

## WORLD 5

RISHI SUNAK PLUGS FOR HONESTY  
IN FIRST UK PM RACE DEBATE

## MONEY 6

BIG TECH MAY HAVE TO PAY  
FOR USING NEWS CONTENT

## SPORT 7

SINDHU SAILS INTO  
SINGAPORE FINALPublished From  
DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL  
BHUBANESWAR RANCHI  
RAIPUR CHANDIGARH  
DEHRADUN HYDERABAD  
VIJAYWADA

NEW DELHI, SUNDAY JULY 17, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹4



## sunday pioneer

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NDA names W Bengal  
Guv as V-P candidatePM, Nadda hail  
'kisan putra'  
Dhankhar as right  
man for the job

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) on Saturday announced West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar as its candidate for the Vice-President's job.

This was yet another decision by the ruling regime that surprised all. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and BJP president JP Nadda both evoked Dhankhar's farmer credentials to term him "kisan putra" (farmer's son).

The decision regarding the 71-year-old Dhankhar, who hogged the limelight for his frequent face-offs with West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, was taken during a BJP Parliamentary Board meeting chaired by Modi and attended by Nadda, Union Ministers Amit Shah, Nitin Gadkari, Rajnath Singh, BJP national general secretary BL Santosh and Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan.

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In this file photo, President Ram Nath Kovind poses with West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar during a meeting, at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi

Didi-Dhankhar  
chemistry was  
worse than bad

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Despite the BJP vice-presidential nominee oft addressing Mamata Banerjee as his "sister" Dhankhar and the Bengal Chief Minister had always shared a stormy chemistry ever since he joined as the Governor of the State in mid-2019.

While, the Governor had repeatedly raised the steadily deteriorating law and order situation and an increasing stranglehold of what he called "syndicate-mafia raj" marked by a culture of "cut-money and extortion" in the State, he was responded to in equally strong words even as the Chief Minister compared him to a horse and her Trinamool Congress called him an agent of the BJP. It all started when the Governor — much to the chagrin of the Chief Minister — personally went to Jadavpur University in 2019 to rescue the then Union Minister Babul Supriyo who had been gheraoed by the Leftist students unions.

Continued on Page 2

## A man constantly on the rise

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Jagdeep Dhankhar assumed charge of the office of the Governor of West Bengal on July 30, 2019. Born on May 18, 1951 in Kithana village, Jhunjhunu District, Rajasthan, to the late Gokal Chand and the late Kesari Devi, Dhankhar was elected as the president of the Rajasthan High Court Bar Association, Jaipur, when he was just 27-years-old.

Having studied in Government primary and mid-

dle schools, he passed out from Sainik School, Chittorgarh.

Dhankhar, an LLB, was the senior-most designated Senior Advocate of Rajasthan till taking the oath of the office of the Governor.

Since 1990 Dhankhar had been practicing primarily in the Supreme Court and his focus areas of litigation have been steel, coal, mine and International Commercial Arbitration, among others. He has appeared in various High Courts in the country.

Sonia behind 'conspiracy'  
to frame Modi in Gujarat  
riots: BJP after SIT reportCharges against  
Patel a move to  
absolve Modi of  
responsibility: Cong

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In the most direct accusation yet, the BJP on Saturday held Congress president Sonia Gandhi as the "driving force" behind the "conspiracy" to implicate the then Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi in the 2002 riots, and defame and destabilise his elected Government in the State.

The BJP alleged Sonia's political advisor late Ahmed Patel and social activist Teesta Setalvad were mere pawns in her hands.

While Patel's daughter Mumtaz Patel said the BJP's campaign for Gujarat poll has

begun "by dragging my father's name in conspiracy theories", the Congress said "the Prime Minister's political vendetta machine clearly does not even spare the departed who were his political adversaries".

Earlier in the day, demanding answers to the affidavit submitted by Gujarat's Special Investigation Team (SIT) before the court allegedly "detailing nexus of Patel and Setalvad" and transfer of "initial" ₹30 lakh to the social activist to "operationalise the conspiracy against Modi", the BJP asked Sonia to hold a press conference to clarify her stand on the issue.

"Not your social media head Jairam Ramesh but you should answer questions," BJP's national spokesperson Sambit Patra said, adding "Patel only delivered the money. Sonia Gandhi gave it to be handed over to Setalvad".

Continued on Page 2

Lankan Parl takes steps  
to elect new PresidentServed my nation  
to best of my  
ability, Gotabaya

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's Parliament held a Special session on Saturday to start the process of electing a new President on July 20 following the resignation of Gotabaya Rajapaksa, with four contenders, including acting President Ranil Wickremesinghe joining the race to head the next Government that has the arduous task to revive the country's bankrupt economy.

During a 13-minute special session, Dhammika Dassanayake, Secretary General of Parliament, announced the vacancy for the post of President after the resignation Rajapaksa, who fled the country after a popular uprising against him.

Dassanayake read out the resignation letter from Rajapaksa to the Speaker in which

Rajapaksa defended his actions to address the economic crisis and the political turmoil. He blamed the Covid-19 pandemic and the lockdown for Sri Lanka's economic woes. Rajapaksa said, "I served my motherland to the best of my ability and I will continue to do so in the future."

Dassanayake informed the House that nominations for the Presidency should be submitted to him on July 19 and if more than one candidate submits nominations, a vote would be taken in Parliament on July 20 to elect the new President.

The 225-member House is dominated by Rajapaksa's ruling Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) party. Besides Wickremesinghe and main Opposition leader Sajith Premadasa, Marxist Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna leader AK Dissanayake and Dullas Alahapperuma, a breakaway SLPP candidate, are the other two leaders to have announced their candidacy to contest the vote in Parliament.

Minor shoots at  
man to avenge  
father's beating

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Four juveniles have been apprehended for shooting a man, identified as Javed (36), in Jahangirpuri on Friday. Javed was hospitalised after being shot in the face at point-blank range. Javed had beaten up the father of one of the minors seven months ago and they shot him to extract revenge.

The CCTV footage of the incident went viral on social media. All three fled the spot after shooting Javed. According to Usha Rangani, the DCP, Northwest district, on Friday, at around 5.15 P.M., police received information about a gunshot injury to one Javed at H-4 Block, Jahangirpuri.

Continued on Page 2

Baghel's Minister Deo quits  
panchayat dept, keeps others

PTI ■ RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Minister TS Singh Deo, locked in a turf war with Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, on Saturday resigned from the Panchayat and Rural Development Department, hinting that he was sidelined in the Government though he will continue to hold the other four portfolios. The development comes over a year ahead of the Assembly elections in the Congress-ruled State. Singh Deo will, however, remain the Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Medical Education, Twenty Point Implementation and Commercial Tax departments.

The sudden development is seen as the fallout of an old political rivalry between Baghel and Singh Deo, who had tried to project him as the Chief Minister in the past.

"I have resigned from the Panchayat and Rural Development Department," he said. In a four-page resignation

letter to the Chief Minister, Singh Deo cited various reasons stating that he was unable to fulfil the targets of the department as per the vision of the Jan Ghoshna Patra (poll manifesto), given the "current scenario".

He said despite his repeated requests, funds were not sanctioned under the PM Awas Yojna, as a result of which houses could not be constructed for eight lakh people in the State.

He also claimed the draft of rules under the Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas (PESA) Act prepared by his department and sent to a committee was changed without taking him into confidence.

Under the Mukhyamantri Samagra Gramin Vikas Yojna, a committee of secretaries headed by the Chief Secretary was constituted against the standard protocol for granting final approval to works. The discretion to approve works of any department lies with the Minister concerned, he added.

'Rewris' for votes is a very  
dangerous culture: ModiDouble-engine  
Govt doing  
wonders in UP:  
PM at e-way  
dedicationVIRENDRA NATH BHATT ■  
JALAUN

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Saturday, cautioned people against what he called the "rewri culture" under which votes were sought by political parties by promising freebies and said this could be "very dangerous" for the development of the country.

Addressing a gathering after dedicating the 296-km-long Bundelkhand Expressway to the people, Prime Minister Modi hit out at the previous dispensations in Uttar Pradesh for the lack of connectivity and said the double-engine Government was now ensuring major transformation of the State with fast-improving connectivity.

He said the distance from Chitrakoot to Delhi by the Bundelkhand Expressway had been reduced by three-four hours, but its benefit was much more than that.

Continued on Page 2



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, UP Deputy Chief Ministers Keshav Prasad Maurya and Brajesh Pathak, and UP BJP president SD Singh during the opening of Bundelkhand Expressway, in Jalaun on Saturday

## Free power, world-class schools not 'rewris': Delhi CM

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday hit back at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying his Government's schemes for free education, healthcare and electricity were not "freebies" but efforts to lay the foundation for making India the number one country in the world.

"I have been accused of dis-



tributing rewris (sweets), freebies. I am being abused. I want to ask the people of India, where am I wrong," Kejriwal

asked at a press conference.

The PM did not take any names, though. Kejriwal said, "I am providing free quality education to the poor children of Delhi. Am I distributing rewris? Before we came to power, the plight of Delhi Government schools was miserable. The future of 18 lakh children was in the dark due to poor infrastructure.

Continued on Page 2

## CAPSULE

'IVANA TRUMP'S DEATH  
RULED AN ACCIDENT'

New York: Ivana Trump, the first wife of former President Donald Trump and the mother to his eldest children, died accidentally from blunt impact injuries to her torso, the New York City medical examiner's office said Friday.

ICSE CLASS 10TH RESULTS  
TODAY, CLASS 12TH SOON

New Delhi: The Council for the Indian School Certificate Examination on Saturday announced to declare the ICSE class 10 results 2022 on Sunday at 5 P.M. While the Board's ISC Class 12 results date will be announced soon.

6 DEAD IN DIARRHOEA  
OUTBREAK IN ODISHA

Bhubaneswar: At least six people have died and 71 others are hospitalised due to diarrhoea after drinking contaminated water from open sources in several villages in Odisha's Rayagada district, officials said on Saturday.

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## NCR-PULSE

**DU DECLARES RESULTS FOR 26 UG, 18 PG COURSES**  
New Delhi: Delhi University has declared the results of 26 undergraduate and 18 postgraduate courses, informed the varsity officials on Saturday. The results are available at the Samarth portal. Dean of Examination DS Rawat said that the results of 37,000 students have been declared. An email regarding the grievance redressal process has also been sent to over 65,000 students.

**MLA PRESIDES OVER ANNUAL DAY OF ADITI MAHAVIDYALAYA**  
New Delhi: Senior AAP leader and Kalkaji MLA Atishi presided over the 27th Annual Day celebrations of Aditi Mahavidyalaya on Saturday. Organised at the India International Centre in Delhi, the annual day function was based on the theme of ‘Glorious India’.

**LG DIRECTS MCD TO SET UP RECOVERY FACILITIES**  
New Delhi: The Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena, while reiterating his commitment to a clean and hygienic Delhi, instructed the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) to set up 24 Material Recovery Facilities from Municipal Wastes, ‘Swachhta Kendras’ across the Capital within the next six months. He was on a visit to one such facility of this kind, set up by the MCD in partnership with UNDP, in Dwarka. The LG was accompanied by the Chief Secretary, Special Officer, MCD and Commissioner MCD apart from senior officials concerned.

**28-YR-OLD HELD WITH ILLEGAL FIREARMS**  
New Delhi: The police has arrested a 28-year-old man from Mullana in Haryana and seized illegal firearms from him, officials said on Saturday. The accused has been identified as Gaurav, a resident of Najafgarh, they said, adding that he is a sharpshooter of the Ashok Pradhan-Neetu Dabodia gang and also supplied firearms to them.

**GAHLOT PARTICIPATES IN EVENT AT SANSKAR ASHRAM**  
New Delhi: Delhi’s Women and Child Development Minister, Kailash Gahlot on Saturday took part in an event organised at Sanskar Ashram Complex on the occasion of ‘World Day for International Justice’. He appreciated the academic performance of the children at Sanskar Ashram and said that children separated from families or rendered orphans must not be deprived of their rights to development and healthy upbringing.

**GAMBHIR SLAMS AAP OVER ‘FREE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY’**  
New Delhi: BJP MP from East Delhi Gautam Gambhir slammed the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government in the national capital on Saturday, alleging that its claim of free electricity supply is ‘propaganda’. In a statement, the cricketer-turned-politician said after forming the government in Delhi, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and his associates had claimed that with clean governance and administration, the electricity prices will reduce drastically.

# Shinde Govt renames Aurangabad, Osmanabad

**TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI**  
Having reviewed the previous Shiv Sena-led MVA Government’s city renaming decisions, the Eknath Shinde-led Maharashtra Government on Saturday decided to re-christen Aurangabad as Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar and Osmanabad as Dharashiv, In another decision, the Shinde government slightly tweaked the previous Uddhav Thackeray dispensation’s decision and renamed the Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA) as “Lokneta D B Patil Navi Mumbai International Airport”. Late Patil had championed the cause of farmers and residents for remunerative compensation for the land acquired for the Navi Mumbai Airport. Subsequently, the Shinde government said that it would send the renaming decisions taken at the State Cabinet meeting to the Centre for approval. After receiving approvals regarding the renaming of Aurangabad as Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar and Osmanabad as Dharashiv, it would rename talukas, municipal Corporations and Councils in the two districts accordingly. All the three renaming decisions – two of which

involved minor tweaks -- are being acts of one-upmanship indulged by the Shinde government to take away the credit for the decisions from the previous Uddhav Thackeray government. It may be recalled that the Shiv Sena-led MVA government had at its last State Cabinet meeting that chief minister Uddhav Thackeray presided over before he resigned from the post on June 28, 2022, in the wake of the Supreme Court’s refusal to stay the confidence vote that he had been ordered to take on the floor of Assembly on Thursday by Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari.

## Tomar hopes monsoon rains will progress in coming days

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**  
Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar on Saturday expressed hope that monsoon rains, which are crucial for Kharif sowing, will progress in the coming days and said it is too early to comment on the paddy acreage. The Minister also said that incomes of lakhs of farmers have doubled in the last eight years with all-round efforts made by the governments at the Centre and states, scientists and the farming community. Data from the Ministry of Agriculture showed that as of July 15, the paddy sowing was down by 17.4 per cent to 128.50 lakh hectares (LH) this Kharif season as against 155.53 LH in the corresponding period of the previous year. However, the sowing areas of pulses, coarse cereals and oilseeds are higher by 7-9 per cent. The weather office has forecast a normal monsoon this year. Asked about the progress of Kharif sowing operation and lesser area under paddy so far, Tomar said: “It is too early to say anything. I hope that monsoon rains will come”. On whether a 17 per cent fall in paddy acreage will get covered, he said: “I feel that it’s too early to comment. We should wait.” The minister was speaking on the sidelines of the 94th foundation day of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). Tomar also released an e-book prepared by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), documenting the success stories of 75,000 such farmers whose incomes have doubled or more than doubled in the last eight years.

**Traders protests against 5% GST on pre-packed and labelled food items**  
**STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI**

Wholesale and retail grain markets in the national capital, as the markets remained closed on Saturday due to a protest by traders against the GST Council’s decision to levy a five per cent GST on pre-packed and labelled food items. Wholesale grain markets at Narela, Bawana and other parts of the city wore a deserted look due to the market bandh called by traders. Many retail grain markets in the city were also closed. Delhi Grain Merchant Association President Naresh Kumar Gupta said that this is for the first time when non-branded food items are being brought under the GST and claimed that the decision was not in favour of the general public and traders.

## Free power, world-class...

**From Page 1**  
Is it a crime to provide good education to these children free of cost?” Kejriwal asked. Without naming anyone, Kejriwal said, “I will tell you who is distributing ‘rewris’ and giving freebies. This waiving of friends’ loans worth thousands of crores and getting contracts worth thousands of crores from foreign tours for friends are giving freebies.” “Those who are abusing me have purchased a private jet for themselves by spending thousands of crore rupees. Kejriwal doesn’t buy jets for himself, but saves the money and makes travel free of cost for women in Delhi.” “I am educated, having studied engineering, accounting and

law. My educational degree is not fake. Despite free schemes, the Delhi government budget is not at loss. The CAG has said since the Kejriwal government coming into power, the capital’s budget is under profit,” the chief minister said. “A corporate firm took loan from the banks and left them bankrupt. It donated some crores of rupees to a political party. But the government didn’t take any action against the government. This is a revarti,” Kejriwal said. “Through the Farishtey scheme we saved 13,000 lives with timely free treatment to injured people in accidents. Ask their families, if Kejriwal is distributing “rewris” or doing a virtuous thing,” the chief minister said..

