

WORLD 5
NO 'MAJOR HURDLE' IN
HOLDING POLLS: PAK ANALYST

MONEY 6
GOVT DEFERS ORDER ON
PC/ LAPTOP IMPORTS BAN

SPORT 7
ARCHER ADITI YOUNGEST
EVER WORLD CHAMP AT 17

Published From
DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL
BHUBANESWAR RANCHI
RAIPUR CHANDIGARH
DEHRADUN HYDERABAD
VIJAYWADA

NEW DELHI, SUNDAY AUGUST 6, 2023; PAGES 12 ₹4



sunday pioneer

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3 killed in Manipur, bodies desecrated

PNS ■ IMPHAL

Tragedy struck Manipur's Bishnupur district on a fateful Friday night when terrorists carried out a ruthless attack, claiming three lives, including that of a father and son.

Three others were injured. The violent episode cast a shadow over the Imphal valley, coinciding with a 24-hour general strike organised by the coordinating committee of 27 Assembly constituencies, paralysing normal life in the region.

As the night unfolded, the victims fell prey to the bullets while they lay asleep, their bodies later desecrated with swords in the heartless attack at Kwakta. The deceased, once seeking refuge in a relief camp, had dared to return to their homes in Kwakta, hoping for better days, only to meet this cruel fate.

The brutal act stirred a tide of anger among the locals, leading to an agitated mob assembling at Kwakta, wanting to march towards Churachandpur.

However, security personnel intervened to prevent any further escalation of violence. The agitated mob set ablaze several houses in Ukha Tampak.



Amid the turmoil, the hill districts managed to maintain a semblance of normalcy, but the general strike impacted normal life.

The committee's leader, L Binod, emphasised that the strike aimed not to exacerbate the hardships faced by the citizens but to exert much-needed pressure on the Government.

Meanwhile, the Manipur Cabinet recommended the State Governor to convene a session of the Assembly on August 21. The last Assembly session held in March seemed distant in memory as the State

grappled with ethnic violence that began in May, continuing to claim innocent lives in sporadic bursts, pushing the death toll to over 160.

The recent announcement of a public mass burial of tribals killed during these riots heightened tensions, with talks between former Kuki terrorist organisations and the Centre further complicating matters.

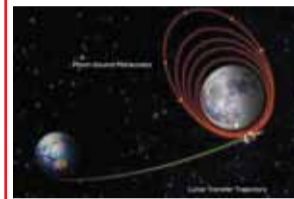
As the State reeled under the shadow of violence and uncertainty, the Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF) sought answers from the Government on addressing the security threat posed by the

rampant looting of guns and ammunition by mobs.

Expressing concern over the lack of safeguarding Government-issued weapons during the ethnic conflict, the ITLF warned that Manipur could face a catastrophic bloodbath if prompt action is not taken.

Despite the grim situation, the people's resilience manifested through the strike, effectively bringing life to a standstill in the Imphal Valley. Markets, business establishments, and schools remained shut as public transport vanished from the roads.

Chandrayaan inserted into lunar orbit



PTI ■ BENGALURU

India's ambitious third Moon mission's 'Chandrayaan-3' spacecraft was successfully inserted into the lunar orbit on Saturday, ISRO said. The required manoeuvre was done from an ISRO facility here, the city-headquartered national space agency said in a tweet.

"Chandrayaan-3 has been successfully inserted into the lunar orbit. A retro-burning at the Perilune was commanded from the Mission Operations Complex (MOX), ISTRAC (ISRO Telemetry, Tracking and Command Network), Bengaluru," ISEO tweeted. Perilune is the spacecraft's closest point to the moon.

The next operation reduction of orbit — will be done at 11 pm on Sunday, ISRO added. ISEO also shared a message from the satellite to its centres, which read, "MOX, ISTRAC, this is Chandrayaan-3. I am feeling lunar gravity."

According to ISRO sources, there will be four more Moon-bound manoeuvres to bring the satellite closer to the Moon, which is a 100 kilometre circular orbit.

Continued on Page 2

Imran gets 3-yr jail for graft, arrested

Conviction for selling state gifts bars him from fighting polls for 5 years

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Imran Khan was arrested on Saturday after the embattled former Pakistan Prime Minister was found guilty in a high-profile corruption trial and sentenced to three years in prison, a verdict that disqualified him for five years from holding any public office.

Additional Judge Humayun Dilawar of the Islamabad-based district and sessions court found Khan, 70, guilty of unlawfully selling state gifts during his tenure as prime minister from 2018 to 2022.

The unexpected developments came as Pakistan is heading for general elections later this year, with the current National Assembly set to complete its term on August 12.

The judge also imposed a fine of Rs 100,000 on Khan, adding that the chairman of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party would be kept in jail for another six months if failed to pay the fine.



Khan has been "found guilty of corrupt practices by hiding the benefits he acquired from the national Exchequer willfully and intentionally. He cheated while providing information about gifts he obtained from the Toshakhana which later proved to be false and inaccurate. His dishonesty has been established beyond doubt," the order said.

The Toshakhana is a department under the Cabinet Division that stores gifts given to rulers and government officials by heads of other governments and foreign dignitaries.

The court convicted the cricketer-turned-politician under Section 174 of the Election Act 2017 and sentenced him to three years of simple imprisonment.

Saturday's verdict centred on charges that Khan incor-

rectly declared details of presents from foreign dignitaries and proceeds from their alleged sale. According to reports, Khan received 58 gifts worth more than Rs 140 million from world leaders during his three-and-a-half-year stint and retained all of them either by paying a negligible amount or even without any payment.

The gift Khan kept with himself included a diamond watch, a pair of cufflinks, a ring, a pen and several watches. "His dishonesty has been established beyond doubt," judge Dilawar wrote in his ruling.

PTI spokesman Zulfi Bokhari informed journalists that Khan was disqualified for five years from holding any public office under the Constitution.

Continued on Page 2

Bulldozers rumble in Nuh for 3rd day; outreach drive on



Illegal construction being bulldozed by the authorities during the third day of the demolition drive in violence-hit Nuh district on Saturday PTI

PNS ■ NUH/GURUGRAM

Dozens of illegal structures were razed by Haryana authorities on the third day of the demolition drive in the violence-hit Nuh district on Saturday, with officials saying some of them were owned by those allegedly involved in the recent clashes.

Haryana Home Minister Anil Vij said that the number of people arrested has gone up to 216, while 80 people have been taken into preventive detention, and 104 FIRs registered so far in connection with

the communal violence that erupted when a religious procession was attacked in Nuh district by mobs on July 31.

While the Opposition pressed for a probe into alleged intelligence failure, Vij said he did not have information about any intelligence input on a possible build-up of tension.

Superintendent of Police P Narender Bijarnia said that rioters will not be spared. Nuh District Magistrate Dhirender Khadgata said the curfew had been relaxed from noon to 3 pm on Saturday.

Continued on Page 2

Adhir meets Speaker, LS Secy-Gen, seeks Rahul's reinstatement

PNS ■ IMPHAL

Congress leader in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury on Saturday urged Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla to reinstate Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's membership promptly after the Supreme Court stayed Rahul's conviction in the "Modi" surname defamation case on Friday.

Adhir claimed that he called the Speaker, who directed him to speak to the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General, as claimed by Adhir, informed him that since Saturday was a holiday, the matter could be discussed only on Monday. Nevertheless, Adhir handed over the SC orders and alleged that he did not receive a stamped receipt for the same.

Adhir expressed dissatisfaction with the delay in reinstating Rahul, contrasting it with the speed of his disqualification following the conviction by a Surat court in March.

The Congress is eager for Rahul's swift return to the House to participate in the upcoming no-confidence



motion scheduled for discussion on Tuesday.

"After I received the court order, I called the Speaker Friday night. I told him that I wanted to hand over the Supreme Court order staying the conviction of Rahul and also submit our letter. I sought time to meet him. He told me that he would meet me on Saturday.

"I called him on Saturday morning. I spoke to him. He advised me to contact the Lok Sabha Secretary General and hand over the document to his office. I called the Secretary General. He said his office is shut today as it was a holiday. I asked who should I give the letter to then? He told me to give it to the Speaker, which will reach him through the Speaker's office," Adhir said.

Continued on Page 2

3 jawans martyred; Mehbooba claims house arrest on 40th anniv of Art 370 repeal

PNS ■ JAMMU

On the eve of the fourth anniversary of the Abrogation of Article 370, three Indian Army soldiers were killed in Kulgam district late on Friday, while former Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir Mehbooba Mufti claimed on Saturday that she and other senior PDP leaders have been put "under house arrest".

An operation was launched in Halan area of South Kashmir's Kulgam district based on intelligence about the presence of a group of heavily armed terrorists in the area.

In a tweet, Srinagar-based Chinari Corps stated, "On specific inputs regarding the presence of terrorists on higher



reaches of Halan in Kulgam, operations were launched by security forces on Aug 4, 2023. In the exchange of fire with terrorists, three personnel sustained injuries and later succumbed. Search operations are continuing."

The soldiers who lost their lives in the line of duty have been identified as Havildar Babul Haritwal, Signalman Vala Mahipalsinh Pravinsinh,

and Rifleman Waseem Sarwar of 34 Rashtriya Rifles.

Post the Abrogation of Article 370, 153 security personnel have laid down their lives in Jammu and Kashmir, recording a significant decline of 57 per cent.

Meanwhile, Mehbooba tweeted, "This (house arrest) comes after a midnight crackdown where scores of my party men are illegally detained in police stations. The Government of India's false claims about normalcy to the SC stand exposed by their actions driven by paranoia."

She added, "On one hand, giant hoardings calling upon Kashmiris to 'celebrate' the illegal abrogation of Article 370 have been put up across

Srinagar. Whereas brute force is being used to choke the actual sentiment of the people. Hope the Hon'ble SC takes cognizance of these developments at a time when Article 370 has come up for hearing."

This follows the denial of permission by the Srinagar administration to Mufti's party to hold an event on the fourth anniversary of the abrogation of Article 370. The PDP had sought permission to hold a seminar on Saturday regarding the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A.

The Centre had on August 5, 2019, revoked Article 370, which gave special status to Jammu & Kashmir, and bifurcated it into the union territories of J&K and Ladakh.

Using 'Jhoothpaste' in the name of toothpaste has resulted not only in unclean teeth, but its chemicals made the teeth and gums even worse!

Patanjali Dant Kanti has the time-tested **Truth of Ayurveda**
That's why it's called

Made of **16** herbs (Akarkara, Neem, Babool, Tomar, Mint, Cloves, Peepli (small), Vajradanti, Bakul, Vidang, Turmeric, Peelun and Majufal etc.) it gives teeth the power to fight cavities, foul smell, yellowness, pyorrhea and all other oral diseases.

First batch of Agniveers pass out to serve nation

PTI ■ RAMGARH

The first batch of 704 Agniveers from two regiments on Saturday passed out to serve the nation as soldiers of the Indian Army after they successfully completed their basic and advanced training in Jharkhand's Ramgarh district, said an official statement.

These include 520 Agniveers from the Sikh Regiment and 184 from the Punjab Regiment who passed out in two different parade ceremonies in the garrison town of Ramgarh.

Addressing the newly passed out Agniveers in a colourful function organised at Harbaksh Drill Square in Sikh Regimental Centre Lt General PGK Menon, military secretary who is also colonel of the Sikh Regimental Centre (SRC), Ramgarh encouraged them to uphold the motto of the Regiment 'Nische Kar Apni Jeet Karon'.

Brigadier Shailesh Sati, commandant of SRC appreciated the Agniveers for their immaculate turnout and synchronised drill movement, reflecting a high standard of training and discipline.

He also praised instructors



and staff at the centre for their commitment to imparting top-quality training to the future soldiers of the Army.

In another colourful passing out parade organised at Kilahari Drill Square in Punjab Regimental Centre in Ramgarh a total of 184 Agniveers passed out in the presence of their parents.

Brigadier Sanjay Chandra Kandpal, commandant of Punjab Regimental Centre urged them to uphold over one and half-century old tradition of winning battles of the regiment.

Brigadier Kandpal presented Gaurav Pataki to the parents of Agniveers as a mark of recognition and appreciation.

On June 17, 2023, a total of 382 Agniveers which include

271 from the Sikh Regimental Centre and a total of 111 Agniveers from the Punjab Regimental Centre were inducted in the regiments after they took part in attestation parades and took oath to serve the nation in presence of Shrimad Bhagwat Geeta and Srigruru Granth Sahib.

Of the total 704 Agniveers passed out on Saturday include Agniveer (General Duty) and Agniveer (Trademan), said an official.

Military training for Agniveers across the country began on January 2, 2023, with upgraded training methodology and infrastructure.

Specialists from sports, medicine and physiotherapy were deployed as pre-emptive measures to reduce stress during the training, said an official.

Nitish chairs Grand Alliance meeting on regularisation of non-commissioned teachers

PTI ■ PATNA

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Saturday chaired a high-level meeting of Mahagathbandhan (Grand Alliance) constituents on the issue of regularisation of thousands of non-commissioned teachers.

The closed-door meeting was held at the CM's residence and the attendees included Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Prasad Yadav, some senior cabinet ministers and representatives of all constituents of the ruling Grand Alliance.

The new recruitment policy announced by the state government recently was also discussed.

After the meeting, attendees said the discussions were positive and Kumar assured them that all concerns will be addressed.

CPI(ML) Liberation MLA Mehboob Alam told reporters, "The issue of non-commissioned teachers, who have been demanding regular government employment for a long time, was discussed at length. It was a positive meeting and the CM assured us that the Mahagathbandhan



government will take measures that will be beneficial for teachers."

Echoing a similar view, Shakeel Ahmad Khan, leader of the Congress Legislature Party (CLP) in the state assembly, told PTI, "Issues related to teachers, including non-commissioned ones, were discussed and the CM patiently listened to the points raised by the leaders. We are hopeful that the non-commissioned teachers will hear good news soon."

Reacting to the meeting, Nityanand Rai, senior BJP leader and Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, told reporters, "The Grand Alliance has always been against the teachers... BJP is the only party that works for the benefit of teachers, farmers and the youth."

Gehlot kicks-off Rajiv Gandhi Rural & Urban Olympic Games 2023

PNS ■ JAIPUR



Chief Minister Shri Ashok Gehlot said that it is a proud moment for thousands of sportspersons to show their talent in the playgrounds together in the gram panchayat and urban wards of each district of the state. We all together have created a sports history before the country.

Organizing Rajiv Gandhi Rural and Urban Olympic Games-2023 will set a new record in the direction of promoting sports. These games will now be organized every year.

Shri Gehlot formally inaugurated the Rajiv Gandhi Rural and Urban Olympic Games-2023 at Sawai Man Singh stadium on Saturday. He administered an oath to players to play with spirit of sportsman-

ship and honesty. He said that it is our responsibility to give platform and honour to the talents.

The Chief Minister said that Rajiv Gandhi Rural Olympic Games were organized last year to build an atmosphere of sports at a large scale in the state. In those games, around 30 lakh players from every category and age got themselves registered.

This time the number has reached 58.51 lakh, which is a record.

He said that this event will build a positive atmosphere for sports from cities to villages-hamlets. The talents coming from these games will win medals in international events such as Olympics, Commonwealth and Asian games in the coming years.

NRI bizman booked for raping actress



TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Mumbai Police has booked a 41 year-old NRI businessman from Tanzania for allegedly raping a 34-year-old actress-cum-event anchor on multiple occasions on the pretext of marrying her.

Identifying the accused businessman as one Viren Patel, the victim woman alleged that they were in a relationship for some time, a period during which he abused, assaulted and raped her despite her resistance.

She told the police during that her relationship, the accused raped on her several occasions on various occasions at different places like Mumbai, Raigad's Alibaug, Karjat and Pune.

In her complaint to the police - details of which surfaced on Saturday, the woman said that she came in contact with Patel at a common friend's birthday party at Andheri in north Mumbai in October 2022.

TMC using police in Bengal to frame false cases against BJP workers: Suvendu

PUBLIC NOTICE

Property: Flat 1001, Tower-3, Orchard Petals, Sector-49, Sohna Road, Gurugram is being transferred in the name of Lt Col Santokh Singh Doad(Retd) and Smt Ranjeet Doad after the death of Ms Amrita. All PERSONS having any claim in respect thereof by way of sale, exchange, gift, mortgage, charge, trust, inheritance, possession, lease, lien or otherwise howsoever are requested to inform the same in writing to S-11, Nivedita Kuni, Sector-10 RK Puram, New Delhi 110022 Or to the Deputy Commissioner, Municipal Corporation, Gurugram, and e-mail to ramandoad1969@gmail.com within 30 days from this notice, failing which, the claim or claims, if any, of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned and the transfer shall be completed.

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Leader of Opposition in West Bengal Assembly Suvendu Adhikari on Saturday accused the ruling Trinamool Congress of "using the state police to frame false cases" against BJP workers.

Addressing a rally in his constituency Nandigram in Purba Medinipur district, the BJP MLA said he has been collecting certified copies of "false" cases slapped against him and other party workers since the declaration of the 2021 assembly poll results.

"Those police officers who have framed false cases will be punished. You (TMC) cannot falsely implicate BJP workers



any more. Your game is up. Those police officers who used to concoct charges against BJP activists will face the music. We will move the court if required," he said.

Speaking on the recently held panchayat polls, Adhikari reiterated that the "TMC had lured voters all over the state in connivance with a section of government officials".

"Despite that, the BJP won

80 per cent of 119 gram panchayat seats in Nandigram. Of the 23 panchayat samiti seats, we have won 15. This has been possible as BJP workers fought and resisted the terror of TMC," he claimed.

The Trinamool Congress steamedrolled to a massive victory in violence-scarred rural polls, bagging all 20 zila parishads in the three-tier panchayat system.

Reacting to Adhikari's allegation, TMC Deputy Chief Whip in the assembly Tapas Roy said, "The Trinamool Congress won most of the panchayat seats across Bengal as it enjoys the support of people. The BJP is not trusted by them."

Use PM Gati Shakti for planning modern infra, Centre to public servants in States

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has suggested public servants in states to use PM Gati Shakti approach for planning modern infrastructure specially in districts, an official statement said on Saturday.

The approach and use of the PM Gati Shakti was discussed during a web-based seminar hosted by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) on August 4.

Secretary, DPIIT, Rajesh Kumar Singh laid emphasis on crucial need for the administrators and public servants to understand the concept and uses of PM Gati Shakti



approach in building world class infrastructure for the country.

More than 250 participants with senior most officers from 27 Central Training Institutes (CTIs) and about 34 State Administrative Training Institutes (ATIs) participated in the webinar.

"Detail Route Survey done by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas used to take 6-9 months to prepare 46 reports. However, with the NMP through electronic Detailed

Route Survey (eDRS), the reports are now created in a few hours, with a digital clip, making the process simpler and faster," it said.

It added that the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas planned alignments of 5 pipelines under the North-East Gas Grid (NEGG) which resulted in reducing the overall length of 42 km, leading to a cost saving of Rs 169 crore.

The PM Gati Shakti - National Master Plan (NMP) for multi-modal connectivity is a digital platform which seeks to ensure integrated planning and coordinated implementation of infrastructure connectivity projects across the country.

'Critical care vital for outcome of cancer care'

New Delhi: Cancer patients are a special group of patients who need specialised ICU care. The quality of ICU care or critical care can make a big difference in determining the outcome of cancer treatment or life expectancy of patients, said Dr Parveen Kaur, Consultant and Head MICU, Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Institute (RGCI) and president of newly founded Onco Critical Care Society (OCCS).

With a view to promote education and research in the field of onco critical care as a speciality, the first annual conference on Onco Critical Care was organised by Onco Critical Care Society in collaboration with RGCI on August 4. SR

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Neelam Gupta w/o Late Sh. Rajesh Kumar R/o House No. D1B, Prithvi Raj Road, Adarsh Nagar, Delhi-110033 have changed my name from SUMAN GUPTA to NEELAM GUPTA for all the future purposes.

PD(123)A

K.G.'s Medical University U.P., Lucknow EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

EOI No.: 6050/PS/FO/23 Date: 05.08.2023 Applications are invited from interested and potential private partners for Supply, Installation & Maintenance of Surgical Robotic System on Wet Lease Basis on Pay Per Use Model in different departments. Interested agencies may refer detailed EOI at etender.up.nic.in. and short details can be viewed at kgmu.org. Document to be submitted in the Finance Office latest by 04/09/2023. In case of any clarification, you may contact H.O.D., Gen. Surgery, KGMU. (Finance Officer)

CORRIGENDUM
ICICI Bank
 Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No. 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005
 Notices under SARFAESI Act for Loan Account No. LBPNP00005130571, LBPNP00005130574 & LBDEL00005335489 Name of the Borrower Deepak Bawejal/Poomam. Demand Notice dated August 30, 2021, 13(4) Notice dated April 07, 2023, Physical possession dated July 20th, 2023 and also published in The Pioneer + Uttam Hindu dated January 29, 2022(13.2), April 12, 2023(13.4), July 25, 2023(Physical possession). Property address mentioned Khawat no 1760 Khata no 2045 Khasra/Murba no 76 Killa no 29 Shiv Colony Safidon Jind. We wish to mention that inadvertently and unintentionally a typographical error in notices "Khawat no 1760 Khata no 2045 Khasra 176 Killa no 29 Shiv Colony Safidon Jind." We therefore, request you to please read area the same as Khawat no 1760 Khata no 2045 Khasra/Murba no 76 Killa no 29 Shiv Colony Safidon Jind.
 Date: August 05, 2023 Authorised Officer
 Place: Delhi ICICI Bank Limited

PUBLIC NOTICE
 It is informed to the General Public that Ms Amrita Daughter of Lt Col Santokh Singh Doad(Retd) died in a road accident on 17 June 2023. Honda Activa scooter Registration Number HR 26 BT 5318, Color: White which used to be driven by her, is untraceable since her death. If found, please contact mobile number: 9906169000 or email: ramandoad1969@gmail.com.

