'e-6 successfully lands on rarely explored Moon's far side to collect samples

spacecraft successfully touched down on the far side of the Moon on Sunday, in the first endeavour of its kind to collect samples from this rarely explored terrain.

The Chang'e-6 landed at the designated landing area at 6:23 am (Beijing Time) in the South Pole-Aitken (SPA) Basin for the first time in human history, the China National Space Administration (CNSA) announced.

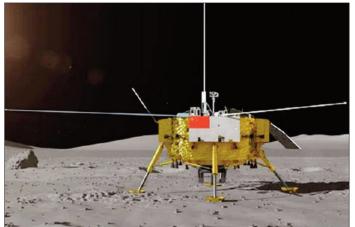
Chang'e-6 consists of an orbiter, a returner, a lander and an ascender. Since its launch on May 3 this year, it has gone through various stages such as Earth-Moon transfer, near-Moon braking, lunar orbiting

and landing descent.

The lander-ascender combination separated from the orbiter-returner combination on May 30, the CNSA said. For the powered descent, regarded as the most complex manoeuvre, an autonomous visual obstacle avoidance system was used to automatically detect obstacles. A visible light camera selected a comparatively safe landing area based on the brightness and darkness of the lunar surface, staterun Xinhua news agency reported.

The Chang'e-6 mission is tasked with collecting and returning samples from the Moon's far side, the first endeavour of its kind.

India became the first country to land near the little-explored lunar



south pole region last year when its Chandrayaan-3's lander, carrying the Pragyaan rover successfully landed there. The Chang'e-6 landing site is at an impact crater known as the Apollo Basin, located within the SPA Basin.

The choice was made for the Apollo Basin's potential value of scientific exploration, as well as the conditions of the landing area, including communication and telemetry conditions and the flatness of the terrain, Huang Hao, a space expert from the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation (CASC) said.

The terrain on the far side of the Moon is more rugged than the near side, with fewer continuous flat

areas Huang told Xinhua.

However, the Apollo Basin is relatively flatter than other areas on the far side, which is conducive to landing. The lander is equipped with multiple sensors, including microwave, laser and optical imaging sensors which can measure distance and speed, and identify obstacles on the lunar surface, Huang said.

To prevent interference to optical sensors by lunar dust during landing, the lander is also equipped with gamma-ray sensors to accurately measure the height through particle rays, ensuring that the engine can be shut down on time and the lander can touch down smoothly on the lunar surface, he

After the landing, the probe is scheduled to complete sampling within two days. It has adopted two methods of Moon sampling, which include using a drill to collect subsurface samples and grabbing samples on the surface with a robotic

World

Due to the Moon's obstruction, the Earth-Moon communication window period on the far side of the Moon, even with the help of the Queqiao-2 relay satellite service, is still shorter than that on the near side. Therefore, the sampling time of Chang'e-6 will be reduced to about 14 hours, compared with the 22 hours used by its predecessor Chang'e-5, the report said.

The CNSA said earlier that the mission is poised to make breakthroughs in key technologies, such as automatic sample collection, take-off and ascent from the far side of the Moon. Meanwhile, the probe will carry out scientific exploration of the landing zone.

The CNSA announced that scientific instruments from France, Italy and the European Space Agency/Sweden will be on board the lander of the Chang'e-6 mission and a Pakistani payload on the

This is the first time China has included an orbiter from its allweather ally Pakistan in its Moon

istan quoting the Institute of Space Technology (IST), the satellite ICUBE-O has been designed and developed by IST in collaboration with Shanghai Jiao Tong University and Pakistan's national space agency Suparco.

The Chang'e lunar exploration probe is named after the Chinese

mythical Moon goddess. The Chang'e 5 brought samples from the Moon's near side. Chinese said during the analysis of the samples it was found they contained water in tiny beads embedded in lunar dirt.

China also plans to have a lunar station on the Moon in future.

A major space power, China in the past successfully launched unmanned missions to the Moon which included landing a rover. China has also sent a rover to Mars and built a space station which is currently in

Earlier, China announced plans for a manned lunar landing by 2030. The country's plans include landing astronauts on the Moon by 2030 and building a research base at its south pole – a region believed to contain

Sunday's landing comes as a growing number of countries, including the United States, eye the strategic and scientific benefits of expanded lunar exploration in an increasingly competitive field. (PTI)

SINGAPORE, June 2: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy accused China on Sunday of helping Russia to disrupt an upcoming Swiss-organised peace conference on the war in Ukraine. Speaking at Asia's premier security conference, Zelenskyy said that China is pressuring other countries and their leaders not to attend the upcoming talks. He

did not say which ones. "Russia, using Chinese influence in the region, using Chinese diplomats also, does everything to disrupt the peace summit," he said at a news conference at the Shangri-La defense forum.

"Regrettably this is unfortunate that such a big independent powerful country as China is an instrument in the hands of (Russian leader Vladimir) Putin." China has staked out what it says is a neutral position on the war, putting it at odds with Ukraine, the United States and most of Europe. Its trade with Russia has grown, easing the economic impact of Western sanctions. And American, Ukrainian and other intelligence agencies say there is evidence that Chinese parts are winding up in Russian weaponry, even if China is not directly arming its neighbour.

The Swiss had been hoping China would attend the peace conference in mid-June, but Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning signalled on Friday that that was unlikely. China has been calling for a peace conference with equal participation of all sides, including Russia, which has not been invited.

"There is still a clear gap between the arrangements for the meeting and the demands of the Chinese side, as well as the general expectations of the international community," Mao said. "This makes it difficult for China to participate in the meeting."

The foreign ministry did not respond immediately to a request for comment on Zelenskyy's accusation. The Ukrainian leader said of China's pressure on others, "That is not only support to Russia, that is basically support of war."

In a speech to the security conference earlier in the day, Zelenskyy urged top defense officials to attend saying he was disappointed at the failure of some countries to commit to joining. Chinese Defense Minister Dong Jun spoke before Zelenskyy at the Shangri-La conference but he did not appear to be in the room when Zelenskyy made his appeal.

proposals to make at the summit as across the Indo-Pacific." (AP)

a basis for peace, addressing nuclear security, food security, the release of prisoners of war and the return of Ukrainian children abducted by Rus-

"Time is running out, and the children are growing up in the Putinland where they are taught to hate their homeland," he said.

At the same time, Zelenskyy said Ukraine is "ready to hear various proposals and thoughts that lead us to an end of the war and a sustainable and just peace." The greater the participation, the more likely it will be that Russia will have to listen, he said. "The global majority can ensure with their involvement that what is agreed upon is truly implemented," he said.

Zelenskyy said he planned to meet one-on-one with Singapore's prime minister and would urge him to participate in person in the Switzerland talks.

"The same goes for the countries in the region," Zelenskyy said through an interpreter. "We truly count on you supporting this summit, and that you will be present in Switzerland.'

Singapore Defense Minister Ng Eng Hen, who shared the stage with Zelenskyy, did not say whether his country's leaders would attend, but did note Singapore had condemned the invasion and provided Ukraine with military ambulances. "We stand with you, and I think your appearance at this Shangri-La Dialogue is the epitome of what we are all hoping for, a rules-based order that guarantees the security and survival of large nations and small," he said.

Dong did not specifically mention the Switzerland meetings in his address to the forum, but did say "on the Ukraine crisis, China has been promoting peace talks with a responsible attitude." He added that China had not provided weapons to either side of the conflict. "We have never done anything to fan the flames," he said. "We stand firmly on the side of peace and dialogue.3

US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin sat in the front row as Zelenskyy talked. In an address Saturday, Austin told the security conference that "Putin's war of aggression has provided us all with a preview of a world that none of us would want."

"We've all been inspired by the courage of Ukraine's troops and the resilience of Ukraine's people,' Austin said. "People around the world have rushed to help Ukraine Zelenskyy said that Ukraine had defend itself, including countries

pro-Palestinian protest

NEW YORK, June 2: New York City police said on Saturday that they took 34 people into custody following a pro-Palestinian protest at the Brooklyn Museum, which reported damage to some artwork and harassment to security staff by demonstrators.

Hundreds of protesters marched to the museum on Friday afternoon, set up tents in the lobby and unfurled a "Free Palestine" banner from the building's roof before police moved in to make arrests.

New York City police officers tackled and punched some protesters during scuffles that broke out in the crowd outside the museum while some demonstrators hurled plastic bottles at officers and shouted insults. Other protesters held banners, waved Palestinian flags and chanted boisterously on the steps of the grand Beaux Arts museum, which is the city's sec-

City police said of the 34 people detained, six were arrested and charged with crimes ranging from were released after receiving tickets or summonses for misdemeanours, including trespassing, making graffiti, damaging property and resisting arrest. Police did not say what happened to the remaining five people. Museum spokesperson Taylor Maatman said in a statement that the

museum closed an hour early because

of concerns about people's safety and the art collections

"Unfortunately, there was damage to existing and newly installed artwork on our plaza, and our public safety staff were physically and verbally harassed," Maatman said.

The rally started across the street from the Barclays Center, home of the NBA's Brooklyn Nets. Marchers banging drums and chanting then made their way to the museum about a mile away.

Organisers, including the group Within Our Lifetime, called on supporters to "flood" and "de-occupy" the museum, saying they wanted to take over the building until officials "disclose and divest" from any investments linked to Israel's actions in Gaza. Videos posted on social media showed guards at the museum trying to secure its doors against the surging crowd and demonstrators finding

other ways inside. Within Our Lifetime posted on social media that its chair, Nerdeen

arrested" by police. New York City has seen hundreds of street demonstrations since the conflict between Israel and Hamas began in October.

The Brooklyn Museum sits at the edge of Crown Heights, which is home to one of the city's largest communities of Orthodox Jews. (AP)

34 taken into custody after Hezbollah fighters shoot down Israeli drone in Lebanon



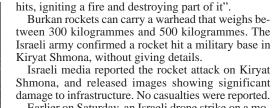
BEIRUT, June 2: The militant Hezbollah group said it shot down an Israeli drone over southern Lebanon and fired rockets at an Israeli military base on Saturday, hours after Israeli drone strikes killed at least one person and wounded several others.

Hezbollah said in a statement that its fighters struck the Hermes 900 Kochav drone, saying such aircraft have been targeting militants and civilian homes. The exchange of fire along the Lebanon-Israel border has been intensifying over the past weeks with Israel's military push on Gaza's southern city of Rafah.

The Israeli military said a surface-tofired toward a drone operating in Lebanese airspace, adding that it was hit and fell in Lebanese territory. "The incident is under review," the military said.

The Hermes 900 Kochav is a medium altitude and long endurance drone that can carry four anti-tank

guided missiles. Hezbollah said on Saturday that its fighters also attacked an Israeli army base in the border town of Kiryat Shmona with Burkan rockets "scoring direct



Earlier on Saturday, an Israeli drone strike on a motorcycle near the southern Lebanese village of Khirbet Selm wounded two people, state-run National News Agency said. The agency reported another drone strike on Saturday afternoon in a village near the southern

city of Nabatiyeh. An Israeli airstrike on a house in the coastal village of Adloun killed one woman and wounded several others on Friday evening, the agency reported.

Late on Saturday night, Israel's warplanes attacked areas west of the northeastern city of Baalbek, slightly wounding two people and causing material damage, the agency said.

Such strikes deep inside Lebanon and far away from the Israeli border have been rare since the latest round of fighting began nearly eight months ago. The Saturday night strike was about 100 kilometres from the Israeli border.

along the Lebanon-Israel border a day after the Israel-Hamas war broke out on October 7. Since then, tens of thousands of people have been displaced on both sides of the border.

Over the past seven months, more than 400 people have been killed in Lebanon, most of them fighters but they also include more than 70 civilians and noncombatants. In Israel, 15 soldiers and 10 civilians have been killed since October. (AP)

retaliation against NKorea

SEOUL, June 2: South Korea said Sunday it'll soon take "unbearable" retaliatory steps against North Korea over its launch of trash-carrying balloons across the border and other provoca-

In the past week, North Korea floated hundreds of huge balloons to dump rubbish on South Korea, simulated nuclear strikes against its neighbor and allegedly jammed GPS navigation signals in the South in an escalation of animosities between the rivals. South Korea's national security director Chang Ho-jin said Sunday that top officials at an emergency meeting decided to take "unbearable" measures against North Korea in response to its recent series of provocative acts.

Chang called the North's balloon campaign and its alleged GPS signal jamming "absurd, irrational acts of provocation that a normal country can't imagine." He accused North Korea of aiming to cause "public anxieties and chaos" in South Korea. South Korean officials didn't say what retaliatory steps they would take. But many observers say South Korea will likely resume front-line loudspeaker broadcasts into North Korea that include criticism of its abysmal human rights situation, world news and K-pop songs. North Korea is ex-



tremely sensitive to such broadcasts because most of its 26 million people have no official access to foreign TV and radio programs.

Earlier Sunday, South Korea's military said that more than 700 balloons flown from North Korea were additionally discovered in various parts of South Korea. Tied to the balloons were cigarette butts, scraps of cloth, waste paper and vinyl, but no dangerous substances, according to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It was North Korea's second balloon activity in less than a week. Between Tuesday and Wednesday, South Korean officials said they had found about 260 North Korean balloons carrying trash and ma-

There have been no reports of major damage in South Korea.

North Korea said its balloon floating was in reaction to South Korean activists flying anti-Pyongyang propa-

ganda leaflets via their own balloons across the border. North Korea often responds with fury to balloons from South Korea, In 2020, North Korea exploded an empty, South Korean-built liaison office in the North in anger over the South Korean bal-

loon activities.

Experts say North Korea's presidential election in No-

balloon campaign, reportedly the first of its kind in seven years, is meant to stoke an internal divide in South Korea over its conservative government's tough policy on the North. They say North Korea is also expected to further ramp up tensions ahead of the U.S.

Since 2022, North Korea has sharply increased a pace of weapons tests to build a bigger nuclear arsenal. Last week, it fired a barrage of nuclear-capable weapons into the sea in a drill simulating a preemptive attack on South Korea. (AP)

SKorea vows 'unbearable' 15 killed as heavy rains lash Sri Lanka

COLOMBO, June 2: At least 15 people were killed and more than 19,000 others from over 5,000 families were marooned over the weekend as severe monsoonal downpours inflicted widespread devastation in Sri Lanka, authorities said on Sunday.

The fatalities were reported from seven districts, including the capital Colombo, where torrential rains exceeding 300 mm have triggered flash floods, uprooted trees, unleashed strong winds, and lightning, and caused landslides, the Disaster Management Centre (DMC) said.