## Minor shoots at man to avenge father’s...

**From Page 1**  
“He was shifted to Babu Jagjivan Ram Memorial (BJRM) hospital and later referred to another centre for the treatment. Javed had sustained a bullet injury in his right eye,” said the DCP. “Javed had told police that around 4.45 PM, he was near H-3 Block park when three minor boys known to him came there and one of them fired a gun aimed at his face,” said the DCP. After firing the gun, all three ran away, she said, adding that the victim’s condition is stable. A case under Section 307 (attempt to murder) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) was registered at Jahangirpuri police station.

## Sonia behind ‘conspiracy’ to frame Modi in Gujarat...

**From Page 1**  
Patra alleged Setalvad, who was also a member of National Advisory Council headed by Sonia Gandhi and awarded Padma Shri in 2007, “received crores of rupees” for the Gujarat 2002 riot relief fund from Sonia”. Setalvad, in turn, used them for her personal comfort, “wine, shoes and holiday resorts” while the “riot victims did not receive a single penny”, he said, adding he was quoting from the Gujarat High Court ruling. He said Setalvad, currently under arrest, wanted to be a Rajya Sabha member and could have made it to a Ministerial post had BJP not come to power at the Centre. Patra alleged Sonia operated behind the scenes while Patel and Setalvad were merely her pawns.

by Patel to get the State Government dismissed after the 2002 riots. Congress general secretary in-charge of the party’s communication, media and publicity department, countered BJP’s charges by issuing a statement. “The charges against Ahmed Patel are part of Prime Minister’s systematic strategy to absolve himself of any responsibility for the communal carnage unleashed when he was the Chief Minister of Gujarat in 2002,” the statement read. “It was his unwillingness and incapacity as the then Chief Minister to control the carnage that had led the then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to remind the Chief Minister of his ‘rajdharm,’” it said. Mumtaz said, his father’s name still holds weight to be used for political conspiracies to malign the Opposition. “Why during the UPA years Teesta Setalvad was not rewarded and made Rajya Sabha member and why the Centre until 2020 did not prosecute my father for hatching such a big conspiracy,” she asked in another tweet, which was retweeted by her brother Faisal Patel from his verified Twitter handle. Patra termed the Congress’ rebuttal alleging “personal vendetta” and SIT working under “pressure” as mischievous and asked if the Supreme Court had also acted under “pressure” when it had slammed Setalvad and other accused for their “ulterior designs” and called for them to be put in the dock, leading to registration of a case and their arrest by the Gujarat police. The BJP spokesperson said the Congress appears to be keeping various kinds of denials ready and releasing them by changing dates. “We want Sonia Gandhi to hold a press conference and address the nation as to why she was conspiring against Modi,” he said, claiming that his press conference is not an attack on late Patel as he was just a medium through which Sonia acted.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

It is to inform to the public at large Mrs. Shishu Devi who is purchasing the Plot No. 6, area measuring 45.00 SQ. YDS. out of Khalsa No. 856/13 MI. Situated in the Village Dhargal, Jalalabad, Ghaziabad, U.P. from Mr. Rajbir Tyagi S/o Mr. Asharam, who had owner through Khatauni Record, and same to be financed & mortgaged by Vastu Housing Finance Corporation Ltd. If any Person having any type of claim/right/title/interest over the said property, may inform in writing, at the address mentioned below, about his objections, within 07 days from today, failing which it shall be presumed that the said property is free from all type of Encumbrances, lien, disputes etc.

Lucem Legal LLP  
B-93B, Second Floor, Opp. SBI Bank, Sector 2, Noida, UP-201301, Contact # 0120-4269379

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A notice of intended marriage has been received from Mr. Swarna Raj Bora S/o Mr. Sushanta Bora R/o Flat No-6/4, Block-A, East Platinum, Sum Bazar Road, Sector-44, Noida, Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar (U.P.) and Ms. Selbi Alaberenova D/o Mr. Ulugbek Pinazorovic Allayarov R/o Taji Street, House No-6, Flat No. 74, Ashgabat Turkmenistan Presently residing at Flat No-6/4, Block-A, East Platinum, Sum Bazar Road, Sector-44, Noida, Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar (U.P.), in the office of the undersigned, any person interested therein, may file objections to it on any day upto 06-08-2022 in the office of the undersigned.

Sd/-  
Marriage Officer  
Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar (U.P.)



### CHANGE OF NAME

I, Vinay Kumar S/o Ram Saran Saxena R/o Flat No-K-405, AV Heights, Tower-K, Plot No-GH-12/02, Sector-Zeta-1<sup>st</sup>, Greater Noida, Sakipur, G.B. Nagar, (U.P.) - 201306. hereby declare that the name of Vinay Kumar Saxena has been changed to Vinay Kumar, and my Aadhaar card no is 4839 7578 9186.

PD(90130)C

I, Joseph Lakra husband of Sangeeta Lakra R/o Village-Konbegi Sarai Toli, P.S.-Thethaitanagar, Konbegi, Simdega, Jharkhand-835235 do hereby solemnly declare that my daughter SUNAINA student of class IX of ASSISI Convent School, Sector-33, Noida, Distt.-Gautam Budh Nagar, have change her name from SUNAINA to SUNAINA LAKRA for all future purposes.

PD(90131)C

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Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ (Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset/ Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date	
1.	Bafna Health Care Private Limited, Sunil Sumatli Mutha, Plot No. 14/5 Main Mathura Road, Opp Srs Tower Sec- 27, Haryana, Faridabad- 121010/ LBFDB00005418759	Property No. S-141, Floor-3 Block-S, Panchsheel Park with Terrace over and Above, Delhi	27/06/2022 Rs. 4,41,00,705/-	06-04-2022	
2.	Himani Jain, Kshama Jain, Robotech Private Limited, C-483 Yojna Vihar, East Delhi, Delhi-110092, LBFDB00004938668	Plot No-78 P, Sector- 7, Urban, Estate, Faridabad - 121001	27/06/2022 Rs. 1,56,49,802.24/-	06-04-2022	
3.	Sanjay Arora, Sunil Singhal, Frisco Fab Dyeing & Printing Pvt Ltd., Sonia Arora, RR- III/ 101 Royale Retreat-2, Charmwood Village, Surajkund Road, Faridabad, Haryana-121009/ LBFDB00003153209	Villa No. 89, Block C, Lakewood City, Suraj Kund Road, Sector-39, Faridabad-121001	27/06/2022 Rs. 3,64,08,372.07	06-04-2022	
4.	Frisco Fab Dyeing and Printing Pvt Ltd, Sunil Singhal, Sanjay Arora, Sonia Arora, Plot No. 16/2 Sareen Farm, Complex Badkhal Flyover, Complex Badkhal Flyover, Mathura Road, Faridabad- 121001/ LBFDB00005266928	Villa No. 89, Block C, Lakewood City, Suraj Kund Road, Sector- 39, Faridabad - 121001	27/06/2022 Rs. 1,00,20,825.97/-	06-04-2022	
5.	Nagulapally Ramakrishna, Sarbjit Kaur, 5000 N, Marine Parade Road, 14-59 Lagoon View, Singapore- 449295, Singapore- 18956/ LBFDB00004481739	Plot No-2845, Part of Khalsa No. 48/21, Floor- 4 With Roof Rights, Sec-A, Greenfields, Faridabad-121002	21/06/2022 Rs. 84,68,402.23/-	07-03-2022	
6.	Yashmani Bose, Anu Sharma, E 111 Pocket 1, Trilok Puri Patparganj, Mayur Vihar, Delhi-110091/ LBGUR00033665413	Flat No. B 1802, 3 BHK Tower E, Sethi Venice 18th Floor, Sec-01/ A-4, Sec 150, Noida- 201301	21/06/2022 Rs. 67,05,832.22/-	07-03-2022	
7.	Hardeep Bhati, Sheetal Bhati, 102, Tower No. 2, Lotus Boulevard, Sec-100 Noida, Noida-201301/ LBDEL000033056637	Plot No. G 92, Block G, Sector 63 Noida, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Noida- 201301	21/06/2022 Rs. 68,49,490/-	07-03-2022	
8.	Irfan Khan, Calcutta Haryana Transport Co, Salimuddin,, Afsana,, 6230 IV Floor, Pakki Gali, Bara Hindu Road, Delhi- 110006 LBDEL00005030156	Flat No. 2A, 2nd Floor, Front Side, 15 Broad Street, PS Karaya, Kolkata, Calcutta Kolkata- 700019	21/06/2022 Rs. 63,53,747/-	03-02-2022	
9.	Dhruv Aggarwal, Santosh Aggarwal, J- 6, 3rd Floor, Main Gali, West Yojti Nagar, Gokulpur, North East Delhi, New Delhi, Delhi- 110094/ LBGUR00004731308	Flat No- B-1703, 17th Floor, Sunshine Helios, Plot No. 5-B, Tower B, Sector- 78 Noida, Noida 201305	21/06/2022 Rs. 93,24,874/-	07-02-2022	
10.	Yashwant Place Service Station, Raj Kumar Goel, Rajni Goel, Pradeep Mehra, Africa Avenue, Opp Chanakya Cinema, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi-110021 LBNO00005119999	Plot No. 163, Moti Bagh- II, Satya Niketan, Delhi-110021	14/06/2022 Rs. 3,85,13,132/-	07-03-2022	
11.	Yashwant Place Service Station, Raj Kumar Goel, Rajni Goel, Pradeep Mehra, Africa Avenue, Opp Chanakya Cinema, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi- 110021 LBNO00005311294	Plot No 163, Moti Bagh-II, Satya Niketan, Delhi-110021	14/06/2022 Rs. 66,45,352/-	07-03-2022	
12.	Shiv Kumar Jatia, Archana Jatia, Shashi R Jatia, B-50, Gulmohar Park, Delhi- 110049 LBDEL00002444168	Plot No-B-503 Gulmohar Park Zone F- 3 Masjid Moth Delhi-110049	25/06/2022 Rs. 4,96,91,014/-	06-04-2022	
13.	Shiv Kumar Jatia, Archana Jatia, Shashi R Jatia, B-50, Gulmohar Park, Delhi- 110049 LBDEL00003454052	Plot No-B-50 Gulmohar Park Zone F-3 Masjid Moth Delhi-110049	25/06/2022 Rs. 2,74,99,600/-	06-04-2022	
14.	Shiv Kumar Jatia, Archana Jatia, Shashi R Jatia, B-50, Gulmohar Park, Delhi- 110049/ LBDEL00005411830	Plot No-B-50 Gulmohar Park Zone F-3 Masjid Moth Delhi 110049	25/06/2022 Rs. 1,88,90,324/-	06-04-2022	
15.	Shiv Kumar Jatia, Archana Jatia, Shashi R Jatia, B-50, Gulmohar Park, Delhi- 110049 LBDEL00002442446	Plot No- B-50 Gulmohar Park Zone F-3 Masjid Moth Delhi-110049	25/06/2022 Rs. 1,45,10,878.32/-	06-04-2022	
16.	Shiv Kumar Jatia, Archana Jatia, Shashi R Jatia, B-50, Gulmohar Park, Delhi- 110049 LBDEL00002442447	Plot No-B-50 Gulmohar Park Zone F-3 Masjid Moth Delhi- 110049	25/06/2022 Rs. 1,40,44,301/-	06-04-2022	
17.	Harmeet Singh Sethi, F 21 First Floor, Vikasपुरi, Delhi-110018 LBDEL00004850300	Plot No. F-165, Block- F, Entire Ground Floor Without Roof Rights, Ground Floor, Vikas Puri, Delhi 110018	21/06/2022 Rs. 52,53,158/-	07-03-2022	
18.	Harmeet Singh Sethi, F 21 First Floor, Vikasपुरi, Delhi-110018 LBDEL00004863995	Plot No. F-165, Block- F, Entire Ground Floor Without Roof Rights, Ground Floor, Vikas Puri, Delhi- 110018	21/06/2022 Rs. 2,76,034.5/-	07-03-2022	
The steps are being taken for substituted service of notice. The above borrower/s and/or their guarantors (as applicable) are advised to make the payments of outstanding within period of 60 days from the date of publication of this notice else further steps will be taken as per the provisions of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.					
Date : July 16, 2022 Place : Delhi NCR				Authorized Officer ICICI Bank Limited	

## Didi-Dhankhar chemistry was worse...

**From Page 1**  
As late as on Thursday, Dhankhar attacked the Mamata Banerjee Government not only for the deteriorating law and order situation but also her policy of appeasement of minorities. Appealing to the civil society of the State he said “break silence and highlight worrisome governance scenario of extreme appeasement, communalised patronage, Mafia Syndicate Extortion in the State

as this would help to enhance of democratic values and human rights protection.”

All these years as the duo engaged each other sometimes through war of words and sometimes through war of letters the Left and the Congress wondered whether it was a “shadow fight” in order to marginalise the other Opposition parties, particularly the Left. Both the Congress and the Left call the BJP and the TMC “horses from

the same stable.” Meanwhile, soon after the BJP leadership declared Dhankhar’s name as a possible NDA nominee for the V-Ps post both the Congress and the Left on raised questions over the longest ever “2-and-a-half-hour” discussion between the Governor and the Chief Minister at Darjeeling Raj Bhavan --- some 600 km from Kolkata --- in the presence of Assam Chief Minister Hemant Biswa Sarma. “It is quite interesting that

the two characters that fought continuously for two years in public were meeting for such a long time... that too in Darjeeling ... and not discussing anything political. It’s very difficult to digest,” said a senior CPI(M) central committee member adding “that Dhankhar was not sounded out about his nomination two days ago is impossible and that Mamata Banerjee was not passed on the information is also not

## Rewris for votes is a very dangerous...

**From Page 1**  
The prime minister laid the foundation stone of the Bundelkhand Expressway on February 29, 2020 and it was constructed in about 28 months. “This expressway will not only give speed to vehicles but will also accelerate the industrial progress of the entire Bundelkhand,” Modi said even as he outlined that improving the law and order and connectivity of the State holds the key to its development. BJP improved both, he emphasized.

The prime minister cautioned people, especially the youth, against the “rewri culture” and said it could be “very dangerous” for the country’s development. Rewri is a popular sweet of north India.

Under Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath’s leadership, Uttar Pradesh was seeing major transformation with better law and order and fast-improving connectivity, Modi said, and asked people to recall the state of law and order and road connectivity in Uttar Pradesh

earlier. He hailed the work being done by the double engine government in Uttar Pradesh.

BJP leaders use the term ‘double engine’ to refer to the party being in power at the Centre as well as in the state.

Modi said the path of development on which the country was moving had two aspects at its core - ‘iraada aur maryada’ (intent and dignity). “We are not only creating new facilities for the present but are also building the future of the country,” he said.

## NDA names W Bengal...

**From Page 1**  
“Glad that Jagdeep Dhankhar (West Bengal Governor) will be our (NDA’s) Vice-Presidential candidate... has excellent knowledge of our Constitution. He is also well-versed with legislative affairs. I am sure that he will be an outstanding Chair in the Rajya Sabha & guide the proceedings of the House with the aim of furthering national progress,” the Prime Minister tweeted.

“Kisan Putra Jagdeep Dhankhar Ji is known for his humility. He brings with him an illustrious legal, legislative and gubernatorial career. He has always worked for the well-being of farmers, youth, women and the marginalised,” he added. The Prime Minister met Dhankhar here earlier on Saturday, and thereafter with the Governors of Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, and Manipur. Prior to becoming the Governor, Dhankhar’s political innings included his election to the Lok Sabha in 1989 on a

Janata Dal ticket from Jhunjhunu in Rajasthan. He served as the Union Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs between 1990 and 1991 in the short-lived Government led by Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar. He is also a former MLA from the Kishangarh Assembly seat in Rajasthan. The nomination ended speculations on other candidates in the race like former Union Minister of State for Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi and Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan. Dhankhar’s election is likely to be smooth as out of Parliament’s current strength of 780, the BJP alone has 394 MPs, more than the majority mark of 390. The Opposition is meeting on Sunday to finalise its candidate for the Vice-President’s post. The last date for filing of nomination papers for the poll is July 19 and the election is scheduled for August 6. The term of the present incumbent M Venkaiah Naidu, ends on August 10.