RATHI STEEL AND POWER LIMITED

CIN: L27109DL1971PLC005905
 Regd. Off.: 24/1, Block A, Mohan Cooperative Industrial Estate, Mathura Road, New Delhi- 110044
 Email ID: investors@rathisteelandalpower.com, Website: www.rathisteelandalpower.com

This is to inform you that pursuant to the Regulation 33 of SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 meeting of the Board of Directors of M/s Rathi Steel and Power Limited is to be held on Saturday the 12th Day of August 2023 at the Registered office of the Company at 4.00 PM to consider and approve following businesses as under:-

ITEM NO.	AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION
Take note and confirm the following:-	
1.	To appoint Chairman of the meeting to call the meeting to order.
2.	To Ensure Quorum of the Meeting
3.	To grant leave of absence, if any.
4.	To take note and confirm the minutes of previous meeting of board of directors of the Company.
Consider and Approve following:-	
5.	To consider and approve Unaudited Financial Results for the nine month ended and Quarter ended on June 30, 2022
6.	Any other businesses with permission of the Chair.
For and on behalf of Board Sd/- (PREM NARAIN VARSHNEY) MANAGING DIRECTOR DIN: 00012709	
Place: New Delhi Date: 05-08-2023	

BJP's Surendran in trouble for asking party to exploit Lord Ganesha's name

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

A call by him to party cadre to exploit the religious sentiments of Hindus has landed BJP Kerala president K Surendran in trouble. A video of his Thursday's speech which went viral since Saturday morning has Surendran asking the party leaders and workers to make use of the reported comment made by A N Shamseer, speaker of the Kerala Legislative Assembly ridiculing Lord Ganesha and stoke the anger among the Hindus.

"In 2019, we could not make political capital out of the resentment among the believers when the Supreme Court ruled in favour of admitting women to the Holy Shrine of Sabarimala. Though we had staged agitations all over Kerala demanding women should not be allowed inside Sabarimala, the CPI-M led Government allowed women to travel to the shrine and worship there. While we were slapped with cases, the Congress managed to win the Lok Sabha seats from the State. This time we should not give up this opportunity," Surendran says in the video.

Shamseer, a CPI-M bigwig and a protégé of Mohammed Riyaz, the new husband of Veena, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan's daughter, told a gathering of students that they should not worship Ganesha who has the head of an elephant and body of human being as it was against scientific temper. While the Hindu organisations and Sangh Parivar elements took strong objection to the comment, the CPI-M deployed the party's publicity machinery to protect Shamseer.

Imran gets 3-yr jail...

From Page 1
 Khan was arrested from his Zaman Park residence in Lahore by the Islamabad police in coordination with the Punjab police after the court verdict, his family said.

A police team headed by Senior Superintendent of Police, Crime Investigation Agency, Malik Liaquat took Khan into custody. A picture of him sitting in a car with Khan also went viral on social media.

Khan was taken by road from Lahore to Attock Jail in the Attock city, PTI spokesperson Zulfi Bokhari said. Police said that he was taken to jail in tight security. "Security has been on high alert on the route leading to jail," police said.

It is the same jail where former premier Nawaz Sharif was kept after his arrest following toppling of his government by General Pervez Musharraf.

After Saturday's verdict, Imran technically stands disqualified from holding any public office for five years under Article 63(1)(h) of the Constitution.

He, however, has the right to appeal the verdict.

Khan's legal team said they would be filing an immediate appeal.

Adhir meets Speaker, LS Secy-Gen...

From Page 1
 "I told the Secretary General to at least get the letter received. He said it was a holiday. What if it is a holiday... there should be some system to receive the letter in emergency situations. He said there is a dak (post) system and asked me to send someone with the letter and order. I sent the letter... an Under Secretary received it. Although he signed, he did not affix the seal," Chowdhury alleged.

He shared the three documents - the notification issued by the Lok Sabha Secretariat in March disqualifying Rahul, the order of the Supreme Court, and the letter he had written to the Speaker requesting Rahul's reinstatement.

"I have done all that is required according to the rules... on behalf of my party..." he said, adding that "the speed with which Rahul was disqualified... his reinstatement should happen with the same speed," regretted the Congress leader.

Chandrayaan inserted into...

From Page 1
 After the manoeuvre on Sunday, there will be three more till August 17, following which the landing module, comprising the lander and rover will break away from the propulsion module. After this, de-orbiting manoeuvres will be carried on the lander before the final descent on moon. According to ISRO, it would attempt soft landing on the Moon's surface on August 23.

Over five moves in the three weeks since the launch on July 14, ISRO has been lifting the Chandrayaan-3 spacecraft into orbits farther and farther away from the Earth. Then, on August 1 in a key manoeuvre - a slingshot move - the spacecraft was sent successfully towards the Moon from Earth's orbit.

Following this trans-lunar injection, the Chandrayaan-3 spacecraft escaped from orbiting the Earth and began following a path that would take it to the vicinity of the moon.

Chandrayaan-3 is a follow-on mission to Chandrayaan-2 to demonstrate end-to-end capability in safe landing and roving on the lunar surface. It consists of

lander and rover configuration.

It comprises an indigenous propulsion module, lander module, and a rover with an objective of developing and demonstrating new technologies required for inter-planetary missions.

The propulsion module will carry the lander and rover configuration till 100 km lunar orbit. The propulsion module has Spectropolarimetry of Habitable Planet Earth (SHAPE) payload to study the spectral and polarimetric measurements of earth from the lunar orbit.

The mission objectives of Chandrayaan-3 are to demonstrate safe and soft landing on the lunar surface, to demonstrate rover roving on the Moon, and to conduct in-situ scientific experiments.

The lander will have the capability to soft land at a specified lunar site and deploy the rover that will carry out in-situ chemical analysis of the Moon's surface during the course of its mobility.

The lander and the rover have scientific payloads to carry out experiments on the lunar surface.

Bulldozers rumble...

From Page 1
 "Curfew is being relaxed on Sunday as well. People can buy essential goods from 9 am to 12 noon," he said.

"These were illegal constructions. Notices were already given to owners of the demolished structures. The owners of some illegal structures were also involved in the violence during the Braj Mandal religious yatra. The

demolition drive will continue," Sub Divisional Magistrate Ashwani Kumar said.

"Today in the district apart from the Nalhar temple area, illegal constructions in Pingawan, village Bisru, village Biwa, Nangal Mubarikpur, Palda Shahpuri, Agon, the area near Sahara Hotel, Adbar Chowk, Nalhar Road, Tiranga Chowk and many other places were

demolished. Similarly, 24 temporary and 1 permanent structures were removed in Tehsola village of Tauru subdivision area," the DC said in a statement.

In the wake of the exodus of migrant workers from Gurugram after the violence, district officials visited a few slum areas and urged the people there to go for their daily work without any fear.

Gurugram Deputy Commissioner Nishant Kumar Yadav interacted with

people near Sector 58 and 70 here as part of the ongoing exercise to build confidence among common people about their safety, along with maintaining law and order.

"The situation here is peaceful now and there is no need to panic," Yadav said.

Teams of Rapid Action Force have been deployed at various places in the district and the Haryana police are trying to arrest all persons involved in anti-social activities, he said.

Delhi Services Bill to be tabled in RS tomorrow

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Central Government is likely to bring the Delhi Services Bill for its consideration and passage in Rajya Sabha on Monday, sources said.

The Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill, 2023 to replace the ordinance on transfers and postings of senior officers in the Delhi government was passed by Lok Sabha on Thursday amid a walkout by the opposition parties.

"The Delhi services bill will come up in Rajya Sabha on Monday. Voting for the passage of the bill will be held the same day in the evening after the conclusion of a discussion on the bill," a source said. Senior Congress leader and Supreme Court lawyer Abhishek Manu Singhvi is likely to initiate the debate from the opposition side, the sources said. Singhvi had represented the Delhi government in the Supreme Court



in the matter related to control of administrative services.

On Friday, some leaders of the INDIA bloc met Leader of the House in Rajya Sabha Piyush Goyal and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi to discuss the way out to end the ongoing impasse on the Manipur issue.

Sources said the opposition members sought the revocation of the suspension of Congress MP Rajani Patil during the meeting and they were indicated that a "sympathetic view" can be taken in her case.

But, AAP MP Sanjay Singh's suspension is unlikely to be revoked, the sources added. They said the government is ready to hold a discussion on the Manipur issue but it is up to Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar to decide the rule under which a discussion could take place.

"The opposition members have been urged to share the draft of their proposal for the discussion on the Manipur issue. They are yet to share the draft. Let's see if it comes on Monday," a source added.

Court to hear Delhi riots arguments in UAPA cases daily from Sept 11

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

All 11 onwards hear arguments on a day-to-day basis in the UAPA cases filed in connection with the alleged conspiracy behind the 2020 north-east Delhi communal riots.

Twenty people, who include activists Sharjeel Imam, Umar Khalid, Khalid Saifi, and former AAP councillor Tahir Hussain, have been booked for their alleged involvement in the conspiracy to incite the riots. Two accused, Suleman Siddiqui and Amanullah, have been declared proclaimed offenders in the case.

"The compliance under Section 207 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (supply to the accused of copy of police report and other documents) qua all the charge sheeted accused persons is complete. Hence, list the matter for arguments on the point of charge on September 11, 2023, onwards for day-to-day hearing," Additional Sessions Judge

Justice awaited



The judge said the Special Public Prosecutor (SPP) will begin the arguments on September 11 and all accused have to appear physically during the hearings.

SPP Amit Prasad will appear on behalf of the Delhi Police. "The investigating officer (IO) concerned shall remain present on the next date of hearing," ASJ Rawat said. He said a copy of the order be sent to the police commissioner

filed its fifth supplementary charge sheet in the case.

The accused have been booked under the anti-terror Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, or UAPA, and provisions of the Indian Penal Code, Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act, and the Arms Act.

The case registered by the crime branch is being probed by the special cell of Delhi Police.

Lynch Sikhs, they have killed our mother, Tytler told mob: Chargesheet

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

"Kill the Sikhs....They have killed our mother," Congress leader Jagdish Tytler shouted, as he came out of a white ambassador car that pulled up in front of Gurudwara Pul Bangash on November 1, 1984. Soon, three people at the Sikh shrine lay sprawled, dead.

The statement is part of a supplementary charge sheet filed against the former Union minister which led to his appearance, for the first time, Saturday before Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Vidhi Gupta Anand as an accused in a case related to the 1984 anti-Sikh riots.

Three people were killed and a gurdwara was set ablaze in the Pul Bangash area in New Delhi on November 1, 1984, a day after the then prime minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her Sikh bodyguards.

One of the statements claims that after alighting from the car, Tytler rebuked his supporters assembled there, saying, "I had completely assured you that nothing would affect (harm) you. You just kill the Sikhs."

"Accused further said that despite this, least number (very few) of Sikhs have been killed due to which he has been put to shame. He also said that there has been only nominal killing in his constituencies (assembly constituencies under his Delhi Sadar Lok Sabha seat) compared to East Delhi and North Delhi, and thereafter he left in a huff," the statement said.

Some of the witnesses claimed though they did not hear what exactly Tytler told the mob, people gathered there "became violent after that (i.e. After the visit of accused) and began to attack the Gurudwara Pul Bangash and set it on fire." Most witnesses said they failed to hear what Tytler told the mob but they saw him alight from the car and make a



speech that triggered the rampage. Another statement claimed that on November 3, 1984 Tytler went to a hospital in the national capital and rebuked a group of people gathered there, saying his instructions had not been followed "faithfully".

"Accused Jagdish Tytler also said that his position has been greatly compromised and lowered in the eyes of central leaders. As per this affidavit, accused told the persons present there that only nominal killing of Sikhs has taken place in his constituency as compared to East Delhi, Outer Delhi Cantt. Etc.

"Tytler also said that he had promised large-scale killing of Sikhs and promised full protection but you (people) have betrayed me (Tytler) and let me down," the charge sheet said, quoting the statement of one of the witnesses. The final report by the CBI said it also included the statements of witnesses who claimed they had not named Tytler, or retracted their statements naming him, because they were "under threat from Tytler".

"In view of the facts and circumstances mentioned above, it is submitted that during investigation sufficient evidence have come on record that the accused Jagdish Tytler was part of the unlawful assembly committing rioting that had assembled near Gurudwara Pul Bangash on November 1, 1984, violating the prohibitory orders.

Kapil Mishra picked as Delhi BJP VP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Controversial BJP leader Kapil Mishra, known for his incendiary tweets and communal remarks, was on Saturday appointed a vice-president of the Delhi unit of the BJP.

Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva, who appointed Mishra, said his name was on the list of the new office bearers of the party announced earlier this week, but it could not be declared due to some reason.

Mishra was under fire in 2020 for an "ultimatum" to the Delhi Police to clear the roads in Delhi, failing which he said he would not listen to the police.

The speech was made during the northeast Delhi riots, in which over 50 people were killed and hundreds injured. A group of lawyers had filed a police complaint against Mishra for his "inciteful tweets" after clashes erupted between protesters against the Citizenship Amendment Act or CAA, and a group supporting the law in northeast Delhi that year.

"Three days' ultimatum for Delhi Police - clear the roads in Jaffrabad and Chand Bagh. After this, don't make us understand. We won't listen to you.

Three days," Mishra had tweeted in Hindi, along with a video of him speaking. The Election Commission had in 2020 asked Twitter to remove a communal tweet by Mishra,



saying criticising protests against the citizenship law in Delhi and referring to "mini-Pakistans" in the city is "highly objectionable" and "appeals to communal feelings".

Mishra had in April lauded the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) decision to erase certain chapters on the Mughal Empire from the class 12 history textbooks.

Alleging that 'thieves' were being referred to as the Mughal rulers, he said that the initiative will shine a light on the 'truth'.

Mishra, a former Minister in the AAP government, joined the Delhi BJP in August 2019 after his differences with party boss Arvind Kejriwal became public.

Known for his provocative speeches on Hindutva ideology, Mishra was not given any organisational responsibility in the Delhi BJP since his joining. He contested the 2020 Delhi Assembly election from the Model Town constituency on a BJP ticket but lost to the AAP's Akhilesh Pati Tripathi.

LG chairs meeting of G-20 preparation

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Lieutenant Governor DVK Saxena on Saturday conducted a comprehensive review of the ongoing civic infrastructure works and the preparedness for the upcoming G-20 Summit in the capital. The meeting was attended by top officials including Chief Secretary, Chairman of NDMC, Vice-Chairman of DDA, and Managing Director of DMRC, among others.

During the meeting, it was noted that the Public Works Department (PWD) has significantly accelerated its works after being instructed to operate in a mission mode.

Additionally, other preparations related to the event have been on schedule. However, some outstanding works, such as the disposal of construction and demolition (C&D) waste across the city and the condi-



tion of pavements and footpaths on 61 roads linked to the Summit, were highlighted for attention.

The LG, who personally inspected 25 different road stretches and locations, emphasized the urgent need to address the disposal of C&D waste, removal of encroachments, and horticultural enhancements. His hands-on approach has already led to visible improvements since his inspections began on July 11,

2023. Authorities from DDA, NDMC, MCD, and Metro have also stepped up efforts to ensure cleanliness at their respective stations and have removed posters and graffiti from pillars and structures.

Eye-catching wall art has been displayed by various agencies on flyovers, poles, and pillars, enhancing the city's visual appeal. To prepare for potential heavy rainfall during the event, PWD and MCD have

been directed to implement a contingency plan to deal with waterlogging. The deployment of tractor-mounted heavy-duty pumps, suction machines, and spray jets will be on standby to tackle any emergencies.

Regarding the issue of encroachments and C&D waste, authorities have been instructed to regularly monitor the stretches that have been cleared and prevent any recurrence. Strict penalties will be imposed on violators to deter future encroachments.

Another persistent problem addressed in the meeting was the defacement of public property, including walls, poles, and metro pillars, by commercial and political entities using posters and graffiti. District Monitoring Coordinators have been empowered to take decisive actions with zero tolerance toward such activities.

Tremors jolt Capital, parts of north India

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 5.8 magnitude earthquake struck the Hindu Kush region in Afghanistan which shook parts of north India, including the national capital, on Saturday night.

The tremor hit the mountainous regions of Afghanistan at 9:31 pm and residents of the national capital region felt the tremors soon after. "The quake hit twice at around 9:30 pm," said



Preeti Shankar, who resides in a high-rise apartment in Noida on the eastern fringes of the national capital. The epicentre of the

earthquake was located at 36.38 degrees north on the latitude and 70.77 degrees east on the longitude in the Hindukush region of Afghanistan, the National Centre for Seismology said. Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, in a tweet, said, "Earthquake tremors have also been felt in Delhi. Hope everyone is safe."

Hey Delhi people, We hope you all are safe! For any emergency help, dial 112," the Delhi Police said in a tweet.



Victims of the 1984 anti-Sikh riots stage a protest against Congress leader Jagdish Tytler outside the Rouse Avenue Court, in New Delhi on Saturday. Tytler on Saturday appeared before the court in connection with the 1984 anti-Sikh riots case

Butcher kills husband of love interest

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 31-year-old slaughterer was arrested for allegedly killing the husband of his one-sided love interest in north Delhi's Sadar Bazar area, police said on Saturday. Mohammad Aamir, a resident of Ahata-Kidara, was arrested for killing a man named Sameer during a drunken brawl, they said.

His accomplice Mohammad Rizwan was earlier arrested in connection with the incident which took place on Tuesday.

Police on Tuesday got a call about a man lying in an injured state in a pool of blood on Chamelian Road in Sadar Bazar area, said an officer. When they reached spot they found that man was stabbed in the right side of neck with a broken bottle by his side. They rushed him to Bara Hindu Rao Hospital, where he succumbed due to excessive bleeding, they said.

The victim's identity was revealed when someone called him on his phone. According to police, the man turned to be Mohammad Sameer, aged 32, a resident of Sultanpuri. It appears that he was hit by broken liquor bottle found near spot with stains of blood, the officer said.

Fresh spell of rain in city, minimum temp 25.2 deg C

New Delhi: There was a fresh spell of rain in the national capital on Saturday morning and the minimum temperature settled at 25.2 degrees Celsius, two notches below the season's average, the India Meteorological Department said. The department predicted generally cloudy skies with moderate rainfall during day. It said maximum temperature is likely to settle around 34 degrees Celsius. SR



Bikers rob woman of gold pendant in Kishangarh

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Two unidentified men allegedly snatched a 45-year-old woman's gold pendant when she was out for a morning walk in southwest Delhi's Kishangarh on Saturday, police said.

After a PCR call was received regarding the incident, police personnel reached the spot near Munirka Vihar, Kishangarh and met the com-

plainant, Anjali Mathur, a resident of Vasant Kunj, a senior officer said. The victim told police that she had come for a morning walk around 9 am.

When she reached near Munirka Vihar, Pal Dairy, two motorcycle-borne unidentified men came there and tried to snatch her gold chain, the officer said. Though they could not snatch the chain, they managed to take the pendant and fled the spot, police said.

Youth wanted in gangrape case in city nabbed from UP

New Delhi: A 23-year-old man wanted in an alleged gang rape case of a minor girl has been arrested from Mainpuri in Uttar Pradesh, police said on Saturday.

The minor was allegedly gang-raped by two men on June 23 and also by three others the same day when she was returning home after the first assault, they added. The girl had alleged that on the day of the two incidents, she was first physically assaulted and gang-

raped by two persons known to her — Mohammad Miraj and a juvenile, a senior police officer said.

While returning home, she met her maternal uncle and told him about the incident who asked two other persons — Karan Singh and a juvenile to take her home. The duo, however, took her to the house of one Kamal Singh where the three of them allegedly gang-raped her, the officer said.

Staff Reporter

Couple arrested for financial fraud

New Delhi: A couple was arrested from Maharashtra for allegedly mortgaging a property with different financial institutions using forged documents and availing loans, police said on Saturday.

A case was registered on the complaint of an assistant manager of a finance services company alleging that Anjana Jain, proprietor of a fashion outlet, and Jitender Jain, proprietor of a sweet shop, had got sanctioned a loan of Rs 2.6 crore against their residential property from the complainant company in 2014, a senior police officer said. They mortgaged their property in

Bhajanpura. The documents were verified and the loan was disbursed. In September 2016, the complainant came to know that the alleged party has also availed of loans from others by mortgaging the same property, the officer said.

During the investigation, the complainant stated that the alleged people availed a loan from them on the basis of a forged property ownership chain and also mortgaged the same property with another finance company as well, Deputy Commissioner of Police (EOW) Vikram Porwal said.

Staff Reporter

Amid eye flu surge, docs warn against irrational use of steroid drops

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Amid a surge in conjunctivitis and eye flu cases in the national capital, doctors have warned against the irrational use of steroid eye drops, saying it may bring temporary relief but can do more harm in the long run.

Early detection and use of appropriate therapies are key to expeditious resolution of the disease and can help minimise potential harmful effects or transmission of untreated conjunctivitis, Dr J S Bhalla, a senior consultant eye surgeon at the DDU hospital said.

Conjunctivitis in the present epidemic is a self-limiting disease and does not require



antibiotic treatment in all cases, he said, adding that hand and facial hygiene are very important to prevent its spread. There is no approved treatment but topical corticosteroids may be helpful in a subgroup of patients with adenoviral conjunctivitis and may prevent

scarring in severe cases. "It should be noted, however, that treatment guidelines suggest caution in the use of corticosteroids because they can potentially prolong infection," Bhalla said. Dr J S Titiyal, chief of the RP Centre at AIIMS, said the condition is usually caused by

viruses, which are highly contagious and spread quickly. He said the RP Centre found adenovirus to be the causative agent in all cases tested. Among these, nearly 20-30 per cent of cases have a positive bacterial culture as well, pointing towards superadded bacterial infection, Titiyal added.

"The viral infection of the eyes is self-limiting and one can recover in one to two weeks. However, secondary bacterial infection may rarely occur and delay recovery," he said. "In such cases, use of antibiotic eye drops is advised."

However, Bhalla said primary or urgent care physicians may prescribe antibiotics without making an informed dif-

ferential diagnosis, adding that misdiagnosis of viral etiologies as bacterial conjunctivitis and the resulting inappropriate use of antibiotics can occur in as much as 50 per cent of cases. This can lead to inappropriate antibiotic prescriptions and the risk of antibiotic resistance, the doctor added.

