

LG, WATER MIN LOCK HORNS OVER FLOOD

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi's Water Minister Saurabh Bhardwaj and Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena on Friday came to verbal blows over the deployment of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) team during a media interaction following a joint inspection of a dysfunctional regulator which has triggered waterlogging in the heart of the capital.

Saxena said this is not the time to resort to a blame game or point fingers at each other as he along with chief minister Arvind Kejriwal, ministers Atishi and Saurabh Bhardwaj inspected an inundated stretch near Vikas Bhawan, ITO, where a drain regulator was damaged.

"I would like to tell you that this is not the time to resort to a blame game or point fingers at each other. Right now, we need to work as a team. I, too,



can say a lot of things but this isn't what we should do at this time," Saxena told the reporters as Kejriwal and Bhardwaj looked on. Saxena is under-

stood to be highly upset with the state's Irrigation and Flood Control Minister, Saurabh Bhardwaj, for engaging in "immature, uninformed, and

politically motivated behavior," particularly during times of flooding in the capital city. Sources in the LG Secretariat have stated that Bhardwaj has

been advised to approach his ministerial responsibilities with greater seriousness and refrain from engaging in such behavior. The sources also criticized him for a tweet that appeared to exploit the "Ordinance" with the intention of manipulating public opinion.

The responsibility for addressing this serious issue lies with the Irrigation & Flood Control Department and DJB, under the Kejriwal Government, specifically with Minister-in-charge, Saurabh Bhardwaj.

Despite having their own dedicated engineering wings comprising numerous officers ranging from Chief Engineers to Junior Engineers, both I&FC and DJB failed to carry out the necessary works even after a lapse of more than 12 hours.

To urgently tackle the engineering challenges, the Lieutenant Governor proactively intervened and maintained constant communica-

tion with Union Home Minister Amit Shah since early morning. With the support of the Government of India, the Indian Army's Engineering Core was deployed to the site with two main objectives:

A providing immediate and interim measures to halt the flow of water from the river into the drain. B. Restoring the collapsed Regulator. The Army initiated the work in the morning, and by the time the Lieutenant Governor and later the Chief Minister visited the site, significant progress had been made in stemming the backflow into the drain due to the Army's efforts.

Sources in the LG office claimed that during their visit, while the Lieutenant Governor, Chief Minister, Minister-in-charge Saurabh Bhardwaj, and Minister Atishi Marlena were addressing the media, Bhardwaj displayed inappropriate and unwarranted behavior. In front of the media, he

made false claims that he had been continuously contacting the Divisional Commissioner since the previous night to deploy the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) for repairing/restoring the collapsed Regulator.

However, it was clarified by the Divisional Commissioner in the presence of the Lieutenant Governor and Atishi Marlena that this was not the case.

Sources in the LG office said that it was crucial for Bhardwaj to understand that the role of the NDRF is specifically focused on carrying out relief and rescue operations during disasters, as they have been doing in Delhi since the recent flooding began.

Regular engineering works are not within the scope of the NDRF's responsibilities. A simple review of the NDRF's mandate on their website would have clarified this for Bhardwaj. To set the record

straight, all employees and officers of the Delhi Government and Delhi Police, alongside the NDRF teams, have been diligently working day and night to address the pressing situation. Bhardwaj should recall that in the early hours of July 13, 2023, when water started inundating the Wazirabad WTP, the Chief Secretary, Divisional Commissioner, and relevant Principal Secretaries were present on-site until 3:45 A.M.

In the presence of the L-G, Bhardwaj claimed that despite reaching out to the officers, asking them to deploy NDRF teams to fix the damaged water regulator that caused flooding in the ITO area on Thursday night, and "there was no response from them". Bhardwaj also claimed that despite repeated requests to Divisional Commissioner Ashwani Kumar on Thursday night, NDRF teams were not deployed.

Floodwater submerges Rajghat, commuters face hardship



Yamuna river inundates Rajghat in New Delhi on Friday. The flooding has led the authorities to impose curbs on movement of traffic

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The movement of traffic remained disrupted while it was closed in many areas across Delhi on Friday due to the overflowing of drains and the flooding of the Yamuna River. Vikas Marg, one of the important stretches connecting east and Central Delhi, has been closed for traffic even as the vehicular movement went haywire and commuters got stuck for hours in traffic jams as the Yamuna floodwaters submerged the busy ITO intersection and Rajghat in central Delhi. The Delhi Traffic Police alerted people to plan their journeys in view of the

flood-like situation in many parts of the city.

More than 4,500 traffic personnel have been deployed on the ground in affected areas of Delhi to decongest traffic and help navigate commuters in case they get stuck in jams amid floodwater, police said, adding depending on how the water level recedes in the affected areas, traffic restrictions would be removed to allow vehicular movement.

According to officials, traffic movement has been closed for all vehicles on Vikas Marg on both the carriageways from Laxmi Nagar T-point to A point (ITO) and vice-versa due to

overflow of flood water. So, commuters have been advised to avoid this stretch and take alternative routes such as NH 24 via Akshardham -Nizamuddin. Due to overflow of drain water, vehicular movement has also been restricted on Mahatma Gandhi Marg on both the carriageways from Sarai Kale Khan towards Rajghat and vice-versa.

Traffic movement has also been restricted on both carriageways of IP road from under IP flyover to W point and vice versa due to overflow of sewer water near IP flyover. So, commuters have been advised to avoid the stretch and take alter-

native route. "The road from Geeta Colony to Shanti Van and vice versa has been closed due to waterlogging. General public is requested to avoid this stretch and plan journey accordingly," the police said in a tweet.

According to officials, movement of traffic has been restricted from Shanti Van towards Geeta Colony Flyover due to the rise in water level of the Yamuna river. Vehicular movement has been also restricted from Geeta Colony Flyover towards Rajghat and ISBT, Kashmir Gate.

Floodwaters of the overflowing Yamuna reached the entrance of the Supreme Court in Central Delhi on Friday while the busy ITO intersection and Rajghat were submerged as a regulator of the Delhi Irrigation and Flood Control Department suffered damage, exacerbating the already dire situation.

"Traffic is affected on NH-48 in the carriageway from Dhaura kuan towards Mahipalpur in view of movement of Kanwad on the National Highway and breakdown of an MGW on Gurgaon Road Flyover opposite Subroto Park. Kindly avoid the stretch," the traffic police tweeted. Traffic movement was also closed on Bhairon Road due to overflow of drain water near railway underbridge and commuters

have been advised to avoid the stretch.

According to traffic police, vehicular traffic has been closed on Bhairon Marg, Ring Road-IP Depot to IP flyover to Majnu Ka Tilla, Old Iron Bridge Pusta to Shamsan Ghat, Salim Garh Bypass, Vikas Marg from IP flyover towards Lakshmi Nagar, Chandgi Ram Akhara to IP College both carriageway, Majnu ka Tilla to ISBT both carriageway, Shanti Van Chowk to Geeta Colony both carriageway and Mukarba Chowk to Wazirabad, Outer Ring Road.

Bhairon Marg - Ring Road T-Point to Gate No. 3 of Pragati Maidan, Ring Road from Majnu Ka Tilla - Yamuna Bazar Mandir - Shanti Van Chowk - IGI Stadium, Boulevard Road from ISBT T-Point to Gate No. 5, Kashmiri Gate Metro Station and area under IP Flyover are flooded.

