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INDIA ASHAMED

Massive protest over Manipur video; State, Union Govts must act, says SC

PNS ■ IMPHAL/NEW DELHI

A massive protest rally swept through Manipur's Churachandpur following the release of a disturbing video showing two women being paraded naked by a mob. The incident has drawn widespread condemnation, including from the Supreme Court, which expressed deep distress and termed it "unacceptable in a constitutional democracy."

The Supreme Court bench, led by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud, took cognisance of the video and ordered the Centre and Manipur Government to take immediate action. The Union Home Secretary and the State Chief Secretary have been asked to file affidavits apprising the court of the actions taken. The next hearing is scheduled for July 28.

Amid heavy downpour, over a thousand people donning black attire assembled at Public Ground in Churachandpur and marched towards Peace Ground in Tuibong, demanding a separate administration. The protesters held banners with messages such as "Rally for separate administration," "Please recognise our separation from Manipur," and "Too much tribal blood has flowed, separation is the only solution."



Slogans like "We want total separation," "Long live tribal unity," and "Biren government down down" echoed through the streets.

This peaceful protest came in the wake of the distressing video that has deeply affected the nation. Numerous organisations, civil societies, political leaders, and Bollywood celebrities have voiced their condemnation, calling it an affront to humanity. Chief Minister N Biren Singh and others have called for strict punishment for the perpetrators.

The rally culminated with the submission of a memorandum to Union Home Minister Amit Shah through the Deputy Commissioner of Churachandpur, demanding immediate action on their demands.

The Manipur Police announced the detention of a key suspect, believed to be the mastermind behind the incident, captured in the 26-second footage from Thoubal district.

During the court proceedings, Chief Justice Chandrachud, accompanied by Justices PS Narasimha and Manoj Misra, expressed their deep disturbance over the video, stressing that using

women as instruments to perpetrate violence in a region plagued by communal strife is deeply disturbing and unacceptable in a constitutional democracy. The court urged the Government to take swift action and prevent any recurrence of such incidents.

The SC ordered the Union Home Secretary and Manipur Chief Secretary to appraise the court on the actions taken in the case, including holding the perpetrators accountable and ensuring the prevention of similar incidents. The court will review the progress on the next date of listing.

Manipur shoots up Parliament's temp

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The first day of the Monsoon Session of Parliament commenced on a stormy note on Thursday with the Opposition raising a din in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha on the Manipur violence issue leading to quick adjournments and finally for the day.

While the Government on the floor of both Houses said it is ready to discuss the issue as a short-duration discussion, the Opposition repeatedly said it wanted all proceedings to be suspended before taking up the Manipur issue.

A united Opposition demanded a suo motu statement from Prime Minister Narendra Modi and sought to know why the PM remained mum on the crisis now which is almost three months.

During the customary conversation between the PM and UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi, the latter demanded an immediate discussion on Manipur to which Modi is believed to have conveyed that it will be taken up in due course.

Several Opposition members, including Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge, had given notices in their respective House demanding a



discussion on Manipur violence.

The lower House was first adjourned in the morning soon after obituary references by Speaker Om Birla and as Opposition members sloganeered on the Manipur crisis.

"We have made it clear that we are ready for a discussion on Manipur in both Houses. Manipur is a sensitive issue. The Home Minister will reply to the discussion in detail," said Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi.

He said Shah will reply to the debate. Joshi said Deputy leader in Lok Sabha Rajnath Singh has already given a similar assurance in this regard.

Opposition MPs were continuously shouting slogans like "Manipur Manipur" and

allowed the notices for a short-duration discussion, Congress president and Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge raised objections and said all the business of the House be suspended first and their notices for a discussion on Manipur under Rule 267 be taken up.

"How the Leader of the House suddenly gets up and says we are ready for a discussion. We have given notices under Rule 267 for suspending all other business of the House and then take this up. Let the prime minister give a statement and we will discuss," Kharge told the chairman after which the House was adjourned due to sloganeering opposition members in the morning.

The Upper House then assembled post-lunch when Union Minister Anurag Thakur was invited to lay listed papers and introduction of the Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill.

Opposition members started sloganeering when Thakur moved to introduce the Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill, 2023, to further amend the Cinematograph Act, 1952 after moving to withdraw the Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill, 2019. It was, however, passed by a voice vote amid the din.

CAPSULE

TEESTA'S PLEA SEEKING DISCHARGE DISMISSED

Ahmedabad: A Sessions court in Ahmedabad on Thursday dismissed social activist Teesta Setalvad's plea seeking discharge in a case related to alleged fabrication of evidence related to the 2002 Gujarat riots in which she and two former IPS officers are the key accused. While rejecting the plea, Additional Sessions Judge AR Patel also asked the prosecution and defence to "open the case" (start trial proceedings) from July 24.

PAK VISA RANKED 4TH WEAKEST IN WORLD

New Delhi: Pakistan's passport has been ranked as the fourth weakest in the world, according to a recent report by Henley & Partners, a global citizenship and residence advisory company. The index, which assessed 227 countries, positions Pakistan at the 101st spot based on the number of destinations Pakistani residents can visit without requiring a visa. Earlier this year, Pakistan was already listed among the five countries with the lowest-ranked passports by the London-based advisory firm.

PM condemns Manipur horror, pledges justice

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

On the opening day of the Monsoon session of parliament on Thursday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi condemned the horrific incidents of sexual atrocities in Manipur, declaring that such actions could never be forgiven, and the guilty would not escape justice.

In his first address on the Manipur issue since the outbreak of violent clashes in the State, the Prime Minister called upon all State Chief Ministers to prioritise the "safety of women" and take necessary measures to protect them.

Speaking to reporters at the Parliament House premises, Modi expressed deep shock and anguish over the distressing video from Manipur, which showed women being disrobed and humiliated by rioters and anti-social elements.

"As I stand next to this temple of democracy, my heart is filled with pain and anger. The Manipur incident is a shame for any civilised nation.



The entire country has been shamed," he said in his customary address ahead of the start of the two houses, which were later adjourned for the day due to the gravity of the issue.

He vehemently condemned the "disturbing incident" and assured the nation that those responsible for such heinous acts would face the full force of the law.

"The video showing atrocity against women in Manipur is the most shameful. I am pained and angered by the incident, and I assure the people of the country that the guilty will not be spared and

will face the severest punishment," the Prime Minister affirmed. "Manipur ki betiyon ke saath jo hua, isko kabhi maaf nahin kiya ja sakta..." Modi stated.

The video, which is 76 days old, resurfaced on social media, revealing the horrifying sight of two women being disrobed and forcibly paraded on village roads. These atrocities are linked to ethnic violence in Manipur.

"The Manipur incident has shamed the entire humanity, and 140 crore people of the country are feeling ashamed. Whether it's Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, or Manipur, the dignity of women and girls is paramount and must be protected. I request the chief ministers of all states to take the strongest possible action against the criminals involved in these atrocities," Modi urged.

Cong CMs rap Modi for analogy

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel and his counterpart from Rajasthan Ashok Gehlot have reacted strongly to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's statement comparing the law and order situation in violence-hit Manipur with their Congress-ruled States.

In response to the PM's comments on the incident of women being paraded naked in Manipur, Baghel said Modi did not address the issue in Manipur adequately, despite the state being in turmoil for three months.

"Instead, Modi mentioned Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan in his speech, both of which are due for Assembly polls later this year," he said, adding that the law and order situation in Chhattisgarh remains peaceful, and neither Modi nor Union Home Minister Amit Shah mentioned any concerns about it during their recent visits.

Baghel accused the Prime Minister of trying to divert attention from the situation in Manipur by linking it to States like Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan.

SC to appoint DERC head on ad-hoc till CM-LG row sorted

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court made strong observations on Thursday regarding the ongoing deadlock between the Arvind Kejriwal-led Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Government and Delhi Lieutenant Governor (LG) VK Saxena over the appointment of the Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission (DERC) chairperson.

The court expressed anguish that nobody seems to care about the "headless" institution and stated that it will take action to appoint a DERC chairperson on an ad-hoc basis while pending a decision on the Delhi Government's plea contesting the LG's power to make such an appointment.

A bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices P S Narasimha and Manoj Misra emphasised the need to resolve the issue promptly, especially after the failure of the LG and the Chief Minister to reach a consensus despite the apex court's directions.

The court proposed the appointment of someone on a



"pro tem basis" to the post and stated that it will have to conduct some groundwork, consult relevant parties, and obtain their consent.

During the hearing, the bench suggested that both sides provide names of three to five former judges of the Delhi High Court without indicating who suggested which names. The court expressed its willingness to pick one name from the list provided. Senior advocates Harish Salve, representing the LG, and Abhishek Singhvi, representing the Delhi Government, were involved in the proceedings.

Senior advocate Salve informed the court that the apex court can name somebody for the position, and upon agreement from both parties, the appointee can be assigned as the DERC chairperson. However, the court reiterated that the appointment could



only proceed with mutual consent.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Centre, emphasised the importance of a functioning DERC and supported the court's proposal to appoint someone to the post on an interim basis.

The Supreme Court expressed its concern about the state of the institution and urged the involved parties to rise above political disagreements and focus on the essential work of governance away from public scrutiny. The court stated that it will find potential candidates and consult former judges of the High Court before making the appointment. The next steps in the matter will be taken as per the court's directions

Chinese manjha kills girl riding with dad

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A seven-year-old girl died Wednesday after a glass-coated kite string got tangled around her neck, leaving a deep cut, in the Guru Harikrishan Nagar, Paschim Vihar area of Delhi. The Delhi Police said the girl was with her father, mother, and elder sister on a motorcycle on her way to a swimming class when the accident took place.

The girl was sitting in the front, followed by her father, who was riding the bike, while her 13-year-old sister and mother were riding pillion, a senior police officer said.

On Wednesday, a PCR call was received at 7.27 pm in Paschim Vihar West Police Station regarding the death of a girl due to a suspected Chinese manjha (thread coated with glass particles used for



flying kites), the officer said. The information was received from Sri Balaji Action Hospital, police said.

A case under sections 304A (causing death by negligence) and 188 (disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant) of the Indian Penal Code has been registered and investigation is underway, the officer said. Delhi Police on Thursday took to Twitter and asked people to inform them if anyone they know is selling or manufacturing Chinese man-

use of nylon or synthetic thread material for kite flying. It prohibits the production, storage, supply, importation, sale, and use of all forms of manjha, with the ban in place in order to prevent harm to humans, birds, and other animals as well as the environment. The notification permits flying kites only with a cotton thread free from any materials designed to increase its sharpness or strength.

In Delhi, the people most affected by the use of the illegal Chinese manjha are those on two-wheelers. In most cases, death is sudden because of excessive blood loss.

Not just humans, birds too have fallen victim to the glass-laced threads used for flying kites. The People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) said that they got around 1,500 calls every year in connection with injuries to birds.

5-judge SC bench to hear Delhi Ordinance

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A five-judge constitution bench will now hear the Delhi Government's plea challenging the Centre's May 19 ordinance which took away the control over services from the city dispensation and set off a fresh tussle between the two power centres.

The top court rejected the vehement submission of the Delhi Government that there was no need for referring the matter to a constitution bench as it will "paralyse the whole system" during its pendency.

A bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and justices P S Narasimha and Manoj Misra said the larger bench will commence the pro-

ceedings after the hearing on the pleas challenging the abrogation of Article 370, which had bestowed special status on the erstwhile State of Jammu & Kashmir, gets over.

"We will refer it to the Constitution bench and give you (parties — Delhi Government and the Centre) the liberty to move before us for the hearing after we finish the 370 (pleas on abrogation of Article 370). We will upload the order this evening... Meanwhile, the pleadings have to be completed," the CJ said.