Twenty of the 25 administrative districts have been seerely affected due to the rains. More than 4,000 homes have suffered partial damage,

with 28 houses completely obliterated. The Sri Lankan Army has mobilised seven teams equipped with boats for rescue operations. The Air Force has put three helicopters on standby for immediate emer-

gency response in the affected areas. Anticipating further rainfall and flooding, the Ministry of Education has announced the closure of all schools across the island for Monday. (PTI)

Chinese defence minister accuses US of causing friction with its support for Taiwan and Philippines **SINGAPORE**, **June 2:** China's defence minister on Sunday

acknowledged the importance of newly renewed militaryto-military communications with the United States as tensions escalate in the Asia-Pacific, while at the same time accusing Washington of causing the friction with its support for Taiwan and the Philippines.

"We will not allow anyone to bring geopolitical conflicts or any war, whether hot or cold, into our region," Chinese Defence Minister Dong Jun told the Shangri-La defence forum in Singapore through a translator, "We will not allow any country or any force to create conflict and chaos in our region," he added. China has been increasingly assertive in pressing its claim to virtually the entire South China Sea, a key global shipping route, which has led to a growing number of conflicts, most notably with the Philippines, whose ships have been rammed by Chinese vessels and hit with water cannons. Dong insisted that China's "strategic culture is anchored in universal love and non-aggression", before threatening the Philippines, which has grown rapidly proAmerican since the election of Ferdinand Marcos Jr in 2022. Since territorial hostilities with China surged last year in the South China Sea, Marcos Jr.'s administration has taken steps to forge new security alliances with a number of Asian and Western countries and allowed a larger US military presence in more Philippine bases under a 2014 defence pact.

Dong accused the Philippines of deliberately provoking China, "emboldened by outside powers."

"China has recognised great restraint in the face of such infringements and provocations," he said. "But there is a limit to our restraint." Dong is a former naval commander who was appointed in late December after his predecessor, Li Shangfu, was abruptly removed from office. Dong met with US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin on Friday on the sidelines of the Singapore forum, which were the first inperson talks between top Chinese and American defence officials since contacts between the two countries' militaries broke down in 2022 after then-U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi visited Taiwan, infuriating Beijing. (AP)

Drive for healthcare access to people with intellectual disabilities launched

US-based non-profit on Saturday announced an initiative to enhance healthcare access for individuals with intellectual disabilities, with an aim to benefit 10,000 people in India in the first vear Under Project Hitarth, US-

based Voice of Specially Abled People (VOSAP) has entered into a collaboration with Parivaar NCPO (National Confederation of Parents Organizations) to provide financial support to social workers to assist individuals with intellectual disabilities in accessing much-needed therapies, dental work, outpatient department services and get reimbursement up to ₹ 1 lakh per year from the government of India's Niramaya scheme, a press statement said.



"We are very excited for the opportunities with this new model to expand VOSAP impact that leverages the government of India's existing programmes and strengths of our trusted, reputed partners like Parivaar," said VOSAP's California-based

founder Pranav Desai.

VOSAP is a leading disability sector NGO, having enabled more than 25,000 persons with disabilities since 2017 by providing assistive devices, surgical interventions and scholarships.

The Niramaya scheme offers up to ₹ 1 lakh insurance reimbursement for covered medical expenses for individuals with intellectual disabilities.

A joint research conducted by VOSAP and Parivaar NCPO revealed significant underutilisation of the scheme due to challenges in online enrollment. understanding benefits and navigating the complicated claim process, the statement said.

In 2022-23, according to a government of India report, only 28,323 claims -- out of 1,87,290 (1.87 lakh) enrolled beneficiaries -- with an average of ₹ 6,405 per claim were settled.

This indicates a very poor enrollment as the number of individuals with intellectual disabilities in India are more than one crore and significantly low reimbursements amounts ie very little impact of the Niramaya programme, the statement said.

"The pilot programme aims to benefit 10,000 individuals with intellectual disabilities within its first year, with the goal of scaling to 1,00,000 beneficiaries. By improving access to health care and reducing the financial burden of medical expenses, (Project) Hitarth strives to enhance the quality of life for individuals with intellectual disabilities through essential therapies such as physiotherapy and speech therapy, etc," it said.

Parivaar NCPO's Pankaj Maru said, "Parivaar is happy to collaborate with Voice of SAP to make the Niramaya health insurance (schemeI more accessible for millions of PwIDDs through our more than 300 parents and voluntarily member organisations having presence in 31 states." (PTI)

Nagaon flood claims life of man

MONDAY, JUNE 3, 2024

HT Correspondent
NAGAON, June 2: The flood

situation in Nagaon district persisted unchanged on Sunday. It is reported that more than 150 villages within the Kampur, Nagaon, and Raha revenue circles are submerged in floodwaters as of the time of reporting.

According to sources, the Nagaon district administration has established over 25 relief camps across various locations in these three revenue circles. The fresh flood has affected over 2.5 lakh people in the district by Sunday. While the water levels in Kapili and Borpani rivers have slightly decreased, the Nishari river remains at a high level.

Tragically, on Sunday, a man named Dilip Das (45) lost his life near Kekuribari under the Kampur revenue circle. He was swept away by the overflowing Nishari river while observing the flood situation in the area, as per reports. In response, the SDRF and fire service personnel initiated an immediate search operation and later recovered his

The untimely demise of Dilip Das has enveloped the greater Kampur areas in sadness on Event featuring career counseling session lauded by dignitaries like Hrishikesh Goswami and minister Sanjoy Kishan

ATTSA honours academic excellence among tea tribes students in Tinsukia

HT Correspondent
MARGHERITA, June 2: Assam Tea Tribes Student Association (ATTSA) Tinsukia District Executive Committee on Sunday organised a grand felicitation and career counseling program at Margherita College, where more than 250 students belonging to the Tea Tribes community of Tinsukia district were felicitated for securing first-division marks in the recently declared HSLC and HS Examinations.

The program began with the hoisting of the association flag, which was unfurled by Jagat Nayak, president of Assam Tea Tribes Student Association Tinsukia Executive Committee, fol-'smriti tarpan' conducted by Anuj Tanti, general secretary, and Umesh Jaal, assistant secretary of ATTSA Tinsukia District Executive Committee.

Afterward, a career counseling program was held at Margherita College Auditorium, with more than 250 students in attendance. A lengthy discussion regarding their career paths took place in the presence of ATTSA Tinsukia District Executive Committee president



and general secretary, Jagat Nayak, and Anuj Tanti.

Hrishikesh Goswami, former chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal's media advisor, was present as the keynote speaker, along with chief guests Sanjoy Kishan, Assam Government Tea Tribes and Labour Welfare minister, Margherita College principal Dr Atonu Kakoty, Assam Tea Tribe Student Association Central Executive Committee general secretary Jagdish Baraik, Margherita

sub-divisional police officer Sambhavi Mishra (IPS), and many other resourceful and distinindividuals guished Margherita sub-division.

Hrishikesh Goswami, keynote speaker, emphasised that without education, no community can develop. He noted that the Tea Tribes students of Assam are now passing their exams with flying colours, which is a positive sign of

"Only education can bring ref-

ances, luxurious vehicles, and high living standards are temporary, but if one is educated, not only that individual but the entire society and nation will prosper."

Sanjoy Kishan, minister for Labour and Tea Welfare in the state government, expressed his appreciation for Tea Tribes students' academic achievements, acknowledging the sacrifices made by their parents for these results.

"After 77 years of our country's independence, significant development work has taken place in the tea garden areas of Assam," he remarked, crediting the construction of model schools, high schools, and higher secondary schools to the leadership of chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma.

He concluded by commending the Assam Tea Tribes Student Association (ATTSA) for organising such a significant event and expressed hope that similar programs would continue in the

The entire program was moderated by Anuj Tanti, general secretary of ATTSA Tinsukia District

Dima Hasao district admin

gears up for vote counting

Lumding-Silchar hills train services resume after five day hiatus



<u>HT Bureau</u>

GUWAHATI, June 2: Train services on the Lumding-Silchar Hills section have resumed, returning to normal after a fiveday suspension caused by torrential rain and landslides triggered by Cyclone 'Remal'. The suspension severed rail connections between the Barak Vallev and the states of Tripura. Manipur, and Mizoram, isolating the Dima Hasao district from the rest of the state.

The restoration of services brought relief to passengers in the Barak Valley and neighbouring states. The first north-eastern link train departed from Lumding and

Badarpur. Subsequently, the Sealdah-Agartala Express left New Haflong station for Agartala at 6:30 pm. Additionally, the special Kanchenjunga Express train from Guwahati to Agartala departed at

Even though train services resumed on the hill section, the North Eastern Frontier Railway authorities canceled all passenger trains from Silchar on Saturday and Sunday due to flooding at Silchar railway station. Railway authorities had been working tirelessly to restore the services after the landslides disrupted train operations between Lumding and

Pre-yoga awareness session held



HT Correspondent

PALASBARI, June 2: Aiming to raise awareness worldwide of the many benefits of practicing yoga, a pre-yoga awareness program was organised at Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport in Guwahati on Sunday.

The program was held between 7:00 am to 8:30 am. The yoga session was led by Bhagan Murmu, a yoga expert and a senior employee of the Central Security Force. The event was attended by chief airport officer Utpal Baruah, commandant of the Central Security Force, Lalmohan Thakur, and more than 100 people from GIAL & CISF.

Crowdfunding efforts facilitate medical care



HT Correspondent
BISWANATH CHARIALI, June 2: Ankur Nath, a ten-year-old resident of Killingmukh, Borbheti village under Sootea PS, suffered an electric shock at Killingmukh Anganwadi center on May 29 and was immediately rushed to Biswanath Chariali sub-divisional hospital. Due to the severity of his condition, he was referred to TMCH, Tezpur, for advanced medical care. Despite treatment, his recovery was slow, prompting medical staff at TMCH to advise his family to seek further treatment in Guwahati. However, being underprivileged, the family lacked the means to travel to Guwahati.

In this dire situation, Uttam Kumar Nath, secretary of Sootea Press Club and a local journalist, initiated a crowdfunding campaign through his news portal Sootea 24×7 to assist the family. His plea resonated with many, including the circle officer of Naduar revenue circle, local employees, and other community members, who generously contributed to the cause. With the funds collected, Ankur was successfully transported to Guwahati for treatment.

Ankur's condition is reported to be stable and showing signs of improvement. The timely intervention by journalist Nath has garnered praise from the community for his compassionate initiative.

PHE contractor Manab Hazarika earns accolades as best performer

HT Correspondent
BISWANATH CHARIALI, June 2: Manab Hazarika, a resident of Sootea and a first-class contractor of the Assam Public Health Engineering Department (Road) and PWD (Home), has been recognised as the best contractor by the department under the jurisdiction of the sub-divisional office of the PHE, Biswanath. Manab, who secured the contract for the construction work of water supply at Kachari part 2 of Selaikhati in the northwestern part of Biswanath with an amount of ₹ 20 lakhs, 35 thousand, and 23 rupees under the Jal Jeevan Mission, accomplished his contract work within 6 months and provided water to 180 families with home connections.

The sub-divisional office of the Assam Public Health Engineering Department, Biswanath, organised a felicitation program in the office premises on Sunday and honoured Manab Hazarika with a citation, gamosa, and recognition as the best contractor.

Biswanath MLA Pramod Borthakur and the officials of the department accorded him the felicitation. The event was attended by officials, contractors, and office bearers.

Nagaon pays tribute to Ranjit Kumar Nath HT Correspondent NAGAON, June 2: Nagaon

Nagorik Somaj organised a special commemoration programme to pay homage to noted lawyer and academician Lt Ranjit Kumar Nath on Sunday at Nagaon Swahid Bhavan.

The programme was chaired by social activist Purnakanta Baruah, and noted Assamese storyteller Sibananda Kakoti delivered a brief note on the prospect of the programme and also highlighted the life and contributions of Lt Ranjit Kumar Nath towards the society of the small town here. Former district administrator Chandra Mohan Kakoti, litterateur and intellectual Prabhat Bora, senior advocate of Nagaon Bar Association Niranjan Sarma, Aalok Goswami, senior physician Dr Mukut Goswami, Dr Harendra Baruah, sports organiser Pradeep Hazarika, Amio Hazarika, Divya Prasad Bora, Tribauct Weigelt, a noted lawyer as well as the only son-in-law of Lt Raniit Kumar Nath, and Mukul Prasad Borthakur also spoke on the occasion and recollected his works and contributions to the fields of education, arts, and culture of the town. Over a hundred dignitaries of the town attended the programme and paid homage to Lt Ranjit Kumar Nath during the commemoration programme. The programme came to an end with a vote of thanks by advocate Mukul Prasad Borthakur. identity cards from the Election

HT Correspondent

JORHAT, June 2: The Animal Hus-

bandry and Veterinary Department

carried out culling of pigs on Sunday

at the number 9 Line Naginijan Tea

Estate under Selenghat Development

Block, Mariani, in Jorhat district. The

entire area was declared the epicenter

of African Swine Fever (ASF) by the

Jorhat district commissioner on May

31, following several cases of pig

deaths due to the disease in recent

It may be mentioned here that six

villages within a one km radius

around the epicenter were designated

as the 'Infected Zone', and 26 vil-

lages falling within a 10 km radius

were designated as the 'Surveillance

Zone' by the DC in the order passed

on Friday, imposing several restric-

GUWAHATI, June 2: The Dima Hasao district administration is making final preparations for the counting of votes scheduled for

June 4. During a press conference on Friday, district commissioner and district election officer Seemanta Kumar Das assured that the administration is fully prepared for the process. Votes from five assembly constituencies within the Diphu Lok

counted in Karbi Anglong and West Karbi Anglong. Specifically, the counting of votes for the Haflong Assembly constituency will commence at 8:00 am on June 4 at the District Commissioner's Commissioner Das detailed that the counting for the Haflong constituency will occur over 19

Sabha constituency will be

to oversee the process, ensuring accuracy and transparency. Commissioner Das also emphasised the importance of co-Journalists who have received

A Jorhat district animal husbandry

and veterinary official stated on Sun-

day evening that a total of 18 pigs

were culled within the 1 km radius of

the epicenter with the assistance of a

The team utilised a painless tech-

nique (electric shock) to euthanise the

pigs, which were then buried in a

large pit dug by an excavator, with

chemicals used to sanitise the area. A

sign was placed indicating that no ac-

tivities should be carried out at the

The official mentioned that ini-

tially, the team faced resistance from

pig owners, compounded by bad

weather, as they were unwilling to

have their pigs culled. However, after

much persuasion and assurances of

compensation as per government

3-member team from Guwahati.

African Swine Fever outbreak

prompts culling of pigs in Jorhat

rounds on 14 tables. The adminis-

tration has already appointed a su-

pervisor and two micro-observers

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM DEPUTY COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE DIMA HASAO CONFERENCE HALL Commission of India will have scores the district administration's access to a media center located

equipped with all necessary facilities to disseminate information to the public efficiently.

