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LS clears Delhi Services Bill, Shah tears into Opp

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha on Thursday night passed the Government of the National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill, 2023, by a voice vote amid a walkout by the Opposition. Immediately after the Bill was passed, Speaker Om Birla suspended AAP MP Sushil Kumar Rinku for the remaining period of the Monsoon session for "not holding the dignity of the House" by throwing papers on the Chair. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi set the motion for the MP's suspension.

Upholding the Bill, Union Home Minister Amit Shah hit out at the Opposition for not participating in the discussion over nine Bills passed by the Parliament but "coming together" in the Lok Sabha to oppose the Delhi Services Bill with the sole intention of "saving" their alliance.

"Opposition parties, including Congress, DMK, TMC, SP, said the Bill was against the 'Constitution', 'federalism', and 'overrides powers of the elected by the selected.'" While replying to over a 5-hour debate, Shah asserted that the Centre "has all the power to make laws for the Delhi State".

The Home Minister said the fear of losing Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's AAP in the alliance and "election" has brought Opposition parties together and "not their love for democracy, country, or people of the country".

"You are exposed... other-

wise tell me why you did not participate in discussions for nine other Bills," Shah said and took a swipe at the Opposition, saying "Kejriwal will say bye-bye to you after the Bill is passed."

Soon after Shah's reply, the Lok Sabha passed the NCT Delhi (Amendment) Bill 2023, with a voice vote, which was also backed by BJD, YSR Congress, and TDP.

While supporting the Bill, BJD MP Pinaki Misra said his party has maintained an "equidistance" from the BJP and the non-BJP parties, and that the issue on the power over services is still under the consideration of the Supreme Court."

Shah said the AAP was opposing the Delhi services bill with the sole intention of hiding its corruption and asked other Opposition parties to think of people's welfare and not of the new alliance.

The lone AAP member in the Lok Sabha, Sushil Singh Rinku, was heard saying that the intention of the party was not to pick up fights with the Centre but to save the Constitution from being "subverted".

With the Opposition questioning the power of Parliament to make laws for the Delhi government, Shah asserted that the Constitution, under Article 239AA, granted such powers.

Shah also invoked the first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, Babasaheb Ambedkar, and Congress leaders Sardar Patel, C Rajagopalchari, and Rajendra Prasad opposing the proposal for full statehood to Delhi.



Union Home Minister Amit Shah speaks in the Lok Sabha during the Monsoon session of Parliament on Thursday PTI

HM mocks Opp unity, 'they don't oppose 9 Bills'; Speaker suspends AAP lone LS MP for disrespect

As HM invokes Nehru for Delhi Bill, Opp takes swipe for opportunism

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

As the ruling party and the Opposition Congress locked horns on the National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill, 2023, Union Minister Amit Shah quoted the first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, to support the Centre's assertion of having overriding powers over the Delhi state.

Shah quoted Nehru to support his contention that Delhi is not like any other full state in the country. "Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Rajaji (C Rajagopalachari), Rajendra

Prasad, and BR Ambedkar were against the idea of Delhi being given the status of full statehood," said Shah while introducing the Bill in the LS. In response to Shah's statement, Congress leader in Lok Sabha, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, said it was refreshing to hear praise for the Congress and Jawaharlal Nehru from the mouth of the HM.

At this point, Shah immediately got up to reply that he was not praising Nehru but merely quoting the former PM verbatim. "If you want to take that as praise, that is fine with me," quipped the Home Minister.

In his riposte, Chowdhury

said the BJP takes Nehru's name only when it suits their argument.

"When you need it, you take the help of former PM Jawaharlal Nehru. If you had actually taken the help of Nehru, then the country would not have witnessed Manipur," said the Congress MP.

After days of disruption in the ongoing Monsoon session, the opposition was, for the first time, participating in the discussion of a Bill in the house. The government has so far passed nine bills without any discussion with the Opposition, derailing both Houses of Parliament over the Manipur issue.

Gyanvapi survey challenged in SC

SC to hear today Anjuman's plea against HC order for ASI survey to find masjid was build on temple

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

The Anjuman Intezamia Masjid committee, a Muslim body, swiftly moved the Supreme Court on Thursday following the Allahabad High Court's judgment permitting an Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) survey at the Gyanvapi mosque to determine if the mosque was built upon a temple.

Advocate Nizam Pasha sought an urgent hearing before Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, who is heading a five-judge constitution bench dealing with the Article 370 challenge.

"The Allahabad High Court has passed an order today. We have filed an SLP against the order. I have sent an email (seeking an urgent hearing). Let them not proceed with the survey...," Pasha stated. Responding to this, the CJI said, "I will look at the email right away."

Lawyers representing the Muslim parties in the case claimed that the Supreme Court would hear the plea of the Anjuman Intezamia Masjid Committee on Friday.

In response, one of the



Devotees gather outside the Gyanvapi mosque, in Varanasi on Thursday after the Allahabad High Court dismissed a petition filed by the Gyanvapi committee challenging a district court order directing the Archaeological Survey of India to conduct a survey to determine if the mosque was built upon a temple. PTI

Hindu parties also filed a caveat in the apex court, urging that no orders be passed without hearing them in the matter.

Earlier on Thursday, the Allahabad High Court allowed the ASI to conduct the survey of the Gyanvapi mosque complex in Varanasi, rejecting the Muslim side's plea to stop the survey.

A HC bench headed by Chief Justice Pritinker Diwaker was hearing the plea filed by Anjuman Intezamia Masjid, which manages the mosque, against the Allahabad High Court's order that had allowed the survey of the complex, excluding the wazukhana area.

The controversy centres around a Varanasi district court's direction on July 21, instructing the ASI to conduct a "detailed scientific survey" to ascertain whether the Gyanvapi mosque, located next to the Kashi Vishwanath temple, was

built upon a temple. The Allahabad High Court later ruled in favour of continuing the ASI survey, dismissing the Muslim side's plea that the survey may damage the structure. The survey will be conducted as per the terms mentioned in the ASI's affidavit.

The Varanasi court's ruling has allowed for a "scientific" survey of the barricaded area, except the sealed area of the "wazukhana".

"Issue of commission is permissible. Varanasi Court justified. The scientific survey is necessary in the interest of justice," the order stated, as per LiveLaw.

The decision was welcomed by UP Deputy CM Keshav Prasad Maurya, expressing confidence that the truth will come out after the ASI survey, and the Gyanvapi issue will be resolved.

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US calls for peace in Hry

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE/AGENCIES ■
NEW DELHI/WASHINGTON

The US has called for restoring peace in Haryana and urged all parties to refrain from violent actions. Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) also responded in the matter and said on Thursday measures were being taken by local authorities to bring normalcy in the State.

Taking note of the incidents in the past few days in Nuh, US State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said late Wednesday when asked to comment on the clashes. "I would say — with respect to the clashes that obviously we would, as always, urge calm and urge parties to refrain from violent actions."

He added that he was not aware if any American citizens have been impacted by the clashes, adding that he will follow up with the embassy on the issue.

Continued on Page 2

Haryana picks up pieces, social media panel to nip provocation in bud



Rapid Action Force (RAF) personnel deployed at Badshahpur after incidents of violence following Monday's attack on a VHP procession in adjoining Nuh district, in Gurugram on Thursday PTI

PTI ■ GURUGRAM/CHANDIGARH
Top Haryana Government official on Thursday said anyone found responsible for the communal clashes will not be spared and claimed that the situation is fast returning to normal in the state.

Authorities in both districts said no fresh cases of violence were reported on Thursday, asserting that the situation is under control.

Additional Chief Secretary (Home) TVSN Prasad also said a centre of the Rapid Action Force, CRPF's anti-riot unit, will soon be set up in Nuh.

The State Government has constituted a committee that will monitor social media platforms to prevent the circulation of provocative material, including videos, photographs, and hate speeches, to maintain law and order and communal harmony in the State.

A total of 176 people have been arrested and 78 taken into preventive detention in connection with the communal clashes in Haryana, Prasad said. He further said 93 FIRs

have been registered, including 46 in Nuh, 23 in Gurugram, three each in Faridabad and Rewari, and 18 in Palwal.

"I would say it has returned to normalcy. We have adequate forces. The Centre was requested and 24 companies of central forces were provided."

Prasad said in the chain of events which unfolded in Nuh on Monday, one thing important to note is why cyber crime police station was targeted by arsonists and asked who was to benefit by damaging the police station. "The whole thing warrants a thorough investigation," he said.

Six people have died in the clashes that erupted in Nuh after attacks on a Vishva Hindu Parishad procession.

Meanwhile, late on Wednesday night, a mosque was set on fire and a short circuit apparently triggered a blaze in another in Nuh district, while two brothers belonging to Muslim community were allegedly beaten up in Gurugram by a group of about 30 people, police said. *Continued on Page 2*

Govt, Opp ready to meet halfway for Manipur talks



DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■
NEW DELHI

The Centre and Opposition parties are working on a middle path to hold a debate on the Manipur crisis and end the deadlock in Parliament.

Sources in the Government have stated that the treasury bench has agreed "in principle" to a new formula, citing rule 167 of Rajya Sabha proceedings, proposed by the Opposition INDIA bloc to end the logjam and move forward in the remaining part of the session until August 11.

The Opposition has been demanding the suspension of all business and a suo motu statement from Prime Minister Narendra Modi, followed by a discussion under Rule 267 in the Upper House. However, the Government wanted a short duration discussion under Rule 176 in the Rajya Sabha.

According to Rule 167, an MP can give notice for a motion, and if admitted by the House, there will be a discussion, followed by voting at the end of the day.

While the official status from the Government's side is still unknown after three rounds of meetings, including

one between Rajya Sabha chairman Jagdeep Dhankar and Opposition leaders, the issue over Prime Minister Narendra Modi's statement, as insisted by the Opposition, remains unresolved.

After a proposed meeting between the Opposition and Dhankar was boycotted by the former, the VP asked the treasury bench to talk to the Opposition to resolve the issue.

Leader of the House in Rajya Sabha Piyush Goyal and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi subsequently met Leader of Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge and other leaders. They suggested debating the issue on a motion agreed by both sides under Rule 167.

However, there are still challenges to overcome, including agreeing on the wording of the motion, the timing of its presentation, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's presence and statement during the debate.

Goyal has agreed "in principle" to the Opposition's suggestion but mentioned the need to consult with the top leadership before finalizing the formula. *Continued on Page 2*

Bring younger Af cheetahs in Kuno to boost survival: Experts

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

In the wake of a spate of cheetah deaths at Madhya Pradesh's Kuno National Park, international experts have advised the Government to introduce young and habituated predators in the region to enhance their survival and adaptability.

Out of the 20 adult cheetahs relocated to Kuno from Africa since March this year, six have tragically died, with the latest incident reported on Wednesday.

The experts have identified 10 young cheetahs, aged between 19 months and 36 months, which can be relocated to India in early 2024.



Younger cheetahs have shown higher adaptability to new environments and lower aggression towards other cheetahs, reducing the risk of intra-specific competition mortality. Moreover, younger cheetahs have longer life expectancies post-release, offering higher conservation value and breeding potential. The experts also highlighted that habituated cheetahs, comfortable with management vehicles and human presence, are easier to monitor for health-related issues and require stress-free veterinary and management intervention.

In addition to conservation benefits, younger cheetahs will enhance the tourism value of Kuno National Park, which is set to open for tourism soon. The experiences and best practices from cheetah reintroduction attempts in South Africa have guided the recommendations.

However, the experts also cautioned that India's Project Cheetah might experience some initial challenges and losses, similar to South Africa's journey, which took 26 years and saw the loss of 279 wild cheetahs.

The founder population of 20 cheetahs in India is expected to decline further to approximately five to seven individuals before population recovery is initiated. The first litters with realistic survival prospects are likely to be born in 2024, but cheetah cub mortality is expected to be high initially as reintroduced female cheetahs adapt to the different birthing intervals in Asia.

One of the seven wild females relocated to India is likely to be a "supermom," as per the experts' assessment.

Regarding the issue of cheetahs developing thick coats

of fur in anticipation of African winter, the experts pointed out that in India's wet and hot conditions, this is proving fatal. They suggested treating the cheetahs with long-acting medicine to deal with fatal infections and prevent further deaths.

The combination of thicker coats, high parasite load, and moisture creates a perfect environment for dermatitis with fly strike, which compromises the skin's integrity and leads to infections that can spread throughout the body.

The report concludes with the experts' hope that these measures will ensure a successful reintroduction and conservation effort for cheetahs in India.

14-yr-old gangraped, killed, burned in coal furnace in Raj; 5 arrested

PTI ■ JAIPUR

A 14-year-old girl was allegedly murdered and later burned in a coal furnace in Rajasthan's Bhilwara district, police said on Thursday as the locals claimed that she was also gang-raped.

Police have detained five people, who work at five coal furnaces in the area, in connection with the incident.

Locals alleged that the girl was gang-raped before she was murdered and thrown into the furnace.

On Wednesday, the teenage girl had gone to graze cattle but did not return home till evening following which the family members started searching for her, police said.

Later in the night, the family members spotted the girl's footwear near one of the five furnaces. On peeping inside, they found her bangle and a few bones, they said.

Locals caught hold of a few people, suspecting their involvement in the crime, and handed them over to the police, they said.

The detained people who live near the furnaces are being



interrogated at the Kotri police station, they said.

SHO of Kotri police station said that there were a total of five furnaces in a row and last night one of them was being operated without being fully covered, contrary to the normal practice.

"The locals spotted a fire in one furnace. Usually, the furnace is fully covered but the furnace was opened from the side. They reached there and found the girl's bangle and some bones," he said.

He said that barring the crime scene, four other furnaces were demolished today as they were illegally set up on government land.

BJP leader Kalul Gurjar who reached the village and

wrote a letter to ADG Civil Rights and SP Bhilwara to send a factual report on the matter.

Meanwhile, the opposition BJP attacked the government over the incident and demanded the resignation of the chief minister.

BJP state president CP Joshi said the incident was gruesome.

"Such an incident would not have happened anywhere in the country. Rajasthan is being tarnished by such incidents. Chief Minister Gehlot should resign," Joshi said.

A three-member committee formed by Joshi visited the village and talked to the family members as well as the police officers.

The committee members demanded the suspension of Bhilwara SP Adarsh Sidhu alleging that the police were negligent in the matter.

"The family members informed the local police station in the evening that the girl was missing but the police did not take action and asked them to bring documents of the girl to establish she was a minor," BJP Anita Bhadel said.

met the victim's family members alleged that the girl was raped and her body was burnt in the kiln.

Gurjar alleged that the police did not act promptly in the case and detained the suspected accused only after the villagers caught them.

Police said they have not yet ruled out the possibility of rape in the matter, adding that further probe is on.

Taking cognizance of the matter, Sangeeta Beniwal, the chairperson of the Rajasthan State Commission for Protection of Child Rights, formed a three-member committee, which will submit a report to her after collecting facts.

The chairperson also

IT Dept discloses middlemen's names in Maha land-graft case

Affidavit filed in HC names middlemen liaising with various Ministries of Maha Govt

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a major development, an affidavit filed by the Income Tax department (Investigation) before the Bombay High Court has disclosed the names of three middlemen engaged in liaising activities in close coordination with various Ministries of Maharashtra government in an alleged corruption case involving the allotment of land belonging to the state government.

In her say filed before the HC bench of Acting Chief Justice Nitin Jamdar and Justice Arif S Doctor that had directed Income Tax Department to file a comprehensive affidavit related to current status of a case involving irregularities in the government land allotment, Ms Teresa Joseph, Deputy Director of Income Tax (Investigation) Unit 32 (2) confirmed that "the relatives/family members/ references of



the bureaucrats in whose name the properties were purchased" were under investigation.

Following raids conducted on 25 residential, 15 office premises and some suites in a five-star hotel in south Mumbai between September and November 2021, the IT officials had detected total transactions to the tune of Rs 1,050 crore. The syndicate - comprising businessmen, middlemen, their associates and also those pub-

lic offices had used code names in their records and in one case, they had backdated records by 10 years. Huge cash exchanges were involved in the overall transactions. The investigations had revealed that businessmen and middlemen had permanently rented out suites in a five-star hotel in south Mumbai for meeting their clients and striking nefarious deals.

In her affidavit, Ms Teresa

Joseph identified the businessmen/middlemen as Prashant Prakash Nilawar, Jayant Hirral Shah, Girish Narayan Pawar and Kirti Vishwanath Kedia who along with their close relatives and others were allegedly engaged in liaising activities in close coordination with various Ministries of Maharashtra government in an alleged corruption case involving the allotment of land belonging to the state government.

The affidavit, filed by Ms Joseph in a PIL filed by Advocate Pravin Wategaonkar brings out the offence of bribery of public servants by middlemen in allotment of land belonging to State Govt. undertaking to industrialists; extension of contracts etc.

In his PIL, Wategaonkar has sought an investigation by the SIT of Director General (ACB) & Jt. Director (ED) into the alleged corruption in the questionable government land deals.



Rajasthan Chief Minister Gehlot addressing the inauguration ceremony of 5 days National Handloom Week-2023 through video conference on Thursday. Also present on the occasion were Industries & Commerce Minister Shakuntala Rawat, Additional Chief Secretary Industries Venu Gupta, Industries Commissioner Om Kamra. The event will witness purchasing companies, buying agents, retailer associations, national and international level marketing companies, for marketing networking for handloom and khadi products in the state. In this, 80 stalls are being set up, in which 70 stalls will sell and display the state's khadi and handloom products and 10 stalls will display excellent products of weavers from other states. During the National Handloom Week, along with buyer-seller meet, exhibition, theme pavilion, talk show, workshop and seminar will be held.

Wadettiwar takes oath as new LoP in Maha Assembly

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Senior Congress leader Vijay Swadetiwar on Thursday took over as the new Leader of the Opposition (LoP) in the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly in place of the NCP's breakaway group leader Ajit Pawar who is now part of the Eknath Shinde-led government in the state.

A day ahead of the end of the ongoing monsoon session of the Maharashtra Legislature, Speaker Rahul Narvekar made a formal announcement declaring Wadetiwar as the new LoP in the State Assembly. The announcement was greeted by members of all political parties



by way of thumping of the desks.

Former LoP and current deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar warmly greeted and congratulated Wadetiwar to the LoP's chair.

After the political developments during the last 13 months which saw rebellion-triggered vertical splits in the Opposition Shiv Sena and NCP, the Congress has become the

number one Opposition in the State Assembly, thus getting the LoP's post that was earlier held by the Sharad Pawar-led NCP.

The Congress has a strength of 45 MLAs in the 288-member State Assembly. While its allies - the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena has 16 MLAs with it, the strength of the Sharad Pawar-led NCP has been reduced to "14 to 15 MLAs" though the party claims it has "19 to 20" MLAs with it.

Congratulating Wadetiwar on his becoming the LoP, chief minister Eknath Shinde said: "Our deputy chief minister Devendra Fadnis is from Vidarbha region. Now we have got an LoP (Wadetiwar) who is also from Vidarbha".

BJP will hack EVMs, incite violence to win 2024 polls, alleges Mamata

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday said that the BJP was working on a two-pronged strategy of inciting communal violence and hacking electronic voting machines (EVM) to win the 2024 general elections and promised to take up the issue in the next meeting of the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (I.N.D.I.A.).

Speaking to the media at State secretariat Nabanna the Chief Minister said that she had information regarding the BJP's plans to hack the EVMs. "I have information that they are trying to play some mischief ... planning to hack EVMs ... We have gathered some evidence and will gather more ... and then discuss it at the next I.N.D.I.A meeting," Banerjee said. The BJP knew that it was going to lose the elections, which was why it was planning to hack voting machines and incite communal tensions to polarize the electorate and win the elections, she told journalists.

"Every time they resort to violence to win polls ... they torture dalits, SCs, STs and minorities ... it is their ploy to saffronise India ... also I have been informed about some dress codes in petrol pumps and metro stations



where saffron colour will be used ... Saffron is a pure and holy colour but here the BJP is using this colour for political purpose ...

Banerjee had on Wednesday referred to the violence in Haryana saying whenever the nation faced elections the BJP resorted to engineering communal tension and violence in order to polarize the electorate.

"Look what is going on ... You can see how Manipur is burning, Haryana is burning ... and rioters are on rampage everywhere ... It is clear that like their usual practice they have started igniting riots when the elections are but a few months away ... this is a part of their politics," Banerjee said on Wednesday. When asked to comment on Union Home Minister Amit Shah's claim that despite all the efforts of the I.N.D.I.A leaders it was Narendra Modi

who would once again ascend the Prime Ministerial chair Banerjee said that "All the NDA partners have left ... whereas I.N.D.I.A is a new one and will win the 2024 election and form the government. INDIA will

save the country from disaster, communal tension and unemployment." Reacting to Banerjee's statements Bengal BJP leader Samik Bhattacharya said that before dreaming of winning Delhi the Chief Minister should first save Bengal as she was going to get a bigger shock than 2019 general elections. "She is talking of violence and EVM hacking but what did her party do in Bengal ... they resorted to hacking of ballot papers on a large scale which is why her own officers are facing suspension ... and to talk of violence no one can match the TMC in committing violence," he said.

Did Desai leave 'recorded suicide message' before taking extreme step?

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

As a preliminary report of an autopsy conducted at Mumbai's Sir J. J. Hospital confirmed that Art Director Nitin Chandrakant Desai had committed suicide 'by hanging', speculation was rife in his family and friends circles on Thursday that Desai had "planned" his suicide two to three days in advance.



As the bereaved family prepared for Desai's funeral scheduled for Friday after, one of the associates of late Art Director Babu More claimed that Desai had left behind a 'recorded suicide message' in which he has named certain businessmen and persons who might have allegedly abetted his suicide.

However, the Raigad police have not neither confirmed nor denied the purported "recorded suicide message" speculation. Being a suspected

case of suicide, the Karjat police have registered an accidental death report and are investigating if there was any foul play in Desai's death.

Unconfirmed reports said that Desai was under tremendous mental pressure over the insolvency proceedings launched against him. He had reportedly confessed to his close aides that some businessmen were allegedly harassing him over financial matters, which might have led to his taking an extreme step.

On their part, the Raigad Police have begun to investigate Desai's suicide from multiple angles, including financial, external or business pressures and other aspects. Fifty-seven-year-

old Desai was found hanging at his N.D. Studios at Karjat in Raigad district in the early hours of Wednesday, a week after the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) ordered the initiation of Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP) against his company over repayment of accumulated debt totalling to Rs 252 crore.

It may be recalled that the Mumbai branch of the NCLT (National Company Law Tribunal) had in its July 25 2023 ordered initiation of "Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP)" against Nitin Desai's company ND's Art World Private Limited for an unresolved debt totalling Rs 252.48 crore. The NCLT had appointed Jitender Kohari as the interim resolution professional to carry out the steps mentioned under the Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code, 2016.

Meanwhile, Desai's funeral will be performed on the premises of N.D. Art World Pvt. Ltd. Studios located on the sprawling 52 acre area at Karjat in Raigad district, on Friday afternoon.

Scores of film personalities, several political figures, Desai's relatives and friends from Mumbai and Dapoli in Ratnagiri, and Raigad local villagers are likely to attend the funeral. At around 2 pm on Friday, Desai's body will be taken in a procession with a flower-bedecked cortege and as per his desire, the mortal remains will be consigned to the flames at a site near the helipad at the studio.

The funeral has been delayed as Desai's wife Neha is awaiting the arrival of her three children - a son and two daughters - from the USA early on Friday morning.

Gyanvapi survey challenged in...

From Page 1
Muslim leader Khalid Rasheed Firangi Mahali stated that the Muslim side has the option to approach the Supreme Court against the Allahabad High Court's order.