**DISTRICT POLICE HEADQUARTERS KATHUA**  
E-mail: [sspkathua@jkpolice.gov.in](mailto:sspkathua@jkpolice.gov.in) Fax/Phone No.: 01922-234010

**LOOK OUT NOTICE**  
On 01.07.2022, one Rameshwar Dutt S/O Chhaju Ram R/O Rajpura District Samba lodged a written report at P/S Hiranagar stating therein that on 30.06.2022 his son namely Deepak Kumar went to Medical agency at Kootha Mohr where he was working but did not returned back. The complainant enquired his whereabouts from all relatives and nereby persons but no any clue could be struck out. On this, missing report vide GD No. 13 dated 01.07.2022 has been entered at P/S Hiranagar. During the course of investigation, best efforts were made to locate missing individual, whereas he is still un-traced. As such Description Roll/Photograph of said missing individuals is being shared with the appeal that anybody having clue/information about his whereabouts may inform us accordingly. The informer will be rewarded suitably:-  
**Description Roll :-**

- Name: Deepak Kumar
- Father: Rameshwar Dutt
- Permanent Address: Rajpura
- Present Address: Rajpura
- Tehsil: Rajpura
- Police Station: Ghagwal
- Age: 27 years
- Height: 05 Feet 07 Inch
- Complexion: Fair
- Built: Average
- Face: Round
- Eyes: Black
- Languages known: Dogri/Hindi.

Any information related to the whereabouts of the subject may be communicated on following Contacts:-  
**1. DPO Kathua - 01922-234010 (Phone/Fax)**  
**2. dpokathua@jkpolice.gov.in (Mail ID)**  
**3. PCR Kathua-01922-234311(Phone/Fax)**  
**4. Police Station Hiranagar: 01922-274222**

**Sd/- Sr. Superintendent of Police Kathua**





# AAP to back Yashwant in Prez poll: Sanjay Singh

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Saturday decided to support Opposition candidate Yashwant Sinha for the Presidential elections scheduled on July 18. AAP leader and MP Sanjay Singh announced this on Saturday after the AAP's political affairs committee (PAC) met in Delhi.



The decision was taken in the PAC meeting chaired by AAP national convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. The meeting was attended by Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and other members of the PAC, including Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh, Punjab MP Raghav Chadha, and MLA Atishi, among others. "We have respect for Draupadi Murmu

but will support Yashwant Sinhaji," Singh said. The AAP is the only non-BJP, non-Congress outfit having governments in two states —Delhi and Punjab.

Sinha is the candidate of a joint opposition front spearheaded by Bengal chief minister and Trinamool Congress leader Mamata Banerjee that excluded the AAP. "The PAC unanimously decided that the

AAP will support Yashwant Sinha. All AAP MLAs and MPs will vote for Sinha on July 18," Singh said. The AAP acknowledges and respects NDA nominee Droupadi Murmu's candidature in the presidential elections but the PAC has deemed it fit to support the opposition candidate, he said.

AAP has 10 Rajya Sabha MPs from two states including three from Delhi. Also, the party has a total 156 MLAs including 92 in Punjab, 62 in Delhi and two in Goa. In 10.86 lakh-strong electoral college, AAP has votes with a total value of 21,308. The party has 10 MPs with a vote value of 7,000, 92 MLAs in Punjab with a vote value of 10,672, 62 MLAs in Delhi with a vote value of 3,596 and two MLAs in Goa with a vote value of 40.

# MCD issues order on revamped property tax rates

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), has issued an order on the new rates of the property tax, which will be applicable from July 16, 2022, aiming to bring uniformity. "Property tax will be payable at the rate of 20 per cent uniformly on residential and non-residential farmhouses.

In addition to the above rates of property tax, an Education Cess of 1 per cent on annual property tax will also be payable," the order read.

"The MCD has fixed various 'use factors' for different types of properties. It has assigned four for entertainment and club, six for banquet hall and Baaraat ghar, one for school, college, medical college, engineering college run or aided by government or local body, three for unaided or educational institutions run by a trust and private institutions, four for commercial use



and three for industrial use. Property tax will be calculated using the 'use factor' at the rate of use factor two for all non-residential properties," the order stated.

As per the order, the MCD will collect 12 per cent rate for residential colonies of A and B category; 11 per cent for residential colonies of C, D, E categories; Property tax will be levied at the rate of 7 per cent for residential colonies of F, G, H categories. "For non-residential properties up to 1500 sq

ft, Property tax rate has been fixed at 20 per cent for categories A, B, C, D, E and 15 per cent for F, G, H. Non-residential properties above 1500 sq. ft. have been prescribed a property tax at a uniform rate of 20 per cent. Property tax has been fixed at a uniform rate of 15 per cent on industrial properties," it stated.

"For computing the service charge at the rate of 75 per cent on Central and Railway properties and for government undertakings, PSUs. Property

tax will be charged at the rate of 15 per cent for residential buildings and 20 per cent for non-residential buildings from constitutional bodies, tribunals, government departments etc.

Property tax will be payable at the rate of 20 per cent for covered land for airports and attached properties and 15 per cent on open spaces such as runways, taxiways, aprons, airport parking lots and 10 per cent on other land," it informed.

"In order to promote disposal of waste at source level, the civic agency has implemented a uniform rate to bring uniformity in the exemption given on property tax. 10 per cent rebate will be available on lump sum payment of property tax till the first quarter of every financial year that is 30th June," it further said.

"Senior citizens, women, differently-abled and retired soldiers will get 30 per cent rebate in property tax on a self-

use property of 100 square meters located in the city. Apart from this, to promote digital payments, incentive at the rate of 2 per cent on property tax not exceeding Rs 10000 and and limited to Rs 200 will be given," the order read.

"MCD will give 10 per cent rebate in property tax to those group housing society whose 90 per cent residents will pay their property tax besides this an additional rebate of 5 per cent in property tax will be given to group housing societies which will do 100 per cent waste segregation at source, 100 per cent composting of wet waste, 100 per cent processing of recyclable dry waste and handing over 100 per cent of remaining dry waste to corporation.

This additional rebate of 5 per cent in form of incentive will be extended in the way of taking up work at the recommendation of group housing society concerned," it said.

# Adesh Gupta slams Kejriwal for his remarks after PM's jibe on freebies

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi BJP President Adesh Gupta and Leader of Opposition in Delhi Assembly lashed out at the Delhi Chief Minister and AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal on his freebies comments saying instead of talking about making a new India, he should rather make efforts to make Delhi better.



Bidhuri said that Prime Minister Modi did not name anyone. "Kejriwal is taking credit for providing free education and health facilities in Delhi, but he is forgetting that free education is provided in government schools and government hospitals across the country," Bidhuri said.

"Not only this, the central government also provides education loans and subsidies in higher education. As far as health is concerned, the people of Delhi have not forgotten how Delhi's poor health services succumbed to corona during Corona and even tests for corona in Mohalla clinics were not

possible," Bidhuri added. BJP leaders reactions came after Kejriwal's reaction at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's jibe on freebies, whom the latter dubbed as 'revvari politics'.

Taking a jibe at Kejriwal, Delhi BJP president Gupta said that sometimes talks of making Delhi Paris or Singapore but ends up only making false statements and selling dreams to Delhiites.

"Now Delhiites are getting contaminated water to drink, roads are in bad condition, water logging issue hasn't been addressed at all for past over eight years. Also, mohalla

clinics are in a condition that doctors there have prescribed wrong medicines to children leading to death," said Gupta.

Gupta further said that PM Narendra Modi is working towards empowering country's youths, women and other sections whether it is through employment or welfare policies. "But Kejriwal government has put Delhi's youths in doubt and is crushing their dreams. Instead of helping them Kejriwal is using people for his political ends," said Gupta.

"A few months since AAP came to power in Punjab there has been an alarming rise in crime cases there. Not only these thousands of teachers there are sitting on dharna as AAP and Kejriwal have conveniently forgotten about regularizing them as was promised earlier," said Gupta.,

"Whether it is ayushman Bharat which has Rs five lakh free insurance cover, awas yojna under which poor get roof under their heads, he didn't implement them in Capital city," said Gupta.

# MCD orders probe into Alipur wall collapse; contractor held

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Municipal Corporation of Delhi has ordered a probe into the wall collapse incident in the Alipur area and suspended a junior engineer and an assistant engineer. Meanwhile, Delhi police has arrested the contractor and the supervisor of the construction site in the Alipur wall collapse incident.

According to police, the contractor is identified as Sikander and the supervisor as Satish. The accused Shakti Singh is still at large. AAP legislator Durgesh Pathak accused the BJP ruled MCD did not take any action despite repeated complaints due to their apparent connivance.

"A probe has been ordered into the incident and action has been taken.

A junior engineer and an assistant engineer have been placed under suspension, pending inquiry," a senior MCD official said. The inquiry was ordered on Friday on the orders of the municipal com-

missioner, he said, adding the action has been initiated after taking "serious cognisance of the unfortunate incident" in Bakoli village. Police on Friday said a case has been registered and two people have been arrested.

Meanwhile, the AAP on Saturday demanded that a proper investigation be conducted and the culprits should be punished under sections 302 and 307 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

"We are yet to come out of the shock and sorrow of the fire accident that took place in Mundka but as a result of rampant corruption in the BJP ruled MCD, another accident has happened in Delhi," said Durgesh Pathak, the AAP's MCD incharge.

"The AAP MLA from Narela, Sharad Chauhan had already raised the complaints against this godown multiple times. Localities also raised their voice against the illegal construction and most importantly, the SDM also complained that the godown is illegal and requested action

against the concerned people. If proper action is not taken, any untoward incident can take place. But the BJP-ruled MCD remained in deep sleep and took no action," said Pathak.

"Chauhan had submitted a letter to the Lieutenant Governor in-person when they met 15-20 days ago regarding unauthorized construction in Narela.

He communicated the content of the letter verbally as well and I might be in the minutes of the meeting as well," said Pathak.

"The Narela legislator also informed the area DC as well through a phone call and a letter. But what can be more pitiable than a Commissioner blocking the contact number of an MLA.

He was doing his work diligently as the people were reaching out to him with the issue. He made all possible efforts to stop such construction. Most importantly, area's SDM complained against this particular godown to the MCD," Pathak added.

# 2nd day of CUET Exam passes off with less chaos



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The second day of the Common University Entrance Test (CUET) on Saturday was less chaotic with aspirants saying they 'learnt lessons' from the glitches of the inaugural day.

Moreover, many of those who appeared on the first day, helped them in understanding the pattern. Many students were glad that the examination was not difficult. The debut edition of the CUET-UG kicked off on Friday. It is being conducted till August 10.

On the first day, many students missed the exams due to the last-minute change in the exam centre venue which hobbled the smooth conduct of the CUET for admission to undergraduate courses.

"Yesterday was chaotic. Centres were changed at the last minute. So this gave us a heads-up and I kept on checking the website to see if there was any change of centre.

To be on the safer side, I reached the centre two hours before the entry time. But I feel bad for those who missed their exams yesterday," said Sachin (17), whose examination centre was in Delhi University North Campus.

He said that he talked with his friends who gave the exams Friday to understand the pattern. "I have a few friends who sat for the examination on the first day and they told me what kind of questions are set. So it helped me a lot," he said. Meanwhile, Kritika (18) is

still upset with the arrangements made as she feels admit cards should come early. "The exam was easy and but the arrangement is the major problem. It should have been more organised to prevent incidents," Kritika said, adding that many of her friends got panicked after seeing what happened yesterday. "Nobody wants to skip the test. Every hour, I was checking my emails for update on centre change. We all came early to the centre," she added.

The CUET exam is being conducted in two phases - phase 1 in July and phase 2 in August. Candidates who have opted for Physics, Chemistry or Biology have been assigned the phase 2 of the CUET exam, given that NEET (UG) - 2022 will be held on July 17.

The UGC chief had in March announced that CUET scores, and not Class 12 marks, would be mandatory for admission to 45 central universities which can fix their minimum eligibility criteria.

The first set of CUET-UG papers, the gateway for undergraduate admissions in all central universities, began at 9 am Friday at centres across more than 510 cities in India and abroad.

With 14.9 lakh registrations, the CUET is now the second largest entrance exam in the country, surpassing JEE-Main's average registration of nine lakh. Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said the CUET is a step in right direction and any remaining challenge in the exam will be resolved at the earliest.

# 15-year-old girl allegedly raped in Delhi's Nangloi

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 15-year-old girl was allegedly raped in the national capital by a 31-year-old man with the help of his wife and three days later the accused poured some substance into the victim's mouth after she was hospitalised.



The accused, identified as Jai Prakash, working in a shoe factory, committed the heinous crime on July 2 in Delhi's Nangloi area.

"On July 5, the accused Jai Prakash stopped the victim while she was on her way to home and forcibly poured some liquid into her mouth," Deputy Commissioner of Police (outer) Sameer Sharma said. The girl fell unconscious

after reaching her home and was subsequently hospitalised. The accused Jai Prakash has been apprehended by the police.

The police got the information about the incident when the brother of the victim girl made a PCR call on July 15. "The PCR call was marked to one female Sub Inspector for necessary action," DCP Sharma said. During enquiry, it was revealed that the victim was under treatment at AIIMS

Hospital and was unfit for statement, however, on Saturday i.e. July 16, the doctor declared her fit for statement. "The statement of the victim was recorded today in the presence of an NGO member," the official said.

Accordingly, based on her complaint, the police registered an FIR under section 307 (attempt to murder), 376 (rape) and 34 (common intention) of the Indian Penal Code and section 6 of the POCSO Act at eh Nangloi police station.

Meanwhile, the said incident was first brought to the light by Delhi Commission for Women chairperson Swati Maliwal who took cognizance of the matter and issued notice to the Delhi Police. Maliwal said that the Delhi Commission

for Women received a complaint regarding rape and attempt to murder of a 15-year-old girl. The father of the girl informed the Commission that he is a daily wage labourer and lives in Delhi along with his family. He informed that his daughter used to work in a shoe factory.

The complainant alleged that one day a contractor of the shoe factory took his daughter to his house on pretext of his wife's illness and raped the girl. "He also alleged that on July 5, the accused forcibly made his daughter drink acid.

The girl is presently admitted in the hospital in a very critical condition," Maliwal said. The Commission has sought the details of FIR registered and accused arrested in

the matter. Notably, according to the data compiled by the Delhi Police, during the year 2021, as many as 1969 women were raped in the national capital, 21.69 per cent more than the previous year. In 2020, the figure stood at 1618.

Not just rape, every figure of crime against women has an upward variation. The molestation of women rose by 17.51 per cent and eve-teasing by 17.51 per cent. However, the Delhi Police termed the rise in figures of crime as "due to conscious policy of Fair and Truthful Registration".

But even as stringent laws are in place coupled with proactive approach of Delhi Police and a high solving rate of rape cases (95.48%), molestation of women cases

(90.98%) and insult to modesty of women (85.75%), the crime against women still ain't declining. One of the surprising reasons is that most of the time, the person committing a heinous crime is known to the victim woman, as was in the aforementioned case.

Shockingly, during the year 2021, in about 98.78 per cent of rape cases, the accused were known to the victim while strangers were involved in only about 1.22 per cent cases.

According to the Delhi Police, of all the rape cases reported last year, 13 per cent times the accused was a relative of the victim, 11 per cent times a neighbour, 46 per cent times a family or a friend and 1 per cent time an employee or a co-worker.

# LG orders probe into bribery charges

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Lt Governor V K Saxena has given his nod to an Anti Corruption Branch-probe into alleged charges of bribery against an officer earlier posted as deputy secretary in the Chief Minister's office. The officer was accused of seeking "monetary benefits" and also "harassing" a civil defence volunteer.

"The Lt Governor has granted approval to the ACB to conduct investigation against Mukul Manrai, the then Deputy Secretary in Chief Minister's Office (CMO), looking after Jan Samvad, the Public Grievance Management System (PGMS) has been charged with illegally demanding monetary gratification from a civil defence volunteer in lieu of certifying his attendance register," sources in Raj Niwas said. The officer, currently posted at the Revenue department.