Road traffic control (directing vehicular and pedestrian traffic) is being carried out on Wazirabad Bridge, Signature Bridge, Vikas Marg towards ITO, Shastri Park to Khajuri Chowk to Khajuri Pushta, Mori Gate Red Light to Tis Hazari Court, Bhikhu Ram Jain Marg from Tis Hazari Court to MCD Chowk, Mall Road to Velodrome Marg and Boulevard Road from Tis Hazari Court to Yudhishthir Setu towards Shastri Park.

Plants at Wazirabad, Chandrawal to resume if water level recedes: CM



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Friday said the water treatment plants at Wazirabad and Chandrawal will resume functioning by Saturday morning if the Yamuna water level recedes to 207.7 metres.

Visiting the ITO barrage, where five of the 32 gates are jammed, obstructing the drainage of water from Delhi, he said, "The Navy is working to open them but it cannot be said when these will be opened." "The Haryana government is responsible for their maintenance but they have no interest. We will surely begin the process to take control of

the barrage," Kejriwal told reporters. Three water treatment plants were shut down on Thursday due to the rising Yamuna water level, the chief minister said, adding the Okhla water treatment plant resumed operation on Friday. Due to the closure of the plants, many areas in the national capital were facing a water shortage. "The Wazirabad and Chandrawal water treatment plants will be started by Saturday morning if the water levels recede to 207.7 metres," he added.

Stressing that everyone should work together towards mitigation of the flood crisis, Kejriwal said this is not the time for a blame game.

Construction of bridge halted due to rising water level in Yamuna

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The construction work of a new 560-metre-long metro bridge over the Yamuna to be built using cantilever construction technique, has been halted due to the rising water level of the river.

Delhi Metro at present has four bridges across the Yamuna, and in view of the rising water level of the river, trains are crossing these bridges with a restricted speed of 30 kmph as a precautionary measure.

The four bridges are at Yamuna Bank (698.8 m on Blue Line), Nizamuddin (602.8 m on Pink Line), Kalindi Kunj (574 m on Magenta Line), and Shastri Park (553 m on Red Line). The swollen river has crossed the danger mark, breaching the all-time record of 1978, flooding low-lying areas near the banks.

Although the Yamuna water level remained stable for three hours on Thursday, it started rising again to reach 208.66 by 7 pm, three metres above the danger mark of 205.33 metres."

Crematoria located near Yamuna waterlogged

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The flood-like situation in Delhi has not only interrupted life in the national capital but also inundated crematoria located near the raging Yamuna making it difficult for people who have lost their loved ones to conduct funerals.

Nigambodh Ghat, a place preferred by many for the last rites, is flooded as waters from the swollen river have rendered the places practically dysfunctional. The Municipal Corporation of Delhi on Wednesday had issued an advisory asking people not to go to Nigambodh Ghat to carry out last rites.

The crematorium in Geeta Colony too was closed due to the rise in Yamuna water levels. The Delhi civic body has advised people to take the bodies to other cremation grounds at Panchkuian Road, Sat Nagar, Punjabi Bagh, Green Park, Dakshinpuri or preferably in their neighbourhood.

On Thursday, visuals emerged on social media of some people performing rituals on a raised platform outside Nigambodh Ghat as the inside of the cremation site and the road outside are flooded with river waters.

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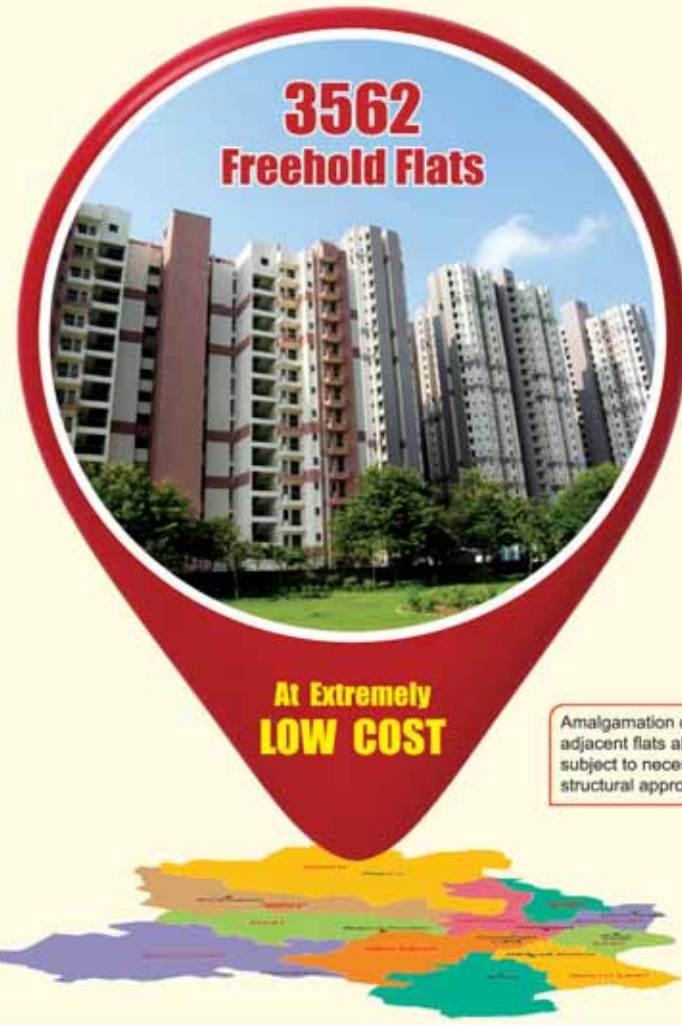
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“A house is not only four walls, but a place where the power to dream comes and aspirations are fulfilled.”

- Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister



Actual Photographs of Narela Sector A1-A4, Pocket 1C



Map Not to Scale



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Three cheers!

Chandrayaan-3 is yet another remarkable milestone in India's space odyssey

The successful launch of Chandrayaan-3 heralds a new chapter in India's space odyssey, one that reflects the nation's coming of age in the field of space exploration. ISRO's growth from a fledgling organisation to a globally recognised space agency is a testament to India's scientific acumen and unwavering determination. Through its lunar missions, ISRO has not only expanded our knowledge of the moon but has also ignited the imagination of millions, inspiring the next generation of scientists and engineers. As India continues to reach for the stars, the world eagerly anticipates the remarkable discoveries and advancements that will undoubtedly follow in the wake of Chandrayaan-3. On the global stage of space exploration, India has emerged as a force to reckon with, continually pushing boundaries and surpassing expectations. The much-awaited launch of Chandrayaan-3, the third lunar mission by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), marks another giant leap forward for India's space programme.

With each mission, India is not only expanding its scientific knowledge but also solidifying its position as a trailblazer in the realm of space exploration.

