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ORDER ON ABORTION ACCESS

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NEW DELHI, SUNDAY JULY 10, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹4



## sunday pioneer

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Ukraine removes  
envoys to India,  
4 other nationsPNS/AGENCIES ■ NEW  
DELHI/KYIV

Amid its ongoing war with Russia, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Saturday dismissed Kyiv's ambassadors to five nations including India. The other nations are Germany, Czech Republic, Norway and Hungary. The Ukrainian Ambassador to India is Igor Polikha. A Reuters report, based on information on the Presidential website, stated that it was not immediately clear if the envoys would be handed new jobs.

The agency said Zelenskyy gave no reason for the move to the sack Ukraine's ambassadors to the five countries. Zelenskyy has urged his diplomats to drum up international support and military aid for Ukraine as it tries to fend off Russia's invasion that started on February 24 this year.

Kyiv's relation with Germany, which is heavily reliant on Russian energy supplies and is also Europe's biggest economy, has been a particularly sensitive matter.

The two capitals are currently at odds over a German-made turbine undergoing maintenance in Canada. Germany wants Ottawa to return the turbine to Russian natural gas giant Gazprom to pump gas to Europe. Kyiv has urged Canada to keep the turbine, saying that shipping it to Russia would be a violation of sanctions imposed on Moscow, the Reuters report maintained.

Crowd fury rocks  
Sri Lankan Govt

Protesters break into Prez's palace; set PM's residence on fire; Gotabaya to quit on Jul 13, Ranil offers to go too

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's embattled President Gotabaya Rajapaksa would resign on Wednesday, Parliament Speaker Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena said late on Saturday night, hours after thousands of protesters stormed his official residence and burnt the private residence of Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, who had also offered to quit earlier in the day to make way for an all-party Government. President Rajapaksa informed the Speaker about this decision to quit after Abeywardena wrote to him seeking his resignation following the all-party meeting of leaders on Saturday evening.

The burning of Wickremesinghe's house came hours after he offered to resign as protests intensified in the country for the resignation of the Government.

The protestors burnt Wickremesinghe's house after a tense situation erupted between them and security forces fired tear gas shells to disperse them.

Earlier in the day, anti-Government protesters entered



Protesters gather inside the official residence of Sri Lanka's President in Colombo, Sri Lanka on Saturday, demanding that Gotabaya Rajapaksa resign. AP/PTI

the Presidential House in Colombo. However, he left the house before the mob arrived.

In a bid to control the situation, the PM's Media Division said that Wickremesinghe will resign after an all-party Government is established and the majority is secured in Parliament. However, he will continue as PM until then.

Wickremesinghe told Opposition party leaders that he was taking the decision to step down as the island-wide fuel distribution is due to recommence this week, the World Food

Programme Director is due to visit Lanka this week and the debt sustainability report for the IMF is due to be finalised soon. So as to ensure the safety of the citizens, Wickremesinghe said he is agreeable to this recommendation by the Opposition party leaders. Wickremesinghe later told the media that he proposed to the President to establish an all-party Government.

He said once the Government quits, a new Government must be formed and it is not wise for the country to go on without one for long. *Continued on Page 2*

Death toll 16; 15k Yatris  
shifted, many missing

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Rescue teams led by the Indian Army and several other agencies on Saturday mounted a massive rescue and relief mission to look for survivors in the Amarnath cave shrine area after it was hit by incessant rains in which several tents were washed away on Friday evening.

So far 16 dead bodies have been recovered while over 60 people were safely evacuated and currently receiving treatment across different hospitals at the base camps along the yatra route and Srinagar. Many people are missing and 15,000 stranded pilgrims, have been shifted to the lower base camp of Panjarni, the ITBP said.

*Continued on Page 2*

An IAF helicopter engages in rescue and relief operations at cloudburst affected areas near the Amarnath shrine. PTI

## Flash flood not due to cloudburst: IMD

New Delhi: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Saturday said the flash flood near the Amarnath shrine's cave on Friday was the result of a highly localised rain event in the upper reaches of the mountains and not a cloudburst. "This cannot be categorised as a cloudburst. A rain event can be categorised as a cloudburst only if a weather station receives 100 mm of rain in an hour," the IMD said.

*Continued on Page 2*Twitter may  
sue Musk as  
he axes deal

San Francisco: Elon Musk, the Chief Executive Officer of Tesla and the world's richest person, said on Friday he was terminating his \$44 billion deal to buy Twitter because the social media company had breached multiple provisions of the merger agreement. Twitter's Chairman, Bret Taylor, said on the micro-blogging platform that the Board planned to pursue legal action to enforce the merger agreement. "The Twitter Board is committed to closing the transaction on the price and terms agreed upon with Mr. Musk..." he wrote.

The possible unraveling of the deal is just the latest twist in a saga between Musk and one of the most influential social media platforms. Much of the drama has played out on Twitter, with Musk saying that the company was failing to live up to its potential as a platform for free speech.

*Continued on Page 2*

## Panel to redraw boundaries of municipal wards

MHA says order  
a bid to expedite  
MCD polls; report  
in four months

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has set up a three-member delimitation

committee, headed by State Election Commissioner Vijay Dev, for redrawing of boundaries of the municipal wards so as to expedite the process of holding the civic body polls in the national Capital.

According to the official order by Joint Secretary Ashutosh Agnihotri, MHA, the committee shall complete the redrawing of the boundaries of existing wards in the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD)

and submit its report within four months from the date of issue of this order.

The delimitation of municipal wards is necessary as per an Act for holding fresh elections.

The exercise will pave the way for the civic polls in Delhi, which would be the first since the reunification of the three corporations.

"In exercise of the powers conferred by Section 3 Section 3, 3A and 5 of Delhi Municipal

Corporation Act 1957, the Central Government constitutes a committee to assist the Central Government in carrying out the delimitation of wards and other incidental functions related to it. The committee shall complete the above-mentioned exercise and submit its report within four months from the date of issue of this order," the MHA said in its order.

*Continued on Page 2*

## Misconceptions spread by Allopathy

Save yourself and the country from the misconceptions spread  
by pharma and medical industry. Let's make India disease free.PATANJALI®  
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With hopes of a better and disease free life, people have been depending on allopathic medicines of BP, sugar, thyroid, asthma, cholesterol etc for years. These medicines have now become a part of the daily lives of patients suffering from these chronic lifestyle disorders. Unfortunately, the health improvement that these medicines were meant to bring along is no where to be seen. Rather, patients who have been on such medications for years are now feeling the hellish pangs of the adverse effects that these medicines have brought along. Clearly, there is a need to revamp the entire outlook towards healthy living. To achieve holistic healthy living, we went back to the ancient medicinal treasures of great sages, like Maharishi Charak, Maharishi Sushruta, Maharishi Dhanvantari and Maharishi Patanjali, to find the answers for a disease-free life for crores of people. The treatment regimens that we use are all based on the principles of Yoga and Ayurveda, and their efficacies are proven through modern scientific techniques.

**B.P.** Over the years despite taking allopathic medicines people have been suffering from heart, brain stroke and kidney failures, irritability and insomnia.

By doing regular Pranayama and Yoga, along with having gourd juice, Bpgrit and Mukta Vati, crores of people have been totally cured of B.P. and problems of B.P. related complications.

**Sugar** For years, despite having allopathic medicines for sugar, people have experienced weakening of eyesight together with an increase in creatinine and weakness of nerves (neuropathy). Patients have increasingly experienced a loss of overall immunity.

Through integrated Yoga, Pranayama, Madhunashini, Madhugrit and administrations of juices of Cucumber, Bitter gourd, Tomato and Giloy along with balanced diet, we have eradicated sugar and its complications in people. For the first time we have successfully reverted patients with type one diabetes into non-diabetics.

**Thyroid** The known medication for thyroid results in weight gain in patients, besides, leading to other complications.

## Glimpses of Yoga, Ayurveda, Naturopathy and Panchkarma Integrated Therapy



Along with different practices of Yoga, such as, Kapaalbhaati, Ujjayi etc., consumption of coriander water and Thyrogrit, have helped people to get rid of thyroid problem and associated complications.

**Eye and Ear Diseases** There is no cure in allopathy for Glaucoma, night blindness and hearing problems, like tinnitus. But Yoga, along with administration of Eyegrit for eyes and Eargrit for ears, have helped many people to overcome their problems of eyesight and hearing.

**Cholesterol** Allopathic medicines as blood thinners and controlling cholesterol have led to aberrant blood profiles

and adverse effects on liver.

Practicing Yoga along with administration of Lipidom, gourd juice and bark of the Arjun tree, we controlled cholesterol naturally.

**Liver** Liver disease, such as, fatty liver, liver cirrhosis and hepatitis do not have any permanent cure in Allopathy.

With regular practice of Yoga and having juice of Bhumi Amla, Punamawa along with Livogrit and Livamrit we have cured fatty liver, liver cirrhosis, hepatitis and strengthened the digestive system.

**Skin diseases** Dermatologists do not have any permanent

cure for skin diseases like leucoderma, eczema, psoriasis. Patients suffering from these diseases are left with no choice but to bear the consequences of steroids and various other chemicals.

By cleansing the body through Yoga, Ayurveda, Naturopathy and Panchkarma along with the use of Kayakalp Vati, Dermagrit and Psorogrit, we have permanently cured people of skin diseases.

**Arthritis** Allopathic medicines for arthritis like painkillers, steroids and biological drugs have severe adverse effects on the quality of life of the patients. These medicines weaken the bones, reduce metabolism and even lead to diseases like diabetes.

Through regular Pranayam, administration of Aloe Vera, Giloy, Ashwasha, Orthogrit and Peedanil Gold, and massage with Peedantak Oil we have cured people suffering from diseases like arthritis, cervical and ankylosing spondylitis.

**Asthma** People suffering from Asthma get temporary relief with inhalers and steroids as their asthmatic attack gets suppressed for a while but they damage the lungs in the long run. Moreover, these treatments do not cure Asthma.

With the help of Bhastrika, Kapal Bhati, Anulom Vilom, Pranayama, Bhujang Asanas and Yoga Nabhabasti, along with administration of Swasari Pravahi, Swasari Vati, Swasari Gold and Cucurmin Gold, we have eradicated asthma and lung fibrosis and restored overall respiratory health of the patients.

**Incurable disease** Allopathy does not have any permanent and proven cure for ailments like heart blockage, infertility, urinary tract infection, stress and autoimmune diseases, such as, SLE, MS, ANA, AVN, HLAB27.

We have cured thousands of people of these incurable and life threatening diseases and have provided scientific evidence to back up the efficacies of our treatments. For more information, please visit our website: [www.patanjaliwellness.com](http://www.patanjaliwellness.com)

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CAPSULE

**MULAYAM’S WIFE PASSES AWAY**  
Lucknow: Samajwadi Party (SP) founder Mulayam Singh Yadav’s wife Sadhana Gupta passed away at a private hospital in Haryana’s Gurugram on Saturday after a prolonged illness. She was suffering from a lung infection and other ailments for the past three months.

**SOPRANOS ACTOR SIRICO DIES**  
Los Angeles: Tony Sirico, who played the impeccably groomed mobster Paulie Walnuts in “The Sopranos” and brought his tough-guy swagger to films including “Goodfellas,” died Friday. He was 79.

**SC ORDER ON MALYA CASE ON JUL 11**  
New Delhi: The Supreme Court will on July 11 pronounce its order on punishment for fugitive businessman Vijay Mallya in a contempt case against him. The SC had in 2017 held Mallya guilty of contempt of court for withholding information about transferring USD 40 million to his children, violating the court’s order.



Shivpal to support NDA’s Murmu

**PNS ■ LUCKNOW**

Pragatisheel Samajwadi Party (Lohia) president and Samajwadi Party MLA Shivpal Singh Yadav expressed his frustration with the style of function of his nephew Akhilesh Yadav, saying Akhilesh was “immature”. He said Akhilesh Yadav had inflicted huge damage to the Samajwadi Party. Shivpal Yadav’s remarks against the Samajwadi Party chief came a day after the PSPL president attended a dinner hosted by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in honour of National Democratic Alliance presidential candidate Droupadi Murmu. “I was invited by the chief minister on Friday so I attended the dinner. We met Droupadi Murmu and we have decided that we will vote for her,” Shivpal Yadav said even as his nephew was supporting the opposition candidate for the presidential elections, Yashwant Sinha. The 67-year-old leader also did not hesitate from taking a fresh dig at his nephew. “It seems that because of political immaturity, the Samajwadi Party is getting weaker. A lot of people are leaving. If our suggestions had been heeded, the Samajwadi Party would have been in a better position,” he said.

Shivpal Yadav had contested the UP assembly election from Jaswantnagar and won the seat amid assumptions that his differences with Akhilesh Yadav had been settled. The two leaders had bitter fallout over control of the party before the 2017 assembly elections. Weeks after the 2022 assembly election results were declared, they again seemed to be at loggerheads when it was alleged that Shivpal Yadav was not invited to a key party meeting. In April, Akhilesh was slammed by his uncle over a remark about reported meetings with the BJP leaders. “It’s an irresponsible comment. I contested the election on the symbol of the Samajwadi Party. If they think they need to take a decision immediately then they can expel me from the legislature party,” Shivpal Yadav had said. “Whenever there was a discussion about samajwad (socialism), it was about Dr Ram Manohar Lohia or Jayaprakash Narayan. But when I see writings on Dr Lohia, now I see Shivpal Singh Yadav. People should read about Dr Ram Manohar Lohia. Your (Shivpal) style of work gives you identity. But samajwad has been made a mirage,” the chief minister had said. The presidential elections are scheduled for July 18.

Martyred soldier who foiled infiltration bid at LoC, cremated

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU**

An Indian army soldier who made a supreme sacrifice in the line of duty while foiling an infiltration bid along the line of control in the Kupwara district was cremated with full military hours in his native village in RS Pura on Saturday. Earlier his mortal remains arrived from Srinagar after senior army officers led by Lt-Gen ADS Aujla, GOC Chinar Corps laid wreath on behalf of all ranks at the Chinar War Memorial. According to a Srinagar based defence spokesman, Naik Jasvir Singh, part of the ambush party, had sustained multiple gunshot wounds during the fire fight and was evacuated to a military hospital, where he was declared dead on arrival on Friday. The Braveheart, 38 years old, was a resident of Sai Khurd, Sai Kalan, RS Pura, Jammu, J&K and is survived by his wife and two young children. The operation was launched in the forward area on the basis of credible inputs regarding movement of terrorists from PoJK to attempt infiltration.

Kejriwal appeals to traders to participate in AAP’s efforts to redevelop Gandhi Nagar

**STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI**

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday appealed to the traders to participate in the AAP dispensation’s efforts to redevelop Gandhi Nagar on the lines of international markets in USA and Spain. “It is for the first time that any government is going to undertake development work for its traders on such a large scale. But it won’t be possible with only the government’s efforts. I appeal to all the traders to actively participate in these efforts along with the government,” Kejriwal tweeted



in Hindi. Kejriwal also shared a video in which traders of Gandhi Nagar were hailing the move., while a voice-over said that the beautification of the market will be done. “It will be developed just like New York’s biggest fashion market where clothes are manufactured as well as sold. It will become cleaner and more beautiful so that every customer feels that the market is ready to welcome them,” the voice-over in the video said. The examples of popular markets in Spain, Dublin, Tokyo were also cited in the video to highlight the fact that the market will be developed on the lines of the international markets. There will be resting spots, signboards leading to the shops, information booths on the important roads, toilets and green belts adorned with plants and trees. The AAP government’s think tank Dialogue and Development Commission of Delhi also tweeted saying the beautification of the market will be done according to international standards. “Gandhi Nagar to become like international markets like Fashion Centre, Harajuku, Ibarra, La Rambla #GreatGarmentHub #GandhiNagar,” it tweeted.

Notorious robber killed, three of his associates arrested in Northeast Delhi

**STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI**

Following an encounter, a 23-year-old notorious robber was killed while his three associates were arrested in northeast Delhi’s Yamuna Khadar area. The incident was reported on Friday night. The deceased has been identified as Aakash alias illu, a resident of Kartar Nagar. According to Sanjay Kumar Sain, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Northwest district, on Friday around 8.30 pm, police saw an injured person, later identified as Tushar, who was coming from Khadar area. “Tushar told police that five to six persons attacked him and snatched his mobile phone. “In retaliation, one of them received bullet injury and fell down while other persons ran away. The injured, identified as Aakash, was shifted to JPC hospital. Later he was referred to LNJP hospital where he died during treatment,” said the DCP. “One pistol, two empty cartridges have been recovered from the spot. Aakash was found involved in seven criminal cases of robbery etc. He was released on bail on June 6 in a case of New Usmanpur police station, the DCP said. Two days ago while police team was patrolling in the area, a group of miscreants had pelted stones at them, causing restraint in discharge of official duties. In this matter, a case was registered at New Usmanpur



police station, said the DCP. “Later, three associates of Aakash were also apprehended from Yamuna Khadar area. They have been identified as Vishal, Monu and Nikhil. Eight mobile phones, one country-made pistol, two live cartridges and one knife have been recovered. Vishal has also been found involved in six criminal cases of robbery etc,” said the DCP. During interrogation, it was found that Monu and Nikhil used to dress up as women to attract the passerby. Whenever someone went near them, their associates used to rob him of his belongings and valuables, police said, adding that efforts are being made to nab the remaining accused persons.

Drunken man stabs woman, her 2 daughters when denied food after party

**STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI**

A drunken man stabbed a woman and her two daughters in Delhi’s Dwarka Kakrola area as he was denied food by them after a birthday party. The incident took place on the intervening night of June 5-6 when the accused man, identified as Vicky, barged into their neighbour’s house at around 12.30 AM and asked for food. Police said that they have arrested the accused. The victims were a family of seven people -- parents, four daughters and one son. According to the First Information Report (FIR) registered at Dwarka North police station on the basis of complaint given by one of the daughter, on that

particular night, they celebrated the birthday of their five-year-old son and the sisters had organised a small party for their brother. “The accused identified as Vicky, a neighbor, was completely drunk and around 12:30 when the birthday celebration was over, he came to our home and asked for food to which my mother told him that now everything has been finished and you please go to your home,” the FIR stated. She alleged that within 10 minutes the accused came back with a knife and started threatening to kill all of them. “He stabbed my mother first on the stomach and then on the shoulder. My elder sister, who intervened, was also stabbed on the left abdomen and her intestines came out,” stated FIR. “The complainant’s younger sister also tried to intervene but she was also stabbed on her hand by the accused person. As there was a lot of noise, people quickly gathered there and got hold of the accused and thrashed him,” stated the FIR. Meanwhile, the police also reached the spot and took both the victims and the accused in separate vehicles to the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital. As the women were grievously injured, they were not able to make any statement to the police then. Later, based on the complaint, the police registered an FIR under Section 307 (attempt to murder) against Vicky and took him into custody.