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Heavy rainfall in Delhi and the national capital region on Saturday afternoon brought relief from the oppressive humidity and heat but this has caused waterlogging and traffic jams at several places including at ITO, Ashram,

New Rohtak Road, Kashmeri Gate, Subahsh Marg road and other parts of the Capital city. Many people took to Twitter and posted pictures of rain in the national capital. However, the minimum temperature was recorded at 28.3 degrees Celsius, one notch above the normal, while the maximum

temperature is settled at 36.5 degrees Celsius. The city had been reeling under muggy weather conditions for the last several days and Saturday rains provided the much-needed relief to people who were seen enjoying the showers. People also took to social media and posted pictures of rains and

waterlogging. Areas that witnessed waterlogging and traffic congestion include Khanpur, Hauzrani, Malviya Nagar, Uttam Nagar, Dhaula Kuan, near AIIMS flyover, Mehrauli-Badarpur Road, Vikas Marg, ITO, Sikandara Road, Kirti Nagar, Anand Parbat-Zakhira road, Kashmeri Gate, Wazirabad Road from Khajuri Chowk to Yamuna Vihar, Ring Road near Majnu Ka Tila among others. As per the reports released by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), following the rainfall in the city, two complaints of waterlogging in the Capital were reported in Uttam Nagar and Malviya Nagar.

However, eight complaints of parts of trees fallen or trees fallen were reported in the Jangpura extension, Defence colony, Neb Sarai, Saket, Greater Kailash-2, Malviya Nagar, Kirti Nagar, Paharganj area.

The Traffic Police also took to Twitter to inform commuters about waterlogging and road congestion. "Traffic is affected on MB Road outside Hauzrani Forest Park in the carriageway from Khanpur T-

point towards Saket Metro Station due to waterlogging. Kindly avoid the stretch," the Delhi Traffic Police tweeted.

In another tweet, it said the traffic was affected on New Rohtak Road in the carriage-way from Anand Parbat towards Zakhira due to waterlogging at opposite Gali No.10 Anand Parbat.

According to India Meteorological Department (IMD), the city received moderate rainfall between 8.30 am and 5.30 pm. Safdarjung observatory, which is the city's official marker, received 19.6 mm rainfall.

Delhi's Ridge area received 25.3 mm rainfall while Delhi University received 24.5 mm rains. Similarly, observatories at Pitampura, SPS Mayur Vihar, Lodhi Road and Ayanagar received 21.5 mm, 20.5 mm, 18.4 mm, 15.4 mm rainfall, respectively on Saturday between 8.30 am and 5.30 pm.

Rainfall recorded below 15 mm is considered light, between 15 and 64.5 mm is moderate, between 64.5 mm and 115.5 mm is heavy, between 115.6 and 204.4 is very

heavy. Anything above 204.4 mm is considered extremely heavy rainfall. "A generally cloudy sky with thunderstorms and light rains is expected in

## Monsoon proved tall claims of Kejriwal false, says BJP

**NEW DELHI:** Delhi BJP on Saturday alleged that monsoon rainfall has exposed the tall claims of the Arvind Kejriwal Government.

Delhi BJP President Adesh Gupta said that in fact, a steady rainfall on Saturday leading to water logging with people stuck in long traffic jams and vehicles moving at snail pace showed just the usual scenario for past over eight years and people of Delhi have got used to it. "After rains, areas like Mayur Vihar phase-3, Akshardhaam, GTB Nagar, ITO, Laxmi Nagar, Burari, Sardar Patel Marg etc witnessed heavy traffic jams for hours," he said. SR

the national capital in the next few days," the IMD said. The IMD bulletin said the maximum and minimum temperatures on Sunday will hover around 37 and 27 degrees Celsius, respectively. The relative humidity recorded at 5.30 pm 96 per cent, the IMD bulletin said.

## Many areas flooded, MCD, Delhi Govt's claim exposed: Cong

**NEW DELHI:** Delhi Congress president Ch. Anil Kumar said that all the claims made by the Delhi Government and the MCD that they were fully "prepared" to meet the monsoon challenge were exposed when heavy rains lashed Delhi on Saturday, with several areas in the Capital getting flooded, including the perennial water-logging hot spot like ITO, causing heavy traffic gridlock on most streets. SR



# Parl to see stormy Monsoon Session as Opp skips Birla's all-party meet

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

The Opposition parties on Saturday set the stage for a stormy Monsoon Session that commences on July 18 as a majority of them skipped the customary all-party meeting called by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla.

None from the TMC, NCP, Samajwadi Party, BSP, BJD, CPM, JMM, TRS, TDP, Akali Dal and other parties attended the meeting.

The Trinamool Congress has said it would also boycott the customary all party meeting convened by the Vice President on Sunday. However, a separate meeting convened by the Opposition parties to discuss the strategy

for Monsoon Session and deciding on the Vice Presidential candidate is likely to be in full attendance on Sunday.

The Government has also called an all-party meeting on Sunday when Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to attend. If the Opposition will boycott this meeting or not is not known though.

The invite has also been extended to Telangana Chief Minister and the head of Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) K Chandrashekar Rao who during the last one day have reached out to all non-BJP and non-Congress party leaders to galvanise his own political force.



The Opposition meeting is likely to be litmus test of their unity after parties like JMM, Shiv Sena broke ranks to support the NDA nomination Draupadi Murmu in the

Presidential polls.

The meeting with the Speaker came against the backdrop of the recent rousing controversies over the list of 'unparliamentary words' and alleged 'banning of protests' in Parliament precincts.

The Opposition demanded a discussion on the short four-year 'Agnipath' military recruitment scheme, unemployment and farmers' issues and sufficient time be given to it to raise these issues, Congress leader in Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said after the meeting.

The first day of the monsoon session will see voting for the presidential election.

Besides Chowdhury, DMK MP TR Balu, Union

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi, BJP MP Arjun Ram Meghwal, YSRCP MP PV Mithunreddy, RLJP MP Pashupati Kumar Paras and other parliamentarians from other parties attended the meeting called by the Speaker.

Some of the bills that are in the pending list include The Indian Antarctica Bill, 2022. The bill is pending in the Lok Sabha. The Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill, 2022 was passed by Lok Sabha and is yet to be passed by Rajya Sabha. The Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Bill, 2021 is pending in Lok Sabha, The Anti-Maritime Piracy Bill, 2019 and The National Anti-Doping Bill, 2021 are also pending in Lok Sabha.

The Constitution (Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes) Orders (Second Amendment) Bill, 2022 (in respect of State of UP - amendment regarding change of district name to be approved by Cabinet) was introduced in Lok Sabha in March 2022.

The new bills to be newly introduced in the Parliament during the Monsoon session include The Central Universities Amendment Bill, 2022.

After the meeting, Birla said he appealed to all party leaders to hold discussions on key issues currently facing us in the interest of the country. "There will be 18 sittings

and a total time of 108 hours will be available to house members. 62 hours have been allotted for government business during the session," Birla said and informed that the timing of submission of notice for raising matters during Zero Hour has been changed.

Now Members can give notices from 0900 hours of a given day to 0800 hours of the Session day on which the members desire to raise their matters in the House during Zero Hour. Notices for Monday or the first working day of the week may be given between 0900 a.m. on Friday or the last working day of the previous week and 0800 a.m. on Monday or the first working day of that week.

## Mutual respect between Govt and Opposition diminishing, says CJI

**PNS/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/JAIPUR**

Maintaining that political Opposition is translating into hostility, Chief Justice of India N V Ramana on Saturday said this is not a sign of a healthy democracy.

He said there used to be mutual respect between the Government and the Opposition, which is diminishing. "Political opposition should not translate into hostility, which we have been sadly witnessing these days. These are not signs of a healthy democracy," Ramana said.

He was speaking at the inaugural session of the 18th All India Legal Services Authority in Jaipur. The event was organised at the Rajasthan



Assembly by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA).

"There used to be mutual respect between government and opposition. Unfortunately, space for opposition is diminishing," he said.

The CJI also raised concerns over the quality of legislative performance. "Sadly, the country is witnessing a decline in the quality of legislative performance," he said, adding laws are being passed without detailed deliberations

and scrutiny.

This apart, the CJI stressed the need to increase the efficiency of the criminal justice system and pointed out that of the 6.10 lakh prisoners in the country, nearly 80 per cent are undertrials.

From indiscriminate arrest to difficulty in obtaining bail, the process leading to prolonged incarceration of under-trial prisoners needs urgent attention, he said adding we need a holistic plan of action to increase the efficiency of the administration of the criminal justice system, he said.

Earlier, Union Law Minister Kiren Rijiju had appealed to the State Legal Services Authorities to take efforts so that maximum undertrial prisoners can be released by August 15, 2022, when India celebrates its 75th Independence Day.

At the same time, he expressed concern over the exorbitant legal fees charged by prominent advocates, thereby putting justice out of reach for the poor and marginalised in the country.

"Resourceful people can afford big lawyers. There are lawyers in the Supreme Court whose fees a common man cannot afford. If they charge Rs 10-15 lakh per hearing, how can a common man pay up," Rijiju asked while addressing the event.

Rijiju said that 71 obsolete Acts will be repealed in the Monsoon session of Parliament, slated to begin from Monday, July 18.

## Gehlot deplores attacks on SC judges over their Nupur Sharma observation

**PTI ■ JAIPUR**

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot Saturday deprecated attacks on Supreme Court justices over their observations against suspended BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma for her remarks on Prophet Mohammad, saying an "issue" was created when the two judges expressed their views.

He was referring to the observations made by a Supreme Court bench of Justice J B Pardiwala and Justice Surya Kant which had on July 1 rebuked Sharma for her "disturbing" remarks against the Prophet Mohammad. The bench had said Sharma's remarks led to unfortunate incidents and ignited emotions across the country.

Gehlot said on Saturday

the Supreme Court judges had expressed their views about the condition in the country but an "issue" was created. "Recently Justice Pardiwala and Justice Surya Kant had said something. It is our duty to respect the judiciary. 116 people were made to stand (against the judges), including former high court and Supreme Court judges, bureaucracy, and officers. Don't know who they were? How it was managed and who managed it and an issue was created in the country," Gehlot said.

He was addressing the inaugural session of the 18th All India Legal Services Authority in Jaipur, attended by Chief Justice of India N V Ramana, other judges of the Supreme Court and those from different high courts.

Gehlot's mention of "116 people" was probably a reference to a group of former judges and bureaucrats who earlier this month had demanded that the SC recall its observations against Nupur Sharma, alleging the court crossed the "Laxman Rekha" while making comments.

The group, comprising 15 high court judges, 77 ex-all India services officers and 25 veterans (a total of 117), had alleged that the "unfortunate" comments are not in sync with the judicial ethos and have sent "shockwaves" in the country and outside. Gehlot also said post-retirement concerns were "affecting" the functioning of judges. Judges and bureaucrats, he said, should work to serve the country rather than be

concerned about their post-retirement ambitions. In the context, he mentioned the nomination of former Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi as a Rajya Sabha MP, saying he was one of the four SC judges who had said, at an unprecedented press conference in Delhi in 2018, that democracy is in danger in the country.

He then became the chief justice and later a parliamentarian, Gehlot said. He then went to mention the crisis his government faced last year due to a rebellion led by his then deputy Sachin Pilot. "I don't know how my government survived. I would not have been standing before you today. You would have met some other chief minister today. It was a matter of touch-and-go," Gehlot said.

## ITBP jawan fires at three colleagues, shoots self dead

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI/JAMMU**

A constable of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) fired upon and injured three of his colleagues before shooting himself dead at a camp in Udhampur district on Saturday.

All the injured personnel have been shifted to the Army's Command Hospital, Udhampur and are safe. The ITBP has ordered a court of inquiry to ascertain the reasons behind the incident.

"A constable of 8th Battalion, Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) was reported to have opened fire injuring his three colleagues in Udhampur, J & K. He later shot himself and

died, the ITBP said in a statement.

The deceased constable was part of an ad hoc battalion deployed in Jammu and Kashmir looking after the security duties. "The incident took place at around 3.30 PM today at the Devika Ghat Community Centre, Udhampur. Constable/GD (General Duty) Bhupendra Singh was part of the F Company of the 2nd Adhoc Battalion of the ITBP." The paramilitary further said in its statement.

The incident comes a day after two Territorial Army personnel were killed and as many others were injured in a fratricidal incident in Surankote area of Poonch.

## IAF annual flypast parade to take place in Chandigarh this year

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**



In an effort to showcase air prowess to people in different parts of the country, the IAF annual fly past and parade this year will take place in Chandigarh instead of Hindon airbase, Ghaziabad. The fly past and parade will take place on Air Force Day on October 8.

Till now, the annual high profile event used to take place at the Hindon airbase for the past few years after shifting from the Palam airbase in 2006. The Palam airbase hosted the annual event for many decades.

After gauging the response of this year's parade and fly

past, the IAF may hold the annual event in other cities of the country in the coming years, sources said here on Saturday.

The main objective of shifting the fly past from the national capital region is to expose the general masses to

the IAF especially the thrilling aerobatics performed by front line fighter jets, they said. These demonstrations may also inspire youngsters to opt for a career in the IAF, sources said.

They also said IAF chief V R Chaudhari has also asked his force to involve as many people as possible in the celebrations related to Air Force Day.

Initial plans suggest the fly past this year may take place in the backdrop of the Sukhna lake in Chandigarh where a large number of people from nearby towns can also come and see the gala event.

The IAF will showcase most of its frontline fighter jets including the newly inducted Rafales, SU-30, Mirage, Mig 29s and Jaguars. The Surya

Kiran and Sarang teams will also perform hair raising aerobatic stunts.

The decision to have the IAF fly past in Chandigarh comes at a time when the present NDA government has hosted several high profile events outside the national capital. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has hosted several foreign VIPs in different cities.

Moreover, the prestigious defence exhibition Def Expo is also held in different cities for the past few years after shifting from New Delhi, they said. Besides involving local people, the aim of holding these events in other cities is to promote tourism and the economy of that region, they said.

## DEC Infra lowest bidder for building executive enclave housing PMO, Cab secretariat

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

Hyderabad-based construction firm DEC Infrastructure has emerged as the lowest bidder for building the Executive Enclave that will house the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), the Cabinet Secretariat, the India House and the National Security Council Secretariat.

DEC Infrastructure and Projects (India) Private Limited had quoted an amount of around Rs 1,189 crore, 10.44 per cent less than the Rs 1,328-crore cost estimated by the Central Public Works Department (CPWD), which has been executing the Narendra Modi government's ambitious Central Vista Redevelopment project.

The estimated cost also includes maintenance and housekeeping for five years. Tata Projects Limited, which is constructing a new Parliament building, quoted Rs 1,407 crore, which is 5.97 per cent more than the estimated project cost. Larsen and Toubro Limited had quoted a bid amount of around Rs 1,424 crore, according to the document. Apart from the PMO, the Executive Enclave will house the Cabinet Secretariat, the India House and the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS).

The India House will be used as a conference facility like the Hyderabad House where high-level talks, especially with top visiting leaders of various countries, are currently held.

## CBI arrests farm Ministry officer, 3 more from Visakhapatnam, recovers ₹1.86 crore

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

The CBI on Saturday said it has arrested a Plant Protection Officer, Directorate of Plant Protection, Quarantine & Storage Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Visakhapatnam, and three private persons in a bribery case and recovered Rs 1.86 crore during searches.

A case was registered against the Plant Protection Officer Padam Singh and Athi Bulli Reddy alias Murali, Regional Manager, Exim Logistics Pvt. Ltd., Visakhapatnam. The two other accused persons are S Siva



Rama Gupta, resident of Visakhapatnam and proprietor of Quality Fumigation & Pest Control Services, Myla Srikrishna Varma, officials said.

It was alleged that Singh was demanding and collecting huge amounts of bribes from the CHAs, Fumigators and Shipping Agents for issuing Phytosanitary Certificates for exporting the goods and Consignment Release Orders

for imported consignments.

It was further alleged that the public servant demanded illegal gratification from the Regional Manager of the private company based at Visakhapatnam for clearing pending application and issuing favourable certificate to Customs for release of import/export consignments of agricultural commodities.