During a brief hearing, the bench raised a query with regard to the ordinance and said it took away the control of services from the control of Delhi Government.

Continued on Page 2

Bhushan granted bail in sexual harassment case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi court granted bail to A Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, the outgoing chief of Wrestling Federation of India (WFI), in the sexual harassment case involving women wrestlers. The court approved the bail plea of Vinod Tomar, the suspended WFI assistant secretary.

"Granting bail on a bond of ₹25,000 each, with certain conditions," said Harjeet Singh Jaspal, Additional CMM. "We have imposed certain conditions. The accused shall not directly or indirectly induce the complainants or witnesses, and he shall not leave the country without permission from the court. Please ensure all conditions are scrupulously followed."

Man dies of electrocution on treadmill, gym owner arrested



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 24-year-old manager of a multinational company died from electrocution while using a treadmill at a gym in Rohini's Sector-15 area. The gym owner has been arrested, as per the police report.

The police were notified of Saksham Pruthi's death by officials of Baba Saheb Ambedkar Hospital. Pruthi was unconscious when brought to the hospital from the gym.

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CJI issues directive on protocol facilities, highlights need for judicial discipline

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ NEW DELHI



In an unprecedented move, Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud, taking cognisance of the summoning of a Railway Official by Registrar of Allahabad High Court Justice Gautam Chaudhary on charges of dereliction on part of Indian Railways, has said that protocol facilities to Judges should not be used in a manner that is liable to result in inconvenience to others or to bring public criticism of the judiciary.

for kind perusal," Chandrachud wrote on Wednesday to all the Chief Justices of the High Courts with an earnest request to share his concerns with all colleagues across the High Courts.

"Self reflection and counselling within the judiciary is necessary," the CJI added.

The CJI stated that the communication which has been addressed by an officer of the High Court to the General Manager of the Railway establishment has given rise to justifiable disquiet both within a

letter to the concerned Registrar, the CJI said his attention has been drawn to a communication dated 14 July 2023 addressed by the Registrar of Allahabad High Court in charge of the Protocol Section to the General Manager of the Northern Railways.

The letter adverts to Justice Chaudhary who was travelling on a train with his spouse. Going by the case, as also highlighted through the CJI, the New Delhi Purushottam Express was late by more than three hours at destination station Prayagraj. In spite of repeated intimation to the T.T.E, no G.R.P personnel were found in the coach to meet the requirements as desired by the Judge.

Further, no Pantry Car workers attended His Lordship for providing refreshments despite repeated calls. Moreover, when the call was made to the Pantry Car Manager the call was not picked up, as mentioned the summoning

part of the Registrar to the Railway officer.

"The aforesaid incident caused great inconvenience and displeasure to His Lordship. In this regard, the Hon'ble Judge has desired, that explanation may be called from the erring officials

of the Railways, the G.R.P Personnel and the Pantry Car Manager pertaining to the inconvenience caused to His Lordship due to their conduct and dereliction of duty. I, therefore, request you, kindly call the explanation of the concerned officials and send to this Hon'ble Court, so that, the same may be placed before His Lordship for kind perusal," Chandrachud mentioned in his letter quoting about the incident highlighted by the Registrar.

The CJI though said that the officer of the High Court was just carrying out a direction of the Judge of the High Court in this instance.

In his remarks to all, the

CJI reminded that protocol 'facilities' which are made available to Judges should not be utilised to assert a claim to privilege which sets them apart from society or as a manifestation of power or authority.

"Awise exercise of judicial authority, both on and off the Bench what sustains the credibility and legitimacy of the judiciary and the confidence which society has in its Judges.

In their defence the railways regretted the inconvenience caused to Justice Gautam Chowdhary, Allahabad High Court, during his train journey on July 9 but said that the pantry manager contact was established by the VIP staff but the delay in facilitation of snacks was due to intense rains and odd positioning of the coach for the day. With this incident the Railway Board has directed its catering arm IRCTC to be more cautious when there are VIPs on board for which protocol information are already there.

16 killed, 98 rescued in massive landslide in Raigad

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI



At least 16 persons were killed and 98 others rescued from under the debris after a massive landslide rocked Irshalwadi village in Khalapur taluka of rain-ravaged Raigad district in coastal Konkan region late on Wednesday night, burying as many as 17 houses, even as the various government agencies launched an extensive rescue and relief operations in the affected village.

In all, 150 to 170 people were initially feared trapped under the mountain of debris of 17 out of a total 48 houses that got buried after a down-pour-triggered landslide wreaked havoc in Irshalwadi, a hill-top tribal village of a population of 228 people that is in the hilly terrain and is inaccessible by a pucca road.

The rescue and relief work - which started within a couple hours after the landslide that took place at around 10.30 pm - continued till 6 pm on Thursday.

Teams of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), who along with the fire brigade personnel from the nearby municipal corporations are engaged in the rescue and debris clearance operations, will resume the work at 5 am on Friday.

Though there was no official confirmation as to the number of the yet-to-be accounted for persons, eyewitness accounts said that at least 50 more villagers were still feared trapped under the debris.

Of the rescued people, more than 50 people sustained injuries. They were rushed to the nearby MGM Hospital at Panvel and a few other hospitals.

Maharashtra chief minister Eknath Shinde -- who rushed to the spot in the early hours of Thursday, made it to point to climb up to the landslide-hit hill-top village by foot and was there for a better part of the day supervising rescue operations - said: "At the time of mishap, several of the local residents were away in the agriculture fields, while some children are studying in Ashram schools. That being the case, we are looking for all the missing persons as well all those who were away from the village at the time of mishap site".

Union Home Minister

Amit Shah, who spoke to the chief minister in the morning and took stock of the situation at Irshalwadi village, tweeted: "Talked to the chief minister. 4 teams of NDRF have reached the spot and rescue operation is going on war level along with the local administration. Our priority is to evacuate people from the scene and treat the injured immediately".

Giving details of the mishap, Deputy chief minister Devendra Fadnis said in the State Assembly: "Irshalwadi village where the mishap took place, has been heavy rains during the last few days. The village had recorded 499 mm of rainfall from July 17 to 19, 2023. The population of the village is 228. There are in all 48 houses in the village. As many as 25 to 28 families are affected in the landslide".

Talking to media persons at the affected village, Shinde announced an ex gratia of Rs 5 lakh each to the next kin of the deceased and free treatment for those injured in the incident. "To relocate and accommodate the 48 families displaced by the mishap, we have ordered 50 containers. We will rehabilitate them properly at a different place at a later stage," he said.

While the chief minister himself visited the mishap, deputy chief ministers Devendra Fadnis and Ajit Pawar are monitoring the situation from Mumbai.

Shiv Sena (UBT)'s leader of Opposition Ambadas Danve, Aditya Thackeray, state Congress President Nana Patole and other leaders visited the mishap site and offered all cooperation to the state government and the local people.

Meanwhile, hundreds of people were moved to safer places after several rivers like Ulhas in Thane district, Amba, Savitri and Patalganga (in neighbouring Raigad district) began over-flowing because of the heavy rains battering both the district for the past couple of days.

Train services were stopped at Chiplun in Ratnagiri district after as Vashishthi river breaches danger mark. "Water was above the danger mark on the Vashishthi railway bridge. Hence train services were stopped as a precautionary measure. The Kochuveli-Indore Express has been stopped at Chiplun station," a Konkarn Railway spokesperson said.

Owing to heavy rains, the Konkarn Railway re-scheduled three long distance trains -- Train no. 01140 Madgaon Jn. - Nagpur Special, Train no. 20112 Madgaon Jn. - Mumbai CSMT Konkankanya Express and Train no. 11004 Sawantwadi Road - Dadar Tutari Express.

Fireman dies of heart attack

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ MUMBAI

In an unfortunate mishap, a fire officer attached to a Belapur Brigade station of the Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation (NMMC) died of a heart attack on Thursday morning, while climbing to the hilltop village of Irshalwadi in Khalapur taluka of rain-ravaged Raigad district where a massive landslide took place late on Thursday night.

Identifying the deceased fire officer, NMMC chief fire officer Shirish Aradwad said: "Shirish was an assistant station officer attached to the Belapur fire station in Navi Mumbai. He was amongst the first batch of rescuers who were sent to Irshalwadi village. While climbing the narrow and steep path to the hill-top village, Shirish collapsed after he suffered a heart attack. He died immediately after that".

when Saksham's emergency contact was reached through his phone. Despite efforts to save him, doctors informed the family that Saksham had died from the electric shock. Saksham had recently been promoted to a managerial position in June.

The family learned from colleagues at the gym that similar incidents had occurred in the past, and complaints to the gym management had gone unheeded. Mahesh believes this negligence led to the loss of his son, who had been going to the gym for the last few months.

Saksham's friend, Navdeep Dhawan, mentioned that he had resumed his workout routine after a short break.

In response to the incident, the Delhi Gym Association advised its members to promptly check the earthing connection and ensure no loose wires were present at their establishments. All electrical points were to be inspected by electricians, and other measures were to be taken to prevent such incidents in the future. The association's vice-president, Chirag Sethi, attributed the incident to a fault in the treadmill's electrical wiring. The association represents various gyms, including Anytime Fitness, Gold's Gym, Gravitas Gym, and The Gym.

Saksham's father, Mahesh Pruthi, shared that his son had a B.Tech degree from Delhi and was employed at an MNC in Gurugram. The family was notified of the accident

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The Constitution excludes three entries of List II (state list) related to police, law and order and land from the control of the Delhi Government, it said.

"What you (Centre) have effectively done is that the Constitution says barring three entries, Delhi Legislative Assembly has the power. But, the Ordinance takes away Entry 41 (services) (of List II) also from the power. That is the effect of Section 3A of the Ordinance," the bench said. Senior advocate Harish Salve, appearing for Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena, referred to previous judgments and said for a union territory the state list becomes a concurrent list and hence Parliament has the power to legislate. Salve justified the termination of the services of 437 independent consultants appointed by the Delhi Government by the orders of the LG. The Delhi Government made "rank illegal appointments" of underserving persons, who happened to be Aam Aadmi party workers, and they were terminated by the LG, and for that the ordinance was not needed at all, he said.

Senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for the Delhi Government, said the reference of the case to a constitution bench was not needed as the matter can be decided by a three-judge bench. The senior lawyer said the ordinance violated Article 239AA (which deals with special provisions with respect to Delhi) of the Constitution as it diluted the power of the elected Government.

From Page 1
The enquiry confirmed that he died due to electrocution while using a treadmill at the facility. Keshav, a witness present at the gym during the incident, mentioned that Saksham sat between two treadmills to take a rest when he fell down after getting shocked. Attempting to help, Keshav also received an electric shock but managed to turn off the power switch before receiving medical attention and surviving.

Despite immediate efforts, there was no response from Saksham, and he was taken to the hospital unconscious. Anubhav Duggal, the person running the gym, has been arrested. The police reviewed CCTV footage, revealing that Saksham was exercising on the treadmill when the accident occurred. A forensic science laboratory team confirmed that the treadmill's metal parts were carrying electric current.

A case has been registered under IPC sections 287 (negligent conduct with respect to machinery) and 304A (causing death by negligence) at KN Katju Marg police station, according to DCP Sidhu.

'Delhi projected to suffer ₹2.75 trillion loss due to climate change by 2050'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi is projected to suffer losses of Rs 2.75 trillion by 2050 due to the impacts of climate change, with changes in precipitation and temperature patterns posing significant threats to the lives of the most vulnerable populations. The warning comes from the city government's draft action plan on climate change.



The plan, which is pending approval, highlights "heat waves/higher temperature and heavy precipitation events over fewer number of days" as major challenges that the city will confront in the upcoming years. It will then be submitted to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change for approval. The new plan will include temperature and rainfall data, and based on projections, will chalk out adaptation and mitigation strategies, the official said.