Necessary to oppose communal violence together, says RSS

**PTI ■ JAIPUR**

Condemning the recent murder of a tailor in Udaipur by two men over an alleged insult to Islam, the RSS Saturday said the Hindu society has responded in a peaceful and constitutional way, and the Muslim community should also oppose such incidents vigorously. “It is necessary for all to oppose this together,” RSS spokesperson Sunil Ambekar said. Speaking to reporters after the conclusion of a three-day meeting of the Akhil Bharatiya Prant Pracharaks in Jhunjhunu, he also said the RSS has set a target to increase the number of its shakhas in the country to one lakh by 2024 from the current 56,824. Ambekar said the meeting discussed upcoming strategies, activities, organisational work, and action plans for the next two years were also evolved. He said work on the last year’s target was reviewed at the meeting and a comprehensive expansion plan made for the Sangh’s centenary year in 2025. “Under this, by 2024, the number of shakhas will be increased to one lakh across the country and efforts will be made to touch all sections of society and create a positive environment in society,” he said.

Twitter may sue...

**From Page 1**  
On Friday, shares of Twitter fell 5 per cent to \$36.81, well below the \$54.20 that Musk had offered to pay. Shares of Tesla, meanwhile, climbed 2.5 per cent to \$752.29. In a letter to the Securities and Exchange Commission, Musk said Twitter has “not complied with its contractual obligations” surrounding the deal, namely giving Musk enough information to “make an independent assessment of the prevalence of fake or spam accounts on Twitter’s platform.” Musk’s flirtation with buying Twitter appeared to begin in late March. That’s when Twitter has said he contacted members of its Board - including co-founder Jack Dorsey - and told them he was buying up shares of the company and interested in either joining the Board, taking Twitter private or starting a competitor. Then, on April 4, he revealed in a regulatory filing that he had become the company’s largest shareholder after acquiring a 9 per cent stake worth about \$3 billion. At first, Twitter offered Musk a seat on its board. But six days later, Twitter CEO Parag Agrawal tweeted that Musk will not be joining the Board after all. His bid to buy the company came together quickly after that. Musk had agreed to buy Twitter for \$54.20 per share, inserting a “420” marijuana reference into his offer price.

Crowd fury rocks...

**From Page 1**  
Wickremesinghe was appointed the Prime Minister after anti-Government protests forced the resignation of then prime minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, the elder brother of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, in May. Wickremesinghe’s offer to resign came after it was decided at the all-party leaders’ meeting that the President and the Prime Minister should resign immediately. The meeting was held at Speaker Mahinda Yapa

Abeywardena’s official residence. The Leader of the Opposition Samagi Jana Balawegaya Sajith Premadasa did not participate in the party leaders’ meeting as he is currently in a private hospital in Colombo due to a sudden illness. It is said that the majority of the party leaders have requested in the meeting of the Committee on Parliamentary Affairs that the Speaker should become the Acting President and work to form an all-party Government under his leadership. Former President and Leader of Sri Lanka Freedom Party Maithripala Sirisena was also of the opinion that the President and the Prime Minister should immediately resign from their positions. The former President in a statement through video call said his party is of the opinion that these activities should be done to preserve the peace and the Constitution

Panel to redraw boundaries of municipal...

**From Page 1**  
The other members of the panel are Pankaj Kumar Singh, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and Randhir Sahay, Additional Commissioner MCD. Former Secretary Lok Sabha and Delhi Assembly, SK Sharma, said a change in number and boundaries of wards is a lengthy and complicated process. “The committee will decide reservation of wards for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled

Tribes and women. The delimitation committee will first submit a draft based on its recommended number of wards and their boundaries after which it will be put in public domain to seek suggestions and objections from all stakeholders,” he added. Sharma further said the prospective candidates, MLAs, MPs and RWAs usually put up several objections and suggestions to add and remove colonies from their wards depending on their own considerations. Their objection and revision in boundaries takes more time. “Normally, such delimitation commissions/committees were given 6-12 months’ time. After it is completed, the draft report has to be notified by the Centre and then the process of rotation of wards and other poll exercises will start. It is likely to take about a year to conduct the municipal election in Delhi,” Sharma added. The MCD polls, originally scheduled for April, were put off

Flood toll 16; 15k Yatris shifted, many...

**From Page 1**  
A BSF spokesperson in Delhi said, “Sixteen bodies have been shifted to Baltal”. Even after deploying sophisticated surveillance equipment the rescue workers and the teams of the NDRF, SDRF and the Indian Army could not find any trace of the missing people. Unconfirmed reports said at least 40 people were still reported missing from the cave shrine area. Accumulation of slush and debris of boulders is vastly hampering the rescue operations on ground zero amid fears of heavy downpour in the region. In Srinagar, National Conference (NC) president Farooq Abdullah on Saturday said the Government should order an inquiry to ascertain how tents and community kitchens were set up in a

highly-vulnerable area close to the Amarnath cave shrine in the south Kashmir Himalayas, which was hit by flash floods on Friday. “We are hopeful that the Government will form an inquiry commission to know how it happened and why it happened,” Abdullah told reporters after meeting Yashwant Sinha, the joint Opposition candidate for the July 18 presidential polls, here. Meanwhile, the Amarnath Yatra remained suspended from both the Baltal and Pahalgam routes on Saturday and the entire yatra track was cleared off to ensure safety of the pilgrims. Surprisingly, a fresh batch of over 6,000 pilgrims were flagged off from the Jammu-based Yatri Niwas early on Saturday morning. To boost the morale of the Indian Army jawans, already working tirelessly since Friday evening, Chinar Corps Commander Lt.-Gen. Amardeep Singh Aujla along with GOC Kilo Force, Major-General Sanjiv Singh Salaria arrived in the cave shrine to personally review rescue operations on Saturday. An integrated command centre has been set up under the charge of the Divisional Commissioner of Kashmir while helpline numbers have been established in Anantnag in South Kashmir, Srinagar and in Delhi for families of pilgrims to know about the wellbeing of their kin. An Army official said an infantry battalion led by a colonel along with Quick Reaction Teams, an additional company from the Rashtriya Rifles Sector and a team from Special Forces had reached the shrine with specialised rescue equipment to undertake the operation. “Through the night, the senior Army officers of the infantry battalion and Rashtriya Rifles oversaw and coordinated rescue operations. Medical resources at the cave and at Nilgaur were activated and additional resources deployed,” he said. Nine surveillance detachments with hand-held thermal imagers, night-vision devices and other gadgets were deployed for the search operations, the official said. Large number of pilgrims who returned overnight from the holy cave area thanked jawans of the different security agencies for rushing timely help and deploying adequate manpower to guide them during the night so that they can cover the distance on foot without facing any hardships. After the Amarnath cave shrine area was hit by gushing waters rolling down the mountainside due to the incessant rain in the upper reaches, the shrine board authorities made public announcements directing the pilgrims present in the area to immediately shift to the safer places. As the security personnel themselves launched rescue operations to save precious lives those deployed along the yatra route were directed to facilitate pilgrims to reach base camps along the yatra route. Thanking soldiers of the Indian army, NDRF, SDRF, ITBP, CRPF, BSF and Jammu and Kashmir police jawans the pilgrims said, if these uniformed men were not present there and launched the timely operations the toll could have been much higher.

Flash flood not due to cloudburst...

**From Page 1**  
“It was initially reported as a cloudburst, but the IMD said that the 31 mm of rainfall between 4.30 P.M. and 6.30 P.M. on Friday is quite low to be categorised as a cloudburst. “The flash floods could have been triggered due to rainfall in the higher reaches of the mountains near the Amarnath cave shrine,” IMD Director-General Dr Mrutyunjay Mohapatra said. The IMD has an automatic weather station near the Amarnath cave shrine, which provides weather forecasts during the pilgrimage. But, the surrounding mountainous areas do not have any such station due to inaccessibility. According to an explainer by the IMD on its website, “It is

very difficult to predict cloudbursts due to its very small scale in space and time. To monitor or nowcast (forecasting a few hours lead time) the cloudburst, we need to have a dense radar network over the cloudburst-prone areas or one needs to have very high resolution weather forecasting models to resolve the scale of the cloudburst.” “Cloudbursts do occur at plains, however, mountainous regions are more prone to cloud bursts due to orography,” said weather experts. However, if the Doppler radar at Banihal which was announced more than two years ago was functional it could have helped avert the tragedy. A Doppler radar is an important tool that gives the

India Meteorological Department (IMD) a more accurate assessment of the clouds and rainfall in the given range of the radar, 100 km in case at Banihal. At Banihal, this Doppler radar is an X-band radar to be installed at a high point to get clearer access to the atmospheric changes in the hilly terrain. The location is under the Defence Geoinformatics Research Establishment (DGRE), that too at a high altitude, away from any village. The IMD, meanwhile, issued a red alert in parts of Maharashtra on Saturday, including Raigad, Ratnagiri, Pune and Kolhapur. According to the Regional Meteorological Centre, Mumbai and its suburbs will receive moderate rain.



# Setting up of delimitation panel Centre's tactic to delay civic polls: AAP



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The AAP on Saturday dubbed the setting up of a delimitation commission for Delhi by the Union Home Ministry as an "eyewash" and alleged that it is yet another "tactic" of the BJP-led Centre to further delay the municipal polls in the national Capital.

The party also contended that the Home Ministry cannot set up a delimitation commission before it determines the total number of municipal wards in accordance with the provisions of the amended Delhi Municipal Corporation Act and termed the move "illegal".

"We are happy that the Centre has constituted a committee for delimitation of MCD wards. But no order has been issued on how many wards will



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there be in Delhi," Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said in a tweet in Hindi. "Then how will this committee work?" he asked.

Calling the setting up of the delimitation commission an "eyewash", Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) chief spokesperson Saurabh Bhardwaj said the Centre had to first determine the total number of wards.

"Then only this order (of the home ministry) holds any water," Bhardwaj said when asked to comment on the development. "Without deciding the total number of wards, this order is an eyewash. This delimitation exercise is also an eyewash," he added.

AAP MLA Atishi said the amended Delhi Municipal Corporation Act "clearly stipulates" that the total number of seats shall in no case be more



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than 250 and the number of seats in the municipal corporation shall be determined by the Centre at the time of its establishment.

"But the home ministry's order does not say in how many wards the delimitation exercise has to be carried out. This was the most important decision that the government had to take (before setting up a delimitation commission), but it did not do so," she said.

"The home ministry's order is hollow. It is yet another effort of the BJP to delay and postpone the polls because it knows that it will be decimated if the polls are held," the Kalkaji MLA charged.

The BJP-led Centre is applying "one tactic after another" to somehow postpone and delay the MCD polls so that the saffron party

remains at the helm of the civic body for "as long as possible", she said. "But I want to tell the BJP that the people of Delhi are watching. The more you delay the election, the stronger would be the support in favour of Kejriwal," Atishi said, adding, "You will be reduced to single digit in the election and Kejriwal (AAP) will come to power in the MCD as well."

Earlier in the day, the MCD said the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has set up a three-member commission for carrying out a fresh delimitation exercise of the municipal wards in Delhi.

"Taking a step forward in the direction of holding municipal elections, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, by exercising its powers under sections 3, 3A and 5 of the DMC Act, 1957, has constituted a delimitation commission to assist central government in delimitation of wards and carrying out other functions related to it," the civic body said in a statement.

"In a matter relating to Madhya Pradesh, the Supreme Court had held that you cannot put off the municipal polls on the excuse of a delimitation exercise or any restructuring," Bhardwaj said.

## Now corporation would be able to function more smoothly: BJP



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi BJP hailed the Centre's decision for setting up a three-member delimitation committee for redrawing of boundaries of the municipal wards.

Delhi BJP president Adesh Gupta said this step will go a long way for betterment and strengthening of unified corporation and this would in turn benefit Delhiites.

Addressing the media, Gupta said now the corporation would be able to function more smoothly and better.

The notification issued says the delimitation exercise would be completed in four months and committee will



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then give report to government. Leader of the Opposition in Delhi Assembly, Rambir Singh Bidhuri also hailed the Centre's decision for setting up a delimitation committee for the municipal wards.

"This is the indication that the Centre is keen to hold elections in the municipal body. The AAP leaders have misled the people that BJP is not in favour of the MCD polls," he said.

Delhi BJP spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor has on Saturday said with every passing day AAP leaders are showing that how immature they are with their reactions and comments.

## Delimitation of wards should be done in scientific, transparent manner: Cong

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Congress president Ch Anil Kumar said the delimitation of wards should be done in a scientific, transparent manner by taking into account the ground reality, for the larger interest of Delhiites. Kumar said the three-member commission should discuss its terms of reference with all the political parties and take them into confidence before beginning the delimitation exercise.

The Delhi Congress president said the party disagrees with the unification of the three MCDs and the delimitation process, but it was in favour of holding the MCD elections without any further delay so that people can get their works done through their elected representatives, and not by puppet officials of the BJP. "The BJP and the AAP

want to delay the elections so that they can divert people's attention from many problems, including the failures of both these parties to address pressing issues," alleged Kumar.

He said that subsequent to the unification of all the three Municipal Corporations of Delhi, the existing number of 272 wards will be reduced to 250, and this process will be carried out on the basis of the population of Delhi that existed in 2011, which would be illogical.

He said that according to the old population census, Delhi's population was pegged at 1.67 crore, but the present population of Delhi has swelled to nearly 3 crore, therefore delimitation exercise based on old population will be totally unscientific. "In past 10 years, new colonies have come up, and Delhi's population has almost doubled," Kumar added.

# MHA to form body to decide city's share of water from Renuka Dam

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has decided to form a committee headed by Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla to decide the national Capital's share of water from Renuka Dam on priority basis. Besides Renuka Dam, the Delhi Government is also helping construct Lakhwar & Kissau dams in Uttarakhand to meet Delhi's water demands.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah has also directed the committee to check the feasibility of the proposal of constructing new drain similar to Najafgarh drain for treatment of polluted water in Delhi in the request of the Delhi Government and directed to resolve the issues at the earliest.

The decision was taken at the 30th Northern Zonal Council meeting held in Jaipur on Saturday where Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena and Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia raised the raised the issue of pollution, water scarcity and industrial

and chemical effluent discharge from Haryana in the Yamuna. The council comprises Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Rajasthan, National Capital Territory of Delhi and Union Territory of Chandigarh.

The Lt Governor also raised the issue of polluted water being released by Haryana. He said that three drains with polluted water from Haryana get discharged in Najafgarh drain in Delhi and are polluting it. This is further polluting the Yamuna. Lt Governor also raised the issue of security and the forthcoming G20 summit that need inter-state coordination.

Highlighting water problems faced by Delhi every year, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia has demanded the formation of a committee to discuss and decide how much extra water the capital should get after construction of the Renuka Dam in Himachal Pradesh. He said that 5,000 cusecs of industrial and chemical effluent water coming from Haryana is polluting Najafgarh

drain; if it is not stopped then Delhi and Uttar Pradesh will continue to suffer. Sisodia said that Delhi Government has started cleaning and maintenance of Najafgarh drain on a war footing. All the polluted water that is discharged in the drain will be treated at the sewage treatment plant first. But until Haryana will not stop discharging the chemical laden polluted water from its industries in the Najafgarh drain, complete cleaning of the drain is not possible.

He also presented the two proposals in front of the council and said that either Haryana should treat this 5000 cusec of chemical water from its industries and use it or they should release the treated water in Najafgarh drain.

The Deputy Chief Minister supported the proposal of Lieutenant Governor of constructing a new similar drain where water coming from drains of Haryana or any other state could be treated before being discharged in the Yamuna. The Deputy Chief Minister also demanded for

expediting the construction of "Renuka Dam" and urged that the government should decide the amount of water to be given to Delhi now, so that this can be included in the state's water policies. Commenting on the demand, Home Minister Amit Shah said, "We understand the requirement of water in Delhi, but it is not possible to decide the same at this time." On this, the Deputy Chief Minister quoted the text from the MoU between 6 states- "As Delhi government is investing money in this project, so the distribution of electricity will be according to the conditions of the coming time. But Delhi will be given water on priority basis out of the amount of water left in it."

Sisodia urged the council that Delhi should get the water on priority basis from the day one as soon as the dam gets functional. Home Minister Amit Shah agreed with the Deputy Chief Minister and said that a committee will be constituted to decide the amount of water to be given to Delhi.

## CBI files case against officers of DJB, recovers ₹1.5 cr

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has registered a case against then Chief Engineer, former Superintending Engineer, then Executive Engineer, Assistant Engineer and Accounts and Audit Officer of Delhi Jal Board besides former General Manager and Project Executive of National Buildings Construction Corporation (NBCC) Limited and recovered cash to the tune of Rs 1.5 crore, fixed deposits worth Rs 69 lakh and jewellery worth Rs 1.2 crore during searches.

Earlier, a Preliminary Enquiry (PE) was conducted. It was alleged that the accused had entered into a conspiracy to provide undue favour to an accused private company and had made it technically eligible (which was otherwise not allegedly eligible), the CBI said in a statement.

It was further alleged that a tender was issued in December, 2017 for Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning (SITC) of Electromagnetic Flow Meters

and corresponding Operations and Maintenance (O&M) for five years of Delhi Jal Board, it said. It was also alleged that due to conspiracy of the accused with said private company and false certificates and fabricated deviation statement issued by NBCC, the private company qualified and bagged a tender worth Rs. 38,02,33,080, it further said.

Searches were conducted at 10 locations in Delhi/NCR at the premises of the accused which led to recovery of incriminating documents and digital evidence.

Cash totaling Rs1.5 crore, huge jewellery worth about Rs 1.2 crore, fixed deposits worth Rs 69 lakh and various property documents were also found from the residence of then General Manager, NBCC, DK Mittal.

Besides Mittal, then Project Executive, NBCC, Sadhan Kumar and private firm NKG Infrastructure Limited. (through its Director) as also unknown public servants and private persons have been named as accused in the case.

## City witnesses no rain, max temperature settles at 35.1 degrees Celsius

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Despite the weather department's prediction, the national Capital on Saturday witnessed no rain and the maximum temperature settled at 35.1 degrees Celsius, which was one notch colder than normal for this time of the year.

The Capital witnessed a minimum temperature of 30.5 degrees Celsius, which was three notches above the normal for this season, stated the weather department data.

At Delhi's base station, Safdarjung observatory, the relative humidity in the weather on Saturday was recorded 69 per cent at 8:30 in the morning and 68 at 5:30 in the evening.