To fully appreciate the significance of Chandrayaan-3, it is essential to trace the remarkable journey of ISRO. From its humble beginnings in 1969, the Indian space agency has come a long way, overcoming challenges and achieving unprecedented success. ISRO's perseverance and dedication have been instrumental in transforming India's space aspirations into reality. ISRO's initial milestones, such as the launch of Aryabhata, India's first satellite, in 1975, laid the foundation for future endeavours. Over the years, the organisation has



earned a reputation for its cost-effective yet technologically advanced missions, most notably with the Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM) in 2013. By successfully reaching the Red Planet on its first attempt, ISRO demonstrated its prowess in space exploration. In 2008, ISRO achieved a significant breakthrough with the launch of Chandrayaan-1, India's first lunar mission. Chandrayaan-1 showcased India's scientific capabilities and marked the country's entry into the elite club of lunar explorers. Building upon this success, ISRO took a leap forward with Chandrayaan-2 in 2019. Despite a challenging landing attempt, the mission achieved several milestones, including the successful insertion of the orbiter into the moon's orbit and the release of the Vikram lander. Although the lander encountered difficulties, the orbiter continues to orbit the moon, collecting valuable data and imagery. Chandrayaan-3 represents a continuation of India's lunar exploration programme and a testament to ISRO's unwavering commitment to space research. The mission aims to build upon the accomplishments of its predecessors, focusing on soft landing and deploying a rover to explore the lunar surface. Chandrayaan-3 holds immense symbolic value for India. It showcases the country's determination to become a key player in space exploration, not just for national pride but also for the betterment of humanity.

PICTALK



An Indian Army contingent marches past during the Bastille Day Parade, in Paris

PTI

Embarking on a journey to explore new lunar frontiers

Chandrayaan-3 success is yet another step in India's bid for space exploration and opens up possibilities of further lunar research

The first phase of India's third mission to the moon Chandrayaan-3 has been successfully done on 14th July from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre Sriharikota using the Launch Vehicle Mark-III (LVM-3). If everything goes as planned, the Pragyan rover in the Chandrayaan-3 will land softly on the south pole of the lunar surface. The Pragyan rover, equipped with six wheels, will carry two payloads aimed at discovering materials from the ancient lunar crust through the use of spectrometers. Furthermore, one of the payloads, called the Spectro-polarimetry of Habitable Planet Earth (SHAPE), will analyze spectral and polarimetric radiation to gain insights into the potential signatures of habitable Earth-like planets. Over the past 65 years, six nations have undertaken 70 missions to the Moon, both successful and partially successful. While a significant number of these missions involved orbiting Earth's sole natural satellite, only a fraction of them involved successful lunar landings. If Chandrayaan-3 achieves a soft landing as



expected probably on August 23 or 24th, India will become the fourth country, after the United States, Russia, and China, to achieve the feat and emerge as a leader in space explorations.

Even though the previous Chandrayaan missions failed to achieve soft landing considerable data regarding the lunar environment has been gathered, a commendable one being the first report of the presence of water on the lunar surface. But why is it that every nation is vying for space on the moon? The Moon is Earth's natural satellite, a celestial body that orbits around our planet. It is the fifth-largest moon in the Solar System and is approximately 1/6th the size of Earth. The Moon is located at an average distance of about 384,400 kilometres (238,900 miles)

from Earth. The Moon is tidally locked with Earth, which means that it always shows the same face to us. The side facing Earth is called the near side, while the opposite side is the far side or the "dark side" (though it receives sunlight just like the near side). The Moon has a rocky surface covered with impact craters, mountains, valleys, and plains.

The Moon plays a significant role in Earth's dynamics. It affects our planet's tides through gravitational interactions, which in turn influence coastal ecosystems and other natural phenomena. The Moon has been a subject of fascination and exploration for centuries. Human missions, such as the Apollo program in the 1960s and 1970s, have landed astronauts on the lunar surface, allowing us to gather samples, conduct experiments, and gain a better understanding of our closest celestial neighbour. Nations are going back to the Moon due to the scientific, technological, economic, and strategic benefits it offers. The Moon is believed to contain valuable resources, such as water ice and other volatiles

in the permanently shadowed regions of the Moon. Scientists are interested in studying these volatiles to assess their availability for supporting human activities and to learn more about their origin and potential uses.

Accessing and utilizing these resources on the Moon could reduce the costs and logistical challenges associated with long-duration space exploration. It could act as a transit point for long-distance space travels when space colonies will become a reality. The Moon provides a stepping stone for future space exploration and offers numerous opportunities for collaboration, resource utilization, and human space settlement, which can have far-reaching implications for both scientific knowledge and also helps in establishing humans as a multi-planet species, thereby saving the species from an imminent extinction. Being at the forefront of space research will give nations an advantage in surviving the perils of the space colony era, and India is sure to excel as a global leader.

(The writer is a science communicator and columnist)



BIJU DHARAMAPALAN

Stray dogs: Pounds will not help

These will inflict horrendous cruelty on stray dogs without reducing their numbers. Besides, they will be a big drain on the resources

The disarmingly benevolent air about the proposal to herd all stray dogs in India into pounds, is the result of two contentions. First, the move will end their presence in neighbourhoods without the savagery of killing them wholesale. Second, it would ensure shelter, medical care and regular meals which they lack now. The first will replace the death sentence by imprisonment for life without parole. The second reflects wishful thinking, contrary to what the existing reality indicates.

In the case of all living beings, the quest for freedom is the central driving force behind the unfolding of life, which depends on the progressive realization of a growing corpus of freedoms beginning with those to live, grow, subsist and move. To elaborate, there can be no life without the freedom to live, find and consume food, shelter from the elements, and move.

The essence of freedom is the autonomous exercise of will, which, in turn, is a function of one's autonomous existence. Imprisonment is a denial of this autonomy; life in jails is controlled by officials who impose restrictions on the lives of the inmates. It is no different in the case of stray dogs. Humans, no doubt, have a higher level of consciousness, cognition and articulation; no other living species has developed languages. Besides, they are the only species to consciously cherish and utilize the freedoms of thought and expression. Nevertheless, it would be wise to recall Desmond Morris' words in *The Naked Ape: A Zoologist's Study of the Human Animal*, "As I have stressed throughout this book, we are, despite all our great technological advances, still very much a simple biological phenomenon. Despite our grandiose ideas and our lofty self-conceits, we are still humble animals, subject to all the basic laws of animal behaviour."

The urge for freedom is the defining component of the psyches of both humans and stray dogs with the latter's free-roaming lives. The agony of the loss of freedom in the pounds will not be compensated by the shelter, vet-



erinary care and food they may receive in these. In fact, if the terrible conditions prevailing in most pounds/shelters in India are any indication, life in these will be, with apologies to Thomas Hobbes in *Leviathan*, "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short," stalked constantly by hunger, illness (often psychosomatic) and depression. Most of the money given for providing food and medicines will be siphoned into private pockets.

Clearly, the two contentions accounting for the air of benevolence around the proposal to confine stray dogs in pounds/shelters, are not valid. Hence, that air is misleading. If implemented the proposal will inflict the most horrendous sufferings on the stray dogs impounded. This, of course, will not be a consideration with those who hate all stray dogs and want them killed. Even they, however, have to face the fact that the proposal is utterly impractical and almost impossible to implement. For one thing, the existing pounds will not be able to accommodate even a tiny fraction of India's stray dog population which, as Mr Parshottam Rupala, Union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, told the Lok Sabha on August 2,



A LARGE AMOUNT OF MONEY AND A HUGE ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE WILL BE NEEDED TO BUILD AN ADEQUATE NUMBER OF POUNDS AND RECRUIT AND TRAIN ENOUGH PEOPLE TO RUN THEM

2022, numbered 1.53 crore in 2019 against 1.71 crore in 2012.