The Gyanvapi case started after a group of women approached the court in Varanasi, claiming that a temple previously existed at the site. The court ordered a video survey of the complex, which led to a dispute over a structure. The Hindu side claimed it to be a shivling, while the mosque management committee asserted it was part of a fountain in the wazukhana.

During the hearing, the ASI told the court that there will be no damage to the structure and in its order, the Allahabad high court emphasised that the condition has to be upheld. The court said the ASI must ensure that no damage is caused to the structure. The ASI assured the court that it has the technical capabilities to do the survey without causing structural damage or doing any excavation.

Govt, Opp ready to meet halfway for...

From Page 1
The Rule 167 motion is likely to be taken up on Tuesday, August 8, as Lok Sabha is scheduled to take up the No Confidence Motion. The availability and schedule of Home Minister Amit Shah need to be checked for fixing the date.

The Opposition has now placed the responsibility on the Government to find time

Haryana picks up pieces, social media panel to nip provocation in...

From Page 1
Regarding the VHP's Brij Mandal Jalabhishek Yatra, Prasad said it is being held for over three years now. "What link did cyber crime police station have with Yatra. Who was to benefit by damaging cyber crime station," he posed.

About the Yatra, he said, "Whenever a yatra is to take place, permission is taken and assessment of situation is done. Meeting of peace committee is held. This time too, the meeting was held and assurances were given that everything will be peaceful.

And we followed all the standard operating procedures for the event," the senior IAS officer said.

Replying to a question, he said the chief minister has said the attack on the procession was "well-planned which pointed to a larger conspiracy".

Curfew, meanwhile, was relaxed in Nuh on Thursday. "People can buy daily essentials from 10 am to 1 pm," Nuh Deputy Commissioner Prashant Panwar said, adding the curfew will be relaxed again on Friday for three hours from 10 am.

US calls for peace...

From Page 1
Meanwhile, MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said here on Thursday measures are being taken by local authorities to restore peace and normalcy in the State.

"I'm sure you are aware of the measures that are being taken by local authorities. You've seen it a lot in the media to put a stop to the violence there, to restore peace and normalcy," he said during a press briefing.

to discuss the issue. They also anticipate difficulties during the drafting stage, as they would insist on including "breakdown of Constitutional machinery" in the motion, a point the BJP is unlikely to accept.

In the morning session of Rajya Sabha, Trinamool Congress floor leader Derek O'Brien appealed to Goyal to shun ego and arrogance and approach the Manipur issue with care and healing. Goyal agreed and invited the leaders for a discussion. However, Chairman Dhankar called a meeting at 1 PM, which the Opposition parties eventually did not attend due to their dissatisfaction with his comments against Kharge.

Despite some initial disagreements within the Opposition, they eventually

decided to go ahead with Rule 167 and presented it before the Ministers.

Congress chief spokesman and general secretary Jairam Ramesh expressed hope that the Modi Government would agree to the middle path solution offered by the INDIA parties to break the logjam and have an uninterrupted discussion on Manipur in the Rajya Sabha.

Kejriwal slams Centre after Services Bill passed in LS

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday accused the BJP of backstabbing the people of the national capital after Lok Sabha passed a bill to replace an ordinance promulgated for handling the transfers and postings of senior officers in the city government.

Kejriwal lashed out at the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and urged people not to believe anything the PM says.

“BJP always promised to give full statehood to Delhi. In 2014, Modi himself said that on becoming the prime minister, he would give full statehood to Delhi. But today these people stabbed the people of Delhi in the back. Don’t believe anything said by Modiji from now



on,” he said in a tweet in Hindi. The Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill, 2023, was passed by Lok Sabha on Thursday amid a walkout by opposition parties. The Delhi services bill was passed after a nearly four-hour-long debate which was replied to by Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

Shah made it clear that the central government has the power to make laws on Union territories and Delhi, being a

Union Territory, the Centre enjoys full rights to make rules also. As the House debated on the bill, Kejriwal said earlier in the day that Home Minister Shah did not have a single valid argument in favour of bringing the bill, and asserted that the opposition bloc INDIA will never let it happen.

Initiating the debate in Lok Sabha, Shah said the BJP and the Congress had ruled the national capital without any confrontation, but problems arose only in 2015 when a government came that had no intention to serve but only to fight with the Centre.

In his first reaction after the introduction of the bill, Kejriwal said this is a bill to enslave people of Delhi. “Today I heard Amit Shah ji speaking in Lok Sabha on the bill which snatches away the

rights of the people of Delhi. They do not have a single valid argument to support the bill... They also know that they are doing wrong. This bill is a bill to enslave the people of Delhi. This is a bill that makes them helpless and helpless.

INDIA will never let this happen,” he said in a tweet in Hindi. The AAP-led Delhi government has been at loggerheads with the Centre over the control of Group-A officers in the National Capital Territory administration.

In May, the Centre promulgated the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Ordinance, 2023 that overturned the Supreme Court judgment handing over control of “services” in the NCT administration to the Delhi government.

Court to hear harassment case against Brij Bhushan on Aug 9

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A Delhi court will start hearing on August 9 arguments on the charges likely to be framed against outgoing Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief and BJP MP Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh in a case of alleged sexual harassment of women wrestlers.

Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Harjeet Singh Jaspal on Thursday fixed August 9, 10 and 11 for arguments on charge after Advocate Rajeev Mohan, appearing for Singh, submitted verification of the documents provided by Delhi police, including the charge sheet, are complete.

The counsel said though he has sought better pictures/copy of certain documents, he can take their soft copies from the Investigation Officer (IO). During the proceedings, Singh and co-accused and suspended WFI assistant secretary Vinod Tomar appeared before the court.

The judge had on July 28 granted Singh exemption from personal appearance for the day after his lawyer submitted he was unable to appear before the court as he was busy discharging his responsibilities as an MP. The Metropolitan court had on July 20 granted bail to Singh and Tomar on a bond of Rs 25,000 each



with certain conditions, including they shall not leave the country without the court's prior permission and not offer any inducement to witnesses.

The Delhi police had filed a charge sheet against the six-time MP on June 15 under sections 354 (assault or criminal force to woman with intent to outrage her modesty), 354A (sexual harassment), 354D (stalking) and 506 (criminal intimidation) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

Elderly woman dies after lift falls in Noida society

STAFF REPORTER ■ NOIDA

A 73-year-old woman died of a possible cardiac arrest on Thursday after the cable of a lift at a group housing complex here snapped, leading to a free fall between floors, police officials said.

The lift did not hit the ground but was caught between some of the middle floors of the building, a police official said about the incident that took place around 4.30 pm in the high-rise society located in Sector 137.

Sushila Devi was alone in the lift when its wire snapped, leading to a free fall. She had pressed the button from the eighth floor for the lift to go down. However, someone from an upper floor of the building had already called the lift, which was going up when she entered it, the official said.

Rai stresses on urgent need for reducing stubble burning

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a joint meeting of Central and State Agriculture Ministers conducted through video conferencing on Thursday, Delhi Development Minister Gopal Rai emphasized the urgent need for reducing stubble burning and discussed various issues related to stubble management.

“Every year, the Kejriwal government formulates a winter action plan based on various factors to tackle the escalating pollution in Delhi during the winter months.

However, stubble burning during the cold season significantly contributes to the pollution problem. To address this, our government has been distributing Pusa Bio-decomposer in paddy fields, resulting in the decomposition of stubble and enhanced field fertility. Despite our efforts, incidents



of stubble burning in neighboring states continue to exacerbate Delhi's pollution problem during winters,” the minister said. He highlighted the positive impact of the Kejriwal government's Winter Action

Plan, leading to a steady decline in PM 10 and PM 2.5 levels. The city's Air Quality Index (AQI) witnessed a substantial reduction, dropping from 26 in 2016 to just 6 in 2022, indicating a 30 percent decrease in

pollution levels over the past eight years. During the meeting, ministers and officials from different departments addressed another vital issue raised by farmers. It was observed that farmers faced a

challenge due to the limited duration between the harvest of paddy crops and the sowing of wheat. As a solution, it was recommended to respective state governments to administer Pusa Bio-composer in a timely manner, ensuring an uninterrupted process with improved outcomes for farmers.

A collaborative action plan was discussed with the Agriculture Ministers of Punjab, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh to ensure effective stubble waste management not only in Delhi but also in other states.

This year's action plan of the Kejriwal government for stubble management -

Spraying Pusa Biodecomposer solution in more than 5000 acres of fields in Delhi. Organizing 50 training camps and 50 exhibitions on stubble-related agricultural

machinery to raise awareness among farmers.

Installing around 2500 large hoardings in prominent places to disseminate information and educate farmers about stubble management.” Rai shared the success of the past three years in spraying bio decomposer for stubble management, covering 2000 acres in 2020-2021, 4000 acres in 2021-2022, and expanding to 4329 acres in 2022-2023. Training camps and awareness programs have been instrumental in educating farmers about effective stubble management.

He further emphasized that the Delhi government will prioritize resolving the issue of stubble burning and will collaborate with neighboring states to collectively combat pollution, not only benefiting Delhi but also the entire Northern region of India.

G'gram-Nuh violence: Muslims decide to offer Friday namaz at home

Gurugram: Muslims here will not offer Friday namaz at any mosque or open space in view of violence that flared up in Nuh, Sohna, and Gurugram earlier in the week, a community leader has announced.

Mufti Saleem Qasmi, president of Jamiat Ulama in Gurugram, appealed through a video message to people to refrain from praying in public places or gathering in mosques for prayers.

Qasmi said it is the responsibility of the people to maintain brotherhood. The decision comes in the wake of the communal clashes that broke out on Monday in Nuh district during a VHP rally. Six people including a cleric were killed in the violence that ensued after the

clashes and several cars and food joint were set on fire. “I appeal to the people to offer namaz at home. Only those people who live in a masjid can offer namaz in the masjid. No one else is allowed to enter it. May Allah protect our brotherhood,” Mufti told on Thursday.

Hindu-right outfits had on Wednesday submitted a memorandum to a Deputy Commissioner of Police demanding, among many other things, a ban on namaz in public places. DC Prashant Panwar and SP Varun Singla of Nuh held a meeting with the Ulemas in Nuh on Thursday and appealed to them to pray at their homes.

Staff Reporter

4 roads identified for facelift ahead of G20 summit: MCD

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has identified four major roads for beautification ahead of the G20 meet which is going to take place here in September, officials on Thursday said.

Bharatendu Harishchandra Marg, Somnath Marg, Maharaja Surajmal Marg, and a stretch on Vikas Marg that leads to Leela Ambience Convention in Karkardooma are the four roads selected for a sprucing up. Four teams have been formed by Shahdara South Zone for completing the work within time, MCD said. “Proper cleaning, beautification, encroachment removal

and greening work is being done by the MCD on these roads. Daily cleaning is being done along with removal of garbage/debris from the identified roads,” the MCD said in a statement.

The four stretches chosen for a facelift include the one in front of Leela Hotel, which is where many of the foreign dignitaries would be staying. “Apart from this, illegal banners and posters are being removed. It is noteworthy that guests from abroad will stay at the Leela Ambience Convention, due to which beautification works are being done in the surrounding area,” it said.

Old, dumped vehicles have been removed from the CBD

ground overlooking the Leela Hotel and instructions have been given to paint the G-2 Cafe located near it, it said.

The MCD said it is also refurbishing and replacing old, damaged dustbins. “Rigorous cleaning of all roads is underway, bolstered by the deployment of sanitation workers to prevent any dumping. Stringent actions are being taken against those engaged in improper waste disposal and littering.

“The daily removal of temporary encroachments and the elimination of illegal banners, posters, and hoardings from walls are integral parts of this endeavour, spearheaded by specially constituted teams,” the civic body said.

Minor girl molested by cleaner in school in Panchsheel Enclave

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A three-and-half-year-old girl was allegedly sexually assaulted at a school in south Delhi's Panchsheel Enclave area, police said on Thursday.

On Tuesday at 11.46 am, a PCR call was received at Hauz Khas police station regarding child abuse at a school near Chirag Delhi flyover in Panchsheel Enclave, a senior police officer said. The police staff visited the school and met the minor and her aunt. The victim alleged that she was

sexually abused by a cleaner — Arjun Kumar (33) — who works at the school, the officer said. She also told her mother that Arjun used to see her when she went to the washroom and he had sexually assaulted her, police said.

A case under sections 376 (rape) and 377 (unnatural offences) of the Indian Penal Code and section 6 of the POCSO Act has been registered against the accused, they said. The accused, a resident of Old Gautam Budh Nagar in UP, has been arrested and sent to judicial custody, police added.



Members of All India Advasi Congress with placards 'Impose president rule in Manipur state' and 'Stop atrocities on tribal' take part in 'Save Tribal Women' Protest against the violence in the Manipur state, in New Delhi on Thursday

RANJAN DIMRI | PIONEER

IMD: Sporadic rain in city for 4-5 days

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Hot and humid weather troubled Delhi residents on Thursday with only marginal relief expected over the weekend.

Intermittent rains are likely over the next five or six days with the intensity peaking on the weekend, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) forecast showed.

The Safdarjung Observatory, Delhi's primary weather station, recorded a minimum temperature of 25.2 degrees Celsius, two notches below normal. The maximum temperature settled at 35 degrees Celsius.

Bountiful rains in July gave Delhi its best air quality for the month in five years, while the average maximum temperature also dropped to its lowest level since 2016, according to data from the India Meteorological Department (IMD) and the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

The city recorded 384.6 mm of rainfall in July, which is the second-highest in the month in the last 15 years,



compared to the normal of 195.8 mm. It gauged above-normal rainfall in the last four months — 53.2 mm against a normal of 17.4 mm in March, 20.1 mm against an average of 16.3 mm in April, 111 mm against a normal of 30.7 mm in May and 101.7 mm against a normal of 74.1 mm in June.

The average maximum temperature in July was 34.7 degrees Celsius, the lowest since 2016 when it was 34.5 degrees Celsius.

Court to hear plea for Yasin's virtual appearance on Aug 7

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Thursday listed for hearing on August 7 a plea for virtual production of separatist leader Yasin Malik from jail in connection with the NIA's plea seeking death penalty for him in a terror funding case.

The application by the jail superintendent was adjourned after a bench of Justices Siddharth Mridul and Anish Dayal, which was scheduled to hear the request, did not assemble.

Previous week, Tihar jail officials made a goof-up by physically producing Malik in Supreme Court and invited wrath of the Judges, Solicitor General Tuhar Mehta and CBI. Saying that he has no advocate to argue, Malik said he himself argue in the killing of Air Force officers and Rubaiya Sayeed kidnapping case.

He was brought to the high-security apex court premises in a prison van escorted by armed security personnel without the court's permission. Four Tihar jail officials were suspended on this goof-up.

The High Court had on May 29 issued warrants for production of Malik, who is presently serving life term in the case in Tihar Jail, on August



9 when the NIA's plea for enhancement of sentence is listed for hearing.

In the application seeking modification of the order, the jail authorities said Malik was a “very high risk prisoner” and it was imperative to not physically produce him in court to maintain public order and safety.

It also said that as per an order passed by the Home Ministry, Malik cannot be “moved from Tihar Jail” and shall not be taken out of jurisdiction of the national capital. “Respondent/Convict Yasin Malik has been lodged in Tihar Jail, New Delhi under the category of very high risk prisoners and thus, the present application is in relation to a heavy security issue.

Therefore, it is imperative that the respondent/convict

Yasin Malik is not physically produced before this Hon'ble Court in order to maintain public order and safety,” the application said.

On May 29, the high court had issued notice to Malik on the NIA's plea seeking death penalty for him in the terror funding case and said, “Let warrants of production be issued against Yasin Malik, before this Court on the next date of hearing.”

List on 09.08.2023.” On May 24, 2022, a trial court here had awarded life imprisonment to Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front chief Malik after holding him guilty for various offences under the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and the IPC.

Malik had pleaded guilty to the charges, including those under the UAPA, and he was convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment. Appealing against the sentence, the NIA has emphasised that a terrorist cannot be awarded life sentence only because he has pleaded guilty and chosen not to go through trial.

While seeking enhancement of the sentence to death penalty, the NIA has said if such dreaded terrorists are not given capital punishment on account of pleading guilty,

there would be complete erosion of the sentencing policy and terrorists would have a way out to avoid capital punishment.

A life sentence, the NIA has asserted, is not commensurate with the crime committed by terrorists when the nation and families of soldiers have suffered loss of lives, and that the trial court's conclusion that Malik's crimes did not fall within the category of the “rarest of the rare cases” for grant of death penalty is “ex-facie legally flawed and completely unsustainable.”

The agency has emphasised that it has been proved beyond reasonable doubt that Malik spearheaded terrorist activities in the Valley and with the help of dreaded foreign terrorist organisations, had been “masterminding, planning, engineering and executing armed rebellion in the Valley in an attempt to usurp the sovereignty and integrity of a part of India.”

The trial court had awarded Malik 10-year jail term each under sections 120 B (criminal conspiracy), 121-A (conspiracy to wage war against the government of India) of IPC and sections 15 (terrorism), 18 (conspiracy for terrorism) and 20 (being member of terror organisation) of UAPA.

Garbage dumped on road from Shahdara to Karkardooma: Court seeks MCD's response



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A court here Thursday sought the response of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) on a plea seeking a permanent injunction against the authorities concerned, restraining them from dumping garbage on a road between Shahdara and Karkardooma.

The plea also sought a mandatory injunction against the defendants - East Delhi Municipal Corporation (EDMC) and the Deputy Commissioner's office in Nand Nagri - directing them to remove and clean the garbage and sewage dump. “List on August 8 for filing of reply and status report by the MCD. The

official concerned of MCD shall remain present in court,” Additional Senior Civil Judge Himanshu Raman Singh said.

The plea filed by Advocate Sachet Sharma alleged the garbage dump on the “road coming from Shahdara to Karkardooma” covered around “half the road” and had been lying unattended for over a month causing traffic hiccups.

“That the maintenance of the sewage and the road is the duty of the defendants in which they have failed miserably to perform their duties and due to their negligence, the plaintiff is facing hardship in commuting from his house to his office in Karkardooma court,” it claimed.

Review Civil Service recruitment process: Parl panel

Committee outlines in it's 131st report that maximum number of officers recruited have technical and medical background

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Noting that above 70 per cent of recruits in civil services are from technical streams, a parliamentary committee on Thursday said the allurements to become a civil servant is perhaps adversely affecting other professions that are a requirement for the nation.



It is high time to rethink the entire recruitment process for the civil services, the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice opined in its latest report.

The panel said a civil servant is an interface between the government and the common people, and works at the grass-roots, which requires considerable human touch and a sensitive approach towards the people. It also noted that a civil servant has to be given training in such a way that he develops a more humane and empathetic approach towards any issue.

In its 131st report on "Review of Functioning of Recruitment Organizations of Government of India", tabled in Parliament on Thursday, the committee, said that the maximum number of officers recruited have technical and medical background. "Above 70 per cent of the recruits in the civil service by the UPSC (Union Public Service

Committee opines that it is high time to have a rethink about the whole process of recruitment for the civil service," the report said.

The committee said that the UPSC and the Staff Selection Commission (SSC) conduct various examinations each year and allocate recommended candidates to different posts. For instance, through the civil services examination, UPSC selects about 1,000 candidates every year and these candidates are posted across 19 different services, it said.

"With reference to this the committee notes that the same process and yardstick is being applied to select candidates who would be manning the top administrative posts in various services. It may happen sometime that the aptitude and interest of the candidate selected may not be suitable for that particular post," the report said. Citing statistics for the last 10 years, it said that out of 833

candidates selected through the civil services examination-2020, 541 candidates (65 per cent) had an engineering background, 33 (four per cent) medical background, 193 (23 per cent) humanities background and 66 (eight per cent) "others" background.

Of the 922 candidates selected through the civil services examination-2019, 582 (63 per cent) had an engineering background, 56 (six per cent) medical background, 223 (25 per cent) humanities background and 61 (six per cent) "others" background.

The committee also sought to know whether the UPSC is contemplating to make any change in the pattern of civil services examination to curtail the length of the examination cycle. Each recruitment test conducted by the UPSC as of now, takes anywhere between six months to one year to complete, it said. "This long drawn process

involves a lot of expenses for the competing candidates and also contributes to the erosion of human capital. In view of this, the committee desires to know whether UPSC is contemplating to make any change in the pattern of civil services," the report said. The panel appreciated that with changing times, the government has brought in several significant changes in the training methodology.

"However, the efficiency, energy and intensity of the officers still needs to improve and the officers need to be further trained for working in adverse situations, particularly to tackle the law and order problems effectively," it said.

The panel also observed that the present day civil servant did not possess the same legal prowess as their predecessors. The committee feels that there is a need to impart better training in the legal part as they are also quasi judicial

officers so that the officers when they take the final assignment, address the judicial problems more meticulously than what they are doing nowadays," the report said. The committee asked the UPSC to explore the feasibility of declaring the answer key of civil services preliminary exams after the preliminary exam stage is over and not after the declaration of final results of the civil services examination.

"The committee appreciates the UPSC and the SSC for conducting the diligence exercises before publishing the answer keys. However, the committee is of the view that this will become further more credible if the feedback of the candidates are taken through a dedicated portal and then keys are published. The committee hopes that this process will be followed in future," the report said. Candidates should be allowed to raise objections at this stage only and on that basis

any discrepancies related to the answer key of the preliminary examination should be resolved, it said. This should be taken into account before publishing the result of candidates qualifying for the next stage that is civil services mains examination, it said.

It said that rendering services to the common people is the primary task of the civil servants and inclination to serve society with human touch must be an essential quality amongst the civil servants. The committee, therefore, recommended that while examinations are conducted and the question paper is prepared, these factors also need to be taken into account apart from the subject and intelligence, the report said.

"The committee is of the view that these factors probably could help in moulding the prospective/selected candidate to work for betterment of the society," it added.

GARDP, ICMR to study antimicrobial resistance in India



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

With antimicrobial resistance (AMR) becoming a major threat in India for physicians and patients alike, the Global Antibiotic Research and Development Partnership (GARDP) has launched a study in India in collaboration with the ICMR at six hospitals to understand drug-resistant infections and subsequently learn how to treat patients better in the future.

The study will collect and analyze data in 180 patients being treated for infections caused by carbapenem-resistant organisms at Kasturba Medical College in Manipal, Christian Medical College in Vellore, Tata Medical Centre in Kolkata, PD Hinduja Hospital & Medical Research Centre in Mumbai, the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER) in Chandigarh and Sir Ganga Ram Hospital in Delhi.

"We are seeing rising rates of resistance to carbapenems – the class of last-line antibiotics most commonly used to treat hospital-associated multidrug-resistant bacterial infections," noted Francois Franceschi, GARDP's Project Lead for Serious Bacterial Infections.

The concerns come amid various researches including the recently published in The Lancet that says that nearly 1.3 million people – and potentially millions more – died as a direct cause of antibiotic-resistant infections in 2019.

The study will also look at the epidemiology as well as the treatments administered to both adults and children with

severe bacterial infections caused by carbapenem-resistant *Enterobacterales* (*CRE*) and/or *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* (*CRPA*). Infections caused by these bacteria are difficult to treat because they do not respond to commonly used last-line antibiotics. Data will also be collected on the clinical outcomes for patients with confirmed CRE/CRPA infections in the six hospital sites.

These infections have been recognized as critical in the Indian Priority Pathogen List, which guides research, discovery and development of new antibiotics in India. "Treating *Pseudomonas* infections has become significantly more difficult because of antibiotic resistance.