This robust preparation underbelow the counting hall, commitment to a smooth and transparent vote-counting process, essential for maintaining public

Sivasagar DIPRO office faces neglect, infrastructure in peril

HT Correspondent

SIVASAGAR, June 2: In an era where most government offices boast modern facilities and cutting-edge technology, the Sivasagar DIPRO office presents a stark contrast. Surprisingly, the administration appears completely indifferent to the sorry state of the infrastructure of this important department despite repeated media reports over the years.

The six-decade-old building on the southern bank of the historic Sivasagar tank may crumble down at any moment, as the whole structure is in ruins. The three employees of the department - one fourth-grade employee, one driver, and another technical assistant - may face serious consequences if it collapses during office hours. The building has not been repaired for many years; the ceilings, part of the walls, and window panes have caved in, and the worn-out furniture and interiors are all exposed to the elements. Whenever it rains, the rainwater seeps in, drenching files, computers, and furnishings, forcing employees to hastily relocate to drier areas.

Meanwhile, the DIPRO Jayanta Mout, now serving as liaison officer to Revenue minister Jogen Mohan, neglects his duties within the department. The assistant commissioner, Kankana Saikia, shoulders the additional responsibility of managing the DIPRO office. With only three staff members instead of the allocated nine, the department struggles to effectively communicate government programs to local media personnel, highlighting a significant gap in its

norms, they agreed to the culling. NFR transforms wasteland into eco-friendly park in Guwahati

HT Bureau GUWAHATI, June 2: As part of

its commitment to sustainability, Northeast Frontier Railway has reclaimed a wasteland and constructed a park named Sirisha Rail Udyaan in its place at BG Colony, Maligaon. NF Railway always initiates efforts to protect the environment and preserve the planet for future generations.

The newly constructed Sirisha Rail Udyaan was previously a wasteland area. Due to waterlogging and garbage dumping, the place was almost abandoned and unhygienic for the nearby residents. The area was unsightly, and the foul odour made life difficult for people in the vicinity. NF Railway reclaimed the wasteland and constructed a park for the local community. The park covers an area of approximately fifty-five



hundred square meters and offers modern facilities such as walking and running tracks for people of all ages, seating arrangements, a lawn area, and an open gym. Additionally, the park features separate washrooms for men and women. The walls of the park are painted to impart knowledge about the nature and cultural history of Assam. In addition to a children's play area, solar LED lamps have been installed, and the park includes a beautiful pond with two water fountains.

Residents of the locality have appreciated this initiative by NF Railway, as they no longer have to deal with garbage, flies, and mosquitoes. Since the transformation of the water body into a park, everything has changed in the

area; children play, and people come here for walks. NF Railway is consistently engaged in protecting the environment by planting trees at various locations. This strategic commitment aims to enhance green cover in and around the zone, contributing to the beauty of the area and supporting biodiversity and sustainable development.

the wind carried the truth to faraway corners, we all rushed to you to see your eyes beaming

Tribute to Rajiv Lochan

Borthakur (Jijida)

n that warm summer night, you left us all stunned and still. When with so much warmth and hope But you've gone beyond the vales, hills, and seas to the yonder sun. Your loving eyes now shine bright in the corners of our hearts. We will never let them dim in life, Jijida.

We all loved you greatly for your passion for life, work, fun, wit, and music. You built up your life from scratch, established yourself, and never craved anyone's help. Never in a fuss over anything, your cool demeanor endeared everyone around. From Khagen Mamelodies echoing through your voice to the uproarious laughter evoked by your antics on the Jorhat Dhapkata Yajna Mandir stage, you left an indelible mark on all who witnessed your artistry.

On this day of remembrance, as we perform your Addyashraddha, our prayers ascend to Lord Shiva, beseeching him to bless your soul with eternal happiness Manoj Kumar Borthakur (BulBul) AT Road, Sivasagar

Senior forest official passes away HT Correspondent KOKRAJHAR, June 2: Brah-

mananda Patiri, a senior forest official in the Forest Department, Government of Assam, passed away on Sunday.

He was admitted to Nemcare Hospital, Guwahati, on Saturday after feeling unwell during a meeting in Guwahati and breathed his last on Sunday morning. He was serving as the divisional forest officer (DFO) of Chirang division in Chirang district.

Notably, Patiri was a well-educated and well-read person, associated with cultural and literary activities. People from various communities have extended their deep condolences and are mourning the demise of Patiri.

Meritorious achievers applauded

HT Correspondent
DEMOW, June 2: Under the patronage of the All Adivasi Students Association of Assam (AASAA), Demow Regional Committee, in association with the Primary Committees, felicitated meritorious students who passed with flying colors in the HSLC and HS Final Examination 2024 on Sunday. The felicitation program was held in the auditorium of N-Santiya Bhawan (Demow Alun Nagar) on Sunday. Lalit Tanti, president of AASAA, Demow Regional Committee, presided over the meeting, while Kamal Bhumij, general secretary of AASAA, Demow Regional Committee, anchored the program. A total of 50 meritorious students were felicitated with phulam gamosa and citations. Gauranga Chaura, Tarun Kurmi, secretary of Chah Janajati Jatiya Sanmillani Sivasagar District Committee, Ajay Kumar Gogoi, professor at Moran Women College, David Bonia, former president of AASAA, Demow Regional Committee, along with other dignitaries, were present as chief guests.

SKM storms back to power in Sikkim

GANGTOK, June 2: The Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM) on Sunday returned to power in the Himalayan state for the second consecutive term by a landslide victory, winning 31 seats in the 32member assembly.

The opposition Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF), which ruled the state for 25 years in a row till 2019, could manage only one seat, though its president Pawan Kumar Chamling lost in the two constituencies he contested.

SKM president and Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang, however, won from two seats, and the party bagged 58.38 per cent of the votes polled. The SKM had won 17 seats in the 2019 assembly

Elections to the assembly were held simultaneously with the first phase of the Lok Sabha polls on April 19.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed Tamang and the SKM for

"Congratulations to SKM and CM @PSTamangGolay for their victory in the Sikkim Assembly Elections 2024. I look forward to working with the State Government to further the progress of Sikkim in the coming times," Modi said in a post on X.

Responding to the Prime Minister's post, Tamang thanked him.

"We are committed to continu-

chief minister and SKM supremo

Prem Singh Tamang on Sunday

gave credit for the party's landslide

victory in the assembly election in

the state to the hard work of the

SKM cadre and the trust of the

the Himalavan state for the second

time in a row by winning 31 seats

After the landslide win, Tamang

"It is because of the love and

congratulated the party supporters

trust of the people which we have

managed to secure in the past

five years in government. Be-

sides, party cadres worked very

hard. Now we have the next five

years to give our 100 per cent for

the people of Sikkim," he said at

a gathering in Paljor Stadium in

sincere gratitude to the esteemed

people of Sikkim for giving a his-

toric victory to the SKM," he said

Tamang won from both

"Dear and Respected People of

The SKM returned to power in

people in his government.

in the 32-member assembly.

and the voters of Sikkim.



opment and prosperity of Sikkim. We look forward to collaborating with you to achieve our shared goals for the betterment of our

"Your unwavering support has been a driving force for us, and we look forward to your continued guidance and blessings," Tamang said in an X.

Modi also thanked all who voted for the BJP in the Sikkim assembly elections. The saffron party contested in 31 seats but failed to win any of them. The party bagged 5.18 per cent of the total votes

Sikkim BJP president Dilli Ram

People's trust, hard work of SKM cadres behind victory: Sikkim CM

constituencies that he contested.

"Your unwavering support has

led us to this landmark victory, a

triumph of truth and the people's

will. Our Sikkimese community

has transcended past negativities

and divisive ideologies," Tamang

The SKM supremo especially

thanked new voters, who had come

all the way from different parts of

the country to cast their vote in

Laying down the priorities for

the future, Tamang said that over

ernment's focus will be on the

progress and prosperity of all peo-

SKM nominee Kala Rai in the Upper Burtuk constituency by a margin of 2,968 votes.

"I also appreciate the efforts put in by our Karyakartas. Our Party will always be at the forefront of working towards Sikkim's development and fulfilling people's as-

pirations," Modi said in a post. After the landslide win, Tamang congratulated the party workers

and the voters of Sikkim. "It is because of the love and trust of the people which we have managed to secure in the past five years in government. Besides, party cadres worked very hard Now we have the next five years to

ple of Sikkim," he said at a gathering in Paljor Stadium in Gangtok. Tamang won by over 7,000 votes in both Rhenock and Soreng-

Chakung constituencies. "I also want to thank the opposition as it is because of them that our party became stronger and more organised," said the president of the SKM which had won 17 seats in 2019.

Like the BJP, the Congress also failed to open its account and secured a paltry vote share of 0.32 per cent which is even less than that of NOTA (0.99 per cent).

Tamang asked the party workers to maintain calm in the aftermath of the landslide victory. (PTI)

Arunachal Governor dissolves assembly

ITANAGAR, June 2: Arunachal Pradesh Governor KT Parnaik dissolved the seventh assembly on Sunday, paving the way for the constitution of the eighth assembly following the declaration of results, a statement said.

Under Article 174 (2) (b) of the Constitution, the governor has accepted the cabinet's advise and signed the order to dissolve the seventh state assembly with immediate effect, the statement issued by the Raj Bhavan said.

Parnaik has also accepted the resignation of Chief Minister Pema Khandu and his council of ministers. He requested Khandu and his ministers to continue until the new government is

The chief minister called on the governor at Raj Bhavan and tendered his resignation.

The governor expressed his appreciation for the chief minister for successfully managing the state administration during his tenure, the statement said.

The BJP returned to power in Arunachal Pradesh for the third time in a row, winning 46 seats in the 60-member assembly, decimating the opposition Congress that bagged just one seat. (PTI)

vigour for Arunachal's growth: PM

NEW DELHI, June 2: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday thanked the people of Arunachal Pradesh for reposing their faith in the BJP yet again and said the party will keep working with even greater vigour for the state's growth.

BJP will keep working with greater

The BJP on Sunday returned to power in Arunachal Pradesh for the third time in a row, as the party won 46 seats in the 60-member assembly and secured a majority, the Election Commission officials said.

"Thank you Arunachal Pradesh! The people of this wonderful state have given an unequivocal mandate to politics of development. My gratitude to them for reposing their faith in @BJP4Arunachal yet again," Modi said in a post on X.

"Our Party will keep working with even greater vigour for the state's growth," he said.

Modi also appreciated the hardwork of the "exceptional" BJP workers in Arunachal Pradesh through the election campaign.

"It is commendable how they went across the state and connected with

didates also tasted victory unop-

Assembly poll win 'historic': Khandu

'People repaid to PM Modi's contribution to Arunachal'

ITANAGAR, June 2: Arunachal Pradesh chief minister Pema

Khandu on Sunday described the

landslide victory of the BJP in the

assembly elections as "historic"

and asserted that the momentum

will spread to other parts of the

country on June 4 when the Lok

Sabha elections results will be de-

The BJP on Sunday returned to

power in Arunachal Pradesh for

the third time in a row, winning

46 seats in the 60-member as-

sembly, decimating the opposi-

tion Congress which bagged just

the BJP and entire Arunachal

Pradesh. People of Arunachal

Pradesh have declared that they

want the BJP to stay in power for

"This time, the mandate is more

than what we got in 2019. In the

2019 assembly polls, BJP won 41

seats, while we have won 46 seats

this time," Khandu told PTI Video.

in the state were counted on Sun-

Votes of the assembly elections

Khandu, however, won uncon-

tested from the Mukto assembly

constituency. Nine other BJP can-

ITANAGAR, June 2: All four

women candidates fielded by the

BJP in the Arunachal Pradesh as-

sembly elections have registered

victories. In all, eight women can-

didates were in the fray in the as-

sembly polls. Of them, four were

fielded by the BJP, three by the

Former chief minister Kalikho

Pul's widow Dasanglu Pul won the

Hayuliang seat in Anjaw district

unopposed. This was the third time

in a row that she won from the

Pul had first won the by-election

Congress and one was an Inde-

pendent nominee.

constituency.

the next five years.

"This is a historic occasion for

clared.

"The people of the state have repaid to the contribution of Prime Minister (Narendra Modi)... The development witnessed under the BJP-led NDA regime in the state is the major factor for the party's win in the state," Khandu asserted.

The development witnessed in Arunachal Pradesh under the BJPled central government is a major factor for the party's win in the state, the chief minister asserted.

"The BJP has started its winning streak from the 'Land of Rising Sun' (Arunachal) and this trend will spread throughout the country

gust 9 that year. She had also won

former lawmaker Jambey Tashi,

the by-election to the constituency

in February last year, after her hus-

band's death on November 2, 2022

Aboh, won Khonsa West seat by a

margin of 804 votes. Aboh had

first won the seat in a by-election

in 2019 after her husband Tirong

Aboh of the NPP was assassinated

by NSCN militants on May 21 that

year, a day before the declaration

Nyabi Jini Dirchi, a greenhorn,

In 2019, three women had won

in the assembly polls, including

Dasanglu Pul, Gum Tayeng from

Dambuk and Jummum Ete Deori

has this time defeated sitting MLA

Gokar Basar in Basar constituency

by a margin of 1,791 votes.

Another BJP nominee, Chakat

Tsering Lhamu, the widow of

the seat in 2019.

due to cardiac arrest.

of results.

which the people will witness on June 4. The party will sweep the Lok Sabha polls with a huge margin and Narendra Modi become the Prime Minister for the third term," he told reporters.

To a question regarding the formation of the new ministry, Khandu said that after the Lok Sabha polls counting on June 4, all the winning candidates of the party would convene a meeting where the chief ministerial candidate would be decided.

"BJP is a disciplined party. The party will select the leader with consensus from all elected candidates," Khandu said. (PTI)

All four women candidates of Governor dissolves 10th Sikkim Legislative BJP win in Arunachal polls **Assembly** from the constituency in 2016 after her husband died by suicide on Au-

GANGTOK, June 2: Sikkim Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya on Sunday dissolved the 10th Sikkim Legislative Assembly (SLA) with immediate effect to won Lumla seat by a margin of clear the decks for the constitution 1,531 votes. Earlier, she had won of the 11th SLA following the declaration of results, officials said.

> The Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM) on Sunday returned to power in the Himalayan state for the second consecutive term by a landslide victory, winning 31 seats in the 32-member assembly.

"After considering the request of the chief minister and the decision of council of ministers in its meeting held on May 28 to dissolve the tenth SLA with effect from June 2, the governor ordered that the state Assembly will stand dissolved with effect from June 2 midnight,' according to a notification issued by the Raj Bhawan.