A large amount of money and a huge organizational infrastructure will be needed to build an adequate number of pounds and recruit and train enough people to run them. The question is: who will do all this? A venture of this magnitude is beyond the capacity of animal welfare NGOs to implement. The Union and State governments, as well as large municipalities and corporations, will have to undertake it through their public works departments. Not many of the latter, if any, have any experience in setting up pounds, which require specialized planning and implementation. This will increase the time taken to complete constructions and, in the process, push up costs.

Even if, by a miracle, the pounds are built and made operative, the problem of catching stray dogs will remain. The present personnel with NGOs and government/municipal bodies are too few in number and poorly trained. They struggle to catch even the small numbers that are taken for sterilization. The street canines are sharp and flee at the sight of these people.

Finally, putting stray dogs into pounds will not reduce their numbers. The Guidelines for Dog Population Management, released by World Health Organization and World Society for the Protection of Animals, in May, 1990, states, "Removal and killing of dogs should never be considered as the most effective way of dealing with the problem of surplus dogs in the community: it has no effect on the root cause of the problem, which is over-production of dogs." Further the Eighth Report (WHO Technical Report Series 824) of the WHO's Expert Committee on Rabies, has stated, "The population turnover of [stray] dogs may be so high that even the highest recorded removal rates (about 15 per cent of the dog population) are easily compensated by survival rates."

Ferocious, dogs that bite, doubtless, pose a problem. They should be dealt with according to the procedure detailed under Section 16 of the Animal Birth Control Rules, 2023, which is humane and comprehensive.

(The author is Consulting Editor, The Pioneer. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

EU RAKES UP MANIPUR ISSUE

Sir — Shortly before Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi arrived in Paris on a State visit, in another French city, Strasbourg, the European Parliament (EP) called on the Indian government to act "promptly" to halt the violence in Manipur and protect religious minorities. The joint motion moved by five groups was voted in by a show of hands in a fairly full house at the EP. The resolution passed by the European Parliament urged Indian authorities to halt ethnic and religious violence, protect religious minorities, conduct independent investigations, and encourage conflicting parties to rebuild trust and play an impartial role in mediating tensions. As usual, India strongly condemned the European Parliament's adoption of a resolution regarding recent clashes in Manipur, asserting that such interference in India's internal affairs is unacceptable.

The external affairs ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi emphasised that the Indian authorities, including the judiciary, are fully aware of and addressing the situation in Manipur to ensure peace, harmony, and law and order. India advised the European Parliament to focus on its internal matters instead. However, more than 150 Indians have died in Manipur violence. Adding to the problem, the Modi governments both at the state as well as the centre seem to be not in control of the situation for too long. While the foreign affairs group of the Indian government needs to deal with these EU actions in the most appropriate ways, internally within India, Indians need to see that things get better in the Indian state of Manipur as soon as possible.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee [Faridabad]

PROMISING CRICKETER

Sir — Yashasvi Jaiswal, a promising young cricketer, achieved a magnificent century in his debut Test match against the West Indies in Dominica. It was a day of triumph and celebration as the talented cricketer left a lasting mark in the record books with his exceptional centu-

Sweden to join NATO



The Vilnius Summit of 2023 will be going historic for world history as one of the most neutral nations of the world; sided its geo-political neutrality to join as a NATO member, a grouping of bipolar values. It was definitely to the world's surprise that Turkey who is creating the barrier for Sweden itself surprisingly sided its halt for Sweden as a NATO countries member.

The attempt of Sweden to deliberately alter its stand for being neutral for world issues had finally ended for the completion of its nation-

al interest. Of course, it has been a great challenge to be a neighbour nation to Russia. And considering the current circumstances, Sweden wanted to play safe for at least itself vis-a-vis Russian power. Everybody knows that although not officially, Sweden was always with NATO on unofficial terms for the last 30 years. Utilising the Russia-Ukraine war as an opportunity, Sweden is trying to manage its unofficial play with official agreements. However, all this in the end will be going to raise bitterness more being the Baltic, Norwegian and Russian states. Europe is burning with more and more ignites together. The war is not going to end by any chance in this way. We need to pave peace and dialogue for cooperation and harmony.

The need of the hour is to think about global peace, not national peace.

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

ry. The story of his remarkable achievement unfolds through his heartfelt celebrations. Filled with excitement, Jaiswal removed his helmet, leapt into the air, and screamed in sheer joy. Following his personal tradition, he then humbly bowed down towards the Indian dressing room. His teammates showered him with applause, and he sought the approval of his mentor, Rohit Sharma, who warmly embraced him. Virat Kohli, wearing a wide grin, expressed his pride in Jaiswal's accomplishment. This heartwarming moment beautifully exemplified the unity and camaraderie within the Indian cricket team.

Md Imdadullah | Patna

MEDIA FEST

Sir — The Department of Journalism and Mass Communication at Tumkur University will host a National Conference and media fest on July 20th and 21st. It is important to address concerns regarding one of the invited

speakers, Ajit Hanamakkanavar, a former editor at a regional News Channel in Kannada. Attendees perceive the speaker as having a rightist inclination, which has generated mixed reactions. The conference aims to discuss diverse aspects of the media industry and therefore requires speakers representing varied perspectives. The individuals chosen must demonstrate a commitment to fair and unbiased journalism. Concerns have been raised about the speaker's past statements promoting divisive ideologies and fostering a hostile environment. The conference will unite professionals, academics, and aspiring journalists, and it is crucial to maintain a high standard of unbiased discourse. Finally, such efforts will transform the conference into a platform for meaningful exchanges that benefit all participants.

Vishal Mayur | Tumkur

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



FIRST COLUMN

CONTROL YOUR MIND,
CONTROL YOUR LIFELike iron corrodes with its own rust, so
can your own mind destroy you

SAKSHI SETHI

Our mind is a multi-dimensional consciousness. As humans, we all have a unique set of beliefs, values and opinions that make an individual distinct and different from others. It's the thoughts and beliefs that decide perception towards anything in life and thus by empowering them, one can guide their inner self and control the feelings, fears, hopes and thinking patterns. These beliefs and opinions shape our personality and how we perceive the world around us. Thus, it becomes important to mould individual thoughts and point their attention in a particular positive direction to achieve peace of mind.

One of the biggest advantages of mind control is the potential to create positive change in the world. If an individual could influence the thoughts and actions of others, he/she could use this power to effect change on a global scale. Working on mental models such as practising critical thinking; strengthening the vision and leverage; learning big ideas and studying big disciplines helps an individual think and act differently.

When a person is in total control of themselves, everything falls into place. One needs to learn how to select thoughts just the same way an individual selects clothes every day. Learning to be optimistic, trying to tell self and reminding that one will succeed over the mind as intended are some of the ways to keep oneself away from negative thoughts and be positive.



Controlling the mind is a realistic idea that can very well take place in the future. The availability of numerous devices and smartphones along with the experiments are devoted to creating the idea of taking over someone's mind. With the help of increased technology and unbelievably available devices and smartphones, this may be able to happen sooner than anyone can expect. Controlling the mind takes over the ability to create an individual's thoughts and interrupts the mindfulness imagination.

Practising the art of mindfulness meditation, in particular, can help an individual become more skilled at focusing on things as they happen. Meditation is the key to nourishing the soul and blooming the divinity within. As an individual becomes more mindful with time, they will notice that they no longer need to constantly pull their awareness back from troubling or distracting thoughts. Also, spending time with others and on others can increase happiness and well-being. Happiness and well-being can increase an individual's self-image and reduce negative feelings that make self-control more difficult.