Both Bhalla and Titiyal warned against the indiscriminate use of steroid eye drops, saying over-the-counter steroids should not be used unless advised by an ophthalmologist for specific indications. "Since it provides rapid relief of symptoms due to its anti-inflammatory properties, patients feel symptomatically better.

3rd meeting of Opp block in Mumbai on Aug 31, Sept 1

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI/MUMBAI

The third meeting of the Opposition bloc India will take place in Mumbai on August 31 and September 1. Maharashtra Congress leader Nana Patole and Shiv Sena (Uddhav) leader Sanjay Raut on Saturday informed that the procedure for sending invites and other arrangements have been discussed with the local leaders including the MVA alliance partners Shiv Sena (Uddhav) and NCP (Sharad Pawar) in the meeting held on this regard.



Chavan and Ashok Chavan, Congress Legislature Party chief Balasaheb Thorat, Leader of Opposition in the Assembly Vijay Wadetiwar and Congress state unit chief Nana Patole. The meeting now holds more significance after the Supreme Court has stayed Rahul Gandhi's conviction in a 2019 defamation case over his Modi surname remark, restoring his status as an MP and he is likely to be back in Parliament in this ensuing Monsoon session. "Sharad Pawar and Uddhav Thackeray are with us and that is important. Three parties (NCP, Congress, Shiv Sena (UBT)) are

together in this," Patole said as both the parties have split and now part of NDA and stakeholders in the incumbent Maharashtra government. With the dates finalised a letter would be submitted to the Maharashtra government in light of the meeting, seeking protocols to be put in place as several chief ministers, former Union Ministers are to attend the meet at Mumbai. Meanwhile, Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut said Uddhav Thackeray will host visiting opposition leaders, including five chief ministers, for dinner on August 31. The two-day deliberations, which will be held at Grand Hyatt in

the suburbs, will begin in the evening of August 31 and from 10am on September 1. The first meeting of the opposition bloc took place in Patna on June 23, and was convened by Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and coordinated by RJD leader Deputy CM Tejaswi Yadav. The second meeting took place in Bengaluru on July 18, in which the alliance of 26 opposition parties was named I.N.D.I.A (Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance). The mega alliance was formed to take on the ruling BJP-led National Democratic Alliance in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

Doval in Jeddah to discuss Ukraine resolution

NEWS SERVICE/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/JEDDAH

In the backdrop of the ongoing Ukraine conflict, National Security Adviser(NSA)Ajit Doval is in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia for talks on finding ways to end it. He is among 30 NSAs participating in the high-level parleys for two days ending Sunday. However, Russia is not amongst the invitees. India has all along maintained that dialogue and diplomacy is the way out to end the war now on for the last more than a year and half. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also said, "India is ready to do whatever it can for a peaceful resolution of the conflict."



Doval arrived in Jeddah on Saturday and welcomed at the Jeddah airport by Indian Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Suhel Khan and Consul General Mohammed Shahid Alam. "Shri Ajit Doval, NSA arrived in Jeddah to take part in National Security Advisers' meeting on Ukraine. He was welcomed at Jeddah Airport by Ambassador Dr Suhel Khan and Consul General Mohd Shahid Alam," the Indian Embassy in Riyadh said on Twitter. The meeting is taking place in Jeddah to discuss

include Chile, Egypt, the European Union, Indonesia, Mexico, Poland, the United Kingdom, the United States, China and Zambia besides others, reports indicated. The absence of Russia is strange since Saudi has always maintained good relations with China and Russia. China on Friday said it will send a team of representatives to Saudi Arabia for the summit. "China stands ready to work with the international community to continue to play a constructive role in seeking a political settlement of the Ukraine crisis," said Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin in a statement. As per the statement, Special Representative of the Chinese Government on Eurasian Affairs Li Hui will lead the Chinese delegations at the event. China's participation is significant since it has been a longtime ally of Russia in war.

India, Nepal review bilateral relations during telephonic conversation



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India and Nepal on Saturday reviewed the entire spectrum of their bilateral ties during telephonic conversation between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Nepal Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda'. Giving details of the talks later, ministry of external affairs (MEA) said the two leaders reviewed various aspects of the India-Nepal bilateral cooperation and followed-up on discussions held during Prime Minister Prachanda's recent visit to India from May 31 to June three, so as to advance the bilateral partnership and to further strengthen the deep bonds of friendship between the two countries. Nepal, a close and friendly neighbor, is a key partner in India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy. This telephonic conversation continues the tradition of high level exchanges between the two countries, MEA said.

NIA arrests 1 for IED test in ISIS Maha module case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In its sixth arrest in the ISIS Maharashtra module case, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Saturday took into custody one Aakif Ateeque Nachan for his involvement in the fabrication and testing of Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) for commission of terrorist acts and arranging a hideout for two other terror operatives.



Aakif was found actively involved in promotion of the terror related activities of the ISIS, a designated Foreign Terrorist Organisation, in collaboration with four other accused, namely Zulfikar Ali Barodawala, Mohammed Imran Khan, Mohammed Yunus Saki and Abdul Kadir Pathan (all arrested recently by ATS Pune), along with some other suspects," the NIA said in a statement. Imran Khan and Mohammed Yunus Saki, members of 'Sufa terrorist gang' were absconding and had been declared 'most wanted' by the NIA in a case relating to recovery of explosives from a car in Rajasthan in April 2022. The NIA nabbed Aakif after a series

of raids in Borivali, Tehsil Bhiwandi in Thane. Several incriminating materials, such as electronic gadgets and documents were also seized during the raids, the NIA said. Besides assembly of IEDs and purchasing materials and components for the fabrication of IEDs, Aakif had facilitated the stay of Imran and Yunus at a house in Kondhwa, Pune. The accused had organised and participated in bomb-making workshops in Kondhwa in 2022 and had also been involved in preparation of a demo IED and conduct of a controlled explosion at this location, it said. As per NIA investigations,

Munnar Villa Vista Pvt Ltd assets worth ₹2.53 cr seized

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has taken possession of immovable properties having book value of Rs 2.53 crore belonging to Munnar Villa Vista Pvt Ltd, on money laundering charges in the Popular Front of India and others case.



as within the country and to generate funds for PFI to finance its radical activities. The project was being developed by forming a company in the name of Munnar Villa Vista Pvt. Ltd. (MVVPL). ED investigation further revealed infusion of large volumes of unaccounted cash in the project, subscription of shares of MVVPL in cash in the name of ghost shareholders, transfer of shares of MVVPL without any consideration, and bogus transfers made to other companies without any supply of goods or services. As a result of ED investigation into the money laundering activities of MVVPL and its key persons, total 'Proceeds of Crime' to the tune of Rs 21.9 crore were quantified. Prosecution complaint or charge sheet was filed before the Special Court of PMLA cases, Lucknow on May 6. Charges have been framed in the case and trial is underway.

The ED had issued a Provisional Attachment Order in respect of the properties on January 7 that was confirmed by the Adjudicating Authority on June 30. The ED initiated investigation on the basis of an FIR and charge sheet filed by NIA, Kochi before Special Court for Trial of NIA cases, Ernakulam, Kerala. According to the FIR and related charge sheet, a group of PFI / SDPI (Socialist Democratic Party of India) activists entered into a criminal conspiracy to impart training to their cadres in use of explosives and weapons and organized a terrorist camp at Narath in Kannur District. Subsequently more FIRs against members of PFI and its related entities were taken within the ambit of Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) investigations in the case. The ED said its investigation revealed that PFI leaders and members associated with overseas entities were developing a residential project Munnar Villa Vista Project (MVVP) at Munnar, Kerala with a motive to launder money collected from foreign countries as well

ED raids 9 places linked to TN MLA in job scam

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Saturday said it has conducted searches at nine locations linked to Tamil Nadu MLA Thiru Senthil Balaji who was arrested in a cash-for-jobs scam and is currently in Central Prison, Puzhal, under judicial custody.

search operation, the ED said. However, Shanthi was not present at the location. Further scrutiny of CCTV footage and investigation revealed that the bags had been handed over to the driver Thiru Shiva. When Shiva's house was searched, he had already absconded and turned off his mobile phone upon hearing about the searches at Shanthi's house, it said. During the search at Shiva's residence, cash amounting to Rs 22 lakh and unaccounted valuables worth Rs 16.6 lakh along with unexplained property documents for 60 land parcels has been found, it said. Shanthi, who is a housewife, did not cooperate and participate in the search proceedings. ED investigation revealed that she has no source of income. Shiva, in his statement, admitted that Shanthi gave him the bags out of fear that incriminating details would be discovered. Based on the ongoing investigation, it appears that seized property and cash belong to ST Saminathan, a close associate of Balaji. Further investigation is under progress, it added.

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

ICICI Bank Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005

The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Sumit Kumar Sadh/ Nisha Sadh/ LBDEL00003535512	Flat No-1301, 13th Floor, "Sharanam", Tower K, Gh 02, Sector 107, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Noida/ August 02, 2023	April 18, 2023 Rs. 51,54,870/-	Delhi/ NCR
2.	Manoj Kumar Gupta/ Bhagwati Prasad/ LBFD00001636565	H.No.C-27, Rakesh Marg, Ghaziabad/ August 03, 2023	April 06, 2023 Rs. 75,25,829/-	Delhi/ NCR
3.	Tanu / Narendra Kumar/ LBNOD00005176382	Flat No-A-1711, 17th Floor, Tower A, "Kw Srishti", Rajnagar Extension Ghaziabad/ August 03, 2023	March 09, 2023 Rs. 21,97,600/-	Delhi/ NCR
4.	Devender Shahi/ Ruchi Mahajan/ LBNOD00001942563	Flat No. 703, Dwarka 4, 7th Floor, Gulmohar Garden, Ph- 2, Nh- 58, Raj Nagar Ext, Ghaziabad/ August 03, 2023	March 09, 2023 Rs. 15,53,163/-	Delhi/ NCR
5.	Rakesh/ Paras Sharma/ LBNOD0000147580	Flat No.10105, 1st Floor, Block L, Gaur City 7th Avenue, Plot No-GH-01, Sector-4, Greater Noida/ August 03, 2023	March 07, 2023 Rs. 5,24,002/-	Delhi/ NCR
6.	Vijay Thappa/ Neena Joshi/ LBDEL00001193874	Plot No.194, Mig Type, First Floor Without Roof Rights, Shalimar Garden, Extn-I, Subham Apartments-VIII, Pasonda, Pergana Loni Ghaziabad/ August 03, 2023	April 29, 2023 Rs. 8,48,228/-	Delhi/ NCR
7.	Bhawna Shukla/ Mamta Shukla/ LBNOD00004932614/ LBNOD00005244584	Flat No.12A01, 13th Floor, Migsun Villaasa, Sun-3, Plot No-GH-1B(2)Sector-ETA-2, Greater Noida/ August 03, 2023	February 28, 2022 Rs. 11,24,411/-	Delhi/ NCR
8.	Suresh Kumar/ Sunita/ Manoj Kumar Aryal/ LBDEL00000990720	Plot No Niti Khand 1/ 46 Tehsil & District Indrapuram Ghaziabad/ August 03, 2023	April 28, 2023 Rs. 4,10,749/-	Delhi/ NCR
9.	Azhar Hussain/ Jasmine/ LBGUR00004670758	Flat No.1202, 12th Floor, Tower Valencia, Oasis Grandstand, Plot No. Gh-01, Ts-01 B, Dsector- 22d, Yamuna Expressway, Gautam Budh Nagar, Uttar Pradesh / August 03, 2023	January 31, 2020 Rs. 19,97,259/-	Delhi/ NCR
10.	Mukesh Kumar/ Suman Kumari/ LBDEL00004976018	Shop No. 0-605, 6th Floor Gaur City Centre, Shops Plot No C1 A Gh 01, At Gaurcity Sector 4 Greater Noida/ August 03, 2023	March 09, 2023 Rs. 21,15,941/-	Delhi/ NCR
11.	Anil Kumar Chananra/ Rajni Bala/ LBGHZ00001461837	Flat No. Gf-1, Ground Floor, Without Roof Rights, Plot No.-93, Sector-6, Vaishali, Ghaziabad/ August 03, 2023	March 07, 2023 Rs. 5,09,077/-	Delhi/ NCR
12.	Jai Prakash Pandey/ Shiv Kumari Pandey/ LBDEL00001913727	Plot No. 1/ 98 , Mig, Ground Floor, Sec-1, Vaishali, Ghaziabad/ August 03, 2023	April 06, 2023 Rs. 10,54,291/-	Delhi/ NCR

The above-mentioned borrower(s)/ guarantor(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Date : August 05, 2023
Place : Delhi/NCR

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

NOTICE

I, Raman Kumar S/o Des Raj R/o Said Tehsil: Hiranagar, District:Kathua have applied for correction of his son name in the service documents. In all other documents such as qualification certificate, Aadhar Card and all other relevant documents my son name was written as Bansh Chungotra which is the correct name. I am applying for correction in my son name which was wrongly mentioned has Vansh Chungotra instead of Bansh Chungotra. Now I am applying for correction. Objection if any may convey to concern authority DSC Department/ Armed Forces within 7 seven days from the publication of this notice.

PUBLIC NOTICE
Mr. Anup Suri S/o Mr. Ram Swaroop Suri is the owner of the DDA Built-Up Flat No. 634 On Ground Floor, Sector-A, Pocket-C, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi-70 ("Property") and has lost, thus unable to trace various ownership documents (Allocation Letter, Fifth and Final Demand Letter, Possession Letter, NCC for Electric & Water connections, all payment Bank Challans etc.) in respect of the said Property. If any person is having any objection against the ownership claims of Mr. Anup Suri over the said Property, he/She/they should file the objection, only in writing, before the undersigned in writing within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which it will be assumed that no third party claims/objections exists challenging ownership of Mr. Anup Suri over the said Property. Further, in case original documents as mentioned above are found by anyone, the same should be returned to the undersigned. Deepak Dahiya, Advocate, Legal Impenials, Plot No. 11, First Floor, Local Shopping Complex, Pocket B1, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi - 110070. Email: info@legallmpenials.com, Mobile Phones: 9540233456, 9560223456

Rajnath inaugurates Durand Cup

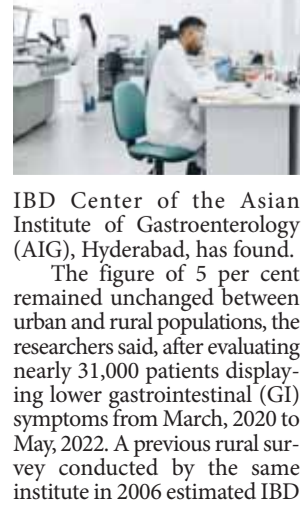
New Delhi: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday inaugurated the 132nd edition of Durand Cup for football in Kokrajhar, Assam. It marked the beginning of the annual football competition for the first time in the Assamese city. The tournament is organised by the Armed Forces and supported by Assam government. Addressing the enthusiastic crowd at the Sai Stadium, Rajnath complimented the efforts of the Armed Forces and Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) for creating a positive environment in Kokrajhar which resulted in the event



being organised in the city for the first time. He commended the people of the Northeast for their excitement and love for football, terming 'the beautiful game' as not just a sport, but an emotion. Stating that Assam has produced many football talents in recent times, Rajnath exuded confidence that the Durand Cup will encourage the youth to join the sport with renewed vigour. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma spoke at length about the rich sports culture of the region and extended his best wishes to all participating teams. PNS

Urbanisation intensifies IBD in India: Lancet

New Delhi: Urbanisation has aggravated the prevalence of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) in India, increasing to more than 5 per cent compared to 0.1 per cent in 2006, according to a study published in The Lancet. IBD is a chronic illness characterized by symptoms varying from bloody diarrhea, weight loss, fever, fatigue, abdominal pain to anemia, joint pain, skin problems among others. IBD accounted for more than 5 per cent of patients presenting lower gastrointestinal (GI) symptoms from March, 2020 to May, 2022. A previous rural survey conducted by the same institute in 2006 estimated IBD



prevalence at 0.1 per cent, the study said. Urbanisation could be a likely cause behind the trend, say the researchers, citing Asian countries like Japan and Korea which have reported a rising prevalence, and both of which experienced rapid industrialisation after World War II. The last two decades have seen an increasing incidence and prevalence of IBD in the Asia-Pacific region and that India appeared to be in an accelerated industrialisation phase, with a rapidly increasing IBD incidence, they said in the study. If the trend continued, then the number of affected could likely exceed those in the West in the next decade, and

this could have "significant implications for healthcare policy and expenditure in the region," they wrote in the study. "With the advent of globalization, IBD made its entry into the developing world and today we are in the similar situation where the west was two decades back. The most problematic thing about the incidence of IBD especially in India is the age group that is getting affected and it is the active, working population between 20 - 40 years who are getting diagnosed more frequently," Dr. Rupa Banerjee, Director, IBD Center, AIG Hospitals and Principal Author of the study said. PNS

Imran asks supporters 'not to sit silent'

PTI ■ LAHORE

Pakistan's ousted prime minister Imran Khan on Saturday in a pre-recorded video said that his arrest was "expected" and asked his supporters "not to sit silent" and stand up for their rights and freedom.

The 70-year-old Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman was arrested from his Zaman Park residence here after the Islamabad trial court convicted him in the Toshakhana case and sentenced him to three-year imprisonment.

In a pre-recorded statement on X, formerly known as Twitter, Khan said, "By the time this video message reaches you, I would be arrested and in jail...which is why I have a request...an appeal to all of you...you should not sit at home in silence. These earnest efforts of mine are not for me but for my people, my community, for you. I am doing it for you. I am doing it for the good fortune of your children."

"If you will not stand for your rights, you will live a life of slavery, and mind you, slaves do not have a life," he said.

Freedom, the former prime

TIMELINE OF TOSHA KHANA CASE



August 2022: National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf sent the Toshakhana case against Khan to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in accordance with the Articles of the Constitution.

September 19, 2022: ECP reserved judgment in the case.

October 21, 2022: The ECP ruled that Khan made "false statements and incorrect declarations" about the gifts and disqualified him under the Constitution.

November 21, 2022: The ECP moved a session court in Islamabad for criminal proceedings against Khan.

May 10, 2023: The trial court indicted Khan.

July 4, 2023: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) overturned the trial court's ruling on the maintainability of the case and directed it to rehear the petitioner and decide the matter within seven days.

July 8, 2023: Judge Humayun Dilawar declared the Toshakhana case against Khan as maintainable.

August 2, 2023: The trial court rejected the list of witnesses presented by Khan.

August 4, 2023: Islamabad High Court Chief Justice Aamer Farooq referred the matter back to the trial court with a direction to re-examine the jurisdiction and any procedural lapse in the filing of the complaint by the Election Commission.

August 5, 2023: Judge Dilawar found Khan guilty of "corrupt practices" in the Toshakhana case and sent the PTI chief to jail for three years.

minister said, doesn't come on a platter.

"They (the military establishment and the Shehbaz Sharif-led government) want to enslave you, but you have to stand up for your rights and freedom," he said, urging people to exercise their voting rights to remove the corrupt government in the next elections.

Pakistan is likely to have general elections in the coming months as the current National Assembly's term will end on August 12.

In the tweet accompanying the video, Khan said his arrest was expected, so he recorded the message before his arrest.

"It is one more step in fulfilling the London Plan (made by PML-N supreme Nawaz Sharif) but I want my party workers to remain peaceful, steadfast and strong. We bow before no one but Allah who is Al Haq. We believe in La ilaha ilallah," he said in the tweet.

Earlier on May 9, Pakistan saw unprecedented nationwide anti-government protests by PTI supporters following Khan's arrest by paramilitary Rangers in a corruption case. He was later released on bail. Dozens of military instal-

lations and government buildings, including the military headquarters in Rawalpindi, were damaged or torched during the riots.

Over 100 vehicles of police and other security agencies were set on fire. After the May 9 violence, the police backed by the military launched a crackdown on the PTI and arrested 10,000 party workers, including women. Over 100 have been handed over to the military for their trial under the Army Act.

The PTI contests that its members were not involved in the attacks, but the government and military reject the claims and say they have "irrefutable evidence" of their involvement.

Khan is also facing numerous cases related to attacks on military installations. Currently, he is facing more than 150 cases related to terrorism, murder and blasphemy.

Khan was ousted from power in April last year after losing a no-confidence vote in his leadership, which he alleged was part of a US-led conspiracy targeting him because of his independent foreign policy decisions on Russia, China and Afghanistan. The US has repeatedly dismissed his allegations.

No 'major hurdle' left in holding polls: Pak analyst

PTI ■ LAHORE

Imran Khan's conviction and his three-year jail term in a corruption case have cleared a "major hurdle" for the ruling PML-N and the military establishment, who appear to be on the same page, to hold the elections, a leading political analyst said on Saturday.

Former Pakistan prime minister Khan, 70, was arrested from his Zaman Park home in Lahore on Saturday shortly after an Islamabad trial court found him guilty of "corrupt practices" in the Toshakhana corruption case and sentenced him to three-year imprisonment.

The case alleges that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief "deliberately concealed" details of the gifts he retained from the Toshakhana, a repository where presents handed to government officials from foreign officials are kept, during his time as the prime minister and proceeds from their reported sales.

From political analysts to politicians of the mainstream parties, there has been a discussion in Pakistan in recent weeks

that the general elections which are due in October/November will only be held once Khan is sent to jail, making it easier for the military establishment to get desired results (in the polls) and install a set up of its choice.

Political analyst Hasan Askari Rizvi told PTI that after the arrest of Khan, there seems to be no reason left to delay the polls.

"Both the ruling PMLN and the military establishment appear to be on the same page," he said. The elections may be delayed for a couple of months because of the census issue, he said, adding that otherwise no other "major hurdle" is left.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif recently said that elections will be held under the digital census of 2023.

Senior PTI leader Mussarat Cheema said Khan was arrested to meet the demand of the PML-N, especially its chief organiser Maryam Nawaz who had set this condition for going into polls.