According to the data released by the weather station, the observatories at Ridge, Ayanagar, Najafgarh, Pitampura, Palam, and Lodhi Road recorded maximum temperatures of 33 degrees Celsius, 35.3 degrees Celsius, 36.7

degrees Celsius, 34.8 degrees Celsius, 36.7 degrees Celsius and 33.6 degrees Celsius respectively.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) predicted, "active monsoon conditions over Central India and along West coast likely to continue during next five days and increase of rainfall over Northwest India on July 09th and 10th 2022."

"Delhi on 10 July will witness generally clouded sky with moderate rain and the maximum temperature will rise up to 32 degrees Celsius while the minimum temperature will dip to 25 degree celsius," predicted the IMD.

"On July 11, the weather of the capital city will be generally clouded with light rain and the maximum temperature will shoot up to 35 degrees Celsius with the minimum temperature falling to 26 degrees Celsius," the weather department said.

## 'Country will run by Constitution, not Sharia'



**New Delhi:** Waving the Tricolour and chanting 'Jai Shri Ram', "Bharat Mata ki Jai" scores of people participated in a 'Samvidhan Sankalp March' organised by various groups led by Vishwa Hindu Parishad on Saturday against "attacks on the community" and with the intention of saying the country will run according to the

Constitution and not the Sharia. The march began from the Mandi House area and will culminate at Jantar Mantar. Commuters who were traveling to Central Delhi faced slow movement of traffic due to the march despite the traffic police advisory in advance regarding their arrangements for the event to ensure motorists face

less inconvenience. A large crowd of people marched from Mandi House, via Barakhamba Road and Tolstoy Marg, to Jantar Mantar, with several roads in the area remaining closed to traffic. People belonging to units of the Rashtriya Hindu Vahini, VHP, and Sewa Bharti were among those who marched. One of the demands being raised was the death penalty for those who killed Kanhaiya Lal and Umesh Kolhe. BJP leaders Tajinder Pal Singh Bagga and Kapil Mishra were also present in the march. BJP leader Kapil Mishra said that the march is meant to be a message that the country will run according to the constitution and not the sharia. "The death of Kanhaiya Lal, Umesh Kolhe...jihadi mod-

ules are becoming active. It is not just sloganeering, they are implementing it. This is the message of Hindu ekta. Lakhs of people have gathered here. Jan mein rosh bhi hain, aakrosh bhi hain," he said. Delhi BJP president Adesh Gupta, said "Bharat samvidhan se chalta hain, dharmik kanoon se nahi chalta hain. Nobody has the right to take the law into their hands."

A public meeting at Jantar Mantar saw former North Delhi mayor Avtar Singh issue a warning that those who target Hindus "will not be spared". Citing the recent killing of a tailor in Rajasthan's Udaipur, Vishva Hindu Parishad international working president Alok Kumar claimed Hindus are being attacked everywhere.

## NCRTC MD inspects RRTS Corridor



**New Delhi:** The National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC) Managing Director Vinay Kumar Singh on Saturday inspected the progress of construction works in the Priority Section of Regional Rapid Transport System (RRTS) Corridor. According to the senior NCRTC

official, the inspection was focused on the construction work of all the five stations, viaducts which are almost complete, and the installation of various systems for the 17-km long Priority Section of the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut corridor. "He started the inspection from Sahibabad RRTS station where the Priority Section begins. This

station is taking shape at a pace, the civil construction is almost complete, and the station roof and other finishing works are being completed," he said. "He along with other NCRTC officers walked over the constructed RRTS viaduct and reached Ghaziabad RRTS station. He also inspected the Ghaziabad Receiving Sub Station (RSS), the construction of which is now complete and will provide power supply to this section," he informed.

"The viaduct of the entire Priority Section is almost complete, and all five stations are also being constructed expeditiously. At present, the work of track laying and installation of Overhead Equipment (OHE) and signaling equipment is being carried out," he said.

## 33-year-old school teacher held under harassment charges

**NEW DELHI:** The Delhi Police has arrested a 33-year-old school teacher from IP Extension metro station for allegedly molesting and harassing a woman teacher.

The accused has been identified as Rajesh Chand Meena, a resident of Kalyanpuri. He was harassing and molested the woman for a long time, police said.

According to Jitendra Mani, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Metro Unit, on Thursday, information was received from station controller of IP Extension Metro Station in which a woman was molested by a person.

# Huge turnout of goat buyers recorded at Meena Bazaar ahead of Eid-Al-Adha

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The national Capital's Meena Bazaar, famous for shopping on Eid, has been decorated with flowers, and scores of people thronged the bakra market to buy goats, ahead of the festival on Sunday. Goats of all kinds, colours, and sizes were available in the market.

Hundreds of goats adorned with elegant anklets, and collars with bells in around a hundred tents that have been pitched in Urdu Park and Hauz, which are located on either side of Meena Bazaar.

The 10-day goat market has also resulted in the opening up of several side-businesses, such as shops for anklets and bells for goats and food carts to cater to the merchants' hunger pangs. On the other hand, the prices of sacrificial animal have skyrocketed



in retail. The traders are saying many families are together purchasing just one sacrificial

animal for the annual festival. Akhlaq came from Shahdara to sell his Turkey

breed goats (Dumbe), said, "Our two goats cost us two lakh rupees each. They require spe-



cial care. So we feed them cashews, almonds, grains, and other nutritious foods." Salman, his son, claimed that because of

our emotional attachment to them and our inability to sacrifice our goats, we sold them to others. He claimed his friend

had brought this pair for him straight from Turkey. Roshan Ali, another goat seller, had arrived from Badaun to offer

Abraq, a two-year-old fawn. Ali expressed his disappointment that despite offering his goat for sale at a low price, no one seems to be interested in purchasing it. Many people in Delhi rear goats to sell them on Eid-al-Adha.

Besides, sellers come from UP, Haryana and Rajasthan to make fast bucks by selling their goats. Some goats are sold for as high a price as Rs 10-15 lakh. Rashid, a resident of Ghaziabad district in Uttar Pradesh, said he has come here with 15 of his family members to sell off 100 goats.

"I came here on Wednesday along with family members to sell goats. We had booked the tent last month and the way people are coming to buy goats, we think we have to wind up our stall by Saturday evening and move towards our home," said Rashid.



# Cong accuses BJP of having ‘links with ultras’

22 of our senior leaders held press conferences in 22 cities to expose links of terrorists with BJP, tweeted Jairam

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI MUMBAI

The Congress on Saturday came down heavily on the BJP accusing it of having "links with terrorists" and seeking an explanation from its leadership over why their activists were found to have direct or indirect connections with anti-nationals in a handful of recent incidents across the country. At least 22 party spokespersons conducted Press conferences in an identical number of cities across the country. They asked if the activists of the nation's ruling party themselves are involved in such activities, then who is there to protect the people of the country and to safeguard national security? Pointing out a number of recent heinous crimes, including the barbaric killing of a tailor in

Rajasthan's Udaipur, the Congress leaders alleged that the connection of the accused in such incidents with the BJP had been exposed but the party leadership was continuing its silence. Congress chief spokesperson Jairam Ramesh said the aim is to counter the BJP's "fake nationalism claims" and to take the message to the grassroots level that the ruling party has "connections" with individuals who have indulged in heinous crimes and terror acts. "Today, 22 of our senior leaders and spokespersons held Press conferences in 22 cities to expose the 'links of terrorists with BJP'," Ramesh tweeted, alleging that "evidence of terrorists having links with the BJP has come out". "The BJP has links with terrorists, what is this relationship called?" he posed in the tweet. Congress has alleged that Riyaz Attari, one of the prime accused in the killing of tailor Kanhaiya Lal in Rajasthan's Udaipur, was a BJP member. It has also released his photographs purportedly with BJP leaders in Rajasthan. The BJP, however, has denied any link with such elements and claimed that some of them had clicked pictures with its leaders after infiltrating the party ranks. "If a ruling party, that too

a self-styled nationalist and patriotic party, has relationship...Links with the terror activities, all of us are in danger...The country is in danger...The people are in danger. And it is important for all of us to ask straight questions to the BJP as to why this nexus exists," Dsouju Sravan said at the Thiruvananthapuram Press conference. Congress also claimed that Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorist Talib Hussain Shah who was nabbed by people in Reasi town in Srinagar recently was an office-bearer of the BJP's minority cell in Jammu and Kashmir, a charge denied by the BJP leadership in the Union Territory. Calling reports about "terrorists and criminals" having links with BJP a matter of concern for country, Congress MP Deepender Singh Hooda said saffron party needs to introspect as to how such elements were finding their way into the party fold. "We feel sorry that the people who conspire to damage the country are getting a place in BJP. It is a national party and is in power in the country. For the BJP, it should be a matter of deep introspection," Hooda told reporters at Ahmedabad.

## Cong supported terrorists, Sonia stood with terrorist Zakir Naik: Patra

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

Countering the Congress charges, the BJP on Saturday alleged it was the Opposition party which was a collaborator with terrorists and under whose regimes the latter had a "free-hand". BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra here at a Press conference accused Congress of constantly supporting terrorists and being engaged in appeasement politics. He said it is surprising as the grand old party is holding briefings across the country against terrorism when they were the ones who always stood with them allowing terrorists acts to flourish across the country. The BJP's response came after the Congress held Press conference across India and said that BJP has become 'Aatmanirbhar on terrorism.' "It is a matter of surprise that the Congress is holding press conferences on terrorism in 22 places in the country. The way

Congress has supported terrorism due to appeasement, it will not be an exaggeration to say that Congress is with terrorism", he said. Congress President Sonia Gandhi 'wept bitterly after seeing the dead bodies of Batla House terrorists who were killed in an encounter," Patra said. "Congress leader Salman Khurshid himself informed that Sonia could not sleep for three nights and kept crying", Patra said and sought to ask "Why did she cry, only because those terrorists were killed?". "Sonia stood with terrorist Zakir Naik and did everything to save him. Zakir is the same person who created a frenzy across the nation about religion in the minds of the citizens because she took donations in the name of her husband Rajiv Gandhi. Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) declared Ishrat Jahan a terrorist and openly called her their sleeper cell unit. But Congress party kept defending her and calling her innocent. They even ran an ambulance service after

her," said the BJP leader. Patra said the credit goes to the Modi Government that it put to a complete end to all those bomb blasts, train blasts and other terrorist activities here, there and elsewhere occurring in the country during the Congress regimes, soon after it came to power in 2014. He further said, "Yasin Malik admitted in an interview that he killed Indians. But even after his confession the kind of status was given to him by the UPA Government was nothing but a glorification of a terrorist. They also advocated for terrorist Burhan Wani that he shouldn't have been killed as he was the son of a headmaster and comes from a poor background. These kinds of wrong narratives were floated by Congress. There might be some reason why the most dangerous terrorist of Hafiz Saeed likes only one party in the world and that is Congress. Hafiz loved Congress because they protected terrorists."

## PM to visit Deoghar, Patna on July 12

In Deoghar, Modi will inaugurate, lay foundation stone of projects worth more than ₹16K cr



**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Deoghar and Patna on July 12. In Deoghar he will inaugurate and lay the foundation stone of various developmental projects worth more than ₹16,000 crores. Thereafter he will have Darshan and perform Pooja at Baba Baidyanath temple, one of the 12 Jyotirlingas. He will then leave for Patna wherein he will address the closing ceremony of Centenary celebrations of Bihar Legislative Assembly. According to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), in a step towards boosting infrastructure development, the Prime Minister will dedicate to the nation and lay the foundation stone of various projects worth over ₹16,000 crore in Deoghar. These projects will help in significantly improving socio-economic prosperity in the region. As a key step to provide direct connectivity to Baba Baidyanath Dham, which is an important religious destination for devotees from all over the country, he will inaugurate the Deoghar Airport. It has been constructed at an estimated cost of around ₹400 crore. The Terminal Building of the airport is equipped to handle over five lakhs passengers annually. The services at AIIMS Deoghar will get a further

boost as Prime Minister will dedicate to the nation the In-Patient Department (IPD) and Operation Theatre services at AIIMS, Deoghar. This is in accordance with Prime Minister's vision to develop excellent health care facilities in all parts of country. The Prime Minister's commitment to develop world class infrastructure at places of religious importance across country and improve facilities to the tourists in all such places, will get a further boost as components of project "Development of Baidyanath Dham, Deoghar" sanctioned under the PRASAD Scheme of Ministry of Tourism will get inaugurated, said PMO. The projects being inaugurated by the Prime Minister include development of two large pilgrimage congregation halls with a capacity of 2000 pilgrims each; Jalsar lake front development; Shivganga Pond development among others. The new amenities will further enrich the tourism experience for lakhs of devotees who visit Baba Baidyanath Dham. The Prime Minister will inaugurate and lay the foundation stone of multiple road projects worth more than Rs. 10,000 crores. The projects that are being inaugurated include six laning of Gorhar to Barwada section of NH-2; widening of Rajganj-Chas upto West Bengal border section of NH-32 among others. In Patna, the PM will lay the foundation stone of Vidhan Sabha museum. Different galleries in the museum will demonstrate the history of democracy in Bihar and evolution of current civic structure.

## Ascites can be treated through Ayurveda: Study

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

Patients suffering from ascites (known as Jalodara in Hindi) — a condition in which fluid collects in spaces within the abdomen — can be treated through Ayurveda as a team of researchers have found in a study that herbal drug Neeri KFT is significantly effective in managing the disease. The herbal drug not only aided in saving the kidney from further damage due to the condition but also helped in excreting the collected fluid from the abdomen. Assistant Professor Komala A, Professor Siddesh Aradhyamath and researcher Mallinath I T from JSS Ayurveda Medical College and Hospital in Karnataka made these observations in the study published in the latest issue of 'Journal of Ayurveda and Integrated Medical Sciences'. As per the study, the

researchers gave a range of Ayurvedic formulations along with AIMIL Pharmaceutical's research based innovation Neeri KFT meant for impaired kidneys, to the ascites patients admitted in the hospital. "A dose of 20 ml of this ayurvedic formulation daily--morning and evening— was given for a month," the researchers said, adding that the outcome was positive. The herbal drug not only helped in protecting the kidneys of the patients from further damage due to the condition but also helped in excreting the collected fluid from their abdomen. The consumption of herbal formulation had flushed out fluid from the abdomen through the urinary tract, said the researchers. Neeri KFT is composed of herbs such as Punarnava, Varun, Sigru, Sariva, Makoi and Sirish, also known for their diuretic properties. Dr.



Sanchit Sharma from AIMIL Pharmaceuticals pointed out that in the last few years, Neeri KFT has proven to be effective in strengthening the kidney as well as clearing toxic fluids from the body. Ascites usually occurs when the liver stops working properly or it malfunctions, leading to a build-up of fluid in the space between the abdominal lining and the organs. Ascites is the most common complication of cirrhosis (scarring of the liver), affecting

around 60 percent of people with cirrhosis within 10 years of their diagnosis, and the 2-year survival rate is 50 percent. Patients suffering with ascites may have the symptoms like painless swelling in the abdomen that worsens rather than going away; abdominal discomfort; weight gain; feeling full after eating a little, shortness of breath as pressure increases in the abdomen, pushing up on the diaphragm and reduction in the space for the lungs to expand.



Presidential candidate of the combined Opposition parties Yashwant Sinha interacts with president of National Conference and People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) Farooq Abdullah, PAGD leader Mehbooba Mufti, CPI-M Leader Yousuf Tarigami and other PAGD leaders during their meeting, at Farooq Abdullah's residence in Srinagar on Saturday

## Jha to bring private members Bill in RS against hate speeches

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

Rajya Sabha MP Manoj Jha is likely to introduce a private member's Bill in the upcoming Monsoon Session of Parliament to curb hate crimes and hate speeches. As per the information available with the Rajya Sabha, the RJD member in the upper house will introduce the bill in the first week of the session on Friday, a day when private members' business is scheduled. The monsoon session of Parliament will begin on July 18. The Hate Crimes and Hate Speech (Combat, Prevention and Punishment) bill, 2022, seeks to punish those involved in hate crimes and hate speeches. According to Jha, given the current scenario in the country it is important to talk about legislation like this. "It is unfortunate that in a democracy the



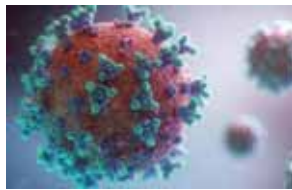
essence of democracy has been forgotten in many aspects," he said. There have been protests in different parts of the country over the controversial comments of suspended BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma. Recently TMC Member of Parliament Mahua Moitra's remarks on Goddess Kali also led to a massive controversy. Last year, during the Budget Session as well, Manoj Jha had demanded legislation to regulate online hate speech and improve information dis-

closure about paid content. Jha said the use of the online sphere for spreading hate speech is reaching new heights. "I request to bring legislation to regulate the problem of online hate speech. The legislation should aim to detect, monitor and safeguard against coordinated inauthentic behaviour, the misuse of online account bots, for the spread of hate speech and the deliberate broadcasting of fake news," Jha said in the Rajya Sabha. He had said the legislation should have measures to be taken to improve information disclosure about paid content aimed at spreading hate speech for a political end. He also suggested that such legislation be introduced only after discussion with stakeholders for a balance between the censorship of harmful content and freedom of speech and expression.

## 18,840 new Covid cases reported; toll at 43 now

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

While Covid cases have been below the 19,000-mark for the last three days with Saturday recording 18,840 infections, deaths have, nevertheless, shown a consistent surge during the same period. On Saturday, the mortality figure was 43 compared to 38 on Friday. Prior to that, 35 people had succumbed to the disease. The death toll has climbed to 5,25,386, the data updated at 8 am stated. India's Covid-19 case tally stood at 4,36,04,394 while the number of active cases increased to 1,25,028, according to Union Health Ministry data updated on Saturday. States like Odisha recorded 512 COVID-19 cases on Saturday, the highest in more than four months, taking the tally to 12,92,928. Ditto was the



case with Jharkhand. The number of active COVID-19 cases crossed the 500-mark in Jharkhand after around four months as 132 more people tested positive for the infection. The fresh infections pushed the tally to 5,36,516. The count, however, remained unchanged at 5,321 as no fresh fatality was reported. The overall test positivity rate jumped to 3.35 per cent from 2.77 as the cases were detected out of 15,265 samples. Fifty-nine children were among those afflicted with the disease, according to a bulletin. The 43 new fatalities include 19 from Kerala, seven from

Maharashtra, three each from Delhi and West Bengal, two each from Assam and Uttar Pradesh and one each from Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Nagaland, Punjab, Sikkim and Uttarakhand. A total of 5,25,386 deaths have been reported so far in the country including 1,47,971 from Maharashtra, 70,108 from Kerala, 40,123 from Karnataka, 38,028 from Tamil Nadu, 26,280 from Delhi, 23,547 from Uttar Pradesh and 21,236 from West Bengal. Active caseload increased by 2,693 in a day and now comprise 0.29 per cent of the total infections, while the national COVID-19 recovery rate was recorded at 98.51 per cent, the Ministry said. The daily positivity rate was 4.14 per cent while the weekly positivity rate was recorded at 4.09 per cent, according to the Ministry.