Without enough antibiotics in the pipeline to address this challenge and as access to newer drugs is not available in India, the situation appears grim. More research as well as active involvement of regulators and policymakers is vital.

The study will provide crucial information that could ultimately be used to improve treatments and help reduce deaths and illness associated with bacterial infections," said Dr Soumyadip Chatterji, principal investigator for the study at the Department of Infectious Diseases, Tata Medical Centre, Kolkata.

The results of the study will also help the hospitals involved to carry out future interventional trials of novel therapeutics which are able to combat carbapenem-resistant infections. GARDP's observational study is also underway at five hospitals in South Africa, said the researchers.

Dhankhar, Kharge spar in RS over Modi bias

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar and Leader of Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge were engaged in bitter exchange on Thursday when the Congress leader accused him of defending Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Dhankhar asserted that he does not need to defend someone who has garnered global recognition and secured electoral mandates in both 2014 and 2019.

Kharge questioned Dhankhar's refusal to consider even minor suggestions and the demand to call the Prime Minister to the House and asked why Dhankhar was



defending the Prime Minister so vehemently, to which Dhankhar reacted strongly. Dhankhar made it clear that he was not obliged to defend anyone, especially the Prime Minister, who has achieved global recognition, and India's progress has been remarkable under his leadership.

He highlighted the 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha electoral results, which showcased a massive victory for the BJP under Narendra Modi's leadership. "Our Prime Minister doesn't require my defense. He has been recognized on the global stage," Dhankhar stated, emphasizing India's unstoppable rise and unprecedented growth.

Birla returns to Chair as MPs assure good behaviour in LS

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Thursday skipped the House proceedings in the first half to express displeasure over disruptions and returned post-lunch only after several opposition leaders met him and assured him that they would maintain the dignity of the chair.

The Speaker had skipped the House proceedings on Wednesday, upset at the repeated disruptions and disrespect towards the Chair by opposition members, particularly during the passage of bills on Tuesday.

Birla did not turn up for the Question Hour on Thursday, prompting Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury to make a plea to him to return to the Chair.

Several opposition leaders met Birla in his chamber with an assurance of their cooperation in the conduct of business and upholding the dignity of Lok Sabha.

The Speaker returned to the Chair in the post-lunch session when the House took up the Delhi Services Bill for consideration and passing. When

BJP leader Rajendra Agarwal assumed the chair during Question Hour, Chowdhury said all the members wanted the Speaker to return. "When the House convenes, we wish to see the Speaker in the chair. It is our demand that the Speaker return to the chair. The entire House likes the Speaker," he said.

"Sir, please urge the Speaker to return to the chair. Whatever the differences, we will resolve them. The Speaker is our custodian, we will air our views before him whether he likes it or not," the Congress leader said.

Besides Chowdhury, Congress leader Gaurav Gogoi, Trinamool Congress' Saugata Ray, Union minister Nitin Gadhikar, NCP leader Supriya Sule, DMK's Kanimozhi, RSP member N K Premachandran also met the Speaker in his chamber and assured him their cooperation in upholding the dignity of the House.

Birla was upset at the repeated disruptions in Lok Sabha on Tuesday when some members tore papers and threw them at the Chair when the House had taken up legislative business.

Petition filed in SC to review order of caste survey in Bihar

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A petition has been filed in the Supreme Court challenging the Patna High Court order upholding the validity of a caste survey in Bihar, contending the notification issued by the state government for the exercise is against the constitutional mandate.

The plea filed by Nalanda resident Akhilesh Kumar submitted that in terms of the constitutional mandate, only the Union government is empowered to conduct a census. "In the present case, the State of Bihar has sought to usurp the powers of Union of India, by merely publishing a notification in the official gazette. "It is submitted that the

Notification dated June 6, 2022 is against the Constitutional mandate of distribution of powers between the State and the Union legislature as enshrined under Article 246 of the Constitution read with Schedule VIIth of the Constitution and ultravires the Census Act, 1948 read with Census Rules, 1990 and is therefore void ab intio (since beginning)," the plea, filed through advocate Barun Kumar Sinha, said.

The plea submitted the entire exercise of conducting a census by the State of Bihar is without authority and legislative competence, and reeks of malafide. "The short question of constitutional impotence that arises in the present petition is whether the

Notification dated June 6, 2022 published by the State of Bihar based on decision of Bihar Cabinet dated June 2nd, 2022, to conduct Caste based Survey from its own resources and the consequent appointment of District Magistrate to supervise the same, is within the Constitutional mandate of separation of power between the State and Union," the plea said.

In a shot in the arm for the Nityush Kumar Government, the Patna High Court had on Tuesday upheld the caste survey ordered by it as "perfectly valid" and "initiated with due competence." The High Court passed the order rejecting a bunch of petitions challenging the survey, which was ordered last year and began earlier this year.

PCI chief to head 10-member panel to recommend chief, members of Lokpal

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has appointed Press Council of India (PCI) chairperson Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai as chairperson of a 10-member search committee to recommend the chief and members of anti-corruption ombudsman Lokpal.

Former head of Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) Samant Kumar Goel and Information Commissioner Heera Lal Samariya are among the members of the committee.

The Lokpal is working without its regular chief after Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose completed his term on May 27 last year.

Justice Pradip Kumar Mohanty, a judicial member of Lokpal, is currently the acting chairperson. At present, there are five members in the Lokpal. Two posts of judicial members and one post of non-judicial member are lying vacant. The Lokpal is headed by a chairperson and can have eight members — four judicial and

the rest non-judicial.

The prime minister-led selection committee has constituted a search committee for the purpose of recommending the panel for consideration of the positions of chairperson and members of the Lokpal, an order issued by the Personnel Ministry said.

The search committee's nine members include Justice Kalpesh Satyendra Jhaveri, former chief justice of Orissa high court; Samant Kumar Goel, ex-chief of RAW; Heera Lal Samariya; A S Kiran Kumar, former head of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO); A Surya Prakash, ex-chairperson of Prasar Bharati; and Arundhati Bhattacharya, former chief of State Bank of India (SBI), according to the order dated August 2.

Besides them, former Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officers Otem Dai and Rajiv Yadav and former Mumbai Police Commissioner Ahmed Javed are also appointed as the members of the search committee.

ED conducts raids in PMLA case probe against Balaji

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate on Thursday conducted fresh searches in connection with its ongoing money laundering investigation against Tamil Nadu minister V Senthil Balaji and others.

Officials said premises linked to some entities being probed in this case and alleged benamidars (benami property holders) were being raided in Coimbatore and Karur.

Balaji continues to be a minister without portfolio in the Tamil Nadu government despite his arrest by the ED on June 14 in a money laundering case linked to an alleged cash-for-jobs scam in the State transport department.

On Wednesday, the ED told the Supreme Court that Balaji was preventing it from exercising its right of custodial interrogation and the apex court reserved its verdict on the pleas of the DMK leader and his spouse challenging his arrest. The apex court had on

July 21 sought the ED's response on the petitions filed by Balaji and his wife Megala challenging the July 14 order of the Madras High Court upholding his arrest by the probe agency in the money laundering case.

The controversial minister and his wife have filed two separate petitions in the top court challenging the high court order. Earlier, the agency had claimed that Balaji allegedly "misused" his office for illegal gratification and "engineered" a job racket scam in the State transport undertakings during 2014-15 with purported kickbacks paid by candidates through his associates including RV Ashok Kumar and B Shanmugam.

The ED filed a case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act in September 2021 to probe these allegations. The PMLA case stems from three Tamil Nadu Police FIRs filed during 2018 and later by some of the candidates who failed to get the promised jobs.

NHAI launches 'Rajmargyatra' app for safer travel on NHs

New Delhi: The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has taken a significant step towards enhancing the highway user experience by launching 'Rajmargyatra', a citizen-centric unified mobile application, to make highways across the nation more convenient and user-friendly.

The app aims to provide a seamless and user-friendly experience for highway users, ensuring a safer and more enjoyable journey on Indian National Highways. It is available for download on both Google Play Store and iOS App Store and is currently offered in Hindi and English, catering to a wider audience. Key features

of the 'Rajmargyatra' App include comprehensive Highway Information, serving as a one-stop repository of essential details for National Highway users.

Additionally, commuters can access real-time weather conditions, timely broadcast notifications, and information about nearby toll plazas, petrol pumps, hospitals, hotels, and other essential services to ensure a smooth and secure journey on National Highways.

The app also comes equipped with an inbuilt complaint redressal and escalation mechanism, enabling users to report highway-related issues easily. Users can attach geo-

tagged videos or photos to provide better clarity, and registered complaints will be handled in a time-bound manner, with system-generated escalations to higher authorities in case of any delays. Furthermore, users can track the status of their grievances for complete transparency, as stated in an NHAI statement.

To facilitate ease of use, 'Rajmargyatra' integrates its services with various bank portals, allowing users to recharge their FASTags, avail of monthly passes, and access other FASTag-related banking services – all within a single platform for a seamless and hassle-free experience. PNS

Centre launches Study in India portal

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Thursday launched a Study in India Portal which is a dedicated website that will provide comprehensive information about the Indian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

Launched jointly by the Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Education, the website will illustrate academic programs covering but not limited to undergraduate (UG), postgraduate (PG), Doctoral level programs as well as courses in Indian Knowledge System like Yoga, Ayurveda, classical arts etc. The website-portal will present information about the academic facilities, research sup-



An international student interacting with Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan at the launch of Study in India portal on Thursday in presence of External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar

port, and related information. The new website will now have the provision for students to

integrated one-stop solution for student registration and visa application process. Speaking on the occasion Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said that SII Portal is a one-stop platform that will simplify international students' academic journey in India.

While addressing the gathering, External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar said that the portal signifies the Government's commitment to make India a global hub of education by welcoming students of diverse backgrounds. "It will establish a strong international footprint of brand 'India' in the education sphere," Jaishankar said. Minister of State for Education Dr Subhas Sarkar; Minister of State for

Education, Annpurna Devi; Minister of State for Education and External Affairs Rajkumar Singh; Member of Parliament, Dr Mahesh Sharma; senior officials of Ministry of Education and Skill Development and Ambassadors of more than 10 countries attended the event.

On the occasion, students from Russia, Thailand, Japan, Ethiopia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan and Republic of Korea who are currently studying in India, presented souvenirs from their culture as token of respect to dignitaries. Guided by NEP, the SII Portal reflects our commitment to make India a preferred education destination as well as to blur academic boundaries for shaping a prosperous future, Pradhan added.

Ganga water level rising again

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The water level of river Ganga restarted rising in the city here on Thursday. This rise is mainly due to recent flood in river Yamuna in Delhi, Haryana and adjoining areas because the level of Ganga at Phaphamau, prior to Sangam in Prayagraj was still recorded constant, as per the report of Middle Ganga Division-III of Central Water Commission (CWC). However, right from Prayagraj to Varanasi including Mirzapur it was recorded rising again. In Varanasi, it was rising at 10 mm per hour.

After crossing 65 metres mark, the water level receded slightly when the river was steady in the city during the last few days but now, it has restarted rising again and at 8 am on Thursday, it was at 64.89 metres. Though it was still flowing several metres below the warning level of 70.262 metres, the rise has affected life at Kashi's ghats. The venue of the famous Ganga aarti at Dashashwamedh Ghat has already shifted on some occasions and still the river was flowing at the feet of Sheetla Mata Mandir. In the downstream areas, though the river was steady at Ghazipur and Ballia, the same may start rising there within a day or two. In Ballia, the river was at 55.31 metres against the warning level of 56.615 metres.



Water level of river Ganga restarts rising in Varanasi on Thursday.

Meanwhile, the rain lashed the city in the afternoon after a good rain during the night hours when it had received 19.8 mm rain. Due to rain, the normal life was paralysed and many areas were waterlogged, exposing the tall claims of Nagar Nigam that the drains were already desilted.

However, the rains and recent efforts made by the government and administration has brought a good result as ground water level has improved in 2022 as compared to 2016 in all the development blocks and urban areas of the district, informed Chief Development Officer (CDO) Himanshu Nagpal. According

to him, in order to improve the water level in the rural and urban areas of the district, rainwater harvesting, constructions of Amrit Sarovars and renovation of ponds, tree plantation, construction of check dams and renovation of restored rivers etc have been done.

"Due to these efforts, at present the ground water level is improving and continuous efforts are being made to check the ground water level," he said, adding that the work of rooftop rainwater harvesting has been done in the area of 3,39,305 square metres in the urban area and the work is in progress in 4,8264 square

metres, which will be completed soon. Along with this, more and more rooftop rainwater harvesting work will be done by making more efforts.

The CDO said that for water conservation, rejuvenation of rivers, construction of ponds, rain water harvesting, tree plantation and construction of chak dams etc are being done in all the development blocks. "Under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme, the work of renovation of a 12 hectare pond is being done for water harvesting on a large scale in village panchayat Karkhiyaon of development block Pindra," he added.

Varanasi put on high alert

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The district has on Thursday been put on high alert and the security in the Gyanvapi premises and at Gate No-4 of Shri Kashi Vishwanath Mandir has been beefed up after the High Court upheld the order of the Varanasi court allowing for the ASI survey of the Gyanvapi premises. The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) will start its survey in the Gyanvapi premises on Friday.

The HC, Prayagraj upheld the order of the Varanasi District Court allowing for the ASI survey of the Gyanvapi

premises. As soon as the news of the HC order reached here, the district administration and police put the district on high alert.

The security in the Gyanvapi premises and Gate No-4 of Shri Kashi Vishwanath Mandir has been beefed up in view of the security. The Commissioner of Police Mutha Ashok Jain also reached the Gate No-4 to take stock of the security arrangement and gave some instructions to the security and police personnel on duty there. The police personnel were deployed at the main mosques. The police force also

conducted flag marches in sensitive areas and appealed to the people to maintain peace and harmony.

The District Magistrate S Rajalingam informed that the ASI has sought permission to start a survey from Friday and the district administration and police will help the ASI team in this direction.

It is learnt that on the order of the Varanasi district court, the 30-member team of the ASI started the survey of the Gyanvapi premises on July 24 last but it had to stop the survey work after few hours when the Supreme Court

stayed the survey work while hearing the plea of the Anjumam Intezamia Masjid Committee challenging the Varanasi court order.

The Supreme Court had asked the Anjumam Intezamia Masjid Committee, which oversees the management of Gyanvapi mosque, to go to the High Court on the issue. The committee moved the HC, Prayagraj which had reserved its order on July 27 last and upheld the order of the Varanasi court on Thursday clearing the way of the ASI survey of the Gyanvapi premises.

Preparations of G-20 Cultural Group Meeting reviewed

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Commissioner of Police (CP) Mutha Ashok Jain and District Magistrate (DM) S Rajalingam, along with the team of Union Cultural Ministry led by Director Naveen Gupta, reviewed the preparations for the proposed G-20 Cultural Group Meeting here on Thursday. This meeting of the G-20 Cultural Working Group is proposed to be held on August 24 to 25, followed by the meeting of Culture Ministers on August 26 in Varanasi itself.

It will be the third meeting of the G-20 scheduled to be held in this city which will give an opportunity to introduce the Culture Ministers of G-20 countries to the culture of India as well as his ancient city, also



CP MA Jain, DM S Rajalingam reviewing preparations of G-20 Cultural Group Meeting in Varanasi on Thursday.

known as the 'Cultural Capital'. The DM directed the Varanasi Development Authority (VDA) to carry out proper

repair of roads, drains etc near Buddha Theme Park in Samarth. He also directed the Nagar Nigam (Municipal Corporation)

to carry out proper cleaning of vacant plots falling on the way from the airport.

He asked to organise programmes in universities also so that proper branding of the programme could be done. He also directed the district administration officers to welcome the guests on arrival at the airport, to appoint proper tourist guides, liaison officers and to make complete preparations for the security after taking complete information regarding the stay of the guests in the hotels and the meeting hall etc.

The officers of various departments including Chief Development Officer (CDO) Himanshu Nagpal, Vice Chairman of VDA Abhishek Goyal and many others were also present in the meeting.

Indian Organ Donation Day observed

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

In compliance with the instructions received from the Union Ministry of Health and Welfare, Indian Organ Donation Day was observed at Dr KN Udupa Smriti Sushrut auditorium in Sir Sunderlal Hospital (SSH), Banaras Hindu University (BHU) here on Thursday under the chairmanship of Medical Superintendent Prof KK Gupta and in presence of Deputy Registrar and Chief Administrative Officer Dr Rashmi Ranjan.

Addressing the employees of SSH BHU, Prof Gupta made all the participants aware of organ donation and then according to the instructions of the Union Ministry of Health and Welfare, the employees and officers took oath for organ donation. Dr Rashmi Ranjan proposed the vote of thanks. The programme was coordinated by Murtuza Alam, Section Officer (General Administration), SSH. Prominent among those who were also present were Assistant Registrar Jai Prakash, Nursing Superintendent Prakash Chandra Sharma,



Doctors, nursing staff taking pledge on Indian Organ Donation Day at SSH BHU in Varanasi on Thursday.

Anuj Kumar, DK Rai, SN Shukla, Rajesh Singh, Jai Banerjee, RP Singh and Manish Singh.

Meanwhile, the postal workers also took a pledge for organ donation at a function held at the Head Post Office here. The pledge was also taken at different post offices and administrative offices of Varanasi Region. On the occasion, Krishna Kumar Yadav, Postmaster General (PMG) of Varanasi Region administered the pledge to the officers and employees.

Speaking on the occasion, the PMG said that there is a need to make people aware about organ donation. "By donating their organs and tissues, one per-

son can potentially save up to eight lives and help overcome the shortage of organs for transplant. Organ donation can be done at any age. We should raise awareness about organ donation and help our community and country to flourish," he said.

On the occasion, Assistant Director Brajesh Sharma, Assistant Accounts Officer Santoshi Rai, postal inspectors Shrikant Pal, Dilip Pandey, private secretary Rakesh Kumar, Shriprakash Gupta, Rahul Verma, Shambhu Prasad Gupta, Shashikant Verma, Ramchandra Yadav, Ajita Kumari, Smita and other officers and employees took the pledge of organ donation.

Niranjan rail under pass to open for public use by I-Day

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

On this Independence Day, the residents of Sangam city will not only commemorate the 76th year of Independence but also rejoice in the long-awaited reopening of the Niranjan rail under pass.

The rail under pass, which has been under construction since May 9 as part of a widening project, is now nearing completion.

The completion of this rail under pass comes as a relief to the locals who have endured tiresome days battling traffic jams in the scorching weather.

With the final stages of construction underway, the burden of traffic at Rambagh and Pani-ki-Tanki flyovers will be shifted to the Niranjan rail under pass, facilitating smoother connectivity between the old city areas and Civil Lines.

The construction of drains beside both the abutments and the pier has also been completed, effectively addressing the issue of waterlogging at this location.

Additionally, pre-cast concrete slabs which were transported from Kanpur have arrived at the site and are ready to be installed between

the two abutments and the pier. Around two dozen prefabricated slabs will be positioned on the supports of the two abutments and the lone pier, forming the foundation for three railway lines in the future.

This expansion has increased the width of the earlier rail under pass by 12.5 metres, allowing for improved traffic flow.

A concrete road has been constructed beneath the bridge, and once it dries up the installation of slabs using massive cranes will proceed smoothly.

The road will be opened once the slabs are in place and the remaining work which

involves laying railway tracks will be carried out at a later stage without disrupting normal traffic flow beneath the bridge.

According to Public Relations Officer (PRO) of Prayagraj division Amit Kumar Singh, the project is progressing as per schedule and the Niranjan rail under pass will be open for public use by Independence Day.

The completion of this project marks a significant milestone in the city's infrastructure development, promising enhanced convenience and connectivity for its residents.

Preparations on to start chopper service from Prayagraj

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

In view of Mahakumbh-2025, the exercise to connect Prayagraj with other cities by air has been intensified. Now, in this sequence, preparations are on to start helicopter service from Prayagraj. Helicopter will start from Prayagraj to other nearby cities, including Delhi. As per the orders of the CM, the officers are engaged in preparing its blueprint.

For this many helipads will also be made at Prayagraj airport. According to airport officials, in the first initial days, passengers will get helicopter

facility for cities like Mathura, Agra, Varanasi, Kaushambi, Pratapgarh and Chitrakoot. The fixed rent for this will also be finalised. Private agency will be hired for all this preparation. With the aim of connecting all airports of the state with each other, preparations are on to start helicopter service.

The booking of the helicopter will be done through the online system. For this a mobile app will also be made by the Airport Authority on which helicopter tickets can be booked. At present, passengers are getting flight facility from

Prayagraj airport to 11 cities. Prayagraj airport is being expanded in view of Mahakumbh. It is now preparing to start direct flights to many other cities. For this on behalf of UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath directions have also been given to the departmental officers concerned two days ago.

ROPEWAY: Pilgrims and tourists coming to Sangam City to attend Mahakumbh in 2025 or thereafter will get to see a panoramic view of Sangam from ropeway running over Yamuna river. This ambitious project will run between

Shankar Viman Mandapam (a place towards city side near to Bade Hanuman temple to Triveni Pushp, located on the other side of Yamuna (Naini side). The 2,200 metres long ropeway will be constructed with a budget of Rs 251 crore.

The tender for the same has been floated by the construction agency National Highways Logistics Management Limited (NHLML). The construction will start after the tender process is completed. The construction of the ropeway is expected to be completed in 18 months.

52 stolen mobile phones seized

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

A joint team of Kareli and Special Operation Group (SOG) seized 52 stolen mobile phones worth Rs 10 lakh and two SUVs.

The arrested persons were identified as Raja Tiwari of Teliyagaraj, Pawan Kumar Saroj of Hathigawan, Brijesh Kumar Saroj alias Pintoo of Pratapgarh, Rohit Saroj of Matadeen ka Purwa, Rajesh Pandey of Shivkuti and Suraj of Pratapgarh. The accused were arrested near Kanchanpur trisection while they were planning to dispose of the mobile phones they had stolen from a shop located in Kareli block. Police said all the five arrested had several cases pending against them.

Meanwhile, a joint team of Civil Lines police and SOG also arrested five auto lifters near Nawab Yusuf Road and recov-

ered 10 stolen bikes and dismantled parts of four other bikes from their possession.

The arrested were identified as Shani Harijan (mastermind of the gang) of Nawabganj, Surendra Gautam of Soraon, Vivek Kumar Yadav of Baharia, Pawan Kumar Gautam of Atrampur and Musser Kumar of Mansoorabad. The police said Pawan Kumar and Musser Kumar were auto mechanics. The gang used to operate with the help of master keys and used to target parking slots and market areas.

DRESS CODE IN TEMPLE: Over 300 devotees have been stopped by the management of Shri Mankameshwar temple while entering the sanctum sanctorum of the temple for allegedly flouting the dress code in the past three months.

According to sources, the management of Shri Manka-

meshwar temple have put in place a dress code for devotees wishing to enter the sanctum sanctorum of the shrine. A board mentioning a seven point dress code was installed at the gate of the temple in June. Over 300 devotees were stopped while entering into garbha griha for not wearing 'decent' clothes ever since the dress code was implemented, admitted chief priest and Mahant Shridharanand Brahmachari. "The devotees coming to the temple to offer prayers to deities must be conscious about the rich Indian culture and tradition and wear 'decent' clothes while entering and offering prayers to deities at the temple," he added.

He, however, said "The management committee has appealed to devotees that men must wear kurta-dhoti while women be dressed up in saree or suit when they are performing

'abhishek' and 'pujan' of Lord Shiva at the garbha griha of the temple."