In the words of Idowu Koyenikan, "The mind is just like a muscle - the more one exercises it, the stronger it gets and the more it can expand."

Both the mind and body are deeply connected. It's the mind that can make the body stressed and physiological stress in the body can lead the mind to feel stressed. If an individual cannot control their thoughts, they cannot control their actions. The thoughts of an individual are a mixed baggage of past, emotions and fears. They are so much powerful that they are capable of turning a dream into reality. The greatness of a man does not lie in how much wealth they acquire but, in the integrity and the ability to affect those around them positively. Unwanted thoughts can cause plenty of frustration and distress.

(The writer is an educator)

Judicial overreach:
Is it going too far?

SURESH KUMAR



SANJEEV SHARMA

The issue of judicial overreach, or judicial activism, has cast a shadow over our constitutional framework and interferes with the governance which is a different domain

Since its enactment in 1950, the Constitution of India has undergone numerous amendments to address the changing aspirations of society. While some of these amendments went unnoticed initially, the 42nd Constitutional Amendment Bill passed during the internal emergency in 1975 brought significant changes that impacted the functioning of the executive, legislature, and judiciary. It modified the division of powers between the states and the Union by expanding the concurrent list. Despite these changes, the Constitution and the nation were ultimately preserved.

DIVISION OF POWERS OF THE
THREE BRANCHES OF
GOVERNMENT

The Constitution distinguishes between justiciable and non-justiciable actions, setting clear roles for the three branches of government: the Legislature, Executive, and Judiciary. These branches are designed to be mutually complementary, with the Executive relying on the strength derived from the Legislature and Judiciary for the effective fulfilment of its functions. However, in recent years, there has been a growing debate on the issue of judicial overreach, also known as judicial activism.

DEFINING THE BASIC
STRUCTURE: THE
KESAVANANDA BHARATI CASE

The 24th Amendment to the Constitution of India, enacted in 1971, introduced changes related to Parliament's power to amend the Constitution. It modified Article 368, which deals with the amending procedure. The amendment expanded Parliament's power to amend any provision, including those relating to fundamental rights. It also added a clause to Article 13, stating that constitutional amendments under Article 368 would be outside judicial review and not open to challenge on the grounds of violating fundamental rights.

The 24th Constitutional Amendment aimed to counter the Supreme Court's judgments in *Golaknath v. State of Punjab* (1967) and *Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala* (1973). These judgments affirmed the basic structure doctrine, which limited Parliament's power to amend the Constitution. However, the Supreme Court partially nullified the 24th Amendment in the *Kesavananda Bharati* case. The Court established the doctrine of the basic structure and further restricted Parliament's amending power.

The *Kesavananda Bharati* judgement, delivered by the Supreme Court on April 24, 1973, ruled that Parliament did not have unlimited powers to amend the Constitution under Article 368. It held that certain core principles and features of the Constitution, known as the "basic structure," were inviolable and could not be amended. Although the judgement did not provide an exhaustive list of what constitutes the basic structure, it outlined essential features such as the Supremacy of the Constitution, Republican and democratic forms of government, Secular character, Separation of powers, Federal character, Judicial review, and Rule of law.

EXPANSION OF BASIC
STRUCTURE AND JUDICIAL
ACTIVISM

Over the years, the term "basic structure" has expanded to include the notion that if citizens' rights are not being fulfilled, even without a violation of fundamental rights, it becomes the responsibility of the executive to ensure their delivery. This expanded scope of justice delivery is encompassed by Public Interest Litigation (PIL), which extends the jurisdiction of constitutional courts to non-justiciable functions. The interpretation of the basic structure has also brought actions or decisions initially outside judicial scrutiny under judicial review.



OVER THE YEARS, THE TERM "BASIC STRUCTURE" HAS EXPANDED TO INCLUDE THE NOTION THAT IF CITIZENS' RIGHTS ARE NOT BEING FULFILLED, EVEN WITHOUT A VIOLATION OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

Suresh Kumar is a retired Punjab-cadre IAS officer and was chief principle secretary to Punjab CM & Sanjeev Sharma is Senior Advocate, Punjab and Haryana High Court

JUDICIAL OVERREACH

In the process of safeguarding the basic structure of the constitution, the judiciary has assumed powers that were not originally intended for it, allegedly encroaching upon the domain of the executive. This encroachment can be motivated by various factors, including the lure of post-retirement benefits that may even influence some decisions. Such overreach casts a shadow on the judiciary's integrity and raises concerns about the balance of powers.

THE CONFLICT BETWEEN
THE EXECUTIVE AND
JUDICIARY

There have been instances where the judiciary, through its pronouncements, has directed or coerced the executive to frame laws and rules in a specific manner. While the executive may comply, the issue arises as to how one can legislate as directed. This compromises the independence of the legislature, which should propose legislation and be subject to judicial review to identify any unconstitutional provisions. The intent or objective of the legislation, influ-

enced by the ideology of the elected government, remains outside the scope of review.

BRIDGING THE POLICY GAP
BY THE JUDICIARY

Instances of conflict between the legislature, executive, and judiciary arise when policies and legislation are ambiguous or still evolving. The National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) case is one such example. In 2015, the Supreme Court struck down the 99th Constitutional Amendment Act and the National Judicial Appointments Commission Act, which sought to establish the NJAC as responsible for judicial appointments and transfers. The court deemed the legislation unconstitutional, as it violated judicial independence and the principle of separation of powers.

The issue of judges appointing judges and transferring judges has also been critiqued. The confrontation between the executive and judiciary becomes evident when recommendations for elevation or transfers of judges are kept pending for years. While no system is perfect, improvements are needed.

Similarly, the Aadhaar Card case highlighted differences between the judiciary and executive regarding the mandatory use of Aadhaar for government services. Despite court-imposed restrictions and emphasis on privacy rights, the executive continues to mandate the furnishing of Aadhaar data without adequate privacy protection laws.

Conflicts have also emerged over the disqualification of Members of Parliament (MPs) and Members of Legislative Assemblies (MLAs) in cases of criminal convictions. While the judiciary upholds provisions for disqualification upon conviction, the executive sometimes refuses to act as per the law.

Reservations in educational institutions and government jobs have also witnessed conflicts between the legislature and judiciary. The judiciary seeks to ensure fair implementation, while the executive faces challenges in meeting these requirements. A unified law at the state and central levels could reduce friction.

The three organs of governance have also clashed over environmental issues and regulations. The judiciary's interventions, such as banning certain industries or activities in ecologically sensitive areas, have sometimes been perceived as an overreach by the executive. At the same time, the laws made by the legislature leave loopholes, which the executive either turns a blind eye to or actively permits their exploitation. The judicial interventions sought in such cases become necessary to ensure fair and just governance. Even the policy gaps are bridged or rectified through judicial pronouncements.

The Constitution of India, though amended quite often, has met the aspirations of society. However, the issue of judicial overreach, or judicial activism, has cast a shadow over this otherwise non-controversial subject. While the judiciary plays a crucial role in safeguarding the basic structure of the country, it is essential to maintain a balance between the powers of the three branches of government—the Legislature, Executive, and Judiciary. This balance allows each branch to fulfil its specific functions without compromising the integrity of the constitutional framework. Effective governance can be achieved by ensuring that the executive formulates policies backed by constitutionally mandated legislation, reducing the burden on the judiciary, upholding the principles of democracy and the rule of law, and maintaining the balance of powers.