Delhi's previous climate action plan was finalised in 2019 -- after a lengthy seven-year consultation with stakeholders -- rendering it obsolete.

"At an aggregate level, the total cost of climate change for Delhi by mid century is expected to be Rs 2.75 trillion," the draft action plan states. It estimates the losses from the agriculture and allied sectors at Rs 80 billion, manufacturing at Rs 330 billion and services at Rs 2.34 trillion.

During the formulation of the new action plan, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Sixth Assessment Report (IPCC AR6) was examined, analysing the impacts of different climate

scenarios on annual maximum and minimum temperatures and precipitation, an expert who contributed to the plan said.

The projections show a rise in maximum temperatures in Delhi by 1.5 degrees Celsius based on the RCP 4.5 scenario, and a 2.1-degree Celsius increase based on the RCP 8.5 scenario by mid-century.

Four Representative Concentration Pathways (RCPs) span a range of future global warming scenarios. RCPs quantify future greenhouse gas concentrations and the radiative forcing -- the difference between the incoming and outgoing radiation at the top of the atmosphere -- due to increases in climate change pollution.

Due to the different future concentrations of greenhouse gases, RCP2.6 will result in the least global warming and only limited climate change. RCP 8.5 will result in more rapid warming and climate change.

Excerpts of the draft action plan, also indicate a decrease in cold days and nights, an anticipated reduction of 8.4 dry days, an increase of 1.4 consecutive wet days, and a rise of 0.9 heavy precipitation days compared to the baseline period of pre-industrial levels. A detailed district specific vulnerability assessment has also

been carried out as part of the plan's revision process.

A detailed district-specific vulnerability assessment was conducted as part of the process. The vulnerability rankings for all districts of the state will help policymakers prioritise adaptation strategies based on the extent and type of vulnerability, with south Delhi being identified as the most vulnerable and New Delhi the least.

The draft action plan for climate change acknowledges a concerning lack of formal records and practices among various agencies responsible for stormwater drainage management in Delhi.

Currently, there is no legislative mandate for these agencies to prepare comprehensive records of inundation extents in different parts of the capital territory.

To improve flood monitoring and enhance preparedness, the draft action plan proposes the installation of low-cost sensors at locations that are prone to perpetual flooding. These sensors would serve the purpose of issuing appropriate warnings and evaluating the effectiveness of flood reduction measures.

The plan outlines various measures to address urban flooding, including the de-silting of stormwater drains. It also suggests using drainage pumps in underpasses and low-lying areas to pump out excess water from the roads.

Mamata accuses Centre of fanning riots in NE States

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday slammed the BJP Government for allowing the "act of barbarism" to continue in Manipur calling upon the people of the country to unite against those who were fanning communal violence.

"What has happened in Manipur, "is a matter of shame," Banerjee said, blaming the Centre for fanning the riots in the North-Eastern State. Banerjee's reaction came after a video showing two women being paraded naked in public by a crowd of miscreants went viral.

"This anarchy has to stop," Banerjee said adding "the Centre's policies are to blame for all these ... it is due to the Centre that the country is burning ... It is a shame." Earlier, asking the nation to remain united in the hour of crisis Banerjee wrote in the social media that her heart was broken to witness the "horrific video." She wrote, "Heartbroken and outraged to witness the horrific video from Manipur showing the brutal treatment of two women by a frenzied mob. No words can express the pain and anguish of witnessing the violence inflicted on marginalised women. This act of barbarism is beyond comprehension and humanity... We must stand united in condemning such inhumane actions by the miscreants & bring justice to the victims." Banerjee's statements come a day before her party goes to organise the mega TMC Martyrs' Day rally.

Her party MP Kakoli Ghoshdastidar who was a member of the Trinamool Congress fact finding delegation to Manipur after returning



from that State said that the kind of violence she had seen in Manipur was unprecedented.

"In one word it is horrific ... the kind of violence we saw has never happened in India or North East or Manipur ... it is simply medieval," Ghoshdastidar said.

Reacting to Banerjee's comments on Manipur Bengal BJP spokesperson Samik Bhattacharya said that the Chief Minister should first have looked into her own backyard where her marauding party men perpetrated unending electoral violence on the ordinary voters just because they showed the courage of casting their votes.

"The Chief Minister is delivering big lectures on Manipur but as a Police Minister of the State she should also have referred to the kind of violence her party men had been perpetrating in Bengal ... In a matter of days 42 of our party workers were murdered after the 2021 Assembly elections ... these panchayat elections have seen 54 deaths while Bengal has become a hub of bombs and bullets," Bhattacharya said, adding the Chief Minister was raising Manipur issue because she wanted to divert the attention from Bengal violence.

Meanwhile, stamped ballot papers continued to surface in bundles from various parts of Bengal leading the opposition parties to point out at the "kind of elections that brought victory to TMC" having taken place in Bengal.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
CONSTRUCTION DIVISION NO 1, CAPITAL PROJECT ADMINISTRATOR,
P.W.D., BHOPAL

TENDER NOTICE

Tenders are invited for following work. The details of the work will be available in the website <https://www.mptenders.gov.in> :-

| S. No | CPA/Tender No | N.I.T. No. & Date | Name of the work | Probable amount of contract (In lakhs) | Earnest Money | Cost of tender form | Last date of online purchase, download & submission of tenders |
|-------|-----------------|---------------------|---|--|-----------------|---------------------|--|
| 1 | 2023_CPA_291382 | 49/SAC dt. 13.07.23 | Construction of Indoor-Outdoor stadium and upgradation work multipurpose hall, construction of cricket ground, boundary wall and other allied work at Dr. Shyama Prashad Mukherjee stadium Kolar road, Bhopal | Rs. 499.76 | Rs. 4,99,760.00 | Rs. 15,000 | 04-08-2023 |
| 2 | 2023_CPA_291383 | 50/SAC dt. 13.07.23 | Construction of pavilion at Aishbagh Stadium, Bhopal (M.P.) | Rs. 205.31 | Rs. 2,05,310.00 | Rs. 15,000 | -As Above- |
| 3 | 2023_CPA_291384 | 51/SAC dt. 13.07.23 | Pavilion & Other Miscellaneous works of Babe Ali Ground Bhopal | Rs. 176.40 | Rs. 1,76,400.00 | Rs. 12,500 | -As Above- |

The tender forms (documents) can be download after online payment of the cost of the from the above website. The last date of purchase, download and online submission the tender form shall be **04-08-2023 upto 17.30 PM**. The detailed NIT and other information can be seen in the above website.

Executive Engineer,
Construction Division. No. 1
C.P. ADMIN., P.W.D.,
E-5, Arera Colony, Bhopal
0755-2464382

G-16952/23

PUBLIC NOTICE
To be known to all, **SUNIL KUMAR SINHA, S/O SH. SHYAM BIHARI LAL R/O FLAT NO.C-201, P.O.SATISHHEEL, BAIROWA, CGHS LTD., PLOT NO.C-201, SECTOR-11, DWARKA, NEW DELHI-110075** Allottee/Owner of FLAT NO.C-201, PRAGATISHHEEL BAIROWA CGHS LTD., PLOT NO.C-201, SECTOR-11, DWARKA, NEW DELHI-110075 having applied for conversion of the aforesaid flat from lease hold to free hold in DDA. The original document i.e. SHARE CERTIFICATE, ALLOTMENT LETTER & POSSESSION LETTER issued by society of the above said flat has been lost. An F.I.R./NCR/LR NO.67800/2023 dated 20/07/2023 in this effect has been lodged in P.S. Crime Branch, Delhi. Any person(s) claiming any right, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents, may write/contact with above named person at above address/Phone No.9931067681 within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objection with respect to this property, can personally inform or write to President/Secretary, Pragatishheel Bairowa CGHS Ltd. or Deputy Director (Group Housing) or Director (Group Housing), Delhi Development Authority, Vikas Sardan, New Delhi-110023.

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Yasir Usmani S/o. Md. Rahmatullah Usmani, R/o L-94, 1st floor, Abul Fazal Enclave, Jamia Nagar, Okhla, New Delhi-110025 have declared that my father's name wrongly mentioned in my 10th class Marksheet as Rahmatullah Usmani instead of Md. Rahmatullah Usmani and my mother's Rukhsana correct name is Rukhsana Khatoon.

THANKSGIVING

Thank you holly spirit blessings Celine.

Thank you holly spirit blessings Celine.

Thank you holly spirit blessings Celine.

Thank you holly spirit blessings Celine.

Thank you holly spirit blessings Celine.

Delhi Cabinet approves free sugar for deprived families

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Cabinet on Thursday approved a proposal to provide free sugar to underprivileged families in the national capital. Approximately 2,80,290 beneficiaries, including 68,747 National Food Security Cardholders, will be benefited from this compassionate decision and it would cost Rs 1.11 crore to the government.

The cabinet has also approved a proposal to provide Rs 10,000 per family ex gratia to flood victims. Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had announced ex-gratia after meeting with flood victims. The floods in Delhi have caused widespread damage, and many people have been displaced from their homes.

After the cabinet meeting, the Arvind Kejriwal government issued a statement saying recognising the unprecedented challenges posed by the current

economic situation and inflation, the Delhi Government had previously taken measures to ensure no one suffers from food insecurity. "As part of these efforts, regular NFSA ration under the Public Distribution System (PDS) was distributed free of cost to the PDS beneficiaries for specific periods, starting from April 2020 to November 2020, and later extended from May 2021 to May 2022."

It further stated that besides the free food grains, including wheat and rice, to all NFSA beneficiaries under the National Food Security Act (NFSA), by the Union of India, the Delhi Government has decided to provide free sugar to residents.

The Delhi Government will provide free sugar to Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) beneficiaries under the sugar subsidy scheme. The distribution of sugar to AAY cardholders will be made available free of cost for a period of one year, effective

from January 2023 to December 2023.

"To facilitate the seamless implementation of this scheme, the matter of free distribution of sugar under the Sugar Subsidy Scheme, specifically 1 kg of sugar to Antyodaya Anna Yojana category cardholders, was brought before the Council of Ministers for consideration and subsequently approved.

Approximately 2,80,290 beneficiaries, including 68,747 National Food Security Cardholders, will greatly benefit from this compassionate decision. The implementation of this initiative will require an estimated budget of approximately Rs 1.11 crores, as the Delhi Government continues its tireless efforts to prioritise the welfare of its residents," it further added.

The Cabinet has also approved a proposal of financial assistance to flood affected families of Rs 10,000 per family. This decision was made after

Kejriwal had personally met with the victims to understand their plight and assess the situation.

This will be subject to verification of their details and genuineness. Approving the proposal, Kejriwal expressed his heartfelt concern for the flood victims.

According to a statement issued by the government, the relief will be disbursed through electronic transfers or Direct Benefit Transfers directly into the bank accounts of the head of each beneficiary family. In case any beneficiary does not have a bank account, the district administration will organize camps to facilitate the account opening process before transferring the relief amount.

The implementation of the ex-gratia relief is aimed at providing immediate financial assistance to the affected families and helping them recover from the devastating impact of the floods, the CM stated.

Don't sell NSAIDs without prescription: Govt to chemists

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi government's Department of Drugs Control has written a letter to the president of All Chemist Associations of Delhi to avoid the sale of nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) like Aspirin, Ibuprofen and Diclofenac without the prescription of a regular medical practitioner. The department has advised retail chemists to refrain from over-the-counter sale of these medicines with immediate effect until further directions.

"They (chemists) are also advised to keep records of stocks of painkiller drugs falling under this category. Stringent action will be taken against retail chemists if found flaunting this advice," the letter said.