He added, "despite repeated warnings and appeals, we have noticed that there is a section of people who are still coming to the temple wearing shorts, jeans, skirts and other 'indecent' clothes. Now, we are forced to stop such people from entering into the sanctum sanctorum." The dress code-cum-guidelines state that those wearing body exposing, provocative, uncultured and indecent clothes are not welcomed in the temple.

The temple management committee has also restricted devotees from clicking photographs and selfies on the temple campus. Thousands of devotees have been visiting the famous Mankameshwar temple to offer prayers to Lord Shiva during the ongoing Shrawan month.

OK PLAY INDIA LIMITED
CIN No: L28219HR1988PLC030347
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NOTICE
Pursuant to Regulation 29 read with Regulation 47 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, Notice is hereby given that a Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Company is being convened on Friday, the 11th day of August, 2023, to consider and approve, inter-alia, the Un-audited Financial Results (Standalone and Consolidated) of the Company for the quarter ended on 30th June, 2023.

For OK PLAY INDIA LIMITED Sd/-
Date : 03.08.2023 Meenu Goswami
Place : New Delhi Company Secretary

NOTICE
Notice is hereby given pursuant to Regulation 29 read with Regulation 47 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, that a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Company will be held on Thursday, 10th August, 2023, inter-alia, to consider and approve the Un-audited Financial Results of the Company for the quarter ended on 30th June, 2023.

The information contained in this notice is also available on the Company's website www.cubical99.com as also on the website of the Stock Exchange viz. BSE Limited - www.bseindia.com

For Cubical Financial Services Limited Sd/-
Place: New Delhi (Ashwani Kumar Gupta)
Date 02-08-2023 Managing Director

LOSS OF ID CARD
Public Notice
This is to bring to the notice of the general public that Shri Rajesh Kumar issued by ICICI Bank Ltd. An ID card of ID card no. 2338568 has been found missing and/or lost. Whoever finds the said ID Card, is requested to return the said ID Card to the Manager, Loan Services & Management Group, ICICI Bank Limited.

Therefore, all customers of ICICI Bank Limited are hereby advised not to make any payment to any unauthorized person holding the above ID Card No. 2338568. Please further note that any person making payment to any person holding the said ID Card shall do so at his/her own cost, peril and risk and ICICI Bank shall not be bound and/or liable for any payment.

Date: 04/08/2023
Place: Pharganj

For:-
ICICI BANK LTD
S.D

New Okhla Industrial Development Authority
Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida, G.B. Nagar (U.P.)
Website : www.noidaauthorityonline.com

E-TENDER NOTICE
E-Tenders are invited from firms/contractors registered with UPLC Lucknow for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened/downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on NOIDA Authority's official website: www.noidaauthorityonline.com & <https://tender.up.nic.in>. Please ensure to see these websites for any changes/ amendments & corrigendum etc.

S. No.	JOB No.	Name of Work	Amount
1	06/DGM(NTC)/SM (NTC)/2023-24	Annual maintenance of command control centre building, Construction of Record room & parking Shed in sector 94, Noida.	7028796.44
2	07/DGM(NTC)/SM (NTC)/2023-24	Noida Traffic Cell (Supply of Innova Toyota Car, Crane, Hydrate Crane and Ambulance on Hire Basis at Noida- Gr. Noida Expressway to the Help of Traffic Police Inview of Traffic and Public Security) Noida.	4910400.00

Which can be uploaded by date **10.08.2023** upto **05.00 PM**. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on date **11.08.2023** at **11.00 AM**.

Which can be uploaded by date **17.08.2023** upto **5.00 PM**. Pre-qualification shall be opened/downloaded on date **18.08.2023** at **11.00 AM**.

Dy. General Manager
Noida Traffic Cell

CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA

ICICI Bank
Branch Office: ICICI Bank Limited, 3rd Floor Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol bagh, Delhi- 110005

PUBLIC NOTICE - TENDER CUM AUCTION FOR SALE OF SECURED ASSET
[See proviso to rule 8 (6)]
Notice for sale of immovable assets
E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the **Physical possession** of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ICICI Bank Ltd. will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" as per the brief particulars given hereunder;

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrowers/ Guarantors/ Loan Account No.	Details of the Secured asset(s) with known encumbrances, if any	Amount Outstanding	Reserve Price Earnest Money Deposit	Date and Time of Property Inspection	Date & Time of E-Auction
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)
1.	Sunita Agrawal (Borrower), Shailendra Kumar Agarwal (Co-Borrower), Gaurav Agrawal (Co-Borrower) Loan No. LBNOD00002082390	Flat No 4182, Type- C, Floor-18, Tower-4, ATS Tourmaline, Village Babupur, Sector 109 B, Gurgaon, Haryana Area: Super builtup area: 2150 Sq.Ft., Builtup area: 1797 Sq.Ft.	Rs. 1,95,09,155/- as on 25-Jul-23	Rs. 1,51,10,000/-	August 23, 2023 From 12:00 Noon to 02:00 PM	September 15, 2023, From 11:00 AM Onwards

The online auction will take place on the website of e-auction agency **M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited (URL Link-<https://disposalhub.com>)**. The Mortgagors/notice are given a last chance to pay the total dues with further interest till **September 14, 2023 before 05:00 PM** failing which, this/these secured asset(s) will be sold as per schedule.

The Prospective Bidder(s) must submit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Demand Draft (DD) (Refer Column E) at: **ICICI Bank Limited, Plot No.23, Shal Tower 3rd Floor, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh Delhi- 110005** on or before **September 14, 2023 before 05:00 PM** and thereafter they need to submit their offer through the above mentioned website only on or before **September 14, 2023 before 05:00 PM** along with scan image of Bank acknowledged DD towards proof of payment of EMD. Kindly note, in case prospective bidder(s) are unable to submit their offer through the website then signed copy of tender documents may be submitted at: **ICICI Bank Limited, Plot No.23, Shal Tower 3rd Floor, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh Delhi- 110005** on or before **September 14, 2023 before 05:00 PM**. Earnest Money Deposit DD/P/O should be from a Nationalised/ Scheduled Bank in favour of **"ICICI Bank Limited"** payable at Delhi

For any further clarifications with regards to inspection, terms and conditions of the e-auction or submission of tenders, kindly contact **ICICI Bank Limited on 8584874809, 8657476284**

Please note that Marketing agencies **1. NexXen Solution Private limited 2. Augeo Asset Management Pvt Ltd. 3. Hecta Propsect Pvt. Ltd.** have also been engaged for facilitating the sale of this property. The Authorised Officer reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without furnishing any further reasons. For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please visit www.icicibank.com/m4p4s

Date : August 04, 2023
Place : Delhi/ NCR (Gurgaon)

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Fake varsities

UGC has identified 20 universities as 'fake'. Most are in Delhi

Well, hold onto your graduation caps, because here's a plot twist nobody saw coming! Brace yourselves for the shocking revelation that we've got some top-tier fake universities right here in our very own country, and they're flourishing right under the watchful gaze of the authorities. The geniuses over at the University Grants Commission (UGC) decided to drop a bombshell by unveiling a list of 20 universities that are about as real as a unicorn riding a rainbow. Picture this: the UGC, that's right, the ultimate degree police, just pulled off a classic "gotcha" move. They're pointing fingers and waving red flags, screaming, "Guess what? These 20 so-called universities? Yeah, they're "fake." Hold up, it gets better. Out of this list of academic charlatans, a whopping eight of them have set up shop right in Delhi. And oh, Uttar Pradesh, you're not far behind either, contributing a solid four entries to the prestigious Fake University Hall of Shame. The UGC's got its superhero cape on, shouting from the rooftops that these imposter institutions are nothing but paper tigers. They can't bestow degrees on anyone. So, if you were planning to get a degree from these fake varsities, well, you might as well start selling pakoras on the north campus.



To be fair, the UGC's heart is in the right place - they're like the ultimate degree bouncers, making sure no one sneaks into the party without a legit invitation. But hold your horses, there's a sequel to this saga. Remember the list the UGC dropped last year? Turns out, the sequel is just as good as the original. So, what's the real deal? According to the UGC rulebook, only universities with a legit parentage (read: Central, State/Provincial Acts or the fanciest certificate - recognition as deemed-to-be universities) can throw graduation confetti around. If you're not on that list, well, about time you seriously started thinking about social media as a career - a YouTuber or instal-stalwart, maybe. This is a telling commentary on the education system of our country. Contrary to the hype created about the reforms that are being introduced in the education system, the government is unable to even weed out the bogus institutions which run right in the capital. Not that degrees matter much as unemployment is rising with every passing day, but it is at least valid. What about the fate of the thousands of students who are already enrolled in these bogus institutions? Where would they go and what they are going to do with the degree that is a crap. As for the UGC, the lesser said the better. They must be patting their backs for releasing the list of fake universities and feeling they did a great job. But this could be just the tip of the iceberg and many more fakes might be operating in the country. In a world where a degree is worth its weight in memes, it's reassuring to know that some folks are keeping an eye out for all of us unsuspecting students. So, next time take a deep breath, do some online detective work and make sure you're not signing up for a degree in disappointment.

PICTALK



Students of Patna Women's College ahead of the Shrivani Dance competition, in Patna

India-US ties: China is the elephant in the room



UMANG KOHLI

If there is a country that can stand up to China's expansionist policy, it is India because it can match it in soldier-to-soldier, eyeball-to-eyeball conflict

The India-US relationship indeed seems to have come of age. There was a time when the US would invariably have a soft corner for Pakistan in its dealings and would generally hyphenate the two countries together in its dealings of the region. The Bush administration even went ahead and gave Pakistan a major on-NATO ally status, a status which continued during the Obama administration as well. So what has suddenly changed as far as the attitude of the US towards India is concerned? Or has the overall thought process changed? The US failed to make India bow to its demands after the advent of the Russia-Ukraine war, and hence is this now a 'charm offensive' by them?

The US did charm China in the 90s during the Clinton administration to keep Russia under check. Is it now trying to charm India only to keep China under check? Is India now a long-term strategic ally of the US or just a counterbalance to China? The answers to these questions would shape the geopolitics of the world over the next decade or two, and hence we as Indians must be cautiously optimistic and not outrightly euphoric about the evolving equation with the US.

Support by China for the Russian offensive in Ukraine is no secret. It looks as if China wants to do the same thing to Taiwan that Russia has done to Ukraine. This has put the US on an alert, as this would make it lose considerable futuristic technology, trade and geo-political clout not only in the Indo-Pacific, but also globally. The Biden administration thereafter emphasized India's centrality in America's Indo-Pacific strategy.

The US also suggested India play a larger role in South, Central and Southeast Asia - this is obviously to counter the growing Chinese presence in the region. Is India thus a part of larger counterplay and an act of decoupling by the US? Or is India a natural democratic leader whose time has come? If the present set of events is an indication, it looks like the truth lies somewhere in the middle.



If there is a country that can stand up to China's expansionist policy, it is India, for it can match up to it in soldier to soldiers, in an eyeball-to-eyeball conflict. This naturally presents an opportunity for deepening cooperation between India and the US.

Now, let's talk about the takeaways from the visit of the Indian Prime Minister to the US and the deals around defence and semiconductor businesses that were sealed. The transfer of technology by GE to HAL is significant, for it provides India with the teeth to stand up to the Chinese Air Force. The supply of predator drones is for surveillance and to keep an eye on Chinese incursions.

It would also act as a deterrent to Chinese misadventures along the LAC. The predator drones would also keep the PLA's Rocket Forces under check. The US Navy's pacts with public sector undertakings (PSUs) Mazagon Dock Limited (MDL) and Goa Shipyard to avail service and repair of their mid-voyage ships is aimed at increasing the reach of the US Navy and thereby keeping the growth of



THE US DID CHARM CHINA IN THE 90s DURING THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION TO KEEP RUSSIA UNDER CHECK. IS IT NOW TRYING TO CHARM INDIA ONLY TO KEEP CHINA UNDER CHECK?

the Chinese Navy under check.

Recently, China banned Micron, citing that it posed a security risk to China's critical information infrastructure supply chain. This has not gone down well with the US, as semiconductors are the key to future technology and China has so far led the semiconductor technology with the help of tech giants. Both the US and China has been using the phrase 'decoupling' loosely. For the US, it means discouraging imports from China to safeguard US citizens' jobs and ensure the safety and security of America's civil and military infrastructure.

From the Chinese perspective, however, decoupling is a strategic shift whereby China switches its focus from economic growth to economic control and then leverages that dominance. Controlling the semiconductor space is like controlling the future, for it opens up areas of innovation and growth of future advances in information, communication, AI, Quantum tech, blockchain, Cloud technology and Data gathering. India has grabbed this opportunity with open arms and facilitated

Micron setting up its plant in India. China may not be the overriding factor behind this deal, however, its behaviour over the last two years has acted as a catalyst.

Despite China being a non-democratic country was pampered by the West for capital gains. The West hoped in the 1990s that communist China could be encouraged to be more liberal both politically and culturally by having an open trade policy with it. However, though China did open up economically, it closed its political doors to liberal ideas even more. This attitude of the West toward helping China become the world's manufacturing hub helped China grow into the giant that it is. India is now the largest populated country with the largest youth population in the world. There can be no future world order sans India's primary role in it. Decoupling or otherwise, the time has come now when India needs to make its presence felt on the world stage both politically and economically.

(The author is a Lt Col (Retd) and writes about international relations)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Haryana Govt and the rule of law



After the Nuh violence in Haryana, the truth about the security arrangements in the state has come to the fore. In a press conference on Wednesday, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar clearly said that every person in the state cannot be protected. The remarks by the CM seem like a person defeated by circumstances. CM Khattar said that 50 or 60 thousand policemen cannot protect 2.80 crore in the state. The people of Haryana are

responsible for their security. Under the rule of CM Khattar, Haryana's law and order situation has reached from bad to worst and has collapsed. The rule of Haryana failed miserably under Manohar's BJP government. Manohar Lal's government failed to stop Nuh's violence. In 2014, the Manohar Lal government also failed in the Rampal arrest case. In 2016, the Manohar-led government failed to stop the violence in the name of the Jat reservation. In 2017, it also failed to stop the violence in the case of Ram Rahim. These are the cases in which Manohar Lal Khattar did what he said in the press conference. If he says that he will not be able to provide security to every person in case of violence, then it means that even Haryana Police is not doing. It is high time he must take moral responsibility and step down and the Centre must impose Presidential rule.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

ferent from Africa? Can the cheetahs there be reared here in these different conditions or not? India hastily decided to bring cheetahs here without reviewing these requirements, the result of which is that within a few months, 9 of them have died. Don't know whether we will be able to save the rest or not? No one has the answer to this.

Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur

HEALTH VS TECHNOLOGY

Sir - In India, after the increasing steps of digitization in the decade of 1980-90, the path of technological development was opened. First, the phone, computer, Internet, TV and then most importantly the mobile phone, hit the Indian market. Technology that was made for convenience, today is also anathema on many levels. People today waste their time on mobile phones for many hours. Due to this one main reason, distance is increasing in our society and family. Many people spend an average of seven to eight hours on the phone out of two-

ty hours. This has the greatest impact on a person's health. According to the World Health Organization, watching a mobile phone screen for a long time affects a person's ability to think and understand. Besides, eyesight also becomes weak over time. In many cases, people have also become blind. In such a situation, it is very important to take care of the "screen time", that is, the time lost on the mobile phone screen. For this nowadays a facility called 'Device Control' is available on the phone itself. Needless watching reels and short videos on Facebook, YouTube and Instagram should be avoided. It acts like a drug. The person is addicted to the mobile phone. Before giving the phone to children, parental control must be placed in it, because today even the ocean looks subtle in front of the contents of the internet.

Salman Khalil | Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Optimal nutrition for anaemia-mukt Bharat



SHAIFALIKA PANDA

A comprehensive framework functioning at the policy, administrative and multi-stakeholder level can help address the anaemia problem

Today every tenth person in India is an adolescent girl. A staggering 59.1% of these girls (age 15-19) are grappling with anaemia, a health complication disproportionately affecting adolescent girls.



Given the significance of anaemia in the overall health, well-being, and future development of these young girls, its potential prevention through awareness of optimal nutrition and health is crucial.

Anaemia is an intergenerational issue for women and girls - undernourished women are prone to giving birth to low-weight or premature babies. These infants are at heightened risk of being anaemic, which can increase childbirth complications.

An adolescent girl suffering from anaemia is more vulnerable to infections, reduced cognitive abilities, fatigue, weakness, lack of concentration in study and other work, and shortness of breath. -This affects their day-to-day life from the foundational years. Further, while menstruation, increased nutritional needs often go unmet due to limited awareness and gender norms. Gender-based prefer-

ential treatment often favours boys over girls in terms of food and healthcare access, deprioritising girls in terms of necessary nutrients.

Medical facilities such as regular haemoglobin screenings, IFA (Iron & Folic Acid) supplementations and deworming are critical in addressing anaemia. Healthcare services particularly in rural areas are often limited, which can escalate nutritional deficiencies. These issues are additionally exacerbated due to affordability and accessibility concerns of healthcare services in small-town India.

The Indian government's Anaemia Mukta Bharat, a part of the broader POSHAN Abhiyan, seeks to address anaemia through services such as Iron and Folic Acid supplementation, deworm-

ing, and health screenings. Integrated with initiatives like Rashtriya Bal Suraksha Yojana (RBSK) Surakshit Matritva Aashwasan (SUMAN), Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY), Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK), and Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA), that aim to bolster maternal and child health, promote institutional delivery, and offer free antenatal check-ups.

Non-government organizations, philanthropies, and private entities also play a substantial role in improving nutrition and combatting anaemia, thereby reducing infant and maternal mortality rates (IMR and MMR). Havells India Limited, for example, has devoted its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) efforts to addressing malnutrition in Rajasthan, ensuring quality and hygiene through an end-to-end mid-day meal process for schools.

Anaemia is a pressing concern that requires holistic interventions. A comprehensive three-tiered framework functioning at the policy, administrative, and multi-

stakeholder levels can help address the various facets of the country's anaemia problem.

Policy-level action redefining food security through providing fortified foods in the Public Distribution System (PDS) must be prioritised, similar to the provision of fortified rice to all beneficiaries under the PDS by the end of FY 2024, as approved by the cabinet committee on Economic affairs in April 2022. In addition, the government can implement colour-coding food packaging through Jan Aushadhi Kendras, thereby enabling widespread adoption of iron-rich foods and supplements as a result of easier identification from this tangible visual cue. Further, creating a position of "nutrition specialist" similar to ASHA and ANMs at the 1,50,000 government-established Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs) at the panchayat level, will allow for the crucial enhancement of nutritional awareness.

(The writer is the Trustee and Founder and CEO, of Bansidhar and Ila Panda Foundation (BIPF))

INDIA ON THE BOIL

Sir - In the milieu of ethnic turmoil, the people of the country are facing extremes of conflicts and arson-like situations in most of the country. From North East India to the West part of the nation, unrest is harming the tranquillity of the nation to a large extent. The point of concern is not this much only, we had a lot of disturbance in the political sense as well. The people of the northern Indian state are also deeply affected by the flooding situation. Manipur is a tense story in its respect, due to which political tensions are also hiked. Flood is another problem for many of the citizens. Many states are being troubled by arson and religious clashes for political rivalry and so.

In the concern of social unrest and disturbance. We all are jerking and angry in some or the other way. To settle peace in society we need to ensure peace at the citizen level. Also, the bureaucratic and political masters too, try to find out the solution for the nation's trouble and must ensure that constructive solutions will be dispersed on an early note, rather than conflicts and quarrels.

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

CHEETAH DEATHS

Sir - Under the 'Action Plan for the Revival of Cheetah in India', there is a plan to introduce 50 cheetahs from African countries to various national parks in the next 5 years. So far 27 have been brought. We could not save 9 of them due to some unknown reasons. The latest occurred this Wednesday, August 2, when a female cheetah died in Kuno National Park. I think the Government of India should postpone the plan to bring the rest of the cheetahs. Before bringing them, it is necessary to investigate and thoroughly study how the species of cheetahs had become extinct in India 70 years ago. Until we do not know those reasons, we will not be able to save them even by bringing 500 cheetahs. Don't know whether animal experts have found out whether India's climate and forest conditions are how far dif-



FIRST COLUMN

THE GEOPOLITICAL SEMICONDUCTOR STORY

The ecosystem required for setting up a fab facility could be elaborate



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

American theoretical physicist Michio Kaku wrote "By 2100, our destiny is to become like the gods we once worshipped and feared. But our tools will not be magic wands and potions but the science of computers, nanotechnology, artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and most of all, the quantum theory." As if on a cue, Indian external affairs minister Dr S Jaishankar in a crisp speech at the recently concluded Semicon India conference last week, outlined the entire geopolitical economic narrative being played out all around the world when it comes to building resilient, trustworthy, reliable supply chains for future of humans. Dr Jaishankar in his speech outlined the value one draws out from harnessing the power of critical and emerging technologies. He said "To begin with, it is an intrinsic element of the knowledge economy that is steadily unfolding. One of its primary characteristics is how deeply it embeds technologies in a manner that profoundly influences all aspects of our lives.

If the very nature of our economic and social activities transforms as a result, it is not surprising that CET should now emerge as one of the important metrics of power. Who invents, who manufactures, what are the market shares, where are the resources, who has the skills, where is the talent pool - these are increasingly the crucial questions. The depiction of a Chip War may be somewhat overstated, but it has more than a fundamental kernel of truth. To a considerable extent, concerns in the CET field are influenced by how market shares and production dominance was leveraged in other areas. Technology trade is not just trade; it is as much about political science. The truth is that we are seeing the re-emergence of export controls as a response to strategic assertions of economic strength. How to do business needs to be tempered with where and with whom to do it.



Trust and transparency are also today key issues as we debate the future of the digital domain. Who processes and harvests our data is increasingly crucial in a world of artificial intelligence. Nor indeed can we any longer separate even basic manufacturing and everyday commodities and services from their data implications. As political democracies, pluralistic societies and market economies, we all have understandable concerns about both privacy and security. It is, therefore, essential that those of us who are comfortable working with each other enhance our collaboration. Another relevant factor here is the mismatch between demographic supply and workplace demand. The pace of change that we are witnessing when it comes to CET will also create an accompanying upheaval when it comes to the required talent pool.

While the message was directed towards several of the semiconductor industry's top bosses present in the audience, the veiled reference to China wasn't missed. India announced a \$10 bn semiconductor mission in 2022, to put itself in the middle of the ongoing restructuring of international relations, specially viewed from a future technology dominance perspective. Dr Jaishankar referred to the Covid pandemic and over-concentration of production, followed by "disruption, manipulation or simply transactionalism" which caused heartburn for every global citizen. He was pitching to the Taiwan delegation (one of the largest manufacturers of chips in the world) to look at India favourably.

Taiwan's Foxconn has recently junked a nearly \$20bn semiconductor joint venture with Vedanta, however, it did not prevent the company's chairman from showing up in Gandhinagar, the venue for the Semicon India conference. As per news reports, the local market for semiconductors would be 4 times the current size of \$23bn in the next 5 yrs. It makes for a powerful case for global giants, such as Foxconn, which already has a presence in India in different domains of manufacturing, to start their semiconductor journey.

(The writer is a policy analyst)

India-Canada alliance to propel employment



DINESH SOOD

In a country of 1.4 billion people, 65% of whom are young people, imparting skills to all must be at the centre of all governmental policies



The limited number of government jobs and low business sentiments are also causing inequalities in demand for gainful employment, seriously hurting the Indian job market. In this dynamic of seizing opportunities abroad, the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and the Skills Council of Canada (SCC) recently formed a strategic partnership to address critical workforce shortages in Canada. This partnership demonstrates that it is possible to create global employment opportunities for skilled workers and reduce the skills gap by increasing the supply and demand of the two countries' economic resources.