## BJP, Sena rebel faction finalise list of Ministers

**PNS ■** NEW DELHI

The BJP and the Shiv Sena rebel faction have reportedly finalised the finer contours of their Council of Ministers in Maharashtra but will wait for the July 11 Supreme Court order on Uddhav Thackeray camp's challenge to Eknath Shinde's appointment as the Chief Minister to take the next step. Shinde and Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Saturday met Prime Minister Narendra Modi after having a flurry of interactions with top BJP leaders, including party president JP Nadda and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. Both the Maharashtra leaders had a long meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday night after reaching here, the first time since assuming power in Maharashtra. According to sources, the meeting with Shah lasted for over three hours. Fadnavis and Shinde also met legal experts including Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta. Speaking to the media, Shinde said leaders of both parties would sit together in Mumbai after the Supreme Court delivered its order even as he rejected Thackeray's demand for a midterm election, saying his Government would complete the term. Shinde and Fadnavis also visited President Ram Nath Kovind at Rashtrapati Bhawan. Fadnavis, after the meeting, tweeted:

"Very thankful, Hon President of India Shri Ramnath Kovind ji for your valuable time and blessings to me and CM Eknathrao Shinde!" The Chief Minister and Deputy-Chief Minister interacted with BJP leadership and discussed developments in the state and the much awaited July 11 Supreme Court order on Uddhav Thackeray faction's challenge to Shinde's appointment. Claiming his faction was the real Shiv Sena, Shinde said they had tried to persuade Uddhav Thackeray three-four times to go with the BJP as it was a "natural alliance" but he refused. "The existence of our MLAs came under threat in the Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi government. Since we could not speak, we took this step. It is only the natural alliance of the BJP and the Shiv Sena that can take Maharashtra ahead. Shiv Sena founder Bal Thackeray had fought for Hindutva but Uddhav failed to follow it. We are following it. Uddhav derailed Bal Thackeray's agenda. We are putting it back on track," Shinde asserted. For his part, Fadnavis denied he was upset with the BJP leadership's decision to make him Shinde's deputy. "My party made me the CM earlier and now as per the need of the party, we have abided by the party's decision. Eknath Shinde is our leader and CM," Fadnavis said

## Gupta held in ₹425 cr money laundering case

**PNS ■** NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has arrested Narender Kumar Gupta in a case of money laundering wherein around ₹425 crore was remitted outside India using 19 dummy Indian entities. The money laundering case against Gupta was recorded by ED on basis of an FIR registered on the complaint of Punjab National Bank against 19 entities which opened accounts with their Mint Street, Chennai branch and in a span of six months remitted ₹425 crore to various entities in Hong Kong and UAE, the ED said in a statement. "On verifi-

cation, these Indian entities were found to be non-existent and the real beneficiaries being the promoter directors of entities outside India are being brought to book," it said. The probe under Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) revealed that Gupta had incorporated an entity in Hong Kong of which he was the director and had used the same for the purpose of laundering ₹22.6 crore. This led to Gupta's arrest. This is ED's fourth arrest in this case. The Special Court (PMLA) remanded him to judicial custody for 15 days and further investigation is in process, it added.

## ED files chargesheet against Amnesty India in money laundering case

**PNS ■** NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Saturday said it has filed a prosecution complaint (chargesheet in police parlance) under Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) against Amnesty International India Pvt Ltd (AIIP), Indians for Amnesty International Trust (IAIT) and others in a money laundering case. In this case, an FIR was registered by CBI, New Delhi against Amnesty International India Pvt Ltd. (AIIP), Indians for Amnesty International Trust, (IAIT), Amnesty International India Foundation Trust (AIIFT) and others under Section Indian Penal Code section relating to criminal conspiracy relevant provisions of Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA), the ED said in a statement. Based on the FIR, the ED has recorded a case and initiated the investigation under PMLA. The ED probe revealed that in 2011-12, Amnesty International India Foundation Trust (AIIFT) had been granted permission under the FCRA for receiving foreign contributions from Amnesty International UK. "The permission/registration has been subsequently revoked to this entity on the basis of adverse inputs received. Subsequently, two new entities— Amnesty International India Pvt Ltd (AIIP) and Indians Amnesty International Trust (IAIT)— were formed in the year 2013-14 and 2012-13 respectively to escape the FCRA route and received forex in the guise of

service export and FDI," it said. The probe further revealed that upon cancellation of FCRA licence of Amnesty International India Foundation Trust by the Centre, a new method was adopted by Amnesty entities to receive money from abroad as Amnesty International, U.K. sent Rs 51.72 crore to AIIP in the guise of Export of Services and Foreign Direct Investment. Further, for export proceeds/advances received for export of services to Amnesty International UK, there was no documentary proof for the alleged export such as invoices and copies of the agreement between AIIP and Amnesty International UK and the same has not been furnished by AIIP to the Authorized Dealer (AD) Banks. "Amnesty International India Pvt Ltd and others have committed scheduled offence by claiming to be carrying out "civil Society work", however receiving forex in a profit making company, thereby mis- utilizing the FDI, which to amply proved by absence of any details/documents relating to exports made and layering of remittances received by AIIP, a company into IAIT, a charitable Trust," it said. In this case, both the entities have acquired proceeds of crime and layered the same in the form of various movable properties. Subsequently, two Provisional Attachment Orders have been issued for the attachment of movable properties worth Rs 19.54 crore and the same has been confirmed by the Adjudicating Authority (PMLA), New Delhi.



# Abe's death raises security questions as Japan mourns

AP ■ TOKYO

Atop police official on Saturday acknowledged possible security lapses that allowed an assassin to fire his gun into former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe while he was addressing a campaign rally, raising questions how could the attacker get so close behind him.

Abe was shot in the western city of Nara on Friday and airlifted to a hospital but died of blood loss. Police arrested the attacker, a former member of Japan's navy, at the scene. Police confiscated his home-made gun and several others were later found at his apartment.

The attacker, Tetsuya Yamagami, told investigators he acted because he believed rumors that Abe was connected to an organization that he resents, police said. Japanese media reported that the man had developed hatred toward a religious group that his mother was obsessed about and that caused his family financial problems. The reports did not specify the group.

On Saturday, a black hearse carrying Abe's body and accompanied by his wife, Akie, arrived at his home in Tokyo's upscale residential area of Shibuya. Many mourners, including top party officials, waited for his remains and lowered their heads as the vehicle passed.

Nara prefectural police chief Tomoaki Onizuka said Abe's assassination was his "greatest regret" in a 27-year career.

"I cannot deny there were problems with our security," Onizuka said. "Whether it was

a setup, emergency response, or ability of individuals, we still have to find out. Overall, there was a problem and we will review it from every perspective."

Abe's assassination ahead of Sunday's parliamentary election shocked the nation and raised questions over whether security for the former prime minister was adequate.

Some observers who watched videos of the attack noted a lack of attention in the open space behind Abe as he spoke.

A former Kyoto prefectural police investigator, Fumikazu Higuchi, said the footage suggested security was sparse at the event and insufficient for a former prime minister.

"It is necessary to investigate why security allowed Yamagami to freely move and go behind Mr. Abe," Higuchi told a Nippon TV talk show.

Experts also said Abe was more vulnerable standing on the ground level, instead of atop a campaign vehicle, which is usually the case but was reportedly unavailable due to his hastily arranged visit to Nara.

"Looks like police were mainly focusing on frontward, while paying little attention to what's behind Mr. Abe, and nobody stopped the suspect approaching him," said Mitsuru Fukuda, a crisis management professor at Nihon University. "Clearly there were problems."

Fukuda said that election campaigns provide a chance for voters and politicians to interact because "political terrorism" was extremely rare in postwar Japan. But Abe's assassination could prompt stricter

security at crowded events like campaigns, sports games and others.

During a parliamentary debate in 2015, Abe resisted suggestions by an opposition lawmaker to beef up his security, insisting that "Japan is a safe country."

In videos circulating on social media, the 41-year-old Yamagami can be seen standing only a few meters (yards) behind Abe across a busy street, and continuously glancing around.

A few minutes after Abe stood at the podium and started his speech - as a local party candidate and their supporters stood and waved to the crowd - Yamagami can be seen taking his gun out of a bag, walking toward Abe and firing the first shot, which released a cloud of smoke, but the projectile apparently missed Abe.

As Abe turned to see where the noise came from, a second shot went off. That bullet apparently hit Abe's left arm, missing a bulletproof briefcase raised by a security guard who stood behind him.

Abe fell to the ground, with his left arm tucked in as if to cover his chest. Campaign organizers shouted through loudspeakers asking for medical experts to provide first-aid to Abe. His heart and breathing had stopped by the time he was airlifted to a hospital, where he later pronounced dead.

Police on Saturday said autopsy results showed that a bullet that entered Abe's upper left arm damaged arteries beneath both collar bones, causing fatal massive bleeding.

According to the Asahi newspaper, Yamagami was a contract worker at a ware-

house in Kyoto, operating a forklift. He was described as a quiet person who did not mingle with colleagues. A next-door neighbor at his apartment told Asahi he never met Yamagami, though he recalled hearing noises like a saw being used several times late at night over the past month. Japan is particularly known for its strict gun laws. With a population of

125 million, it had only 10 gun-related criminal cases last year, eight of then gang-related. Even though he was out of office, Abe was still highly influential in the governing Liberal Democratic Party and headed its largest faction. But his ultra-nationalist views made him a divisive figure to many.

Abe stepped down two

years ago blaming a recurrence of the ulcerative colitis he'd had since he was a teenager. He said he regretted leave many of his goals unfinished, especially his failure to resolve the issue of Japanese abducted years ago by North Korea, a territorial dispute with Russia, and a revision of Japan's war-renouncing constitution.

That ultra-nationalism

riled the Koreans and China, and his push to create what he saw as a more normal defense posture angered many Japanese liberals. Abe failed to achieve his cherished goal of formally rewriting the U.S.-drafted pacifist constitution because of poor public support.

Loyalists said his legacy was a stronger U.S.-Japan relationship that was meant to bol-

ster Japan's defense capability. Abe divided the public by forcing his defense goals and other contentious issues through parliament.

Chinese leader Xi Jinping, who early on had a frosty relationship with Abe, sent a condolence message to Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida on Saturday, a day after most other world leaders issued their statements.

## Biden, Japan Prime Minister Kishida hold phone talks after Abe's assassination

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

US President Joe Biden had a telephonic conversation with Prime Minister Fumio Kishida of Japan and discussed how Abe Shinzo's legacy will live on as they continue the important task of defending peace and democracy, the White House has said.

During the conversation, Biden expressed his outrage, sadness and deep condolences after former Japanese leader Abe's assassination, it said.

Abe, 67, was shot from behind in Nara in western Japan while giving a campaign speech. Police have arrested a Nara resident in his 40s, who allegedly used a handmade gun to shoot Abe, a tragedy that has shocked Japan which has some of the strictest gun laws in the world.

The President underscored that he and the American people stand with the Prime Minister and the people of Japan in their time of mourning," said a readout of the call on Friday.

## We will honour Abe's memory by redoubling work towards peaceful, prosperous Indo-Pacific: Quad

PTI ■ NEW YORK

The leaders of India, Australia and the US - countries that make up the Quad with Japan - have expressed shock at the assassination of Shinzo Abe and recalled the former Japanese Prime Minister's formative role in the founding of the grouping as well as his tireless work to advance a shared vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

Abe, Japan's longest-serving prime minister, died in hospital on Friday morning after being shot while speaking at a political campaign event in Nara in western Japan. The 67-year-old Japanese leader's assassination has profoundly shocked a country where gun crime is very rare.

"We, the leaders of Australia, India, and the United States, are shocked at the tragic assassination of former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe," US President Joe Biden, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said in a



The Indian national flag flies half-mast at the National War Memorial to mourn the death of former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, in New Delhi on Saturday.

PTI

joint statement released by the White House on Friday.

They described Abe a "transformative leader" for Japan as well as for Japanese relations with each one of the three countries.

"He also played a formative role in the founding of the Quad partnership, and worked tirelessly to advance a shared vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific," they said.

Abe was one of the architects of the Quad, the US, India, Japan and Australia alliance. The four countries had in 2017 given shape to the long-pending proposal of setting up the "Quad" or the Quadrilateral coalition, amidst China's aggressive behaviour in the strategically important Indo-Pacific region.

In the joint statement, Biden, Albanese and Modi

vowed to honour Abe's memory by "redoubling our work towards a peaceful and prosperous region" and added that their hearts are with the people of Japan and with Prime Minister Fumio Kishida in their moment of grief.

Police in Japan have arrested Nara resident 41-year-old Tetsuya Yamagami, who allegedly used a handmade gun to shoot Abe.

# Russia trying to raise true hell, says Ukrainian Governor

AP ■ KYIV

Russian forces are managing to "raise true hell" in Ukraine's eastern industrial heartland despite reports of them taking an operational pause, a regional governor said on Saturday, while the government in Kyiv urged people in Russian-occupied southern areas to evacuate "by all possible means" ahead of a Ukrainian offensive.

Deadly Russian shelling was reported in Ukraine's east and south.

The governor of Luhansk, Serhyi Haidai, said Russia launched over 20 artillery, mortar and rocket strikes in the province overnight and its forces were pressing toward the border with neighbouring Donetsk.

"We are trying to contain the Russians' armed formations along the entire front line," Haidai wrote on Telegram.

Last week, Russia captured the last major stronghold of

Ukrainian resistance in Luhansk, the city of Lysychansk. Analysts predicted Moscow's troops likely would take time to rearm and regroup.

But "so far, there has been no operational pause announced by the enemy. He is still attacking and shelling our lands with the same intensity as before", Haidai said.

In a later post, he claimed the bombardment of Luhansk was suspended because Ukrainian forces had destroyed ammunition depots and barracks used by the Russians.

Ukraine's deputy prime minister, Iryna Vereshchuk, appealed to residents of Russian-held territories in the south to evacuate so the occupying forces could not use them as human shields during a Ukrainian counteroffensive.

"You need to search for a way to leave, because our armed forces are coming to de-occupy," she said. "There will be a massive fight. I don't want to

scare anyone. Everyone understands all of this anyway."

Speaking at a news conference late Friday, Vereshchuk said a civilian evacuation effort was underway for parts of the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions. She declined to give details, citing safety considerations.

It was not clear how civilians were expected to safely leave Russian-controlled areas while missile strikes and artillery shelling continue in surrounding areas, or whether they would be allowed to depart or even hear the government's appeal.

The war's death toll continued to rise.

Five people were killed and eight more wounded in Russian shelling Friday of Siversk and Semihirya in Donetsk province, its governor, Pavlo Kyrylenko, wrote on his Telegram channel on Saturday morning.

In the city of Sloviansk, named as a likely next target of

Russia's offensive, rescuers said they pulled a 40-year-old man from the rubble of a building destroyed by shelling on Saturday morning. Kyrylenko had said multiple people were under the debris.

Russian missiles killed two people and wounded three others on Saturday morning in the southern city of Kryvyi Rih, according to regional authorities.

"They deliberately targeted residential areas," Valentyn Reznichenko, the governor of the eastern Dnipropetrovsk region, asserted on Telegram.

Kryvyi Rih's mayor, Oleksandr Vilkul, asserted in a Facebook post that cluster munitions had been used, and he urged residents not to approach unfamiliar objects in the streets.

In northeast Ukraine, a Russian rocket strike on Ukraine's second-largest city, Kharkiv, injured seven people on Saturday morning, and three of them were hospi-

talised, including a child, the regional governor, Oleh Syniehubov, wrote on Telegram.

The city has been targeted throughout the war, including several times in the past week.

As survivor Valentina Mirgorodskaya dabbled at a cut on her cheek, first responders warily inspected a downtown residential building shattered in Saturday's strike.

"I don't know," Mirgorodskaya said. "I just don't know."

Mykolayiv Mayor Oleksandr Senkevych reported in a Telegram post that six Russian missiles were fired at his city in southern Ukraine, near the Black Sea, but caused no casualties.

Russian defence officials claimed on Saturday that their forces destroyed a hangar housing US howitzers in Ukraine, near the Donetsk province town of Chasiv Yar. There was no immediate response from Ukraine.

## For EU, Johnson exit won't change much; damage already done

AP ■ BRUSSELS

From his days stoking anti-European Union sentiment with exaggerated newspaper stories, to his populist campaign leading Britain out of the bloc and reneging on the post-Brexit trade deal he signed, outgoing UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson has been the bane of Brussels for all so many years.

Such was his impact on breaking the bonds between Britain and the EU that after Johnson was forced to announce Thursday that he would step down, the news brought little public jubilation in EU circles. Instead, there was just the numb acceptance of the inevitable and resignation that things will never be the same.

"I will not miss him," French finance minister Bruno Le Maire said, highlighting an open disdain unseen since the Europeans welcomed the US election loss of Donald Trump in 2020.

And while trans-Atlantic relations picked up quickly since the arrival of President Joe Biden, don't expect anything similar with a new British leader, politicians and experts said.

"Even with a new prime minister, I believe there will likely be few changes in the British government's position" on the main Brexit issues causing current divisions, said David McAllister, the leading EU legislator dealing with the United Kingdom.

Guy Verhofstadt, who was the top EU parliamentarian during the whole Brexit divorce proceedings, said Johnson's impact was such there is little to no chance another Conservative prime minister could steer a fundamentally different course.

"No one is under any illusion that Johnson's departure from Downing Street solves any of the underlying problems in the UK-EU relationship," Verhofstadt wrote in an opin-

ion piece for The Guardian. "The damage done by the outgoing prime minister, through the project that he instrumentalised to achieve power, lives on."

The United Kingdom was always a halfhearted EU member since joining the bloc in 1973. When Johnson joined the Brussels press corps some three decades ago, he often enthralled his home readership with stories that had two fundamental elements: they put the EU in the darkest of lights, and they had little connection to reality.

As a Conservative politician, he threw his weight in the 2016 referendum on the UK's EU membership behind arguments to leave the bloc. Johnson used his breezy manner and jokey style to sell the benefits of withdrawing from the EU, sometimes disregarding the facts. He was key to the Brexit campaign's victory in the cliff-edge 2016 Brexit referendum vote.