According to department officials, these medicines destroy platelets in human blood. The Health department will take action against any retail chemist found flouting this advice. With the rise of vector-borne diseases such as



dengue and chikungunya in monsoons, taking these medicines without supervision could be harmful, they said. In the letter, K R Chawla, a Controlling Authority official, said that there is a chance of vector-borne diseases rising in the pre-monsoon and post-monsoon periods, and close monitoring is required.

An official from the drugs control department said that such an advisory is issued every year, and it is more relevant this year because of the floods in Delhi. In the monsoon season, the rise of vector-borne diseases like dengue and chikungunya taking these painkillers without any consultation could be harmful.

This season due to Delhi floods the risk vector-borne diseases is more as mosquito breeding is on the higher side.

Painkillers may lead to a decline in blood platelet count, and doctors generally caution against taking pain relievers without medical supervision. The most common side effects of NSAIDs are indigestion, stomach ulcer, headache, drowsiness, dizziness, allergic reactions, kidney issues, heart attack, and strokes.

As per the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), a total of 163 dengue cases have been reported till July 15 this year, as compared to the same period in 2022 and 2021 when 158 and 40 cases respectively were reported.

As per data, 39 cases were reported in the last one week alone. Of these, two patients were from outside Delhi and in 10 cases, the address was not provided by hospitals. No fatality has been reported so far, as per data. Apart from dengue, 14 cases of chikungunya and 54 cases of malaria have also been reported.

Consider replacing 15-year-old diesel generator sets, green body tells DPCC

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The National Green Tribunal has asked the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) to consider replacing 15-year-old diesel generator sets, besides using cleaner fuel for complying with environmental norms.

While disposing of a petition that claimed the continuous running of generators at a mall in Vikaspuri was causing noise pollution, the green panel also asked the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) to periodically monitor the parameters of noise and air pollution in the area and take necessary action in case of violations.

A bench of Acting Chairperson Justice SK Singh said no further action is required as, according to the report of an earlier panel, the diesel generator sets were not violating the prescribed standards.

The bench, also comprising Judicial Member Justice Arun Kumar Tyagi and Expert Member A Senthil Vel, said, "We direct the DPCC to periodically monitor the parameters of noise and air pollution in the area and in case of violation, necessary action be initiated according to the rules."

"Further, DPCC needs to consider replacement of 15 years old DG (diesel generator) sets, relocation of DG sets and using cleaner fuel..." the bench said.

Underlining that noise pollution is an emerging environmental threat and prolonged exposure can cause various ailments, the bench said the construction of green belts around roads and incorporation of green spaces in cities or even green roof installations can be considered to attenuate noise exposure in residential, silence and industrial zones.

"Consideration of noise-reducing pavements, traffic noise impedance walls, and quieter vehicles and installation of natural or artificial noise barriers, no-horn sign, and other traffic-calming measures can reduce noise level at high sound level zones," the tribunal said.

Modi silent on Manipur, sign of weak leader: Kejriwal

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal Thursday said the video of two women being paraded naked in Manipur has shaken the conscience of the nation, and urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to take strict action to restore peace in the state.

The chief minister termed the government's lack of response as "shameful, disgraceful, and criminal," and called for immediate and thorough criminal investigations into the matter. "It has often been seen that PM Modi is quiet on such incidents. It is the sign of a weak leader. A courageous leader comes out in the front. It doesn't happen that they shut themselves in a room.

He has been silent (on the issue)," the AAP chief said. Tension mounted in the hills of Manipur after a May 4 video surfaced on Wednesday showing two women from one of the warring communities being paraded naked by a few men from the other side. The video was doing the rounds on the eve of a planned protest march



announced by the Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF) on Thursday to highlight their plight. Responding to a media query after an official event at the Thyagaraj Stadium, Kejriwal said "The video that went viral has shaken the conscience of nation.

It is criminal and extremely shameful that there has been violence in the state for more than two months but the government did not take any action. It is with extreme sadness that I have to say that Manipur (government) and Centre are responsible for this."

Kejriwal also slammed the state government over the incident. "Now that the video went viral only one person has been arrested. The faces of the accused are visible. This shows

government's criminal conspiracy, negligence and collusion," he alleged. When asked about the growing echo for Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh's resignation, he said, "For me, the first priority is to restore peace in the state in whatever way possible. I don't want to do politics over it since it's a very sensitive matter. The prime minister has to come forward to take responsibility. Strict steps have to be taken."

Later, launching the early childhood care and education (ECCE) kit developed by the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) Delhi and Anganwadi team, Kejriwal said the Delhi government wants to turn Anganwadi into an early childhood learning centre. He said that children will soon be taught moral values and their emotional and psychological needs will be fulfilled at Anganwadi centres.

He further stated that the SCERT has prepared the "best" kit for the Anganwadi children to provide them with a proper early childhood programme.

Atishi terms video of two women paraded naked in Manipur horrific

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

AAP leader and Delhi PWD Minister Atishi on Thursday termed "horrific" a May 4 video of two women being paraded naked in Manipur and hit out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying though he had time to visit foreign countries, he hasn't yet gone to the strife-hit northeastern state while Delhi Commission for Women Chief Swati Maliwal Thursday wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi demanding immediate steps to curb the violence in Manipur and arrest those behind parading two women naked and allegedly sexually assaulting them.

Addressing a press conference, Delhi Women and Child Development Minister Atishi said, "Prime Minister Modi did not have the time to visit



Manipur. He visited Japan on May 19, Papua Guinea on May 21, Australia on May 22, the US on June 20 and then France and the UAE. But he didn't go to Manipur.

Even a delegation from Manipur kept waiting for him but he did not meet them. "Not only is this video horrific, but it is heart-rending. The whole country watched the kind of behaviour that the women were meted out. It was worse than how animals are treated. But the BJP is not tak-

ing action against the violence," she claimed. The AAP leader claimed that one of the women told local media that she was paraded and gang-raped, but police, present there, didn't take any action. "I want to ask the BJP what will you tell these women? I want to ask the prime minister and Home Minister Amit Shah, what will you tell these women and every woman of the country? In Manipur, people have been facing violence," she said.

In a letter to PM, Maliwal said she plans to visit Manipur to interact with the survivors, their families, and other women and girls who may be living in fear and vulnerability. She said the May 4 attack on the women captured on a video has "shocked the nation and scarred the conscience of humanity". It was "disheartening" to learn that despite the

registration of an FIR, justice has not been served to the victims of this heinous crime, she said. In her letter, Maliwal told the prime minister, "I implore your Hon'ble self to immediately take urgent steps to curb violence in Manipur and protect the dignity and safety of all its citizens," she added.

She requested the PM's intervention in ensuring that the local authorities expedite the process of apprehending all the culprits in the "sickening act" and that the survivors and their families are provided necessary support and protection.

"Strongest action needs to be also taken against the erring police officers who failed to act swiftly in the matter. The passage of over two and a half months without any arrests is inexcusable and requires immediate corrective measures," she said.

DU invites short-term research proposals from faculty members

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

To expand its research profile, Delhi University has invited short-term research proposals from the faculty members of its different departments and centres for the academic year 2023-24. Under the faculty research programme, the university plans to provide maximum financial assistance of Rs 5 lakh to the selected applicants after vetting their research proposal.

"In continuation of the commitment to support and expand its research profile, the Delhi University under the Institution of Eminence (IoE) scheme invites short-term



research proposals (one-year duration) from the faculty members of the University Departments and Centres for the year 2023-24," the university said. "Research proposals are invited from the faculty members of the University of Delhi individually or in collaboration with other researchers as Co-PIs (up to one) from within/outside the University including University

of Delhi Colleges," the university added in the notice. The last date for submission of proposals is July 31 and the selection will be done by the varsity's Proposal Evaluation Committee. DU has also listed the maximum financial assistance for various faculties and subjects of the University.

A researcher can get a maximum assistance of Rs 5 lakh if research topic is related to experimental sciences or interdisciplinary and applied science; up to Rs 4 lakh for theoretical science; up to Rs 3 lakh for social sciences, interdisciplinary and applied social sciences management and up to 2 lakh for humanities and law.

Govt's failure to implement NeVA comes under scrutiny

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi's AAP Government's failure to implement the National E-Vidhan Application (NeVA) aimed at digitalising the Legislative Assembly has come under scrutiny, as it remains the only Assembly in the country yet to initiate the digitisation process, even after four-and-a-half years since the project's inception.

NeVA, launched in 2015 by the Central Government, aims to make Legislative Assemblies across India paperless and digitally efficient. The initiative has been adopted by all 37 Legislative Assemblies and Councils in the country, except for Delhi.

In 2019, the Central Government proposed to fully



fund the NeVA project for Delhi, providing both financial and technical assistance. However, the AAP Government in Delhi decided to develop the application independently, allocating a budget of Rs 20 crore for the purpose. Despite this intention, the project has made no progress,

leading to growing concerns over the delay and lack of action. The Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs' Secretary addressed the issue, writing to the Lieutenant Governor (LG) Secretariat, seeking intervention to expedite the implementation of the NeVA project in Delhi.

The LG Secretariat subsequently forwarded the request to the Principal Secretary (Law, Justice & Legislative Affairs) of the Government of the National Capital Territory of Delhi (GNCTD) for necessary action.

Earlier this year, the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs had also written to the Delhi Chief Secretary, urging the government to adopt Project NeVA, highlighting the 100% funding available for the Union Territory of Delhi for its implementation.

The letter emphasized that the project's digitalization of Vidhan Sabha and other associated services would lead to significant cost savings for the government of Delhi and enhanced convenience for leg-

islators and the general public. In January 2019, the Delhi Assembly had decided to "opt-out" of the NeVA project, expressing its intention to develop the eVidhan project independently using its allocated budget.

Despite acknowledging the urgency to digitize and adopt electronic means of communication, the Delhi Assembly and the Delhi Government have yet to take any concrete steps towards initiating the project since 2019.

The delay in implementing the NeVA project has raised concerns about the efficiency of the AAP Government in utilizing available resources to ensure the digitalization and modernization of the Legislative Assembly.

Old Yamuna bridge slum dwellers stare at bleak future

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Flood-ravaged slum dwellers at the Old Yamuna bridge are staring at a bleak future even though the Yamuna is showing a receding trend in the national capital.

Battling the loss of property coupled with the absence of basic facilities, residents of the slum are making rounds of the district administration offices seeking something as fundamental as sanitation and electricity.

The water level of the Yamuna in Delhi dropped below the danger mark of 205.33 metres on Thursday and is expected to recede further, albeit slowly as heavy rainfall is likely at isolated places in the upper catchment areas in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.



in the water level could slow down the pace of rehabilitation of the affected families in the inundated low-lying areas of the capital and they may have to stay in relief camps for a longer period. Shakuruddin, who spent every penny from his savings to buy books for his

LLB entrance examination, is devastated as all his textbooks got washed away in the floods. "My father is a rickshaw puller and my mother works as a house help. I want to pursue law and had saved up to buy books for the entrance test. All my books and copies got

washed away in the flood and that is my biggest concern right now," the class 12 government school student told. "My brother is in class 11. Even his bags and books got washed away. Thankfully, we were able to save our identity proofs and documents," he adds.

Shakuruddin said tents were set up by the administration on Tuesday after 10 families visited the district magistrate's office, adding that lights inside the tents were set up Wednesday morning. "Two to three families are lodged in smaller tents, while four to five families are living in the larger ones," he said.

"We are still facing troubles. How can so many families stay in a single tent? There are no washroom facilities yet. All of us are defecating in the open, what other choice do we have? Supply of drinking water is also insufficient," says another

slum dweller Sabina (38). Sandeep (40) has been living under the old Yamuna bridge for more than three decades. He fumes that no support came his way from the government until Tuesday.

"Tents were finally set up Tuesday afternoon and today they have arranged lights here. But this help is coming after we suffered for around a week," he says. Lashing out at political leaders, a frustrated Sandeep said that the slum dwellers will boycott the next elections.