"The CBI apprehended the Plant Protection Officer, Visakhapatnam and the said Regional Manager of private company and recovered the bribe amount of Rs 6,000," the CBI said in a statement.

Searches were conducted at

the premises of the accused and others, including his associates at Visakhapatnam, Kakinada, Roorkee (Uttarakhand).

"Cash to the tune of Rs 1,29,63,450 was recovered from the premises of the public servant and Rs 56,86,000 allegedly belonging to the public servant was recovered from the premises of others. Certain incriminating documents were also recovered," the agency said.

The arrested accused persons are being produced before the Court of Principal Special Judge for CBI Cases, Visakhapatnam for further action, added the agency.

## India reports over 20,000 Covid cases for third day in row, active cases over 1.40 lakh

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

India reported over 20,000 new Covid-19 cases for the third day in a row. On Saturday, 20,044 new coronavirus infections were logged in taking the active caseload to over 1.40 lakh. The country also reported 56 more deaths and over 18,000 recoveries.

According to Health Ministry data updated on Saturday, the death toll has climbed to 5,25,660 with 56 more fatalities. Active cases increased by 1,687 in a day and now comprise 0.32 per cent of the total infections while the

national recovery rate is 98.48 per cent.

The daily positivity rate has been recorded at 4.80 per cent while the weekly positivity rate is 4.40 per cent.

The total number of people who have recuperated from the Covid infection surged to 4,30,63,651, while the case fatality rate was 1.20 per cent. According to the ministry, 199.71 crore Covid vaccine doses have been administered in the country.

Of the 56 deaths, 27 are from Kerala, 10 from Maharashtra, five from West Bengal, two each from Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttar

Pradesh, and one each from Assam, Bihar, Karnataka, Punjab, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, and Uttarakhand. An increase of 1,687 cases has been recorded in the active COVID-19 caseload in a span of 24 hours. The active cases comprise 0.32 per cent of the total infections, the ministry said.

The total death toll in the country is now at 5,25,660. In India, the first death due to the Covid pandemic was reported in March 2020.

The daily positivity rate on July 16 was recorded 4.80 per cent. India's vaccine coverage has reached the 199-crore mark. Over 3.79 crore first

doses and over 2.60 crore second doses have been administered for the age group of 12 to 14. Over 6.80 crore first doses and more than 5 crore second doses have been given to the 15 to 18 age group, as per the government data. Meanwhile, over 4.52 crore precaution doses (booster shots) have been given to people above 60 years of age, healthcare workers, and frontline workers.

Currently, India is also conducting a free Precaution Dose drive for all adults for 75 days which commenced yesterday to help all eligible citizens get their precaution dose.

# Covaxin induces robust immune memory to SARS-Cov-2: Report

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

Scientists have found that Covaxin, which is an inactivated whole-virion vaccine manufactured by Bharat Biotech, an Indian pharma, induces robust immune memory to SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) and variants of concern that persist for at least six months after vaccination and induces memory T cells that can respond robustly against the variants.

This may help in control-

ling the virus load and thus, reduce the disease severity, according to a study.

The study was published in the Nature Microbiology journal.

Although the clinical trial data were available for the vaccine efficacy, important questions remained unanswered for evidence-based policy-making particularly. These included whether the vaccine induces immune memory, how long the vaccine-induced memory persists, and whether these memory responses are

able to sustain against the SARS-CoV-2 variants.

In a multi-institutional collaboration with the Translational Health Science and Technology Institute (THSTI), Faridabad, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi, ESIC Medical College, Faridabad, Lok Nayak Jai Prakash Narayan Hospital (LNJP) Hospital, New Delhi, LJI, LA Jolla, Dr. Nimesh Gupta and group at the National Institute of Immunology (NII), New Delhi, investigated 97 SARS-

CoV-2 unexposed individuals who had received vaccine, up to six months after 2-dose vaccination. The vaccine-induced responses were compared with the immune memory in 99 individuals who recovered from mild COVID-19, the Union Ministry of Science & Technology said in a statement.

The study supported under IRHPA-COVID-19 special call by the Science and Engineering Research Board, a statutory body of the Department of Science and

Technology, found that the vaccine produces antibodies against Spike, RBD, and Nucleoprotein of the virus, just like in virus infection. However, analyses of both the binding and neutralising antibodies revealed a reduced recognition of variants of concern like Delta (India), Beta (S. Africa), and Alpha (UK).

"This study showed that the vaccine is capable of inducing memory B cells. The researchers found this satisfying because antibodies may decline with time, but these



memory B cells can replenish antibodies against the virus, whenever required. Their

study provided the first-ever evidence of the detailed traits of immune memory generat-

ed in humans in response to an inactivated virus vaccine," the Ministry said.



# RUSSIA STEPS UP STRIKES ON UKRAINE

AP ■ KRAMATORSK

Russia stepped up its onslaught against Ukraine on Saturday, with civilian casualties reported in several areas of the country. At least three civilians were killed and three more were injured in a Russian rocket strike on the northern Ukrainian city of Chuhuiv in the early hours, a regional police chief said.

Serhiy Bolvinov, the deputy head of Kharkiv's regional police force, said that the rockets were likely fired from Russian territory. Chuhuiv lies some 120 kilometers from the border.

"Four Russian rockets, presumably fired from around (the Russian city of) Belgorod at night, at about 3:30, hit a residential building, a school and administrative buildings," Bolvinov wrote on Facebook, adding that a two-story apartment block was partly destroyed.

"The bodies of three people were found under the rubble. Three more were injured. The victims are civilians," Bolvinov added. In the neigh-



boring Sumy region, one civilian was killed and at least seven more were injured after Russians opened mortar and artillery fire on three towns and villages not far from the Russian border, regional governor Dmytro Zhvyvtsky said

on Telegram on Saturday morning. Seven civilians were killed and 14 more received injuries over in the most recent 24 hours in cities in Ukraine's embattled eastern Donetsk region, its governor said Saturday morning. Nearby,

however, Ukrainian troops repelled a Russian overnight assault on a strategic eastern highway, said Serhiy Haidai, the governor of the Luhansk region. Haidai said that Russia had been attempting to capture the main road link between the

cities of Lysychansk and Bakhmut "for more than two months." "They still cannot control several kilometers of this road," Haidai wrote in a Telegram post. Russia's defense chief told troops to step up operations across Ukrainian

territory, according to social media updates from the defense ministry on Saturday. A Facebook post said Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu gave "instructions to further intensify the actions of units in all operational areas, in order to exclude the possibility of the Kyiv regime to launch massive rocket and artillery strikes on civilian infrastructure and residents of settlements in Donbas and other regions."

According to the post, Shoigu on Saturday inspected some of the Russian units that have served in Ukraine, handing out awards for bravery. Russia's military campaign has been focusing on the Donbas, covering Donetsk and Luhansk, but Russian forces also have been pounding other parts of the country in a relentless push to wrest territory from Ukraine and soften the morale of its leaders, civilians and troops as the war nears the five-month mark.

In Ukraine's south, two people were wounded by Russian shelling in the town of Bashanka, northeast of the Black Sea city of Mykolaiv,

according to a Telegram post by regional governor Vitaliy Kim.

Kim said that Mykolaiv itself also came under renewed Russian fire in the early hours. On Friday morning, he had posted videos of what he said was a Russian missile attack on the city's two largest universities, and denounced Russia as "a terrorist state." Two people were killed and a woman was hospitalized after a Russian rocket strike on the eastern riverside city of Nikopol, emergency services said. Dnipropetrovsk governor Valentyn Reznichenko said on Telegram that a five-story apartment block, a school and a vocational school building were damaged.

On Friday, cruise missiles fired by Russian strategic bombers struck the southeastern Ukrainian city of Dnipro, killing at least three people and wounding 16, Ukrainian officials said. In a regular press briefing Saturday, Russian defense officials said that the strike had destroyed "workshops producing components for, and repairing, Tochka-U ballistic missiles, as well as

multiple rocket launchers." Spokesman Igor Konashenkov did not respond to Ukrainian allegations that the strike had killed civilians.

On Thursday, a Russian missile strike killed at least 23 people—including three children—and wounded more than 200 in Vinnytsia, a city southwest of Kyiv, the capital, far from the front line.

Russia said the Kalibr cruise missiles hit a "military facility" that was hosting a meeting between Ukrainian air force command and foreign weapons suppliers. Ukrainian authorities have insisted the site had nothing to do with the military.

Ukraine's Interior Ministry said Friday that Russian forces have conducted more than 17,000 strikes on civilian targets during the war, killing thousands of fighters and civilians and driving millions from their homes.

The invasion has also rippled through world economy by hiking prices and crimping exports of key Ukrainian and Russian products such as grain, fuel and fertilizer.



## G20 finance meetings in Bali overshadowed by war in Ukraine

AP ■ BANGKOK

Financial leaders of the Group of 20 richest and biggest economies have wrapped up meetings on the Indonesian resort island of Bali without a final joint communique after talks were overshadowed by divisions over the war in Ukraine.

As G-20 host this year, Indonesia has sought to bridge divisions between G-20 members over Russia's invasion, but enmity over the conflict was evident even as the finance ministers and central bank chiefs appeared to concur on the urgency of global economic challenges, including decades-high inflation and food insecurity, which has been worsened by the war.

Asked why there was no joint statement or communique from the meeting, Indonesian Finance Minister Sri Mulyani Indrawati said that all involved agreed the meeting took place "under a very challenging and difficult situation because of the geopolitical tensions."

She said delegates had "expressed sympathy that Indonesia has to manage this situation." But Indrawati and Indonesian central bank Gov. Perry Warjiyo said Indonesia would later release a G-20 chair's statement that would include two paragraphs describing areas where the participants failed to agree.

Indrawati said there were still issues that could not be reconciled, "because they want to express their views related to the war." In the statement "related to the war there are still views that are

different within the G-20," she said. Indrawati outlined a range of areas where the members did agree, including the need to improve food security, to support the creation of a funding mechanism for pandemic preparedness, prevention and responses, on working toward a global tax agreement and on facilitating financing of transitions toward cleaner energy to cope with climate change.

"The progress is more than expected," Warjiyo said. With inflation running at four-decade highs—U.S. Consumer prices were up 9.1% in June—Warjiyo said participants were "strongly committed to achieving price stability."

"There is a commitment among the G-20 to well calibrated macro economic policy to address inflation and slowing growth," he said. The meetings in Bali follow a gathering of foreign ministers earlier this month that also failed to find common ground over Russia's war in Ukraine and its global impacts.

During the talks that began Friday, U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen condemned Moscow for "innocent lives lost and the ongoing human and economic toll that the war is causing around the world." "Russia is solely responsible for negative spillovers to the global economy, particularly higher commodity prices," she said.

Canadian Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland likened the attendance of Russian officials at the meetings to having "an arsonist joining firefighters."

## Maryam Nawaz offers 'hand of friendship' to Imran Khan's party



PTI ■ LAHORE

Ruling PML-N leader and deposed premier Nawaz Sharif's daughter Maryam Nawaz has for the first time offered a "hand of friendship" to Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, saying fighting between the two mainstream political parties is not in the best interest of the country.

"I don't want to fight with the PTI. I want Pakistan to

progress and for this I offer a hand of friendship, peace and love to the PTI youth and its supporters. I first take this initiative only for Pakistan.

I also ask Imran Khan to let the country progress," Maryam said while addressing a rally of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party in Multan city of Punjab province on Friday ahead of crucial bypolls in Punjab province. She, however, warned the former prime minister Khan, who was removed through a no-confidence motion in April, and his party that her "offer of peace" should not be taken as her or her Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz party's weakness as she knows how to give a "tit-for-tat" response.

Bypolls in 20 Punjab provincial assembly seats are taking place on Sunday.



PTI ■ LONDON

The crux of the UK prime ministerial frontrunner Rishi Sunak's message was around honesty as he clashed with his four remaining rivals in the first televised debate of the race to replace Boris Johnson as the Conservative Party leader. Former Chancellor Sunak, who is

## Biden meets with Arab, Gulf countries to counter Iran threat



AP ■ JEDDAH (SAUDI ARABIA)

President Joe Biden was using a summit of Arab nations on Saturday to lay out his strategy for the Middle East as he closes the final leg of a four-day trip meant to bolster U.S. Relationships in a region bracing for confrontation with Iran. The president spent the

morning meeting individually with the leaders of Iraq, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates, some of whom he had never sat down with. Biden invited Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, who became president of the UAE two months ago, to visit the White House this year, saying he looked forward "to another period of strong

and growing cooperation" between their countries under the sheik's leadership.

The Gulf Cooperation Council summit, which is being held in the Red Sea port city of Jeddah, is an opportunity for Biden to demonstrate his commitment to the region after spending most of his presidency focused on Russia's invasion of Ukraine and China's growing influence in Asia.

Hours before the conference began, the White House released satellite imagery that indicates Russian officials have twice recently visited Iran to see weapons-capable drones it is looking to acquire for use in its war in Ukraine.

None of the countries represented at the summit have moved in lockstep with the U.S. To sanction Russia, a key foreign policy priority for the Biden administration. If anything, the UAE has emerged as a sort of financial haven for

Russian billionaires and their multimillion-dollar yachts. Egypt remains open to Russian tourists. Release satellite imagery that shows Russian officials visited Kashan Airfield on June 8 and July 15 to look at the drones could help the administration better tie the war's relevance to many Arab nations' own concerns about Iran's nuclear ambitions, missile program and support for militants in the region.

A senior Biden administration official, who briefed reporters before the summit, said Moscow's efforts to acquire drones from Tehran show that Russia is "effectively making a bet on Iran."

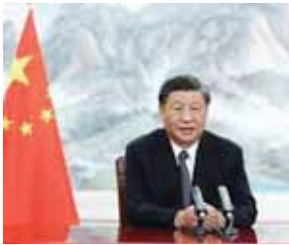
Biden's attendance at the Gulf Cooperation Council summit followed his Friday meeting with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the oil-rich kingdom's de facto ruler and heir to the throne currently held by his father, King Salman.

## President Xi meets PLA troops connected with Ladakh standoff

PTI ■ BEIJING

Chinese President Xi Jinping, who made a rare visit this week to the restive Xinjiang region which borders Ladakh, met the troops and officers stationed there and praised their "outstanding contributions" to the border defence and stabilisation of the volatile province.

Xi, who heads the Central Military Commission (CMC), the overall high command of the Chinese military, met the representatives of the officers and soldiers stationed in Xinjiang in the provincial capital Urumqi on Friday. Xi, who visited the border province from July 12 to 15 where his



government is widely accused of oppressing predominantly Muslim ethnic minorities, extended greetings to all the commanders and fighters of the troops stationed in the province and fully affirmed the "outstanding contributions" made by the troops stationed in the region, state-run Xinhua news agency reported. Photos

in the official media showed that besides the top brass of the Western Theatre Command of the PLA, which oversees the 3,488-km-long LAC between India and China, Qi Fabao, the regimental commander of the PLA who was injured during the June 2020 clash at Galwan in eastern Ladakh was also present at the meeting.

He was subsequently honoured with "hero regiment commander for defending the border." While full details of his address were not released, official media reports said that President Xi emphasised that it is necessary to implement the ruling Communist Party's idea of strengthening the Army in the new era.

## Sudan says 31 killed in tribal clashes in Blue Nile province

AP ■ CAIRO

At least 31 people were killed in tribal clashes in a Sudanese southern province, authorities said, the latest bloodshed in a country in turmoil since an October military coup.

The fighting between the Hausa and Birta ethnic groups in the Blue Nile province grew out of the killing of a farmer earlier this week, according to a statement from the local government late Friday.

The clashes also left at least 39 people injured and damaged some 16 shops in the town of Roseires, it said. The local government deployed the military and

paramilitary Rapid Support Forces—or RSF—to bring stability to the region. Authorities also imposed a nightly curfew and banned gatherings in the area where the clashes took place.

The violence came amid chaos in Sudan since the military's took over in October, removing a transitional government that ruled the country since a popular uprising forced the overthrow of longtime autocrat Omar al-Bashir in April 2019.

The coup upended the country's transition to democracy and raised questions about military leaders' ability to bring security to Sudan's far-reaching areas.