The process of constitution of the 11th SLA will begin soon, officials said. (PTI)

Sikkim BJP president loses to SKM's Kala Rai

GANGTOK, June 2: Sikkim BJP president Dilli Ram Thapa lost to Upper Burtuk assembly constituency, officials said on Sunday.

Thapa, a sitting MLA and a former minister lost to Rai by 2,968

Rai polled 6,723 votes while Thapa got 3,755.

Sikkim Democratic Front's DB Thapa polled 1,623 votes, while BK Tamang (CAP-A) bagged 581

Polling for the 32-member Sikkim Assembly was held on April 19 along with the first phase of the Lok Sabha elections.

The counting of votes for the 32member Sikkim Assembly started at 6 am on Sunday. (PTI)

SKM won 10 seats in the 2014 assembly elections

Prem Singh Tamang: Able administrator, organiser, mass leader

GANGTOK, June 2: Much waters have flown down Teesta and Rangeet rivers since Prem Singh Tamang rebelled against the then Sikkim chief minister Pawan Kumar Chamling and subsequently formed his own party, the Sikkim Krantikari Morcha, in

Fifteen years after quitting the Sikkim Democratic Front in 2009, he decimated Chamling's party, scripting history by winning 31 of 32 assembly seats in the Himalayan state in 2024. Only twice before, in 1989 and 2009, had political parties, the Sikkim Sangram Parishad and the SDF, respectively, registered such landslide victo-

Fifty-six-year-old Tamang, regarded as an able organiser, administrator and fiery politician, rode on a slew of development and welfare measures, besides his own personal charisma, to massively increase his party's seats and vote share.

After having walked out of prison, where he was lodged for one year after being convicted in a corruption case, in 2017, Tamang had revamped his fledging party, which went on to unseat Chamling from power only two years later, winning 17 seats in 2019.

Although SDF had won 15 seats, two party MLAs had won two seats each and had to quit one seat each, effectively putting the party's strength at 13 in the assembly.



Chamling suffered mass desertions of his MLAs, as 10 legislators joined the BJP, while the remaining two switched sides to the SKM, leaving him as the lone representative of his party in the assembly.

Tamang, on the other hand, went on to further consolidate his power and expand his party base and support, focusing on welfare schemes targeted at women and weaker sections and implementing development work with generous funding from the Centre as he stitched an alliance with the BJP. The coalition, however, collapsed ahead of the 2024

Born to Kalu Singh Tamang and Dhan Maya Tamang on February 5, 1968, he had graduated from a college in Darjeeling in neighbouring West Bengal and became a teacher in a government school in 1990.

However, he quit his job only three years later and in 1994, co-founded the SDF, with which he remained associated for nearly 20 years, of which he was a minister for 15 years, before floating his party in 2013. The SKM won 10 seats in the 2014 assembly

After having fallen out with Chamling, Tamang had ploughed a lonely furrow in Sikkim politics, inviting the wrath of his former mentor as he was booked in a corruption case in which he was convicted to one year imprisonment following which he was disqualified from the state assembly as an MLA from Upper Burtuk seat.

After winning the 2019 polls, the bar on him to occupy a public post was removed by the central government, following which he took oath as the chief minister on May 27 that year and won a by-election five months later from Poklok-Kamrang constituency, ironically a seat vacated by Chamling.

Five years down the line, the fortunes of the two leaders have changed drastically, with Tamang winning from Rhenock and Soreng-Chakung constituencies by thumping margins, while Chamling met his political waterloo by losing both seats, Namcheybung and Poklok-Kamrang.

The drubbings may mark the end of Chamling's four-decade-long public life during which he had served as a five-term chief minister to leave Tamang as the new satrap of Sikkim. The SKM boss, however, has also expressed his wish before the electorate to not remain in public life after serving two terms as the chief minister and to hand over the reins of the party to the next line of leadership. (PTI)

sports lover who brought BJP to power in bordering Arunachal ITANAGAR, June 2: Pema

Sikkim, I would like to express my the next five years, the state gov-

Pema Khandu: Music and

Khandu, a sports enthusiast and music aficionado, has emerged as a tall leader in Arunachal Pradesh over the years, especially after a constitutional crisis in 2016 that led to the imposition of president's rule. Khandu was also regarded as a strategist who, through political manoeuvring, brought the BJP to power for the first time in the northeastern state bordering China.

The BJP on Sunday returned to power in Arunachal Pradesh for the third time in a row, as the party won 46 seats in the 60-member assembly. Khandu's political odyssey began amid a personal tragedy. The untimely demise of his father, former chief minister Dorjee Khandu, in a helicopter crash in 2011, thrust him under the spotlight. Although he had joined the Con-

gress in 2000 and held various positions, it was not until he won a by-election uncontested from his father's constituency Mukto, that he truly began to carve out his political path. Khandu's rise was swift. Serving initially as the tourism minister in Nabam Tuki's Congress government, his leadership trajectory soared following a constitutional crisis in January 2016 that led to the imposition of president's rule.

When the central rule was lifted, he became a minister in the Kalikho Pul-led government, supported by the BJP. However, this government was short-lived. The Supreme Court's intervention restored Tuki, who soon resigned, and at just 37, Khandu became the chief minister in July 2016.

Since then, Khandu and his government have twice changed their party affiliation in quick succession

– from the Congress to the People's Party of Arunachal (PPA) in September 2016 and then to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in December of the same year. Just three months into his term, 43 ruling Congress MLAs defected to the PPA, an ally of the BJP.

Although internal discord led to his suspension from the PPA, Khandu demonstrated resilience and adaptability by joining the BJP along with most PPA MLAs, securing his position and proving his majority on the floor of the house.

In 2019, Khandu won from Mukto assembly seat for the second time and became the chief minister without any political hindrance. Beyond politics, Khandu is known for his cultural contributions. An ardent music lover, he captivates audiences with renditions of Kishore Kumar and Mohammad Rafi classics at official gatherings. His commitment to preserving cultural heritage is evident in his efforts to promote traditional songs through talent shows in Tawang and West Kameng districts.

Sports, another of Khandu's passions, sees him actively organizing cricket tournaments and supporting local athletes, nurturing talent across various disciplines including football, cricket, badminton, and volleyball. A history graduate from Delhi's Hindu College, Khandu is a member of the Monpa tribe, which predominantly inhabits Tawang and parts of West Kameng.

In the run-up to the assembly polls held simultaneously with the Lok Sabha elections on April 19, he campaigned on a plank of corruption-free governance, emphasizing transparency and people-centric policies.

"We will continue our efforts to support the poor, the sick, and the needy. From the unborn child to our senior citizens, we will stand by every Sikkimese in their times of need. Despite challenges, our unity and determination will help

the blessings and support that we

received from our dear people, es-

pecially the most vulnerable," he

favour of the ruling party. us overcome obstacles. The people The Sikkim CM said the Sikkim have given us a great gift by entrusting us with their future, and Krantikari Morcha stood as a beacon of hope, lighting the way for a we will honor this trust with unwavering dedication," the SKM new dawn leading to golden and supremo said. prosperous future. 'This win is not just ours; it be-In 2019, the SKM had won 17 longs to the youth, students, and

seats and unseated the Sikkim every Sikkimese who dreams of a Democratic Front party (SDF) which ruled the state for 25 years bright future for our children and a prosperous, inclusive society," he SDF president and former CM

Pawan Chamling lost from both the seats he contested elections.

"I also want to thank the oppo-

"Our past achievements, like the 'Aama Yojana' for the welfare of of the landslide victory. (PTI) Rhenock and Soreng-Chakung poor mothers, reflect our commit-

Tamang asked the party workers

to maintain calm in the aftermath

sition as it is because of them that our party became stronger and more organised," he said.

Modi congratulates SKM chief

NEW DELHI, June 2: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday congratulated Sikkim Krantikari Morcha chief Prem Singh Tamang for his party's victory in the assembly polls and said he looks forward to working with the state government to further Sikkim's progress. The Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM) on Sunday returned to power by sweeping the assembly polls in the Himalayan state, winning 31 of the 32 seats, according to the Election Commission. The opposition Sikkim Democratic Front won only one seat. "I thank all those who voted for @BJP4Sikkim in the Assembly Elections. I also appreciate the efforts put in by our Karyakartas," Modi said in a post on X. (PTI)

been rer district

5202 / 21



fected states, including the loss of

lives and damage to houses and

other properties due to landslides

and floods in Mizoram, Assam, Ma-

(NDRF) teams have carried out

evacuation, airlifting and road clear-

ance operations, it said, adding the

Union home ministry is in regular

PM Modi said the Union govern-

ment will continue to extend full

support to the states affected by the

cyclone, according to the statement.

meetings the prime minister chaired.

review the preparations to celebrate

the World Environment Day, which

Much before the Lok Sabha

Top bureaucrats were part of the

He is also chairing a meeting to

touch with state governments.

National Disaster Response Force

nipur, Meghalaya and Tripura.

MONDAY, JUNE 3, 2024 PM Modi chairs host of meetings

jesh Thakur claimed the INDIA

bloc will get eight to ten seats out

Maharashtra Congress president

Nana Patole said the party will win

16 seats and the Maha Vikas

Aghadi alliance will get 38-40

seats out of the 48 in the state. Peo-

ple are fighting the elections

against the BJP in these polls, Pa-

Govind Singh Dotasra said the

party would win at least 12-13

He said there was tough fight in

the remaining seats in Rajasthan -

- that has a total of 25 parliamen-

During the online interaction,

Gujarat Congress president Shak-

tisinh Gohil said the party has

Congress chief

of the 14 in the state.

Rajasthan

seats in the state.

tary constituencies.

Director for Agnibaan SOrTeD, and Umamaheswari. K,

the Project Director of the first Mission, played a key role

The Agnibaan also logged several firsts to its credit

the world's first flight with a single piece 3D printed en-

gine, the first-ever semi-cryo engine launch of India and

the first-ever launch from a private launchpad in India.

The rocket was controlled by computers powered by

Linux operating system, and driven by an ethernet-based

architecture for connecting flight computers within the ve-

Agnibaan SOrTed was also the first flight to use avia-

Agnibaan SOrTeD was a vertical ascent flight, unlike

"Seven seconds after lift-off we checked the health of

tion-grade jet fuel and industrial-grade Liquid oxygen as

sounding rockets that are launched using guiding rails

the vehicle and that is when the auto-pilot kicked in. A lit-

tle bit into the flight, it started moving over the ocean and

performed the pitch-over manoeuvre and then continued

on its planned trajectory," Ravichandran said, sharing de-

the wind biasing manoeuvre, where we solve the wind

speed and actually fly into the wind so there is not much

to fly till burnout and dropped back into the ocean. "There

was continuous radar tracking of the vehicle. All the de-

vices and instruments enabling that also worked really

of firing multiple engines together and carry out tests for

rocket has multiple engines fired together. So, that will

vehicle. The orbital vehicle will have two stages. So stage

there we will be able to target the orbital mission in the

lites was high with as many as 30-35 tonnes of payloads

According to Ravichandran, the demand for small satel-

separation has to be tested." Ravichandran said.

The next steps for Agnikul are to master the technology

We will have to figure out two things. Our orbital

"And the stage separation. SOrTeD was a single-stage

'We are already in the middle of building rigs at our facility. We will take six-seven months to get that and from

"Once it reached about 60 seconds or so, we entered

tails of Agnibaan SOrTeD's maiden flight.

wind load on the vehicle," he said.

have to be tested out on the ground.

next three months," he said.

put in low earth orbits every year. (PTI)

well," Ravichandran said.

stage separation.

After the wind-biasing manoeuvre

placed at a particular angle.

Exit polls: Cong's state leaders confident of much better returns

leaders from some politically crucial states on Sunday exuded confidence that the party will do much better than what was projected in the exit polls and asserted the INDIA bloc is going to form the next government.

Leaders from states such as Karnataka, Maharashtra, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Jharkhand, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan and Gujarat stressed that the Congress' performance would be very good, belying all the predictions in the exit polls.

The assertion was made at an online interaction Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh had before the media with key state leaders, Pradesh Congress Committee presidents and legislature party leaders of various states.

Leader of the Opposition in the Punjab Assembly Partap Singh Bajwa said all the surveys have given seven to nine seats to the

"We are ahead on nine seats, one seat will go to the AAP and three seats will be won by the candidates who will not in any way help the NDA or the PM. The INDIA bloc will get a minimum of 10 seats...In Punjab, the NDA is not going to get even a single seat," he said. There are 13 parliamentary constituency in the state

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu said the Congress has an edge on two

NEW DELHI, June 2: After the successful test flight of

its Agnibaan rocket, Chennai-based space start-up Agnikul

Cosmos is hoping to start launching satellites early next

Executive Officer Srinath Ravichandran said the 3Dprinted semi-cryogenic engines and the rocket will offer

customised launch vehicles for their satellites.

Agnibaan rocket.

In an interview with PTI, Agnikul co-founder and Chief

"Nine to twelve months I would say. Probably by the

end of this financial year or the early part of the next fi-

nancial year is what we are targeting," Ravichandran said

when asked about the commercial orbital launch of the

technology demonstrator) on May 30, which lasted for 66

ing in differentiating between building a vehicle and

launching a vehicle," said Ravichandran, whose idea to

use 3D printing technology to build engines and rockets

led to Agnikul Cosmos, a space sector start-up incubated

specialist, and Satvanaravanan Chakravarthy, a professor

at IIT Madras and Head of the National Centre for Com-

The other co-founders were Moin SPM, an operations

Women engineers Saraniya Periaswamy, the Vehicle

seconds, came after four unsuccessful attempts.

at the IIT Madras Research Park in 2017.

bustion Research and Development.

The first test flight of Agnibaan SOrTeD (suborbital

"It was a big sense of relief. I think we got a lot of learn-



parliamentary seats and is in a tight contest on the two other seats in the hill state. He exuded confidence that the Congress was also winning the six assembly seats where the bypolls have taken

Karnataka deputy chief minister D K Shivakumar said the Congress would win at least two-third of the 28 seats on the back of the popularity of the guarantees the party fulfilled after coming to power in the state. Bihar Congress chief Akhilesh Prasad Singh said his party would definitely win six to seven seats out of the nine seats it contested in the state.

He said the INDIA bloc together would win around 20 out of the 40 seats in Bihar.

Jharkhand Congress chief Ra-

Agnikul eyes launching satellites

by 2025: CEO Ravichandran

five seats in Gujarat and there was tough competition on about 12 seats he said. Gujarat has a total of 26 Lok Sabha seats.

fought strongly in the state.