"Today, justice was slaughtered by disqualifying and convicting a national hero (Imran Khan) in a phoney case. This

is what Maryam Nawaz has long been demanding - a level playing field to go into elections," she said in a tweet.

A senior PML-N leader in Punjab told PTI that Khan's arrest has paved the way for general elections.

"There was an apprehension both in the establishment and PML-N that as long as Khan is a free man, it will not be easy to contain him in polls. Therefore, his arrest was a prerequisite to the polls...otherwise delay was imminent," he said on the condition of anonymity. Columnist Nadeem Farooq Paracha linked the dramatic rise and fall of Khan with his style of politics attached to the powerful military establishment.

"The so-called 'Imran Khan Project' has been systematically dismantled by the same army institution that had first launched it with great fanfare in 2011," he said.

He added the cricketer-turned-politician has been networking with former military personnel since the days when he formed a lobby with the former ISI chief Hamid Gul in 1994.

Thousands evacuated as more floods hit northeast China

Taipei (AP)

Rain continued to pelt northeastern China in the wake of Typhoon Doksuri on Saturday, as authorities reported more fatalities and missing people while evacuating thousands more. One person died and five went missing in the city of Shulan in Jilin province, which has seen five straight days of rainfall, according to state media.

Over 14,300 people were evacuated from the city of more than 700,000, according to the local disaster relief agency. State news agency China News Service showed images of waterlogged streets around homes and factories. The average precipitation in the

city had reached 111.7 mm (4.4 inches) by Friday afternoon.

China is struggling with record-breaking rainfall in some areas while others suffer scorching summer heat and drought that threatens crops. The heavy rains - remnants of Typhoon Doksuri - have battered northern China since late July, disrupting the lives of millions. Flooding near Beijing and in neighbouring Hebei province this week killed at least 22 people. In northeastern Heilongjiang province, which is known as China's "great northern granary," rain inundated farms and flooded streets, leading to the evacuation of thousands.

Ukrainian drones hit Russian tanker

AP ■ KYIV

Ukrainian drones hit a Russian tanker in the Black Sea near Crimea late on Friday night, according to Russian officials and video circulating on social media.

The strike was the second sea attack involving drones in one day, after Ukraine struck a major Russian port earlier on Friday in an attack that underlined Kyiv's growing naval capabilities as the Black Sea becomes an increasingly important battleground in the war.

The attacks follow Russian strikes on Ukrainian ports after Moscow nearly three weeks ago withdrew from a key grain-export agreement that allowed

Ukraine to sell millions of tons of grain on world markets.

"The Sig tanker...suffered a hole in the engine room near the waterline on the starboard side, presumably as a result of a sea drone attack," Russia's Federal Agency for Marine and River Transport wrote on Telegram, adding that there were no casualties among the 11 crew members.

Vladimir Rogov, a Kremlin-installed official in Ukraine's partially occupied southern Zaporizhzhia region, said several members of the ship's crew were wounded because of broken glass.

An official with Ukraine's Security Service confirmed to The Associated Press that the service was behind the attack

on the tanker, which was transporting fuel for Russian forces.

A sea drone, filled with 450 kilograms (992 pounds) of TNT, was used for the attack, added the official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorised to give official statements.

Without specifying that Ukraine was responsible for the drone strike, Vasyl Malyuk, who leads Ukraine's Security Service, said that "such special operations are conducted in the territorial waters of Ukraine and are completely legal."

Any such explosions, he said, are "an absolutely logical and effective step with regard to the enemy."

The attack briefly halted traffic on the Kerch Bridge, the

19-kilometre (12-mile) bridge linking Moscow-annexed Crimea to Russia, as well as ferry transport.

Tugboats were deployed to assist the tanker, which is under United States sanctions for helping provide jet fuel to Russian forces fighting in Syria, according to Russia's Tass news agency.

Ukraine's earlier strike on Novorossiysk halted maritime traffic for a few hours and marked the first time a commercial Russian port has been targeted in the nearly 18-month-old conflict.

The port has a naval base, shipbuilding yards and an oil terminal, and is key for exports. It lies about 110 kilometres (about 60 miles) east of Crimea.

WORLD BRIEFS

JUDGE ARRESTED ON SUSPICION OF KILLING WIFE

Santa Ana: A Southern California judge has been arrested on suspicion of killing his wife in the couple's home, authorities said on Friday. Orange County Superior Court Judge Jeffrey Ferguson was arrested late Thursday after police received reports of a shooting at the home and found the judge's wife, Sheryl Ferguson, shot inside, said Anaheim police Sergeant Jon McClintock. She was pronounced dead at the scene in the upscale neighbourhood of Anaheim Hills. The 72-year-old judge was arrested and taken to jail. He is being held on USD 1 million bail and is expected to appear in court in Santa Ana, California, on Monday. He has not yet been formally charged. McClintock said one other person was at the home at the time but declined to say who notified police of the shooting.

FUNERAL HOME OFFERS PINK COFFINS WITH BARBIE LININGS

San Salvador: A funeral home in El Salvador has taken Barbie mania to an extreme, offering pink coffins with Barbie linings. It's all designed so you can be a Barbie fan till the day you die - and even after that. The pink metal coffins are on sale at the Alpha and Omega Funeral Home in the city of Ahuachapán, near the border with Guatemala. Owner Isaac Villegas said on Friday he had already offered the option of pink coffins before the July premiere of the Barbie movie. But the craze that swept Latin America convinced him to decorate the cloth linings of the coffins with pictures of the doll. The coffins are also decorated with little white stars.

IDAHO SCHOOL BUS FILLED WITH TEEN CRASHES

Boise: A school bus carrying teenage campers rolled over on a winding Idaho highway on Friday afternoon, injuring 11 people, the Idaho State Police said. Seven of those hurt had critical injuries and four had non-critical injuries, according to an ISP news release. The Boise County Coroner's office had not received any reports of fatalities as of 5:45 pm, coroner's investigator Noah Webster said. The bus was carrying about 30 campers and staff back to Boise from the Treasure Valley YMCAs camp at Horsethief Reservoir. All of the teens on the bus were between 13 and 18 years old, according to ISP. They were all taken to area hospitals to be checked out, the ISP said.

FREDDIE MERCURY'S ADORED INDIAN MINIATURE PAINTING

London: An Indian miniature painting dating back to the 16th century is among over 1,400 lots unveiled for a new exhibition-cum-sale of British singer-songwriter Freddie Mercury's treasured belongings by Sotheby's auction house in London. The Mughal folio from an 'Akbarnama' depicting a prince on horseback with his entourage is priced between GBP 30,000 and 50,000 and is said to be reflective of the flamboyant artist's Indian Parsi ancestry.

Crowd tosses chairs, pounds cars in streamer giveaway in NY

AP ■ NEW YORK

A crowd of thousands that packed Manhattan's Union Square for a popular livestreamer's hyped giveaway got out of hand on Friday afternoon, with some clambering on vehicles, hurling chairs and throwing punches, leaving police struggling to rein in the chaos.

Aerial TV news footage showed a surging, tightly packed crowd running through the streets, scaling structures in the park and snarling traffic. Shouting teenagers swung objects at car windows, threw paint cans and set off fire extinguishers. Some people

climbed on a moving vehicle, falling off as it sped away. Others pounded on or climbed atop city buses.

By 5:30 pm, police officers in growing numbers had regained control of much of the area, but small skirmishes were still breaking out, with young people knocking over barricades and throwing bottles and even a flowerpot at officers. Police were seen wrestling people to the ground and chasing them down the street.

Police planned to charge the streamer, Kai Cenat, with inciting a riot, NYPD Chief of Department Jeffrey Madreddy said in the evening. Officers arrested 65 people, including 30



juveniles. A number of people were injured, including some officers. Details and numbers were not yet available.

"People were suffering out here," Madreddy said, adding that he saw people bleeding and having asthma and panic

attacks. Some motorists were trapped as people climbed on top of their cars. Madreddy said several police vehicles were damaged, including his.

On his Instagram feed, Cenat had an image promoting a giveaway at 4 pm in the park.

People started lining up as early as 1:30 pm. By 3 pm, the crowd had swelled and was getting unruly. Some young people leaving the park said they had come expecting to get a computer for livestreaming or a new PlayStation.

Skyler Jones, 19, and a friend came to see Cenat and try to get something from his giveaway, which they said was promoted as a chance for things like gaming consoles or a gaming chair.

When they arrived, the scene was already packed. Bottles were being thrown. There was a commotion even before Cenat appeared, they said.

"It was a movie," Jones said. Police "came with riot shields, charging at people."

Cenat, 21, is a video creator with 6.5 million (65 lakh) followers on the platform Twitch, where he regularly livestreams. He also boasts four million (40 lakh) subscribers on YouTube, where he posts daily life and comedy vlogs ranging from "Fake Hibachi Chef Prank!" to his most recent video, "I Rented Us Girlfriends In Japan!"

His 299 YouTube videos have amassed more than 276 million (27.6 core) views among them. In December, he was crowned the streamer of the year at the 12th annual Streamy Awards.

Pope visits shrine known for apocalyptic prophecy linked to Russia

AP ■ FAIMA

Pope Francis visited the Portuguese town of Fatima on Saturday to pray for peace at a shrine known for apocalyptic prophecies of hell, peace and Soviet communism that have found new relevance with Russia's war in Ukraine.

But for the third time of his trip to Portugal for World Youth Day, Francis ditched his prepared remarks and didn't even recite a prayer written for the occasion pleading for peace.

The prayer had been expected to be a highlight of Francis' visit to Fatima, given the shrine's century-old affiliation with exhortations of peace and conversion in Russia. Francis instead "prayed silently for peace, with pain," while meditating for a long period before a statue of the Virgin Mary, Vatican spokesman Matteo Brunetti said. And the Vatican later tweeted the prayer.

The unusual morning unfolded at the shrine where, according to legend, three young peasant children in 1917 saw visions of the Madonna.

The apparitions turned the small town nestled in the fields of vineyards, olive groves and fruit orchards north of Lisbon into one of the most popular Marian pilgrimage sites in the

world, drawing millions of visitors each year.

On Saturday, an estimated 200,000 turned out for Francis' visit, packing the central esplanade long before the red-tinted moon set and the sun rose. Nearby wildfires turned the sky smoky black and sent ash snowing down on the crowd.

Francis' visit marked a side trip from his main program in Lisbon to preside over the World Youth Day Catholic festival. The featured protagonists in Fatima were also young, including some young people with disabilities who read aloud prayers and young inmates who were allowed to attend. Babies were out in force, as parents offered them up to Francis to bless as he looped through the crowd in his popemobile.

"We are here with great joy," said Maria Florido, a 24-year-old Spaniard who also saw Francis in Lisbon. "We woke up very early to come here and see the pope... and we're here with great enthusiasm."

The Fatima story dates back to 1917, when according to tradition, Portuguese siblings Francisco and Jacinta Marto and their cousin Lucia said the Virgin Mary appeared to them six times and confided to them three secrets.

Israel arrests 2 settlers after deadly rampage

Jerusalem (AP)

Israeli police said Saturday that they arrested two Israeli settlers after they stormed a Palestinian village in the West Bank in a rampage that left one Palestinian dead.

Armed settlers entered Burqa, a herding village east of the city of Ramallah, late Friday, shooting and killing 19-year-old Qusai Matan, Palestinian health officials said.

Israeli media reported that one of the arrested settlers used to work as an aide, who remained unnamed, for a lawmaker of the far-right Israeli "Jewish Power" party which is in Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's coalition of ultra-nationalist and ultraorthodox parties in the Israeli parliament. It includes Itamar Ben-Gvir, a pro-settlement firebrand known for headline positions against Palestinians.

The party couldn't be reached for comment.

Police said they arrested two settlers after detaining five for questioning. The other settler who was arrested was hospitalized after sustaining injuries on Friday night. Authorities did not elaborate on the charges. The army said that Israeli settlers arrived in the area to herd sheep, leading to clashes between Israelis and Palestinians from the village. Both sides hurled rocks at each other, the army said.

One more indictment to close out election: Trump

AP ■ MONTGOMERY

Former US president Donald Trump, fresh off his third appearance in court as a criminal defendant, delivered a speech full of defiance and bluster on Friday night, insulting prosecutors and declaring that the charges he faces only help his 2024 presidential campaign.

"Any time they file an indictment, we go way up in the polls," Trump said at a Republican Party dinner in Alabama. "We need one more indictment to close out this election. One more indictment, and this election is closed out. Nobody has even a chance."

Trump pleaded not guilty on Thursday to crimes related to his efforts to overturn the results of his 2020 election loss. Although it is his third criminal indictment this year, this case is the most serious, with the federal government he once ran charging him with orchestrating a scheme to block the peaceful transfer of power.

But Trump was characteristically unapologetic as he took the stage on Friday night to Lee Greenwood's "God Bless the USA", flashing a thumbs-up at the crowd, raising his fist and taking in a standing ovation of nearly three minutes.

"We are gonna be here for a little while," he joked, asking

NASA restores contact with Voyager 2

Cape Canaveral (AP)

NASA's Voyager 2 spacecraft was back chatting it up on Friday after flight controllers corrected a mistake that had led to weeks of silence.

Hurling ever deeper into interstellar space billions of miles away, Voyager 2 stopped communicating two weeks ago. Controllers sent the wrong command to the 46-year-old spacecraft and tilted its antenna away from Earth.

On Wednesday, NASA's Deep Space Network sent a new command in hopes of repositioning the antenna, using the highest powered transmitter at the huge radio dish antenna in Australia. Voyager 2's antenna needed to be shifted a mere 2 degrees.

It took more than 18 hours for the command to reach Voyager 2 -- more than 12 billion miles (19 billion kilometres) away -- and another 18 hours to hear back.

The long shot paid off. On Friday, the spacecraft started returning data again, according to officials at California's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

"I just sort of sighed. I melted in the chair," project manager Suzanne Dodd told The Associated Press.

"Voyager's back," project scientist Linda Spilker chimed in.

Syrian baby born under quake rubble turns 6 months old

AP ■ JINDERIS

A baby girl who was born under the rubble of her family home destroyed by the deadly earthquake that hit Turkey and Syria six months ago is in good health, loves her adopted family and likes to smile even to strangers.

The dark-haired baby Afraa survived 10 hours under the rubble after the February 6 earthquake crushed to death her parents and four siblings in the northern Syrian town of Jinderis. When she was found, her umbilical cord was still connected to her mother.

Her story captivated the world at the time, and people from all over offered to adopt her.

After spending days at a hospital in north Syria, Afraa was released and handed over to her paternal aunt and her husband, who adopted her and are raising her along with their five daughters and two sons.

Afraa was handed over to her aunt's family days after a DNA test was conducted to make sure the girl and her aunt are biologically related, her adopted father, Khalil Al-Sawadi, said.

On Saturday, baby Afraa was enjoying herself, swinging on a red swing hanging from the ceiling while Al-Sawadi pushed her back and forth.

"This girl is my daughter.

She is exactly the same as my children," said Al-Sawadi, sitting cross-legged with Afraa on his lap.

Al-Sawadi said he spends the day at an apartment he rented but at night the family goes to a tent settlement to spend the night, as his children are still traumatised by the earthquake which killed more than 50,000 people in southern Turkey and northern Syria.

According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, more than 4,500 deaths and 10,400 injuries were reported in north-west Syria due to the earthquakes.

It estimated that 43 per cent of the injured are women and girls while 20 per cent of the injured are children aged five to 14 years old.

The devastating 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck in the early hours of February 6, followed by multiple aftershocks. Among the hardest hit areas was rebel-held northwestern Syria that is home to some 4.5 million people, many of whom have been displaced by the country's 12-year conflict that has killed half a million.

When Afraa grows up, Al-Sawadi says, he will tell her the story of how she was rescued and how her parents and siblings were killed in the devastating earthquake. He said that if he doesn't tell her, his wife or children will.

Govt defers implementation order of restrictions on PC/ laptop imports

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
The government on Friday deferred the implementation of the import restriction order on laptops and computers (including tablet computers) by about three months till October 31, a move that gives more time to electronic companies to import these devices without a licence.
Now, these companies would need to take a licence from the government to import these devices from November 1. On August 3, the government put the import of these devices under a licence regime with immediate effect. Subsequently, industry raised issues with the government on the notification.
The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), in an order issued late on Friday, said the notification dated August 3 (Thursday) shall be effective from November 1.
"Import consignments can



be cleared till October 31, 2023 without a licence for restricted imports. For clearance of import consignments with effect from November 1, 2023, a valid licence for restricted imports is required," it said.
It added that a "liberal transitional arrangement is provided for import of laptops, tablets,

the need to promote domestic manufacturing. The move will also curtail in-bound shipments of these goods from countries like China and Korea.
The import curbs will allow the Centre to keep a close watch on the locations from where the products are coming, officials said.
The decision will also spur domestic manufacturing at a time when India has identified electronics manufacturing as a key priority area for its future growth ambitions and is hoping to attract investments from global biggies looking to diversify their operations outside China.
Under the PLI 2.0 (production-linked incentive scheme IT hardware scheme, 44 companies have already been registered and two companies have filed their applications on the scheme portal by July 31. The companies can submit applications till August 30.
all-in-one personal computers, ultra-small form factor computers and servers ... Till October 31, 2023".
The move will offer a breather to the companies that have been on tenterhooks following Thursday's order.
The restrictions were imposed for security reasons and

Leading laptop companies to make their products in India

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
As many as 44 IT hardware manufacturers including global PC makers have registered for manufacturing laptops, tablets and personal computers in India, an official source said on Saturday.
The official, without naming any company, said that IT hardware production in the country is expected to repeat the success that has been achieved in mobile phone manufacturing under the production linked incentive (PLI) scheme.
"Leading laptop companies have registered for PLI and some of them are ready to start manufacturing in India any time. Global server companies have said that they want to make India an export hub for servers," the official said.
The government has fixed August 30 as the last date for manufacturing IT hardware under Rs 17,000-crore PLI scheme.
According to Counterpoint Research, Lenovo, HP, Dell, Apple and Acer were the top five companies in the personal computer segment in the June 2023 quarter.
Research Director of Counterpoint Research Tarun Pathak said the total laptop and PC market size in India is close to USD 8 billion annually, and approximately 65 per cent of the units are imported.
The government has also announced a plan to allow import of laptop, tablets and personal computers with valid license in restricted category from November 1.
"The pull to manufacture IT hardware, especially laptops and tablets, in India, started during PLI 1.0, and it bloomed further with PLI 2.0. We expect local production of IT hardware devices in India will meet 60-65 per cent of domestic demand in the next 2-3 years," Optimus Electronics Ltd (OEL) Managing Director A Gururaj said.
Lava International co-founder, Chairman and Managing Director Hari Om Rai said the decision to restrict import via valid permit is a great move by the government.



"It will add 10 billion dollars to laptop manufacturing, billions of dollars of components and millions of jobs. It is also a very big milestone in building the much-needed scale of the supply chain of electronics in India," Rai added.
He said the government has ensured that there is no disruption in the supply chain so that the companies will have no issues with the "ease of doing business" and the consumers will continue to get the products at the same price.
According to the latest Canlys data, the Indian PC market (desktops, notebooks and tablets) suffered a major year-on-year decline of 35 per cent, with 3.9 million units shipped in the March 2023 quarter.
After a muted 2023, Canlys forecasts that the Indian PC market, including tablets, will rebound strongly with an 11 per cent growth in 2024 and a further 13 per cent growth in 2025.
Deki Electronics MD and CII National Committee for Electronics Chairman Vinod Sharma said the government under IT hardware PLI has provided incentives for the use of locally manufactured components, which will boost the domestic components ecosystem.
"A non-tariff measure in the form of a licence to check imports will boost local production. Imported IT hardware can also be spyware or malware. We have had similar cases in the past. The government is absolutely right in imposing restrictions to make sure that devices are procured from trusted and safe sources," Sharma said.



Realtors body raise concern over hike in registration charges

PTI ■ CHENNAI
A real estate body on Saturday raised concerns over the Tamil Nadu government's decision to levy 9 per cent apartment registration charges as it would have adverse consequences on potential homebuyers. Following the hike, the registration revenue to the exchequer would decline, Confederation of Real Estate Developers' Association of India (CREDAI), Chennai said.
"The decision to increase the flat registration fee with immediate effect will impact the government and homebuyers more than the developers. The hike will affect property buyers who have already purchased the flat but have not yet registered," CREDAI Chennai President S Sivagurunathan said.
"Booking cancellations can happen as a result of this," he cautioned and the move would also "impair" the government's goal of providing a home for everyone by 2030. "CREDAI Chennai requests the government to rethink its choice and reverse the increase in the cost of flat registration. The increased flat registration costs will directly impact the affordability of homes for potential buyers," he said in a statement.

Ficci CASCADE launches awareness campaign to fight against smuggling



PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Ficci Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Destroying the Economy (CASCADE) on Saturday launched an awareness campaign against illicit trade that impedes economic growth.
The campaign, titled #BeACASCADER, was organised to engage with people and create awareness of the detrimental consequences of illicit trade, Ficci CASCADE said in a statement.
Due to smuggling and illicit trade, tax loss has witnessed a whopping 163 per cent rise from 2010 to 2020, the statement said, quoting a report titled 'Illicit Markets: A Threat to Our National Interests'.
The financial implication of

this was Rs 58,521 crore across five sectors, including alcoholic beverages, mobile phones, FMCG-household and personal goods, FMCG-packaged foods and tobacco products, it said. During the decade, the tax losses incurred by the government from the alcohol industry witnessed an astronomical surge of over 508 per cent, while the increase in tax loss from the FMCG packaged foods industry stood at a substantial 201 per cent and from the tobacco industry, the loss was pegged at 113 per cent.
"Illicit trade inflicts significant harm on individual industries and has a substantial negative impact on employment generation and economic growth. Illicit trade also poses a dual challenge for the government," Ficci CASCADE chairman Anil Rajput said.
Not only does it result in a loss of legitimate tax revenue, but it also demands additional allocation of resources for enforcement and public health measures, he said.