## Pakistan assures IMF over CPEC energy deals: Report

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan has assured the IMF that it would try to receive concessions from the Chinese investors participating in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) power plants in the shape of either reduction in the profit rates on investment or rescheduling the loan repayments, according to a media report on Saturday.

The assurance to seek concessions from Chinese investors was given by Pakistani authorities to remove one of bottlenecks in the finalisation of a staff-level agreement with International Monetary Fund, government sources told *The Express Tribune* newspaper.

## Over 6 mn people in crisis-hit Sri Lanka food insecure: World Food Prog

**United Nations:** Over six million people or over 28 per cent of Sri Lanka's population are "food insecure" and this situation is likely to deteriorate as the crisis unfolds in the island nation which is grappling with its worst economic crisis, the World Food Programme has said.

Sri Lanka is currently reeling under a severe foreign exchange crisis with falling reserves and the government is unable to foot the bill for essential imports. The economic crisis has led to an acute shortage of essential items like food, medicine, cooking gas, fuel and toilet paper, with Sri Lankans being forced to wait in lines for hours

outside stores to buy fuel and cooking gas. The WFP on Friday said in a situation report that 6.3 million people (28.3 per cent) in the country are food insecure and this is likely to deteriorate as the crisis unfolds.

Of these, at least 65,600 people are severely food insecure. WFP warned that these figures could increase drastically without immediate intervention, the report added.

WFP said skyrocketing food costs are making it harder for the population to meet their food needs. About 6.7 million people are not consuming adequate diets and 5.3 million people are reducing the number of meals eaten. The

agency is immediately scaling up operations to reach 3.4 million people in 2022. The WFP said it urgently requires 63 million dollars to carry out its life-saving assistance.

The situation update said that household food security and nutrition situation is set to deteriorate as the crisis ensues, according to the WFP and FAO's recent Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission (CFSAM).

Further, incomes in the last three months have plummeted and about two in five households reported that their income has been cut in half. To cope with the lack of food, 5 million people are using crisis or emergency livelihood cop-

ing strategies that are likely to impact their medium- to long-term capacity for income-generating activities and food security. Food inflation reached a staggering 80 per cent in June 2022. Coupled with livelihood disruptions, this further limits households' purchasing power.



The update said that the upcoming Maha season is at risk of seeing a 50 per cent reduction in paddy planting areas and an unlikely recovery of the fisheries and livestock sectors if farmers do not gain access to seeds, fertilizer, and financial assistance. PTI

## Indian-American Naureen Hassan named Prez of UBS Americas and CEO of UBS Americas Holding

**New York:** A prominent Indian-American finance executive, Naureen Hassan, has been appointed President of UBS Americas and CEO of UBS Americas Holding, according to Switzerland-based financial giant.

Currently, Hassan is the first vice president and chief operating officer of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York (FRBNY). She will also be serving on UBS Group's Executive Board, according to a press release by UBS Americas. Hassan will join in the leadership role in October this year and will succeed Tom Naratil, the Zurich and Basel-

headquartered company said in a press release. UBS Group AG is a multinational investment bank and financial services company founded and based in Switzerland.

Co-headquartered in the cities of Zurich and Basel, it maintains a presence in all major financial centres as the largest Swiss banking institution and the largest private bank in the world. She will become a member of UBS's Group Executive Board in October 2022. Hassan this week stepped down from her role as the First Vice-President and Chief Operating Officer at The Federal Reserve Bank of

New York, where she was the New York Fed's second-ranking officer. UBS said in a statement that in her new role, Hassan will be responsible for driving client relationships, promoting cross-business collaboration, navigating the evolving public policy landscape, and ensuring sound regulatory and reputational risk governance.

In addition, she will lead the firm's strategic growth and digital initiatives in Americas region, including transformation of firm's Wealth Management Americas Platform, expansion of customised banking services.



# Funding in startups dropped by 17% in April-June: Nasscom



**New Delhi:** Funding in startups dropped by 17 per cent on quarter-on-quarter basis to USD 6 billion (about ₹47,800 crore) in the April-June period, industry body Nasscom has said. According to the Nasscom quarterly investment factbook on tech startups compiled in association with PGA Labs, deals also dropped by about 17 per cent due to dampened market sentiments but despite reduction in deal value, funding in growth stage continued to increase.

The report said, "16 large ticket size deals helped generate a total funding of USD 6 billion in the second quarter (Q2) of calendar year (CY) 2022. Startup ecosystem witnessed the birth of 4 new unicorns in Q2 CY22, taking the tally to 20

unicorns in the first half."

Around 26 per cent of the total funding went to fintech segment.

"Large ticket deals like CRED and Dailyhunt resulted in overall increase in total investments in fintech and media and entertainment sectors, contributing around 45 per cent of total funding in Q2, CY22," the report said.

Fifty-two per cent funding was in the ticket size of USD 100 million or above with Dailyhunt and ShareChat raising big rounds.

Growth stage deals contributed 58 per cent of the total funding during the reported quarter as the investors backed startups have already reached a certain scale, the report said. **PTI**

# ATF cost cut by 2.2% on fall in global oil prices

**New Delhi:** Jet fuel (ATF) prices on Saturday were reduced by 2.2 per cent, reflecting a fall in international oil prices.

Aviation turbine fuel (ATF) prices were cut by ₹3,084.94 per kilolitre, or 2.2 per cent, to ₹138,147.93 per kl, a price notification of state-run fuel retailers showed.

This is only the second reduction in rates this year. Prices had peaked to ₹141,232.87 per kl (₹141.23 per litre) last month.

ATF prices are revised on the 1st and 16th of every month based on rates of benchmark international oil rates in the previous fortnight.

There was no change in rates on July 1.

Prior to that, prices were hiked by the steepest ever 16 per cent to catapult rates to an all-time.

International oil prices have softened since on fears of recession in major economies. Oil prices are at pre-Ukraine war levels.

On June 16, the price of ATF -- the fuel that helps aeroplanes fly -- was increased by Rs 19,757.13 per kl. That followed a marginal 1.3 per cent (₹1,563.97 per kl) cut in rate on June 1.

But for the one-off decrease on June 1, ATF prices



have been on the rise throughout 2022.

In all, rates have been increased 11 times since the start of the year. This has led to rates almost doubling in six months.

Prior to the cut on Saturday, prices had gone up by 91 per cent (₹67,210.46 per kl) since January 1.

With jet fuel making up almost 40 per cent of the operating cost of an airline, the increase in prices had resulted in a rise in the cost of flying. Now there has been a marginal relief.

Meanwhile, petrol and diesel prices remained

unchanged at ₹96.72 per litre and ₹89.62 a litre, respectively.

An excise duty cut by the government had helped reduce the price of petrol by ₹8.69 a litre and diesel by ₹7.05 per litre on May 22. But for that, the base price has remained unchanged since April 6.

Before that, prices had risen by a record ₹10 per litre each.

The retail prices of petrol, diesel and domestic cooking gas are way below the cost. Petrol and diesel rates are revised daily, based on equivalent rates in the international market. **PTI**

# Supertech puts on sale hotels, malls to raise ₹1K cr for completing projects

**New Delhi:** Realty firm Supertech Ltd on Saturday said the company plans to sell its four commercial assets at Meerut and Haridwar for an estimated ₹1,000 crore, as part of its efforts to expedite construction in existing projects and repay debt.

The company had put these commercial assets on sale a few years ago but could not succeed as the hospitality and retail sectors were badly impacted during the COVID pandemic.

In a statement, Noida-based Supertech Ltd said that the company has put its assets -- shopping malls and hotels -- in Meerut and Haridwar on sale with the "target of raising funds to the tune of ₹1,000 crore."

In Meerut, Supertech has one shopping mall and one hotel and in Haridwar, the realty firm has one shopping mall and one hotel.

On June 10, the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) ordered starting of insolvency proceedings in only one of the housing projects of realty firm Supertech Ltd and not the entire company, and directed constitution of the Committee of Creditors for the said project only.

A two-member NCLAT bench limited the Corporate



Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP) to only "Eco Village II Project" located at Greater Noida (West).

Post NCLAT Order, Supertech said the company has resumed operations in large scale at all projects, which earlier remained suspended due to uncertainty after the NCLT order.

On March 25, the Delhi bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) had ordered to initiate the insolvency process against Supertech Ltd over a petition filed by the Union Bank of India for non-payment of dues of around ₹432 crore.

However, this was chal-

lenged by Supertech promoter R K Arora before the NCLAT.

Arora said in the statement that the NCLAT has also allowed the company to settle with creditors most of whom are banks and private equity funds whose repayment was affected due to the recession after Covid-19.

To achieve this, he said the company has put few commercial assets on sale.

"Further, several investors have shown keen interest in investing as interim funding in the projects of the company and it has been able to sign term sheets for investment worth ₹50 crore and more are in the pipeline," Arora said. **PTI**

# ICAR must focus on improving productivity of oilseeds, pulses, cotton, says Agri Min

**New Delhi:** Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar on Saturday asked the premium farm research organisation ICAR to focus on improving productivity of various crops like oilseeds and pulses as yields are much below the global average.

While addressing the 94th foundation day of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), the minister said the ICAR has played an important role in making India self-sufficient in foodgrain production and the country is either number one or two in terms of output of most crops.

"ICAR's foundation day should be celebrated as a pledge day. ICAR should take some pledge on this day and make efforts that the same gets achieved over the next one year," Tomar said.

Although a lot of success has been achieved in the last 93 years of ICAR's journey, the minister said there is a "great challenge" in terms of productivity in front of us, especially in oilseeds, pulses and cotton.

"If we compare (our crop yield) with other countries,

**WHILE ADDRESSING THE 94TH FOUNDATION DAY OF THE INDIAN COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH (ICAR), THE MINISTER SAID ICAR HAS PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN MAKING INDIA SELF-SUFFICIENT IN FOODGRAIN PRODUCTION AND THE COUNTRY IS EITHER NUMBER ONE OR TWO IN TERMS OF OUTPUT OF MOST CROPS**

then we will feel that there is a lot of work to be done," Tomar said. The minister said the crop productivity issue should be part of the ICAR's pledge.

India imports around 60 per cent of its annual domestic demand of edible oil. The country had imported a record ₹1.17 lakh crore of edible oils in the 2020-21 oil year ending October. Pulses too are being imported but not in as much quantity. Tomar asked the ICAR to continue its research work to mitigate the challenge of climate change on agriculture.

He spoke about the need

to promote organic as well as natural farming, as excess use of chemicals and fertilisers impacts human health.

Tomar highlighted that the Modi-government has taken various initiatives and launched several programmes for the growth of the agriculture sector and doubled farmers' income.

He noted that incomes of lakhs of farmers have not only doubled but more than doubled in the last 7-8 years.

The minister stressed that there is a need to attract young and educated people in the field of agriculture.

On the occasion, Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Parshottam Rupala asked ICAR to document its achievements.

The minister emphasised on improving soil health, which he said can be achieved through use of cow dung. A protocol for use of cow dung should be prepared, he said.

Kailash Choudhary, Minister of State for Agriculture, said there is a need to promote natural farming. **PTI**

# Govt planning to make Big Tech pay for using content from news publishers

**IAN S ■ NEW DELHI**

The Indian Government is planning to make Big Tech pay publishers for using their content on their respective platforms, as other countries aim to create a revenue-sharing bridge between internet companies like Google and Facebook and digital news publishers.

According to Minister of State for IT and Electronics, Rajeev Chandrasekhar, the government is mulling revision in IT laws to effect this change.

"The market power on digital advertising that is currently being exercised by the Big Tech majors, which places Indian media companies at a position of disadvantage, is an issue that is seriously being examined in the context of new legalisations and rules," the minister told The Times of India.

If implemented, the new law will force Big Tech companies to pay digital news publishers a share of the revenue earned via using their original content. Google has already signed deals to pay more than 300 publish-

ers in Germany, France and other EU countries for using their content on its platform.

The Canadian government also moved a law early this year to bring about fairness in revenue sharing between digital news publishers and intermediary platforms.

In March this year, the the Competition Commission of India (CCI) ordered an investigation into complaints against Google for abusing its dominant position related to news referral services and Google Adtech Services in the Indian online news media market.

According to the Indian Newspapers Society (INS), media houses are being kept in the dark on the total advertising revenue collected by Google and what percentage of the advertising revenue is being transferred to media organisations. The CCI found that prima facie, these allegations of abuse of dominant position are under the purview of the Competition Act, 2002 and requires a detailed investigation by the Additional Director General.

# Bank unions to start Twitter campaign against privatisation

**AIBEA to hold protest before Parl on July 21**

**IAN S ■ CHENNAI**

A day ahead of the start of the Parliament's Monsoon session, the United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU) has given a call for a campaign on Twitter against privatisation of government banks, a top union official said.

All India Bank Employees' Association (AIBEA) General Secretary C.H. Venkatachalam also said a protest will be held before the Parliament on July 21 and a strike call will be given based on the developments during the session.

The monsoon session of the Parliament begins on July 18 and one of the Bills that may be brought is to enable privatisation of the government banks.

"The Twitter campaign by

the bankers will begin on Sunday, the morning of July 17. During these days, campaigning through social media is also important apart from our traditional campaigning mode," Venkatachalam told IANS.

He had told the union members to tweet in English and also in the regional languages to reach a large number of people. For a long time, it has been said time has come to merge the government banks to have about five big banks.

Recently, in a paper, Poonam Gupta of National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) and Arvind Panagariya of Columbia University had advocated privatisation of all government banks barring the State Bank of India (SBI).

They had said, to start with two banks with better asset quality and higher returns be privatised and set them as an example for disinvestment by the government in its other banks.

# VIL shareholders OK ₹436 cr equity allocation to Vodafone

**New Delhi:** Debt-ridden telecom operator Vodafone Idea's shareholders have approved equity allocation worth ₹436.21 crore to its promoter entity, the Vodafone Group.

As per voting results submitted to the stock exchanges on Friday evening, 99.94 per cent of Vodafone Idea (VIL) shareholders approved allocation of the equity to Vodafone Group firm Euro Pacific Securities.

Vodafone Group at present holds 58.46 per cent stake in the company and Aditya Birla Group 16.53 per cent.

The company had raised ₹3,375 crore from Vodafone Group and ₹1,125 crore from Aditya Birla Group in March.

VIL has been trying to raise funds in the range of ₹20,000-25,000 crore from external sources since the last two years but has failed to attract any investor.

The government announced a reform package in September last year which has largely benefited Vodafone Idea.

The government has allowed VIL to convert around ₹16,100 crore interest dues into about 33 per cent stake in the company to provide liquidity for investment in the business.

Still, analysts have said high leverage and weak balance sheet have impaired the company's ability to invest in the network.

As on March 31, 2022, the total debt (including interest accrued but not due) of the group was ₹1,97,878.2 crore. The company has around ₹8,160 crore of payments due over the next 12 month, as per analysts. **PTI**

# HDFC Bank's Q1 profit up to ₹9,196 crore for FY- 2023



**IAN S ■ MUMBAI**

Private banking major HDFC Bank Ltd closed the first quarter of FY23 with a net profit of ₹9,196 crore.

According to HDFC Bank, its net profit for the quarter under review grew to ₹9,196 crore from about ₹7,729 crore earned during the first quarter ended June 30, 2021.

For the quarter ended June 30, 2022, the bank had earned a total income of ₹41,560 crore, up from about ₹36,771 crore earned during the corresponding period the previous year.

The bank's gross and net

non-performing asset (NPA) as on June 30, 2022 stood at about ₹18,033 crore and ₹4,887 crore, respectively, as against ₹17,098 crore and ₹5,485 crore in the corresponding period of the previous year.

Provisions and contingencies for the quarter ended June 30, 2022 were about ₹3,187 crore (which were comprised of specific loan loss provisions) as against total provisions of about ₹4,830 crore for the quarter ended June 30, 2021.

Total balance sheet size as of June 30, 2022 was ₹2,109,772 crore as against ₹1,753,941 crore as of June 30, 2021, a growth of 20.3 per cent.

# Cooperative banks must extend more long-term loans to farmers: Shah

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

Cooperation Minister Amit Shah on Saturday urged Agricultural and Rural Development Banks (ARDBs) to extend more long-term loans to the agriculture sector, including for irrigation and other infrastructure.

The Government is building a database on cooperatives for expansion of this sector, which is important for boosting farm growth and doubling farmers' income, he added.