The rapid growth in the global economy and the development of technology have created a demand for professionals all over the world. Against this background, India is realizing its potential to become a global economic powerhouse by leveraging its young workforce. Partnerships with countries with an ageing population and labour shortages will increase the employment of Indian workers worldwide.

Unfortunately, there is a mismatch between the young skills and their desire to get better placements in countries like Canada, the US and Australia. Wacky promises by the immigration companies to encourage outbound migration of youth without required skills are nothing but a cruel joke, which must be avoided and one should accept the challenge of unprecedented underemployment.

NSDC along with Ernst & Young (EY) has conducted the 'Global Skill Gap Study'. The study showcases an in-depth analysis of the global workforce markets with a prime focus on leveraging the opportunities to benefit the Indian

workforce. The study highlighted that several nations would face workforce shortages in the foreseeable future and mapped out the corresponding opportunities that these shortages present for the Indian workforce.

Canada is currently experiencing workforce shortages in sectors such as transportation, construction, agriculture, health, beauty and wellness, IT, hospitality and retail. There is no doubt that having the right skills for young people should be the most important thing in meeting the Canadian workforce. It is hoped that the NSDC and SCC partnership will provide Indian workers with the knowledge and skills necessary to thrive in the new workplace. According to the Royal Bank of Canada, there were approximately 300,000 vacancies in Ontario alone in December 2022, requiring similar skills to Canadian employers. NSDC should facilitate the training and development of office staff across the country. It is hoped that this partnership will facilitate the transfer of workers from India to Canada.

An efficient system should ensure a smooth transit from India to Canada after an extensive skills screening process to match newcomers' skills with established employers everywhere, useful for newcomers and the Canadian market. The SCC-NSDC partnership will demonstrate the power of international cooperation in solving local problems and promoting economic growth in both countries.

To bridge the global shortage of workforce in the coming years by reaping the demographic dividend of the young Indian workforce, India International Skill Centres (IISCs) - aimed at imparting international standard skill training to youth and enhancing overseas opportunities for them - have the potential to transform our country into the skill capital of the world. IISCs will also have a wide network of partner organisations and overseas recruiters to facilitate the supply of skilled and certified workforce in other countries.

These partnering organisations will work with the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) to aggregate demand from overseas markets. The centres will have services such as mobilisation, counselling, skill training, pre-departure orientation, foreign language training, placement and immigration and post-placement support. India has signed memorandums of understanding and other administrative agreements in the field of apprenticeship and skill training with Germany, Belarus, the United Kingdom, France, Australia, Japan and Qatar.

The government initiatives to improve or impart skills to our youths have not been successful in the past. This hints at a systemic problem that affects the talent ecosystem. A major challenge that currently our unemployed youth face is the mismatch between their skills and the needs of global job providers. Search costs are prohibitive for employ-

ers and a candidate's qualifications are difficult to verify. There seem to be many jobs available on different platforms but there is no real way to establish the quality of job roles. For someone to successfully navigate through this maze would be almost impossible. Similar issues plague the arena of skilling. Candidates looking to upskill themselves find it difficult to connect themselves with credible skill providers, and the so-called 'certified' trainers often do not have the required skills to make them decently employable globally.

National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF) should be globally aligned with certificates. There should be a focus on the identification of transferable skills. This can be done by developing a skills or trade matrix; and highlighting the overlap of skills across different trades, such as information and communication technology (ICT), knowledge of languages, beauty-wellness etc. The most common transferable skills across the world should be made part of the employable skill development curriculum.

As an industry expert, I can vouch for that by 2047, India will be the world's largest exporter of skilled workforce, and the Indian economy will reach trillions of dollars. In a country of 1.4 billion people, 65% of whom are young people. Imparting skills to all must be at the centre of all policies and activities. Build an alien ecosystem together to create an ecosystem for overseas placement.



INDIA IS REALISING ITS POTENTIAL TO BECOME A GLOBAL ECONOMIC POWERHOUSE BY LEVERAGING ITS YOUNG WORKFORCE

(The writer is Co-founder and MD, of Orane International, a training partner with the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), Network Member, of India International Skills Centres, an initiative of GoI. The views are personal)

Flood fury a manmade disaster, needs strong governance

Disaster relief is still a challenge, requiring a supportive legal and regulatory framework for risk assessment and financial assistance

Monsoon the seasonal affairs become flood fury - the man-made disaster caused massive floods in rivers and roads sweeping the northern states of Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Delhi, and J&K. The impact of this crisis is difficult because it affects the livelihoods of 50% of the country's population. The empirical fact is that no other business has to face such unpredictable and risky things as floods, heat, fire, frost, famine, and disease, as agriculture faces from sowing to harvesting.

Even though the central government immediately released assistance of Rs 7,532 crore to 22 state governments for the respective State Disaster Response Funds



SHREY MIGLANI

(The author is pursuing MBA from Chitkara University, Punjab)

(SDRFs). At this juncture, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) should take a call to develop a framework for Disaster Risk Assessment and Financial Assistance (DRAFA) to connect a sustainable solution.

Floods are the biggest disaster in India. About 12 per cent of India's landmass (40 million hectares) is vulnerable to flood, while river erosion and hilly areas are at risk from landslides. Between 1980 and 2021, 265 floods occurred in India, 132,286 people died and 1.93 billion people were affected. Financial loss from the flood was as high as US\$58.7 billion. Floods in India account for 68% of all disasters and economic losses.

ANTHROPOGENIC CRISIS

Deforestation and forest cover in the basin area led to soil erosion and siltation of the riverbed, increasing the number of floods and reducing the carrying capacity of river channels. The massive rise in population has resulted in the expansion and encroachment of floodplains catchments area in rivers. Urban flooding is the result of such unbridled expansion without a proper drainage network and proper planning for waste disposal. Unplanned growth of urban areas has increased pressure on natural resources like extracting sand faster than it can be replenished naturally. Large amounts of sand, both legal and illegal mining not only destroy banks and

riverbeds but also make them prone to flooding. When extraction is done rampantly from riverbeds may cause a rapid change in bed configuration.

In addition, the lack of appropriate information on the environmental impact of water sand mining is a major gap. Therefore, scientific assessment is the basis for developing management strategies for sand mine-hit areas. In this background, a recent study by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) examined the environmental impact of sand mining and the flooding of rivers. Major rivers such as the Ganges, Yamuna, Satluj, Ravi, Bias, and Ghaggar swell, causing breaches. This has lowered the deltas of the rivers, mak-

ing the local population very vulnerable to flooding, soil loss, water pollution, and severe crop damage.

DISASTER RISK COVERAGE NEEDED

Manmade and natural disasters have many direct and indirect impacts on people at all levels, including loss of life, destruction, damage, and financial consequences to public and private property and infrastructure as well as fiscal impacts arising from recovery and reconstruction expenditures. Restoring livelihoods and rebuilding economic and social relationships requires a lot of substantial financial resources, so financial strategies are needed to manage the financial impact of natural and human-

induced disaster risks.

The State Disaster Response Funds have limitations because the central government contributes 75% and is only used to cover the costs of emergency relief to people affected by the notified calamities. Funds will be released upon proof of previous use of funds and receiving a report from the state government on SDRF's activities. Therefore, there is a need to promote comprehensive and affordable disaster insurance. Many countries have established various types of public-private partnerships to support disaster risk management. Tax incentives, subsidies, and other forms of regulation can be used to provide adequate insurance.

In many developing

countries, insurance or reinsurance is provided directly by the government to cover various disaster risks. In countries with limited insurance coverage, such as India, with limited insurance penetration, several innovative initiatives have been established to provide targeted coverage to vulnerable segments of society such as agricultural producers or small entrepreneurs. When disaster insurance is limited, governments often provide financial assistance and compensation and resumption of economic activity to ensure recovery.

Finally, we must adhere to appropriate standards and best practices. Strong governance and political will are now needed for the sustainable management of disasters.

'Pak Cabinet OKs security pact with US'

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's Cabinet has quietly approved the signing of a new security pact with the US, a move that indicates a fresh start in bilateral defence cooperation after years of wilderness in ties and may open avenues for Islamabad to get military hardware from Washington, a media report said on Thursday.

The Cabinet, through a circulation summary, gave its seal of approval to the signing of the Communication Interoperability and Security Memorandum of Agreement, known as the CIS-MOA, between Pakistan and the US, The Express Tribune newspaper reported.

However, there was no official announcement from either side about the signing of the agreement. According to the report, Federal Minister for Information Marriyum Aurangzeb was approached but did not respond.

The development comes days after Pakistan and the US agreed to further enhance their bilateral relations, including in the defence field, at a meeting between US Central Command (Centcom) chief General Michael Erik Kurilla and Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir. CIS-MOA is a foundational agreement that the US signs with its allies and countries with which it wants to maintain close military and

defence ties. It also provides legal cover to the US Department of Defence for ensuring the sale of military equipment and hardware to other countries.

The signing of the CIS-MOA means that the two countries are keen to maintain the institutional mechanism. The agreement, first signed between the Joint Staff Headquarters of Pakistan and the US Department of Defence in October 2005 for 15 years, expired in 2020. The two sides have now renewed that arrangement which covers joint exercises, operations, training, basing and equipment.

The signing of the CIS-MOA indicates that the US might sell some military hardware to Pakistan in coming years, a source in Washington was quoted as saying in the report.

However, a retired senior Army officer who previously dealt with the US played down the development and said that it was not easy for Pakistan to buy military hardware from the US despite this agreement.

Referring to the growing strategic ties between the US and India, the officer said Washington's long-term interests are not aligned with Islamabad.

Nevertheless, the US needs Pakistan in some critical regions, and hence this agreement serves the purpose of both, he said.

'Pak's spy agency using Israel's cyber tech since 2012'

PTI ■ JERUSALEM

Israeli cyber tech firm, Cellebrite, has sold Pakistan's Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and various police units products that are highly intrusive and can lead to gross human rights violations despite the two countries not having diplomatic ties and Israeli norms prohibiting such deals, a local media report said on Thursday.

The Israeli firm's products have been in use by Pakistani agencies since 2012, Ha'aretz newspaper reported in an investigative report.

Cellebrite's flagship product, UFED, is traded in Nasdaq and enables law enforcement agencies to engage in digital forensic work by hacking into password-protected cell phones and can copy information stored on the device, including

pictures, documents, text messages, call logs and contacts.

Unlike Israeli company NSO, whose sale of Pegasus cyber tech grabbed worldwide attention, and other manufacturers of offensive-cyber products, Cellebrite operates in a grey area between security exports and civilian ones.

In 2020, the export of forensic equipment such as that produced by Cellebrite came under the Defence Ministry's oversight, since it was included in the Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies, which defines which dual-use (security use and civilian use) products require oversight, the report noted.

However, International shipment records show that until at least 2019, Cellebrite

Asia-Pacific Pte (its Singapore subsidiary) sold products directly to companies in Pakistan and to its Federal Investigation Agency, the Israeli daily reported.

This happened despite Cellebrite's end-user license agreement forbidding sales to Pakistan.

In other proofs presented in the report, the investigative piece notes that in 2012 it was reported in Pakistan that the Sind Province police had acquired UFED Touch Ultimate devices made by Cellebrite, and their use has been expanding since.

The Express Tribune newspaper had also published pictures that clearly show Cellebrite's product, the Israeli daily said.

Operating manuals, documents and official invitations for bids show that police units

and the FIA regularly use these systems," Ha'aretz claimed.

"FIA officials, past and present who were tasked with enforcing the draconian cyber-crime law, even state in their LinkedIn profiles that they have been trained and certified to use these systems and that they use them on a regular basis," it noted.

Court rulings in Pakistan also refer to the extraction of forensic evidence from telephones but do not specify which technology was used, the report said.

The country's different agencies use forensic systems made by other companies as well, but in an FIA invitation for bids from 2021 for systems made by two other firms, Belkasoft and Compelson, both were required to support files produced using Cellebrite's technology, the report stressed.

Bidding requests issued by Pakistan's Punjab police include a request for three UFED Ultimate devices, it further added.

Another bidding request by the counterterrorism division of the Peshawar police, from May of this year, also includes a request to renew the UFED license for another two years.

In yet another strong proof presented of the Israeli firm's firm roots in Pakistan, a 2021 catalogue from Pakistan's National Radio and Telecommunication Corporation (NRTC) touts a long list of technologies produced in the country.

On page 17, there is a listing for a UFED Touch 2 by Cellebrite. On the next page, NRTC advertises BlackBag's Mobilyze digital forensic technology, which was acquired by Cellebrite in 2020, the report

pointed out

"The company does not sell to Pakistan, directly or indirectly," Cellebrite told the Israeli daily, but it refused to explain how that claim squares with Cellebrite-Singapore's shipment certificates to Pakistan and with official tenders in Pakistan that demonstrate that the country's investigation agency and police use its technology.

"Cellebrite is committed to its goal of creating a safer world by providing solutions for law enforcement bodies that permit them to solve crimes more quickly," the company was quoted as saying in its response. "For that purpose, we have developed strict means of oversight that ensure proper use of our technology in the context of investigations carried out by virtue of the law," it stressed.

Niger's civil society mobilizes nation to fight for freedom

AP ■ NIAMEY (NIGER)

Niger's ruling junta and civil society groups called on the nation to mobilize in the capital on Thursday to fight for the country's freedom and push back against foreign interference. "We are talking about the immediate departure of all foreign forces," Mahaman Sanoussi, interim coordinator for the M62 civil society group that's organizing the protest, told The Associated Press. "We'll mobilize" against all forms of threats to continue the struggle for the sovereignty of the people. The dignity of the Nigerian people will be respected by all without exception."

The march falls on the West African nation's independence day from its former colonial ruler, France, and as anti-French sentiment spikes, more than one week after mutinous soldiers ousted the country's democratically elected president. Protests are expected throughout the capital, Niamey, to push back against foreign meddling. The coup has been strongly condemned

by Western countries, many of which saw Niger as the last reliable partner for the West in efforts to battle jihadis linked to al-Qaida and the Islamic State group in Africa's Sahel region. Russia and Western countries have been vying for influence in the fight against extremism.

France has 1,500 soldiers in Niger who conduct joint operations with its military, and the United States and other European countries have helped train the nation's troops.

In an address to the nation on Wednesday, the new military ruler, Gen. Abdourahmane Tchiani, lashed out at neighboring countries and the international community and called on the population to be ready to defend the nation.

Tchiani said Niger will face difficult times ahead and that the "hostile and radical" attitudes of those who oppose his rule provide no added value. He called harsh sanctions imposed last week by the West African bloc known as ECOWAS illegal, unfair, inhuman and unprecedented.

ECOWAS has also threatened to use force if ousted President Mohamed Bazoum, who remains under house arrest, is not released and reinstated by Aug. 6.

In a closed door meeting on Wednesday, dozens of people from civil society organizations, professional groups and trade unions spoke with the coup leaders about their vision for the country. Sanoussi, from M62, was at the meeting and said the junta talked about their priorities for the nation, including securing it from violence. But another civil society member at the same gathering who did not want to be named for security reasons told the AP they left feeling concerned.

They had a strong impression that the French military was going to be ousted soon and that members of civil society groups would help the junta do it.

During the meeting, Tchiani spent a long time speaking about the history of foreign military presence in the region, discussing France's involvement without naming it

specifically, and asked those present to help maintain the country's integrity. Tchiani also didn't seem concerned that ECOWAS would intervene or that President Bazoum would resign — which he has yet to do — noting he was no longer in power, the civil society members said. Even if the junta demands the withdrawal of French troops — as they did in neighboring Mali and Burkina Faso, both of which are run by military leaders — it wouldn't make a difference, said Anne-Claire Legendre, a spokesperson for the French foreign minister during a press briefing on Wednesday.

"We don't answer to the putschists. We recognize one constitutional order and one legitimacy only, that of President Bazoum," she said.

Ahead of Thursday's demonstration, the French Embassy in Niamey asked Niger's government to take all measures to ensure the security and protection of its premises after it was attacked by protesters last week and a door was set on fire.

Hundreds rally in Niger, denouncing France



AP ■ NIAMEY (NIGER)

Hundreds of people rallied in support of Niger's ruling junta in the capital on Thursday, denouncing France and others who have criticised a recent coup — as the country's military leaders sought to exploit anti-Western sentiment to shore up their takeover. As numbers began to swell at a demonstration organised by the junta and civil society groups on Niger's independence day, protesters in Niamey pumped their fists in the air and chanted out support for neighboring countries that have also seen military takeovers in recent years.

Some waved Russian flags, and one man brandished a Russian and Nigerian flag sewn together.

Last week's coup toppled President Mohamed Bazoum — whose ascendancy marked Niger's first peaceful, democratic transfer of power since its independence from France. It has been accompanied by strident anti-French sentiment and raised questions about the future of the fight against extremism in Africa's Sahel region, where Russia and Western countries have vied for influence.

The coup has been strongly condemned by Western countries and the West African regional bloc known as ECOWAS, which has threatened to use force to remove the junta if they don't hand back power to Bazoum. As tensions have grown in the capital and

the region, many European countries have moved to evacuate their citizens.

At Thursday's protest, many expressed support for the coup leaders and denounced interference from others.

"For more than 13 years, the Nigerien people have suffered injustices," said protester Moctar Abdou Issa. The junta "will get us out of this, God willing ... they will free the Nigerien people."

"We're sick of the French," he added. It remains unclear whether the majority of the population supports the coup — and in many parts of the capital, people went about their lives on Thursday as normal.

In an address to the nation on Wednesday, the new military ruler, Gen. Abdourahmane Tchiani, lashed out at those who have condemned the coup and called on the population to be ready to defend the nation.

Tchiani said Niger will face difficult times ahead and that the "hostile and radical" attitudes of those who oppose his rule provide no added value.

He called harsh sanctions imposed last week by ECOWAS illegal, unfair, inhuman and unprecedented.

The bloc has set a deadline of August 6 for the junta to reinstate Bazoum, who remains under house arrest.

Its sanctions include halting energy transactions with Niger, which gets up to 90 per cent of its power from neighbouring Nigeria, according to the International Renewable Energy Agency.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CENTRAL INSTITUTE OF PSYCHIATRY
KANKE, RANCHI-834006, JHARKHAND

NOTICE

With reference to the advertisement published in this newspaper on 14.07.2023 for contractual appointment on the posts of Professor of Clinical Psychology, Associate Professor of Clinical Psychology, Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychology, Professor of Psychiatric Social Work, Associate Professor of Psychiatric Social Work, Assistant Professor of Psychiatric Social Work and Assistant Professor of Neuro Psychology at Central Institute of Psychiatry, Kanke, Ranchi, it is to inform that due to some unavoidable reason the Walk-in-Interview scheduled to be held on 08.08.2023 has been cancelled.

Sd/-Director

SRF LIMITED
Regd. Office: The Galleria, DLF Mayur Vihar, Unit No. 236 & 237, 2nd Floor, Mayur Vihar Phase, Noida Link Road, Mayur Vihar Phase I Extn, Delhi-110091
Corporate Office: Block-C, Sector 45, Gurugram, Haryana-122 003
Tel. No (Regd office) : (+91-11) 49482870; Fax : (+91-11) 49482900
E-mail: cs@srf.com, Website: www.srf.com; CIN: L18101DL1970PLC005197

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that Share Certificates pertaining to shares of the Company detailed below have been reported lost and request(s) for issue of duplicate Certificates in lieu thereof have been received by the Company. Shareholder(s)/Claimant(s) shall also be entitled to Bonus Shares in the ratio of (4:1) on these shares from Investor Education & Protection Fund Authority :-

Sl. No.	Folio No.	Name of the Share Holder/Legal Heir (Claimant)	Cert.No.	Dist.No. (from)	Dist.No. (to)	Lost Shares
1	J 0002051	INDER MOHAN SINGH (Claimant)	123311	5207741	5207756	16
			975782	18565799	18565831	33
			1138266	296493398	296493593	196
			822104	499392000	49939249	50
			1135392	295908894	295909093	200
			6693	1480651	1480675	25
2	SRF0143246	SURESH KUMAR CHHABRA (Claimant)	84043	3702926	3702936	11
			152349	6032001	6032018	18
			349370-74	16713578	16713722	145
			498370-74	24733370	24733514	145
			90045546-48	8042874	8042973	100
			90179109-110	14326540	14326639	100
			1136095	296063390	296065565	2176
			90090787	9686430	9686469	40
			1134182	295676506	295676665	160
			1134949	295827046	295827445	100
6	P 0005498	PARSHOTAM LAL SACHDEVA (Holder)	332911	16374831	16374880	50
			332915	16374926	16374927	2
			481911	24394623	24394672	50
			481915	24394718	24394719	2
			90141386-87	7386538	7386637	100
			1136304	296101638	296102453	816
			364852-53	16966967	16967018	52
			513852-53	24986759	24986810	50
			90188394	14875485	14875534	50
1135987	296041446	296042061	616			
8	SRF0102117	NEELIMA K SAVLANI (Claimant)	392044-46	17436582	17436613	32
			541044-46	25456374	25456405	32
			90107419	8818790	8818809	20
			90204671	15500295	15500329	35
			1139277	296695102	296695577	476
			27959	2093301	2093350	50
9	K 0006080	KIRAN SEVANTILAL MEHTA (Holder)	65736	3382697	3382718	22
			125013	5248251	5248286	36
			90162119-20	12208205	12208279	75
			1139510	296740754	296741485	732
			601482-84	42681329	42681369	41
10	SRF0127125	SUPRIYA GUPTA (Claimant)	1133440	295517294	295517457	164

Any person having any claim/objection in respect of the above requests should lodge such claim/objection with the company at its Corporate Office within 15 days of the publication of this notice, failing which the company will consider to give effect to the above requests.

Public is hereby cautioned against dealing with the aforesaid share certificates.

For SRF LIMITED
Sd/-
RAJAT LAKHANPAL
Sr. VP (Corporate Compliance) & Company Secretary

Biden's inaction weak as violence in Middle East surges: Malki

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Ramallah (West Bank) ■ The Palestinian foreign minister on Thursday attacked the Biden administration as weak and passive in the Middle East, as violence between Israel and the Palestinians surges to its highest levels in nearly two decades. The comments by Riad Malki reflected the Palestinian frustration with US President Joe Biden, who initially won plaudits from the Palestinians when he rejected the Trump administration's unabashedly pro-Israel stance. But Biden so far has done little to follow through on that vision "I'm frustrated," Malki told members of the Foreign Press Association, an organisation representing international media outlets in Israel and the Palestinian territories.

"It seemed that (Biden) wanted to change all policies Trump has taken, but not when it comes to Palestine."

Pressured by Israel's far-right government, increasingly isolated in the Arab world and running out of money, the Palestinian Authority is confronting what analysts say could be its greatest threat to its existence. Malki said the Biden administration has been mealy-mouthed about the expansion of Jewish settlements, the escalation of Israeli military raids in the West Bank that have killed a growing number of Palestinians and the daily abuses of the open-ended Israeli occupation.

He also lashed out at Biden's failure to to reverse several measures taken by the Trump administration that Palestinians saw as undermining their quest for statehood. "We have a weak (US) administration when it comes to Palestine," he said. The US has not reopened its consulate to the Palestinians in Jerusalem, which was closed under President Donald Trump.

The Palestinian diplomat's mission in Washington, also closed under Trump, remains shuttered. AP

'Won't allow army to take any unconstitutional steps'

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial on Thursday said that the country's top judiciary would not allow the army to take any unconstitutional step. Chief Justice Bandial made the remarks while hearing a set of petitions challenging civilian trials in military courts of those accused of attacking military installations during the May 9 protest. Referring to the incident of arson and violence by the supporters of former prime minister Imran Khan, the top judge termed the riots as serious, expressing regret and grief over the happening on that fateful day.