"Nobody should come and seek votes from us next time. None of us from Seelampur will cast our votes. Every time we approach any leader, all they say is that 'this is not our area', then why do they come for campaigning here during elections? And how can they even have such thoughts of area divisions at a time of an emergency like this?" he rues.

Teams formed for health check up of animals in flood-hit areas

New Delhi: The Delhi Government's Animal Husbandry Department has formed eight teams for health check-up of animals in flood affected areas. Additionally, the department has been instructed to rescue animals, provide suitable medicines, and vaccines for them.

Delhi's Animal Husbandry Department minister Gopal Rai on Thursday said the government has formed eight teams for health check-up of animals in flood affected areas. "Two mobile vans have been allocated on a rotational basis for rehabilitation camps



dedicated to the well-being of animals. Additionally, the department has been instructed to rescue animals, provide suitable medicines, and vaccines for them. Furthermore, orders have been given to consistently provide sufficient ani-

mal feed in the relief camps," he said. The minister said guidelines have been issued to the Animal Husbandry Department to promptly respond in order to prevent the spread of diseases post-floods.

Staff Reporter

Cong running away from Manipur debate: BJP; Prasad questions timing of video

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As both the Houses of Parliament were adjourned for the day on the issue of Manipur on the very first-day of the Monsoon session, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Thursday accused the Congress of "running away" from the discussion and rather insisting on the "rules" under which the debate can be conducted.



Senior BJP leader Ravi Shankar Prasad addresses the media at BJP HQ, in New Delhi on Thursday

The ruling party also questioned the timing of the emergence of the video showing the brutality meted out to two girls in Manipur who were stripped naked and gang-raped by a mob on May 4. "What happened in Manipur is shameful and unfortunate, but now the situation is normal and the Chief Minister informed that one of

The BJP leader said Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi in the Lok Sabha and the leader of Rajya Sabha Piyush Goyal have clearly stated that the government was ready for the discussion in the respective houses on the Manipur issue but the "opposition is sitting on its ego, insisting on particular rules and clauses and running away from the debate."

"Modi Government is very sensitive and alive to the safety and security of women in any state", said Prasad after both houses were adjourned for the day on the Manipur issue with the opposition demanding a discussion and Prime Minister's response in the Parliament. The BJP leader said "it is painful the Congress was particular about clause or

rule for discussion when Rajya Sabha leader Piyush Goyal and parliamentary Minister Pralhad Joshi said "we are ready for discussion". He said the opposition was sitting on egos and "wanting an ego massage". "A debate in Parliament would have given a positive message of oneness on the issue to the state", he said. Prasad alleged that "on each Parliament session Congress builds a narrative to derail Parliament and runs away and then accuses Modi-government of running away from the debate."

"Har session main ek gubbara chhod dete hain aur Gayab ho jate hain..." said the BJP leader and maintained that there was a "pattern" in it citing issues of Adani, Pegasus and BBC documentary con-

trovery. Prasad also questioned the "timing" of the video on the disrobed women appearing now though, he said it was months-old. "A question arises in my mind — Suspicious circumstances... that today we are in July and the incident of the first week of May suddenly comes on Twitter, before the commencement of the House. What does this mean," he asked

Prasad said strong action is being taken in Manipur and took the Twitter to task for allowing the video to circulate. Prasad asked as "Why Sonia, Rahul and Priyanka are not speaking on the Jodhpur incident where he said 4 persons including one woman was burnt alive" and accused them of "adopting double stan-

Railways adopts ways to link popular areas with station name

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ NEW DELHI

Railway stations across the country will soon be identified with both their established names and local popular names, along with those of their satellite cities.

For example, when booking journey tickets for New Delhi Station, the reservation platforms will display options like Indraprastha and Noida.

Similarly, when booking for Patna, supplementary locations like Gol Ghar, Rajgir, and Patliputra will be available on the websites or apps for inquiries related to these stations.

This new approach aims to improve journey planning and provide a personalized passenger experience during ticket booking on the website and mobile app. Currently, 175

popular cities/areas have been mapped with 725 stations, and this facility will be available from Saturday onwards. Tourist destinations such as Kashi, Khatu Shyam, Badrinath, Kedarnath, and Vaishnodevi have also been linked to their nearest railway stations.

The railway officials state that this initiative will be beneficial for passengers searching for journeys between specific cities.

When people search for a journey from Mumbai to Mathura, they will be given options for nearby stations and trains for Agra or Tundla en route, making the journey planning process easier and increasing berth availability.

"This approach of linking popular areas with station names will provide great passenger convenience, as it helps identify small stations with

popular cities/areas. The railway will not only prompt the station name but also the right place while planning the journey. Small stations will be linked with popular cities/areas, such as Sarnath being linked with Banaras, Sabarmati linked with Ahmedabad, and Panvel linked with Mumbai," explained a senior railway official.

Moreover, this initiative also includes linking satellite cities to their connecting railway stations, like Noida being linked to New Delhi. Sometimes, local or popular names differ from the official railway station names, leading to confusion during journey planning. By linking them, this confusion will be eliminated, benefiting travelers and ensuring a smoother travel experience.

In boost to desi defence manufacturing sector, HAL inks MoU with Argentina

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Giving a boost to indigenous capabilities in defence sector, the public sector aerospace conglomerate Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and Argentina defence ministry on Thursday inked a letter of intent on productive cooperation and acquisition of medium utility helicopters for its armed forces.

The letter of intent was signed in Bengaluru by visiting Argentine Defence Minister Jorge Taiana and HAL chief C B Ananthakrishnan in the presence of Francisco Cafiero, Secretary of International Affairs, Ambassador Hugo Javier Gobbi, Ambassador Dinesh Bhatia, and other senior officers from both sides.

The Argentinian Defence Minister remarked that the

day was interesting and a step on the road to an ever-growing and strong collaboration with HAL. Its officials briefed the visiting dignitaries on various activities of HAL and a presentation was made on the occasion.

During the day-long program, the Argentinian Defence Minister and his team viewed the flying display of various HAL products at HAL Airport. The team also paid a visit to Light Combat Aircraft (LCA), Helicopter Divisions and evinced keen interest in HAL products.

Argentina has also evinced interest in indigenously designed and manufactured Tejas LCA. India and Argentina on July 18 reviewed their ties with special focus on ways to enhance defence industrial partnership during talks in New Delhi between Defence

Minister Rajnath Singh and Jorge Enrique Taiana.

Giving details of the talks, defence ministry officials said later both the leaders discussed the ongoing defence cooperation initiatives. Taiana arrived in New Delhi on Monday on a four-day visit to India. He is accompanied by Secretary of International Affairs, Argentine Ministry of Defence Francisco Cafiero.

India-Argentina relations were elevated to the level of Strategic Partnership in 2019. An MoU on defence cooperation too has been in force since 2019 while both sides are engaged to conclude further instruments to deepen the engagement. India and Argentina are working closely together to make defence engagements an important facet of their Strategic Partnership.

Cong constitutes election panels for Raj, Telangana

New Delhi: Congress on Thursday constituted State election committees for the poll-bound Rajasthan and Telangana.

Rajasthan Congress chief Gobind Dotsara will head the state committees as its chairman and chief minister Ashok Gehlot and his former deputy Sachin Pilot as members.

Telangana state unit party president A Revanth Reddy was appointed as chairperson of the Telangana State election committee of Congress.

"The Congress president has approved the proposal for the constitution of Pradesh Election Committee for the ensuing assembly elections in Rajasthan and Telangana-2023, with immediate effect," a party statement read.

Besides Gehlot and Pilot, former Union minister Jitendra Singh is a member of the committee. The setting up of the committee comes days after Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge, former party chief Rahul Gandhi, AICC-in-charge for Rajasthan Sukhjinnder

Randhwa, Rajasthan Pradesh Congress Committee president Dotsara, Pilot and several MLAs and ministers from the state attended a poll strategy meeting at the AICC headquarters last week

Congress is seeking to return to power in Rajasthan and it has resolved the power tussle between Gehlot and Pilot. The party leadership has brokered a deal between the chief minister and his former deputy, and who have decided to work together to ensure that the Congress returns to power.

The members of the Telangana panel include party MPs from the state N Uttar Kumar Reddy and Komatireddy Venkat Reddy. Party leaders Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu, Thatiparthi Jeevan Reddy, Bomma Mahesh Kumar Goud, Jagga Reddy, J Geetha Reddy, Mohammed Azharuddin, M Anjan Kumar Yadav, Kunduru Jana Reddy and V Hanumantha Rao are also part of it.

DGCI warns doctors, patients against cough syrups containing pholcodine

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The country's top drugs regulator, Director General Controller of India (DGCI), has issued an advisory asking doctors, medical professionals, and patients against using pholcodine-containing cough syrups and cold medication after the World Health Organization (WHO) raised an alarm.

The DGCI has asked doctors to suggest an alternative to patients for treating their symptoms. The WHO's advisory for healthcare professionals and regulatory authorities highlighted the risks of anaphylactic reactions associated with the use of pholcodine-containing products.

The global agency said that people who have consumed pholcodine-containing cough and cold remedies within the last 12 months before undergoing surgical procedures involving general anaesthesia with neuromuscular blocking agents (NMBAs) may be sus-



ceptible to severe allergic reactions. DCGI Rajeev Raghuvanshi said that the matter was referred to the Subject Expert Committee (Antimicrobial & Antiviral) to seek expert opinion on the safety alert published by WHO on prior use of pholcodine containing cough syrups and cold remedies and risk of perioperative anaphylactic reactions to NMBAs for any regulatory interventions required on the matter.

"To verify whether the patients scheduled to take general anaesthetics (NMBAs) have taken pholcodine containing cough syrups in the previous 12 months and also be aware of

anaphylactic reactions in such patients," he said in the advisory. Raghuvanshi advised consumers or patients to "exercise caution" when considering the use of pholcodine-containing cough and cold remedies.

If you have taken Pholcodine-containing cough and cold remedies within past 12 months and are scheduled for a procedure involving general anaesthesia, it is essential to report this information to your healthcare professional prior to procedure," he said.

The WHO, in a medical product alert issued on March 31, said that the European Medicines Agency's (EMA) pharmacovigilance risk assessment committee reviewed all available evidence including post-marketing safety data, information from third parties such as healthcare professionals and final results of a French multicentre case-control study comparing pholcodine exposure within a year before anaesthesia between patients with NMBA-related peri operative anaphylactic reactions.

FORM No. 3
[See Regulation-15 (1)(a)/16(3) DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL CHANDIGARH (DRT 2)]
1st Floor, SCO 33-34-35, Sector-17A, Chandigarh (Additional space allotted on 3rd & 4th Floor also)
Case No.: OA/1560/2021
Summons under sub-section (4) of section 19 of the Act, read with sub-rule (2A) of rule 5 of the Debt Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993.
Exh. No. 17328
ICICI BANK LIMITED
Vs.
AZAD SINGH

ICICI Bank
Branch Office: ICICI Bank Limited Shal Tower Plot No-23, New Rohtak Road Karol Bagh New Delhi-110007
PUBLIC NOTICE: Builder Cancellation
VEERPAL SINGH HEMA SINGH (borrower/s) has availed Home loan facility vide facility agreement number **LBGUR0004928648** located at **UNIT No. 5-005, TOWER 5, THE SERENAS VILLAGE DHUNELA, SECTOR 36, SOHNA DISTRICT, GURGAON**. The borrower/s has failed to pay the contractual amount to the builder as per the terms and conditions of the agreement.
The Bank had informed the same to the borrower through letter dated **January 11, 2023** informing that **STERNAL BUILDCON PRIVATE LIMITED** has cancelled the allotment of the above mentioned property. You are therefore requested to resolve this matter with the builder within 7 days from the date of this publication.
Please take further notice that post cancellation of the allotment of the said property ICICI Bank shall not be bound and/or responsible for any other allotment done by the builder.
Dated: July 21, 2023
Place: Delhi/ NCR
For ICICI Bank Limited
Sd-

छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल
पर्यावास भवन, सेक्टर-19, नया रायपुर अटल नगर, जिला-रायपुर (छ.ग.)