UCC: Abide by the wish of the Constitution makers

The Supreme Court has held the view that there is no necessary connection between religion and personal law in a civilized society

The Constituent Assembly appointed the Drafting Committee on August 29, 1947. The Committee was chaired by Dr BR Ambedkar. Draft Constitution was submitted on 21.2.1948 to the Constituent Assembly. The Draft Constitution contains 315 Articles and 8 Schedules. Article 35 in the Draft Constitution was the direction to the State to legislate Uniform Civil Code (in short "UCC") i.e. "35. Uniform Civil Code for the citizen.- The State shall endeavor to secure for the citizens a uniform civil code throughout the territory of India."

HISTORICAL BACK-
GROUND

Article 35 of the Draft Constitution was debated in



GOPAL JHA

(The writer is Advocate Supreme Court of India)

the Constituent Assembly on 23 November 1948. Mohamad Ismail Sahib moved a motion to add a proviso i.e. "Provided that any group, section or community or people shall not be obliged to give up its own personal law in case it has such a law." Muslim Members namely Ismail Sahab, Pocker Sahib Bahadur, Naziruddin Ahmed, and Mahboob Ali Baig Saheb Bahadur supported the Motion. It was their stand that (1) Law of succession, inheritance, marriage and divorce of Musalmans are completely dependent on their religion., (2) Britishers carried out the administrations of this country for the last 150 years and over, for the reason that they have given a guarantee of following own personal laws to each of the various

communities in the country. (3) Mr Hussain Imam argued that our country is so diverse that it is not possible to have uniformity of Civil Law. On these arguments, Muslim members wanted a proviso in Article 35 "that, it may not affect their personal laws". Mr Naziruddin Ahmed submitted that Article 35 would undo what had been given in Article 19 as it will encourage the State to break the guarantee given in Article 19. However, he expressed the view that the stage would come when the civil law would be uniform. Mohammed Ismail Sahib submitted that for creating harmony it is not necessary to compel people to give up their law. The motion was opposed by Dr Bhim Rao Ambedkar, K.M. Munshi, Suresh Chandra

Majumdar, Ananathasayanam Ayyngar etc. Sri Suresh Chandra Majumdar argued that the submissions of Muslim Members are in direct negation of Article 35 and cannot be taken as an amendment. Mr Ananthasayanam Ayyngar said that marriage in Muslim is a contract. Mr KM Munshi submitted that nowhere in the advanced Muslim country the personal law of each minority has been recognized as so sacrosanct to prevent the enactment of the Civil Code.

Mr Munshi argued, when Shariat Act was passed by the Central Legislature, certain Muslim members, Khoja and Cutchi Memon were unwilling, but had to surrender.

Where were the rights of minorities then? He argued that if the personal law of

inheritance succession etc. is a part of religion, then there cannot be equality for women. It was argued that the attitude of mind perpetuated under the British rule that personal law is a part of religion. Mr. Alladi Krishnaswamy Iyer argued in European countries there are Muslims, Hindus, Catholics, Christians and Jews. In France, Germany, Italy in all the continental countries of Europe, they have not perpetuated personal laws. It was argued that Article 35 not invading the domain of religion. On the above logic, it was asserted that the motion may be negated. Babasaheb argued that we have Uniform Criminal Code. Civil Code in its contents applies to the whole of the country. Up to 1935 North-

West Frontier Province was not subject to Shariat law, Hindu law in the matter of succession and other matters were being followed. North Malabar following Marumakkathayam law. Dr Ambedkar opposed the motion contending that Muslim law was not immutable. Dr Ambedkar opposed the Motion.

PRESENT SCENARIO

In *John Vallamattam Vs. UOI* reported in (2003) 6 SCC 611 Supreme Court held that "it is a matter of regret that Article 44 of the Constitution has not given effect to. Common code will help the cause of nation national integration."

The Hindus along with Sikh, Buddhists and Jains have forsaken their sentiments in

the cause of national unity and integration, some other community would not, though the Constitution enjoins the establishment of a common civil code for the whole of India. Article 14 is the guaranteed fundamental right to equality. Article 13 provides all the laws that include custom or usage to the extent of inconsistency shall be void. The right of religion is guaranteed subject to public order and morality. The Supreme Court time and again regretted 'why the Parliament had not given effect to the Article 44 of the Constitution despite having the direction by the Constitution maker'. There is no justification whatsoever for delaying indefinitely with the introduction of uniform personal law in the country.

DJOKOVIC INTO 9TH WIMBLEDON FINAL

AP ■ LONDON

Novak Djokovic powered into his ninth Wimbledon final as the fiery defending champion feuded with the umpire and spectators before beating Jannik Sinner to reach a record 35th Grand Slam singles title match on Friday.

Djokovic was in combative mood during a 6-3, 6-4, 7-6 (7/4) semi-final victory that moved him closer to a record-equalling eighth Wimbledon title.

The 36-year-old faces world number one Carlos Alcaraz or Russian third seed Daniil Medvedev in his fifth successive Wimbledon final on Sunday.

"Semi-finals are always going to be very intense. Maybe the scoreline doesn't give the reality of what happened on court. It was super close," Djokovic said.

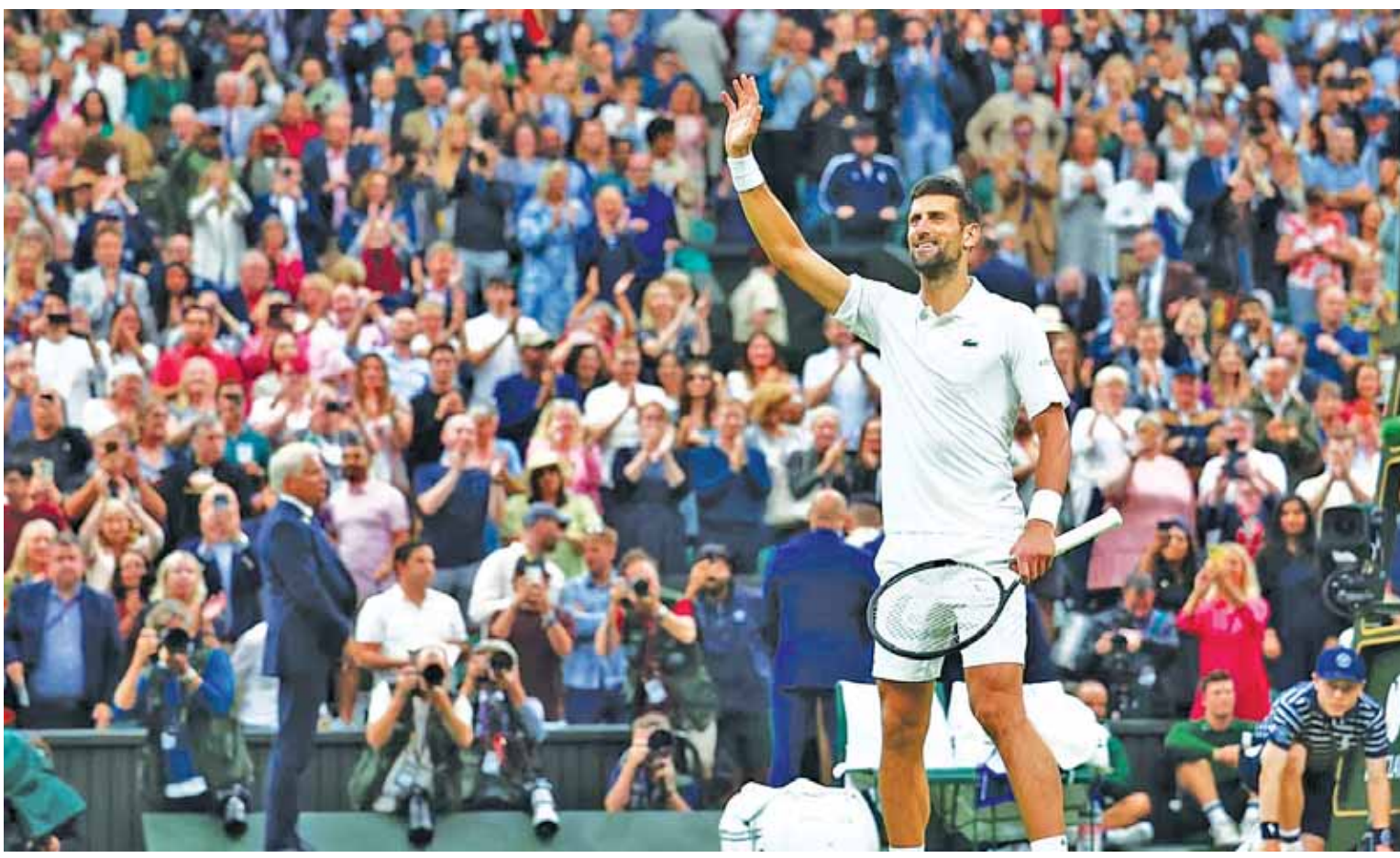
On his row with umpire Richard Haigh, who stripped him of a point after he made a loud yell in the middle of a rally, Djokovic said: "The hindrance could have changed the course of the match. I felt nervous after that call, but I managed to regroup."