On May 9, violent protests erupted after the arrest of Khan by paramilitary Rangers in Islamabad. Over 20 military installations and state buildings, including the army headquarters in Rawalpindi, were damaged or torched in the violent protests that followed Khan's arrest. The

violence elicited a strong reaction from the government and military with vows of taking action against the culprits, leading to an ongoing crackdown against those involved.

The chief justice praised the armed forces for not opening fire on civilians despite the violence on May 9 but added that "the military will not be allowed to take any illegal steps".

He also said that the hearing would not be conducted for about two weeks due to the unavailability of judges and asked the Attorney General of Pakistan (AGP) Usman Awan to ensure that the trial of civilians is not held during this period. "AGP sahib, no military trials of civilians will be conducted," he told Awan, who assured the court that its directives would be followed.

Bandial also said that the earlier directives to provide relevant facilities to the suspects in the custody of military authorities would remain in place.

Ace Pak snooker player arrested

Lahore (PTI): Prominent Pakistani snooker player Ahsan Ramzan was arrested on Thursday for allegedly keeping his sports club open beyond the permitted hours and causing disturbance to the neighbourhood, police said.

According to the officials, the government allows sports clubs and businesses to remain open till 10 pm. Anyone doing so beyond the permitted hours can be arrested for infringing the rules. Police said that the snooker club of Ramzan was open till 2 am on Thursday (four hours beyond the stipulated time) in the Township area of Lahore. After receiving the complaint, police raided the club and arrested him.

"Prominent Pakistani Ahsan Ramzan snooker player was arrested Thursday for keeping his snooker club open despite the permitted hours. There were complaints that there was disturbance caused due to it to the neighbours," said a senior police official.

In a video statement, Ramzan said that he was with other players training for upcoming events at a snooker academy when police from the Green Town Police Station raided the snooker club for keeping it open till late at night.

He was later released when his identity was made known to the Station House Officer. While in custody, Ramzan was allegedly manhandled and was verbally abused. In 2021, Ramzan, 17, set a new record for amateur snooker and became the 2nd youngest player after Chinese player Yan Bingtao to win the title at the World Amateur Snooker Champion 2021.

China proposes to limit children's screen time

AP ■ BEIJING

China's internet watchdog has laid out regulations to curb the amount of time children spend on their smartphones, in the latest blow to firms such as Tencent and ByteDance, which run social media platforms and online games. The Cyberspace Administration of China on Wednesday published the draft guidelines on its site, stating that minors would not be allowed to use most internet services on mobile devices from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m., and that children between the ages of 16 and 18 would only be able to use the internet for two hours a day.

Children between the ages of 8 and 15 would be allowed only an hour a day, while those under 8 would only be allowed 40 minutes. Only certain services, such as apps or platforms that are deemed suitable to the physical and mental development of minors, will be



exempted. The CAC did not specify which internet services would be allowed exemptions.

The restrictions are Beijing's latest efforts to attempt to limit internet addiction, a problem it views as widespread among its youth. In 2019, Beijing limited children's daily online game time to 90 minutes a day and tightened those restrictions in 2021, allowing children only an hour a day of online game play on Fridays, weekends and public holidays.

Short-video and online video platforms like Douyin, Bilibili and Kuaishou have offered

youth modes that restrict the type of content shown to minors and the length of time they can use the service. Children are also pushed educational content, such as science experiments.

The latest restrictions would impact firms like Tencent, China's largest online game company, and ByteDance, which runs popular short-video platform Douyin. Firms in China are often responsible for enforcing regulations.

"To effectively strengthen the online protection of minors, the CAC has in recent years pushed for the establishment of a youth mode on internet platforms, expanding its coverage, optimising its functions and enriching it with age-appropriate content," the CAC said. Since the mode was launched, there has been a positive impact in reducing youth internet addiction and the impact of undesirable information," it added.

Climate protesters arrested for draping Sunak's home in black cloth

PTI ■ LONDON

Four climate protesters from Greenpeace were arrested on Thursday after they draped the home of British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak in northern England in black cloth, in protest against his recent backing for an expansion of North Sea oil and gas drilling. The Greenpeace activists had climbed onto the roof of Sunak's sprawling constituency home in Richmond, North Yorkshire, to unfold 200 square metres of "oil-black fabric" to cover one side of the mansion. The local North Yorkshire Police issued a statement to say that its officers had responded to the protest activity at the Prime Minister's home in Kirby Sigston.

"Officers have contained the area and no one has entered the building. The PM and his family are not at home," the police said. It confirmed the arrests on Thursday afternoon after the four protesters finally climbed down from the roof after around three hours and were seen being led away into the back of police vans. Sunak, along with wife Akshata Murty and daughters Krishna and Anoushka, is currently away on a week-long holiday in California. Asked about the incident, deputy prime minister Oliver Dowden told the BBC he thought the British people were "sick of these stupid stunts". Two other Greenpeace activists unfurled a banner emblazoned with the words

"Rishi Sunak - Oil Profits or Our Future?" on the grass in front of the home. "Just as wildfires and floods wreck homes and lives around the world, Sunak is committing to a massive expansion of oil and gas drilling," said Philip Evans, Greenpeace UK's climate campaigner. "The experts are clear - we can't afford any new oil and gas, and the fossil fuel industry certainly doesn't need another helping hand in destroying the climate. What we need is a clean, affordable energy system fit for the 21st century. It's time for Sunak to choose between Big Oil's profits or our future on a habitable planet," he said. Earlier this week, Sunak had unveiled government plans to grant hundreds of new oil

and gas licences as part of a drive to make Britain more energy independent. "We have all witnessed how (Russian President) Putin has manipulated and weaponised energy - disrupting supply and stalling growth in countries around the world. Now more than ever, it's vital that we bolster our energy security and capitalise on that independence to deliver more affordable, clean energy to British homes and businesses," Sunak said on Monday. "Even when we've reached net zero in 2050, a quarter of our energy needs will come from oil and gas. But there are those who would rather that it come from hostile states than from the supplies we have here at home. We're choosing to

power up Britain from Britain and invest in crucial industries such as carbon capture and storage, rather than depend on more carbon intensive gas imports from overseas - which will support thousands of skilled jobs, unlock further opportunities for green technologies and grow the economy," he said. During a radio show on Wednesday before setting off on holiday, the British Indian leader again defended his plans to say fossil fuels would still be needed as part of the country's energy mix in future. "Like most people, they're not eco zealots, they're open to sensible, practical arguments," he said, when asked what his environmentalist daughters make of his plans.



Selection of Thailand's new PM delayed again

AP ■ BANGKOK

Parliamentary vote to select Thailand's new prime minister expected on Friday was delayed again after a court put off a decision in a case involving the progressive party that won May's election, adding to growing uncertainty about when a new government can take office. The Constitutional Court on Thursday said it needs more time to deliberate on whether to accept a petition from the state ombudsman on whether it was constitutional for Parliament to bar Move Forward Party leader Pita Limjaroenrat, the surprise election winner, from being nominated as a prime ministerial candidate a second time. The progressive Move Forward Party finished in first place in the May election and assembled an eight-party coalition with 312 seats in the 500-member lower house. But Parliament has struggled to confirm a new prime minister, which requires a

majority vote together with the conservative 250-member appointed Senate. Pita's initial bid last month fell short by more than 50 votes, largely because only 13 senators backed him. He was barred from a second try the following week when Parliament voted that he could not submit his name again. Many senators, who were appointed by a previous military government, said they would not vote for Pita because of his party's call to reform a law that makes it illegal to defame Thailand's royal family. Critics say the law, which carries a penalty of up to 15 years in prison, has been abused as a political weapon. The Senate's members see themselves as guardians of conservative royalist values which hold the monarchy to be sacrosanct. Move Forward, whose agenda appealed greatly to younger voters, also seeks to reduce the influence of the military, which has staged more than a dozen coups since Thailand became a constitution-



Protesters hold up the three-finger salute and a portrait of Pita Limjaroenrat during a protest in Bangkok on July 23.

al monarchy in 1932, and big business monopolies. After Pita was barred from a second bid, several complaints were submitted to the state ombudsman asserting that the action violated the constitution. The complainants include private citizens and lawmakers from Pita's party. When the case was filed to the court last week, Parliament postponed the vote but rescheduled it days later, although the court had yet to make a decision. The court said in a statement Thursday that it will meet again on August 16 to decide whether to accept

the petition. If accepted, the court could order the vote to be postponed until it issues a ruling. House Speaker Wan Muhamad Noor Matha said the vote for a prime minister would be delayed pending the court's decision. He said Parliament will still convene on Friday to debate a Move Forward petition seeking an amendment of the military-enacted constitution to eliminate the Senate's de facto ability to veto a prime minister candidate. Regardless of the court ruling, Pita's chances of being nominated again appear nil. Move Forward faces several legal challenges which its supporters see as dirty tricks deployed by its political opponents to cling to power. One of the cases, which accuses Pita of violating the constitution by running for office while allegedly holding shares in a media company, resulted in him being suspended from Parliament last month while Parliament was debating his second nomination.

Russian shelling hits church in city of Kherson

AP ■ KYIV

Russian shelling on Thursday damaged a landmark church in the city of Kherson that once held the remains of the renowned 18th-century commander who exerted Russian control through the southeast parts of modern Ukraine and annexed the Crimean Peninsula. Ukraine's emergency service said four of its workers were wounded in a second round of shelling as they fought the fire at St. Catherine's Cathedral. Four other people were wounded in the first shelling attack, which also hit a trolleybus, the prosecutor general's office said. The shelling followed the severe damage sustained by a beloved Orthodox cathedral in a missile strike last week in Odesa and underlined the war's risk to the country's cultural monuments. Fighting has intensified in multiple regions as Ukraine's military steps up a counteroffensive to reclaim Russian-occupied territory.

The Kherson church, dating from 1781, is one of the city's most notable buildings. It once was the burial spot for Prince Grigory Potemkin, a favourite of Russian Empress Catherine the Great. His remains were removed last year while the city was still under Russian occupation. Russian forces withdrew from Kherson last November in the face of a Ukrainian counteroffensive. Potemkin engineered the 1784 annexation of Crimea from the Crimean Khanate. His name entered popular speech because of stories, now widely doubted, that he erected fake settlements called "Potemkin villages" to impress Catherine during her long journey through Crimea and the southern territories. The Ukrainian president's office said two people were killed over the past day in Russian attacks — one in eastern Ukraine's Donetsk province and one in Zaporizhzhia province. The Ukrainian air force said Russia launched a wave of 15 Shahed drones against the Kyiv region but all were shot down. The governor of the capital region, Ruslan Kravchenko, said there were no injuries or damage. Ukraine's military also continued to launch attack drones deep into Russia. The Russian Defence Ministry said six Ukrainian drones were downed in the Kaluga region, about 150 kilometres (90 miles) south of Moscow, the latest incident following attacks that twice hit buildings in the Russian capital that house some government ministries.

Russia fines Apple, Wikipedia for spreading 'false information'

Moscow (AP): A Russian court on Thursday imposed fines on Apple and the host of Wikipedia for failing to remove material deemed to be "false information" about Russia's military actions in Ukraine. A justice of the peace in a magistrate's court, which handles administrative violations and low-level criminal cases, fined the Wikimedia Foundation 3 million rubles (USD 33,000) for retaining material on Russian-language Wikipedia pages that violated a law against discrediting Russia's military and spreading false information about the Ukraine conflict, the Interfax news agency reported. The same justice found Apple guilty of failing to delete podcasts and apps with such information and fined the company 400,000 rubles (USD 4,400).

S'pore executes third prisoner in 2 weeks for drug trafficking

AP ■ KUALA LUMPUR

Singapore hanged a third prisoner in two weeks on Thursday for drug trafficking despite calls for the city-state to halt capital punishment for drug-related crimes. The Central Narcotics Bureau said Mohamed Shalleh Abdul Latif, a 39-year-old Singaporean, was executed at Singapore's Changi Prison after being accorded due process under the law. He was sentenced to death for trafficking 54 grams (1.9 ounces) of heroin, an amount "sufficient to feed the

addiction of about 640 abusers for a week," it said in a statement. Transactive Justice Collective, an anti-death penalty advocate in Singapore, said Shalleh, an ethnic Malay, worked as a delivery driver before his arrest in 2016. He was sentenced in 2019 but his appeal was dismissed last year. The group said Shalleh had maintained in his trial that he believed he was delivering contraband cigarettes for a friend to whom he owed money, and he didn't verify the contents of the bag as he trusted his friend. The

High Court judge ruled that their weren't close enough to warrant the kind of trust he claimed to have had for his friend. Although the court found he was merely a courier, Shalleh was given the mandatory death penalty because prosecutors didn't issue him a certificate of having cooperated with them, it said. Singapore's laws mandate the death penalty for anyone convicted of trafficking more than 500 grams (17.6 ounces) of cannabis and 15 grams (0.5 ounces) of heroin. Shalleh was the fifth person to be executed

this year, and the 16th executed for drug offences since the city-state resumed hangings in March 2022, after a two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Two other citizens were executed last week: Sarideew Djamani, 45, who was the first woman to be hanged in 19 years on Friday, for trafficking about 31 grams (1 ounce) of heroin; and Mohammed Aziz Hussain, 56, hanged two days prior for trafficking around 50 grams (1.75 ounces) of heroin. Human rights groups, international activists and the United

Nations have urged Singapore to halt executions for drug offences and say there is increasing evidence it is ineffective as a deterrent. Singapore authorities insist capital punishment is important to halting drug demand and supply. Critics say Singapore's harsh policy punishes low-level traffickers and couriers, who are typically recruited from marginalized groups with vulnerabilities. They say Singapore is also out of step with the trend of more countries moving away from capital punishment.

13 injured as man goes on stabbing spree in South Korea

Seoul (AP): At least 13 people were injured in South Korea on Thursday when a man rammed a car onto a sidewalk, before stepping out of the vehicle and stabbing people inside a shopping mall in the city of Seongnam. Yoon Sung-hyun, an official from the southern Gyeonggi provincial police department, said at least nine people were stabbed and four others were injured by the vehicle in the attacks that occurred in a crowded leisure district near a subway station. Police did not confirm whether any were in serious condition. Police were questioning an unidentified suspect in his 20s who was arrested at the scene. Police officials did not immediately comment on any potential motive for the attack. Photos from the scene showed forensic units examining the halls of the AK Plaza, where the stabbings took place. A white Kia hatchback with a broken front window and ruptured front tire could be seen on a sidewalk near the Seohyeon subway station. The National Police Agency held an online meeting Thursday with regional police chiefs to discuss ways to deal with stabbings and other attacks against random targets. During the meeting, National Police Agency Commissioner General Yoon Hee-keun described the attack as "virtually an act of terrorism." Officials discussed increasing nighttime patrols in leisure districts and other crowded areas and strengthening security camera surveillance, according to the agency.

Violence rising in Amhara after bid to disarm fighters

AP ■ NAIROBI

Violent unrest is escalating in Ethiopia's Amhara region as federal security forces clash with a local ethnic militia, leading the deputy prime minister in an unusually outspoken statement to call the situation "increasingly grave." Ethiopia's second most populous region has been gripped by instability since April, when federal authorities disarmed the Amhara regional force as part of the recovery from a devastating two-year conflict in the neighbouring Tigray region. Authorities last year also tried to dismantle the Amhara militia known as Fano. Both forces had fought alongside federal ones in the Tigray conflict, but now the federal government wants to centralise its security powers. Many Amhara, however, are deeply attached to their regional fighters and accuse the federal government of trying to undermine their region, which federal officials reject. Deputy Prime Minister Demeke Mekonnen on Wednesday called for dialogue to seek a peaceful resolution and described some of the concerns of the Amhara population as "understandable." His comments came a day after the Fano fought with federal police at the airport in Lalibela, a key supply point, according to two witnesses and several residents. Flights to the popular tourist destination have been suspended, flight tracking data show. Britain on Tuesday issued a travel warning describing the Lalibela airport as "taken over by Fano militias" and noted instability along the A2 highway that links the eastern part of the Amhara region with Addis Ababa, Ethiopia's capital. The internet has been shut down in several parts of the Amhara region, the Ethiopia-based Center for Advancement of Rights and Democracy said Thursday. Elsewhere in the Amhara region, residents said protesters blocked roads and Fano militia ambushed military units, while government officials fled several towns. A witness said there was "heavy fighting" in Gondar, another popular tourist town, on Thursday. All spoke on condition of anonymity out of fear for their safety. Flight tracking data showed canceled flights from Ethiopia's capital to Gondar. In Kobo, the military used artillery against the Fano on Monday night and Tuesday morning, damaging homes, two residents said. Gunfire could be heard in Debre Tabor on Wednesday, according to a witness, who said the military used live ammunition to disperse stone-throwing youths on Tuesday. "Most people here support the Fano. There is no government system at all anymore," said Tilahun Tarko, a Kobo resident. He said he was sitting in his neighbour's house on Tuesday when the building was hit by an artillery round.

MODI RUBBER LIMITED
 CIN: L25199UP1971PLC003392
 Registered Office: Modinagar - 201204; Dist. Ghaziabad, (U.P.)
 Corporate Office: 4-7C, DDA Shopping Centre, New Friends Colony,
 New Delhi-110025; Website: www.modirubberlimited.com
 Email: investors@modigroup.net; Phone: +91-11-47107398

NOTICE
 Pursuant to regulation 29 of SEBI (LODR) 2015, Notice is hereby given that a 302nd Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Company is scheduled to be held on Monday, 14th August, 2023 at 3.00 PM at Corporate Office : 4-7C, DDA Shopping Centre, 4th Floor, New Friends Colony, New Delhi- 110 025 to inter-alia approve the following:
 (1) Un-Audited Standalone and Consolidated Financial Statements of the Company for the period ended on June 30, 2023.
 (2) To fix the Date, Time and Venue for convening the 50th Annual General Meeting.
 (3) To consider and approve Directors Report, Corporate Governance Report, Management Discussion Analysis Report and Secretarial Audit Report for the financial year 2022-23.
 For Modi Rubber Limited
 Sd/- (S K Bajpai)
 Place : New Delhi
 Date : 3.8.2023
 Head - Legal & Co. Secretary

kotak
 Kotak Mahindra Bank
NOTICE
 Locker hired by Ms. Aanchal Garg having address at- C 84 A C Block Vivek Vihar, Delhi-110095 with Branch of Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. situated at Address GF, 290-AGCR Enclave Karkardooma Delhi-110092 remains unoperated for the past 3 years. All the 3 letters sent to Ms. Aanchal Garg calling upon her to operate the locker has returned unreserved and she is not contactable. It is hereby informed that despite this notice if the said locker is not operated by Ms. Aanchal Garg within 90 days from the date of this notice, break open of the said locker will be done on **November 05, 2023 at around 12 p.m**

kotak
 Kotak Mahindra Bank
NOTICE
 Locker hired by Mr. Imtiaz Alam having address at- E-178-179 Ground Floor, Surya Apartment Pandav Nagar, Mayur Vihar Ph-1, Delhi-110091 with Branch of Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. situated at Address GF, 290-AGCR Enclave Karkardooma Delhi-110092 remains unoperated for the past 3 years. All the 3 letters sent to Mr. Imtiaz Alam calling upon him to operate the locker has returned unreserved and he is not contactable. It is hereby informed that despite this notice if the said locker is not operated by Mr. Imtiaz Alam within 90 days from the date of this notice, break open of the said locker will be done on **November 05, 2023 at around 12 p.m**

kotak
 Kotak Mahindra Bank
NOTICE
 Locker hired by Mrs. Pooja Jain/Mr. Sanjay Kumar Jain having address at- D-3 GF, Rishabh Vihar, Delhi-110092 with Branch of Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. situated at Address GF, 290-AGCR Enclave Karkardooma Delhi-110092 remains unoperated for the past 3 years. All the 3 letters sent to Mrs. Pooja Jain/Mr. Sanjay Kumar Jain calling upon them to operate the locker has returned unreserved and they are not contactable. It is hereby informed that despite this notice if the said locker is not operated by Mrs. Pooja Jain/Mr. Sanjay Kumar Jain within 90 days from the date of this notice, break open of the said locker will be done on **November 05, 2023 at around 12 p.m**

kotak
 Kotak Mahindra Bank
NOTICE
 Locker hired by Mr. Sanjay Kumar Jain/Ms. Pooja Jain having address at- 13 GF, Rishabh Vihar, Delhi-110092 with Branch of Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. situated at Address GF, 290-AGCR Enclave Karkardooma Delhi-110092 remains unoperated for the past 3 years. All the 3 letters sent to Mr. Sanjay Kumar Jain/Ms. Pooja Jain calling upon them to operate the locker has returned unreserved and they are not contactable. It is hereby informed that despite this notice if the said locker is not operated by Mr. Sanjay Kumar Jain/Ms. Pooja Jain within 90 days from the date of this notice, break open of the said locker will be done on **November 05, 2023 at around 12 p.m**

United Textiles Limited
 Regd. Office 7th K.M. Stone, Barwala Road, Hisar - 125001 (Haryana)
 CIN: L17115HR1993PLC032092
Notice
 Pursuant to Regulation 29 read with Regulation 47 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations & Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, Notice is hereby given that the Meeting of Board of Directors of the Company is scheduled to be held on Monday, 14th August, 2023 at 11.00 AM at the Regd. Office of the Company to consider the Unaudited Quarterly Results for the Period Ended 30th June, 2023. Further as per the Company's Code of Conduct for Prevention of Insider Trading, the trading window for dealing with securities of the Company will remain close from 30.06.2023 to 48 hours after the declaration of the Financial Results. The said information is also available on Company's Website www.unitedtextileslimited.com & also on the website of stock exchanges at www.bseindia.com.
 For United Textiles Limited (Vivek Aggarwal) Whole Time Director
 Dated: 27.07.2023 (DIN 07079208)

PUBLIC NOTICE
 Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of our client i.e. SMFG India Home Finance Co. Ltd. stating that Mitlesh is the owner of Built up Property bearing No. 77, area measuring 75 Sq. Yds, out of Khirsa No. 260 situated at Village Gokulpur, in the abadi of call No. 18, Gokulpur, Jalandhar, Punjab, by virtue of a Gift Deed dated 12.01.2023, Doc. No.105 executed by Mr. Sugriv. All persons are hereby informed that above mentioned owner wants to mortgage the said property and intend to obtain a loan from our client against the said property, if anybody has any objection/s upon the ownership of Mitlesh over the said property, its mortgage/lien, and any other objections, kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the receipt of this notice.
 Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants)
 200, Ind Floor, 23, Shivaji Marg, Mori Nagar, N. Delhi-15
 Ph: 011-41112527-28 legal@kmalga.com

PUBLIC NOTICE
 My Client, HIMANI BANSAL W/O VIKAS KUMAR BANSAL, Rio H.No. D-153, Ganesh Nagar, Complex, Pandav Nagar, Shakarpur, East Delhi-110092 is the registered owner of Property No. A-101, Khirsa No. 492226/1, A-Block, Pandav Nagar, Village Chandrai (Patparganj), Shahdara, Delhi-110092 wide registered sale deed as Doc No. 1477 Dated 17.03.2020 SR-VIIIA, Delhi. The previous original document of this property have been lost i.e. regd sale deed doc no-4306, dated 01.07.2018, SR-VII-A, Delhi executed by (1) Deepak Kapoor (2) Resha Kapoor (savour of Smt. Nupur W/o Sh. Omkar Singh) and in this regard Mr. has been registered as LR No. 727981/2023 and this above-mentioned property is going to be mortgaged with IFL Home Finance Limited. Any person/bank/financial institution having any claim/right, lien any objection whatsoever in regard to above property, should notified to the undersigned/Adv. Vishal Mehra, E-713, Karkardooma Court, Delhi-110092 along with documentary evidence, under address through registered a/c within 10 days from the date of publication of this notice failing which any claim, lien or objection shall be deemed to have been waived.
 Vishal Mehra (Advocate)
 E-713, Karkardooma Court, Delhi-110092
 Mobile No. 9811215131

PUBLIC NOTICE
 Notice is hereby given on behalf of Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited that Mr. Harish Chand Gupta intends to purchase/mortgage the First Floor Portion (without roof/terrace rights) of Property No. 874 (Old No. 282-E/40), Plot No. 40, Jwala Nagar, Shahdara, Delhi, with our client against the financial assistance. Whereas, Mr. Atraj Singh had acquired the Said Property on POA basis vide GPA/ATS/Will dated 03-03-1999 and after his death, Mr. Sukhvinder Singh Anand got the rights of the Said Property on the basis of regd. Will dt. 21-11-2013 of Mr. Atraj Singh and now, he intends to sell the same to Mr. Harish Chand Gupta. If any person(s) having objection with regard to ownership/mortgage of the said property is/are requested to intimate in writing to undersigned within 07 days from the date of issue of this notice at below address. In the event no information is received within 07 days from date hereof, our Client i.e. Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited will proceed with the mortgage process.
 DEEPLYOT SINGH, ADVOCATE
 A-13, LGF, South Extn-II,
 New Delhi-49 # 011-40587824

Sensex, Nifty fall for 3rd day

US rating downgrade triggers global equity sell off

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark Sensex tanked 542 points to settle at a four-week low while Nifty closed below the 19,400 mark, extending their losses for a third straight day on Thursday in tandem with a bearish trend in global markets following the US rating downgrade.