// सर्व संबंधित को सूचना //

भारत सरकार, पर्यावरण, वन और जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय की ई.आई.ए. अधिसूचना दिनांक 14.09.2006 (यथा संशोधित) के अंतर्गत सर्व संबंधित को सूचित किया जाता है कि मेसर्स नाविक स्टील उद्योग प्राइवेट लिमिटेड, ग्राम-झिरिया एवं बिटकुली, ताम्हील व जिला - बेमेतरा (छ.ग.) में Establishment of Greenfield steel plant comprising of Iron ore beneficiation (8,50,000 TPA), Pellet Plant (6,00,000 TPA), Gasifier for Pellet Plant (21,000 Nm³/hr) DRI Kilns (6,27,000 TPA), Induction Furnace with matching LRF & CCM (Billets) / Ingots / Hot Billets- 4.62,000 TPA), Rolling Mill (TMT Bars) Structural Steel - 4.62,000 TPA) Gasifier for Reheating Furnace (3570 Nm³/hr), Ferro Alloy Unit (FeSi - 42,000 TPA/FeMn-1.51,200 TPA/SiMn-86,400 TPA/FeCr-90,000 TPA/Pig Iron -60,000 TPA) Briquetting Plant (600 Kg/hr). WHIRB based Power Plant - 46 MW, FBC based Power Plant - 20 MW & Brick manufacturing unit (1,00,000 Bricks/Day) के पर्यावरणीय स्वीकृति हेतु लोक सुनवाई दिनांक 13.04. 2023 को समय प्रातः 11:00 बजे, स्थान- बिटकुली से मल्दा मुखा मार्ग पर स्थित ग्राम - झिरिया में भूमि खसरा नम्बर-333, 334, 336, 337 / 1, 338 / 1, ताम्हील-बेमेतरा, जिला बेमेतरा (छ.ग.) में निरत की गई थी। जिसे कार्यालय कलेक्टर, जिला- बेमेतरा के ज्ञापन क्रमांक 75 / सि.सु. / 2023 बेमेतरा दिनांक 06.04.2023 के द्वारा अग्रहण/कारणों से आगामी आदेश तक स्थगित किया गया था। जिसकी सूचना का प्रकाशन समाचार-पत्र हरिभूमि, सम्पूर्ण छत्तीसगढ़ में दिनांक 12.04.2023 एवं द पारोयनियर, नई दिल्ली में दिनांक 12.04.2023 को कराया गया था। सूचित है कि उक्त परियोजना के लिये लोक सुनवाई कार्यालय कलेक्टर एवं जिला दण्डाधिकारी, जिला-बेमेतरा के ज्ञापन क्रमांक 2644 / सि. सु. / 2023 बेमेतरा दिनांक 13.07.2023 के द्वारा लोक सुनवाई दिनांक 11.08.2023 को समय प्रातः 11:00 बजे, स्थान- बिटकुली से मल्दा मुखा मार्ग पर स्थित ग्राम - झिरिया में भूमि खसरा नम्बर-333, 334, 336, 337 / 1, 338 / 1, ताम्हील- बेमेतरा, जिला - बेमेतरा (छ.ग.) में निरत की गई है। उक्त सूचित है कि- आपत्ति / सुझाव / विचार / टीका टिप्पणी, इस सूचना के जारी होने के दिनांक से 15 दिवस के अंदर क्षेत्रीय अधिकारी, छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, 5 / 32 बंगला, भिलाई, जिला-सुरी के कार्यालय में मौखिक अथवा लिखित रूप से कार्यालयीन समय में प्रस्तुत की जा सकती है। यह भी सूचित हो कि-

- लोक सुनवाई के दौरान सम्मिलित होने वाले व्यक्तियों को फिजिकल / सोशल डिस्टेंसिंग का पालन करना अनिवार्य होगा।
- लोक सुनवाई में सम्मिलित होने वाले व्यक्तियों द्वारा भाषक का उपयोग किया जावेगा तथा सम्म-समय पर सेनेटेशन का उपयोग किया जाना अनिवार्य होगा।
- लोक सुनवाई स्थल पर सम्मिलित होने वाले व्यक्तियों को वैकल्प व्यवस्था कम से कम 02 मीटर की दूरी रखना अनिवार्य होगा।
- कोकना वायर्स के निर्वहन एवं रोकथाम हेतु शासन द्वारा जारी समस्त दिशा-निर्देशों का अग्ररतः पालन किया जाना अनिवार्य होगा।

ई.आई.ए. नोटिफिकेशन 14 सितम्बर 2006 (यथा-संशोधित) के अनुसार संबंधित व्यक्तियों के अवलोकन / पत्र हेतु ड्राफ्ट ई.आई.ए. रिपोर्ट, कार्यालयक सार हिन्दी एवं अंग्रेजी भाषा तथा सी.डी. (साफ्ट कॉपी) डायरेक्टर, पर्यावरण, वन और जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार, झंडिया पर्यावरण भवन, जोर बाग रोड, नई दिल्ली, क्षेत्रीय अधिकारी, एकीकृत क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, पर्यावरण, वन और जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार, अरण्य भवन, नार्थ ब्लॉक, सेक्टर-19, नया रायपुर, अटल नगर, रायपुर, छत्तीसगढ़, कलेक्टर, कार्यालय कलेक्टर, जिला- बेमेतरा, मुख्य कार्यालय न अधिकारी, जिला पंचायत, जिला - बेमेतरा, महाप्रबंधक, जिला व्यापार एवं उद्योग केन्द्र, जिला-बेमेतरा, संचयन / संचिन, ग्राम पंचायत झिरिया, जिला - बेमेतरा, क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, 5 / 32 बंगला, भिलाई, जिला-सुरी एवं मुख्यालय, छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, पर्यावास भवन, सेक्टर 19, नया रायपुर अटल नगर, जिला- रायपुर में प्रवेश करी लें।

हस्ता/- सदस्य सचिव
छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल
नया रायपुर अटल नगर, जिला- रायपुर (छ.ग.)

NIA arrests another PFI man in Bihar case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has made another arrest in the Bihar case related to the banned Popular Front of India (PFI), bringing the total number of arrests to 15. Yaqub Khan alias Sultan, a 22-year-old resident of District East Champaran, Bihar, was apprehended in NIA Case No. 31/2022/NIA/DLI, which involves the investigation of unlawful and anti-national activities of PFI cadres and members, as per the NIA statement.

During the investigation, it was learned that Yaqub Khan served as an expert arms trainer for the PFI and conducted numerous training sessions to further the outfit's aggressive and violent agenda. He facilitated the procurement of arms and ammunition to target youth from a particular community for revenge, thereby fueling communal hatred. Additionally, he uploaded con-

troversial videos on social media to incite enmity among communities. Yaqub Khan had been on the run since the houses of PFI syndicate members were raided and searched in February of the current year. Following the ban on PFI by the Centre, he remained in contact with the FIR named accused Reyaz Moarif, and his associates Md Belal alias Irshad and Afroz. Moreover, he communicated with his Dubai (UAE) based associate Md Sajjad Alam via WhatsApp.

After concealing himself initially in Bettiah district of Bihar, he later stayed with another accused, Md Irshad Alam, in Pokhara, Nepal, who was arrested in this case on March 18. Subsequently, he moved to Mumbai, where he resided with another aunt at Dharavi and a friend. Returning to Bihar in April 2023, he continued to hide with friends, associates, and relatives in East Champaran, Sitamarhi, and Muzaffarpur districts.

Busted ISIS module in Kerala, claims NIA

New Delhi: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Thursday claimed that it has achieved a major success in busting a Kerala ISIS module and averted communal terror attacks in the Southern State after it arrested an accused from a hideout in Tamil Nadu and searched four locations in Thrissur and Palakkad districts of Kerala.

"The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has averted possible terror attacks on places of worship and leaders of certain communities by busting an ISIS module based in Kerala," the NIA said in a statement. Based on credible inputs and investigations, NIA conducted an intelligence-led joint operation with Anti-Terrorist Squad

(ATS) of Kerala Police, and searched four locations following arrest of one accused, the agency said. The raids were conducted at three locations in Thrissur and one in Palakkad districts of Kerala to bust the IS module, which had been conducting reconnaissance missions and conspiring to commit terrorist attacks, it alleged.

On Tuesday, the NIA successfully tracked and arrested an accused Ashif alias Mathilakath Kodayil Ashraf from his hideout near Sathyamangalam, Tamil Nadu. On Wednesday, the NIA conducted searches in houses of Ashif, as well as three others, identified as Seyid Nabeel Ahammed, Shiyas TS of Thrissur and Rayees of Palakkad. PNS

ISIS member arrested in UP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested a 19-year-old youth affiliated with the banned terror outfit ISIS after conducting extensive searches at the suspect's house in Jharkhand and his rented accommodation in Uttar Pradesh.

The accused, Faizan Ansari alias Faiz, a student of Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), Uttar Pradesh, was taken into custody in NIA case RC-02/2023 registered at its office in Ranchi.

The searches at his house in Lohardaga district of Jharkhand and rented room in Aligarh, UP, were carried out on July 16 and 17, resulting in seizure of electronic devices and incriminating materials/documents, the NIA said.

Model Dhamecha grilled in drug case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI on Thursday questioned model Munum Dhamecha, who was arrested with actor Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan in a drugs case, in connection with its probe against former Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) officer Sameer Wankhede.

Dhamecha appeared before the investigation team at the CBI headquarters here and was subjected to questioning, sources said. She was among those arrested by the NCB along with Aryan Khan on October 3, 2021, a day after the raid on the Cordelia cruise ship. It was alleged that about 5 gram charas was recovered from Dhamecha during the NCB raid. However, a special

inquiry team (SET) of the NCB later red-flagged several lapses and irregularities in the operation on the cruise ship conducted under the "monitoring" of then NCB Zonal Director of Mumbai Sameer Wankhede. The NCB had alleged that a private person, named KP Gosavi, and his aide Prabhakar Sail, since deceased, were included as independent witnesses in the cruise ship raid on October 2, 2021 on the directions of Wankhede. Gosavi and his aide Sanvile D'Souza along with others had allegedly entered into a conspiracy to "extort Rs 25 crore" from Aryan's family by "threatening them of the accusation of offences of possession of narcotics substances", according to the FIR.

Road safety centre opens

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari on Thursday inaugurated a state-of-the-art road safety centre in New Delhi, the Center for Advancement of Road Traffic Safety (CARTS).

CARTS aims to serve as an operational nerve centre for implementing and monitoring road safety projects across India. With the vision and capability to deliver a significant reduction in road crashes, the Center will serve as the nodal point for SLF's and the MoRTH's flagship Zero Fatality Corridor (ZFC) and the Zero Fatality District programs. On the occasion Gadkari said the

Probe underway on Seema: Bagchi

New Delhi: The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Thursday said investigations are underway on the matter relating to Pakistani national Seema Haider, who crossed over to India over two months ago.

Thirty-year-old Haider, who hails from Sindh province in Pakistan, entered India illegally along with her four children in a bus via Nepal on May 13.