"It's probably the first time it's happened to me, I don't normally have extended grunts. Maybe it was an echo in the roof."

The Serb will tie Roger Federer's eight Wimbledon crowns if he wins a fifth consecutive title on the All England Club grass.

Djokovic's latest milestone — his record 35th Grand Slam final — took him past American legend Chris Evert, but he has an even more significant feat in his sights on Sunday.

With 23 Grand Slam singles titles to his name, the world number two is aiming to equal Margaret Court's all-time record of 24.



'A LOT OF MOTIVATION'

Djokovic has already won this season's Australian Open and French Open as he chases an astonishing clean-sweep of all four Grand Slam events in a single year, with the US Open to come in August.

"I feel 36 is the new 26, it feels pretty good. I feel a lot of motivation," he said of his longevity.

"This sport has given me and my family a lot. I will return a favour to this sport and play as much as I can."

Italian eighth seed Sinner, 21, came close to a shock victory over Djokovic in the Wimbledon quarter-finals last year before the Serb came from two sets down to win.

This time it was Djokovic who held sway from the start as he took the first set with ease.

After breaking in the third game of the second set, Djokovic found himself in trouble with Haigh.

The British official took a point from Djokovic in the fourth game, ruling he made a distracting noise after his shot and just before Sinner was about to hit the ball.

Clearly furious, Djokovic stormed over to the official to ask "what are you doing?"

Haigh irked Djokovic again moments later, warning him for taking too long to serve as the Serb shook his head in disbelief.

But Djokovic recovered his equilibrium to win the second set with ruthless efficiency.

After saving two set points in the third set, Djokovic responded to the crowd's vocal support for Sinner by making a sarcastic crying gesture towards the stands.

Djokovic had the last laugh on his tormentors as he won the third set tie-break to clinch a victory that moved him to the brink of more history.

Jabeur hopes for third time lucky at Wimbledon

AP ■ LONDON

Ons Jabeur hopes it will be third time lucky when she attempts to become the first African or Arab woman to win a Grand Slam singles title at Wimbledon on Saturday.

The 28-year-old Tunisian takes on Marketa Vondrousova of the Czech Republic, hoping to go one better than last year when she was defeated by Elena Rybakina in the final at the All England Club and lost to world number one Iga Swiatek at the US Open later in the year.

Unlike her two final losses at the majors, this time world number six Jabeur will start as the favourite against the left-handed Vondrousova, the first unseeded woman in the Wimbledon final in 60 years.

She has had a tough run to Saturday's championship match, beating two-time former winner Petra Kvitova in the last 16, third seed Rybakina in the quarter-final and then coming from a set down to knock out second-ranked Aryna Sabalenka in the semi-finals.

By doing so she became the first woman to defeat three top-10 players at Wimbledon since Serena Williams in 2012.

But she said she could not afford to take her eye off the ball on Saturday, even though she is taking on a player far lower down the rankings at 42 in the world.

"I think a final is a final," Jabeur said. "You're playing someone, Grand Slam champion or not. I think it's going to be very difficult."

"It can happen for both. Whoever could handle more the emotions, whoever could be more ready on the court, will definitely win that match."

"I want to make my path worth it, winning against all these Grand Slam champions to be in the final. Yeah, I'm going full in, and hopefully this time it will work."

Only six women have lost all



three of their first Grand Slam finals, although two of those — Chris Evert and Kim Clijsters — eventually made up for lost time.

Jabeur has form on her side for Saturday, with a tour-best 28 wins on grass since 2021 matching the run of former Wimbledon champion Maria Sharapova between 2004 and 2006.

However, Jabeur has lost twice in 2023 to Vondrousova, in the second round of the Australian Open and third round in Miami.

"I'm going for my revenge. I didn't win against her this year. She has good hands. She plays very good," said Jabeur of an opponent who is appearing in her second Slam final after finishing runner-up at the 2019 French Open.

Vondrousova, whose run at Wimbledon has guaranteed her a return to the world's top 20 next week, was an injured bystander at the tournament in 2022, reduced to watching a friend attempt to qualify for the main draw.

A second wrist surgery had ruled her out for six months although her absence from the tour at least allowed her the space and time to get married.

She is the second-lowest ranked player to reach the Wimbledon final — only Serena Williams in 2018 was ranked lower at 181.

Like Jabeur, the 24-year-old Czech has had to battle hard to make the final. She defeated four seeds in succession just to make the semi-finals by seeing off Veronika Kudermetova, Donna Vekic, Marie Bouzkova and Jessica Pegula.

Against fourth-ranked Pegula of the United States, she was 1-4 down in the final set.

In Thursday's semi-final, she swept past crowd favourite Elina Svitolina of Ukraine in two comfortable sets.

"For me, it's really crazy this is happening. But I think anything can happen in tennis," she said.



Spotlight on Vinesh in Budapest Ranking Series

PTI ■ BUDAPEST

Vinesh Phogat's performance will be followed keenly at the Polyák Imre & Varga János Memorial here on Saturday as she is set to return to competitive wrestling after a 10-month gap during which she also spearheaded the protest against WFI chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh.

Vinesh and five other women wrestlers, including Sangeeta Phogat, have accused Singh of sexually abusing them.

The Delhi police has filed a chargesheet in the case against 66-year-old Singh, who is also a BJP MP. The last time Vinesh competed was in September 2022 when she won a bronze at the World Championships in Budapest. However, she has entered the 55kg competition in the last UWW Ranking Series of the season instead of her usual 53kg division.