# How crowded GOP field could help Trump in 2024 campaign

AP ■ NEW YORK

As Donald Trump considers another White House run, polls show he's the most popular figure in the Republican Party. But it wasn't always that way.

Competing at one point against a dozen rivals for the presidential nomination in 2016, Trump won only about one-third of the vote in key early states. He even lost in Iowa, which kicks off the nomination process.

But he prevailed because those in the party who opposed his brand of divisive politics were never able to coalesce around a single rival.

That same dynamic could repeat itself as Trump mulls a new bid for the presidency as soon as this summer.

With a growing list of candidates gearing up to run, even a Trump diminished by two impeachments and mounting legal vulnerabilities could hold a commanding position in a fractured, multi-candidate primary.

I fear it could end up the same way as 2016, which basically was everyone thought everyone else should get out," said Republican strategist Mike DuHaime, who advised former



New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie's campaign that year.

"I think every major candidate realized that he or she would have a better shot against Trump one-on-one. But of course each person thought he or she should be the one to get that shot and nobody got out of the way. ... And then it was too late."

The anxiety is mounting as a growing list of potential rivals take increasingly brazen steps, delivering high-profile speeches, running ads, courting donors and making repeat visits to early voting states.

That group now includes upward of a dozen could-be-candidates, including Trump's former vice president, Mike Pence; his former secretary of state, Mike Pompeo; and Sens. Ted Cruz of Texas, Tom Cotton of Arkansas, Rick Scott of Florida and Tim Scott of South Carolina. All could run on the

former president's policies.

In the anti-Trump lane, politicians such as Rep. Liz Cheney of Wyoming and Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan are raising their profiles.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis is increasingly seen as Trump's heir apparent, even by Trump's most loyal supporters, and viewed by Trump allies as his most formidable potential challenger.

Former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley and others have said they will not challenge Trump if he does go forward. But others, including Christie, seem to be gunning for the fight, even if they seem to be long shots.

"I'm definitely giving it serious thought. I'm not gonna make any decision probably until the end of the year," Christie said in a recent interview. He has urged the party to move on from Trump and his ongoing obsession with the 2020 election.

"For me, it's about the party needing to go in a new direction from a personality perspective, and to continue to have someone who can bring strong leadership, tough leadership, that the country needs, but doesn't have all of the other drama that goes along

with it," he said.

"I'm hearing the same things from donors that I'm hearing from voters - that they're very concerned that we can't put ourselves in a position to have 2024 be about anything but the good of the country,"

Pompeo, who has had a busy travel schedule and plans to return to Iowa this summer, said in a recent interview that he has been spending time reading and listening to President Ronald Reagan's speeches as he prepares for a possible run.

"We're getting ready to stay in the fight," he said last month as he courted evangelical Christians at a gathering in Nashville, Tennessee.

He said he and his wife would sit down after the November elections and "think our way through it, pray our way through it, and decide where's best to serve. It could be presenting ourselves for elected office again. We may choose a different path. But we're not gonna walk away from these things that I've been working on for 30 years now. They matter too much."

Pompeo sketched out a possible approach in much the same mold as Trump.

AP ■ WASHINGTON

President Joe Biden on Friday condemned the "extreme" Supreme Court majority that ended a constitutional right to abortion and delivered an impassioned plea for Americans upset by the decision to "vote, vote, vote" in November. Under mounting pressure from fellow Democrats to be more forceful in response to the ruling, he signed an executive order to try to protect access to the procedure.

The actions Biden outlined are intended to head off some potential penalties that women seeking abortion may face after the ruling, but his order cannot restore access to abortion in the more than a dozen states where strict limits or total bans have gone into effect.

About a dozen more states are set to impose additional restrictions. Biden acknowledged the limitations facing his office, saying it would require an act of Congress to restore nationwide access to the way it was before the June 24 decision.

"The fastest way to restore Roe is to pass a national law," Biden said. "The challenge is go



out and vote. For God's sake there is an election in November!"

Biden's action formalized instructions to the Departments of Justice and Health and Human Services to push back on efforts to limit the ability of women to access federally approved abortion medication or to travel across state lines to access clinical abortion services. He was joined by Vice President Kamala Harris, HHS secretary Xavier Becerra and Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco in the Roosevelt Room as he signed the order.

His executive order also directs agencies to work to educate medical providers and insurers about how and when they are required to share privileged patient information with authorities - an effort to protect women who seek or obtain abortion services. He is also asking the Federal Trade

Commission to take steps to protect the privacy of those seeking information about reproductive care online and establish a task force to coordinate federal efforts to safeguard access to abortion. Biden is also directing his staff to line up volunteer lawyers to provide women and providers with pro bono legal assistance to help them navigate new state restrictions.

The order comes as Biden has faced criticism from some in his own party for not acting with more urgency to protect women's access to abortion. The court's decision in the case known as Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization overturned the landmark 1973 Roe v. Wade ruling. Since the decision, Biden has stressed that his ability to protect abortion rights by executive action is limited without congressional action, and stressed that Democrats do not have the votes in the current Congress to do so.

"We need two additional pro-choice senators and a pro-choice house to codify Roe," he said. "Your vote can make that a reality." Biden for the first time last week announced his support for changing Senate

rules to allow a measure to restore nationwide access to abortion to pass by simple majority, rather than the usual 60-vote threshold required to end a filibuster.

However, at least two Democratic lawmakers have made clear they won't support changing Senate rules. He predicted that women would turn out in "record numbers" in frustration over the court's decision, and said he expected "millions and millions of men will be taking up the fight beside them."

On Friday, he repeated his sharp criticism of the Supreme Court's reasoning in striking down what had been a half-century constitutional right to abortion. "Let's be clear about something from the very start, this was not a decision driven by the Constitution," Biden said. He accused the court's majority of "playing fast and loose with the facts."

He spoke emotionally of a 10-year-old Ohio girl reported to have been forced to travel out of state to terminate a pregnancy after being raped, noting that some states have instituted abortion bans that don't have exceptions for cases of rape or incest.



# States to get incentives for successful auction, identification of mineral blocks

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

State Governments will be incentivised for successful auction and identification of minerals blocks during the National Conclave on Mines and Minerals to be held in the national Capital next week, an official statement said on Saturday.

The day-long conclave on July 12 will be inaugurated by Coal and Mines Minister Pralhad Joshi.

"As part of the afternoon session, the award function includes presenting new mine blocks to state governments and the Ministry of Coal and providing incentive to state governments for successful auction and identification of blocks," the

mines ministry statement said.

CEOs of various mining companies will be brainstorming on important issues pertaining to the country's mining sector during the round table discussions.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah will be the chief guest of the conclave.

Some of the highlights of the conclave are conferring of Rashtriya Khanij Vikas Puraskar to the best performing states in the field of mining, launch of three modules of Mining Tenement System (MTS), awards for 5-Star rated mines for 2020-21 and National Geo Science Awards-2019.

Technical session by National



Mineral Exploration Trust (NMET) and session on automation in mining will be held as part of the inaugural session of the conclave.

The mines ministry introduced the concept of the national mining conclave in 2016 with an aim to provide a platform for interaction among different stakeholders like the central government officers who are policy makers, state government officers, the real executives in the auction regime, industry and the industry associations.

# Adani confirms entry into telecom spectrum race

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



Billionaire Gautam Adani's group on Saturday confirmed its entry into the race to acquire telecom spectrum, which it said will be used to create a private network to support its businesses from airports to power as well as data centres.

"As India prepares to roll out the next generation of 5G services through this auction, we are one of the many applications participating in the open bidding process," the group said in a statement.

PTI on Friday reported Adani group making a surprise entry which will pitch it directly against Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Jio and telecom czar Sunil Bharti Mittal's Airtel.

"We are participating in the 5G spectrum auction to provide private network solutions along with enhanced cyber security in the airport, ports and logistics, power generation, transmission, distribution, and various manufacturing operations," the statement said.

Adani Group plans to use the airwaves for its data centre as well as the super app it is building to support businesses from electricity distribution to airports, gas retailing to ports.

"As we build our own digital platform encompassing super apps, edge data centres, and industry command and control centres, we will need ultra high quality data streaming capabilities through a high frequency and low latency 5G network across all our businesses," it

said. Applications for participating in the July 26 auction of airwaves, including those capable of providing fifth-generation or 5G telecom services such as ultra-high-speed internet connectivity, closed on Friday with at least four applications.

Jio, Airtel and Vodafone Idea -- the three private players in the telecom sector -- applied.

The fourth applicant is Adani Group, which had recently obtained National Long Distance (NLD) and International Long Distance (ILD) licences.

"If we are awarded 5G spectrum in the open bidding, it will also align with our recent announcement of significantly increasing the Adani Foundation's investments in education, healthcare and skill development in rural areas, each of which stands to benefit from 5G technology," Adani group said. "All of this is aligned with our nation building philosophy and supporting Atmanirbhar Bharat."

# EV sector witnessing significant employment growth, says report

PTI ■ CHENNAI



A significant employment growth and an average growth in employee numbers was witnessing a 108 per cent increase in the last two years in the electric vehicle space, a study by CIEL Human Resources services said on Saturday. Engineering department has dominated the EV sector, followed by operation and sales, quality assurance, business development, information technology, human resources and marketing among others.

The survey 'Latest Employment Trends in EV sector 2022' was conducted among 15,200 employees over 52 companies by city-based CIEL HR services Ltd.

Bengaluru topped the list accounting for

# 'Inflation may ease gradually in second half of fiscal'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Exuding confidence that the price situation will gradually improve in the second half of the current fiscal, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das on Saturday said the central bank would continue to take monetary measures to anchor inflation with a view to achieving strong and sustainable growth.

Inflation is a measure of the trust and confidence that the public reposes in the economic institutions of the country, Das said while speaking at the inaugural Kautilya Economic Conclave.

"Overall, at this point of

time, with the supply outlook appearing favourable and several high frequency indicators pointing to resilience of the recovery in the first quarter (April-June) of 2022-23, our current assessment is that inflation may ease gradually in the second half of 2022-23, precluding the chances of a hard landing in India," he said.

Noting that price stability is key to maintaining macroeconomic and financial stability, he said the central bank will undertake measures for preserving and fostering macroeconomic stability.

"While factors beyond our control may affect inflation in

the short run, its trajectory over the medium-term is determined by monetary policy. Therefore, monetary policy must take timely actions to anchor inflation and inflation expectations so as to place the economy on a strong and sustainable growth pedestal.

"We will continue to calibrate our policies with the overarching goal of preserving and fostering macroeconomic stability," he said. Das noted that the MPC in its April and June meetings revised the projection of inflation for 2022-23 in two stages to 6.7 per cent, taking stock of the evolving developments.

# Nepal starts exporting cement to India for the first time

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

For the first time, Nepal has started exporting cement to India, with the initial consignment of 3,000 bags entering the neighbouring country through a check post bordering Uttar Pradesh.

The Palpa Cement Industries in Nawalparasi district on Friday dispatched the first consignment of cement to India for the first time in history through the Sunauli border.

The industrialists in Nepal are excited about exporting cement to India after the government provided an eight per cent subsidy for cement export in the budget.

The Nawalparasi plant has a capacity of producing 1,800 metric tonnes of clinker and 3,000 metric tonnes of cement every day, according to Jeevan Niraula, public relations manager of Palpa Industries.

Palpa, which produces Tansen brand cement under the banner of Palpa Cement

Industries Limited, began exporting cement to India after completing all the government procedures, including quality standards check.

The latest development has paved the way for five other cement industries operating across Nepal to export their products to India.

According to Nepal Cement Producers' Association, the Himalayan nation has the potential of exporting cement worth NRs.150 billion.

# Govt launches Jute Mark logo to promote Indian golden fibre

PTI ■ KOCHI

The government on Saturday introduced certification of authenticity for jute products with the unveiling of "Jute Mark India" logo by the Union Textile Secretary U P Singh. It is an initiative to promote and protect Indian jute products, Singh said.

"The Jute Mark India (JMI) scheme will provide the collective identity and assurance on origin and quality for traditional jute and jute products. The JMI would therefore be a hallmark of powerful creative

work that defines the jute product with quality, distinguishes it from competition and connects it with customers," a National Jute Board statement said. The certification is expected to boost domestic market and exports of jute products from India.

Each Jute Mark label will contain a unique QR code and by scanning it, customers can learn about the producer. National Jute Board is the nodal agency of the Union textiles ministry, responsible for the promotion of jute and jute products in India and abroad.

# 85 complaints received after new guidelines on service charge: CCPA

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

As many as 85 complaints have been registered on the National Consumer Helpline (NCH) after new guidelines were issued on July 4 barring hotels and restaurants from levying service charge by default, the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) said on Saturday and directed all district collectors to take strict action against the violators.

The top five cities in terms of service charge complaints

registered between July 5-8 are — New Delhi, Bengaluru, Mumbai, Pune and Ghaziabad.

Consumer protection regulator CCPA has written to chief secretaries and district collectors of states and union territories to ensure wide publicity of the new guidelines and take appropriate action against violators for protection of consumer interest, it added.

On July 4, the CCPA came out with the new guidelines barring hotels and restaurants from levying service charge automatically or by default in food

bills. It also clearly stated what steps consumers can take in case of violation of the guidelines. "From July 5 to July 8, 2022 i.e. After the guidelines were issued by CCPA, 85 complaints have been registered on NCH," the CCPA said in a statement.

About 18 complaints were received in New Delhi, 15 in Bengaluru, 11 in Mumbai, 4 in Pune and 3 complaints in Ghaziabad. The major grievances include hotels/restaurants making service charge compulsory, embarrassing consumers in case they resisted.

REVISED FORM G (SECOND) INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST	
(Under Regulation 36A (1) of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy (Insolvency Resolution Process for Corporate Persons) Regulations, 2016)	
RELEVANT PARTICULARS	
1 Name of the Corporate Debtor	Stellar Investments Limited
2 Date of Incorporation of corporate debtor	12.08.1980
3 Authority under which corporate debtor is incorporated / registered	ROC-Delhi
4 Corporate identity number / limited liability identification number of corporate debtor	U67120DL1980PLC010758
5 Address of the registered office and principal office (if any) of corporate debtor	16/121-122, Jain Bhawan Faiz Road, WEA Karol Bagh, New Delhi - 110005
6 Insolvency commencement date of the corporate debtor	24.02.2022
7 Date of invitation of expression of interest	11.07.2022
8 Eligibility for resolution applicants under section 25(2)(h) of the Code is available at:	Eligibility Norms: a) Minimum Net worth of INR 10,00,000 (Ten Lakh) as per the latest Audited Financial Statements for the FY 2020-21 or thereafter; b) In case of Assets Reconstruction Company, Minimum Assets under Management of INR 100,00,00,000/- (Rupees One Hundred Crore Only) as per the latest Audited Financial Statements for the FY 2020-21 or thereafter; c) If any company's including holding company, subsidiary company or group company is having their amount as NPA in less than 12 months, the said company including holding company, subsidiary company or group company will be ineligible to submit the Resolution plan. d) There is no default on the part of the Company in filing the latest Audited Financial statements and /or the income tax return and /or GST Returns (if applicable) for the FY 2020-21 or thereafter Further detail can be sought by emailing: nazim@minkassociates.com; ciro.stellarinvestments@gmail.com
9 Norms of ineligibility applicable under section 29A are available at:	http://ibbi.gov.in/webfront/legal/framework.php (Official website of IBBI-Legal framework-Updated Code) Also details can be sought by Emailing - nazim@minkassociates.com; ciro.stellarinvestments@gmail.com
10 Last date for receipt of expression of interest	26.07.2022
11 Date of issue of provisional list of prospective resolution applicants	05.08.2022
12 Last date for submission of objections to provisional list	10.08.2022
13 Date of issue of final list of prospective resolution applicants	20.08.2022
14 Date of issue of information memorandum, evaluation matrix and request for resolution plans to prospective resolution applicants	10.08.2022
15 Manner of obtaining request for resolution plan, evaluation matrix, information memorandum and further information	Details can be obtained by e-mailing at nazim@minkassociates.com; ciro.stellarinvestments@gmail.com
16 Last date for submission of resolution plans	09.09.2022
17 Manner of submitting resolution plans to resolution professional	By electronic mode through email nazim@minkassociates.com; ciro.stellarinvestments@gmail.com
18 Estimated date for submission of resolution plan to the Adjudicating Authority for approval	09.10.2022
19 Name and registration number of the resolution professional	Name: Mohd Nazim Khan Reg No: IBBI/PA-002/IP-N00076/2017-18/10207
20 Name, Address and e-mail of the resolution professional, as registered with the Board	Name: Mohd Nazim Khan Address: G-41, Ground Floor, West Patel Nagar, New Delhi-110008. Email nazim@minkassociates.com; ciro.stellarinvestments@gmail.com
21 Address and email to be used for correspondence with the Resolution Professional	Address: G-41, Ground Floor, West Patel Nagar, New Delhi-110008 Email nazim@minkassociates.com
22 Further Details are available at or with	Detail can be obtained by emailing at nazim@minkassociates.com
23 Date of publication of Form G	11.07.2022
Sd/- Resolution Professional Stellar Investments Limited IBBI Reg No. IBBI/PA-002/IP-N00076/2017-18/10207	
Date: 10.07.2022 Place: Delhi	

# Tata Motors increases passenger vehicle prices

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Tata Motors on Saturday said it has increased prices of its passenger vehicle range with immediate effect to partially offset the impact of rising input costs.

A weighted average increase in price of 0.55 per cent will come into effect starting Saturday across the range, depending upon the variant and model, the homegrown auto major said in a statement.

The company has taken extensive measures to absorb a significant portion of the increased input costs, it said.

"However, to offset the



residual impact of the accumulated increase in input costs, it is passing on a minimised price hike," it added.

The company sells a range of models including Punch, Nexon, Harrier and Safari in the domestic market.