Farmers' income cannot be raised without improving the farm sector, especially irrigation, he pointed out, and asked cooperative banks to focus on providing loans for increasing irrigated land in the country.

The minister further said India, which has 49.4 crore acres of arable land, highest after the US, has potential to feed the whole world if the entire arable land is irrigated.

Currently, about 50 per cent of the arable land in the country is monsoon dependent.

Addressing a national conference here, Shah said Agricultural and Rural Development Banks have been functioning in the country under different names in the last nine decades. Most of them operated as land mortgage banks and were first to



grant long-term finance to farmers way back in 1924.

With the conversion of these banks into ARDBs, farmers' dependence on monsoon got reduced. Slowly, long-term financing evolved, he said.

"If we look back and see the last 90 years' journey of long-term financing through cooperatives and how it has percolated down, if you see the data, it has not grown," Shah observed.

"Especially in agriculture financing, be it long or short term, it is paralysed in many parts of the country.

In many places, activities are done well but in some states it is not. We need to revive them," he said.

Shah, however, stated that there are many hurdles in providing long-term financing to the agriculture sector. Time has come to overcome those hurdles with cooperative spirit and achieve agriculture growth, he asserted. The minister further said ARDBs have financed more than 3 lakh tractors so far, but the target should be 8 crore tractors.

The IEC, which comes under the aegis of the Internet

# RBI, Bank Indonesia agree to expand cooperation in payment systems

**Mumbai:** The Reserve Bank of India and Bank Indonesia on Saturday entered into an agreement to expand cooperation in payment systems, digital financial innovation, and anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism (AML-CFT).

The two central banks signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Bali on the sidelines of the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting to improve mutual cooperation.

"With this MoU, RBI and BI committed to deepen relations between both central banks and strengthen the exchange of information and



cooperation in the area of central banking, including payment systems, digital innovation in payments services, and regulatory and supervisory framework for AML-CFT," the RBI said in a statement.

The MoU will be implemented through policy dialogue, technical cooperation, exchange of information and joint work.

It was signed by RBI Deputy Governor Michael

Debabrata Patra and BI Deputy Governor Dody Budi Waluyo in the presence of RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das and BI Governor Perry Warjiyo.

"This MoU serves as a significant milestone in the relation between Bank Indonesia and Reserve Bank of India. It has been a long period of time since we began cooperating productively, and this MoU will only ensure a more solid collaboration in the future.

"Going forward, I am convinced that such excellent partnership will result in fruitful outcomes that benefit both central banks and the people of both nations," Governor Warjiyo said. **PTI**

# Centre pulls up edtech firms for mis-selling courses

**IAN S ■ NEW DELHI**

After the Centre took serious note of mis-selling of courses to parents by edtech firms including BYJU's and its group companies, self-regulatory organisation India Edtech Consortium (IEC) on Saturday said it is committed to protecting consumer interest and has resolved 100 per cent complaints received till June.

The Ministry of Consumer Affairs pulled up edtech firms during a meeting with them and IEC, according to sources, and aggressive mis-selling of courses to parents was the key concern.

The IEC, which comes under the aegis of the Internet

and Mobile Association of India (IAMA) and has created a two-tier grievance redressal mechanism, said that it has resolved all complaints received until June 2022 complaints received in July were going through active screening for faster resolutions.

"The edtech sector is extremely dynamic in nature and therefore, to address the rising challenges, what IEC is proactively doing will certainly propel a stronger ecosystem in the coming times," said ret'd SC judge and chairperson of Independent Grievance Redressal Board (IGRB), Dr B.S. Chauhan.

The IEC also said that each

member company has appointed a dedicated grievance officer internally to address and assess the problem and offer remedial action accordingly.

The IEC-member companies are also registering at the National Consumer Helpline (NCH) for streamlining the resolution process, it added.

"Edtech as a strong community has been far more responsible and prompt than our traditional counterpart in managing consumer complaints and grievances," said Mayank Kumar, UpGrad Co-founder and MD and Chair at IEC.

The recent reports have said that as per the Advertising Standards Council of India

(ASCI) data, 33 per cent of complaints are filed against the education sector.

However, the official statement by ASCI also states that 6 per cent of the total complaints received are against the edtech companies while the remaining 94 per cent are filed against the traditional education system, according to the IEC. Earlier this month, the Centre warned edtech companies against unfair trade practices. In a meeting with the IEC, Consumer Affairs Secretary, Rohit Kumar Singh, said that if self-regulation does not curb unfair trade practices, then stringent guidelines would be formulated for ensuring transparency.



# SINDHU SAILS INTO SINGAPORE FINAL

PTI ■ SINGAPORE

Indian shuttler PV Sindhu stormed into the Singapore Open title clash with a commanding win over lower-ranked Japanese Saena Kawakami in the women's singles semi-final, here on Saturday.

Sindhu, a double Olympic medallist, who had claimed two Super 300 titles at Syed Modi International and Swiss Open this year, prevailed 21-15 21-7 over world number 38 Kawakami in a 32-minute last-four clash.

The 27-year-old from Hyderabad, who has also claimed a bronze at the Asian Championships this year, is now one win away from her maiden Super 500 title of the 2022 season.

In the finals, the third seeded Indian will face China's 22-year-old Wang Zhi Yi, the reigning Asian Championships gold medallist, who was also part of the Uber Cup team, which won the silver at Bangkok this year. Wang beat Japan's Ohori Aya 21-14 21-14.

Sindhu had defeated world number 11 Wang in their only meeting at the All England Championships this year. A two-time World Junior Champion and a Youth Olympics silver medallist, Wang had also reached the finals of Indonesia Open Super 1000 in June.

Sindhu came into the match with a 2-0 head-to-head record, having played her last at the 2018 China Open. Kawakami had received a walk-over from top-seed Tai Tzu Ying of Chinese Taipei in the second round.

A former world number 15, Kawakami, winner of the 2019 Orleans Masters and a finalist at Swiss Open the same year, was a part of the Japanese women's team that won the bronze medal in May this year. The Japanese had



played just three events last year and it was her fifth tournament in 2022.

Sindhu, a former world champion, looked in complete command against Kawakami, who just couldn't control the shuttle and was buried in a heap of errors during the lop-sided match.

Early on, Sindhu started with her whipping smashes but the drift inside the hall, made decision making difficult and also at times, the precision was lacking.

But the power in her stroke-play helped the Indian moved to a healthy three-point lead at the break.

The 24-year-old Japanese, however, started putting the shuttle in from difficult positions to draw parity. The match

came alive with both fighting for each point.

Sindhu also won two video referrals, punished a weak high lift and also made good calls at the baseline to move to 18-14. A power-packed smash and then two unforced errors by Kawakami helped Sindhu seal the opening game comfortably.

Kawakami's struggles continued in the second game as she failed to control the shuttle and conceded a 0-5 early lead to her fancied rival.

Sindhu just had to keep engaging her rival in the rallies and patiently wait for her mistakes. A frustrated Kawakami just could wrily smile as Sindhu first grabbed

a 11-4 lead at the mid-game interval and then zoomed to 17-5 in a jiffy.

The Japanese had no answer to Sindhu's attacking forehand returns and deft backhand flicks which opened up a decisive 19-6 lead for her.

Sindhu sent one long but next unleashed a whipping smash from the baseline which her opponent could only sent to the net. When Kawakami's return finally went out again, Sindhu pumped her fist to announce her entry into the finals.

The two-time Commonwealth Games medallist, will lead the Indian charge at the quadrennial event in Birmingham starting July 28.



## IOA announces 322-strong Indian contingent for Commonwealth Games

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Olympic Association on Saturday announced a 322-strong contingent including 215 athletes and 107 officials and support staff for the upcoming Birmingham Commonwealth Games.

The Games are scheduled to be held in British city from July 28 to August 8, and the India contingent will look to improve upon its Gold Coast 2018 CWG performance, where it finished third behind traditional powerhouses Australia and England.

Sharing his thoughts, IOA secretary general Rajeev Mehta said, "We are sending one of our strongest squads ever to the CWG and even with a strength sport for us like shooting not being there, we are confident of bettering our

performance from the last edition.

"Make no mistake, the competition will be world class and fierce but our athletes have prepared well and are fit and raring to go. We wish them all the very best."

The Games-bound Indian athletes and officials will be staying at five different "Villages" with the women's cricket team being put up in a separate facility in the Birmingham city centre.

In a press release issued by the IOA, the apex sports body's top office-bearer thanked the government for its support to the athletes and federations.

Mehta said, "It needs to be said that the Government of India led by the Hon. Prime Minister have provided unprecedented support to Olympic sports in recent years and our best ever performance

at the Olympic Games stand testimony to that.

"We remain ever grateful for the same and are sure our athletes will ensure that rich rewards are reaped for the untiring efforts put in by them, most of all the Union Sports Ministry and the Sports Authority of India."

Some prominent names in the squad include Olympic medallists Neeraj Chopra, PV Sindhu, Mirabai Chanu, Lovlina Borgohain, Bajrang Punia and Ravi Kumar Dahiya.

Defending CWG champions Manika Batra, Vinesh Phogat as well as 2018 Asian Games gold medallists Tajinderpal Singh Toor, Hima Das and Amit Panghal are also part of the contingent.

Rajesh Bhandari, vice president of Boxing Federation of India (BFI), is the Chef de Mission of the squad.

## World Athletics C'ships: Sreeshankar 1st Indian male long jumper to qualify for finals



PTI ■ EUGENE (USA)

Murali Sreeshankar became the first Indian male long jumper to qualify for World Athletics Championships finals while 3000m steeplechaser Avinash Sable also expectedly made the grade on the first day of the competitions here.

Sreeshankar, who had entered the championships as a dark horse for a medal at second spot in the season's top list, had a best jump of exactly 8m, which he did in his second attempt, to finish second in qualification round Group B and seventh overall.

Anju Bobby George was the first Indian to make it to the World Championships long jump finals and first to win a medal -- bronze in 2003 edition in Paris.

Two other Indians in the fray, Jeswin Aldrin, who was cleared for the championships despite failing to impress the national selectors in two rounds of trials, and Muhammed Anees Yahiya could not make it to the finals after finishing ninth and 11th in Group A qualification round with best jumps of 7.79m and 7.73m respectively.

Those who achieved 8.15m or the 12 best performers from across the two groups qualify for the finals to be held on Sunday (6:50am IST).

The 23-year-old Sreeshankar has been a consistent performer with his 8.36m jump at the Federation Cup in April, followed by 8.31m and 8.23m at an event in Greece and National Inter-State Championships respectively.

## Emotional exit for Woods, big chance for Smith at St Andrews



AP ■ ST ANDREWS (SCOTLAND)

Tiger Woods made an early and emotional departure from the British Open, possibly for the last time at St. Andrews.

Cameron Smith can only wonder if the 150th Open will be his arrival as an undisputed elite player.

Smith already won The Players Championship this year and has risen to as high as No. 3 in the world. His 8-under 64 gave him his first lead in a

major, by two shots over PGA Tour rookie Cameron Young. Rory McIlroy was lurking another shot behind.

"It's obviously a really good spot to be in," Smith said. "I feel like I've been in this spot a lot over the past couple of years, and things just haven't quite gone my way yet."

Woods strode over the Swilcan Bridge without stopping to pose for pictures and said it "felt like the whole tournament was right there" when he walked the final 356 yards of what was otherwise a long day of 75 to miss the cut.

Woods didn't retire from major championship golf or the British Open. He's just not sure a right leg held together by hardware or a lower spine that has been fused will allow him to compete when the Open returns to St. Andrews again.

"It's very emotional for me," he said. "To me it felt like this might have been my last British Open here at St. Andrews. And the fans, the ovation and the warmth, it was an unbelievable feeling."

About the time Woods was saluting thousands of fans crammed into so many spaces around St. Andrews, Smith was making birdie after birdie to take the lead. Right when it looked like it couldn't get any better, he holed a 65-foot eagle putt on the 14th hole.

## Sri Lanka top order collapses after batting 1st vs Pakistan

AP ■ GALLE

Pakistan took early advantage in the first cricket test against Sri Lanka by reducing the hosts to 80 for four at lunch on the first day Saturday.

Sri Lanka had elected to bat first at the Galle International Stadium after winning the toss in good batting conditions, but the team's batsmen failed to live up to expectations with several soft dismissals.

Captain Dimuth Karunaratne dragged a Shaheen Afridi delivery on to his stumps for 1 and then a 49-run stand followed for the second wicket between Oshada Fernando and Kusal Mendis.

Then Sri Lanka lost three wickets for the addition of just eight runs, slumping to 68 for four after being 60 for one.

Fernando and Mendis departed in the space of three deliveries with Yasir Shah breaking the partnership. Mendis (21) bottom-edged one to wicketkeeper Mohammad Rizwan as the leg-spinner claimed his first wicket since making a comeback. Yasir had not represented Pakistan since August last year due to injuries.

Pakistan then made a bowling change,



bringing Hasan Ali in from the City End and it worked as Oshada Fernando (35) nicked an out-swing and Rizwan took a good catch diving to his right.

Mathews spent 30 minutes at the crease but never looked comfortable. Yasir ended his misery when the former captain hit it straight to Naseem Shah at mid-on and was dismissed without scoring.

Dinesh Chandimal, who had made an unbeaten double hundred in Sri Lanka's last test match in an innings victory over Australia earlier this week, was unbeaten on 12 at lunch with Dhananjaya de Silva.

## Kohli might have been dropped or rested for WI T20Is: Kapil Dev

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The legendary Kapil Dev wondered if Virat Kohli was indeed rested or ignored for the upcoming five T20Is against the West Indies, hinting that the word "dropped" may have been avoided as he "is not an ordinary" cricketer.

Kohli's lean run is now into its third year, the modern-day great last scoring an international century in 2019, something that recently prompted Dev to say that the team management can't go by reputation only.

The former India skipper will not feature in the five-match T20I series against the West Indies, to be played in the Caribbean and the United



States from July 29.

"It's not like India haven't played without Virat in the last five to six years, but I want such a player to be back in form. He might have been dropped or rested but there's still a lot of cricket left in him," Dev told ABP News.

India's first World Cup winning-captain added, "Play Ranji Trophy or score runs anywhere. His confidence needs to

be back. This is the difference between a great and a good player."

"A great player like him shouldn't take so much time to get back in form. He has to fight with himself and get things in order."

Last week, Dev said that a if a bowler with the pedigree of Ravichandran Ashwin could be dropped from the Test team then so can Kohli.

## Don't pull Kohli down, those 70 tons weren't scored in aunt's backyard: Shoaib



PTI ■ LAHORE

Pakistan's fast-bowling great Shoaib Akhtar has hit out at Virat Kohli's critics and reminded them that the former India captain's 70 international hundreds weren't scored in "aunt's backyard" or while playing "candy crush video game".

Kohli's painfully long lean patch of nearly three years has led to calls for his ouster from the T20 World Cup team, with even the legendary Kapil Dev voicing support for his exclusion. While Akhtar said he respects Dev's opinion that continuing with the woefully out-of-form Kohli is unfair to a performing junior, the Pakistani reminded everyone that it takes a lot of effort to score 43 ODI and 27 Test hundreds. "Kapil Dev is my senior and he has an opinion and it is fine to have an opinion," Akhtar said on his YouTube channel.

"But, as a Pakistani, why am I supporting Kohli? Well, he has 70 hundreds. Woh 70 sau khaala ke ghar mein ya candy crush khelte huye nahi banein hain. (Those 70 tons were not scored in his aunt's backyard or while playing Candy Crush)."

## Women's Euro C'ship Austria ousts Norway, sets up Euros quarterfinal vs Germany



AP ■ LONDON

Austria set up a Women's European Championship meeting with Germany by eliminating star-studded Norway 1-0.

Nicole Billa's header in Brighton clinched the win that sealed second place in Group A, leaving Norway in third place despite the two-time European champion being able to deploy 2018 Ballon d'Or winner Ada Hegerberg.

The group was won by host nation England, which put on another dazzling display by routing Northern Ireland 5-0 in Southampton. It is 14 goals without reply in three games at the tournament for the team led by Sarina Wiegman, who missed Friday's game after testing positive for COVID-19.