These exit polls are an attempt to mislead the people and create pressure on counting agents, he

The Congress will win four to

Haryana Congress president Udai Bhan said the Congress would win at least eight of the 10 seats in Haryana.

Uttar Pradesh Congress chief Ajai Rai also spoke during the interaction and exuded confidence of a much better performance in his state than the projections made in the exit polls. Uttar Pradesh has 80 seats and the Congress, which fought the polls in alliance with the Samajwadi Party, contested on 17

The unusual interaction before the media came a day after the exit polls on Saturday predicted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will retain power for a third straight term, with the BJP-led NDA expected to win a big majority in the Lok Sabha elections.

While India Today-Axis My India has forecast 361-401 seats for the BJP-led alliance and 131-166 seats for the opposition INDIA bloc in the 543-member Lok Sabha, the ABP-C Voter predicted 353-383 seats for the ruling alliance and 152-182 seats for the INDIA bloc. (PTI)

LS polls: EC asks Cong's Ramesh to share details of claim

NEW DELHI, June 2: The Election Commission (EC) sought factual information from Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Sunday on his claim that Home Minister Amit Shah has called up 150 district magistrates and collectors ahead of the June 4 counting of votes for the Lok Sabha polls. In a letter to Ramesh, the poll panel has asked him to share details regarding his claim by 7 pm on Sunday. The EC has referred to his post on X on June 1, in which the Congress general secretary had alleged that "the outgoing Home Minister has been calling up DMs/Collectors. So far, he has spoken to 150 of them. This is blatant and brazen intimidation, showing how desperate the BJP

The process of counting votes is a sacred duty cast upon every returning officer and such public statements "tend to put an element of doubt and thus, deserves to be addressed in larger public interest", the EC has told Ramesh.

It has also told the Congress leader that when the Model Code of Conduct is in force, all officers are under the deemed deputation of the commission and they report directly to the poll watchdog for any direc-

"However, no DM has reported any such undue influence as alleged by you...," the EC's letter to Ramesh

"It is requested that details of 150 DMs to whom such calls have been allegedly made by the Home Minister along with the factual matrix/basis of your information are shared by 7 pm today -- June 2, 2024, so that appropriate action can be taken," it has told the Congress

sular India, the statement said. In the meeting to review the post-Cyclone Remal situation, another official statement said, Modi was briefed about its impact in the af-



NEW DELHI, June 2: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday stressed the need to ensure regular fire and electrical safety audits in hospitals and other public places as he reviewed the heatwave situation in the country amid fire incidents which have claimed many lives.

He chaired a host of meetings, including one on the post-Cyclone Remal situation, especially in the northeast region, and another to review the 100-day agenda of the new government to be sworn in after the Lok Sabha results are announced on

Exit polls broadcast on Saturday predicted a massive win for the BJPled National Democratic Alliance (NDA), with Modi set to retain

to an official statement.

He also said that regular drills for biomass must be planned.

normal in most parts of the country

power for a third straight term.

In the meeting to review the heatwave conditions in parts of the country, Modi instructed officials that proper drills for preventing and handling incidents of fire must be undertaken on a regular basis, according

the maintenance of fire lines in forests and productive utilisation of

Modi was briefed that as per forecasts, the heatwave is likely to continue in parts of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. Monsoon this year is likely to be normal and above

falls on June 5.

polling exercise began, Modi had set in motion the exercise for different government ministries to prepare the 100-day agenda for the new govern-He had asked his Council of Minis-

ters to prioritise programmes and initiatives for the first 100 days. (PTI)

LDF, Congress in Kerala reject exit poll predictions; terms it baseless

June 2: The ruling Left in Kerala and the Congress on Sunday rejected as "baseless" the exit poll predictions which said that the BJPled NDA will come to power at the Centre and also open its account in the state where it has not had an MP in the past. The LDF also termed the predictions as "suspicious" and "politically motivated", while the Congress said that there is no need to believe the exit polls as they have been proved wrong in the past.

The LDF and the Congress, both of whom are confident of a good show in the Lok Sabha polls in the state, were in agreement that the BJP will not open its account in Kerala. LDF convener and veteran CPI(M) leader E P Jayarajan said the exit poll predictions were not arrived at through some scientific findings or experiments, "it was not based on public sentiments" and was not an observation following a proper analysis of the elections.

"I suspect it is politically motivated. All the exit polls have taken a stand that repeats and strengthens what the BJP has been saying till now (about the poll results). That is what makes it even more suspicious," he told a TV channel.

A similar view was expressed by senior Congress leader Ramesh hennithala, who said that he will not accept exit polls which based on a sample size of 1,000 people make predictions about how lakhs of people voted.

"We have no faith in the exit polls. There is no need to believe in them. There is a strong public sentiment against Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the country. We firmly believe that the INDIA bloc will win and that it will reach the figure of 295 predicted by Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge," he said. "We are moving forward with the belief that the INDIA bloc will form a government at the Centre. Also the UDF will have a huge win in Kerala. We will win all 20 seats," he added. Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) chief K Sudhakaran and his party colleague K Muraleedharan were also confident that the UDF will win all 20 seats in Kerala and that BJP will not get even one. They, too, said that exit polls have been wrong in the past.

Jayarajan too questioned how the exit polls were predicting that the BJP will open its account in the southern state.

"I believe it is a political creation. The BJP has hardly any chance of opening its account in Kerala. The actual fact is that the BJP will not get even one seat in Kerala." he said. The LDF convener further said that Kerala was a secular state with a new generation that was highly educated and secular in its outlook.

"Kerala society does not wish for a communal party to come here," he added. On being asked whether Kharge's prediction of the INDIA bloc winning 295 seats was accurate, Jayarajan said "the fact is that it is possible"

"In two days the picture will be

clear," he added. While rejecting the predictions, he said that there should be extreme vigil during the counting process on June 4. His party colleague and CPI(M)

Central Committee member A K Balan, was also of the view that the BJP would not open its account in Kerala and that it would not get a majority at the national level.

"We cannot believe that the BJP will come back to power based on the exit polls. The predictions are a lie and have no connection with reality," he said.

He further said that all the seats from Kerala will go to the INDIA bloc, but the exact share of the LDF and UDF will be clear only after results come on June 4. However, Balan was confident that LDF would have a good show in Kerala.

On whether BJP will win in Thrissur, the CPI(M) leader said it was not possible, but if it happens, then the Congress would have to be blamed for it. The BJP has fielded actor Suresh Gopi in Thrissur Lok Sabha constituency. (PTI)

SIT searching for Bhavani Revanna

BENGALURU, June 2: The Special Investigation Team carried out searches at various locations in the last 24 hours looking for Bhavani Revanna, mother of suspended JD(S) MP Prajwal Revanna, in connection with a woman kidnap case as she was not present at her residence at Holenarasipura in Hassan district, sources said on

Meanwhile, Karnataka home minister G Parameshwara said a search is on to "arrest" Bhavani, who is found "absconding". She is hiding somewhere and will be arrested soon, he added.

"They (Special Investigation Team) are searching for her (Bhavani) to arrest her. It's not known where she is. She will be arrested once she is found. It is a due process of law and nothing else,' Parameshwara told reporters here.

The SIT had issued a notice to Bhavani asking her to be present at her home on June 1 as there was a need to question her in the kidnap case linked to allegations of sexual abuse against her son. When a team of SIT sleuths reached Bhavani's house, 'Chennambika Nilaya', she was not present.

Two women lawvers reached 'Chennambika Nilaya' on Saturday evening and met the SIT officials. They did not disclose the purpose behind the meeting.

It is learnt that Bhavani had communicated through her lawvers that she was unwell and would appear before them (SIT) shortly.

Bhavani's husband and Hole-

narasipura JD(S) MLA H D Revanna is on bail in the same case. The SIT carried out searches at

various locations including Mvsuru, Hassan, Bengaluru, Mandya and Ramanagara. The searches were also done at Bhavani's relatives' houses to track her, but she was not found, sources said. Sources said the SIT has consti-

tuted various teams to look for Bhavani.

Praiwal was arrested over allegations of sexually abusing several

Kejriwal hugs children, touches parents' feet before leaving for Tihar jail

NEW DELHI, June 2: Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal and his family bid adieu to each other on Sunday before he left the CM's residence to surrender at Tihar jail after his interim bail in the excise policy case ended on June 1.

Kejriwal hugged his children and touched his parents' feet before leaving in a car for a scheduled visit to the Rajghat and the Hanuman temple at Connaught

He waved a final goodbye to his parents before his car sped alongside a long trail of vehicles carrying AAP leaders who accompanied the chief minister for his surrender. Kejriwal's wife Sunita, son Pulkit and daughter Harshita also accompanied him for his surrender.

Sharing visuals of the family's last moments together, the AAP wrote in a post on X, "Bharat Mata's brave son Arvind Kejriwal ji took blessings from his parents and hugged his children before going to jail to save democracy. Kejriwal will not bow down to dictatorship.

In another post, the party wrote, "It is this feeling that scares the dictator. With a smile on his face, Delhi CM Kejriwal headed towards Raighat to pay homage to father of the nation. Mahatma Gandhi. Today, Kejriwal ji will go to jail in this fight to save democracy." In a display of unity and sup-

port, Kejriwal's family and AAP leaders accompanied the chief minister as he paid homage at Mahatma Gandhi's memorial at the Rajghat and offered prayers at the Hanuman temple in Connaught Place. Kejriwal later addressed a

large gathering of workers and leaders of the AAP before leaving for Tihar jail.

AAP leaders, including Atishi, Kailash Gahlot and Saurabh Bharadwaj, Rajya Sabha MPs Sanjay Singh and Sandeep Pathak, and party leaders Durgesh Pathak, Rakhi Birla and Reena Gupta were also present.

Patriotic songs and slogans of "Kejriwal Zindabaad" filled the air at the party headquarters.

Addressing the gathering, Kejriwal said, "I am going back to iail not because I was involved in corruption but because I raised voice against dictatorship... I campaigned for the Lok Sabha polls to save the country."

Kejriwal said that the BJP will not form the next government at the Centre, saying the exit polls were "fake" and "mind games' by the BJP. Several exit polls, which were

aired on Saturday evening, pred-

icated a comfortable majority

for the BJP-led NDA. Counting of votes for the Lok Sabha polls will be held on Tuesday. The address at the party headquarters was summed up with the national anthem and Keiriwal left for Tihar amid a sea of

Indian flags. Minutes before the chief minister's surrender, security arrangements were beefed up at Tihar jail with heavy police deployment. Traffic was also re-

stricted in the area. The chief minister surrendered to the Tihar authorities after 21 days of bail granted by the Supreme Court for the election campaign

He was released from prison on May 10 on an interim bail granted by the apex court in the excise policy-linked money laundering case.

The bail expired on June 1, the day the seventh and last phase of the general elections

to International Health Regulations, 2005

'A further step towards equity and the creation of an umbrella of solidarity that will help protect the world from future pandemic threats'

77th World Health Assembly adopts amendments

NEW DELHI, June 2: In a landmark achievement in the global health security agenda, the 77th World Health Assembly agreed to the package of amendments to the International Health Regulations (IHR 2005) based on 300 proposals made by member countries after the Covid-19 pandemic. The targeted amend-

ments to the International Health Regulations (IHR) aim at improving countries' ability to prepare for and respond to Public Health Emergencies of International Concern (PHEIC) and Pandemic Emergencies (PE), an official statement

They include provisions for facilitating equitable access to relevant health products during PHEIC and PE, as well as mobilizing financial resources to support developing countries in building, strengthening and maintaining the core capac-



ities required under the IHR (2005), it said.

Health Ministry Secretary Apurya Chandra said that an "incredible milestone" has been reached "with the "revision of the international health regulations"

"This is a further step towards equity and the creation of an umbrella of solidarity that will help protect the world from future

pandemic threats. This is a gift to our children and grandchildren," he added.

The Working group on International Health Regulations (WGIHR) and Intergovernmental Negotiating Body on Pandemic treaty with country representations began the negotiation process in two separate groups almost two years ago and met a number of times, including many resumed sessions on the issue, the statement said. The processes witnessed

a number of close calls with seeming deadlocks over positions taken by the various stakeholders, it added. In order to finalize the

package of amendments to the IHR, a proposal was put forward in the form of a White Paper by Apurva Chandra as Chair of Committee A of the World Health Assembly on May 28, 2024. It proposed to establish a

single drafting group, to be co-chaired by one bureau member from the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB) and the Working Group on Amendments to the International Health Regulations (WGIHR) respectively, to consider the matters related

to some of the most critical agenda items - the proposed amendments to the IHR (2005), followed by consideration of procedural matters on way forward related to INB negotiations on the pandemic treaty.

The single drafting group thus established, along with WHO secretariat and member State representatives, through sheer hard work and determination completed the work of bringing consensus in the ongoing IHR amendments during the 77th assembly session period.

India played a constructive role in the crafting of the Instrument, which seeks to operationalize equity, necessary for an equitable response by developing countries to Public Health Emergencies.

As a result, on June 1, 2024 the resolution to amendment of the IHR (2005) was adopted by consensus in the 77th World Health Assembly, the statement said.

The said proposal was approved by all member states by consensus, it said. (PTI)

'Lagaan' inspired to capture essence of storytelling via cricket: Sharan Sharma on 'Mr & Mrs Mahi'

MUMBAI, June 2: Filmmaker Sharan Sharma says he sought inspiration from Aamir Khan-starrer "Lagaan" while crafting the story of his new film "Mr. & Mrs. Mahi", a human drama set against the backdrop of cricket.

Sharma's movie features Janhvi Kapoor and Rajkumar Rao as the titular couple -- Mahendra, a former cricketer, and Mahima, who is a doctor. After Mahendra spots the cricketing talent in his wife, he encourages her to chase her dream and becomes her coach

"There's so much cricket to watch in general, so I'm not going to a theatre to watch cricket, I go there to watch a story. We didn't want to show the sport like how we see it on TV... We shot it like a scene, the idea was to show the drama of the scene. This was done brilliantly in 'Lagaan'.

"In 'Lagaan', you were following the story, you were not sitting and watching the match. Our inspiration from 'Lagaan' in terms of coverage, and the focus was on storytelling, that's what we were trying to take," the director told PTI in an interview.

"Lagaan", a period sports drama from director Ashutosh Gowarikar, was about a cricket match between a group of untrained villagers and their colonial masters. It won an Academy Award nomination for best foreign language film and went on to become a blockbuster hit and a classic in the history of Indian cinema.