The 30-share BSE Sensex fell by 542.10 points or 0.82 per cent to settle at a four-week low of 65,240.68. During the day, it slumped 819.7 points or 1.24 per cent to 64,963.08.

The NSE Nifty declined below the 19,300 mark in intraday trade before paring some of the losses to close at 19,381.65, still down by 144.90 points or 0.74 per cent. It moved in a range of 19,537.65 to 19,296.45 in day trade.

In three days of losses, Sensex plunged by around 1,287 points or 2.16 per cent while Nifty has tanked 372 points or 2.42 per cent.

"Global markets are still grappling with the impact of the US rating downgrade, with spiking bond yield and strengthening dollar index," Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services said.



Cement, Bajaj Finance, Maruti, Tata Consultancy Services, IndusInd Bank and State Bank of India were the major laggards.

Infosys emerged as the biggest gainer rising by 0.63 per cent. JSW Steel, NTPC and Power Grid were also among the gainers. In total, 23 Sensex stock dropped while seven advanced. The pharma sector managed to weather the storm thanks to its strong earnings outcome, while mid and small-cap stocks outperformed the benchmark index, Nair said.

"The domestic services PMI has sur-

passed market expectations, reaching a 13-year high due to a rise in new orders, particularly in international sales," he added.

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge climbed 0.23 per cent and midcap index gained 0.14 per cent.

Among indices, Realty fell by 1.85 per cent, metal declined by 1.15 per cent, bankex (1.06 per cent), financial services (0.94 per cent), oil & gas (0.92 per cent) and consumer durables (0.84 per cent). Healthcare, utilities and power were the gainers.

"The recent drift in the global indices is putting pressure now and we expect the negative tone to continue," Ajit Mishra, SVP - Technical Research, Religare Broking Ltd said.

In the broader market, Sanghi Industries jumped 5 per cent after Ambuja Cements announced the acquisition of a majority stake in the cement manufacturer at an enterprise value of Rs 5,000 crore.

Ambuja Cement shares closed higher by 2.87 per cent.

In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo and Hong Kong ended in the negative territory while Shanghai settled in the green. European markets were trading in the red.

Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 1,877.84 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude dipped 0.46 per cent to USD 82.82 a barrel. Meanwhile, India's services sector growth touched a 13-year high in July as a substantial improvement in demand conditions and pick-up in international sales induced the strongest increase in new business and output, a monthly survey said on Thursday.

Ease of doing biz: DPIIT to help States in simplifying, decriminalising provisions

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre will help states in simplification, rationalisation or decriminalisation of provisions with a view to promoting ease of doing business and living in the country, a top government official said on Thursday.

Secretary in the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) Rajesh Kumar Singh said that Parliament passed a bill which seeks to promote ease of business by decriminalising minor offences through amendments in 183 provisions of 42 Acts.

"We will do this in the future as well... We intend to follow with an inter-ministerial working group which will look at other provisions where further simplification, rationalisation or decriminalisation is possible and we are intending to do the same exercise at the state level by providing guidance to the states as well," he told reporters here.

He said that there will be many more rounds of this exercise with the overall objective of promoting ease of doing business and ease of living.

The Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2023 was passed by Rajya Sabha by a voice vote on August 2. Lok Sabha cleared the legislation on July 27.

The bill converts several fines to penalties, meaning that court prosecution is not neces-



sary to administer punishments. It also removes imprisonment as a punishment for many offences. All offences under the Post Office Act of 1898 are being removed.

A working group has been formed to take the initiative forward. The group comprises representatives from industry associations, business chambers, legal professionals, legal experts and officials of seven ministries.

Besides, it has representatives of the National Housing Bank (NHB), the National Bank

of Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) and the Central Pollution Control Board.

The bill seeks to amend 183 provisions of 42 Acts administered by 19 ministries to reduce the compliance burden on individuals and businesses.

Under the bill, both imprisonment and/or fine are proposed to be removed in some provisions; imprisonment is proposed to be removed and fine retained in a few provisions; and imprisonment is proposed to be removed and fine enhanced in certain provisions.

For effective implementation, the bill proposes measures such as pragmatic revision of fines and penalties commensurate to the offence committed; establishment of adjudicating officers; establishment of appellate authorities; and periodic increase in the quantum of fines and penalties.

Cabinet secy reviews progress of PLI scheme in certain sectors; another meeting likely soon

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Cabinet secretary Rajiv Gauba on Thursday reviewed the progress of the production-linked incentive scheme (PLI) for sectors that are "generally doing very well" like pharma and electronics, a senior official said.

Another such review is expected for the remaining sectors, the official said.

The scheme was announced in 2021 for 14 sectors such as telecommunication, white goods, textiles, manufacturing of medical devices, automobiles, specialty steel, food products, high-efficiency solar PV modules, advanced chemistry cell battery, drones and pharma with an outlay of Rs 1.97 lakh crore.

"Today we covered sectors that are generally doing very well like pharma, electronics and mobile manufacturing, and white goods. Others which have not fully taken off are coming up later," the official said.

"They are doing well but they can do better. We are in the process of consulting whether any minor tweaking is required. Once we complete the process, we will be in a position," the official added when asked about the details of the review meeting.

PLI schemes for sectors which are not picking up well



include high-efficiency solar PV modules, advanced chemistry cell (ACC) batteries, textile products and specialty steel.

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) held a workshop with concerned PLI stakeholders in June to get feedback.

"Some of those suggestions after taking the feedback we will convert into policy decisions," the official said.

Stakeholders have flagged issues like timely processing of claims; visa-related matters where vendors require some expertise from Chinese professionals; delay in getting environmental clearances in some states.

"Those kinds of things we are trying to sort out. These issues are there in almost all the PLI sectors," the official said, adding "there are issues of environmental clearances, in some cases visa issues for Chinese, particularly when their compo-



Gems, jewellery exports likely to improve in second half of FY24: GJPEC

PTI ■ MUMBAI

India's gems and jewellery exports are likely to improve in the second half of this financial year as the demand recovers in key export destinations, the Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJPEC) said on Thursday. GJPEC is exploring new markets, including Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Myanmar, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, to boost exports.

"Disbursement is not a criteria in the general sense to assess whether the scheme is doing good or not. Disbursements doesn't really bother us so much because many of the schemes we are talking about are in the gestation stage," the official said.

Concerned ministries are taking up issues related to their sectors and the DPIIT is playing a coordinating role.

"If it doesn't get resolved it can escalate to Cabinet Secretary to the DPIIT or minister level," the official added.

The purpose of the schemes is to attract investments in key sectors and cutting-edge technology; ensure efficiency and bring economies of size and scale in the manufacturing sector and make Indian companies and manufacturers globally competitive.

Sebi allows OFS for units of private listed InvTs via stock exchange mechanism

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Capital markets regulator Sebi on Thursday allowed Offer For Sale (OFS) for units of private listed Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvTs) through a stock exchange mechanism.

InvTs were introduced in India to provide investors with an opportunity to gain exposure to infrastructure projects with diversification of risks through pooling arrangements.

Privately placed InvTs can invest in under-construction assets as well as completed and revenue-generating assets and public InvTs can invest majorly in completed and revenue-generating assets.

Based on the feedback received from market participants, it has been decided to modify the framework to allow OFS for units of private listed InvTs, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said in a circular.

The OFS for the sale of units of REITs and InvTs by sponsor or sponsor group entities, and other unit holders are permitted in units of listed REITs.

India can become USD 6.7 trillion economy by 2031: S&P Global

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India can become a USD 6.7 trillion economy by 2031, from USD 3.4 trillion currently, if the country clocks an average growth of 6.7 per cent for 7 years, an S&P Global report said on Thursday. India had clocked a 7.2 per cent GDP growth in 2022-23 fiscal. But a global slowdown and lagged effect of a policy rate hike by RBI could slow down growth to 6 per cent in the current fiscal, S&P Global said in a report titled 'Look Forward: India's Money'.

"We expect India to grow 6.7 per cent (average) from fiscal 2024 to fiscal 2031, catapulting GDP to USD 6.7 trillion from USD 3.4 trillion in fiscal 2023. Per capita GDP will rise to about USD 4,500," said the report jointly authored by S&P Global Ratings Global Chief Economist Paul Gruenwald, Crisil Chief Economist Dharmakirti Joshi and S&P Global Market Intelligence Chief Economist Asia Pacific Rajiv Biswas.

The macro challenge for India in the upcoming decade is to turn traditionally uneven growth into a high and stable trend, it said. Capital accumulation will drive India's economy toward this desirable path with the government and increasing-



ly private sector investing in infrastructure and manufacturing, the report said. "You will see growth peak at around fiscal 2025-26," Joshi said.

The report also said that India will likely see gains from reforms such as Goods and Services Tax. Further, the implementation of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code would also help to drive a healthy credit culture. It said that even with India recalibrating toward manufacturing, services will maintain a strong role in the economy.

The challenge over the next decade and beyond will be to create the conditions for sustained growth and achieving this will likely require structural reforms in 3 key areas — raise labour participation, especially among women, and boost skills, lift private investment in manufacturing and bolster external competitiveness through FDI, it added. A massive domestic market, along with gradually improving global competitiveness, is helping India draw foreign investment, the report said.

Kotak integrates alternate funds, advisory biz; total assets now at \$18 bn

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Kotak Mahindra Group on Thursday said it has integrated the alternate funds and investment advisory businesses, and the combined quantum of assets raised or managed has now increased to USD 18 billion.

The group has also renamed Kotak Investment Advisors (KIA) as Kotak Alternate Asset Managers (KAAM).

Lakshmi Iyer, the Chief Executive Officer of the investment advisory business at KIA, told reporters that it has integrated the asset advisory and the asset management businesses, and the combined strength of the entity will be USD 18 billion of assets raised or managed.

It has raised dedicated funds for private equity, real estate, private credit, strategic situations, data centres and infrastructure over the last 17 years where the assets under management was USD 8.9 billion while under the investment advisory side, it manages USD 9.1 billion of assets. "The name change reflects our strategy to harness the combined power of Rs 1.47 trillion capital and direct it to the best opportunities available in India."

BUSINESS BRIEF

POWERGRID ORGANISES VENDOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME/BUYER-SELLER MEET AT SRINAGAR
POWER GRID CORPORATION OF INDIA LIMITED (POWERGRID), Northern Region-II, conducted Vendor Development Program/ Buyer-Seller Meet for Micro & Small Enterprises (MSEs) at Sher I Kashmir International Convention Centre, Srinagar to promote participation of MSEs in POWERGRID procurements. The event was organised in association with Branch MSME Development and Facilitation Office, Srinagar. Senior most officials from POWERGRID, Northern Region-II led by its Executive Director, Rajesh Kumar and including Anil Sharma, GGM(Projects), Shafat Ahmad Wani, Sr. GM(Ladakh & Jammu & Kashmir), Arshad Iqbal, Sr. GM., K V Sampath Kumar, Sr. GM(Finance), Vinod P Baxda, GM(HR), Amit Patel, Sr. DGM participated in vendor development programme. Branch MSME. Rajesh Kumar in his key note address impressed upon the MSME vendors to come forward and partner POWERGRID in nation building. He intimated that the purpose of this programme is to make them aware and facilitate their participation in various tenders being floated by POWERGRID.

POWER FINANCE CORPORATION'S NON-CONVERTIBLE DEBENTURES LISTS ON BSE

The Public Issue of secured, rated, listed, redeemable non-convertible debentures by Power Finance Corporation Limited, a company registered with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) as a non-deposit taking systematically important Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) and classified as an Infrastructure Finance Company (IFC) listed on the BSE. The issue was oversubscribed 5.65 times garnering Rs 2,824.48 crore. The NCD has a face value of Rs. 1,000 each. The base issue size is Rs. 500 crores with a green shoe option of up to Rs. 4,500 crore, aggregating up to Rs. 5,000 crore ("Tranche I Issue"), which is within the shelf limit of Rs. 10,000 crore ("Issue"). The NNI Category was the most subscribed with 8.99 times, followed by Non-Institutional Category with 3.58 times. Institutional Category was subscribed 2.50 times, whereas, Retail Category was subscribed 2.09 times. Issue opened on Friday, July 21, 2023 and was scheduled to close on Friday, July 28, 2023. The issue was early closed on July 26, 2023 by exercising option of early closure. On the occasion, Parminder Chopra, Director (Finance) and Additional Charge Chairman and Managing Director said, "I am delighted to share that PFC's 2nd public issue of taxable bonds was a resounding success. It is truly encouraging to see that more than 80% of retail investors from all corners of India have participated in this Bond issue. This overwhelming participation is a testament to the continued trust our investors have placed in PFC's vision."

Broad level of consensus among stakeholders on proposed e-commerce policy: Official

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A broad level of consensus has emerged among the concerned stakeholders on the proposed national e-commerce policy, which is under formulation, a senior government official said on Thursday.

The commerce and industry ministry on August 2 held a detailed discussion with representatives of e-commerce firms and domestic traders body CAIT on issues related to the policy for the sector.

"There is a broad level of consensus. We will tell you more, may be in a couple of weeks. Policy is in final stages. There is a level of consensus across all stakeholders," the official said.

Both the policy and the rules will be aligned to each other, the official added.

Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) Secretary General Praveen Khandelwal, who attended the meeting, has said it was indicated that the national e-commerce policy would be released by the government in the coming months.

"A unanimity was arrived at between all stakeholders about basic pillars of e-commerce policy and rules," Khandelwal said



on Wednesday. Senior officials from the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) and the consumer affairs ministry were also present at the meeting.

The meeting assumes significance as the government is in the process of framing a national e-commerce policy and consumer protection rules for the sector.

Broadly the intention is to make the policy work along with the consumer protection rules and not in conflict with each other.

The policy aims to prepare strategies for providing a conducive environment for inclusive and harmonious growth of the e-commerce sector through a streamlined regulatory framework for ease of doing business, adoption of modern technologies, integration of supply chains and enhancing exports through this medium.



Zomato posts first-ever net profit of ₹2 crore in Q1

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Online food delivery firm Zomato Ltd on Thursday reported its first-ever consolidated profit after tax of Rs 2 crore in the April-June quarter of 2023-24, driven by strong revenue growth.

The company had posted a net loss of Rs 186 crore in the same quarter last fiscal, Zomato said in a regulatory filing.

Consolidated revenue from operations in the first quarter of the current fiscal was at Rs 2,416 crore as against Rs 1,414 crore in the year-ago period, it added.

Total expenses were higher at Rs 2,612 crore as compared to Rs 1,768 crore in the same quarter a year ago.

In a letter to shareholders, Zomato Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Deepinder Goyal said the company has been working hard to make its business less complex, and putting the right people at the right spots within its businesses.

He had said in May that the company was confident of achieving profitability for the entire business in the next four quarters.

"...I can in hindsight say that most of our seemingly 'risky' bets have changed the trajectory of the business significantly, much faster than we expected," he added.

India's per capita steel consumption improves from 2.5 kg to 2.8 kg: ISSDA

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Stainless Steel Development Association (ISSDA) on Thursday said that India's per capita consumption of stainless steel has improved from 2.5 kg to 2.8 kg on the back of an increased demand for the green metal in sectors, such as railways, process industries and Architecture, Building and Construction (ABC).

The figures come at a time when globally, the stainless steel production has fallen by 5.2 per cent from 58.2 million tonnes in 2021 to 55.2 million tonnes in 2022 (CY). The latest data was released by the industry associ-



ation on the inaugural day of its maiden India Stainless Steel Expo (ISSE) 2023 being held in Greater Noida during which it highlighted consumption of stainless steel in India has grown by nearly 10 per cent over the past financial year to reach 4 million tonnes.

Secretary, Ministry of Steel, Government of India, Nagendra Nath Sinha, President, ISSDA, Rajamani Krishnamurti, Managing Director, Jindal Stainless, Abhyuday Jindal, Secretary General, World Stainless, Tim Collins, and Managing Director, SMR GmbH, Markus Moll, were present on the occasion. Faggan Singh Kulaste, Minister of State for Steel, addressed the gathering virtually.

At least 8,000 key stakeholders from the stainless steel sector are participating in the event, besides as many as 17 companies from Latin America region are also part of a reverse buyer seller meet under the Ministry of Commerce through the Engineering Export Promotion Council (EEPC).

Temasek to invest ₹1,200 cr in M&M's four-wheeler passenger EV arm

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Mahindra & Mahindra on Thursday said Singapore's sovereign investment firm Temasek will invest Rs 1,200 crore in its four-wheeler passenger electric vehicles arm — Mahindra Electric Automobile Ltd. The company has executed a binding agreement with Temasek for the latter to invest Rs 1,200 crore into Mahindra Electric Automobile Ltd (MEAL), valuing the EV arm at Rs 80,580 crore, M&M said in a regulatory filing. Under the agreement, Temasek will invest the sum in the form of Compulsorily Convertible Preference Shares (CCPS) at a valuation of up to Rs 80,580 crore, resulting in Temasek's ownership in a range of 1.49 per cent to 2.97 per cent in MEAL, it added.

"Temasek will join British

International Investments (BII) as an investor in MEAL. With this investment, Mahindra's EV subsidiary's valuation goes up by 15 per cent from up to Rs 70,070 crore to up to Rs 80,580 crore," the company said.

M&M Managing Director & CEO Anish Shah said, "Globally known for their strong governance, Temasek's investment is a step forward, as we execute our strategy towards future leadership in electric SUVs. The valuation of up to USD 9.8 billion is testimony to Mahindra's EV business and the progress we have made in the journey towards scaling up the electric SUV portfolio." M&M said the breadth of global experience of these marquee investors — Temasek and BII, will be valuable for MEAL. The amount invested is consistent with the Mahindra Group's plan to minimise dilution.

Adani Power shares climb 3% after June quarter earnings

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Shares of Adani Power Ltd on Thursday climbed 3 per cent after the company posted an 83.3 per cent jump in its consolidated net profit for the April-June quarter.

The stock gained 2.69 per cent to settle at Rs 274.90 apiece on the BSE. During the day, it rallied 4.59 per cent to Rs 280.

On the NSE, it climbed 3 per cent to end at Rs 275.90 per share. In volume terms, 22.40 lakh shares of the company were traded on the BSE and over 1.73 crore shares on the NSE during the day.

Adani Power Ltd (APL) on Thursday posted an 83.3 per cent jump in its consolidated net profit at Rs 8,759.42 crore for the April-June quarter on account of higher income.

Germany OUT Of Women's WC



AFP ■ PERTH (AUSTRALIA)

Anissa Lahmari's winner powered World Cup debutants Morocco past Colombia 1-0 on Thursday and into the last 16 at the expense of two-time champions Germany. Morocco's upset in Perth lifted them to six points and they finished runners-up in Group H to Colombia on goal difference. Germany were eliminated after being held to a 1-1 draw with South Korea in Brisbane. Colombia will play Jamaica in the round of 16, while Morocco face France. It was a fairytale result for Morocco, who have rebounded from a humiliating 6-0 drubbing on their debut against Germany with wins over South Korea and Colombia.

In front of 17,342 fans, the sole goal arrived moments before half-time when Ibtissam Jraidi was impeded in the box by a clumsy Daniela Arias. Captain Ghizlane Chebbak's penalty kick was spectacularly saved by lunging goalkeeper Catalina Perez, who dived to her left. But Sakina Ouzaoui pounced on the deflection and her nifty pass found Lahmari who made no mistake from close range. Colombia, wearing their yellow shirts, fielded a full-strength team despite having effectively qualified to the last 16 before this game. Real Madrid striker Linda Caicedo, who was diagnosed with ovarian cancer at 15 but made a full recovery, took her place after

x-rays cleared her of any health issues. Caicedo, who scored goals in Colombia's wins against South Korea and Germany, had suffered breathing difficulties against the Germans just days after collapsing in training with chest pain. Midfielder Mayra Ramirez overcame a knee injury sustained against Germany. But Morocco took heed of coach Reynald Pedros' plea to play aggressively with a dashing Jraidi forcing Perez into a save in the opening minute. An attacking Morocco continued to dictate the early exchanges with Chebbak and Fatima Tagnaout particularly influential. Tagnaout set up Lahmari whose long-range strike on the half hour sailed well over the bar.

Caicedo had limited impact and copped an errant tackle to her foot which had her writhing on the turf. She was finally involved just before half-time with several menacing dashes down the right, but Colombia couldn't capitalise. Morocco made them pay with Lahmari's goal putting the group on a knife's edge at the interval. Colombia came out aggressively and almost equalised on the hour when Daniela Montoya's bullet was brilliantly saved by Morocco goalkeeper Khadija Er-Rmichi. They continued to press with Ramirez slamming a powerful shot from a tight angle into the right post. But Morocco hung on to trigger wild celebrations from their players.

Germany coach calls earliest Women's World Cup exit 'a disaster'

AFP ■ BRISBANE (AUSTRALIA)

Coach Martina Voss-Tecklenburg called it "a disaster" after Germany suffered their earliest Women's World Cup exit with a 1-1 stalemate against South Korea on Thursday. The 2003 and 2007 champions -- and one of the favourites to win the tournament -- crashed out in the group stage for the first time in their history. Debutants Morocco instead reached the last 16 after stunning Colombia 1-0 to join the South Americans on six points in Group H. Germany finished third in the table on four points and will be heading home. "If you want to see it as a disaster in sporting terms, then it's hard to argue against it," Voss-Tecklenburg said after the stalemate in Brisbane condemned her side. Voss-Tecklenburg said she was still trying to come to terms with going out at the first hurdle and refused to speculate about her future with the national team. "Our team of coaches will talk about what happened of course and what we could have done differently, but it's not something I can analyse one and a half hours after exiting. "But of course I'm disappointed -- of course I'm frustrated. "Overall we never really played our game the way we know we can," she added. "Maybe we were too careful at the start. Maybe we were too uptight and tried to force things." Last summer's European final-



ists came into the game knowing that a win against South Korea would take them through to the knockout stage. The team ranked second in the world were expected to get the better of a side who had lost their opening two matches and had almost no chance of advancing. But Colin Bell's side went a goal up early on through Cho So-hyun and defended stoutly to frustrate their opponents, who could not find a winner following Alexandra Popp's first-half equaliser. The Englishman Bell said his side deserved the draw despite the pressure the Germans put them under. "We had a chance early with Casey Phair and then when Cho scored early it just freed up our team," he said. "The way they played, the way they fought, we really deserved a point. "When Popp scored everyone probably expected us to lose, but we kept fighting, kept playing."