Profits at Warren Buffett's firm reach \$36 billion as stocks surge in Q2



AP ■ OMAHA (US)
Profits rebounded at Warren Buffett's conglomerate along with the value of its USD 353 billion stock portfolio in the second quarter to hit USD 35.9 billion, and Berkshire Hathaway's assorted businesses also performed well, led by strong results in its core insurance businesses, particularly Geico.
Berkshire Hathaway said on Saturday that its profits surged to hit USD 24,755 per Class A share.
A year ago, the Omaha, Nebraska-based company recorded a loss of USD 43.6 billion, or USD 29,633 per Class A share, when the value of its biggest investments fell.
But Buffett has long said that

those bottom-line figures can be misleading because of the big swings in the paper value of its investments from quarter to quarter when few of Berkshire's investments are actually bought or sold. Instead, Buffett recommends that investors focus on operating earnings to see how the more than 90 companies Berkshire owns are actually performing.
By that measure, Berkshire's operating earnings grew 6.6 per cent, to USD 10.043 billion, or USD 6,928.40 per Class A share. That's up from USD 9,417 billion, or USD 6,403.61 per Class A share, a year ago.
The three analysts surveyed by FactSet Research expected Berkshire to report operating earnings of USD 5,575.67 per Class A share.
Berkshire's revenue jumped to USD 92.5 billion from last year's USD 76.2 billion thanks largely to the addition of truck stop operator Pilot Travel Centres, which generated USD 14.75 billion in revenue during the quarter.

BoB profit soars 88% to ₹4,070 cr on loan growth, better margins

PTI ■ MUMBAI
Bank of Baroda on Saturday reported a robust set of numbers with an 87.7 per cent on-year jump in net profit at Rs 4,070 crore in the June quarter, driven by higher interest income from an above-industry level loan growth and better margins.
The bottom line was also helped by lower provisions for bad loans as the asset quality improved vastly. Loan growth was led by the global book-something none of the other domestic lenders could book.
The management of the second largest state-run lender



said the profitability growth was supported by healthy operating income that grew 42.9 per cent to Rs 14,319 crore, of which the key net interest income (NII) grew 24 per cent to Rs 10,997 crore and other income led by treasury income jumped 2.8 times to Rs 1,152 crore.
Debadatta Chand, BoB's managing director & chief executive, said the bank's global NIM stood 3.27 per cent, an increase of 25 basis points (bps)

and domestic NIM at 3.41 per cent, an increase of 34 bps and guided towards a 3.3 per cent level for the remaining quarters as they see some repricing of deposits which will eat into the spread.
Accordingly, the yield on advances increased to 8.40 per cent from 6.58 per cent in Q1FY23 and the cost of deposits rose to 4.68 per cent from 3.46 per cent yet its cost to income came down to 45.36 per cent from 54.81 per cent, said BoB chief financial officer Ian de Souza. The asset quality continued to improve with the gross NPA ratio falling by 33.8 per

cent to Rs 34,832 crore or 3.51 per cent of the total book down from 6.26 per cent in Q1FY23. The net NPA fell to a record low of 0.78 per cent in the reporting quarter from 1.58 per cent in Q1FY23. This had the provision coverage ratio improving to 93.23 from 78.52 in Q1FY24. Total provisions (other than tax) and contingencies rose 15.5 per cent to Rs 1,946 crore, of which, provisions for NPAs stood at Rs 420 crore and for wage hikes stood at Rs 730 crore of which Rs 500 crore was made this quarter, and for written-off accounts at Rs 1,693 crore.

L&T Finance launches Digital Sakhi project in Murshidabad

PTI ■ KOLKATA
L&T Finance Holdings Ltd (LTFH), a non-banking financial company, Saturday announced the launch of its 'Digital Sakhi' project in Baharampur town in West Bengal's Murshidabad district. A CSR project of the company, 'Digital Sakhi' trains and nurtures rural women, who in turn promote women entrepreneurship and digital financial literacy in their communities, the company said in a statement. The project will focus on creating a dedicated cadre of 100 Digital Sakhis in Murshidabad, who will play a pivotal role in imparting module-based training to the community, with a special emphasis on women, the NBFC said.
The launch of the project in Murshidabad follows its introduction at Madurai in Tamil Nadu on June 28 this year, the statement said. The rapid expansion of the 'Digital Sakhi' project is attributed to its successful implementation in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, West Bengal, Karnataka and Kerala, it said.



BIS inks pact with 35 institutions to foster collaboration

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has signed agreements with 35 prestigious institutions, including NITs, across the country to foster collaboration in standardisation and conformity assessment.
The institutions included some prominent NITs, government and private engineering colleges from different states, an official statement said.
BIS Director General Pramod Kumar Tiwari emphasised that memorandum of understandings (MoUs) with these esteemed academic institutions will bolster and enrich

the standards formulation activities.
The MoU will pave the way for the partner institutions to participate in standardisation activities by associating with the technical committees of the Bureau at the national and international levels, getting infrastructure support for relevant R&D Projects, introducing standardisation curricula in academics, exploring a Centre of Excellence for Standardisation, testing and sharing laboratory facilities.
BIS is a statutory body functioning under the aegis of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.

Hilshaw Group makes foray into aviation space with aircraft leasing JV

PTI ■ MUMBAI
Multi-family office and investment advisory firm Hilshaw Group on Saturday announced its aircraft-leasing joint venture with Aeolus to mark its foray into the aviation space.
The JV will be focused on aircraft leasing, special flight operations and related services with an initially planned fleet of 20 commercial aircraft, a mix of both narrow-body and wide-body planes to be available to the global leasing market, the company said in a statement.
As part of the collaboration,

airline advisory, aircraft brokerage and trading firm Aeolus will render its expertise and experience in fleet management while the Hilshaw Group's mandate is to design and manage the finance and capital structure for acquiring the fleet, it said.
The collaboration aims to capitalize on the increasing demand for aircraft leasing services and the growing opportunities in the global aviation market, it said.
"Hilshaw Group has always employed diversification as part of its growth strategy. This expansion aims to add agility to the region's and, thereafter, the



the Remote Work Visa program, as per the statement.
Besides, it is also involved in the financial facilitation of sustainable projects across Europe and Africa.
Aeolus serves and advises both ultra-high networth individuals and airlines in the UAE and other international markets for their requirements.
Under the terms of the JV agreement, both companies will pool their expert portfolios to establish a diverse and comprehensive fleet of commercial aircraft, ranging from narrow-body to wide-body and regional jets, the statement said.

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Punjab & Sind Bank Q1 net profit falls 25 pc to ₹153 crore

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Public sector lender Punjab & Sind Bank on Saturday reported a 25 per cent decline in net profit to Rs 153 crore for the June 2023 quarter, partly due to the provision of wage revision and fresh slippages.
The lender had reported a net profit of Rs 205 crore in the April-June quarter of 2022-23.
The total income increased to Rs 2,494 crore in the first quarter of 2023-24 against Rs 1,915 crore a year ago, as per a regulatory filing. During the quarter, the bank earned an interest income of Rs 2,316 crore compared to Rs 1,800 crore in the year-ago period.
Explaining the reason for the decline in profit, Punjab & Sind Bank managing director Swarup Kumar Saha said the bank has made a Rs 57 crore provision towards the wage revision under negotiation and Rs 450 crore in fresh slippages, including a mid-corporate of Rs 92 crore in the quarter.
The bank has made a provision of Rs 42 crore for that particular account, which is in the logistics business, he said.
On the asset quality side, there was an improvement in gross non-performing assets (NPA) of the total advances, easing to 6.80 per cent at June-end from 11.34 per cent a year earlier. Similarly, net NPAs declined to 1.95 per cent in June 2023 against 2.56 per cent. The bank aims to bring down gross NPA to 6 per cent while Net NPA below 1.5 per cent during the year, Saha said.
The provision coverage ratio stood at 88.58 per cent against 88.10 in the same quarter of the last fiscal.
Its capital adequacy ratio increased to 17.19 per cent from 16.79 per cent at the end of June 2022.

BUSINESS BRIEF
EDELWEISS TOKIO'S IMPRESSIVE GROWTH
New Delhi: New Delhi: Edelweiss Tokio Life, a new-age life insurance company, achieved impressive 20 per cent YoY growth in FY 2022-2023, with Rs 502 crore Individual APE. Over 12 years, the company's CAGR growth was 44 per cent. Focused on customer centricity, innovation, and value for stakeholders, the company drove projects to enhance distributor and customer experiences. The FY23 Claim Settlement Ratio was 99.20 per cent, and the Net Promoter Score was 54.

SCHWING Stetter India eyes to plant 2.50 lakh trees

PTI ■ CHENNAI
Construction and concrete equipment manufacturer SCHWING Stetter India under its initiative to promote reforestation has set a target to plant 2.50 lakh trees across the globe, the company said on Saturday. The planting of trees also marks the 25th anniversary celebrations of the city-based company.
"As we embark on this incredible journey of turning 25

years, we want to continue to engage in activities that reflect our commitment to sustainability and the environment," SCHWING Stetter India chairman and managing director V G Sakthikumar said.

Affle India profit rises 21 pc to ₹66.2 cr in Apr-Jun qtr

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Global technology company Affle (India) Limited on Saturday reported a 21.4 per cent rise in its profit after tax at Rs 66.4 crore in the April-June quarter of this fiscal.
The company promoted by Singapore-based Affle Holdings had registered a profit after tax (PAT) of Rs 54.5 crore in the first quarter of FY23, Affle India said in a release.
The consolidated revenue from operations grew 17 per cent to Rs 406.6 crore in the reporting quarter as compared to Rs 347.5 crore in the year-ago period.
The company's earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA) increased to Rs 78.1 crore during the first quarter of this fis-

cal, up 13.7 per cent from Rs 68.7 crore in the year-ago quarter.
The consumer intelligence-driven firm, which transforms advertisements into recommendations helping marketers connect with their target audience, said it has "achieved its highest quarterly revenue run rate ever" in the reporting quarter which saw an "accelerated broad-based growth in ad spends".
The company attributed the performance to its newly launched return-on-investment-linked CPCU (cost per converted user) business model.
"This quarter too witnessed the accelerated broad-based growth in ad spends powered by our unique ROI-linked CPCU business model, coming across our top industry verticals.

BLS E-Services files draft papers with Sebi to garner funds via IPO

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
BLS E-Services Ltd has filed draft papers with capital markets regulator Sebi to mobilise funds through an initial public offering (IPO).
The company is a subsidiary of BLS International Services Ltd, which offers visa and consular services.
The IPO comprises a fresh issue of 2.41 crore equity shares with no offer for sale (OFS) component, according to the draft red herring prospectus (DRHP) filed on Friday.
Proceeds of the issue will be utilized for strengthening technology infrastructure to develop new capabilities and consolidating existing platforms.
In addition, fresh capital will be used for funding initiatives for organic growth by setting up BLS Stores, achieving inorganic growth through acquisitions, and general corporate purposes.
BLS E-Services Ltd is a leading technology-enabled dig-



ital service provider, offering business correspondent services to major banks in India, assisted e-services; and e-governance services at grass root levels in India.
The company provides access points for the delivery of essential public utility services, social welfare schemes, healthcare, financial, educational, agricultural and banking services to governments and businesses alike apart from a host of B2C services to citizens.
Unistone Capital is the sole book-running lead manager to the issue. The equity shares of the company will be listed on BSE and NSE.

Archer Aditi becomes youngest ever world champion at 17

PTI ■ BERLIN

Less than two months after she won the junior world title, 17-year-old Aditi Swami on Saturday became the senior world champion when she defeated Andrea Becerra of Mexico in the compound women's final of the World Archery Championships, here on Saturday.

The Satara teenager, who had won the Under-18 title in Youth Championships in Limerick in July, shot a near perfect score of 149 out of a possible 150 points to prevail over the Mexican giant-killer by two points. The 16th seed Andrea had knocked out reigning champion Sara Lopez in the pre-quarterfinals. But Andrea faced a tough chal-



lenge from the sixth seeded Indian, who started off with a bang, drilling in all her first three arrows closer to the centre (X) to take a 30-29 first round lead. Aditi was on target in all of her 12 arrows in the first four rounds to extend her lead by three points. It was only in the final end, she shot one 9 out of the three arrows, but by then she had already sealed

India's second World Championship gold ever. Aditi along with Parneet Kaur and Jyothi Surekha Vennam had secured India's first ever World Archery Championships gold by winning the compound women's team final on Friday. Earlier in the day, she had ousted her 'idol' and the most successful Indian compound archer Jyothi

Surekha Vennam 149-145 in an all-Indian semifinal. Jyothi, however, went on to win a bronze medal when she shot a perfect 150 to defeat Ipek Tomruk of Turkey by four points in the third-place play-off. Jyothi now has one gold, four silver and three bronze medals from three editions of the World Archery Championships.

FIFA WOMEN'S WORLD CUP

JAPAN BEATS NORWAY 3-1 TO REACH QUARTERFINALS

AP ■ WELLINGTON (NEW ZEALAND)

Japan scored its 14th goal of the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023 and conceded its first Saturday, beating Norway 3-1 to reach the quarterfinals for the fourth time. Hinata Miyazawa sealed the win with her fifth goal of the tournament in the 81st minute to remain the leading scorer. Risa Shimizu's 50th-minute goal followed an Ingrid Syrstad Engen own goal in the first half to help give Japan its fourth straight win of the tournament. Guro Reiten headed a superb goal for Norway in the 21st minute to end Japan's flawless defensive performance and leave the teams locked at 1-1 at half-time.

After beating Spain 4-0 with only 23% of possession in its group-stage finale, Japan once again was a tactical chameleon in the pre-quarters - playing with more than 60% of possession in a commanding performance.

Japan traded its regular blue uniform for pastel colours Saturday, pink and purple. The softer colour scheme did nothing to dull its attacking style; it pressed forward from the start and had its first corner after two minutes.

While it was ineffective, it was an early declaration of intent. With long balls or sharp, quick passing, Japan continually pressed forward and Norway, which conceded only one goal in group play, often seemed rattled at the back.

When the defence finally yielded, it was in unusual circumstances. In the 15th minute, Miyazawa curled the ball in from depth on the left and Engen extended her leg to parry the ball. She managed only to deflect it wide of Aurora Mikalsen in goal for the eighth own goal of the tournament.

Japan seemed well on top but in the 21st minute, and from



the first time in the match Norway had threatened, Vilda Boe Rise got away on the right, took the ball to the byline and crossed to the middle where Guro Reiten stood tall and headed wide of the diving Ayaka Yamashita into the left corner. The goal came entirely against the run of play. After a half-hour, Japan had 183 completed passes to Norway's 88, had more than 60%, and five shots on goal. Miyazawa, Aoba Fujino, Jun Endo and others had been threatening. Shimizu's winner came in the 50th minute as Japan pushed forward again from halfway. Miyazawa tried to hold up the ball near the goal but lost possession to Boe Risa, who tried a back pass but rolled the ball into the path of Shimizu rushing in from the right to score. Miyazawa produced a copy-book finish in the 81st, running onto a superb through ball and directing her shot wide of Mikalsen.



SA is out to cause another upset against Netherlands

AP ■ SYDNEY

South Africa has already upset the odds to advance to the knockout stages of the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup. Now, it is aiming to spring another surprise against one of the tournament favourites on Sunday.

As captain Refiloe Jane says: "Anything is possible" against the Netherlands for a team that has become one of the big stories of this World Cup.

"You know, it's knockout stages," she said. "So, you still want to keep on fighting as a team, keep on reaching for one another and not lose sight of any of the possibilities that lie ahead of us."

Thembi Kgatana's stoppage-time winner against Italy secured South Africa's place in the round of 16. The joyous scenes after the final whistle of that 3-2 win created some of the most memorable images of the World Cup so far.

"South Africans are excited and happy that we made history," midfielder Kholosa Biyana said. "We're the first team to do that in South Africa both male and female. So, it is a great achievement, not just for us, for female athletes and for women's football in South Africa and in Africa."

The World Cup has showcased the growth of the women's game with a number of upsets, including the elimination of traditional

powerhouses Germany and Brazil in the group stage. It has also highlighted the strength of women's soccer in Africa, with three teams advancing to the knockouts. Morocco and Nigeria have joined South Africa in the pre-quarters.

"You know, we have so much talent in Africa, that goes without saying," Jane said. "We've got a group of players who are playing overseas, who learn so much from abroad, who come back in their national teams and show their knowledge. But, if we can invest in our own countries in Africa, we can get so much out of the players, and we can advance in so many tournaments."

South Africa faces a Dutch team in Sydney that topped Group E ahead of the back-to-back defending champion US team.

It rounded off the group stages with a 7-0 rout of Vietnam and is the favourite to advance to the quarterfinals. But, Netherlands coach Andries Jonker treats every game as a knockout and is preparing his team to take on the challenge presented by South Africa.

"They play with the heart and soul. For the people and the country," he said. "There is big heart in the team, fighting spirit, a couple of really good players... It is a dangerous opponent for us."

Spain routs Switzerland 5-1 to advance to the quarterfinals

AUCKLAND, AUG 5 (AP)

Aitana Bonmati scored twice as Spain routed Switzerland 5-1 on Saturday to advance to the quarterfinals of the Women's World Cup for the first time.

Spain responded emphatically to its 4-0 loss against Japan in its group-stage finale in a blowout against the Swiss in Auckland.

Alba Redondo, Laia Codina and Jennifer Hermoso also scored in the win at Eden Park. Codina showed plenty of relief to score from close range after conceding an own goal in the first half.

Spain coach Jorge Vilda made some big calls after his

team was routed by Japan. Two-time Ballon d'Or winner Alexis Putellas was left on the bench and goalkeeper Cata Coll was picked for her full international debut. They were among five changes to his starting lineup, which paid off as his team produced a dominant performance.

Switzerland was one of only three teams that didn't concede a goal in the group stages, but was 4-1 down by halftime against Spain, which wore blue jerseys instead of its familiar color of red.

Not that it made any difference as one of the tournament favorites won in style.

Bonmati scored her first in the fifth minute after Switzerland goalkeeper



Gaelle Thalmann had pushed Alba Redondo's effort against the post. The Swiss couldn't clear the ball and Bonmati collected it, turned sharply in the box and fired low into the corner.

Switzerland was gifted an equalizer in the 11th

through Codina's own goal. The defender picked up the ball just inside her own half, but without looking, turned and swept an overhit back-pass beyond Coll, who was advanced out of her goal.

Spain was back in front in the 17th as Redondo headed a bouncing ball low into the corner. It was her third goal of the tournament.

Spain continued to look for more goals and Bonmati scored her second in the 36th when showing quick footwork to make space in the box before placing a shot into the corner.

It was 4-1 in the 45th as Codina made amends for her earlier error by bundling the ball over the line from a

corner. Meriame Terchoun, one of three half-time substitutes for Switzerland, forced a save from Coll from close range after the break. It was her team's only effort on target all match.

Switzerland all-time leading scorer Ana-Maria Crnogorčević had just one shot on goal in group play and didn't fire a shot against Spain.

Hermoso swept in a fifth for Spain in the 70th to score her third of the tournament.

WHAT'S NEXT

Spain will play either 2019 runner-up Netherlands or South Africa in the quarterfinals in Wellington on Friday.



Long jumper Aldrin wins Switzerland event with best performance in 5 months

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

World's season leader long jumper Jeswin Aldrin produced his best performance in five months as he cleared 8.22m to win gold in the CITIUS Meeting in Bern, Switzerland.

This was Aldrin's fourth career-best performance.

The 21-year-old Aldrin had jumped 8.42m, the best in the world so far this season, during the National Open Jumps Competition at Bellary on March 2 and then had two



8m-plus efforts in Havana, Cuba in May.

After that, he has been struggling to touch the 8m

mark before Friday's 8.22m. He has also been plagued with injury.

The CITIUS Meeting in Bern is a World Athletics Tour bronze level event.

Aldrin, who won a silver medal in the National Interstate Championships in June in Bhubaneswar with a jump of 7.98m, has qualified for the World Athletics Championships (August 19-27) in Budapest, Hungary.

He did not participate in the Asian Championships in July due to lack of fitness.

Aditi makes cut narrowly as Diksha misses out at Women's Scottish Open

PTI ■ IRVINE, (SCOTLAND)

Indian golfer Aditi Ashok survived the cut line narrowly while Diksha Dagar missed out by a big margin at the end of the second round of the FREED GROUP Women's Scottish Open golf tournament here.

Aditi totalled three-over 147 and was lying T-65th while Diksha, with 9-over 153, missed the cut.

Aditi survived the cut despite two late bogeys on the front nine, which was her second nine as she started from the 10th. She began her round on

the 10th and dropped shots on the 12th and 14th, but birdies on the second and the fifth brought her back to par for the day.

Bogeys on the seventh and eighth put her in a danger zone. At 3-over for 36 holes, she just scraped through to the weekend rounds.

Diksha, after her 7-over 79, needed a low under par round, but she carded 74 with one birdie and two bogeys and exited early for the second time in as many weeks.

Hinako Shibuno produced a round of 68 (-4) on the second day to hold a two-



shot lead. The major champion started with a bogey on the first but soon turned her day around with a birdie on the

second before adding another on the fifth.

Three more birdies on the back nine saw Shibuno seal a round of 68 as she leads at the top with a total of 12-under-par after 36 holes.

It was an impressive second round for Maja Stark who fired a 65 (-7) to climb into second place on 10-under-par, two shots behind the leader.

France's Celine Boutier and Australia's Sarah Kemp are in a share of the third place on seven-under-par after they both fired rounds of 68 (-3) on day two at Dundonald Links.

'India will win gold in 2028 LA Olympics if not Paris next year'

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Hockey India (HI) secretary general Bhola Nath Singh on Saturday claimed that India will definitely win gold at the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics if they miss out on the yellow metal in Paris next year.

He said the current HI brass under former India captain Dilip Tirker is leaving no stone unturned to take Indian hockey to the top again.

"I have big plans for hockey and you will see some new things being introduced. We will try our best to change HI during this time," Bhola Nath told PTI. "I want to assure you that if

not the Paris Olympics, India will surely win a gold medal in the Los Angeles Olympics. If they don't, you can come back to me."