"We are aware of this matter as she has appeared in court. She has been granted bail. She is free on bail. The matter is being investigated," MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said. "We will let you know more when there are developments. It is a judicial matter and investigations are underway and I would not like to say anything more," he said. Bagchi was responding to media queries on case at his press briefing. PNS

government is committed to ensuring that road crashes in India are brought down with urgency. "The use of technology and innovation is extremely important in the current times given the magnitude of the problem at hand and what we want to achieve. With that in mind, we welcome this much-needed initiative and are happy to lend CARTS our full support," Gadkari said.

The initiative targets a 50% reduction in road crash fatalities in 100 High Priority Districts and 100 highway corridors in the next 5 years. CARTS has developed a Severity Index for ranking the districts based on road crashes, fatalities, and crash severity.

Ganga aarti site shifted as river continues to rise



Water level of river Ganga continues to rise in Varanasi on Thursday.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The continuous rise in the water level of river Ganga for the last many days due to the incessant rains in the hilly Himalayan regions and floods in many northern states, the place of the world famous Ganga aarti has been changed because of the further rise, the direct connection between one to another ghats would be broken and in such situation, the devotees would face a lot of problems. As the auspicious month of Shrawan is going on, the Ganga ghats are seeing heavy rush of devotees these days.

The continuous rising trend may also pose flood threats in this belt of Purvanchal (eastern UP) in the coming days though at present the river level is still far below than the warning level in Varanasi. According to the report of Middle Ganga

Division-III of Central Water Commission (CWC), the water level of river Ganga was recorded at 63.48 metres at 8 am on Thursday against the warning level at 70.262 metres but during the last 24 hours, the water level has increased by 56 cms as the level was at 62.92 metres a day ago. In the city, the river level was rising with a speed of 30 mm per hour though in the upstream it was recorded increasing with more intensity as the river was rising at 40 mm per hour in Prayagraj and Mirzapur.

The river Ganga was recorded rising right from Phaphamau district to Ghazipur including Prayagraj, Mirzapur and Varanasi. However, the water level in river Gomti was steady at Jaunpur.

In the manner the floods in

the rivers Yamuna and others created havoc in Delhi, Haryana and Punjab and heavy rains in northern Himalayan states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, the possibilities have increased that in the coming days, the low-lying areas of this belt of Purvanchal (eastern UP) may also face a flood threat.

The state government has already alerted all the concerned departments in view of the dangers of possible floods. Varanasi's 11 Battalion of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) is gearing up to deal with the flood hazards. NDRF has prepared its teams by doing pre-positioning.

Varanasi-based 11 Battalion NDRF undertakes rescue and relief work in 42 districts of Uttar Pradesh.

addressing party workers here. He said that India has emerged as a strong country under the leadership of PM Narendra Modi and the whole world is praising the PM. He said, "Now, India has taken a step towards becoming a developed country and the whole world is taking note of it." He called upon the party workers to act as a strong booth soldier in view of the upcoming parliamentary elections.

Meanwhile, senior BJP leaders, including Mayor Ganesh Kesrawani, visited sev-

Cong a sinking ship: Vijayvargiya

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) national general secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya said the Congress is a sinking ship and all political camps affiliated to it will be destroyed in the Modi tsunami in the 2024 parliamentary elections.

"People across the country are supporting PM Narendra Modi and the entire country is in the grip of Modi wave. The Congress and its allies have no chance in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls," Vijayvargiya said while

addressing party workers here. He said that India has emerged as a strong country under the leadership of PM Narendra Modi and the whole world is praising the PM. He said, "Now, India has taken a step towards becoming a developed country and the whole world is taking note of it." He called upon the party workers to act as a strong booth soldier in view of the upcoming parliamentary elections.

Meanwhile, senior BJP leaders, including Mayor Ganesh Kesrawani, visited sev-

eral areas of the city on Thursday and highlighted the achievements of the Modi-led central government in nine years.

SUICIDE BID: A married woman took a leap into the swollen Ganga from Chandra Shekhar Azad Setu (Phaphamau Bridge) on Thursday. She was rescued by the boatman and admitted to Tej Bahadur Sapru Hospital, where she is undergoing treatment.

Her husband's love affair with another woman is stated

to be the reason behind this suicide attempt.

Reports said Aarti of Raniganj, Pratapgarh, climbed the railing and jumped into the flooded river. Passersby raised an alarm to alert the boatmen on the river bank.

The divers pulled out Aarti safe and sound.

She had sustained injuries and was rushed to the TB Sapru Hospital for treatment. A boatman said Aarti said that an affair of her husband with another woman prompted her to take this step

India to review ties with SL during Modi's talks with Lankan Prez

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India and Sri Lanka will review the entire range of their bilateral tie here on Friday during talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Sri Lanka President Ranil Wickremesinghe. He kicked off a two-day visit to India that is expected to impart new momentum in bilateral ties, especially in the economic and trade sphere.

Prime Minister Modi and Wickremesinghe will hold wide-ranging talks on Friday covering all key aspects of relations between the two countries.

"We Look forward to the visit to impart a new momentum to the relationship," External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said at his weekly media briefing on Thursday.

India extended financial



assistance worth around USD 4 billion to Sri Lanka including lines of credit for purchases of food and fuel last year when it was reeling under a severe economic crisis.

New Delhi also provided guarantees to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to help the country secure a USD 2.9 billion bailout package.

"This is a very important visit. It (Sri Lanka) is a neighbouring country with whom we have very important and multi-faceted relations. I do not want to prejudice the conversations that will happen," Bagchi said.

He said India has discussed with Sri Lanka the issues of closer economic cooperation including how Indian economic growth can benefit the island nation.

He also identified security issues, development cooperation and new projects as areas of engagement, adding India helped Sri Lanka to address its economic problems. "I think this will be a good base to take forward our conversation," he said.

The Sri Lankan president was received at the airport by Minister of State for External Affairs V Muraliedharan. "Warm welcome to President @RW_UNP of Sri Lanka on his maiden visit to India since assumption of the Office of President. Received by @MOS_MEA at the airport. The visit will further boost the multi-pronged India-Sri Lanka partnership," Bagchi tweeted.

Search for AMU VC on, hectic lobbying begins

PNS ■ ALIGARH

The Aligarh Muslim University campus agog with the search for next Vice Chancellor, as the former VC Prof Tariq Mansoor resigned to become MLC in April, whose term was supposed to end on May 17, 2023.

Many names are coming forward in the race of becoming Vice Chancellor.

A campaign has been launched for the nomination of names for the post.

This has been the practice in AMU. The statute envisages that at the primary stage, five persons are nominated by the AMU Executive Council and after persual in the open meeting of AMU court, only three names are then forwarded to the President of India for the final selection.

Efforts on to provide better facilities on Panchkoshi Marg

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Several efforts are going on to provide better facilities to the devotees on the Panchkoshi Marg as during the extra month (adimas) of Shrawan a large number of people are expected to travel on this pilgrimage route on which there are five padoos (halts) including Karmdeshwar Mahadev, Bhim Chandi, Rameshwar Mahadev, Panch Pandhav and Kapildhara. After the completion of the second phase of Namoo Ghat development project, the devotees would reach Kashi Vishwanath Temple easily to complete their holy journey after passing through Adi Keshav Ghat.

The Additional Municipal Commissioner said that near the Aditya Nagar located pokhara (pond) on the

Panchkoshi Marg located in Karaudi, the Nagar Nigam has drained out the rain water collected during recent days and sprayed insecticides there. The Executive Engineer of the Public Works Department (PWD) claimed that the condition of the road in Karaudi is satisfactory and there are no patches or potholes anywhere on the route.

Deputy Director (Tourism) said that at the first halt of Panchkoshi Yatra at Khandwa (Karmdeshwar Mahadev), out of a total of 10 dharamshalas being renovated, the civil work, temporary water system, temporary lighting system and already constructed toilets have been repaired in eight so far while the work is in progress in the remaining two dharamshalas. According to him, the work of cleaning and repairing

the pond located at the halt is also in progress while at the second padoo (halt) at Bhim Chandi, the renovation work of total nine dharamshalas was to be done and out of them, civil works, temporary water works etc have been completed in eight so far while many arrangements, temporary lighting system and already constructed toilets have already been repaired. Work is in progress in one remaining dharamshala, he informed.

At the third halt at Rameshwar, out of the renovation work of seven dharamshalas, civil works, temporary water system, temporary lighting system and already constructed toilets have already been repaired in six while work is in progress in the remaining one. At fourth halt at Panch Pandav in Shivpur area, the

renovation work of both the dharamshalas including civil work, temporary water system, temporary lighting system and already constructed toilets have already been completed while at fifth halt at Kapildhara, the renovation work of all six dharamshalas including civil work, temporary water system, temporary lighting system and already constructed toilets have also been completed.

Mahakumbh: Preparations being made to operate 1,200 spl trains

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Preparations have been intensified by the Railways regarding Mahakumbh-2025. In Mahakumbh devotees from all over the country can come and take a holy dip in the Sangam. For this, preparations are being made to operate 1,200 special trains.

This will provide convenience to the devotees coming to Prayagraj. Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) Himanshu Badoni said most of the memu trains will run as specials. All these trains will operate from Prayagraj

Junction as well as all other stations of the city. In this, these trains will be run from Prayagraj Junction, Subedarganj, Naini, Prayagraj Chheoki, Prayagraj Rambagh, Jhansi, Prayagraj Sangam, Prayag Junction and Phaphamau Junction.

DRM said 800 special trains were operated in 2019 Kumbh in Prayagraj. But the crowd of devotees is expected to be more in Mahakumbh. Therefore, keeping in view the convenience of passengers, the number of trains has been increased to 1,200.

Along with this, the num-

ber of coaches has also been doubled.

The number of trains can also be increased if the crowd increases.

He said work is also going on at the stations regarding Mahakumbh. Instructions have been given to complete all the works by October 2024.

SILENT PROTEST: Followers of the Jain sect took out a silent protest march to draw the attention of the Government towards kidnapping and killing of Jain Acharya Muni Srikam Kumar Nandi in Chikkodi village of Karnataka.

Holding a banner and placards the protesters reached the office of the Divisional Commissioner Vijay Vishwas Pant and handed him over a memorandum addressed to the prime minister, demanding stern action against the culprits who first kidnapped the Jain seer and then cut him into pieces.

The Jain sect believes in non-violence but it did not mean that their saints will be killed, said Manish Jain. The divisional commissioner assured that he will send the memorandum to the PMO without delay.

DRM for increasing Rly income

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI



DRM Ramashray Pandey holding a meeting with NERMU office-bearers in Varanasi on Thursday.

Divisional Railway Manager (DRM), Varanasi Division of North Eastern Railway (NER) Ramashray Pandey emphasised on finding new areas to increase the income of Indian Railways.

He was presiding over the meeting of Permanent Negotiating Machinery (PNM) with NER Mazdoor Union (NERMU) at Bharatendu Sabha Hall (DRM office) here on Thursday. Praising the contributions of Railway employees, Pandey said that the NER is on the first place in the entire Indian Railways in redressal of complaints received through Rail Madad portal.

"The employees' union has an important role in rail operations and the implementation of many important suggestions received through them increases efficiency of the

the same day to the retiring railway personnel apart from scholarships to the children of employees, appointment on the basis of compassion, timely conduct of promotion examinations and Modified Assured Career Progression Scheme (MACPS) and added that all these works are also being done on priority basis.

Earlier, Senior Divisional Personnel Officer (SDPO) Sameer Paul said that the Railway administration is fully alert to protect the interests of the employees and efforts are made to settle any employee grievances as soon as possible. NERMU's divisional secretary NB Singh drew the attention of the railway administration towards several issues related to the welfare of the employees.