FRUSTRATION The Germans said before the game they wanted more creativity after their shock 2-1 loss to Colombia, but they were unable to convert their many chances. They had 13 shots to their opponents' six, but only three of those were on target as Korea put almost everyone behind the ball in defence. Sixteen-year-old striker Phair almost scored inside three minutes when she latched onto a through ball, but her shot was brilliantly saved by German goalkeeper Merle Frohms. Three minutes later the Germans went behind from an almost identical move, Choe Yuri playing a ball through to Cho, whose side-foot effort beat Frohms to find the back of the net. The goal seemed to spur the Germans into action, and they dominated possession and territory after that, although they couldn't find a way through the Korean defence.



Argentine footballer's knee fully dislocated in Libertadores injury

AFP ■ BUENOS AIRES

Argentine footballer Luciano Sanchez could be out of action for up to a year after his left knee was entirely dislocated in a chilling injury the likes of which his doctor said he has never seen. The injury took place after Fluminense's Marcelo accidentally stepped with his full weight on the Argentinos Juniors defender's shin, bending his leg entirely backwards and prompting gasps of horror on and off the field. "In 23 years as a doctor I have never seen anything like this, it is almost a separation of the femur and fibula," Argentinos doctor Alejandro Ronconi told D Sports Radio on Wednesday. He said Sanchez, 29, would undergo several surgeries to reconstruct the knee, and "recovery takes between 10 and 12 months." The injury took place at 55 minutes, and the former Real Madrid player Marcelo broke down in tears as he was sent off. "Today I had to experience a very difficult moment on the field. I accidentally injured a professional colleague. I wish you the best recovery possible," Marcelo wrote on social media.

Murray beats Nakajima in ATP Washington opener

AFP ■ WASHINGTON

Andy Murray held firm in a 7-6 (7/5), 6-4 victory over Brandon Nakashima in the ATP hardcourt tournament in Washington on Wednesday, the British great's first match since an epic second-round exit at Wimbledon. The 36-year-old Scot, ranked 44th in the world, saved all six break points he faced against the 70th-ranked American to reach the third round. That included one in the final game, when a double fault left Murray down 30-40. He responded with a deft, angled forehand drop shot to end a long rally and followed up with a service winner before closing out the contest with a booming forehand winner.



"It got really tense toward the end," Murray said, thanking a vocal crowd for their support. "The adrenaline, butterflies, nerves, that makes you feel alive. I still enjoy that." Three-time Grand Slam champion Murray admitted last month he didn't know if he'd be back at Wimbledon again after falling in five sets to world number five Stefanos Tsitsipas in the second round.

He hasn't made the second week of a Grand Slam since reaching the quarter-finals at Wimbledon in 2017 as two hip surgeries threatened to end his career. His first match win in Washington since 2018 showed he's still relishing the fight. He trailed 5-2 in the first-set tiebreaker, winning five straight points to claim the set.

He broke Nakashima to open the second set and held on from there. "The courts and the balls are extremely slow here, so you're having to work really hard in all of the games, it's not easy to finish points," Murray said. "It was a good one to get through." Murray, who had a first-round bye, next faces top-seeded Taylor Fritz or fellow American Zachary Svajda. In other matches Wednesday, Japan's Yosuke Watanuki shocked third-seeded Canadian Felix Auger-Aliassime 7-6 (12/10), 7-6 (7/3) and 11th-seeded Wimbledon quarter-finalist Christopher Eubanks beat Japan's Sho Shimabukuro 6-3, 6-4. At 12th in the world, Auger-Aliassime is the highest-ranked player the 99th-ranked Watanuki has beaten.

Svitolina reaches Washington WTA quarter-finals with another win

AFP ■ WASHINGTON

Ukraine's Elina Svitolina continued her dominance of Daria Kasatkina, taking her career record over the Russian to 8-0 with a 6-2, 6-2 victory Wednesday in the WTA hardcourt tournament in Washington. Unseeded Svitolina's second victory over her fifth-seeded Russian rival saw her into the quarter-finals, where she'll face either top-seeded American Jessica Pegula or lucky loser Peyton Stearns. "I just try to fight each time I play Dasha," said Svitolina, who also beat Kasatkina in straight sets in the fourth round at Roland Garros this year. "She's a tough opponent to face, and each time I try to play just one extra ball over the net,



to take and dictate the game. I'm really happy I won the match today." Svitolina, playing her eighth tournament since returning from maternity leave, belted 29 groundstroke winners, including 22 on her forehand. She saved all 10 break points she faced, nine of them coming in just two games -- her

gritty hold to claim the opening set and a marathon game for a 5-1 lead in the second. When the match ended, Svitolina stuck to her policy of declining to shake her Russian opponent's hand, although at Roland Garros she commended Kasatkina for speaking out against the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Brazilian winger Lucas Moura returns to Sao Paulo

AFP ■ SAO PAULO

Brazilian winger Lucas Moura, formerly of Tottenham and Paris Saint-Germain, finalized a deal Wednesday to return to his boyhood team, Sao Paulo, the club said. "Lucas is back!" Sao Paulo FC said in a statement, making the 30-year-old international the latest South American footballer to head home for a late-career swan song. The winger, whose contract with

Tottenham ended in June, will join Colombian forward James Rodriguez, 32, whose signing with Sao Paulo was announced Saturday. Moura made his professional debut with Sao Paulo in 2010, winning the Copa Sudamericana with them two years later before heading to Europe for a decade. Returning to the club "is a whirlwind of emotions," he said in the statement. "Just remembering everything I



lived through here, coming back after all this time, it's very exciting. I'm very happy." Sao Paulo transferred Moura to PSG in 2012 for a \$53-million fee, the biggest at the time for a Brazilian team. After struggling to make his mark at the star-studded French club, he left in 2018 to join Tottenham, where he memorably scored a hat-trick against Ajax in the 2019 Champions League semi-final, before the club's loss to Liverpool in the final.

Weah off the mark as Juventus down Madrid

AFP ■ MIAMI

United States international Timothy Weah scored the first goal of his Juventus career as the Italian giants defeated Real Madrid 3-1 in a pre-season friendly in Florida on Wednesday. Weah, who joined Juventus from Lille last month, tucked away a close-range finish after collecting a pass from U.S. team-mate Weston McKennie to lead the Serie A side a 2-0 lead after 20 minutes in front of a sell-out 63,503 crowd in Orlando. McKennie, who spent the second half of last season on loan at Premier League club Leeds where he struggled to make an impact, also had a hand in his team's opening goal which came inside the first 60 seconds. Neat approach play led to McKennie curling a shot against the foot of the post, with Moise Kean on hand to turn in the rebound. Real Madrid, who once again started new signing Jude Bellingham, were slow to get into the contest but eventually pulled a goal back seven



minutes before half-time through Brazil international Vinicius Jr. A superb ball from Toni Kroos sent Vinicius bearing down on the Juventus goal, and the striker calmly lifted his finish over Wojciech Szczesny to score. Real chased an equalizer in a disjointed second half, before Dusan Vlahovic made the game safe for Juventus deep into stoppage time. Wednesday's game was Real's final pre-season fixture before they kick off their La Liga campaign against Athletic Bilbao on August 12. Juventus meanwhile will now return to Italy to prepare for their season-opener against Udinese on August 20.

AFP ■ SYDNEY

France coach Herve Renard has warned his team they must keep their focus or it "can all come tumbling down" after being stunned by an early goal from Panama and leaking another two late on. Women's World Cup debutants Panama silenced the world number five with a strike in the first minute of their Group F clash in Sydney on Wednesday before France woke up to race 5-1 ahead. But with a last-16 place secure, France eased off and were punished 47 times by a team ranked twice more lower. Renard accused his team of looking for "an easy game" and said they did not exist at a World Cup. "My girls weren't playing as they should have been playing and, collectively, we were look-

France warned to 'pull their socks up' or pay World Cup price

ing for the easy solution, the easy game, forgetting that in a World Cup, you need to show respect," Renard said after the 6-3 win. "Everything that you've built up can come tumbling down in a matter of seconds." France rested captain Wendie Renard, and when her replacement Grace Geyoro came off among a slew of substitutions to give other players a chance they lacked leadership. Renard said it was a wake-up call for those who came on, including Laurina Fazer, Amel Majri and Viviane Assayi.



"We were 5-1 up, you see this often in football. It was poor attitude from the girls for a few minutes," he said. "This shows the ones who are hoping to be part of the starting 11, they need to work a little bit harder and pull their socks up, because what I saw maybe wasn't good enough." France will face the runners-up from Group H in the last 16 on Tuesday -- possibly two-time champions Germany. Paris FC attacking midfielder Clara Mateo said the

defensive mistakes must be fixed or they could be in trouble. "We were quite consistent offensively because we scored six times," she said, with Kadidiatou Diani hitting a hat-trick. "However, we conceded three goals so we will have to check what happened to fix our defensive mistakes. "We know that in the knockout stage, it could be fatal so we need to improve the defensive aspect and keep on scoring goals."

INDIA LIMIT WEST INDIES TO 149/6 IN FIRST T20I

PTI ■ TAROUBA

India leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal made instant impact in his first game on the tour before Rovman Powell played a captain's knock to take West Indies to 149 for six in the first T20 International here on Thursday.

Besides Powell's 48 off 32 balls, the in-form Nicholas Pooran made an entertaining 41 off 34 balls.

India handed maiden T20 caps to young batter Tilak Varma and pacer Mukesh Kumar, who made his Test and ODI debut earlier on the tour.

With the new ball not doing much in the powerplay, the Indian pace duo of Mukesh and Arshdeep Singh was not able to put the West Indies top-order under pressure.

Hardik Pandya introduced spin in the fourth over and Brandon King (28 off 19) made his intentions clear with an inside out six over cover off Axar Patel.



Chahal (2/24) was brought into the attack in the following over and a struggling Kyle Myers (1) missed a slog sweep off the leggie's googly only to be adjudged lbw. The replays showed the ball was missing the stumps but Myers chose not to review.

Two balls later, King missed a straight ball off Chahal to be trapped in front.

Pooran, fresh from his sensational hundred in the Major League Cricket final, looked in devastating touch from ball one.

He dispatched Axar for a six and four in the cow corner region, leaving the West Indies at 54 for two in six overs.

Powell then got into the act and smashed three sixes and as many fours to taking the innings forward. However, the West Indies were never able to get the final flourish, adding 42 runs off the last 30 balls with the loss of two wickets.

Besides Chahal, Arshdeep (2/31) also chipped in with two wickets for the visitors.

South Zone clinch Deodhar Trophy title for 9th time



PTI ■ PUDUCHERRY

South Zone's juggernaut continued as they clinched the Deodhar Trophy title for the ninth time with a commanding 45-run win over East Zone in the final, here on Thursday.

After opener Rohan Kunnammal smacked a sensational century — a 75-ball 107 with four sixes and 11 fours — to set the ball rolling for his side, there was no stopping the South Zone who piled up 328 for eight in the summit clash batting first.

South Zone's impressive bowling line-up then made life miserable for the East Zone batters, whose top order crumbled to reach 75 for four after 16 overs and were left staring at a mountain to climb. It was not for the first time in the Deodhar Trophy that East Zone pinned all their hopes on the pair of Riyan Parag and Kumar Kushagra, who delivered yet again with a 105-run stand for the sixth wicket, but their effort was just not enough. Chasing 329 to win, East Zone were bowled out for 283 in 46.1 overs. All hopes were quashed for East Zone when their star all-rounder, Parag fell agonisingly five runs close to what would have been his third century in the competition.

Having stuttered in the chase, Parag's yet another quickfire knock — 95 from 65 balls with

eight fours and five sixes — did revive East Zone's hopes of turning the tables on South Zone.

But Washington Sundar dealt the decisive blow when he pinned Parag in front of the wickets in the 38th over, with the chasing team needing another 109 runs to win from 12 overs.

There was still some fight left in East Zone as Kushagra took charge, hitting Vijaykumar Vyshak for two fours and Sundar for a couple of sixes. But the Tamil Nadu and India all-rounder Sundar had the last laugh, getting Kushagra caught by Rohit Rayudu for a 58-ball 68 (6x4s, 3x6s) and shut the doors on East Zone in the 42nd over.

At the start of their chase, Vasuki Koushik accounted for Abhimanyu Easwaran (1) and Virat Singh (6) while Vidwath Kaverappa removed Utkarsh Singh to leave East Zone reeling at 14 for three. Earlier in the first half, Mayank Agarwal called it right for South Zone to bat first, as their opening pair tore into the East Zone bowling attack right from the word go.

Agarwal (63 from 83 balls, 4x4s) took the backseat and watched his younger partner, Kerala's Kunnammal go ballistic with the bat.

The right-handed opener smacked his first ton of the competition after scores of 70 and 87 not out earlier, giving his side complete command.

Kunnammal and Agarwal piled up 181 runs before they were separated, in the 25th over, but by then a strong platform had been set for South Zone. Narayan Jagadeesan made a watchful 54 off 60 balls but no other South Zone batter could really impose themselves in the remainder of their innings. Having won the Duleep Trophy final recently against the East Zone, this is South Zone's second national title in the span of a month. South Zone had won all of their five league round matches of Deodhar Trophy as well.



KL, Iyer Unlikely To Be Picked For Asia Cup 2023

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Star batters KL Rahul and Shreyas Iyer are on road to recovery from their respective injury. However, their spot in the upcoming Asia Cup 2023 is still a topic of discussion due to the 50-over format of the tournament.

The latest BCCI update didn't determine the date of the potential return of the star duo. Rahul underwent thigh surgery while Iyer had surgery on his lower back to cure a stress fracture.

"It is unlikely that both Rahul and Shreyas would be match fit for 50-over cricket and that too in humid conditions in Sri Lanka. But BCCI medical team feels that Rahul can at least get fit before the three-match series against Australia before

the World Cup," a BCCI source told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

"In case of Iyer, he has also started skills training but World Cup for him will be touch and go if Indian management thinks of putting a 100 percent fit Iyer back on the park. T20 is an easier vehicle for comeback unlike 50-over cricket. We are keeping fingers crossed," the source added.

KL Rahul has started wicket-keeping drills but doing that for the whole 50 overs will be a tough task after fresh hamstring surgery. Jasprit Bumrah's Return Good For India Ahead Of Asia Cup 2023

Fast-bowling spearhead Jasprit Bumrah is set to make a comeback into international cricket after being named as India's captain for the three-

match T20I series against Ireland. In the squad, fast-bowler Prasidh Krishna also makes a return to the team.

The three T20I matches between India and Ireland will be played in Malahide on August 18, 20 and 23. India and Ireland played a two-match T20I series in June 2022, with the visitors winning the series 2-0, though the hosts came close to winning.

For the tour of Ireland, Rinku Singh, Jitesh Sharma, Shivam Dube, Washington Sundar, and Shahbaz Ahmed have also been included, with Ruturaj Gaikwad appointed as vice-captain of the side.

Bumrah's return to the Indian cricket team is great news for team India ahead of Asia Cup 2023 and ODI World Cup 2023.

Netherlands to arrive in India in early September for practice matches



PTI ■ BENGALURU

In a significant boost to Netherlands' preparation for the ICC World Cup 2023, the Dutch outfit will arrive here in the second week of September for a few warm-up matches.

The details of the matches, like dates and venues, are still being worked out, as these will be played a few days ahead of the scheduled pre-tournament warm-up matches.

"Yes, we will be arriving (in India) a few days earlier and we will play some matches (in Bengaluru) before entering the official warm-up games.

"These matches are important for us because we are yet to play any competitive matches after getting qualified to the World Cup earlier last month," a Netherlands cricket association (KNCB) official told PTI.

After the practice games in Bengaluru, the Netherlands will travel either to Hyderabad or Thiruvananthapuram for official warm-up matches.

However, Hyderabad is the preferred destination of the Dutchmen because they will play their first two World Cup matches in the city. Netherlands will open their World Cup campaign against Pakistan on October 6 at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium, while on October 9 they will take on New Zealand at the same venue.

The busy schedule for Netherlands ahead of the quadrennial showpiece assumes importance because their coach Ryan Cook had made an emotional plea to allot them some matches in the sub-continent to get acclimatised to the conditions. "This is a call-out to anyone who wants to play us. We'd love to have a fixture or two. Our guys have not been to the sub-continent many times before so it would be good to have some fixtures somewhere in the sub-continent as well," Cook had said post their World Cup entry.

This will be Netherlands' fifth appearance in the World Cup, but first one since 2011.

Manoj Tiwary announces retirement from all forms of cricket



PTI ■ KOLKATA

Former India batsman Manoj Tiwary on Thursday announced his retirement from all forms of cricket, drawing curtains to a very unique career.

Tiwary, who played 12 ODIs and three T20Is between 2008 and 2015, ventured into politics even while he remained an active cricketer, and became a minister of state for sports and youth affairs in West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee's state cabinet.

But during the 2022-23 domestic season, the 37-year-old returned to play for Bengal and

guided the team to the final where they went down to Saurashtra at the Eden Gardens. It was also Tiwary's last First-Class game.

"Goodbye to the game of cricket," Tiwary wrote in an Instagram post while announcing his retirement.

"This game has given me everything. I mean every single thing which I had never dreamt of, starting from the times when my life was challenged by different forms of difficulties.

"I will always be grateful to this game and to the GOD, who has always been by my side

throughout," said Tiwary.

The right-handed batsman made 287 runs from 12 one-dayers that includes a hundred against West Indies at Chennai in December 2011.

Tiwary finished his First-Class career just 92 runs shy of the 10,000-landmark (9908 runs) and averaged 48.56 with 29 centuries in a glittering 19-year career. He made his debut under Deep Dasgupta in 2004 against Delhi at the Eden Gardens.

He scored 5581 runs from 169 List A games at an average of 42.28.

An aggressive middle-order batter, Tiwary faced selection blues with the India think tank under MS Dhoni preferring a left-hander in Suresh Raina, who was also his protege in Chennai Super Kings.

As fate had it in store for him, Tiwary was dropped for 14 ODIs after scoring the century against the Windies.

Tiwary made 65 runs and took four wickets in two matches when he made his return but he was dropped again. Injuries also took a toll on his career.

He was also a member of the Kolkata Knight Riders' maiden IPL triumph in 2012 and struck the winning runs in the last over to seal a 191-run chase against the CSK.

Tiwary also represented Delhi Daredevils, Kings XI Punjab and Rising Pune Supergiants in the IPL. Overall, he has played 183 T20s, scoring 3436 runs at a strike rate of 116.43. Tiwary also thanked his childhood coach Manabendra Ghosh, his former teammates and his family.

'We Don't Have His Back Up': Mohammad Kaif About Bumrah

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Former Indian cricketer Mohammad Kaif backed Jasprit Bumrah as one of the key players for Team India's campaign in the ODI World Cup 2023. The premium pacer is set to make his return to international cricket as the Indian skipper for the Ireland tour.

"The players who are injured, India's chances in the World Cup will depend a lot on that (their comeback). Bumrah is coming now after a long injury lay off and we will get an idea on how fit he is. India need a fully fit Bumrah to do well in World Cup at home," said Kaif on Wednesday.

"In the bowling department, you can't have two teams. If Bumrah doesn't play we will lose, like we did in Asia Cup T20 and 2022 T20 World Cup. We don't have his back up. At the moment the team is not looking the strongest on paper as it is missing key players including K L Rahul, Pant, Iyer, and the biggest factor is Bumrah," said the 42-year-old.



Mohammad Kaif Addresses India's Experiments In ODIs vs WI

"I won't judge the team for what it has done on the West Indies tour. If Rohit Sharma and Kohli had to take a break then they should not have been part of the squad. I will judge them from Asia Cup and the 15 they pick for the tournament," said Kaif

"From Asia Cup onwards,

they have to be sure what their 11 is and what their backups are. He will be in the squad as he has done well. I am not sure if Kishan, SKY, Samson, and Iyer, all of them won't be in the 15."

"It remains to be seen if Kishan will be the backup wicket-keeper to Rahul. World Cup for India will start with the semi-final. They will need to win two big games to lift the title," he added.

Anderson's experience will be required in India: Nasser

PTI ■ LONDON

Former England skipper Nasser Hussain expects pace bowler James Anderson to tour India for the gruelling five-Test series early next year, saying that with pacer Stuart Broad and all-rounder Moeen retiring, the experience of the 41-year-old will come in handy in sub-continental conditions.

Anderson, the highest wicket-taking quick in Test cricket, would be more than keen to tour India for the series, scheduled to commence in January next year, after an ordinary bowling effort during the recently concluded Ashes.

"Jimmy's (Anderson) got a very good record against India... And you need a balanced attack. You need that experience for younger players to come in," Hussain said on The ICC Review on Thursday.

Anderson has a good record against India, with six of his 32 five-wicket hauls in Tests coming against them. His average in the Asian country (29.32) is decent in comparison to other places he has played in.

"Listen, Jimmy's had a bad or an average couple of months, but you are a fool if you're writing off Jimmy Anderson. I spoke



to him in an interview and he was like, the hunger is still there. He's already thinking about how to get back to his best," added Hussain.

Hussain added that with the Ashes now history, Anderson was looking ahead to newer challenges and aiming to hit the nets soon.

"He's already thinking about going back in the nets and working hard at his game and that's a good sign for me that he's still got that hunger. He's, what, 10 wickets away from 700 (Test wickets), and that will keep him

going for a while yet."

England have been hit by a spate of retirements, notably by all-rounder Moeen Ali and pacer Broad. But Hussain felt that while the absence of the two stalwarts will be felt, the team has depth in their bowling ranks to perform well in India.

"I think especially with Broad going, I would like that experience (of Anderson in India)."

"(All-rounder) Chris Woakes has stated that he's not that keen anymore of playing away from home and his

record's not great away from home. We'll see, he (Woakes) might change his mind. There's been a lot of mind changes recently. But if you don't have Woakes and you don't have Broad, you will need that experience of someone like Jimmy Anderson," added Hussain.

Hussain added that tour of India will pose then next biggest challenge to "Bazball", a term which has come to be associated with England's aggressive style of play under coach Brendon McCullum and skipper Ben Stokes.

"(Spinner) Jack Leach will (hopefully) be back and Rehan Ahmed is a very good second spinner, as we saw in Pakistan," Hussain said.

"(Pacer) Josh Tongue has bowled really well. (Pacer) Ollie Robinson is a very skilful bowler. Unfortunately, someone like Olly Stone is injured and obviously Jofra Archer is injured.

"You need that extra pace as well in India. So England have got... They've got that lad (Gus) Atkinson at Surrey, who has a lot of good things being said about him. So England have options. It's (India) the next test for Bazball. They said Bazball will work against one side, then they moved on to the next side.

"Then they moved on to New Zealand, Australia, Pakistan. The next challenge is India and everyone knows India in India is one of the sternest challenges in Test match cricket."

Hussain indicated he was keen to know how "Bazball" will work against the likes of India's ace spinners like Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja and Axar Patel.

"It's Bazball against spin. Bazball against Ravi Ashwin, Jadeja and Axar Patel and that is going to be fascinating."