To help Indian hockey recapture its past glory, Bhola Nath said HI is working on creating a bigger talent pool.

He said plans are in place to give the junior teams the best facilities as the senior side, coupled with enough international exposure, which would again make India a major hockey powerhouse.

"As far as the junior teams are concerned across genders, they will get all the facilities and support that are provided to the senior team, including an inter-

national coach. And I want to implement it within the next two months.

"We also have some grassroots programmes for our junior teams. We have their zonal tournaments, and many more such junior tournaments are expected to start. We will also have a junior national tournament, and the players selected there will get proper training as the senior team," he added.

The HI official said the junior sides will get to play more international tournaments.

"So far, there were only nationals for the U-17 and U-18 sides. But now, they will also have international tournaments against top junior sides in the



world. The short-listed kids at the junior level will be selected for a national camp from August 20 in Rourkela," Bhola Nath said. Bhola Nath said that having

been a player and a coach himself, it is his duty to fulfil the needs of players as an administrator.

On being asked how the

current HI brass had been promoting the game across the country, he said, "For the first time, every state has been given ample hockey equipment and kits. Most of the junior players come from poor families, whose parents cannot afford equipment. We at HI are keeping a watch that state associations distribute the equipment properly."

He also said that besides the FIH Pro League, the Indian team will get a lot of international exposure in the run-up to the Paris Olympics.

"We have the Pro League in Bhubaneswar, where some five-six top teams will come, which will be good preparation for the

Olympics. Also, we will plan more international outings during this phase, which will aid the team before it heads to Paris," Bhola Nath said.

HI is planning to revive the Hockey India League and Bhola Nath said the competition would be expanded to eight teams, while a female version will also be introduced.

"HIL will have eight teams. The groundwork for its revival is more or less complete, and you will see it soon."

"Also, besides the men's HIL, we will also have the women's HIL. The women's HIL will start with four teams, but we will expand it to six if it becomes successful."

2ND T20I

India aim for improved death overs batting keeping workload in mind

PTI ■ PROVIDENCE (GUYANA)

India's most sought after IPL stars will have a reputation to defend and parity to restore when they take on a quality West Indies side in the second T20 International of the five-match series here on Sunday.

A boundary was the difference between the two teams in the opening game in Tarouba where West Indies prevailed on a slow batting track with an impressive bowling effort at the back-end.

The T20I series is of little consequence in an ODI World Cup year but skipper Hardik Pandya along with his deputy Suryakumar Yadav would expect to put a far improved batting show — both individually as well as collectively.

The duo along with Ishan Kishan, Shubman Gill and Sanju Samson are all looking at the ODI World Cup but no one would mind a few good knocks which will give them some confidence ahead of the Asia Cup.

Save debutant Tilak Varma, who looked ready for international cricket during his knock of 39, the Indian batting with IPL prima donnas earning fat pay cheques, flattered to deceive.

However, with five T20s being played in a period of nine days, involving three countries (Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and United States), it is also imperative that the likes of skipper Hardik, openers Gill and Kishan, spinner Kuldeep Yadav get adequate rest keeping the big picture in mind.

Playing so many T20 games



on the bounce with little rest and lot of travelling won't do them any good even if one considers that this is not an ageing team like the ODI outfit.

This T20 series against the West Indies gives India the best chance to check out their short-cut format options as it would become important next year with the World Cup being held

in the Americas (West Indies and United States).

Hence, trying out last IPL edition's sensation Yashasvi Jaiswal during the series if not the second game wouldn't be a bad option.

A better batting effort in the back-10 would be top priority at a venue where the West Indies haven't had a great T20I record.

Out of 11 matches played at this ground, three didn't produce result due to rain and in the remaining eight, West Indies lost five games.

But despite their declining standards in the two traditional formats, West Indies in T20 cricket remain a force to reckon with as they produce the maximum premium 'Guns for Hire'

in the franchise market after Australia.

The Nicholas Poorans, Kyle Mayers, Shimron Hetmyers, Rovman Powells, Romario Shepherds are on even keel, at least in this format and hence the Indian team will find this particular outfit toughest to beat in current circumstances.

For India, Suryakumar

would want to get a big one in his pet format and regain a bit of confidence that has eroded because of a lean patch in the ODIs.

Ditto for Samson, a perennial underachiever at the international level despite the talent that he possesses. He will be travelling to Ireland after this series and hence would be looking to add runs under his belt.

Among bowlers, Yuzvendra Chahal has fallen off a bit in ODI pecking order and he will have a point to prove if he gets an opportunity in all five games.

Arshdeep Singh is a work-in-progress as far as death overs bowling is concerned while Mukesh Kumar is reaping rewards for his good show throughout the tour.

But at some point, both Avesh Khan and Umran Malik, the two tearaway quicks need to be given an opportunity and see if they can become the X-factor on docile tracks.

TEAMS (FROM):
INDIA: Ishan Kishan (wk), Shubman Gill, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Tilak Varma, Suryakumar Yadav (vc), Sanju Samson (wk), Hardik Pandya (c), Axar Patel, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Ravi Bishnoi, Arshdeep Singh, Umran Malik, Avesh Khan, Mukesh Kumar.
WEST INDIES: Rovman Powell (c), Kyle Mayers (vc), Johnson Charles, Roston Chase, Shimron Hetmyer, Jason Holder, Shai Hope, Akeal Hosein, Alzarri Joseph, Brandon King, Obed McCoy, Nicholas Pooran, Romario Shepherd, Odean Smith, Oshane Thomas.



WC SCHEDULE

Pakistan vs England game at Eden could witness date change

PTI ■ KOLKATA/NEW DELHI

The Cricket Association of Bengal on Saturday requested ICC recce team about concerns raised by local security agencies with regards to World Cup match between Pakistan and England on November 12 coinciding with Kali Puja.

If BCCI and ICC have to accommodate another date change, then Pakistan will have a third change in schedule.

This is after rescheduling of India vs Pakistan game (October 14 instead of 15 in Ahmedabad) and Sri Lanka vs Pakistan game (now on October 10 in Hyderabad instead of October 12).

The Ahmedabad Police had told the BCCI that it would find it difficult to take care of security on October 15 which happens to be the first day of the Hindu festival of Navaratri.

The ICC and BCCI had released the schedule at a grand ceremony on June 27 but now the revised schedule is yet to be published as it has completely gone haywire.

Kali Puja is a second biggest festival in West Bengal, and thousands of local clubs organise festivities with a large police deployment required to maintain law and order situation across the length and breadth of the city.

While CAB president Snehasish Ganguly denied of any 'official request' for a change in schedule, senior office-bearers in CAB are well aware that Kolkata Police has already raised this issue.

"Kolkata Police has cited concerns to provide security for the match slated on Diwali.

We have informed the ICC and BCCI to reschedule it and if does not happen we would inform this to the chief minister," a senior CAB office-bearer, who was part of the meeting with the 17-member ICC and BCCI inspection team, said.

In such a scenario, it remains to be seen whether ICC agrees for another schedule change.

CAB chief Ganguly gave a guarded response, while talking to reporters after the ICC's inspection and meeting that lasted for more than three hours.

"We have not yet got anything officially from the Kolkata Police," Snehasish, elder brother of former BCCI president and India captain Sourav Ganguly, said.

"Unless we get something officially, we can't inform the ICC. Security issue is being taken care of by the Kolkata Police. That is not our look-out."

"As I said, we have not got anything officially, if we get anything we will inform ICC."

The CAB top-brass, incidentally, had gone to meet Kolkata Police officials at their Lalbazaar headquarters a couple of days back.

Snehasish however termed it a "courtesy call". "We went to Kolkata Police for a courtesy visit two days ago, we had a discussion with them. We schedule, plan and how we are preparing the stadium were discussed," he said.

However with multiple changes in schedule, the question that has cropped up is that whether the local security agencies were taken into confidence while chalking up the dates for the World Cup.



Home Media Rights: Can BCCI breach 1 billion dollar mark?

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian cricket board is expected to breach the USD 1 billion (INR 8200 crore approx) mark in its cumulative earnings from selling the separate TV and digital rights for India's 88 home games during the five-year period till March 2028.

The highlight of this new cycle will be 21 home games against Australia (five Tests, 6 ODIs and 10 T20Is) along with 18 games against England (10 Tests, 3 ODIs and 5 T20Is) out of the 25 Tests, 27 ODIs and 36 T20Is.

During the last five-year phase (2018-23), the BCCI had earned USD 944 million (INR 6138 crore approx in 2018 exchange rate) from Star India with a price per international game being Rs 60 crore (digital plus TV).

Unlike last time, the BCCI will invite separate bids for TV and digital rights after a whopping INR 48,390 crore earning during the IPL media rights auction where Reliance won the digital bid and Star won the TV rights.

The bidding process will once again be conducted through e-auction just like it happened with the IPL media rights as it is considered the most transparent process for best price discovery. Those who are tracking the developments feel that even digital rights for Indian cricket will skyrocket and the response for TV will be way more tepid in comparison.

"It is difficult to put a number right now as the value of dollar to rupee has also changed from the exchange rate of last time. But don't be surprised if digital rights earns way more than TV," a broadcaster involved in this business said.

While there are number of companies who has bought the

bid document worth Rs 15 lakh, the three serious bidders for India's (men and women's) home matches are going to be Disney-Star and Reliance-Viacom while Zee could be a big contender if the merger with Sony is completed before the auction scheduled during the first week of September.

"It is too early to comment but there will be only three serious bidders if Zee-Sony conglomerate joins the bidding war. There are many things one needs to factor in. Two entities — Reliance and Star — had gone all out for IPL rights. Star also owns the ICC tournament property. So how much each will stretch is a question," a senior executive from one of the broadcasters told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

"As far as Amazon is concerned, they didn't even bid for IPL, which is BCCI's biggest property right now."

But, considering there is a World Cup happening in three months and in case India doesn't win the championship, the subsequent few months could be bad in terms of advertisement revenue.

"There are 25 home Tests in this cycle. But if you check out last cycle, how many Tests practically went into the fifth day? Most Tests in India end inside three days. The broadcaster will factor that in," another broadcaster said. "Obviously a series against Sri Lanka or Afghanistan won't fetch you the amount that England or Australia will get you. The ad rates per second for a T20 match will be more than most Test matches. So when your company puts in a bid, these things are kept into account."

"Also you need to ensure your current stars play 'x' number of games in that cycle in this day and age of workload. The NBA has a clause," he added.

Cummins played Oval Test with suspected broken wrist, could miss India series

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Australia skipper Pat Cummins could miss the three-match ODI series against India next month having played the fifth Ashes Test with a suspected broken wrist. Cricket Australia is yet to reveal the details of Cummins' injured left wrist.

The men from Down Under will fly to India for the ODI series, which is slated to begin on September 22 in Mohali.

However, "two sources with

knowledge of the matter but not authorised to speak publicly say medical staff have not ruled out a possible fracture," according to the 'Sydney Morning Herald'.

The Australian pace spearhead had injured his wrist on the opening day of the final Ashes Test at the Oval last week. He had played the remainder of the Test with a heavily-strapped wrist, and while the injury did not appear to impede Cummins' bowling, the skipper's discomfort while batting was evident.



However, after playing six Tests in two months, including the World Test Championship final against India, Cummins was expected to take some time off.

CA is likely to announce the squads for Australia's upcoming white-ball assignments, that includes the tour of South Africa and India, next week.

Mitchell Marsh is expected to lead in Cummins' absence. The all-rounder is also in contention to be named Australia's T20 skipper. Star batter Steve Smith had captained Australia in Cummins' absence in India earlier this year.

Australia are scheduled to play three T20Is and five ODIs against South Africa, starting August 30, following which they will travel to India for the ODIs.

Young rider Shreyas dies in racing incident

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Copparam Shreyas Hareesh, a 13-year-old prodigy from Bengaluru, succumbed to injuries that he had suffered following a crash in the third round of the MRF MMSC FMSCI Indian National Motorcycle Racing Championship at the Madras International Circuit, here on Saturday.

Following the tragic incident, promoter of the event, Madras Motor Sports Club, cancelled the remaining races scheduled for Saturday and Sunday.

Born on July 26, 2010, Shreyas, a student of Kensri School in Bengaluru, was being hailed as a rising star, as he had won several races at the National level, including four in a row, competing in the rookie category of the Petronas TVS One-Make Championship this season.

The incident occurred soon after the start of the rookie race for which he had qualified for pole position this morning.

Exiting Turn-1, Shreyas fell following a crash and suffered grievous head injury.

The race was red-flagged immediately and he was rushed to a nearby hospital in a trauma care ambulance stationed at the track.

He was pronounced dead on arrival at the hospital. His father, Copparam Hareesh was at his bedside.



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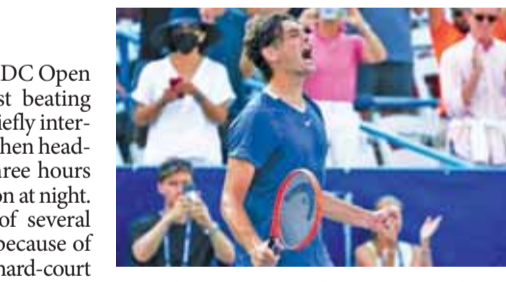
Taylor wins twice to reach DC Open semifinals, Jessica & Coco also advance

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Taylor Fritz went 2 for 2 at the DC Open to reach the semifinals, first beating Andy Murray in a three-setter briefly interrupted by climate protesters and then heading out onto a different court three hours later to eliminate Jordan Thompson at night.

Fritz, a 25-year-old from California who is the top-ranked American man at No. 9, saved all seven break points he faced in the third set and hit 17 aces with tennis balls he deemed "awful" en route to a 6-7 (2), 6-3, 6-4 victory against Murray, a 36-year-old from Britain who earned three Grand Slam titles before he had two hip operations.

That one, which Fritz said was played at an "insanely high level," lasted more than three hours with the temperature in the mid-



80s Fahrenheit (around 30 Celsius) and 60% humidity. Then Fritz raised his season victory total to 41 - only No. 1 Carlos Alcaraz and No. 3 Daniil Medvedev have more - by beating Thompson 6-3, 6-3 in a much quicker contest: 1 hour, 17 minutes.

"My body probably couldn't have handled another battle like I had with Andy," said Fritz, who'll face No. 12 seed Tallon Griekspoor on Saturday for a berth in the final. "I can't say I've experienced this - playing three hours with the heaviest balls in the world in humid conditions and having to

turn around and play again," Fritz said.

He said he couldn't recall playing back-to-back matches like that since he was a kid. He spent the time between facing Murray and Thompson like this: "I biked a little bit. Cooled down. Got some food in me. Immediately just started drinking, trying to get a lot of electrolytes in me, not just water. Then showered and got in an ice bath for five, six minutes. Then I just ... Laid down and relaxed for 30 minutes or so. Then it was time to start doing all my pre-match stuff, so I just got right back into it." Murray couldn't remember the last time he played two matches in a day. "It's pretty rare that it happens," he said. "There is not necessarily, like, a strategy for that. Because it's so rare, you just try and focus on the first match. And then if you get through it, try and rest and recover as much as you can before going out there. But it's far from ideal." Before facing Fritz, Thompson finished off a 6-2, 6-2 win over No. 11 Chris Eubanks in a match suspended late in the first set Thursday.

Prannoy reaches final of Australian Open

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Star Indian shuttler HS Prannoy stormed into his second final of the season with a comprehensive straight-game win over young compatriot Priyanshu Rajawat at the Australian Open Super 500 badminton tournament here on Saturday. The 31-year-old Prannoy rode on his power and precision to outwit the 21-year-old Rajawat 21-18 21-12 in the men's singles semifinals.

"It is very satisfying (to win), because it is always tough to play continuously against the top 10 players and beating them and if you look at the men's singles section, somebody from 30s

and 40s are also very tough these days," Prannoy said after the win.

"Last two years have been good for me, I have been consistently able to pull off matches and this year has been special and I hope I can do something similar to what I did in Malaysia," he said.

The World number 9 Indian will square off against China's Weng Hong Yang in the summit clash on Sunday.

Interestingly, world number 24 Weng is the same opponent whom Prannoy had defeated in the final of the Malaysia Masters to win his first individual title in six years in May. It was also their only meeting so far in the inter-



national circuit.

"Weng is very tricky, he can play big matches. In last six months, he has gone out there and beaten a lot of big names. So it is not easy and especially being

a left-hander, he has a lot of advantage over a lot of players. But finals is a final and I will go all out tomorrow," Prannoy said.

With the loss, Rajawat's impressive run this week ended

with a first-ever Super 500 semifinal finish.

Prannoy has looked in supreme touch throughout the week with his stunning comeback from behind win over world number 2 and top seed Anthony Ginting in the quarterfinals being the highlight.

Prannoy once again showed his capability to draw errors from his younger opponent Rajawat, who is known for his fast hand and leg speed and quick net play.

Rajawat began on a positive note with his service earning him a 2-0 lead but Prannoy slowly started constructing his points and pushed his young challenger to err, registering

four straight points to move ahead.

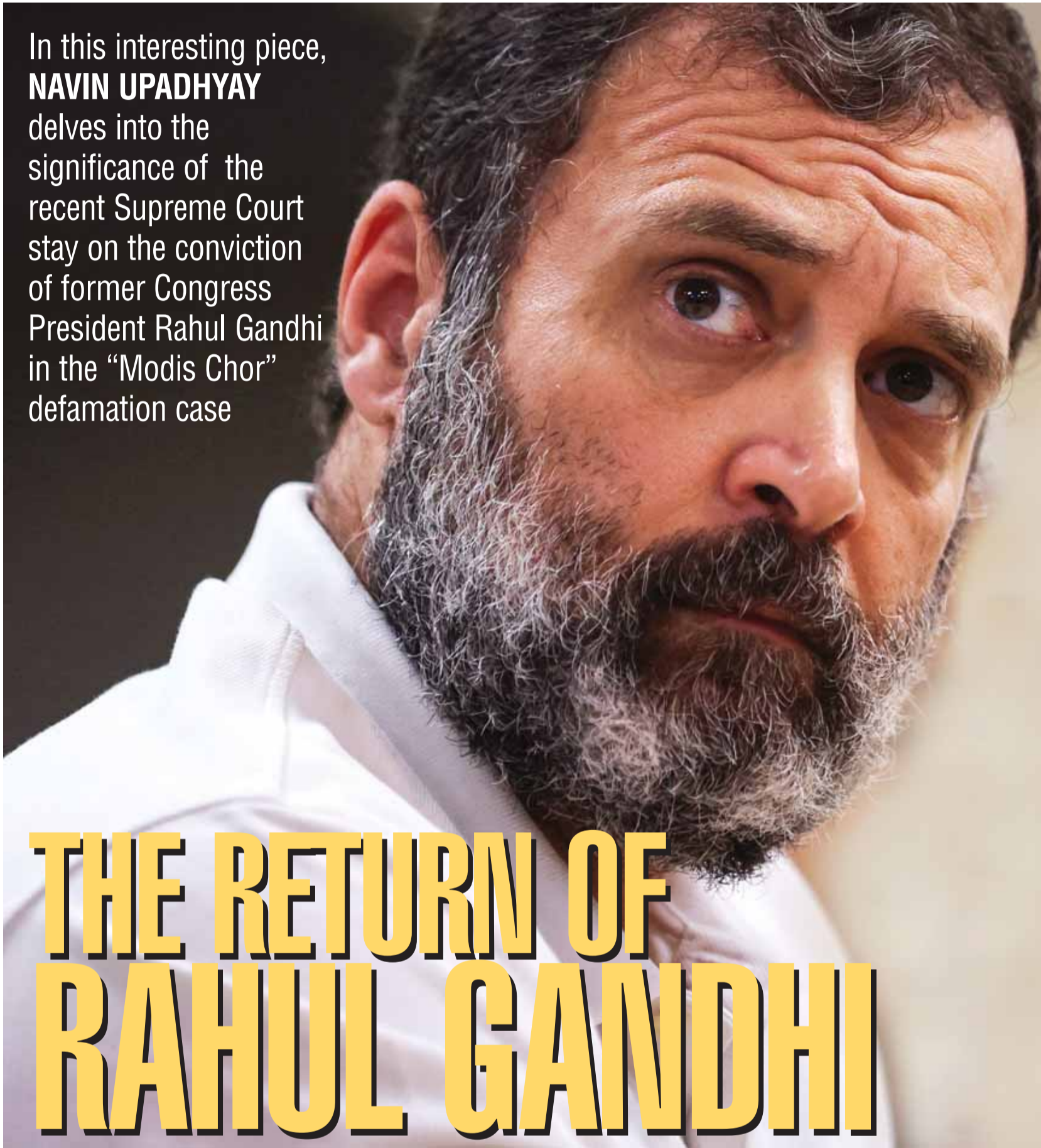
Rajawat tried to step up the attack and two good-looking jump smashes helped him to draw parity at 7-7, but unforced errors continued to undo his good work as Prannoy enjoyed a two-point cushion at the interval. The 21-year-old from Madhya Pradesh tried to stay in the rallies and grabbed four out of five points after resumption to keep snapping at his senior rival's heels.

Prannoy slumped into a pool of errors after the interval as Rajawat levelled the score at 14-14. The youngster managed to move neck-and-neck till 18-18.

"Everyone needs a theme song! It should make you feel like a million dollars"
—Zoey Deschanel



In this interesting piece, **NAVIN UPADHYAY** delves into the significance of the recent Supreme Court stay on the conviction of former Congress President Rahul Gandhi in the "Modis Chor" defamation case



THE RETURN OF RAHUL GANDHI

The recent Supreme Court stay on the conviction of former Congress President Rahul Gandhi in the "Modis Chor" defamation case has sent shockwaves through the Indian political landscape. This legal victory not only brought respite to Rahul Gandhi but also set in motion a ripple effect that is poised to shape the political arena in the upcoming state assembly polls and the Lok Sabha elections.

The defamation case lingered in the corridors of justice and emerged as a contentious issue during the 2019 election campaign. However, the Supreme Court's verdict has given a new twist to this protracted legal battle, allowing Rahul Gandhi to refocus on steering his party's strategy for future electoral challenges.