Tata Motors has already hiked prices of its commercial vehicles range by 1.5 - 2.5 per cent from this month.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

It is to notify that I MD.NADIM ALAM S/o of MD. SAMI ALAM Address-Ismlpur, Simdega, Jharkhand-835223, All my Original Certificates of 10th Class (BSEB-PATNA, Roll Code-05206, Roll No.-1178), 12th Class (BSEB, Roll Code-3312, Roll No.-10187), Diploma and Degree of B.Tech.-EEE (BPUT-ROURKELA, ODISHA, Regn. No.-1101218035) along with Grade/Marks Sheet, Registration card, Admit card and all identity proofs have been lost/stolen. For which FIR number-0224/2022 on 20.06.2022 has also been lodged at Shaheen Bagh Police Station at New Delhi. Whoever gets these documents, please contact on this Mobile Number: 8750012196/824990658.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for notice of the general public that a political party is proposed to be registered by the name of "Vision India Party". The office of the party is located at Sivagiri Colony, Mulapet, Nellore, AP-524003. This Party has submitted application to the Election Commission of India, New Delhi for its registration as Political Party under Section 29A of the Representation of People Act, 1951. Name/address of the office bearers of the Party are as follows:  
**President** - Kirankondeti, S/o K. Suryanarayana, Mulapet, Nellore, AP-524003.  
**General Secretary** - Satish Raja Molli, S/o M. Panduranga Vital, Kakina, AP-533003.  
**Treasurer** - Dinesh Kumar Tatapu, S/o T. Gurumurthy (late), Rajam, Vizianagaram, AP-532127.  
If any one has any objection to the registration of "Vision India Party", they may send their Objection with reasons thereof, to the Secretary (Political Party) Election Commission of India, Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001 within 30 days of the publication of this notice.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the General public that by Mrs Kamia Rawat V/o Mr Triok Singh Rawat, was interest holder through General Power Attorney dated 09.01.2009 of A Residential Built-up Second Floor FRONT SIDE, having Super Covered Area measuring 40 Sq.Yards, Built on Plot No C-23, Out of Khosra No 18, Situated in Shaheen Garden, Acharya Niketan, Delhi. All persons are hereby informed that MR. NATRANJAN SURESH is purchasing the above-mentioned property from Mrs Kamia Rawat V/o Mr. Triok Singh Rawat by way of Registered General Power Attorney dated 09.01.2009 the said above mentioned property with Fullerton India Home Finance Company Limited. General public hereby informed that if anybody has any charge/interest/title in the said property or any kind of dispute kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.  
**Mrs. Prasoon Lata, Advocate, SG Associates (Law Firm) Unit No 7, Basement, Plot No C-78, Sector 2, Noida, UP 201301, E-MAIL: sgassociatespl@gmail.com, Ph: 701172764, 8130200837**

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Hereby my client Mr. Kuldeep Singh S/o Hardit Singh R/o House No.43, Ground Floor, North Avenue Road, West Punjabi Bagh, New Delhi-110026  
In the agreement with (1) **Smt. Vandana Chopra** W/o Sh. Deepak Chopra R/o A-101, Sanker Garden, Vikas Puri, New Delhi-110018. (2) **Smt. Varsha Sethi** W/o Sh. Lokesh Sethi R/o L-1/5, South Extn. Part-II, New Delhi-110049.  
Who are the complete Owner and absolute possession of Flat 101, Area Measuring Approx 1300 Sq.Ft. Situated at First Floor, 43, North Avenue Road, Punjabi Bagh, New Delhi-110026.  
If anybody have Claim/Right on this property kindly contact within span of 25 days on given below details:  
**SUDESH KUMAR (Advocate) En. No.02/298/2009 Ch. No. X-46, Civil Wing, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi-110054, Mb. 9313195031 Em: sudeshkradvocate@gmail.com**

# D-Mart Q1 profit jumps multifold to ₹642.89 cr, sales almost double

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



Avenue Supermarts Ltd, which owns and operates retail chain D-Mart, on Saturday reported over six-fold jump in its consolidated net profit to ₹642.89 crore for the quarter ended on June 30, 2022, helped by a "very good recovery" in overall sales and a comparative low YoY base.

The company had posted a net profit of ₹95.36 crore in the April-June quarter a year ago, said Avenue Supermarts in a BSE filing.

Its revenue from operations was up 93.66 per cent to ₹10,038.07 crore during the

quarter under review against ₹5,183.12 crore in the corresponding quarter last fiscal.

According to the Damani family-promoted supermarket chain, its Q1FY23 results are not comparable with the

corresponding quarter of the last fiscal, which was impacted by the second wave of Covid-19.

Commenting on the results, Avenue Supermarts CEO & Managing Director Neville Noronha said, "There has been a very good recovery of overall sales. However, this quarter's performance is not comparable to the same period last year due to the second wave of Covid-19 during that time."

Avenue Supermarts' total expenses were at ₹9,191.79 crore, up 81.03 per cent in Q1/FY 2022-23, as against ₹5,077.22 crore of the corre-

sponding quarter.

While talking about the growth of D-Mart in the brick and mortar segment in April-June, Noronha said: "We cumulatively opened 110 stores over the last three financial years which never got an opportunity to operate in normal circumstances over the last two years.

These are stores that are larger, better designed and have the capacity to handle a larger scale of revenue. These stores have done extremely well in this quarter."

D-Mart added 10 stores in the April-June quarter of 2022-23.

# 'Smokeless' LPG bringing tears to eyes as prices rise 30% in one year

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



Already battered by rising prices of essentials ranging from fruits and vegetables to edible oil and electricity, record high rates of cooking gas LPG have added to the woes of the common man, especially the lower strata.

LPG rates this week were hiked by ₹50 per 14.2-kg cylinder, taking the total increase in last one year to ₹244 or 30 per cent.

Non-subsidised LPG — the price that all households except the poor women beneficiaries of the Ujjwala scheme pay, is now at ₹1,053 per 14.2 kg cylinder. Ujjwala beneficiaries have to pay ₹853.

"LPG is smokeless but still it is bringing us tears," rued M Mallika, a 38-year-old homemaker in Tenali town of Andhra Pradesh.

"In three months, the price has increased by ₹150 per cylinder without taxes and overall it is about ₹160. A cylinder is now ₹1,075 (in Andhra Pradesh). It is certainly a heavy burden," she said.

Fuel rates vary from state to state depending on the incidence of local taxes such as VAT.

The increase in prices has particularly affected the lower income group such as housemaids, drivers, security guards, daily wagers, salesmen and waiters who earn between ₹10,000 to 15,000 per month. The cooking fuel bill alone is

around 10 per cent of their earnings.

"It's quite difficult for us to afford cooking gas cylinders these days. Every month the price of domestic gas cylinders is hiked, making our home budget bill even more difficult to balance... We are looking at alternate ways of cooking... Maybe solar, maybe something else," said Nupur Dasgupta, an SBI employee and resident of Kolkata's Golpark area.

Swapna Mukherjee, a homemaker in Dumdum in Kolkata, said she was thinking of using a kerosene stove alongside cooking gas stoves to keep a check on her monthly expenses.

"Our monthly expenses have gone up drastically and it is becoming tough. We require two gas cylinders in one month, but I think we will surrender one connection and start using kerosene again,"

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# INDIA BEAT ENGLAND, WIN T20I SERIES

## Win match by 49 runs to take 2-0 lead



PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM

Rohit Sharma's inspirational leadership and an aggressive brand new approach saw India completely outclass England by 49 runs in the second T20 International to seal the three-match series with an unassailable 2-0 lead here on Saturday.

Batting first, India once again showed a start-to-finish aggressive intent while reaching 170 for eight riding on new 'batting all-rounder' Ravindra Jadeja (46 not out off 29 balls) after a sudden collapse during the middle-phase on a track full of pace and bounce.

With the ball, Bhuvneshwar Kumar's (3/15) new found rhythm in the powerplay overs was superbly complemented by the skilful duo of Jasprit Bumrah (2/10) and Yuzvendra Chahal (2/10) as England innings imploded for a meagre 121 in 17 overs. If India's batting has been very good in both the games, the bowling has simply been outstanding with complete domination in the powerplays.

Since he got full-time captaincy, the Indian team is yet to lose a match under him. There has been three clean sweeps -- New Zealand (3-0), West Indies (3-0), Sri Lanka (3-0) and a fourth against England in the current one looks imminent.

With three months left for the World T20, the playing XI on

Saturday gave a glimpse of what could be the batting order and its philosophy going forward.

Rishabh Pant's (26 off 15 balls) elevation as an opener alongside skipper Rohit (31 off 20 balls) is a welcome move where the team at least wouldn't be erring in the side of caution in the powerplay overs.

In between the duo, they hit seven fours and three sixes in the first six overs, an approach that was missing during last T20 World Cup.

The strategy is to not stop playing the shots even if wickets fall at one end and Virat Kohli (1 off 3 balls) did feel the peer pressure and the mistimed skier showed his desperation. But the most impressive aspect came to fore from 89 for five, as India still managed to reach 170, courtesy Jadeja, who didn't have a great time in T20 cricket having had a torrid time in CSK during IPL, where he lost form and fractured relationships.

With strong indications that he will leave CSK next year, Jadeja seemed to be playing with a free mind and it was evident that even as wickets fell at the other end, there was no letting up in his strokeplay as the scoreboard had a competitive feel to it. A good Indian white ball team has always had Bhuvneshwar as an important component in the set-up.

In the first game, it was a banana inswinger that castled rival captain Jos Buttler and on Saturday, a classical outswinger first up saw Jason Roy edging it to the slip cordon.

## Elena Rybakina wins Wimbledon women's singles

### Beats Ons Jabeur to become first tennis player from Kazakhstan to win a Grand Slam singles



AP ■ WIMBLEDON

Elena Rybakina beat Ons Jabeur 3-6, 6-2, 6-2 in the Wimbledon final on Saturday to become the first tennis player from Kazakhstan to win a Grand Slam singles championship.

Rybakina is a 23-year-old who was born in Moscow and has represented Kazakhstan since 2018, when that country offered her funding to support her tennis career. The switch has been a topic of conversation during Wimbledon, because The All England Club barred all players who represent Russia or Belarus from entering the tournament because of the war in Ukraine.

This was the first women's title match since 1962 at the All England Club between two players who were making their debuts in a major final.

Rybakina is ranked No. 23. Since the WTA computer rankings began in 1975, just one woman ranked lower than Rybakina won Wimbledon - Venus Williams in 2007 at No. 31, although she previously had been No. 1 and already won three of her five career trophies at the All England Club.

Rybakina used her big serve and powerful forehand to overcome Jabeur's mix of spins and slices at Centre Court on Saturday. Rybakina ended Jabeur's 12-match winning streak, which came entirely on grass courts.



## Verma stuns world no 1 Schloesser, makes last four in World Games

PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM (USA)

Star Indian compound archer SAbhishek Verma shocked world champion Mike Schloesser to storm into the semi-final of the World Games here.

The two were locked 149-149 after a five-setter duel and the tie-breaker also was a stalemate with both shooting perfect 10s, but the Indian edged out the world number one shooting closer to centre to make the last-four on Friday.

India also remained in the fray in the mixed compound section where Verma and Jyothi Surekha Vennam will play for bronze medal against Mexico later on Saturday.

The World Games is a multi-sport event with only compound section in archery.

## Prannoy loses in Malaysia Masters semis, India's campaign over

PTI ■ KUALA LUMPUR

Star Indian shuttler HS Prannoy's rampaging run at the Malaysia Masters Super 500 tournament hit a roadblock as he slipped to a narrow three-game loss against Hong Kong's NG Ka Long Angus in a mistake-filled men's singles semi-final here on Saturday.

It was heartbreak once again in the semifinals for the Indian as he squandered a one-game advantage to go down 21-17 9-21 17-21 against NG Ka Long

after battling for an hour and four minutes at the Axiata Arena here.

Heading into the match with a 4-4 career record, Prannoy, who had defeated Ng Ka Long in the last three meetings, picked the good side after winning the toss.

It seemed to come back to haunt him as he looked in firm control in the first game but struggled with his length and drowned in a pool of unforced errors after changing ends.

After a nervy start in the



opening game, Prannoy marched ahead to a 5-3 lead with two exquisite cross court jump smashes.

The Indian didn't try to play at a breathtaking pace but rather

focussed on constructing the rallies and punishing the weak returns with a pitch-perfect placement. He had a four-point cushion at the break.

Ng Ka Long tried to use his smashes to gather points but he was guilty of missing some easy chances as Prannoy maintained his four-point lead till 17-13.

Prannoy then gave two points away with a couple of miscued shots before prevailing in a parallel exchange and soon grabbed four game point opportunities. He missed the first one

before closing out the opening game with another perfect placement at the baseline.

However, after the change of sides, Prannoy struggled to control the shuttle in drift conditions while Ng Ka Long showed better execution to keep a firm grip on the rallies. The result was a six-point advantage at the mid-game interval.

With errors piling up, Prannoy soon fell far behind and the Indian decided to let go of the second game to save his energy for the decider.

## 200m runner Dhanalakshmi yet to complete US visa formalities for July 15-24 World C'ships

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Ace Indian 200m runner Dhanalakshmi Sekar is yet to complete her US visa formalities, which was the reason why her name was not there in the list of Indian participants released by the international track and field governing body for the upcoming World Athletics Championships in Eugene,



USA. Dhanalakshmi was on

June 30 named in the 22-member Indian team for the July 15-24 World Championships in Eugene, USA. Bur now, it could be difficult for her to take part in the showpiece as she is even yet to complete visa formalities. "My visa is yet to be done. My first visa appointment got cancelled, so trying to get it done," she told PTI from Thiruvananthapuram

where she is currently training.

The Tamil Nadu athlete could not breach the automatic qualification standard of 22.80s but made the cut for the World Championships through world rankings.

On June 26, she had run her personal best time of 22.89s to win 200m gold at the Qosanov Memorial Athletics Meet in Almaty.

## India has great chance to claim medal at CWG: Mithali

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Former captain Mithali Raj feels the Indian women's cricket team has a great chance to finish on the podium in the upcoming Commonwealth Games, provided it has its tactics and strategies in place.

Women's cricket will make its debut in the Birmingham CWG after a men's tournament was held at the 1998 edition in Kuala Lumpur.

India are placed in Group



A and will take on Australia in their first group stage game on

July 29. Pakistan and Barbados are the other two teams in the group.

"I think before any big event, preparation is very important. If you prepare well and because it's a T20 format and Commonwealth Games, if you have your tactics and strategies in place we have a great chance to finish on the podium," Mithali said here.

The iconic former captain announced her retirement last month.

## Sri Lanka fights back in 2nd test against Australia

AP ■ GALLE, SRI LANKA

A record 152-run stand for the second wicket between captain Dimuth Karunaratne and Kusal Mendis helped Sri Lanka fight back in the second test against Australia as the hosts finished day two on 184 for two on Saturday, trailing by 180 runs.

After a batting collapse and 10-wicket loss in the first test, Sri Lanka needed to show resolve on a track notorious for spin domination.

Karunaratne and Mendis laid the foundation for a competitive total after opener Pathum Nissanka (6) departed cheaply having been spectacularly caught by Cameron Green at gully off Mitchell Starc.

The sweep shot had proved to be

Sri Lanka's downfall in the first test and on Saturday sweeps were few as the two batsmen banked on their strengths.

Karunaratne drove the spinners well and was often on the front foot during his knock of 86 that produced 10 boundaries. He reached his 30th test fifty by stepping out to leg-spinner Mitchell Swepson and smashing him for the mid-wicket boundary.

The partnership was broken when the left-hander attempted to play Swepson across and was plumb in front. The 152-run stand is a record for Sri Lanka for the second wicket against Australia improving on the 143-run partnership between Kumar Sangakkara and Marvan Atapattu in 2007 in Hobart.



Mendis was more comfortable against pace pulling and flicking with confidence as he reached his 14th test half-century. He was unbeaten on 84 having faced 152 deliveries and hit nine fours. Angelo Mathews was not out on 6. He had to withdraw from the first test after testing positive for COVID-19. Steve Smith and Marnus Labuschagne had hit hundreds in Australia's first innings to help them to 364 all out. The overnight pair of Smith and Alex Carey added 77 runs for the sixth wicket but there was not much resistance from rest of the batters.

Australia resumed from 298 for five and Sri Lanka's spinners did well to claim the last five wickets for 66 runs as left-arm spinner Prabath

Jayasuriya claimed six for 118. He became the sixth Sri Lankan to take five wickets or more in an innings on debut. Jayasuriya was a late replacement in the Sri Lankan side after it was forced to bring in additions with several players testing positive for COVID-19.

Smith finished unbeaten on 145 having batted for more than six hours in which he faced 272 deliveries and hit 16 fours. He had posted his 28th test hundred on day one and was rarely troubled by the spinners.

Australia has retained the Warner-Murali Trophy following its big win in the first test. If they wrap up the series 2-0, the Australians will further consolidate their position as the world's No. 1 team.



## Bajrang Punia obtains UK visa, will travel to US for training ahead of CWG

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Star Indian wrestler Bajrang Punia has received his UK visa for the upcoming Commonwealth Games, which will allow him leave for the United States for a training stint there ahead of the Birmingham CWG, the Sports Authority of India (SAI) said on Saturday.

Since, he will go for the CWG directly from his training base in the United States, it would have been difficult for Bajrang to complete the UK visa formalities later. Now that he has got his UK visa, Bajrang can train in the US without any anxiety.

The 28-year-old Tokyo Olympics bronze medalist was supposed to travel to the Michigan University in the US last month for training ahead of the Birmingham CWG but was forced to stay back in India due to a delay in getting his UK visa.

"The Sports Ministry, through the Ministry of External Affairs, got in touch with the British High Commission to seek the UK Visa for Bajrang, which has now been obtained,"

a SAI media release said.

The CWG will be held in Birmingham from July 28 to August 8.

On several occasions, the MEA has helped the Sports Ministry in obtaining visa of athletes travelling abroad for competition and training ahead of the CWG.

Bajrang, who won gold in the 2018 Commonwealth Games, and fellow wrestler Deepak Punia will now leave for US this weekend from India. They will train at the Michigan University until July 30, following which both will leave for Birmingham.

The Sports Ministry's Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) has facilitated the exposure trip. The training stint in the USA will be helpful for the preparation of the CWG and other upcoming major competitions like the Wrestling World Championship, scheduled in September in Belgrade.

A total of 111 foreign exposures in various sports have been funded by the Sports Ministry after Tokyo Olympics in the lead up to CWG.

## Suchitra Ramesh finishes 35th at Trust Golf Links on LET Access Tour



PTI ■ DURHAM

Suchitra Ramesh, one of the regulars on the Hero Women's Pro Golf Tour in India, rounded off the week with a tied 35th place finish at the Trust Golf Links Series here.

She shot six-over 79 in a round that saw her hit a tough patch with a double and four more bogeys on the back nine at the Par-73 Ramside Hall Golf Club.

Suchitra, who is trying to play her way into the Ladies European Tour

through the LET Access Series shot rounds of 76-77-79.

Thailand's Chanettee Wannasena carded a final round of level-par 73 to win the title by three shots.

The 18-year-old started her round with a birdie on the first hole after which she added two more and dropped three strokes on the front nine to make the turn in 37 shots.

The Thai talent had one more bogey on the 11th hole and swiftly erased that with a birdie on the 12th to finish the round at even-par and secure her maiden win in Europe. Germany's Chiara Noja claimed the solo third place shooting a final round of two-over 75 and regaining the top spot on the LETAS Order of Merit.