Northern Ireland had already been eliminated and England was sure of advancing before kick-off in Southampton but it took Wiegman's side 40

minutes to break the deadlock against the tournament newcomer when Fran Kirby struck a curled shot from the edge of the box over the defense and into the top corner.

England doubled its lead before the break with Beth Mead taking her tournament tally to five. The Arsenal forward took a touch in the box before calmly slotting the ball into the back of the net.

She turned provider three minutes into the second half, with a cross headed in by substitute Alessia Russo.

Russo had to wait only until the 53rd minute for another goal, taking a touch to lose the defender before slotting past goalkeeper Jacqueline Burns after being played in by Ella Toone.

England's fifth came in unfortunate fashion for Northern Ireland, as Kelsie Burrows inadvertently lifted the ball in over her own goalkeeper as she attempted to deal with a cross.

## Indian football: CoA submits AIFF draft constitution to SC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The final draft constitution of the All India Football Federation, which has been framed by the Committee of Administrators (CoA), has been submitted to the Supreme Court for its approval.

It was submitted to the apex court on Friday, the AIFF said in a statement on Saturday. AIFF acting general secretary Sunando Dhar said: "After a lengthy set of discussions with various stakeholders, the draft Constitution of the AIFF has finally been submitted to the honourable court."

"I would like to congratulate everyone involved in the process, on this swift move forward, and hope that with the new constitution in place, we can move ahead with developing Indian football."

The CoA, which has been appointed by the apex court on May 18 this year, comprises Justice (retired) Anil R Dave, former Chief Election Commissioner of India Dr SY Quraishi and former member India captain Bhaskar Ganguly.

The apex court directed the CoA to assist in facilitating the adoption of the constitution and prepare electoral rolls for the purpose of conducting elections of the AIFF at the earliest.

Since then, in the course of formulating the draft constitution, the CoA has "put in more than 150 hours of work and has spoken to all the AIFF's stakeholders, including state associations, FIFA, AFC, ISL and I-League clubs and considered suggestions forwarded by them".

## CHESS OLYMPIAD TORCH

Arrives in Chhattisgarh's Raipur; CM lists efforts to popularise game

PTI ■ RAIPUR

The first ever torch relay for the 44th Chess Olympiad to be held in Tamil Nadu between July 28 and August 10 arrived in Chhattisgarh capital Raipur on Saturday.

Arjuna Award recipient and Grandmaster Pravin Thipsay handed over the torch to Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel at Pt Deendayal Upadhyaya Auditorium here and the latter handed it over to Woman FIDE Master Kiran Agrawal.

"It is a matter of great pride that for the first time, the World Chess Federation has allowed a torch relay on the lines of the Olympics. The torch relay in the state today will act as an inspiration for budding chess talents," the CM said.



He praised Agrawal, who participated in Chess Olympiad in 1986 and 1990, and said future generations from the state must be inspired by her.

part of the organising committee.

"Moreover, six players selected from different schools of the state will also participate in the Chess Olympiad and learn by watching big players. On the initiative of All India Chess Federation, work has been started to promote chess in 22 schools in the state," the CM said.

## 'ICC's rough FTP draft has dedicated 2.5 month IPL Window'

PTI ■ DUBAI

The IPL is all set to have its dedicated two and half month exclusive window from the next Futures Tours & Programme (FTP) calendar of the ICC starting 2024, with no international cricket scheduled in that phase. That the T20 extravaganza would be a "two-and-a-half-month" affair from the next FTP was confirmed by PTI in an exclusive interview with BCCI secretary Jay Shah on the sidelines of the blockbuster IPL media rights deal last month.

"Let me inform you that from the next ICC FTP calendar, IPL will have an official two-and-a-half month window so that all the top international cricketers can participate. We have had discussions with various boards as well as the ICC," Shah had told PTI.



## FAISAL KHAN

# 'I AM SUPER LUCKY TO PLAY THIS CHARACTER'



# Plan Your Day

# Sound of. music



Stairway to Heaven (Led Zeppelin)  
Imagine (Yoko Ono)  
Revolution (The Beatles)  
Wind of Change (Boppin' B)  
Back in Black (AC/DC)

# Masterstroke

A close-up photograph of a person's forearm featuring a large, vibrant tattoo. The tattoo depicts a stylized face with a wide, open mouth showing a red tongue and white teeth. The face is rendered in shades of orange, red, and yellow, with intricate black line work. Above the eyes, there are blue and green patterns resembling feathers or scales. The background is slightly blurred, showing a wooden floor and a person's legs in the distance.

Lokesh Verma, Founder of Devil'z Tattooz says: "National Tattoo Day is an historic event for all the tattoo artists across the globe because it represents art, culture and history. It is a day when our art is appreciated and our work is recognised. Tattoos are now being more widely accepted and appreciated than ever before. Getting inked is the latest lifestyle fashion trend among millennials."

PET,  
SET,  
GO!

A black and white dog, possibly a Border Collie, is looking directly at the camera. It is holding a white rectangular sign in front of its mouth. The sign has the words "LOVE ME" in bold, black, sans-serif capital letters. Below the text is a small red heart icon. The background is a solid dark grey.

Dr Vinay Gorhe, BVSc & AH,  
Pet Cover Clinic, Pune

# QUIRKYTALE

Physical events, equipped with cutting-edge tech integration, are all set to deliver enhanced value creation with the most engrossing attendee experience, extensive networking opportunities and ROI driven lead generation opportunities.



No matter what happens in life, be good to people. Being good to people is a wonderful legacy to leave behind  
— Taylor Swift



# AIADMK, A HOSTAGE OF INTERNECINE WAR

The exit of Jayalalithaa left a political vacuum in Tamil Nadu and this is yet to be filled. There was no second-in-command in the party as all were soldiers of Amma, writes KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

It is almost six years since the AIADMK fountainhead and former Tamil Nadu chief minister J Jayalalithaa breathed her last. But the struggle to inherit her political legacy and control of the AIADMK goes on. The internecine squabble between various caste groups in the 50-year-old party has turned ugly. The future of the major Opposition hangs in the balance.

The AIADMK general council, the highest decision-making body, recently ousted O Panneerselvam and his four associates from the primary membership of the party and elected Edappadi Palaniswamy as interim general secretary. This after the fight for the control of the party reached the doors of the Supreme Court. The violent street protest by the OPS supporters speaks volumes about the state of affairs in the AIADMK.

Both M.G.Ramachandran, the party's founder, and Jayalalithaa, his successor, died intestate without any offspring. After Jayalalithaa's demise, many women came forward claiming to be her daughters. "Many women in their mid-30s claim to be Jayalalithaa's offspring. Jayalalithaa herself would have been shocked by these claimants had she been around," said G C Sekhar, a longtime journalist who followed Amma's news with interest.

Another veteran journalist in Chennai who claimed to be Jayalalithaa's biographer was not aware of the existence of Deepa and Deepak, her niece and nephew, till Amma's demise. The world came to know about them when they came out in the open demanding the possession of Veda Nilayam, Jayalalithaa's imposing bungalow in the high-end Poes Garden locality in Chennai.

The exit of Jayalalithaa left a political vacuum in Tamil Nadu and this is yet to be filled. There was no second-in-command in the party as all were soldiers of Amma. O Panneerselvam was elevated to the post of chief minister on September 21, 2001, when the Supreme Court declared as null and void the action of the then Governor of the State swearing her in as chief minister despite her conviction and sen-

tencing by a Special Court in a corruption case.

It was not because of any leadership qualities of Panneerselvam that he was handpicked by Jayalalithaa for the top job. She knew well that he would resign even without her asking once the Court clears her name in the case. Panneerselvam had no hesitation in accepting the fact that he was a puppet. "Sir, I am here because Amma could not function as chief minister because of the court verdict. Once the court clears her name, she would be back," was his standard reply to queries. He even declined to sit on the chair used by Amma and functioned from his cabin in the secretariat. The second time he assumed the chief minister's post was when the Special Court sentenced Jayalalithaa to four years imprisonment in the disproportionate case. Once the Karnataka High Court acquitted her of all charges, Panneerselvam quit facilitating the return of his Amma to Fort Saint George. It was the sudden demise of Jayalalithaa that led to his coronation as chief minister for the third time (early hours of 6, December 2016).

Jayalalithaa's passing away led to a series of events in the AIADMK about which the Dravidian-dominated Tamil media refuse to write. The first question that remains unasked is the raison d'être of V K Sasikala (personal aide of Jayalalithaa) and members of her Mannargudi clan in Veda Nilayam. Sasikala and her family members were ousted by Jayalalithaa from Veda Nilayam in October 2011. Amma issued a directive to the party cadres not to have any kind of ties with Sasikala and her relations, claiming they brought disrepute to the party. The action was welcomed by the party cadres by bursting crackers marking an early Diwali in the State. But Sasikala managed to re-enter Veda Nilayam by tendering a public apology in which she declared that her life was dedicated to serving Akka (elder sister), and she would stay away from all other activities including politics. But on the morning of December 6, 2016, when Jayalalithaa's mortal remains were lying in state at the Government Estate in Chennai, the entire Mannargudi gang was seen sit-



“PANNEERSELVAM, WHO HAD NO LEADERSHIP QUALITIES OTHER THAN HIS DEVOTION TO JAYALALITHAA, THOUGHT THAT THE CHIEF MINISTERSHIP AS WELL AS THE POST OF GENERAL SECRETARY BELONGED TO HIM AND STARTED MANEUVERING TO EMERGE AS THE UNCHALLENGED LEADER OF THE PARTY. BUT HE WAS NO MATCH FOR PALANISWAMY, A COOL PLAYER WHO SUCCEEDED IN WINNING FRIENDS AND INFLUENCING PEOPLE



ting around the coffin! TTV Dhinakaran, who had been ousted much earlier from the party as well as Vedha Nilayam was seen supervising the show. Nobody, including Panneerselvam or Palaniswamy, could explain how he managed to infiltrate Veda Nilayam.

The moment the Tamil Nadu Police sounded the Last Post for Jayalalithaa, Sasikala started her machinations to usurp the party and government. Panneerselvam was summoned to Veda Nilayam and was forced to sign his resignation letter. The next day Sasikala was elected as the legislature party leader. and it was decided to hold her swearing-in ceremony on February 13 at the Madras University Centenary Hall. But the Supreme Court pronounced its verdict upholding the Special Court order sentencing Sasikala and two others to four years of rigorous imprisonment in the disproportionate asset case. So, on the day she was expected to swear in as chief minister, Sasikala surrendered before the superintendent of Parappana Agrahara Central Jail to serve her imprisonment.

It was Edappadi Palaniswamy who was sworn in as chief minister instead of Sasikala. But Dhinakaran, who was appointed as deputy general secretary by Sasikala, started calling the shots. Palaniswamy was a sitting duck as Dhinakaran sent out the message that the former should report to him on all issues. Dhinakaran declared himself as the party candidate for the by-poll to be held at R K Nagar hitherto represented by Jayalalithaa. His mission was to become the chief minister once he got elected to the assembly. But that did not work out because Palaniswamy and Panneerselvam buried the hatchet and unitedly took on Dhinakaran. Dhinakaran won the bout at R K Nagar, but he and Sasikala were eased out of their positions and ousted from the AIADMK in the general council meeting held in September 2017. Though some legislators declared their support for Dhinakaran and ended up losing their membership, Palaniswamy functioned effectively as chief minister for the next four years. Meanwhile, Dhinakaran launched an

outfit by the name AMMK with Sasikala's blessings.

Panneerselvam, who had no leadership qualities other than his devotion to Jayalalithaa, thought that the chief ministership as well as the post of general secretary belonged to him and started maneuvering to emerge as the unchallenged leader of the party. But he was no match for Palaniswamy, a cool player who succeeded in winning friends and influencing people.

Though Dravidian parties claim that there is no communalism and casteism in Tamil Nadu, it continues to be the most caste-ridden society in South India. The upper caste Hindus do not allow the Harijans to stay anywhere near their locality. This writer has experienced the two-tumbler system prevailing in many districts. Tes shops serve tea to Harijans in separate tumblers even as cops deployed to oversee the eradication of untouchability watch silently. That much for the social justice propagated by the Dravidian politics which has been governing the State since 1967.

The AIADMK has been dominated by the Thevar community to which Sasikala and her clan belong. Panneerselvam too is a Thevar. Palaniswamy belongs to the Gaundar community. While there was a feeling that the Thevars may rally around Sasikala and Dhinakaran, it has not happened. Palaniswamy has succeeded in mobilizing the Thevar community around him and only a miracle could help Sasikala and her acolytes to bounce back. "She has a lot of money and can buy over people. But Palaniswamy has proved to be a tough nut to crack," said R Rajagopalan, veteran political commentator.

He said the weakening of AIADMK is a setback for the nationalist forces in the State. "Whether the BJP could make political capital out of this situation is not known. The Hindutva party has a strong and young leader in K Annamalai. But that alone would not help the party to fill the space vacated by the AIADMK," said Rajagopalan.

The career of Panneerselvam has suffered a setback as he does not have even a single associate with any mass

base. Moreover, it is known all over the State that he is devoid of any leadership qualities. His moves to bring back Sasikala to the party and anoint her to a top position has not gone down well with the people.

Sasikala herself is a picture of contradiction. Though she tried to hijack the AIADMK, she had to drop the plan as the cadres are not enthusiastic about her intentions. Despite her declaration that she was quitting active politics (and that too for the second time), the lady moves around claiming herself as the general secretary of the AIADMK!

The AIADMK may be down now, but it is the principal opposition party in the State. Though it lost the May 2021 assembly election, the party managed to poll 39.72 percent votes against the DMK's 45.38 percent. There was no Jayalalithaa to campaign and the party had to face hostile media which was highly supportive of the DMK. The 2024 Lok Sabha polls would tell us more about the future of the AIADMK. It is not known whether Sasikala, Dhinakaran, and company would be able to make any difference to the fortunes of the party. Sasikala may be a good reader but she is not a leader. The lady cannot make a public speech and she reads out from papers handed down to her by hangers-on.

"Even Rabri Devi, wife of Laloo Prasad Yadav was better informed than Sasikala," says a scribe who has been following Sasikala's antecedents. Jayalalithaa's 'Woman Friday' has miles to go before she graduates into the big league of politics because it is not her cup of tea. She may be good in palace intrigues but that alone does not qualify her as a leader. If Palaniswamy manages to cobble up an alliance with like-minded parties, it is the end of the road for Sasikala and Panneerselvam. Interestingly, Panneerselvam is the only leader in the post-Jayalalithaa genre who is struggling to promote his son to sustain the dynasty. The whole of Tamil Nadu is agog with reports that Panneerselvam, Sasikala, and Chief Minister M K Stalin are handed in gloves to demolish the AIADMK.

(The writer is a senior journalist with The Pioneer)



The second-best movie tagline went to "From Despair to Hope" by dr. Subramania Iyer from Kochi, Kerala. It highlighted the case of one Manu, who had lost both his hands in a train accident and was given a new hope, when his plastic surgeons offered him hand transplantation. Now, he has recovered well, and not only does his work by himself, but he also works as a transplant counsellor in the same hospital. The Third Movie was Kathrivel, by Dr. S. Rajaraj Sabhapathy, from Coimbatore.

It showed how plastic surgery



July 8, 2022, has become one of the darkest days in the annals of the post-war history of Japan, with the assassination of former Prime Minister and Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) leader Shinzo Abe during his election speech in the western province of Nara. The assassin, Tetsuya Yamagami, a 41-year-old unemployed, fired almost point blank at Abe's chest from behind.

Yamagami told police that he had been planning for the attack for months. He followed Abe at his campaign locations, including the city of Okayama, more than 120 miles from Nara, a day before the assassination. At times he considered a bomb attack before opting for a gun. After the incident, when the security agencies searched his home, they found items believed to be explosives and homemade guns, including the ones similar to the weapon used in the current attack. This clearly indicates that Yamagami has been planning the killing for quite some time; he was just waiting for the right time to execute his plan. And finally, he got everything right on July 8.

A woman prays after offering a bouquet of flowers at the memorial area set up for former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, shown in pictures, at the ruling Liberal Democratic Party's headquarters in Tokyo

AP

A portrait of a man with dark hair and a mustache, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and a light blue patterned tie. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

(Courtesy: AP)