All eyes are now on the Lok Sabha secretariat for the reinstatement of Rahul Gandhi's membership. Any delay may attract criticism, as the Lok Sabha secretariat took just 24 hours to disqualify Rahul Gandhi after his conviction. Swift reinstatement will enable Rahul to actively participate in crucial debates, including the Congress-sponsored no-confidence motion against the Modi government and discussions on the Manipur crisis. As Rahul takes center stage, every word he utters will be broadcast live on TV channels, providing him with a platform to galvanize public opinion.

Not surprisingly, within minutes of the SC verdict, Congress leaders began demanding the immediate reinstatement of Rahul's Lok Sabha membership. Congress President Mallikarjun said, "Gandhi was disqualified as an MP within 24 hours after the Gujarat court verdict. Now let us see in how many hours he is reinstated. This judgment has come from Delhi... The distance between the Supreme Court and Parliament is hardly a kilometer... So I hope he is reinstated, perhaps by night... whether it is done today... how much time it

will take... we have to see... We will await his (Speaker's) order."

Following the court order, Congress leader in Lok Sabha, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, met with Speaker Om Birla and urged him to restore Gandhi's membership. The Lok Sabha Secretariat confirmed that it will consider revoking the suspension of Rahul Gandhi upon receiving a copy of the Supreme Court order.

Congress leader Tarun Gogoi told The Pioneer that if Rahul returned to Lok Sabha by Tuesday, he may take part in the debate on the no-confidence motion. "Rahul Gandhi may speak on the motion if the Speaker restores his membership by Monday or Tuesday," said the Congress leader said.

Looking beyond the parliamentary session, the focus shifts to Rahul's proposed second phase of the Bharat Jodo Yatra. Unlike the first phase, which was mainly a Congress show, this time several opposition leaders are expected to join the foot march, with a focus on reviving the opposition in the Hindi heartland, primarily Uttar Pradesh. Rahul is set to spend three weeks in Uttar Pradesh, possibly joined by stalwarts like Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav and RLD chief Jayant Chaudhary. This second phase of the Bharat Jodo Yatra aims to add another dimension to the evolving political scenario, uniting the opposition under a common vision.

The Yatra's focus on national integration and unity resonates deeply in a climate characterized by polarizing rhetoric. By embarking on this journey from Porbandar to Arunachal Pradesh, Rahul aims to bridge regional divides and connect with people from diverse backgrounds. The Yatra could serve as a platform for Rahul to interact directly with citizens, listen to their concerns, and address their aspirations. In the aftermath of the SC verdict, Congress will project him during the yatra as someone committed to inclusiveness and a

ALL EYES ARE NOW ON THE LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT FOR THE REINSTATEMENT OF RAHUL GANDHI'S MEMBERSHIP. ANY DELAY MAY ATTRACT CRITICISM, AS THE LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT TOOK JUST 24 HOURS TO DISQUALIFY RAHUL GANDHI AFTER HIS CONVICTION. SWIFT REINSTATEMENT WILL ENABLE RAHUL TO ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN CRUCIAL DEBATES, INCLUDING THE CONGRESS-SPONSORED NO-CONFIDENCE MOTION AGAINST THE MODI GOVERNMENT AND DISCUSSIONS ON THE MANIPUR CRISIS. AS RAHUL TAKES CENTER STAGE, EVERY WORD HE UTTERS WILL BE BROADCAST LIVE ON TV CHANNELS, PROVIDING HIM WITH A PLATFORM TO GALVANIZE PUBLIC OPINION



(The writer is Executive Editor of The Pioneer)

WHAT THE SUPREME COURT SAID

The sentence for an offence punishable under Section 499 of the Indian Penal Code is a maximum of two years of a sentence or fine or both. The learned trial judge, in the order passed by him, has awarded the maximum sentence of two years. Except for the admonition to the petitioner by this Court in a contempt proceeding, no other reason has been granted by the learned trial judge while imposing the maximum sentence of two years. It is to be noted that it is only on account of the maximum sentence of two years imposed by the learned trial judge that the

provisions of Section 8(3) of the Representation of Peoples Act came into play. Had the sentence been a day lesser, then the provisions would not have been attracted.

Particularly when the offence was non-cognizable, bailable and compoundable, the least which was expected from the learned trial judge was to give reasons for imposing the maximum punishment. Though the learned appellate court and the High Court have spent voluminous pages in rejecting the applications, these aspects are not seen considered'.

WHAT RAHUL GANDHI'S COUNSEL ABHISEKA MANU SINGHVI ARGUED

- I am yet to see a non-cognizable, bailable, and compoundable offence, which is not against society, which is not kidnapping, rape, and murder, in which the maximum sentence is given. How can this become an offence involving moral turpitude?
- The maximum sentence has the effect of silencing Gandhi for eight years, as it will disqualify him from elections as per the Representation of the People Act.
- There is no prior conviction for Gandhi. There was one contempt case in Supreme Court in which he tendered an apology. Other cases are pending complaints filed by BJP workers.
- Rahul Gandhi is not a hardened criminal. There is no conviction in any case'.
- Rahul has already lost two sessions (of Lok Sabha). If the Supreme Court says no, he will lose the entire term. What is the complainant's interest in ensuring his disqualification as his concern ought to be only the conviction?

DEFAMATION LAW IN INDIA

Defamation under the Indian Penal Code (IPC)

Section 499: This section defines defamation and states that whoever, by words either spoken or intended to be read or by signs or visible representations, makes or publishes any imputation concerning any person intending to harm or knowing or having reason to believe that such imputation will harm the reputation of that person, is said to defame that person.

Section 500: This section deals with the punishment for defamation. Any person found guilty of defamation under Section 499 shall be punished with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years, or with a fine, or with both.

Exceptions to Defamation (IPC)

Section 499: The section also provides certain exceptions under which the act of defamation is not an offence.

These exceptions include imputations made in good faith for the public good, opinions on public conduct, and fair criticism of public servants in the discharge of their public duties.

Procedure for Defamation (Code of Criminal Procedure - CrPC)

Section 198(1) and (2): This section deals with the procedure for taking cognizance of offenses related to defamation. It states that no court shall take cognizance of defamation except upon a complaint made by the person defamed or his/her representative.

It is important to note that defamation can be both a civil and a criminal offense in India. The aggrieved party can file a civil suit for damages seeking compensation for the harm caused to their reputation. Simultaneously, they can also pursue criminal action under the IPC against the person who has allegedly defamed them.

MAJOR DEFAMATION CASES IN INDIA

- **Subramanian Swamy vs. Rahul Gandhi:** In 2014, BJP leader Subramanian Swamy filed a defamation case against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for accusing him of making false statements against the RSS. he case is still ongoing, and the final verdict is pending.
- **Arvind Kejriwal vs. Nitin Gadkari:** In 2014, former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal was sued for defamation by BJP leader Nitin Gadkari after Kejriwal accused him of corruption. Settled out of court.
- **Jayalalithaa vs. The Hindu:** In 2003, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Jayalalithaa filed a defamation case against The Hindu newspaper for publishing an article critical of her government's actions. The case was settled out of court, and The Hindu issued an apology for any unintended insinuation.
- **MJ Akbar vs. Priya Ramani:** In 2018, MJ Akbar, a former Union Minister, filed a defamation case against journalist Priya Ramani after she accused him of sexual harassment. Priya Ramani was acquitted in the defamation case filed by MJ Akbar.
- **Amit Shah vs. Arvind Kejriwal:** In 2014, BJP leader Amit Shah filed a defamation case against Arvind Kejriwal for making allegations of corruption against him. Both parties settled and Shah decided to withdraw the defamation case against each other.
- **Sahara Group vs. SEBI:** In 2013, Sahara Group filed a defamation case against the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) after SEBI accused Sahara of raising funds illegally. The case is still going on.
- **Tata Sons vs. Cyrus Mistry:** In 2016, Tata Sons filed a defamation case against its former Chairman Cyrus Mistry after he was removed from his position and made allegations against the company. Cyrus Mistry's reinstatement as Chairman of Tata Sons was upheld, but claims of oppression and mismanagement rejected.
- **Ramdev vs. The Indian Medical Association:** In 2012, Yoga guru Baba Ramdev sued the Indian Medical Association for defamation after they questioned his claims about curing certain diseases through yoga. In 2012, both parties settled, and the case was withdrawn.
- **Salman Khan vs. The Times of India:** In 2012, Bollywood actor Salman Khan filed a defamation case against The Times of India for publishing an article suggesting his involvement in a hit-and-run accident. he case was settled out of court, and The Times of India issued an apology to Salman Khan.
- **Lalit Modi vs. Sushma Swaraj:** In 2015, former IPL Chairman Lalit Modi accused then External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj of defamation for labeling him a "fugitive" in connection with financial irregularities in IPL.



HEPATITIS CAN BE FATAL

GOING THE WHO WAY

The WHO has kept the 2030 as a deadline to achieve a 90% reduction in new chronic hepatitis infections and a 65% reduction in hepatitis mortality. We must eliminate hepatitis as a public health threat, it says. It is now pinning hopes on its four-pronged strategy to combat hepatitis:

- Policy makers should incorporate hepatitis testing and treatment into packages of essential primary health care services, recognizing that testing and treatment must be accessible within the community..., and included as part of universal health coverage.
- Health and community leaders should reach out to, empower and engage vulnerable and high-risk communities specifically, and people from all walks of life generally, building on the immense success of similar initiatives for HIV, as well as the Region's 'Nothing for us, without us' approach.
- Policy makers and health care providers – including in the private sector – should actively integrate services for hepatitis, HIV and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), in alignment with the Region's integrated Action Plan for Viral Hepatitis, HIV and STIs 2022–2030, and with a focus on increasing efficiency and reducing gaps and fragmentation.
- Countries should realign – as appropriate – the funding allocated to each of the three diseases, with a focus on delivering maximum impact, based on current disease burdens.



Hepatitis causes liver damage and cancer and kills over a million people annually. Of the five types of hepatitis infections, hepatitis B and C are most threatening. If current infections continue, it could kill more people than malaria, tuberculosis, and HIV combined by 2040. But do you know, hepatitis is highly preventable, treatable, and curable. ARCHANA JYOTI brings a report

Your liver silently performs over 500 vital functions every single day to keep you alive. No doubt, 'You've only got one life, and you've only got one liver' was the theme of the World Hepatitis Day campaign observed on July 29. But Hepatitis, a liver disease, can endanger everything. In hepatitis, liver cells become inflamed and liver functions are adversely affected. Hepatitis is usually a virus-borne disease and is often caused by consuming contaminated water and food, although alcohol, drugs, and intoxicant substances can also cause this disease. Sometimes it may be a result of an autoimmune disease.

A healthy person falls prey to hepatitis somewhere in the world every 10 seconds, that means 8000 people get infected with hepatitis every day.

Almost half of the world's population is currently facing the havoc of floods. Under such circumstances, there is an apprehension of a huge increase in the cases of hepatitis.

In fact, a recent study has flagged that individuals who have been cured of hepatitis C infection still face a substantially greater risk of death compared with the general population – between 3 and 14 times higher depending on liver disease stage, a latest study has cautioned. The study is published in the BMJ.

Based on data from more than 20,000 patients with a hepatitis C cure, the results show that drug and liver-related causes of death were the main drivers of excess deaths – and highlight the importance of continued support to fully realise the benefits of a hepatitis C cure.

Historically, hepatitis C was treated with interferon-based therapy, which was

TYPES OF VIRAL HEPATITIS

It is of five types from A to E depending on the virus causing the infection. Hepatitis A and E are caused by the use of contaminated water and infected food items. Generally, hepatitis A occurs in children, while E occurs in adults.

Hepatitis B and C are caused by infected blood or needles and unprotected sex. If a pregnant woman is infected, the unborn baby can also get hepatitis B or C. Hepatitis D usually occurs in patients who have been previously infected with hepatitis B.



SYMPTOMS

In most cases, there are no symptoms in the beginning on the basis of which hepatitis can be suspected. Patients reach the doctor very late. When a person gets infected with the virus, liver functions begin to be adversely affected. There is a decrease in the production of bile, which leads to digestive disturbances. The speed of removal of bilirubin, cholesterol, hormones and medicines slows down. Digestion of carbohydrates, fats and proteins is adversely affected. Initial symptoms of the disease include generalised weakness, fatigue, fever, abdominal pain, vomiting, loss of appetite, yellowing of urine and eyes. With the progression of the disease, symptoms like pain in the joints, yellowing of the skin and faeces start appearing. Some of the other symptoms include constipation, indigestion and foul smell in the faeces.

often ineffective. But in 2011, new medications called direct acting antivirals (DAA) were developed. Now more than 95% of patients treated with DAAs achieve a "virological cure" and have a significantly lower risk of death than untreated patients.

Yet the question of what prognosis cured patients can

expect compared with the general population remains the subject of debate.

To explore this further, a team of UK and Canadian researchers set out to measure mortality rates in individuals with a hepatitis C cure and assess how these rates compare with the general population. Nevertheless, the WHO report says that India has the highest levels on tobacco products and providing tobacco dependence treatments. Also, India has prohibited e-cigarettes and nicotine products, and there is a comprehensive prohibition on tobacco advertising, says the report.

In the latest anti-tobacco measures, India has become a

They analysed data from three population studies carried out in British Columbia (Canada), Scotland and England involving 21,790 individuals who achieved a hepatitis C cure between 2014 and 2019.

Individuals were grouped by the severity of liver disease at the time of cure: pre-cirrhosis (British Columbia and Scotland studies only), compensated cirrhosis, and end stage liver disease.

Data were then linked to national medical registries and several causes of death were examined, including liver cancer, liver failure, drug-related death, external causes (mainly accidents, homicides and suicides) and diseases of the circulatory system, over an average follow-up period of 2-4 years.

Most participants did not have cirrhosis at cure. The average age of pre-cirrhosis patients in Scotland was 44 years and 56 years in British Columbia, and males outnumbered females across all studies and disease severity groups (65-75%).

A total of 1,572 (7%) of participants died during follow-up. The leading causes of death were drug related (24%), liver failure (18%) and liver cancer (16%).

After taking account of age, death rates were considerably higher than the general population across all disease severity groups and settings.

For patients without cirrhosis, the leading cause of excess death was drug related, whereas in patients with cirrhosis, the two leading drivers were liver cancer and liver failure.

These are observational findings and the researchers acknowledge that they may not apply to all settings, particularly where injecting drug use is not the dominant mode of hepatitis C transmission.

TIPS TO PREVENT HEPATITIS

Hepatitis can be controlled only by maintaining hygiene & cleanliness, washing hands before eating. Non-contaminated water and food are necessary to prevent hepatitis. Be careful while drinking outside water, especially the water cooled by market ice. Avoid eating outside food. Do not use previously cut fruits, salads or chaat. Do not use salad of vegetables growing under the ground during the rainy season. Never use already used needles, razor or toothbrush. It is not known during

blood transfusion whether the blood is infected or not, so tests for HIV and hepatitis must be done at an interval of 1 month and 3 months after blood transfusion.

Food : Do not eat food with excess oil, ghee and spices. Drinking buttermilk, coconut water, seasonal fruits juice and sugarcane juice helps to maintain a healthy liver.

Ayurveda: To avert and treat hepatitis eat green and leafy vegetables, but not raw. Vegetables like bottle gourd, apple gourd, zucchini, pointed



DR R P PARASHER
Chief Medical Officer (Ayurveda), MCD

gourd, amaranth, ivy gourd, tomatoes, drum stick, moringa,

spinach, scarlet gourd, jackfruit, etc. and fruits like papaya, apple, pears, pomegranate, peach, apricot, guava, fig, kiwi, pineapple, orange, etc. are useful.

Medicines: Effective treatment of hepatitis is available in Ayurveda with medicines like Bhuinamla, Punarnava, Makoy, Kasni, Guduchi, Kutki, Kalmegh, Shunthi, Vidau, Chitrak, Jhau, Daruhaldi, Rohitak, Tulsi, Pittapapada, Shyonak, Loha Bhasma, Swarnamakshik Bhasma, etc.

STATES TAKE STEPS TO TACKLE THE DISEASE



PROFESSOR (DR) SUMI NANDWANI
Head of Department, Microbiology, PGICH Noida



PROFESSOR (DR) ARUN KUMAR SINGH
Director, PGICH Noida

● From May 1, Post Graduate Institute of Child Health, (PGICH), Noida started Hepatitis B and C viral load testing free of cost for patients under National Viral Hepatitis Control Programme with support of the State Government. Head of Department, Microbiology, PGICH Noida, Professor (Dr) Sumi Nandwani said that the molecular testing is done for patients diagnosed with life threatening hepatitis B & C viral infections. Viral load testing is useful for starting treatment and monitoring disease progress. Patients are

coming from the Institute, District GB Nagar and adjoining districts. Director, PGICH Noida, Professor (Dr) Arun Kumar Singh, mentioned that this facility is not available in public sector in nearby districts. Poor patients can be catered free of cost. So far, around 300 samples have been processed, added Dr Nandwani.

● With Hepatitis 'B' and Hepatitis 'C' emerging as a major health problem in flood-hit Odisha, the State government has become the first in the country to declare them as notifiable diseases.

EARLY DIAGNOSIS, ACCESS TO TREATMENT IS KEY

The severity of the disease varies widely, with some cases showing no initial symptoms, leading to undiagnosed cases that cause gradual damage over time.

The real threat lies in the virus's ability to establish chronic infection, perpetuating inflammation and scarring in the liver, eventually leading to liver fibrosis and cirrhosis.

Cirrhosis, the advanced stage of liver scarring, is irreversible and can lead to liver failure and hepatocellular carcinoma, making early identification and intervention critical. Hepatitis C also exhibits extrahepatic manifestations, complicating diagnosis and requiring a holistic approach to management.

Despite the severity of the disease, there is hope in therapeutic advancements. Novel direct-acting antiviral agents have revolutionized Hepatitis C management, offering high cure rates. Early diagnosis and access to these treatments can preserve liver function and improve patient outcomes.

Prevention remains the ultimate shield against Hepatitis C.



DR AMIT MIGLANI
Director and Head of the Department of Gastroenterology, Asian Hospital, Faridabad

Educating individuals about transmission modes and promoting safe practices is crucial in reducing new infections. Healthcare providers must advocate for harm reduction strategies and routine screening for those at risk.

The gravity of Hepatitis C is undeniable, as it affects not only the liver but also various body systems. Physicians must recognize clinical clues and intervene promptly to mitigate its progression. By prioritizing prevention, early detection, and the latest therapies, we can collectively combat Hepatitis C and work towards a future where this virus no longer casts a shadow on patients' lives.

Move to make India tobacco-free in 'Amrit Kaal'

After economists, public health experts, a Parliamentary panel too bats for higher tobacco tax, reports THE HEALTH PIONEER

Concerned at the growing cases of tobacco-induced cancers in the country, a parliamentary committee has suggested raising taxes on tobacco products, stating that increasing their market price would make them less affordable. The suggestion has come not without reason.

"This will result in lower consumption and decrease the risk of tobacco-related diseases, including cancer," the panel said.

The report which was presented in Rajya Sabha recently has come close on the heels of a study by the global agency World Health Organisation (WHO) which highlights that 5.6 billion people – 71% of the world's population – are now protected with at least one best

practice policy to help save lives from deadly tobacco – five times more than in 2007.

"The Health Ministry must pursue with the Department of Revenue to expedite the decision on raising taxes on tobacco products," the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Health and Family Welfare said in its 147th report.

The Parliamentary panel recommendations on tax hike on tobacco items echo views of several economists and anti-tobacco activists who have been urging the Government to impose a substantial hike in tax on all tobacco products and stronger laws which would not only bring the best out of human capital by ensuring better health of citizens, but also

help in achieving Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a five trillion dollar economy by 2025.

Four countries (Australia, Lithuania, Nicaragua and Vanuatu) have moved to the best-practice group by levying taxes that comprise at least 75% of retail price. However, India is moving slowly in this direction.

Nevertheless, the WHO report says that India has the highest levels on tobacco products and providing tobacco dependence treatments. Also, India has prohibited e-cigarettes and nicotine products, and there is a comprehensive prohibition on tobacco advertising, says the report.

In the latest anti-tobacco measures, India has become a



first country in the world to issuing a notification mandating anti-tobacco warnings for OTT platforms. The Ministry of Health and Ministry of Information and Broadcasting will take strict action upon failure to comply with the rules to come into force soon.

In fact, BJP MP Manoj Tiwari, recently voiced his con-

cerns over the misuse of Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms for tobacco promotion while addressing the parliament.

Noting that after movies, OTT platforms have become quite popular these days, he expressed concern at the alarming prevalence of smoking scenes involving tobacco products in numerous series and scenes.

Appreciating the Government's move to tighten the noose around the tobacco industry which has been luring the youth into deadly tobacco grips, Tiwari, himself an actor said that such a legislation was the need of the hour.

According to the new guidelines, streaming platforms will be required to dis-

play anti-tobacco warnings similar to those seen in movies shown in theaters and on television. The move aims to dissuade tobacco consumption and protect people from the harmful effects of tobacco.

The WHO Regional Director, Dr Poonam Khetrpal also praised the Indian government's commitment to safeguarding the health and well-being of its citizens, expressing support for the Health Ministry's recent actions that reinforce India's commitment to fighting against the harmful effects of tobacco and ensuring that OTT platforms are used responsibly to entertain and educate the masses.

The argument that anti-tobacco measures do not help

as asserted by a few film makers and OTT platforms falls flat given that in the last 15 years since WHO's MPOWER tobacco control measures were introduced globally, smoking rates have declined.

Without this decline there would be an estimated 300 million more smokers in the world today, says the WHO.

"These data show that slowly but surely, more and more people are being protected from the harms of tobacco by WHO's evidence-based best-practice policies," said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General.

Eight countries are just one MPOWER policy away from joining the leaders in tobacco control: Ethiopia, Iran, Ireland, Jordan,

Madagascar, Mexico, New Zealand, and Spain.

"While smoking rates have been going down, tobacco is still the leading cause of preventable death in the world – largely due to relentless marketing campaigns by the tobacco industry," said Michael R. Bloomberg, WHO Global Ambassador for Noncommunicable Diseases and Injuries and founder of Bloomberg Philanthropies.