The low amateur of the tournament was England's Jessica Hall who finished at a total of two-under, sharing fourth place with Wales' Jordan Ryan. Australia's Stefanie Hall, Sweden's Sara Kjellker, and Scotland's Tara Mactaggart all ended up a further shot back to tie the sixth spot.

## Youth National Boxing C'ships: Asian champion Vishwanath, Rohit advance to quarterfinals

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Reigning Asian champion Vishwanath Suresh and Rohit Chamoli extended their impressive run to enter the men's quarterfinals by registering emphatic wins at the Youth National Boxing Championships here.

While Vishwanath, representing Services Sports Control Board (SSCB), thrashed Chandigarh's Sushant Kapoor by 5-0 in the 48kg category, 2021 Asian junior champion Rohit of Chandigarh out-punched Bhupendra Kumar of Uttar Pradesh by similar margin in the 51 kg last-16 contest.

Jadumani Mandengbam (51kg) was the other SSCB boxer to progress into the men's quarterfinals. He beat Manipur's Edipak Laishram Singh by unanimous decision.

For Chandigarh, besides Rohit, Parineeta Sheoran also advanced to the last-8 stage from women's section after securing an easy 5-0 win over



Andhra Pradesh's Vyashnavi Nethala in the 48 kg category.

Meanwhile, six pugilists from Maharashtra, including four women, made their way into the quarterfinals on the third day of the event.

Aarya Bartakke began the day for Maharashtra with a thrilling 3-2 win

against UP's Anamika Yadav in an intensely fought women's 57 kg pre-quarterfinal.

Vaishnavi Waghmare (60kg), Aditi Sharma (66kg) and Sana Gonsalves (70kg), on the other hand, claimed comfortable wins.

Aditi beat Delhi's Khushi Sharma by 5-0 margin while Vaishnavi and Sana notched up wins by Referee Stopping Contest (RSC) verdict against Chhattisgarh's Garima Sharma and Punjab's Darshpreet Kaur respectively.

In the men's section, Umer Shaikh (48kg) and Usman Ansari (51kg) progressed into the quarterfinals from Maharashtra with contrasting wins.

Yamini Kanwar (48kg) and Sunita (52kg) were among the five women pugilists from Rajasthan who made their way into the quarter-finals.

While Yamini got the better of Maharashtra's Janhavi Churi by 3-2 margin, Sunita won by 4-1 against Gujarat's Sanjana Choudhary.



# REMO D'SOUZA

**'ALL DANCE FORMS ARE MY FAVOURITE'**



■ Since your television debut in 2009, how has the dance landscape evolved

A totally different background and then getting into dancing, it was a very tough

Individually, he is the god of dance in India. He got the revolution and inspired so many

of dancing is my favourite. I love Hindi film industry. People say it's Bollywood style. It's not Bollywood style, it's a mix of every dance form in the world and it comes together here. That's the form I like.

## PALETTE | AN ARTIST'S ODYSSEY

# ONE-STOP VEDIC HUB

With an aim to reviving the vedas and restoring the rich traditional roots of our ancient culture via technology, here is an app which promises to keep you connected to vedic worship. It offers spiritual guidance and much more



## A photograph of a modern interior space. On the wall, a large, vibrant abstract painting with warm tones of yellow, orange, and red is displayed. Below the painting, a green armchair is positioned on the left, and a small wooden table with a potted plant sits on the right. A large, multi-colored checkered rug covers the floor. The room is brightly lit, creating a warm and inviting atmosphere.

Arpita Katyal, CEO, Roperro said: "We are excited to launch a thoughtfully crafted brand that provides the perfect blend of affordability and luxury to our customers who will both be local and global. We see a clear gap in the Indian market where fashion lovers do not have access to high quality products that can be used every day."

strength, a coping mechanism, a pillar of hope and faith for people. The spiritual discipline of sadhana builds an unshakeable inner foundation of peace and bliss within its practitioner. It has been hailed a boon by many users who were waiting for spiritual guidance and now have a way to experience it.

It is not just an app, it is a humble offering in the service of Sanatana Dharma and the society. It has been kept not for profit because it is a sacred service and a mission dedicated to reviving the timeless vedas and to preserve a cultural legacy for the future generations of the nation.

**Sacred service**  
It is not just an app, it is a humble offering in the service of Sanatana Dharma and the society. It has been kept not for profit because it is a sacred service and a mission dedicated to reviving the timeless vedas and to preserve a cultural legacy for the future generations of the nation.

“We are building and enabling even more powerful features and

“As people turn to technology to reconnect with religion, our organization is playing an important role in bridging that gap with the app. It empowers people to learn and experience the power of turning inwards and performing vedic ritual worship to their deity with the purest chants

## March towards healthy living



**Dr. Anil Kumar**  
 MBBS, DNB, FRCS, FRCR, FRCR  
 Senior Consultant, Urology  
 Sir G. G. Aggarwal Institute of Postgraduate Medical Education and Research  
 Sector-26, Chandigarh

## The wait is over

Spread across one million sq ft in two phases, the first phase of Reach Airia, approx five lac sq ft is an inimitable mix of shopping, F&B and entertainment outlets. It's a leasehold mall with a great mix of fashion, food, amenities and entertainment. Whereas, Reach Comercia is a modern day infrastructure that calls for mixed use projects where people live, work and indulge in the same area.



## Joy Biswas' startup is here to save you

Reputation Hat seeks to give brands and individuals real control over their digital lives. The company works on a case-by-case basis, assigning each client a personal search agent.



**This book will make you question a lot of things in life**

The book is available on Amazon and at all large bookstores across the country.





Even before you've earned it, treat yourself and your career with the level of respect that you hope to one day deserve  
— Catherine O'Hara



The mega loan fraud by DHFL has underscored the urgency for transparency in loan sanctions and disbursal by both private as well as public sector lenders, writer RAKESH KUMAR SINGH

The ₹34,615 crore DHFL scam, undoubtedly the biggest banking sector bank loot, has flagged a serious need for a rethink on the regulatory mechanism governing banking operations in the country.

In the absence of a full-proof mechanism, the Mumbai-based private lender allegedly cheated a consortium of 17 banks led by the public sector, Union Bank of India.

A time-bound investigation into the mega fraud that resulted in a whopping loss of over ₹34,600 crore to the public exchequer is a sine qua non to instill a sense of trust in the public in general and the market investors in particular.

The mega loan fraud by DHFL has underscores the urgency for transparency in loan sanctions and disbursal by both private as well as public sector lenders.

The DHFL availed ₹42,871.42 crore in 2010, but the fraud could only be detected in 2019. This speaks volume about the absence of a regulatory check and balance mechanism.

The then DHFL promoter and CMD Kapil Wadhawan and the then director Sudhakar Shetty along with other accused persons entered into a criminal conspiracy to cheat the consortium of 17 banks led by the Union Bank of India. The Wadhawan gang convinced the consortium of banks to sanction huge loans aggregating to 42,871.42 crore and siphoned off a significant portion of the said funds by falsifying the books of the DHFL and dishonestly defaulted on repayment of the legitimate dues of the said consortium banks, thereby causing a wrongful loss of ₹34,615 crore to the consortium lenders, the CBI has alleged in its FIR registered on June 20, 2022.

Besides, DHFL and its then CMD Kapil Wadhawan, the CBI has named 11 other individuals and entities includ-

ing DHFL director Dheeraj Wadhawan and Sudhakar Shetty besides shell companies like Amaryllis Realtors LLP, Gulmarg Realtors LLP, Skylark Buildcon Pvt Ltd., Darshan Developers Pvt Ltd., Sigtia Constructions Pvt. Ltd., Creatoz Builders Pvt. Ltd., Township Developers Pvt. Ltd., Shishir Realty Pvt. Ltd and Subblink Real Estate Pvt. Ltd. These entities were allegedly used for diversion of loan funds and subsequently siphoned off by the accused promoters of DHFL.

The fraud by DHFL was committed despite a consortium of lenders of DHFL was formed under the leadership of Union Bank of India on July 24, 2010 with 29 member banks. The member banks agreed for joint documentation of the facilities, pooling of securities for the aggregate facilities sanctioned by the DHFL Consortium Lenders to the borrower company.

If this was not enough, it is a matter of record that DHFL was availing credit facilities from the complainant bank Union Bank of India since 1984. The loan facilities availed by DHFL were renewed/reviewed /enhanced from time to time by the complainant bank as well as by e-Corporation Bank and e-Andhra Bank, which have since been amalgamated with the Union Bank of India.

The borrowers defaulted on the loans sanctioned by the DHFL Consortium Lenders and their accounts with consortium lenders have been classified as Non Performing Assets. The accounts have also been declared as fraud by each of the consortium lenders.

The loans by the consortium banks were sanctioned by the Management Committees of the DHFL Consortium Banks based all over the country including New Delhi, Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Kochi, Pune, Chennai, Hyderabad, Mangalore, and Bengaluru without raising any red flag

“THE FRAUD BY DHFL WAS COMMITTED DESPITE A CONSORTIUM OF LENDERS OF DHFL WAS FORMED UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF UNION BANK OF INDIA ON JULY 24, 2010 WITH 29 MEMBER BANKS. THE MEMBER BANKS AGREED FOR JOINT DOCUMENTATION OF THE FACILITIES, POOLING OF SECURITIES FOR THE AGGREGATE FACILITIES SANCTIONED BY THE DHFL CONSORTIUM LENDERS TO THE BORROWER COMPANY”

at any level. This is only a pointer to the governance failure on part of the banks.

The entire loan amount was sanctioned relying on misrepresented documents and falsified accounts by the promoters of the DHFL.

The DHFL defaulted in its debt repayment obligations to the consortium lenders from May 2019 onwards followed by a sharp correction in the share price of DHFL after concerns surfaced about the financial health of the private lender.

On the queries raised by the consortium lenders, the DHFL directors and officers claimed that the fall in share price was on account of the sale of commercial papers by one of its investors.

As early as January 2019, media reports appeared wherein serious allegations of fraud by way of diversion, round-tripping, and siphoning of funds were made against DHFL and promoters/directors. Following this, a meeting of Consortium Lenders was held on February 1, 2019, wherein a Core Committee of the seven largest lenders comprising SBI, BoB, BoI, Canara Bank, Central Bank of India, Syndicate Bank, and Union Bank of India (lead bank and complainant bank) was formed. Consultancy firm KPMG was then appointed as Auditor to conduct a Special Review Audit of DHFL from April 1, 2015, to March 31, 2019.

In the meantime, DHFL and its directors continued to maintain that they were planning to distress the company through various means like securitization of a pool of housing loans, project loans, divestment of promoters' stake in the company, and other Group companies and bringing in a strategic investor. DHFL CMD Kapil Wadhawan continued to maintain that DHFL held strong liquidity equated to six months of cash and would remain in cash surplus even after considering all repayment obligations for the financial year 2018-19. However,

having falsely assured the lenders that adequate steps were being taken to de-stress the company and maintain that the company had adequate liquidity, DHFL delayed its interest repayment obligations Towards Term Loans in May 2019, which continued thereafter, leading to the account turning into NPA.

Based on early warning signals like delay and default in payments to banks/market borrowings, invocation of Bank Guarantees, the resignation of key personnel, adverse market reports, downgrading of external rating to the default category, reporting of RFA (Red Flagged Account) by other banks, the complainant bank classified the account of DHFL as RFA on October 18, 2019, and a Look Out Circular was issued against Kapil and Dheeraj Wadhawan.

Subsequently, in view of cash flow constraints resulting in non-servicing interest and installments, the account of DHFL was classified as a substandard category (NPA) by the Union Bank on October 31, 2019, as per bank RBI guidelines.

Following a notification dated November 18, 2019, by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs allowing cases of NBFCs with asset size of ₹500 crore and above to be sent to the National Company Law Tribunal for proceedings under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) then issued a Press release on November 20, 2019, superseding the Board of DHFL and appointed R Subramaniakumar as the Administrator of DHFL under the RBI Act to take control of the Company.

The NCLT, through an order on June 7, 2021, approved a Resolution Plan through which the consortium banks recovered a meager ₹5,977.93 crore and NCDs of 7,186.74 crore.

During the Special Review Audit/Forensic Audit, KPMG observed

that large amounts were disbursed as loans and advances by the borrower company to several interconnected entities and individuals with commonalities to DHFL Promoter Entities, which were used for the purchase of shares/debentures.

According to the KPMG review, most of the transactions of such entities/individuals were like investments in land/properties.

The Forensic Audit also revealed significant financial irregularities, diversion of funds through related parties, fabrication of books to show fraudulent non-existent retail loans, round-tripping of funds, and utilization of diverted funds for creation of assets by Kapil Wadhawan, Dheeraj Wadhawan, and their associates.

The DHFL and its promoters disbursed an amount of ₹14,000 crore as Project Finance but reflected the same as retail loans in their books, according to the Forensic Audit. This led to the creation of an inflated retail loans portfolio whereby 1,81,664 false and Non Existent Retail Loans aggregating to ₹14,095.08 crore (outstanding as on 31.03.2019) were created. These loans, referred to as “Bandra Books” were maintained in a separate database in Foxpro Software, against which loans were shown as disbursed by DHFL and were subsequently merged with OLPL (Other Large Projects) Loans.

The Bandra Books were primarily maintained by Jayesh Khona, the then Senior VP of Special Projects, DHFL who was assisted by Snageeta Amin and Priya Naik.

The details of such non-existent retail loans using dummy names were maintained in a separate accounting system (Foxpro Software) and were then transferred to the main accounting software of DHFL (Synergy) by Priya Naik and Sangeeta Amin.

(The writer is a special correspondent of The Pioneer)



# VANISHING FAMILY DOCTORS

Do you remember the old black & white Indian films in which every time a crucial character fell sick in the family, the familiar, all comforting-doctor (General Physician) was called in to examine the patient and order rest, medication or tests if necessary. Needless to say, in the past, communities reposed enormous faith in the easily accessible and affordable services of family physicians. However, the concept of the family doctor which was fading into oblivion is now gradually gaining ground in the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic, finds ARCHANA JYOTI.

Family doctor as a breed is fast becoming extinct. It is unfortunate because the medicine as seen and practiced by specialists and super specialists, is increasingly becoming myopic with a tubular vision; and the implications are profound,” says Dr Rajesh Malhotra, Head of the JPN Trauma Centre, AIIMS, Delhi. Dr Sumit Anand, Chief Medical Officer (CMO) at Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), agrees. “The aspirations for high social status and prestige, and the demand of patients, who earn well and enjoy better lifestyles in urban areas, for medical specialists has triggered the drive in the medical fraternity for specialization and super specialization. As there is little motivation for young budding doctors to become family doctors as General Physicians, the concept of the family doctor is fading into oblivion.”

Both the experts, joined by many others from the fraternity, concur that unlike the healthcare super specialists, family doctors usually share a long and therapeutic relationship with their patients. They are trusted more by their patients than other healthcare providers, as they are familiar with case history of their patients and provide comprehensive care for treating various ailments for all the age groups in a family.

“Providing comprehensive care for most specialties to patients of all age groups is the hallmark of family medicine”, says Dr Nita Radhakrishnan, Associate Professor of Pediatric Hematology-Oncology at Post Graduate Institute of Child Health, Noida

Family medicine practitioners serve as an entry point for individualized healthcare for most health problems.

They enjoy a distinct status in developed countries where patients can't approach a specialist without the recommendation of a family physician. Unfortunately, this is not the case in India where a fast flourishing culture of corporate hospitals is making



#### Some of the specific roles and responsibilities of a family physician are:

- Promote health and prevent spread of communicable diseases in families and communities;
- Manage common diseases in all age groups across different clinical specialties, besides utilising the limited resources in primary healthcare system;
- Making appropriate referral to specialists by correctly identifying red flags in patient's health via study of their symptoms;
- Provide continuity in healthcare by involving two-way referral with specialists;
- Provide home and palliative care;
- Provide community-focused care with a multidisciplinary approach;
- Learning by observation and sharing with others the association of socio-cultural and environmental factors with individual and community health;
- Provide effective health education to families and the communities.

Family Physicians irrelevant. The Coronavirus pandemic, however, steered a shift in this trend with the focus again zooming on family physicians for providing healthcare at the grassroots level. “Family Physicians counseled patients about the role of preventive medicine, the importance of vaccination, and the usage of various preventive care measures to limit the spread of infection. They were also providing domiciliary care to the Covid patients and to all those who were exposed to Covid patients and were kept in isolation at home”, says Dr Malhotra while bringing home the point.

“Family doctor is not a new concept in India. Historically, family doctors used to be generalist practi-

tioners who would act not only as health managers to families but also as their friend, philosopher, protector, and guide,” says Dr. Raman Kumar, President of the Academy of Family Physicians of India (AFPI). AFPI has been pushing for revival of family physicians and popularising family medicine as a clinical specialty.

Family medicine is recognized in many developed countries where training is provided through organized residency programs. This should happen in India as well.

“Family medicine has been incorporated in the foundation course of Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) and is planned to be adopted in all

medical institutes in India; however, the MBBS syllabus makes no mention of it. In medical schools in India, fully functioning family medicine departments should be established on an urgent scale. It is necessary to take the required measures to introduce the subject at the undergraduate level of the MBBS program and to generalize it across India,” rues Kumar.

A review article ‘Need of the Hour: Family Medicines published in a journal of Medical Sciences recommends that the number of medical schools in India offering postgraduate residency training in family medicine should be increased to meet the current health needs of communities.

“Of the 54,000 new doc-

tors who will graduate this year, at least 44,000 will become specialists after the expansion in the number of post-graduate seats,” says Dr Raman Kumar.

He has written to the Medical Council of India (MCI) after he found that its' new 890-page MBBS curriculum made no mention of terms like General Practice or Family Medicine or Family Physicians, leaving students little choice than the option for specialist and tertiary level hospitalist care.”

According to Dr Kumar, MBBS students get all of their training at tertiary hospitals, which deprives them of valuable working experience in clinics and primary health centres.

Even as political and eco-

nomics factors are likely to keep pushing the government towards raising the total number of post-graduate seats, the family physicians would still be scarce as MBBS students continue to opt for specialisation in the medical field.

Despite their contribution in managing a wide range of health problems, either directly or through referral to other specialists, family physicians in India continue to face an identity crisis. Irrespective of their role in optimizing the cost-effectiveness of the healthcare system by treating general healthcare ailments and guiding their patients towards specialised care in cases of acute ailments, Family Physicians are becoming outdated in India.

Doctors feel that this could be addressed if the Government pushes for formation of Departments for family medicine in medical colleges across India, and the study material for family medicine is included in the MBBS curriculum. Besides increasing the number of medical colleges offering residency programmes in family medicine, public healthcare institutions and organizations also need to be educated and updated on the subject.