Sharma, who made his filmmaking debut with 2020's "Gunjan Saxena: The Kargil Girl", starring Kapoor, said he was very particular about each and every detail related to the sport in the movie. (PTI)

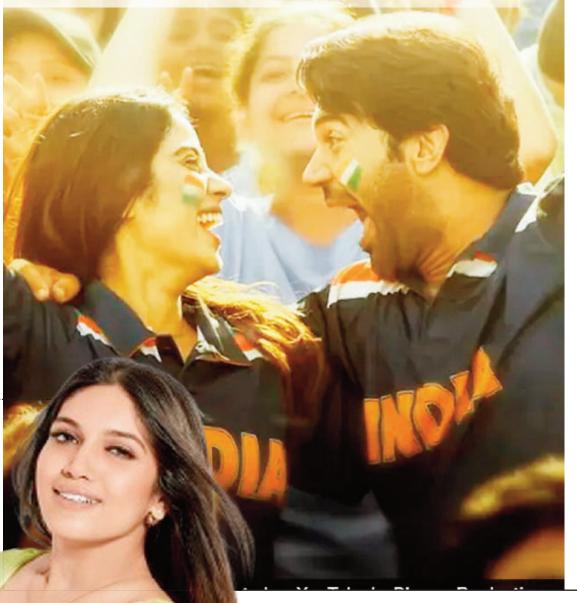
BHUMI PEDNEKAR BEGINS SHOOTING FOR HER DEBUT OTT SHOW 'DALDAL'

MUMBAI, June 2: Bhumi Pednekar on Saturday announced that she has started filming for "Daldal", the upcoming Prime Video thriller that will mark the actor's series debut.

The actor, who was most recently seen in "Bhakshak", shared the news on Instagram, where she also posted a still from the show, in which she will star as a cop hot on the heels of a serial killer in Mumbai. "The past never stays buried for long. Rita's journey with #Daldal commences from today.. #Day1 #DaldalOn-Prime," Pednekar, 34, wrote in the caption. Amrit Raj Gupta of "Gullak" fame will direct the series, based on Vish Dhamija's book "Bhendi Bazaar". It is produced by Abundantia Entertainment. In "Daldal", which was announced by Prime Video in March this year, Pednekar plays Rita Ferreira, Mumbai's newly appointed DCP who is haunted by the guilt of her part and dealing with demons of her present.

"She must embark on an investigation of a series of murders that puts her on a collision course with a cold-blooded serial killer, even as she has to save her life from falling apart," read the official synopsis.

Vikram Malhotra and Suresh Triveni serve as executive producers on the series, penned by Sreekanth Agneeaswaran, Rohan D'Souza, and Priya Saggi. (PTI)



I'm in my villain era: actor Neha Sharma on 'Illegal' season 3, '36 Days'

NEW DELHI, June 2: Actor Neha Sharma says she is equal parts excited and nervous about audience's reaction to her protagonist, advocate Niharika Singh, going "dark" in the latest season of "Illegal".

The season three of the legal drama is currently streaming on JioCinema. Sharma, known for films such as "Crook" and "Chirutha", said she is happy "Illegal" has returned with another good story. "I am forever grateful and most importantly, it's because of the audience. If they didn't love the show, there wouldn't be a season two or three... I can say that I am in my villain era, so I am looking forward to that as well and how people like it... "We see her (Niharika) growing every season and this time, Niharika gets a little grey. We see a dark side to her which is a new thing for her. I am excited and nervous at the same time to know how people like this new Niharika Singh," the actor told PTI in an interview. She will also play a grey part in "36 Days", an upcoming SonyLIV series, she said.

Sharma made her Hindi debut with the 2010 film "Crook", opposite Emraan Hashmi, and the actor is still most recognised by the movie's song "Mera Bina" even today. "Every medium is different but there is no one such medium that is above than the other. I started off with mainstream cinemas, so I feel that it's still remembered. I am assuming it's resonated with a lot (of people). "'Mere Bina' has been a song which people have loved and told me they have loved me in the song. 'Crook' was my first film that gave me a special place in the audiences heart and firsts are always super special."

However, the 2007 Telugu film "Chirutha", her cinema debut with "RRR" star Ram Charan, is her "most favourite". "That was my first and my introduction to the world of cinema. The love that I got from my audiences there, I can never pay that back to them. The journey been there something that I am forever grateful for," she

Manav Vij's crime drama show 'Gaanth' to stream from June 11 on JioCinema

MUMBAI, June 2: Crime series "Gaanth", starring actors Manav Vij, Monika Panwar and Saloni Batra, will premiere on JioCinema on June 11.

Directed by Kanishk Verma, "Gaanth" will present audiences an unsolvable and bone chilling case that blurs the lines between reality and perspective, the streamer said in a press release. Set around the eerie streets of East Delhi, the show follows a strange case of mass suicide that captures both media and police attention. As the 40-year-old disgraced Police Inspector Gadar Singh (Vij) gets the charge of the gritty case, he is determined to get to the root of the crime and find the ruth.

"The mystery deepens with the introduction of a psychiatric intern

"The mystery deepens with the introduction of a psychiatric intern Sakshi Murmu (Panwar), who possesses a unique gift for perceiving patterns invisible to the human eye. Singh and Murmu form an unlikely partnership to unravel the mystery of the peculiar crime scene-seven bodies hanging from seven ropes in a cramped, hazy corner of a house," the official plotline read.

Vij, best known for starring in films such as "Udta Punjab", "Phillauri", "Naam Shabana" and "Andhadhun", said he has always been a fan of psychological thrillers.

"They make you think deeply, transforming you into an investigator as you unravel the mystery in your mind. When I was offered

'Gaanth', I realised it wasn't just about playing a cop in a crime thriller; the character had intricate nuances.

"Gadar Singh is profoundly layered, struggling with inner demons while pursuing the ultimate truth behind the eerie crime. After filming, it took some time for me to detach from the character. Despite the challenges, playing such complex reles is immensely re-

filming, it took some time for me to detach from the character. Despite the challenges, playing such complex roles is immensely rewarding," the 47-year-old actor said. (PTI)

Share a special bond with Manoj Bajapyee, fun to reunite with him: Sharib Hashmi on 'Family Man' 3

MUMBAI, June 2: Actor Sharib Hashmi says he shares a great bond with "The Family Man" co-star Manoj Bajpayee and was eagerly looking forward to reprise his role of JK Talpade in the show's upcoming season

Created and directed by Raj Nidimoru and Krishna DK, the action thriller series features Bajpayee as Srikant Tiwari, a middle-class guy trying to maintain a balance between his personal and professional life as a covert intelligence officer.

Hashmi plays Talpade, a close friend and colleague of Tiwari, in the show, which started with its critically-acclaimed first season in 2019 and followed by the sophomore chapter in 2021.

The filming for the upcoming third season of the Prime Video show began last month. "I was very excited to begin work on the third sea-

son of 'The Family Man', and I'm very happy with the scenes that we've shot. I'm waiting for the next schedule to begin, I look forward to getting back to playing JK," the 48-year-old actor told PTI in an interview.

Hashmi said reuniting with Bajpayee on "The Family Man" series is always "fun and special".

"We both share a special bond, I've a great comfort level with him. When we become JK and Tiwari, we get into that groove and have that same banter, we pull each other's legs. It didn't seem that we didn't shoot for this long," he said.

The actor said that he never anticipated that their onscreen camaraderie will attract a huge fan-following.

"We did hope that people would like us but we didn't know that our onscreen friendship would get so much love. Some people have writ-

ten poems about that. It feels great that our hard work has paid off," he added. Hashmi, who has garnered

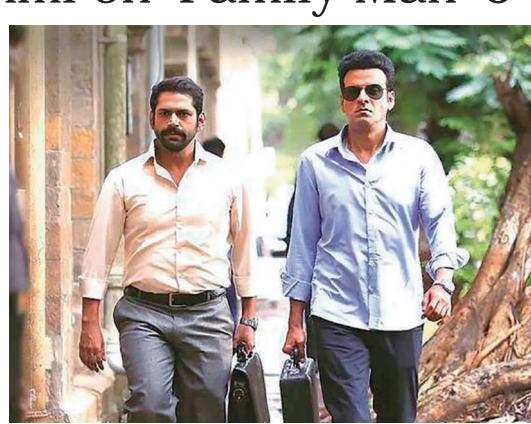
critical acclaim for his work in "Filmistaan", "Tarla", "Fighter", among others, said he believes in working with utmost honesty, whether he has one scene in a film or a full-fledged role.

"I never take my work for granted, I've confidence in myself. I've talent too but I'm not over confident that I can do everything on my own as an actor. I need support and guidance from the director, and that is important for me. I think a lot before saying yes to a film, whether I do one scene in 'Fighter' or a full-length role in 'Tarla'," the actor said.

Hashmi's upcoming movie is "Malhar", set in rural Kutch and described as a heartwarming exploration of three intertwined tales of love, struggle, and resilience. The anthology movie also features Anjali Patil of "Newton" fame, Rishi Saxena, Shrinivas Pokale, Vinayak Potdar, Mohammad Samad and Akshata Acharya, among others.

"There are three stories in this, there's a story of two children who are friends, another is a teenage love story, and one is a story where I. Anjali and Rishi feature. I liked how the director weaved these three stories; besides I liked the character, the script and team," Hashmi said. "I'm not headlining the film. Rather I've a cameo but it doesn't look like a small role. I'm hoping the audience will like the film, which touches upon some relevant topics," he said.

"Malhar" is set to release in theatres on June 7. The film is directed by Vishal Kumbhar and produced by Praful Pasad under the banner of V Motion Pictures. (PTI)



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LOCALS WILL HAVE TO PLAY THE GAME AND EXPLORE IT: YUVRAJ ON CRICKET'S FUTURE IN AMERICA

SPORTS

India star Yuvraj Singh is amazed at the Americans' penchant for packaging their sports and for cricket to make strides in the USA, he says the "locals" will have to "play the game and explore it".

The USA and the West Indies are jointly hosting the ongoing edition of the T20 World Cup with matches being scheduled in New York, Dallas and Fort Lauderdale in Florida.

"To all the (Indian American) fans who come here for cricket, who I know want India to win, but I think you should encourage your American friends and all the people Americans package sports, I

watch every game and encourage the sport of cricket in America," Yuvraj said.

An ICC Ambassador for the T20 World Cup, Yuvraj was present at the opening of Fan Park at the Oculus Trade Centre in New York.

where all the best sports in the world are played. America is a place where all sports are pop-

"In our country, I know cricket is very popular amongst other sports, but I think it will be amazing to watch cricket grow in America because I feel the way the

around the world," he added.

A member of the International Cricket Council (ICC), USA is hosting a cricket tournament of this magnitude for the first time, and it has generated some interest in this part of the world that is obsessed "I'm sure this is a place with baseball, the NBA and American football (NFL).

"Definitely, the interest is growing in America. The major league (cricket) has come and done really well, cricket is really growing. I think the way Americans package sports is amazing, and if they can package cricket like that, like their sports, it will be great to watch.

cals will have to play the game and explore it. It's going to take time. But, as I said,

package sports, is amazing, and if they can do it with cricket, it will be good to watch," Yuvraj said.

The marquee

Americans, the way

India-Pakistan match is scheduled for June 9 in New York and Yuvraj, a veteran of many epic battles between the neighbours, is looking forward

to the game as it will be the

it from the venue. "Well, it's a game of emo-

> tion. If we win, we'll go crazy. If we lose, we'll go crazy. But the thing is, if we win, they will go crazy with us. If we lose, they will go crazy with us. That's the difference.

"But I think,

whether it's India, Pakistan, or any other game, I'm sure the guys are going 100%. It's

just that I always feel that the team who control their emotion on that day better and

they will win the game.

"In the last couple of years, we've had a better record than Pakistan. And hopefully, we can continue that.'

The stylish left-handed batter added, "I think I would not be that nervous going into India-Pakistan game watching it. I've watched on TV, but never been to the ground watching an India-Pakistan match. This will be first time."

Yuvraj is delighted to see Americans hosting a top global cricket tournament and also playing in it for the first time. The USA started their campaign with a convincing other teams as well," Yuvraj seven-wicket victory over ri-

KOLKATA, June 2: Indian

on Sunday said the upcoming

FIFA World Cup Qualifier

against Kuwait could "change

the careers" of his players and

India will take on Kuwait at

the Salt Lake Stadium in their

penultimate second-round game,

which will be followed by the

away match against Qatar on

Despite their shocking loss to

lower-ranked Afghanistan in the

home leg match in Guwahati in

March, India can still make a

maiden entry into the third round

of qualifiers for the 2026 World

the FIFA rankings after gaining

just a solitary point in their two

meetings with Afghanistan in

March, will look to put up a

much better display against

Kuwait in what will also be tal-

isman Sunil Chhetri's farewell

"For such an important game,

we need to do a few things; in

regards to strength conditioning,

in regards to understanding what

it needs, in regards to how im-

portant this game is, and in re-

gards to mental strength and

"So, we work on all aspects

The head coach added: "There

rations for this game. First, win-

ning the game is crucial. And to

reach that target, we need to be

very clever. We need to under-

self-confidence.

from international football.

Federation (AIFF).

described it as a "huge game".

Careers of boys can change with June 6

game: Stimac

"All the best to you and the

American team, but India is far ahead in cricket right now. Part of you, which is also Indian, so I know inside you want India to win as well.

"But to say a few words about this iconic place, we all know the history over here and we all know what happened and people's lives do matter.

"And to the World Cup teams, I wish them all the best and may the best team win, and I hope you guys really enjoy the tournament and cheer all teams. I know you want to back India, but if India is not playing, cheer

Norway Chess: Praggnanandhaa stuns Caruana, enters top 10 world ranking

STAVANGER (NORWAY). June 2: Indian Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa scored a massive, hard-earned victory over world number two Fabiano Caruana of the United States and made his way to the top 10 of world rankings after the end of fifth round of Norway Chess tournament here.

Hikaru Nakamura of the United States got the better of off-colour world champion Ding Liren of China to stretch his lead to a full point over Magnus Carlsen of Norway.

With 10 points in his bag, Nakamura has a full point lead over Carlsen at the half way stage of this USD 161000 prize money tournament.

Carlsen outwitted Firouzja Alireza of France from a drawn rook and pawns endgame. With five rounds still to come, the world number one is followed by Praggnanandhaa on 8.5 points while a distant fourth now is Alireza who remained on 6.5 following his loss.

Caruana on five is in fifth spot while Ding Liren is clearly not enjoying the event with just 2.5 points to his credit.

In the women's event being held simultaneously, R Vaishali continued her dream run and defeated Tingkie Lei of China in the in the Armageddon over Koneru opening by the Indian saw ex- last pawn. It took 11 more moves away. (PTI)



Armageddon game to keep her lead on 10 points.