There is still much work to be done, 44 countries remain unprotected by any of WHO's MPOWER measures and 53 countries still do not have complete smoking bans in health-care facilities. Meanwhile, only about half of countries have smoke-free private workplaces and restaurants.

India's G20 presidency: Focus on Mass Entrepreneurship

As it gains greater international recognition, India assuming charge of the G20 Presidency can be an ideal opportunity to address endemic rates of high youth unemployment, which was reported in 2022 across G20 nations, such as South Africa (more than 50 per cent) as well as India, Italy and Saudi Arabia (around 23-24 per cent).

Why Mass Entrepreneurship Counts

As per the International Labour Organisation, the overall number of unemployed youth globally was estimated at 73 million in 2022 - six million above the 2019 pre-pandemic level. Youth from minority religious and ethnic groups, indigenous communities, women and LGBTQIA+ were most severely affected. It is in this context that Mass Entrepreneurship is crucial. The term denotes the millions of common local enterprises using indigenous inputs to serve local needs across every community, typically hiring or raising income levels of between five and 20 people.

To thrive, Mass Entrepreneurship requires policy, financial and enterprise development tools that promote self-employment and speed up the growth of MSMEs (micro, small and medium enterprises). For instance, a successful youth entrepreneurship development programme in Northeast India helped establish more than 1,000 grassroots enterprises and created over 55,000 jobs between 2012 and 2017.

By encouraging and supporting mass entrepreneurship, countries can unlock the economic potential of their youth and marginalised communities such as women, tribal/indigenous people, migrants and minority communities, and others.

Thereby, it helps drive innovation, creativity and inclusivity while overcoming social and cultural barriers, including issues such as lack of access to credit and hurdles in regulatory frameworks and trade facilitation.



The Benefits of Collaboration

During the past three decades, the United Nations has been forging collaboration among countries to address climate change - a pressing challenge confronting humanity in the 21st century. Worldwide, ESG has been adopted by stakeholders since it helps companies and countries manage risks as well as opportunities linked to environmental, social and governance norms.

Without active partnerships with large corporations and the MSME segment - the latter being an integral part of global value chains - countries cannot meet their ESG targets. Therefore, a key incentive to assist MSMEs in becoming inclusive and sustainable is their significant size, which represents around 90 per cent of enterprises, 50 per cent of GDP and more than half of the

employment generated globally in 2020, according to the World Bank.

An excellent example exemplifying ESG adoption is a 35-year-old entrepreneur's unit in rural India. His water-saving agricultural mulching film benefits 200,000 farmers by conserving water, preserving soil health, and contributing to sustainable agriculture. Launched in 2011, his unit has created 255 local jobs, facilitating economic growth and community development through the sharing of knowledge and global best practices.

The above example shows why a special focus is required on grassroots entrepreneurs who are often left behind in institutional programmes, despite the value they bring in driving local job creation. With such scenarios in mind, the G20 must actively encourage MSME adoption of ESG good practices via supportive busi-

ness legislation, procurement programmes and financial incentives.

The G20 YEA has been built upon a tradition of collaboration between the world's young entrepreneurs that began in Italy in 2009 and continued at successive meetings in Canada, Mexico, Argentina, France, Germany, Russia, China, Turkey, Australia and Japan.

But swiftly changing business conditions, which include rising energy costs, supply chain disruptions, community lockdowns and shortages of raw materials, have compounded the challenges posed by ongoing issues such as climate change, rising social intolerance and growing barriers to international mobility.

To promote the cause of young entrepreneurs, the Hamburg edition of the G20 YEA meeting in October 2022 called on business and politi-

cians to support and advance entrepreneurship by promoting an inclusive global recovery; fostering peace through sustainable growth and economic inclusion and encouraging climate and energy entrepreneurship. The biggest advantage of the G20 YEA is that young entrepreneurs throughout the globe receive a chance to network, collaborate and share their ideas with venture capitalists.

Helping Marginalised, Vulnerable and Underserved Segments

While savvy entrepreneurs can leverage the G20 YEA, governments, corporates and NGOs should also support grassroots entrepreneurs from marginalised groups, vulnerable sections (women, Dalits, etc.) and underserved areas to participate in the deliberations and recommendations to make G20 truly inclusive for MSMEs.

India's G20 Sherpa, Amitabh Kant, stated recently that MSMEs should be encouraged to focus on producing quality goods using renewable energy sources for catering to global markets. Besides, he suggested that regulatory policies should be eased and clearances regarding the functioning of MSMEs be digitalised so physical interaction with government officials is eliminated. Here, new-age technology should be leveraged to completely digitalise Indian MSMEs. Simultaneously, the economic value and general potential of Indian MSMEs should be conveyed to the world at large.

The Criticality of Digital

Furthermore, supported entrepreneurs should be assisted in adopting "digital readiness", which comprises three essential elements: digital presence, digital payments and digital commerce. Also, to help MSMEs cater to global markets, a global consensus on defining, understanding and recognising these segments transparently is important.

Beyond the YEA deliberations, members of the G20 can launch Youth Entrepreneurship Development initiatives, such as Business Idea Contests, Entrepreneurial Hackathons, Mobile Mentor Clinics and Industry Incubation Centres. Youth from underserved communities can also be motivated to refine and develop their business ideas under the guidance of a cadre of accredited mentors.

Customised training, business networking and peer learning opportunities can be delivered through webinars, videos and user-friendly mobile apps to help MSMEs adopt international best practices and market understanding to build scalable businesses. All of this can transform their entrepreneurial dreams into reality and change the trajectory of global economic growth and social transformation.

(The writer is a founder and Managing Trustee, Bharatiya Yuva Shakti Trust)

India's G20 Presidency aims to tackle youth unemployment by promoting mass entrepreneurship, especially among marginalised communities. Collaboration with large corporations and MSMEs is essential to address environmental and social challenges through ESG adoption. Inclusivity for MSMEs and digital readiness are critical, along with supporting grassroots entrepreneurs. G20 YEA facilitates networking and collaboration among young entrepreneurs worldwide to drive global economic growth and social transformation



LAKSHMI VENKATARAMAN VENKATESAN

PERSPECTIVE

Era of Indians' influence in United Kingdom

From living in a refugee camp to the British House of Lords, Rami Ranger's extraordinary life journey showcases triumph over adversity. As an Indian immigrant, he overcame challenges, rising from car cleaner to Chairman of two thriving UK export businesses. His story emphasises giving back to society, leaving a lasting legacy of resilience and perseverance



BRIJ K GUHARE

Jeffrey Archer recently made a prescient remark while speaking in Gurugram during a book launch: "The Jewish century is over in the UK; the Indian century has just begun." He clearly mentioned that the UK is now going to be taken over by the Indians.

He compared Indians, like the Jewish community, who entered England 30-40 years ago. He stated that both groups have followed similar immigrant paths in Britain. Jews, who came in large waves at the end of the 19th century, faced riots and racism. They were stigmatised and bullied. But they forged a path through all that to find acceptance, becoming one of the wealthiest and most stable minorities in the land. There are differences, of course, but something fairly similar has happened to many of the Indians who came to Britain in the mid-20th century, following the collapse of the Raj and the horrors of partition. Both can make a reasonable claim to the "model minority" level coined by sociologist William Peterson.

Albert Einstein once said, "Strive not to be a success, but rather to be of value." The above quote perfectly matches Lord Rami Ranger, CBE, a Member of the House of Lords of the UK, who aspired to be both through his journey; his endeavor has been a success. A man who casually migrated from India to the UK during struggling days to find a suitable placement and proved himself as a successful entrepreneur, social reformer, politician, and an extraordinary human being who set an example not only in the United Kingdom but for the rest of the world that nothing is impossible if a per-



son has decided to achieve his goals in a true manner, in any corner of the world, possible by three tools - determination, passion, and hard work.

In my opinion, Lord Rami Ranger's life journey is truly extraordinary, showcasing the triumph of the human spirit in the face of adversity. His story of coming to the United Kingdom as an immigrant and rising from humble beginnings

to become a successful businessman and respected figure in British society is highly inspiring and motivational.

Arriving in London with high hopes, he encountered numerous challenges, including financial constraints and racial prejudice. However, his unwavering determination and strength of character enabled him to overcome these

obstacles and achieve remarkable success. From starting as a car cleaner and cook to becoming the Chairman of two of the fastest-growing export businesses in the UK, his achievements are commendable.

Moreover, Lord Rami Ranger's contributions to the British economy have been rightfully recognised with multiple Queen's Awards, highlighting his significant impact on the

nation. Beyond his business accomplishments, he has also dedicated himself to raising the profile of Asians in Britain and advocating for the contributions of the Hindu community to society. This commitment to social causes earned him prestigious honors like the MBE and CBE.

The journey from a refugee camp to the British House of Lords

showcases the incredible journey of a man who has become a beacon for the British Indian community, excelling as a businessman, campaigner, and philanthropist.

What sets Lord Rami Ranger apart is his modest and principled approach to success. Instead of seeking rapid recognition and financial gain, he has focused on building a strong foundation for his life and business endeavors. His story stands as a testament to the adage "slowly but surely wins the race."

Moreover, his involvement in the UK's political landscape, aiding in the election of Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, reflects his deep love for India and belief in the value of Indian culture. He has also been an advocate for unity and has consistently spoken out against divisive elements.

The story of Lord Rami Ranger's life, as described in the book "From Nothing to Everything," resonates with many Asians who have succeeded and contributed to their adopted nations. It emphasises the importance of giving back to society and bettering the lives of others, regardless of caste, creed, or culture.

In conclusion, Lord Rami Ranger's journey is a testament to resilience, hard work, and the power of perseverance. His accomplishments and dedication to making a positive impact on society make him an inspiration for people from all walks of life. His story is a reminder that with determination and a strong moral compass, one can overcome any challenge and leave a lasting legacy.

(The writer is Programme Director, ICCR, New Delhi)



YOUR WEEK AHEAD

MADHU KOTIYA



ARIES March 21-April 19

An eventful week lies ahead, filled with swift and dynamic activities that will ignite the warrior within you. Busy as you may be, this will lead you to a deeper understanding of your life's purpose and goals. The week promises joy on the domestic front, alongside indications of travel, particularly work-related and strenuous in the beginning. Job-related changes may require movement or relocation, leading to eventual happiness by the week's end. Nostalgia may strike mid-week, driving you to connect with loved ones and revisit cherished childhood memories, possibly prompting a visit to your hometown. Remember to avoid haste and aggression. A positive message is foreseen, with the potential for financial gains, gifts, or inheritance.

Lucky number 21 | Lucky colour Pink
Lucky day Wednesday



LEO July 23-Aug 22

In the midst of life's smooth sailing, unexpected disruptions may arise, putting you in challenging situations. Whether it's an argument with a colleague or a conflict at home, fear may tempt you to retreat. However, as a true Leo, your strength and bravery, both mentally and physically, will guide you. Face these challenges with confidence, and you'll discover easy solutions. Your inner wisdom will help you overcome obstacles, aided by intuition and emotions that will benefit your romantic endeavours. New relationships, love messages, proposals, and even romantic gestures or gifts may come your way this week. Take control of your life and dreams, harnessing your inner power to navigate through whatever comes your way.

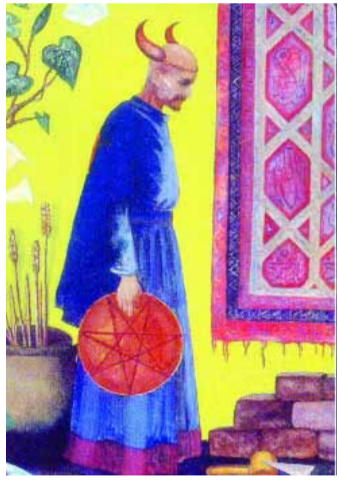
Lucky number 16 | Lucky colour Coral
Lucky day Saturday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

Prepare for a magical call as sudden and profound changes loom ahead, beyond your understanding and control. Embrace their impact on your life. Though destiny can seem unpredictable, keen observation can unveil its signs and make it less mysterious. Take swift and calculated actions, avoiding haste. A charming new friend might ignite a rapid romance, and air travel with your loved one is on the horizon. Utilize your energy and communication skills to captivate your partner and solve stubborn issues swiftly. Express your love openly and passionately. Some may face a tough choice between their spouse and a newfound love; seek inspiration from within and your conscience for guidance. Embrace the enchantment that awaits!

Lucky number 7 | Lucky colour Mustard
Lucky day Thursday



TAURUS April 20-May 20

Expect a delightful week ahead, filled with harmonious family connections and mutual understanding, bringing cheer and a radiant smile to your face. Domestic bliss will shine through your demeanour. Singles will be elated as love messages and marriage proposals come their way, possibly leading to meeting their ideal partner. Midweek will bring joyous celebrations with family and friends, fostering renewed bonds and sparking creative inspiration. Spiritual growth and a newfound spark are also in the cards. You may choose to donate some of your hard-earned money to charity. It's a favourable time for financial transactions and loan repayments. This week, your generosity will extend to supporting your loved ones in their financial needs.

Lucky number 17 | Lucky colour Magenta
Lucky day Sunday



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

With a sense of empowerment and motivation, you're geared up to pursue your goals passionately. Your strength will propel you towards turning dreams into reality. It's an opportune time to build friendships and partnerships. In the week's midpoint, introspection may reveal insights into others' actions and motivations. Your caring nature shines, offering support to those in need. Love and romance will flourish on the personal front, and you'll find solace in art, music, and poetry. However, remain cautious not to let dreams overshadow practicality. Balancing emotions and logic will help you overcome potential challenges with ease. Embrace this dynamic journey of growth and fulfillment. Embrace this dynamic journey of growth and fulfillment, finding harmony between your heart and mind. Stay resilient and focused on your path.

Lucky number 11 | Lucky colour Yellow
Lucky day Monday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

Now is the time for renewal and starting anew. Embrace your mistakes as part of learning and leave the past behind. Step forward confidently, without being hindered by shadows of the past. Some issues may resist diplomacy, tempting you to act forcefully. However, with courage and clarity, you can resolve conflicts and arguments. The week's end brings intriguing dreams or gifts, but be cautious of tempting offers and their consequences. Stay true to your beliefs and exercise caution in accepting anything hastily. Trust your instincts and maintain vigilance over your aspirations. It may be wiser to refrain from pursuing certain paths altogether. Stay steadfast on your journey to safeguard your dreams. Stay steadfast on your journey to safeguard your dreams fearlessly.

Lucky number 20 | Lucky colour Black
Lucky day Tuesday



GEMINI May 21-June 20

This week, your decision-making capability will be strong, allowing you to make important choices on various matters, be it related to health, emotions, job, or career. You possess self-belief and confidence in yourself. Around midweek, you might encounter someone with contrasting qualities and psychic issues, which could be somewhat bothersome initially, but you'll eventually handle the situation well. This person may be a new colleague at your workplace and may play a negative role in your professional life. Despite this challenge, you will remain firmly grounded in reality. Your honest, systematic approach, determination, and intelligence will empower you to overcome these obstacles and prove your worth. Your ability to balance different aspects of life and captivate others with your charisma remains true to your character. Keep shining brightly!

Lucky number 14 | Lucky colour Sky Blue
Lucky day Tuesday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

This week, you may find yourself fascinated by fantasies and daydreams, but be cautious of overindulgence in material pursuits. If ego-driven fantasies have built a fortress, it's time to let go. Adopt a down-to-earth approach and embrace the spiritual call. Walls may eventually crumble, so keep dreams realistic. Temporary pleasures may lead to lasting consequences. Towards the week's end, expect swift and significant changes, including the possibility of a speedy change of residence. An important person might enter or exit your life during this time. Stay open to transitions and embrace the transformations ahead. Be receptive to the shifts and opportunities this week brings. Embrace growth and welcome new connections, as they may lead to meaningful experiences and insights. Trust the unfolding journey ahead.

Lucky number 19 | Lucky colour White
Lucky day Friday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

Stay patient and mentally strong as the upcoming week may present negative challenges in health, home, or work. Unexpected events could trigger mental tension, but your resilience will act as a shield. You might encounter skeptics or opponents, or face wild energy on the road. Embrace compromise as a strategic approach. Stay composed even on fiery grounds. Regret and anxiety may dominate the week's end, keeping you awake with thoughts of changing the past. Instead, focus on addressing real problems before they harm you. Take a step back and defuse potential issues. Embrace the present and safeguard your well-being. Stay patient and strong amidst negative challenges in health, home, or work. Embrace compromise, defuse problems, and safeguard well-being.

Lucky number 12 | Lucky colour Saffron
Lucky day Wednesday



CANCER June 21-July 22

This week looks promising for you, as the stars align in your favour. Your creative, enterprising, and adventurous nature ensures the successful completion of tasks and projects. Building a strong foundation leads to stable results. Midweek may bring emotional challenges, but support from your spouse or a fruitful partnership will help. Expect new relations in both personal and professional aspects, with singles receiving signals of love. Married couples will experience a strong bond. However, be wary of manipulative individuals seeking to take advantage of your simplicity. Use your commanding presence and diplomatic skills to overcome negativity and protect yourself from unscrupulous characters. Stay confident and focused on the positive energy surrounding you.

Lucky number 9 | Lucky colour Lavender
Lucky day Thursday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

The week commences with joyous celebrations, be it weddings, anniversaries, parties, or community events. Gratitude fills your heart as you acknowledge the abundance in your life and appreciate everyone around you. The new project or job requires boldness and swift action for the success you crave. You possess the skills to embark on this adventure and see it through to completion. Harness the fresh surge of power and initiative to your advantage, achieving your deepest desires. Towards the week's end, you may encounter a perceptive female figure, possibly your boss. Honesty is essential in your interactions, though you may inadvertently engage in heated debates. Through it all, you'll gain wisdom, becoming wiser without even realizing it.

Lucky number 3 | Lucky colour Sea Green
Lucky day Saturday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20

This week emphasizes constant changes and self-development. If you've been feeling bored, try having some fun for a refreshing change. However, if you're overly occupied with minor tasks, consider cutting back. It's crucial to control your finances to avoid chaos. Balancing family and career is vital to maintain financial stability. Sooner or later, you'll need to reduce expenses. Focus on your health too, with a new regime, diet plan, and exercise. Despite challenges (represented by black clouds), the sun shines in the background, symbolizing hope. Every new beginning emerges from an end. Enlightenment comes from using your mental and spiritual powers positively. At week's end, take time to rejuvenate your body and mind for healing.

Lucky number 22 | Lucky colour Brown
Lucky day Friday

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Shiva shows how the world evolved



Taking off from the previous issue, first, the symbology of Damru needs attention. With its play, the equilibrated state of the primordial source gets shaken, when the primal sound note 'Om' gets excited. Now going by the scientific perception, once there is entropy (disorder), it multiplies in geometric progression. It so happened following excitation of Om sound also. In the process, first came into play Energy-trinity - Sata, Rajasa, and Tamasa. Lord Shiva's Trident is symbolic of his power. Three phalanges of the trident, branching out of the base rod, imply three dimensions of energies emanating from a singularity. Following random mutation of these three primal energies, emerged multitude of differentiated energy streams. The harmony and symphony of those energy streams led to all creations. First, up above in the sky. The ground thus got laid down for creation of life cycle on earth plane. Moon, playing from the front carries forward cosmic forces on earth. Moon, thus, serves as the interface between the cosmic world above and life mechanism on earth plane.

Thus, comes into being a life cycle, which runs in succession. It is reflected by running water stream of the perennial river Ganges originating from Lord Shiva's hair locks. Water travels from its source to the sea, extending life all through its run. We are aware that but for water there would be no live form-existence. Science also believes that the first live existence emerged in water. Water running down the river stream, as also in the sea, evaporates. It then takes the form of cloud, and again rains back in purified form to recharge the water bodies on earth every now and then. All forms of life follow a similar cycle. We are born and then after pursuing one's journey here in this world for a while, we meet the end of our form-existence. Life's journey however does not end in finality with death. It rather gets recycled with a new rejuvenated body-encasement, charged with fresh vigour and strength. The way recycled water appears in purified form. Life's journey thus continues unabated changing its garb again and again.

In the second imagery, Lord Shiva is shown mounted on a bull. He has in His entourage assortment of multitude

forms of existences, some of them weird and even invisible. To name a few, divine beings; human beings; devilish existences; animals; birds; goblins, and even invisible existences such as ghost.

Symbolically, His entourage is indicative of the multipolar manifest world with all its enormity and diversity. This symbol stands for the dynamic world ever on the move at its own pace, as a bull,

while pulling a cart keeps moving unprovoked at a constant speed. It will not stop in the way till it reaches a place designated for being fed and taking rest. After a while, the bull again takes the journey forward. After reaching the desired destination, it again reverts to its normal place of abode after completing the voyage. The manifest world too, after being on the run for a specified time, gets back to the primal source to acquire a restful state, whence it gets recharged once again. Following which, out of the seeds of life withdrawn into primal source, fresh creation cycle takes off.

Let us now have a look at those forming Lord Shiva's entourage. It exemplifies multitude of existences forming this world. It will be important to note that as per Indian perception approximately 8.4 million species are there in existence. Perhaps, even the chroniclers of modern science suggest a number close to Indian perception. The divine beings are personification of the cosmic forces, vital to creation, sustenance, and recycling of existential order. Human beings are said to be armed with intelligence and

awareness level, much higher than other creatures. The onus, thus, lies on them to work towards qualitative existence of the whole living order. Devilish existences imply ignorant people having a clouded mind. Because their intelligence level is under limitation, they are primarily driven by animalistic instincts. They, therefore, are not expected to be conscious about their collective obligations. It also implies all negative orientation of mind that may prove detrimental to harmonious and peaceful coexistence. The presence of invisible existences such as ghosts, make out a purposeful reference. These unseen creatures supposedly symbolise the formless existence during the interregnum period between two successive lives. They, therefore, symbolise continuum between successive lives. In a way it can be said that Lord Shiva's entourage presents a picture of all seen and unseen existences forming this living world.

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