There is a requirement for developing a comprehensive curriculum for family medicine to address the current health needs of communities. The healthcare system should focus more on primary care and family medicine to provide affordable, accessible, and quality healthcare to people.

India is experiencing a rapid annual increase in its population, the chunk of which lives in rural locations. Access to affordable, quality healthcare has been a challenge in rural India.

Family medicine has been recognised and integrated into the primary healthcare system in varied contexts around the world. Canada, Australia, Norway, Brazil, Latin America, Nigeria, Ghana, Ethiopia, South Africa, China, Russia, Nepal and several other countries have prioritised family medicine throughout the health system., Dr V Sreenivas, Director, Academics, Academy of Family Physicians of India says as per a media report

Indian policymakers should see that the state invests significantly in family-doctor centric primary healthcare, preventive public health, social development programmes, opening of new healthcare facilities, safe universal health coverage, investment in public health and primary care research and infrastructure development, including large scale reforms in public health. They should put in serious effort to create a pandemic-free world for our future generations, he says.

Family doctors as a breed are fast becoming extinct. It is unfortunate because the medicine as seen and practised by specialists and the super specialists is increasingly becoming myopic with a tubular vision; and the implications are profound!

A family physician is almost like a family member to the patient. He is conversant with the patient's family history, and knows his/her

medical, social and financial background. He is the one who can connect the dots, put the past history in today's perspective and treat the disease as well as the person. The dwindling interest in career as a family physician is manifest in fewer number of physicians practising family medicine; this is causing difficulties in providing the appropriate health care. It also means diminution of the art of clinical

medicine as traditionally it relies more on clinical acumen, with the modern and expensive investigations relegated to special situations. He can triage the patient and seek timely intervention of a specialist/ higher centre in case of need.

The recent pandemic has brought to the fore the importance and the role of family physicians in providing healthcare at the very grassroot level. It ranges from



counselling about the role of preventive medicine to explaining about the importance of vaccination, prevention of spread of prevention as well as providing domiciliary care to the Covid affected

**DR RAJESH MALHOTRA**, Chief, JPN Apex Trauma Centre, Professor & Head Department of Orthopedics, AIIMS, Delhi

ed who have to be managed at home. Managing patients at home, recognising red flag signs with timely referral to hospitals saved lives at a time when hospital beds and specialist care were at a premium. A family physician was the primary caregiver as much as he/she was the healer you knew and had easy access to. We are now highly cognizant of the role family physicians can play in times

of major healthcare crises and pandemics. The recent times have seen an escalation in the demand of family physicians all over the world. It is particularly true in countries like the United Kingdom where an appointment with a specialist may not be available for months on end. The disease itself, however, does not respect that. The family physician thus becomes the saviour who is readily available, accessible,

affordable and acceptable. Follow up is no challenge and a tele-consultation session is less likely to be fraught with errors.

We need to nurture this breed of healthcare providers who can extend our access and reach to the remotest corners of the country, decongest our hospitals and offload, to some extent, the burden faced by our specialists and super specialist healthcare providers.



**DR NITA RADHAKRISHNAN**, Associate Professor and Head Department of Pediatric Hematology Oncology, Post Graduate Institute of Child Health, Noida

Indians need a defined network of referral pathways which we currently lack in our system. We do have a system of referral in government sector hospitals from wellness clinics to primary health centers to district hospitals to medical colleges to tertiary institutes. However, patients are also free to go to a specialist any time and in many cases we feel a specialist consultation is vital. But the reverse is also true.

Family doctors who are the first line of defence in medical care in most countries have a wholesome approach to each disease and are able to resolve many primary care issues at their level. They also have a more holistic perspective as unlike specialists, they manage the health of other members of the same family and the community as a whole. So, development of a referral network would help ensure adequate resource allocation and strengthening of primary care which is currently weak in our country.



**DR SUMIT ANAND**, Senior Medical Officer, Delhi, MCD

has triggered the drive for specialisation and super specialization in the medical fraternity. This has dented the prospect of family doctors for budding healthcare professionals who then choose to go into specialised care.

In developed countries patients can't approach a specialist directly without recommendation of a family physician. Whereas with corporate hospitals culture building up in India, family physicians are facing an identity crisis. Government needs to be more sensitive in recognising their contribution and bring more job opportunities for them. Housing the 2nd highest population in the world, India's healthcare system can't survive the extinction of family doctors.

Let's recognise and pay tribute to their endless service to mankind. Without their support, we could not even have dreamt of fighting and winning the battle against the dreaded COVID Pandemic which shook the world in the 21st century.

## DOCTORS SPEAK

The family physicians are general physicians who are committed to their patients regardless of their age, gender, and type of illness: they are responsible for comprehensive healthcare of patients with undifferentiated problems. The scope of their practice is not defined by diagnosis or health procedures but by the nature of human needs. The GP provides a vital role in steering for their patients the targeted treatment process while making them feel comfortable with right advice and care during the periods of uncertainty.

Family practice has a distinct clinical approach that requires special skills to identify concerns, focus issues, negotiate plans, and help solve problems. The recognition, integration, and prioritization of multiple concerns and the synthesis of solutions are critical clinical competencies. Family doctors oversee one's preventive care.



**DR ANIL KUMAR CHANDNA**, EC member, Dental Council of India and Member, Delhi State Dental Council

One of the most important functions of a family doctor is to educate patients about disease prevention and health maintenance. They are concerned with one's entire being, including mental and emotional well-being. This could include assisting with techniques for stress relief, anger management, weight management, nutritional counselling, Fertility testing besides advice or advice on the best types of physical exercise for better fitness.



**DR DALJIT SINGH**, Professor and Head of Department of Neurosurgery, GB Pant Hospital, Delhi

Family physicians form a major link between the patient and the entire healthcare system encompassing patients, healthcare providers and doctors. They are the first link for patients to report and the last link to address their problems on a day-to-day basis. Whereas a super specialist is needed to provide best up-to-date care, their number is limited, hence they cannot take full loads of patients. After treatment from a specialist, a patient will fall back to a family physician for subsequent care and support. There is a need to update current knowledge of family physicians so that they can cater to some special services with confidence.

Family physicians will always remain an important part of the system; they know every family member of the patient at personal level, and thus are a trusted bridge between the people and the public healthcare system. A family physician's services are economical, long lasting and easily available even at district levels.

Family doctors were a bridge in the community—between the super specialty and the patients.

Family practitioners also called as GPs used to see the body as a whole. But now we have moved to the scene where super specialists just see one part of the body without realising that body part itself is going wrong or somewhere else might be the reason for the cause of that ailment, given that body is interconnected.

We started seeing the body as a part and not the body in whole. That's where the utility of the family doctor is required. The family doctor was the one who knew not so much in detail but something about everything so that he/she could give remedial measures at the earliest. The family doctor could determine what is the cause of the sickness in his/her patient and after determining the reasons he could send the patient to the particular super specialists. This saves time as well as unnecessary expenditure on multiple clinical tests.

With longevity at our hand, where we are at least going to survive more than 75 years of age we need to find or say the need of the hour is to have a family doctor who can take care of us. In the super speciality world, where everybody wants to become a super specialist, where is the time to talk to the patients in detail. For instance, a gastro doctor has no time to speak about neuro



**DR RAHUL BHARGAVA**, Principal Director, Hematology Department at Fortis Memorial Research Institute, Gurugram

problems. But if we have a family doctor, the patients need not go through the multiple tests and are not clueless about what is happening.

GPs are the need of the hour. A formula has to be worked out to ensure that we have a sufficient number of family doctors or say general physicians. They are the first contact points for the people. This will also lessen the burden on the AIIMS like institutes which instead of conducting studies and researches are overburdened by the patients who can be otherwise treated at the basic level itself i.e. by general practitioners at the primary level itself.



# Conservatives’ predicament as Johnson clings on to chair

The UK Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, a diehard Eurosceptic, is facing the toughest test in his political career. He has been delivered a body blow by the spate of resignations of the senior ministers, following which he yielded to their demands and quit as the leader of the Conservative Party, which by default makes him lose the premiership.

However, giving the political situation a twist, he wants to cling on to the post of the Prime Minister till his party elects a new leader: a cumbersome process which may take around three months. The insistence has aggravated the resentment against Johnson in the party. Conservative Party leaders want his earliest departure from the 10 Downing Street.

Johnson announced his decision after a bitter stand-off with his Cabinet. In fact, during the same meeting, new Chancellor Nadhim Zahawi asked him to leave the Prime Minister office. Meanwhile, Labour leader Keir Starmer has said his party will initiate a vote of confidence if Johnson refuses to go early. Starmer said, “He needs to go: he can’t cling on in this way. His own party has now decided that he is unfit to be Prime Minister; they can’t now inflict him on the country for the next few months.”

It is a clear indication that Johnson now must understand his limits. And in case a no confidence vote is held in Parliament and the Conservatives lose, the party will get 14 days to elect a new leader and prove majority again. If the Conservative Party fails to do so, a fresh national election will be held. This, by no stretch of imagination, is a good proposition for the Conservative Party. There are only two possible ways for the party: either bear with the long process of electing a new leader or replace Johnson with a care-taker Prime Minister.

Johnson came to power in July 2019. He is a rare leader who always prefers an argument of “no ifs, no buts”. He has remained as the cheerleader of Brexit, and he has finally made it when two earlier British Prime Ministers miserably failed. Both David Cameron and Theresa May had to quit the Prime Minister office primarily because of issues cen-



UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson reads a statement outside 10 Downing Street, London, after formally resigning as Conservative Party leader, in London on July 7, 2022

AP

tered around the great Brexit debate. Brexit, which saw a nation intricately divided along fault lines, has made deep impact on the political discourse in the country.

Cameron opened the tinderbox and May got into it, but clever Johnson took the full benefit of the divided Britons to occupy the 10 Downing Street. However, while highlighting the Brexit conundrum, it would be misleading to brand Johnson as an isolationist. His sole concern was to bring forth a Great Britain out of the Brussels’ bureaucracy and establish a new British identity in global politics.

This week Johnson encountered a severe battering at Prime Minister’s Questions before a parliamentary com-

mittee of senior lawmakers in Parliament. Afterwards a delegation of Cabinet members arrived at the 10 Downing Street, the official residence of the British Prime Minister, asking him to step down. The bruising appearance of Johnson after facing the parliamentary committee was more than a pointer at his incapacity and uncomfortable times that he is wading through in public life.

This Wednesday night he fired close ally and senior Cabinet Minister Michael Gove, who had, as sources say, asked the Prime Minister to step down.

Another key ally and Home Secretary Priti Patel confided in Johnson that the general opinion of the Conservative Party was that he

had to go. Amid all the high-profile resignations, his parliamentary private secretary James Doddridge said that Johnson is “fighting on because he believes he can win”. It seems that he may continue occupying the office to see who the next leader would be.

With his immediate resignation, a new debate comes up for selecting the next leader of the Conservative Party. The frontrunners for the Prime Minister’s post are recently resigned Treasury chief Rishi Sunak, his successor in that job Nadhim Zahawi, Foreign Secretary Liz Truss, Attorney General Suella Braverman and Defence Secretary Ben Wallace. For the first time it so happens that the UK, an imperial power that once occupied India for

more than two hundred years, has seen two contenders for the top job from that part of the world only: Rishi Sunak and Suella Braverman.

By this time different suggestions are emerging from various quarters. One of the ideas is that Johnson should quit now and call for a caretaker government under current Deputy Prime Minister Dominic Raab or Theresa May, Johnson’s predecessor. Former British Prime Minister John Major said it would be unwise and unsustainable for Johnson to remain in the office for a length of time when a new leader is chosen.

Sir Graham Brady in a letter to the chairman of the 1922 Committee of the Conservative backbenchers

wrote: “The proposal for the Prime Minister to remain in office for up to three months having lost the support of his Cabinet, his Government and the parliamentary party is unwise and may be unsustainable.”

Major suggested that Johnson could resign as Prime Minister and Raab could take over as acting Prime Minister till a new leader is elected. Another idea he gave was that the Conservative lawmakers could elect a new leader to be installed as Prime Minister and then the party members could later endorse his candidature. These are all probable constitutional routes available for now. It’s Johnson who should immediately decide the future course of action in no

time. All are getting impatient with him, including the EU that is awaiting his departure expecting a new constructive dialogue to settle all the complicated issues with the post-Brexit Britain.

Why all these resignations? All the Ministers of Johnson Government have one serious refrain that Jo has failed to rebuild the country. With the massive mandate that he received from his people, all were expecting that he would be bringing a kind of Meiji Revolution to restore the glory, status and position of the country in the global power calculus.

Why people are unhappy with Johnson? Many feel that he has squandered a revolutionary mandate for reform. He has been ignoring what the UK is demanding from his government. Therefore, there is no justification for him to continue in any public office. Some of the sharpest criticisms thrown at him say that all the accusations against him such as his constant lies and torpedoing of the Westminster customs would have meant nothing if he had delivered to the public. Above all, he is found by many as purely incompetent. The way he has spoiled the massive mandate for his petty failings would remain in public memory for long. The liberal in the UK is presenting him as one who has broken the hallowed traditions of the Westminster. Some call him quasi-fascist. It is the continued failings for which he is highly condemned.

Even after repeated calls from trusted aides and colleagues, Johnson insisted that he had a “colossal mandate to keep going” from the voters. So, the beleaguered Prime Minister is on his job. He is not ready to listen to his colleagues who have already left their offices.

Despite resignations of top ministers and calls to leave office, Johnson is clinging on to power. This time he may have few options to survive.

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MAKHAN SAIKIA

## PERSPECTIVE

# Role models can prevent tobacco-induced cancer

**Our country has a significant youth population. With global flash points like climate change, our youth already worry about the world they are to inherit. The costs of tobacco are an avoidable drain on resources that should be instead engaged in improving this world. Role models should not underestimate their contributions here.**



PANKAJ CHATURVEDI

A few years ago, many Indians woke up to the sight of a respected Hollywood star on the front pages of newspapers and on huge billboards across their cities, promoting a brand that most of us know stands for a variety of smokeless tobacco products like gutka and pan masala.

No doubt cultural nuances were missed since the actor later clarified that he was unaware of the implications of his act and that as an advocate of cancer awareness, after losing two family members to the disease, he would never promote anything tobacco related. More recently (and culturally closer), some stars from Bollywood and Tollywood were in the news for dissociating themselves from tobacco products’ promotions. Increased knowledge about the deadly effects of tobacco aside, we can also attribute these acts to an increased awareness about surrogate advertising. One may wonder why these public announcements by members of our entertainment industry are so deserving of our attention. Let us consider a few well-known facts available in the public domain.

India has 266.8 million tobacco users, the second largest consumer base in the world, which includes both smoking and smokeless tobacco users. According to WHO, 12 per cent of the world’s

smokers are found in India. These statistics throw light on the magnitude of health-related challenges that tobacco usage is causing directly and indirectly. In fact, about 1.2 million deaths per year are attributed to second-hand smoke. Non-smokers exposed to this are at an increased risk of developing heart disease by 25-30 per cent and stroke by 20-30 per cent. The costs continue to pile up. Treatments for cancer, heart diseases and stroke are quite expensive, adding to the distress for the economically weaker sections of society. At the national level, the economic cost attributed to tobacco use from all recorded deaths between 2017-2018 for persons over 35 was a staggering ₹1,773.4 billion.

The Indian government has instituted various laws to curb tobacco usage, including requiring larger graphic warnings on packs, prohibiting their sale near educational institutions or to minors, mandating Designated Smoking Areas (DSA) for certain places, banning smoking in public spaces, fining those who spit out chewed tobacco and banning the direct or indirect advertisements of tobacco or tobacco-related products. While they address key challenges, a lot more ground needs to be covered. One area in need of immediate increased attention is surrogate advertising and the



role of celebrity endorsements.

Manufacturers use brand extensions to build associations and to advertise, as we have seen with the “mouth fresheners” advertisements. These are usually sold under the same brand name and with very little differentiation. Consumers, especially young people, are subliminally lured and convinced to make a positive association between the two. Meanwhile, well-known personalities are misled into believing that their endorse-

ment is for a tobacco-free sister product so their conscience can rest as there is no law being broken.

Even though strict ban has been laid down by the government on direct or indirect means of tobacco advertising, brand extension promotions are a loophole-exploiting practice that circumvents the law. However, despite the ambiguity, most of us can agree that the practice is decidedly unethical. Overlooking this aspect would be an unfortunate nega-

tion of one’s social responsibilities, especially by public role models with massive influence and reach, who therefore, need to be more accountable.

A simple endorsement can undo years of efforts and investments by governments in trying to control tobacco use prevalence intended to saving lives and families from the burden of deadly diseases. One may reasonably ask how a few actors can make millions of Indians overcome their habits? Popular culture and those at

the top of it continue to have a strong sway over individual behaviours and choices, especially when you consider that more than 50 per cent of smokers start using tobacco before the age of ten and that the one-third of the youth experiment with tobacco as a result of Tobacco Advertising, Promotion and Sponsorship (TAPS).

We need to continue fighting against tobacco as it is still entrenched in our lives especially through popular culture. Tobacco is the only consumer product in the world to kill every second user according to WHO.

As a cancer surgeon, I have seen first-hand the impact it has not just on patients but also their families. The immense pain of avoidable deaths is compounded by the financial burdens and other challenges that come with it. Tobacco products are still being sold near educational institutions even as DSA norms are flouted elsewhere. While surrogate advertisements continue to thrive and prevail, our movies and online streaming channels blatantly show the usage of tobacco products. Creative expression and freedom of speech should also be seen in conjunction with the right to life and good health. If we don’t address the tobacco use, we could be staring at death tolls more than that of

Covid-19 each year.

During Covid-19 peak, we rose to the occasion displaying strong social, collective and individual responsibilities that prioritised community health. Public role models from all sectors and walks used their platforms and influence to help further these goals. The pandemic is not entirely out of our lives and yet we see a sustained momentum for prevention and addressing the pandemic. Meanwhile, the much older tobacco epidemic, which worsens Covid-19 and other illnesses, continues unabated. In light of this, it is essential that we keep the spirit of collective action alive.

Our country has a significant youth population. With global flashpoints like climate change, our young people already worry about the world they are to inherit. The costs of tobacco are an avoidable drain on resources that should be instead engaged in improving this world. Role models should not underestimate their contributions here. I hope to see them leading from the front and using their voice to leave behind a richer legacy — one of a tobacco-free and smoke-free India as the future of our country.

(The writer is professor and surgeon, Department of Head Neck Surgery, Tata Memorial Centre, Mumbai)