Anna Muzychuk is the closest to the Indian and is a full point behind after defeating Pia Cramling of Sweden in the Classical game. Women's world champion Wenjun Ju is third on 7.5 after scoring her fifth straight victory

points, two points clear of Humpy who seems to be struggling at the half-way mark. Cramling with three points is at the bottom of the tables. Praggnanandhaa played out a Carlsenque endgame to grind down Caruana. The Catalan

Humpy. Lei stands fourth on six change of pieces at regular intervals and the players reached a rook and knight endgame before the 40th move itself. The same side pawns even with an extra pawn is known to be a theoretical draw but Praggnanadhaa kept playing till Caruana collapsed on his 66th move and blundered his

for Praggnanandhaa to convert into a full point.

Carlsen had a similar outing and his was even easier draw that Alireza missed in the rook and pawns endgame. Carlsen had to wait for as many as 77 moves for Alireza to make a serious mistake and five moves later, the world number one had cruised to another victory from an equal endgame.

In the women's section, Vaishali played out a draw under the Classical time control with Tingjie Lei and in another drawn endgame of the day, outplayed the Chinese in the ensuing knight and pawns endgame.

This was Vaishali's second win under Armageddon in the tournament along with two wins in Classical. Her lone loss came against Wenjun Ju in the first round. It was a day that will be attributed to blunders from almost level endgames. Koneru Humpy was the other player on the receiving end as she could not find the best defensive path in a rook and pawns endgame against Ju in the Armageddon.

Though just a pawn less, Humpy missed a slightly tricky defense towards the final stages but instead ended up losing a rook with the clock ticking

"If we don't open the scoring football team coach Igor Stimac in the first half an hour, we need to be intelligent and play quality football together with pace. All these aspects are very important and we have to prepare for

The Blue Tigers are winless in six matches and have scored just a goal in these games.

In the last one year, India met Kuwait three times. It includes the victory in a tiebreaker in the SAFF Championship final in Bangalore.

"Each of those matches was very tough and I can clearly state that we controlled all those games in superb ways," Stimac

"It's a huge game. The careers "We dominated for the bigger of the boys can change with this parts in each one of these games. We were above them physically. game. I want them to enjoy and do their best in the game," Sti-But on other occasions, before mac told the All India Football the Kuwait games, we had many games that helped us reach that India, who slipped to 121 in

"But it is a different game now because they are coming here when we didn't have the opportunity to play games. No league is being played now, no club is available. But we did play two games between us to reach the intensity we required.

"And I need to tell you that the boys were superb in those two games. I am very happy with them; happy with everything that was done in the last three weeks," the coach added.

Asked if he was missing anything that could have added value to the side, Stimac said, "I don't have the right to think about it. We have to focus on what we have. What we can do and what can be improved.

"In the final week, we are concentrating on set pieces, offensive tactics, and a few details regarding the shape, team composure, and speed of passing.

Real Madrid seals 15th European Cup after 2-0 win over Borussia Dortmund

LONDON, June 2: In an explosion of gold and silver confetti. Real Madrid held aloft the Champions League trophy for a recordextending 15th time on Saturday.

The most familiar sight in European club soccer's greatest competition felt as fresh as ever after a 2-0 win against Borussia Dortmund in the final at Wembley Sta-

"Getting used to it? Never," said Carlo Ancelotti, who extended his own record of wins as a coach to five. "The dream continues.

A white wall of Madrid fans at one end of the stadium serenaded their conquering heroes after goals from Dani Carvajal Vinicius Junior sealed the victory. dictable result came in less

than predictable

circumstances

after Dortmund dom-

inated the chances in the first half. "It was a very difficult game, much more difficult than we had expected," Ancelotti said. "We

changed things because in the first half we were a bit lazy. Carvajal headed Madrid in front in the 74th minute and Vinicius doubled the Spanish giant's lead

nine minutes later. Ancelotti's fifth Champions League title was his third in two spells with Madrid and two more than his closest rivals Zinedine Zidane, Pep Guardiola and Bob

Carvajal, Luka Modric, Toni

Kroos and Nacho won the trophy a sixth time to equal the benchmark set by Madrid icon Paco Madrid's win comes just a year

after Manchester City lifted the trophy for the first time, a victory many believed would herald a new era of dominance for Guardiola's team in Europe. Instead, it was Ancelotti who underlined his case to be considered the finest coach of his generation for his continued supremacy in the Champions League.

As well as three titles with Madrid, he was a two-time winner with AC Milan. He also lifted the Spanish title this season his sixth league championship won in five different coun-

Madrid's dominance of the competition defies belief, having won more than double than anyone else. Milan is the second most successful club with

tries.

seven. Madrid has won nine titles in the Champions League era and this was its second in three seasons. "This is the love story between Real Madrid and the European Cup. Players come, players go, but we can say that this is our competition," Madrid president Florentino Perez said.

Its dominance will take some breaking with Kylian Mbappe widely expected to join as a free agent from Paris Saint-Germain during the offseason and Brazil's rising start Endrick on his

Champions League final: With our batting, anything under 200 was chaseable: Aaron Jones

DALLAS, June 2: Aaron Jones against England in 2016. was at a loss for words after starring in the USA's seven-wicket demolition of Canada in the T20 World Cup opener in which the New Yorker introduced himself to

cricket's elites with a 40-ball 94. Set a target of 195, USA stuttered initially, losing opener Steven Taylor for zero in the second ball of the innings, and were 42/2 after 6.3 overs.

But Jones had other ideas as he came up with a counter-attacking knock to script a memorable win with 14 balls to spare.

"I don't think it is easy to put it into words. We know Canada come hard against us since it is a big rivalry. Happy to take the team over the line," said Jones, who smashed 10 sixes, the second most in a T20 World Cup innings behind West Indian Chris Gayle's 11

On his big shots, he said: "I go through my processes and I like my power hitting. I know if I get it in the middle, it will go for sure. I like to come in when the team is under pressure, it brings out the best in me.'

Despite losing two early wickets, Jones said he was confident of chasing down the total with their long batting lineup. He got a helping hand from Andries Gous, who made 65 off 46 balls in a 131-run partnership with Jones.

"With our batting line-up, knew anything under 200 is chaseable. Outfield and pitch were good and we knew that," said Jones after USA's highest run chase in T20Is.

All praise for Jones, USA skipper Monank Patel said: "We've always known, he has the game. He

didn't feel great playing him that

third set and the beginning of the

Gasping for break while lean-

ing over with hands on knees, or

taking so much time between

points that he earned a warning,

Djokovic appeared to be ex-

hausted at times against his much

younger, backward-hat-wearing

opponent. Musetti was propelled

to the lead by a one-handed back-

hand, a deft touch at the net and

a 5-for-5 success rate on break

chances — playing, in sum, "the

tennis of his life," as Djokovic

fourth.'

ing his shots. It was clean hitting. 'We want to continue the way we are playing. Don't want to change our fearless cricket whether we play Pakistan or

Calling it a team effort, Patel said: "The way we've been playing against Canada in previous series, I thought it was a whole team ef-USA recently defeated Canada

4-0 in the build-up to the T20 World Cup.

"Gous and Jones handled the needed for our boys to be on top pressure situation, took the game of their form in this game." out of Canada.' are two key points for the prepa-

He, however, said they gave away 10-15 runs extra with the ball. "As soon as we bowled, the ball was coming well. We bowled well in patches but we gave 10-15 runs extra. Ball was two-paced

stand that in the game, we replayed fearless cricket and back-Novak Djokovic keeps his French Open title defense going by getting past Lorenzo Musetti in 5 sets

Djokovic's French Open title defense — and his hold on the No. 1 ranking — are still alive thanks to a 7-5, 6-7 (6), 2-6, 6-3, 6-0 comeback victory over 22-yearold Italian Lorenzo Musetti in a third-round match that lasted 4 1/2 hours and did not conclude until Sunday after 3 a.m., the latest finish in tournament history.

It is Djokovic's 369th win at a Grand Slam tournament, tying Roger Federer for the most in tennis history. Djokovic can break the mark on Monday, when he'll face No. 23 seed Francisco Cerundolo of Argentina.

Djokovic briefly looked as if he might be unable to recover against Musetti but instead ran away with the final two sets and now will continue his bid for a record 25th Grand Slam title and

"I was in real trouble and credit damp and cold conditions, and to Lorenzo for making me unheavy clay, hard to deal with, escomfortable on the court and pecially "when you're playing 20-plus-shot rallies at 2 a.m.; playing some really amazing tennis. Very high level. At one point, who plays at 2 a.m., you know?" I didn't know, really, what to do,' But Djokovic is nothing if not the 37-year-old Djokovic said. "It

a determined problem-solver. And once Djokovic got headed in the right direction in the fourth set, thanks to playing more aggressively on service returns and closer to the baseline during groundstrokes exchanges, the 30th-ranked Musetti could not withstand the charge.

One telling stat: Djokovic improved to 39-11 in fifth sets over his career; Musetti fell to 2-6. Djokovic has spent more

weeks atop the ATP rankings than anyone, but if he fails to return to the final at the French Open, he will cede that spot to

Musetti's countryman, current No. 2 Jannik Sinner. That's because a loss in this match would have been the latest in a series of disappointing results in 2024 for the oft-dominant Djokovic, who won 12 of the last 20 Grand Slam events he entered and hasn't been beaten this early at a major since the Australian Open in January

Not only hasn't he earned a trophy at any tournament this season, but he hasn't even reached a final.

That's why, a week ago, Djokovic assessed his mindset when arriving in Paris with a 14-6 record this year: "Low expectations and high hopes.

Those words also might have described Djokovic's thoughts entering the fourth set against Musetti, who never has been past

The bundled-up spectators frequently chanted Djokovic's first name, or his two-syllable nickname, "No-le." Musetti heard plenty of support in Court Philippe Chatrier, too. The sound reverberated off the underside of the retractable roof, which was closed because of showers that arrived earlier Saturday, the fifth day in a row with showers.

That weather was partially responsible for Djokovic and Musetti not setting foot on court until 10:30 p.m., more than two hours later than originally planned: Tournament organizers moved an additional contest into the safe-from-rain main stadium ahead of Djokovic-Musetti to try and make sure the third round would get completed on time.

We have not really nailed down our batting unit: Rohit Sharma Amit Panghal clinches Paris Olympics spot

NEW YORK, June 2: The Indian team is yet to "nail" its batting line-up for the T20 World Cup and much shouldn't be read into the think tank's decision to send Rishabh Pant at number three in the warm-match against Bangladesh, said skipper Rohit Sharma.

India emerged winners by 60 runs at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium, restricting Bangladesh to 122 for nine after posting 182 for five in the allotted 20 overs on Saturday.

On Pant batting at No.3, Rohit said, "Just to give him an opportunity. We have not really nailed down what the batting unit will look like. Even the bowlers did pretty well. All in all happy with how things went."

Pant struck a fluent 53 off 32 balls, while Hardik Pandya smashed 40 in 23 deliveries after Suryakumar Yadav helped himself to an 18-ball 31.

"Quite happy with how things went. Pretty much got what we wanted from the game. Like I said at the toss, it was important to get used to the conditions.

'New venue, new ground, dropin pitch - important to get used to it and we managed pretty well,"

NEW YORK, June 2: Sri Lanka

will rely on their exceptionally var-

ied bowling attack to tame the un-

restrained batting power of South

Africa in their Group D T20 World

the points table at the earliest too as

some tricky teams like Nether-

lands, Bangladesh and Nepal are

their cards on the table as the team

selection indicated the most likely

route they would take in this ICC

A batting line-up consisting of

captain Aiden Markram, wicket-

keeper batter Heinrich Klaasen,

Quinton de Kock, David Miller and

Klaasen and Stubbs have been in

In the IPL 2024 too, Klaasen

roaring form of late. In this World

Cup cycle, the right-hander has av-

eraged 41 and struck runs at 182.

made 471 runs from 16 matches at

a strike rate of 171 for the Sunrisers

Stubbs has been equally impres-

sive for the Delhi Capitals, amass-

ing 378 runs from 14 matches and

he made them at a strike-rate of

190. Both these gifted power-strik-

ers come in the middle-order when

the spinners will be in operation,

and to add to Lanka's worries, they

are phenomenal against the tweak-

In the run-up to the World Cup,

the 32-year-old from Transvaal has

averaged 59 against spin and made

runs at an eye-watering strike-rate

of 191. It will certainly worry a set

of Lankan spinners such as captain

Wanindu Hasaranga (economy

7.42) and Maheesh Theekshana

(6.71), both of whom had to battle

injuries in the recent past. So, Sri

Lanka, who have not reached the

knockouts of a T20 WC after their

triumph in 2014, will be eager to

try a couple of overs from pacers

Matheesha Pathirana and Dilshan Madhushanka in that phase when

Klaasen and Stubbs are looking for

However, Lanka might take

Lanka will also hope that the

New York pitch will continue to

offer some help to the bowlers as it

had happened in Saturday's warm-

up match between India and

Bangladesh, where a few deliveries

did not rise above the ankle and

knee level. Beyond that, the

Lankans are also one of the teams

that have played a good number of

T20Is this year. In 2024, they have

series wins over Zimbabwe and

Afghanistan at home and

last nine T20Is. But those external

factors will not have much bearing

on a fresh day and Lanka know that

In fact, they have won six of the

Bangladesh away.

heart from the fact that the Proteas

went down 0-3 to the West Indies

in a recent T20I series at Kingston.

ers, especially Klaasen.

Hyderabad.

mare for any bowling attack.

South Africa have spread all

clubbed with them in the group.

They will be eager to get onto

Cup opener here on Monday.

T20 WC: SL look to muffle big guns

in SA batting; Namibia face Oman



Rohit said after the match.

Left-arm seamer Arshdeep Singh shone with the ball, picking 2/12 in three overs while all-rounder Shivam Dube grabbed 2/13 in three

Asked about Arshdeep, Rohit said, "He has shown us, in whatever games he has played, he has the skills up-front. He has got a very good skill-set (at the

their batters too will have to come

good against the African rival.

They have the experienced Angelo

Mathews, the explosive Kusal

Mendis and the rock-solid Dhanan-

jaya de Silva to bank on while the

former captain Dasun Shanaka can

make a few quick runs down the

The SA attack does not have that

much variety in their bowling unit

as it largely revolves around Kag-

iso pacer Rabada and left-arm

Anrich Nortje is still finding his

range after coming back from an

injury and had an underwhelming

IPL where he conceded more than

11 runs an over. The SA manage-

ment will hope that the pacer will

regain his rhythm in the biggest

stage and that will have a major say

in avoiding another below-par out-

Markram (c), Ottniel Baartman,

Gerald Coetzee, Quinton de Kock,

Bjorn Fortuin, Reeza Hendricks,

Marco Jansen, Heinrich Klaasen,

Keshav Maharaj, David Miller, An-

rich Nortje, Kagiso Rabada, Ryan

Rickelton, Tabraiz Shamsi, Tristan

Sri Lanka: Wanindu Hasaranga

(c), Charith Asalanka, Kusal

Mendis, Pathum Nissanka, Ka-

mindu Mendis, Sadeera Sama-

rawickrama, Angelo Mathews,

Dasun Shanaka, Dhananjaya De

Dunith Wellalage, Dushmantha

Chameera, Nuwan Thushara,

Matheesha Pathirana, Dilshan

Madushanka. Travelling Reserves:

Asitha Fernando, Vijayakanth

Viyaskanth, Bhanuka Rajapaksa,

In a Group B clash at

Bridgetown, Namibia, a dominant

force in the African Qualifiers, will

against Oman. However, it would

not be that easy for Namibia as Oman

conceding the five-match series 2-1.