The 55kg category consists of 11 wrestlers as against 22 in 53kg division, which features strong grapplers such as Tokyo Olympics silver medalist Qianyu Pang of China, 2021 world championships bronze medalist Katarzyna Krawczyk from Poland and Tokyo Games bronze medalist Bolortuya Bat Ochir of Mongolia among others.

Vinesh will open her campaign with a qualification round against Areana Louise Villacusa of the USA and if she crosses the first hurdle the Indian will be up against Li Deng of China in the quarterfinals. Sangeeta Phogat will be India's lone contender in the 59kg and will open her campaign against Jennifer Page Rogers of the USA.

While Sarita Mor (women's 59kg), Sujeet (men's 65kg), and Greco-Roman wrestler Sunil Kumar (87kg) were scheduled to compete initially but later withdrew from the tournament.

The six protesting wrestlers had sought time till August 10 to prepare for the Asian Games trials, saying they are not in best physical shape to appear in trials due to their protest.

The IOA ad-hoc panel will conduct the trials on June 22-23 but it is unclear if the six protesting wrestlers will appear or not.

Sindhu, Sen enter US Open quarterfinals, Sankar too win

PTI ■ COUNCIL BLUFFS

Star Indian shuttlers P V Sindhu and Lakshya Sen notched up straight game wins to progress to the women's and men's singles quarterfinals of the US Open Super 300 badminton tournament here.

Double Olympic medalist Sindhu, seeded third, defeated Korea's Sung Shuo Yun 21-14 21-12. Fresh from his Canada Open Super 500 title last week, Sen beat Czech Republic's Jan Louda 21-8 23-21 in 39 minutes.

Sindhu will face China's Gao Fang jie next, while it will be an all-Indian clash in men's singles when third seed Sen takes on promising 19-year-old S Sankar Muthusamy from Chennai.

It has been an impressive run for the 2022 World Junior Championships silver medalist who registered a fighting 21-18 21-23 21-13 win over Israel's Misha Zilberman.

Sindhu didn't break much sweat against Sung, who could not pose any real challenge to the Indian during the match. Sindhu jumped to a 7-2 lead early on before extending it to 13-5.

Sung managed to narrow down the deficit to 11-14 but



Sindhu dashed any hope of a comeback, keeping a grip on the rallies to eventually earn the bragging rights.

After the change of sides, Sung started to match up to the Indian initially as she had a slender 5-3 lead but it soon evaporated with Sindhu breaking off from 7-7 to march ahead.

At the interval, Sindhu had a 11-8 lead and she kept moving ahead as Sung crumbled. From 16-12, Sindhu reeled off the remaining points without much ado.

Sen too blazed his way to a 6-1 lead and then jumped to 17-5 in a jiffy to take it away from his opponent in the opening game. The 39-year-old Czech, however, made a remarkable comeback in the second game, making life tough for Sen.

India's campaign ends at Badminton Asia Junior C'ships

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's campaign at the Badminton Asia Junior Championships came to an end as two girls' singles players and one girls' doubles pair lost in the round of 16 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia on Friday.

In the girls' doubles quarter final match, Taneesha and Karnika displayed a tough fight against the duo of Chen Fan Shu Tian and Jiang Pei Xi from China.

The Indian pair started off brilliantly in the first game and showed great coordination

en route to their 21-17 victory but their opponents mounted a comeback in the last two games to win 21-17, 13-21, 13-21 in a match that lasted 50 minutes.

In the girls' singles round of 16 match, Rakshitree Sree S was up against China's Huang Lin Ran. The Indian shuttler started well but could not find sustained rhythm throughout the match before eventually losing 15-21, 13-21.

In the other girls' singles pre-quarter final match, Tara Shah failed to find any momentum and went down 13-21, 8-21 against China's XU Wen Jing in a one-sided affair.

Moyes says West Ham 'can't plan anything' as Rice move drags on

AP ■ LONDON

Frustrated West Ham coach David Moyes has lamented Declan Rice's drawn-out move to Arsenal, saying Friday he "can't plan anything" until the captain's transfer is done.

A £105 million (\$140 million) deal for the England international midfielder was agreed with Arsenal 10 days ago but he is still officially a West Ham player.

Rice is not though part of West Ham's touring squad to Australia for pre-season friendlies against Perth Glory and Tottenham Hotspur.

The Premier League season kicks off in a month.

"Until it's done we can't plan anything really," Moyes told reporters in Perth ahead of West Ham's friendly against Perth Glory on Saturday.

"Everybody knows the situation. We are expecting something to happen."

Moyes remained coy over possible replacements for the influential Rice, who



played a major part in West Ham's Europa Conference League title win.

"I don't think we can replace Declan exactly like for like, that is for sure," he said.

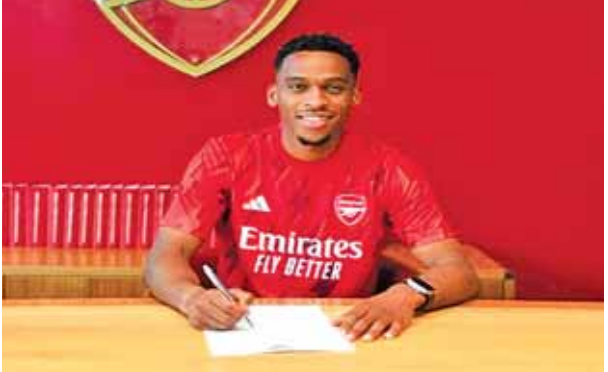
"We will add to the squad. We won't be giving any thoughts or any names or anything like that."

With Rice and several other star players absent, West Ham boasts a youthful squad in Perth in the club's first outing since their European triumph over Fiorentina.

"We're still buzzing... there are fantastic memories that won't fade away quickly. But we've also moved on and preparing for the next round of games," said Moyes, whose job was under threat last season with West Ham near the Premier League's relegation zone.

"We don't have all of our international players with us due to a late finish and international games so it's a great opportunity for some young players and the players we have with us now."

Arsenal swoop for Dutch defender Timber



AP ■ LONDON

Arsenal announced the signing of Dutch international defender Jurrien Timber from Ajax on Friday as the Gunners continue to strengthen for a Premier League title challenge.

The 22-year-old will cost an initial 40 million euros (\$45 million, £34 million) with a further five million euros worth of add-ons, Ajax confirmed in a

Leipzig sign striker Openda from Lens

AP ■ LEIPZIG

Bundesliga club RB Leipzig on Friday bought Belgian striker Lois Openda from French club Lens. The Bundesliga team said on their website that the 23-year-old Belgian international had signed a five-year contract and that "the transfer fee did not exceed the limits we had set for ourselves."

Lens said it was a "record fee", but did not specify which club it was a record for.

The 23-year-old joined Lens from Club Brugge for around 10 million euros last summer. He scored 21 goals, a club record in Ligue 1, as Lens finished second behind Paris Saint-Germain.

Openda replaces Frenchman Christopher Nkunku at Leipzig, who moved to Chelsea after finishing last season as joint-top scorer in the Bundesliga with 16 goals.

"We're really excited that Jurrien has joined us," said Arsenal boss Mikel Arteta. "He is a versatile young defender, who will fit into our system and provide our squad with so much added quality." "I'm excited to play for this beautiful club, and

I can't wait to start, and to see the fans obviously in the stadium," said Timber. "I just like the way Arsenal play, it's a bit similar to Ajax's style and I like to play from the back. I can see a lot of similarities, especially in the way Arsenal and Ajax want to play."