Hence, Oman, who are making their

Match starts at 8 PM IST.

Silva,

Janith Liyanage.

Maheesh Theekshana,

Squad: South Africa: Aiden

ing in a World Cup.

wrist-spinner Tabraiz Shamsi.

"We saw it today. He bowled pretty well, swung the ball up front, and then bowled one at the backend. We have got 15 good players

bination is best for us.' Head coach Rahul Dravid said the pitch was a bit soft and spongy, while lauding the performance of

here. We have to see what the con-

ditions are and then see what com-

"Ît's great to get a good hit-out.

NEW YORK, June 2: Bangladesh suffered an injury

setback as left-arm pacer Shoriful Islam needed six

stitches on a split-webbing in his bowling hand after

their T20 World Cup warm-up match against India

India's innings on Saturday, when Shoriful tried to stop

a drive from Hardik Pandya and hurt his bowling hand.

Tanzim Hasan Sakib bowled the last ball of the innings

and middle finger of his left hand while trying to stop

a ball in his last over," Bangladesh Cricket Board chief

"Shoriful suffered a split injury between the index

as Shoriful walked off the field in pain.

The incident happened in the penultimate ball of

cility in terms of as quickly as they have put up. The ground is a bit soft and the guys could feel that on the hamstring and the calves.

"So, that's the area we need to ensure that we are working around and ensuring that the guys are looking after does feel a little bit heavy underneath." Dravid said in a video posted by the BCCI.

India ticked multiple boxes during their comfortable win over Bangladesh in the warm-up match, but none bolder than the fifty by Pant which has all but sealed his place as the first-choice wicketkeeper batter in the ICC showpiece.

Dravid added, "A little bit spongy (pitch) at times but I thought we coped really well. The batters had put an above-par score on that wicket and the bowlers came out and bowled really well. "All in all, we got run-around

and to get a game here is really nice. Hopefully, we can prepare well for the next couple of days and Arshdeep, who made good use

of the pitch said the team was nicely adapting to the conditions

despite some challenges.
"Feels good, really important

PNCricinfo.

on and did not give away runs. The wicket was helping us as well, so we tried to keep it simple and got the result as well.

"The ground is sand-based, so you need to get the rhythm right. It will be a challenge to adapt to the conditions here.

"We are adapting really well because the practice sessions were also there in the morning and everyone turned up and did their 100% there, that we can see on the field as well, the way we played as a team, and it was a nice result," Arshdeep said.

Dube, who has made a name for himself with his ability to hit big sixes besides bowling his medium pacers, added, "It was fun playing here, and it was good to have a win in our first warm-up game. Obviously, it's well-built. But there is a challenge for the players. It's not

easy.
"The warm-up match is important for us to be ready for the T20 World Cup. So it was important to get used to it in batting, bowling and fielding and hence, we got a good idea after playing today and it was a different experience," Dube

(50kg), Preeti Pawar (54kg) and Lovlina Borgohain (75kg). All of Bangladesh anxious on Shoriful availability as them have booked Olympic pacer requires six stitches for split webbing Panghal had only one shot at making the Paris Olympics and

> made the most of his opportunity. The going has been tough for Sri Lanka in Texas on June 7 and it remains to be seen Panghal as he lost his place in the national team on the basis of BFI's if the premier pacer is fit for that match. Bangladesh evaluation system to world championship bronze medallist Deepak Bhoria, who competed at the earministered six stitches. We will visit him again after

the 2018 Asian Games champion

BANGKOK, June 2: Amit

Panghal's comeback to the Indian

team culminated in an Olympic

quota as the world championships

silver medallist boxer qualified for

the Paris Games with a quarterfi-

nal win in the 2nd World Oualifi-

cation Tournament here on

Panghal, India's lone male

world championship silver medal-

list, notched a hard-fought 5-0 win

over China's Chuang Liu for a

ticket to his second Olympic

He thus joins the quartet of Nis-

hant Dev (71kg), Nikhat Zareen

lier two qualifying events. Since the Tokyo Olympics, the only big-ticket event that the Harvana boxer has competed in was the Commonwealth Games in

2022, where he won the gold medal.

He also emerged victorious at the prestigious Strandja Memorial tournament earlier this year.

The quarterfinal bout began on a rather sedate note with both boxers trying to assess each other. One minute into the bout, Liu went after Panghal. At an height disadvantage, the Indian struggled to find his range, and he did mange to land a couple of scoring shorts but didn't engage much.

Trailing 1-4, Panghal, a threetime Asian Championship medallist, changed his strategy. He went on the offensive, beginning the second round on a positive note. The Chinese boxer retaliated by

launching some counterattacking blows but Panghal continued with his punches and ended the round on a high, forcing all five judges to rule in his favour.

In the last three minutes, Liu changed his game and moved closer to Panghal. It was an energy sapping affair as both fighters traded punches, going hammer and tongs at each other. In the end, the former world number one prevailed. Later in the day, Jaismine Lamboria (57kg) and Sachin Siwach (57kg) will also look to secure Olympic quotas. (PTI)

Hopefully my innings will open eyes of those who don't know me or USA cricket: Aaron Jones

up match that India won by 60 runs. (PTI)

physician Dr Debashis Chowdhury was quoted on ES-

Bangladesh begin their World Cup campaign against

"After initial medical attention, he was taken to Nas-

sau University Medical Centre. The hand surgeon ad-

two days. We will know then how much time it will

Shoriful claimed 1/26 from 3.5 overs in the warm-

take for Shoriful to return," said Chowdhury.

pacer Taskin Ahmed is also down with a side strain.

DALLAS, June 2: New Yorker Aaron Jones on Sunday hoped his scintillating knock in the landmark T20 World Cup opener against Canada would "open the eyes of those who don't know me or USA cricket".

Jones' 40-ball 94 was an eye-opener as his team notched a convincing seven-wicket victory over rivals Canada here, beginning the home team's campaign on a rousing note in a tournament they are hosting for the first time, along with the West Indies.

Jones, whose place in the T20I side was under scrutiny and was released by Major League Cricket (MLC) franchise Seattle Orcas after its inaugural edition, said he showed he was "good enough" to play at the highest level. He was not picked in the last MLC draft.

"When I wasn't selected in the Major League, I just took it as a stepping stone in the journey," he said. "I would have loved to get drafted, so it goes

sometimes. Hopefully tonight's innings will probably open the eyes of those who don't know me or USA cricket.

"We have great players here and that we have a lot of talent here and are willing to play at the highest level for sure."

Set a target of 195, USA stuttered initially, losing opener Steven Taylor for zero in the second ball of the innings, and were 42/2 after 6.3

But Jones had other ideas as he came up with a counter-attacking innings to script a memorable win with as many as 14 balls to spare. "I don't think it is easy to put it into words We know Canada come hard against us since it is a big rivalry. Happy to take the team over the

line," said Jones.

Jones smashed 10 sixes on the day, the second most in a T20 World Cup innings behind West Indian Chris Gayle's 11 against England

"Sometimes as a cricketer, you could go a bit under the radar if you have a few low scores," Jones said. "I always back myself and know that I am capable of performing at every level. (I am) happy that I came out on top and won the

"Hope it opens the eyes of some people around the world that I am good enough to play T20 cricket. "I believe in myself, I work hard and I just

use (criticism) as motivation. I know that I'm good enough to play at the highest level, and whenever given the opportunity, I'll do my best

"When I went out to bat tonight, I just saw it as another game to fight for me and bring my team as close as possible to the line, and if we get as close as possible to the line and over the line, it's great for the team.' Despite losing two early wickets. Jones said

he was confident of chasing down the total with their long batting lineup. He got a helping hand from Andries Gous, who made 65 off 46 balls in a 131-run partnership with Jones.

"With our batting line-up, knew anything under 200 is chaseable. Outfield and pitch were good and we knew that," said Jones after USA's ighest run chase in T20Is.

USA will next take on Pakistan at the same venue on Thursday and play India in ten days' time, while Canada face Ireland in New York

on Friday. Jones said they will continue to play fearless

"We just want to keep winning as much as possible, of course we can't win every single game for the rest of our lives.

"I don't think our plan (for the rest of the tournament) is going to change much. We want to play fearless cricket, we want to play hard cricket, we want to play smart cricket.

"We are going into the Pakistan game with the same mindset. We want to play fearless cricket, regardless of who we play against."

All praise for Jones, USA skipper Monank Patel said: "We've always known, he has the game. He played fearless cricket and backing his shots. It was clean hitting.

"We want to continue the way we are playing. Don't want to change our fearless cricket whether we play Pakistan or India." Calling it a team effort, Patel said: "The way we've been playing against Canada in previous series, I

Aditi tied-29th at US Women's Open

LANCASTER (USA), June 2: Aditi Ashok endured another roller coaster round, carding a below-par 3-over 73 to go tied 29th on the third day of the US Women's Open. Aditi's rounds included two birdies, three bogeys and a double

The double bogey came on the fourth, where she had lost two shots on the first day too.

Aditi's first two rounds have been 73-71 and she is currently at 7-over in her 29th Major.

Aditi, who came close to a medal at the Tokyo Olympics, is still looking for her first top-20 finish in a Major. On a course which has been difficult to score, only five players are under and there are three co-leaders.

The lead at 5-under is shared by Wichanee Meechai (69), Andrea Lee (67) and Minjee Lee (66). Former British Open champion

Hinako Shibuno had seven birdies for a 66 and was two behind.

Another shot back was Yuka Saso, who saved shots with her putter and one sublime shot over a bunker to a tight pin on the par-3 17th. She dropped two shots late

Nelly Korda, Rose Zhang and some other big stars have missed the cut on a tough course.

The prize purse this week is \$2.4 million for the winner, by far the largest in women's golf. (PTI)

Stay clam, keep nerves at bay: Babar tells teammates ahead of India clash

be hoping for a winning start had run them close in April, before third appearance in a T20 WC, will be hoping for a better outcome this World Cup clash, here Sunday. India have lost only once to

Squad: Oman: Aqib Ilyas (c), Pakistan in the T20 World Cup in Zeeshan Maqsood, Kashyap Prajapati, Pratik Athavale, Ayaan Khan, Shoaib Khan, Mohammad Nadeem, Naseem Khushi, Mehran Khan, Bilal Khan, Rafiullah, Kaleemullah, Fayyaz Butt, Shakeel Ahmad, Khalid Kail. Reserves:

Sufyan Mehmood, Jay Odedra. Namibia: Gerhard Erasmus (c), Zane Green, Michael Van Lingen, Dylan Leicher, Ruben Trumpelmann, Jack Brassell, Ben Shikongo, Tangeni Lungameni, Niko Davin, JJ Smit, Jan Frylinck, JP Kotze, David Wiese, Bernard Scholtz, Malan Kruger, PD Blignaut. Match starts at 6 AM IST (Monday). (PTI)

Jatinder Singh, Samay Shrivastava,

NEW YORK, June 2: The hype, the expectations and the pressure around India-Pakistan games certainly makes players nervous, says Babar Azam who advised his side to stay calm and stick to basics during the much-awaited T20

seven meetings with their only defeat coming in 2021 when the Virat Kohli-led side lost by 10 wickets at the Super 12 stage. "We know the Pakistan-India fixture generates more discussion

than any other match. There is a different vibe altogether for this fixture, and there's a lot of excitement too not just among players but also among the fans," Babar said in a PCB podcast. "Wherever you go in the world, you'll have people talking about

the India-Pakistan match with

everyone supporting their country.

Every fan eagerly waits for this

fixture and focuses on this one

particular match.

"Obviously, the expectations and the hype around this match causes some nervousness. It all comes down to how you handle it and the more you focus on the basics, the easier it will be for you as "It's a game of immense pres-

sure, and if you keep your head cool, stay calm and trust your hard work and skills, things will be easier," Babar added. The Pakistan skipper rued the missed chances in the 2022 edition. "For me, in 2022, we could and

should have won the India game, but they took it away. The most hurtful was the defeat against Zimbabwe. It hurts more because we had played good cricket against India and people were praising our performance and fightback," he recalled about their one-run defeat in a last ball

He further emphasised the importance of playing top cricket against every team, focusing on effort and positive mindset while



acknowledging that results are uncertain. "I am happy and excited because when you go to play in a major event, you have different excitement. It's the aim of any cricketer to play in a World Cup, so that kind of feeling is coming over me. The hope is always to lift the trophy, but for that to happen, we have to play top cricket against every side. "Effort is in our hands, but re-

sults, we do not know. How we

matter. We must be positive, so results will come. The 2009 champions, Pakistan have been the most consistent sides of the T20 global showpiece, having made six semi-finals in

our body language and how we

communicate with each other will

eight editions. They finished runners-up in 2007 and in 2022, going down to England in the final of the previ-

"In the final, Shaheen's injury

was impactful because at that time, the pressure was on them (England). We were forced to give an over to a spinner and that made "Our performances in the last

two ICC Men's T20 World Cups have been good. Unfortunately, we could not finish on a high. We were also runners-up in the ACC T20 Asia Cup 2022. So, at the back of our minds, we are thinking about how we have played two finals and a semi-final and how we can overcome the mistakes that derailed our campaigns," Babar said. Babar said winning an ICC trophy is an ultimate dream.

"As a batter, I have achieved decently and, as a captain, I have won a few series. But lifting the ICC trophy is a different motivation. You go to a different level and get a lot of praise. So, the motivation, aspiration and dream remains to lift an ICC trophy and present it to Pakistan," he said. (PTI)

Printed, published and owned by Rameswar Chauhan & Printed at Echo Printing Press, Printing unit of The Echo of India, AK Deb Road, Katabari, Gorchuk, Guwahati- 781035 and Published at Near office of the DFO (East) Div., Diphu, Karbi Anglong, Assam.782460 Editor -Rameswar Chauhan, Guwahati Office Ph - 0361 2220018, Diphu Office Ph 272106, Fax- 272106, e.mail: hillstimes@gmail.com and ads.hillstimes@gmail.com (only for advertisement)