PUBLIC NOTICE
This Notice is hereby given to general public that Lt. Col. Amit Lamba and Mrs. Ritu Lamba Garikal who are now the owners and in possession of Built Up DDA Flat Bearing No. 79-C, on Second Floor, in Pocket-6, site-2, Phase-I, Category MIG, situated at Nasipur, Dwarka New Delhi, by virtue of Surviving Member Certificate of late Lt. Col. Satish Kumar Lamba (Retd.) issued by SDM dated 24.06.2023 now Lt. Col. Amit Lamba and Mrs. Ritu Lamba Garikal are selling said property to Vanilalain Vajozong who have approached IDBI Bank Limited for financial assistance and therefore shall be mortgaged with the said Bank. We hereby requested to notify the same in writing to undersigned with supporting documentary evidence at the address mention below within 10 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which claim, if any, of such persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned and our client shall proceed with the disbursement of loan against the said property and subsequent creation of Mortgage in respect thereof.
For Juris NextGen Law Offices
E-56, LGF, Greater Kailash Enclave Part-I
New Delhi-110048

ICICI Bank
Branch Office: ICICI Bank Limited Shal Tower Plot No-23, New Rohtak Road Karol Bagh New Delhi-110007

PUBLIC NOTICE: Builder Cancellation
This is to bring to your notice that RAJESH KUMAR/ JYOTI (borrower/s) has availed Home loan facility vide facility agreement number LBGR0002949269 located at UNIT NO 6-211, 2ND FLOOR, TOWER 6, "GRANDIVA", SITUATED AT SEC 103, GURGAON. The borrower/s has failed to pay the contractual amount to the builder as per the terms and conditions of the agreement.
The Bank had informed the same to the borrower through letter dated December 29, 2021 informing that JMK HOLDINGS PRIVATE LIMITED has cancelled the allotment of the above mentioned property. You are therefore requested to resolve this matter with the builder within 7 days from the date of this publication.
Please take further notice that post cancellation of the allotment of the said property ICICI Bank shall not be bound and/or responsible for any other allotment done by the builder.
Dated: July 21, 2023
Place: Delhi/ NCR
For ICICI Bank Limited
Sd-

GOVERNMENT OF GOA PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
DIVISION VIII (BLDGS-SOUTH), FATORDA, MARGAO-GOIA.
E-TENDER NOTICE No.: PWD/DIV.8(B.S)/ASW/2005/2023-2024
Dated:- 18-07-2023

(E-TENDER & E-PAYMENT MODE ONLY)

1. Last date of online submission of tender 01/08/2023 upto 11.00 A.M
2. Opening of online Tenders 03/08/2023 after 11.00 A.M
For more details please contact Office of The Executive Engineer Works Division VIII (Bids South), PWD, fatorda, Margao - Goa
Website https://eprocure.goa.gov.in
Executive Engineer-VIII
Division VIII (Bldgs-South) P.W.D
DI/Advt/2022-23/857

NEW OKHLA INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Main Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida, G.B. Nagar (U.P.)
Website : www.noidaauthorityonline.in

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

| S.No. | Jobs No. | Name of the work | Tender Amount (Rs. Lacs) |
|-------|-----------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| 1 | 05/DGM/SM (WC-7)/ET/2023-24 | Strengthening of Road (P/L Bitumen Mastic on 60.00 mtr. wide road Samsung Road, Sector 80-81) Noida | 69.85 |
| 2 | 14/DGM/SM (WC-5)/2023-24 | M/o Drain (C/o R.C.C. culvert on drain in A,B,C-Block, Sector-71), Noida. | 96.22 |
| 3 | 16/DGM/SM (WC-5)/2023-24 | M/o Drain (C/o Drain in sector -12, 22 & 56 T-Point along Kondli road and MP-2 road (Sector-22 side) due to low line area), Noida | 72.51 |

The above tenders can be uploaded by dated 27.07.2023 up to 5.00 PM. Pre-qualification shall be opened / downloaded on dated 28.07.2023 at 11.00 AM.
Dy. General Manager
NOIDA
CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA

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

PUBLIC NOTICE - TENDER CUM AUCTION FOR SALE OF SECURED ASSET
[See proviso to rule 8(6)]
Notice for sale of Immovable assets

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the Physical Possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ICICI Bank Ltd. will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is", as per the brief particulars given hereunder:

| Sr. No. | Name of Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrowers/ Guarantors/ Loan Account No. | Details of the Secured asset(s) with known encumbrances, if any | Amount Outstanding | Reserve Price Earnest Money Deposit | Date and Time of Property Inspection | Date & Time of E-Auction |
|---------|---|---|-------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| (A) | (B) | (C) | (D) | (E) | (F) | (G) |
| 1. | Meenakshi Pandey (Borrower), Geeta Pandey (Co-borrower) (LBDE00002081323, LBFDB00005250172) | Flat No.3093, 9th Floor Tower 3, ATS Tourmaline, Sector 109, Gurgaon. Area 2150 Sq Ft | Rs. 1,76,49,783 as on July 14, 2023 | Rs. 1,50,50,000/- from Rs. 15,00,000/- | August 19, 2023 from 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM | September 01, 2023 from 12:00 Noon to 01:00 PM |

The online auction will take place on the website of e-auction agency M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited (URL Link-<https://disposalhub.com>) The Mortgagors/ noticee are given a last chance to pay the total dues with further interest till August 31, 2023 before 05:00 P.M failing which, this/these secured assets/will be sold as per schedule.
The Prospective Bidder(s) must submit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Demand Draft (DD) (Refer Column E) at: ICICI Bank Limited, Plot No.23, Shal Tower 3rd Floor, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh Delhi- 110005 on or before August 31, 2023 before 05:00 P.M and thereafter they need to submit their offer through the above mentioned website only on or before August 31, 2023 before 05:00 P.M along with scan image of bank acknowledged DD towards proof of payment of EMD. Kindly note, in case prospective bidder(s) are unable to submit their offer through the website then signed copy of tender documents may be submitted at: ICICI Bank Limited, Plot No.23, Shal Tower 3rd Floor, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh Delhi- 110005 on or before August 31, 2023 before 05:00 P.M. Earnest Money Deposit DD/PO should be from a Nationalised/Scheduled Bank in favour of "ICICI Bank Limited" payable at Delhi
For any further clarifications with regards to inspection, terms and conditions of the e-auction or submission of tenders, kindly contact ICICI Bank Limited On 9372730494/8584874809
Please note that Marketing agencies 1.M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited 2. Augeo Asset Management Pvt Ltd 3. Hecta Proptech Pvt Ltd have also been engaged for facilitating the sale of this property.
The Authorised Officer reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without furnishing any further reasons.
For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please visit www.icicibank.com/n4p4s
Date : July 21, 2023
Place : Delhi/ NCR
Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited



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PAPER WITH PASSION



SUDHIR HINDWAN

Israel-Palestine strife: Military is no solution

Rather than a military solution, thorny issues such as water management and Jerusalem's status must be addressed at the UN for lasting peace

The multiple attacks by the Hamas, retaliations, the latest army operation carried on in Jenin Camp to drive out militants and the ongoing skirmishes between Palestinians and Israel resulting in huge casualties have further dusted off any hope of peace and negotiation. The announcement of nine settlements in the West Bank during February 2023 has been widely criticized by Palestinians and raised concerns about the possible forebodings of a third Intifada. The first major retaliation was launched by Palestine in 1978 and the second in 2000. Despite recent attempts by the US, Egypt and the UN to seek an immediate solution to the crisis West Asia continues to sit on Powder Keg. There are chances of conflict spilling over the communities within Israel which can turn out to be pernicious and may end up flaring it up further.



This also brings forth a major question: how to resolve regional conflicts so deeply interwoven in acrimonious past? perhaps this is high time each side takes a cue from the emancipation of a renowned Scottish philosopher David Hume's enlightenment discourse. As he once conceded "Difference is the essence of humanity. Difference is an accident of Birth and it should therefore never be the source of hatred or conflict. The answer to difference is to respect it. Therein lies a most fundamental principle of Peace and respect for diversity". These are not merely a part of clichés but have an in-depth meaning of conflict resolution. The continuous need for peace and a common platform for negotiation has exposed the painful process of conflict and a complete trust deficit resulting in the upsurge of clashes.

While people in the region expecting for both sides to accelerate plan formulation towards peace and improving means of production, economic aggrandizement, income, and employability the reality appears to elude chances of negotiations till a breakthrough is made. As many as 2559 civilians and over 206 soldiers have died in the nasty con-



THE PRESENT CRISIS IS THE OUTCOME OF A COMBINATION OF FACTORS, DEEPLY INTERWOVEN IN THE COMPLICATED PERIOD OF THE CONFLICT IN WEST ASIA EVER SINCE 1948

front ever since the resurgence of conflict after a brief lull that ended in 2015. The area is in for trouble and must be prepared for the deadly action of truly desperate organizations such as Hamas which might even bring down the entire machinery. A trial of strength is going on between the security forces of Israel and Hamas. The present crisis is the outcome of a combination of factors, deeply interwoven in the complicated period of the conflict in West Asia ever since 1948. Although in the past on many occasions the Israeli Government has designed a series of policies aimed at quick results, the Hamas took the extreme step of working against the peace proposals. Recently a third party (Egypt-supported) brokered peace and reconciliation efforts have been agreed upon by Hamas but the coming days will test the sustainability of such efforts. The history of past third-party mediations has not yielded positive results. In these circumstances, the solution to West Asia depends on the extent to which the present leadership of both sides can negotiate with each other. Further, the mounting Israeli strikes on the Gaza Strip

pose a serious challenge to the peace and security of this volatile region. The Palestinian paramilitary organisation, Hamas, has already vowed to avenge the Israeli onslaught and is preparing for fresh attacks. There are going to be new challenges for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The violent attacks, some of which were retaliatory, suggest that the present crisis is deeply interwoven in the issue of separate national identities and the never-ending claim over a common piece of land. Gradually, both Israel and Palestine understood that they could only survive if a two-State solution was accepted. The Oslo Peace Accord allowed the Palestinians to build an air and sea passage in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, with the then Palestinian President Yasser Arafat denouncing terrorism and the recognition of Palestine by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. What matters at this juncture, apart from the suffering of the troops and innocent people, is how a permanent link can be established between the two sides. But what we see today are extreme circumstances absolutely without any hope for reconciliation. Therefore, this requires careful handling of the situation. To bring about a lasting solution to the ongoing conflict in the tension zone of the Gaza Strip, a comprehensive policy involving the leaders and people from Israel and Palestine and the media might prove beneficial. Any further effort towards negotiations will have to address issues such as resolving the settlements dispute, maintaining security, the water issue, the problem of refugees and the status of Jerusalem. Israel should also know that the best way to fight terrorism is to restore its old strategy of intelligence-gathering and isolating the terrorists from the mainstream by generating more public opinion. Unless the causes of grievances are addressed, military actions can provide temporary relief. What is required is to develop a fresh perspective for a more mature reliance on international cooperation between nations to enunciate a new strategy of combined peace and cessation of violence. (Author, a recipient of the Bharat Gaurav Award, is a professor and an expert on strategic affairs)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

'UNITY' IS STILL INCOMPLETE

Sir — The second meeting of the opposition parties has ended. Most of the so-called secular parties are trying to be brought on a single platform by the opposition. The common platform of all the parties has also been named INDIA. But, surprisingly, Muslims who are 15 to 20 per cent in the country are not invited to attend the meeting by any of the important Muslim leaders like Asaduddin Owaisi Sahib and Maulana Badruddin Ajmal Sahib etc. Mehbooba Mufti etc. were involved from Kashmir but they have no significant influence in any other part of the country except Kashmir. When no Muslim leader showed up in the first meeting of the opposition, it was hoped that in the next meeting, the platform might be a little more spacious. No one was invited. The opposition parties want Muslim votes but do not want Muslim leadership.

Tausif Qamar | Howrah

WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA

Sir — The Preamble of the Constitution starts with the following words "WE THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST SECULAR DEMOCRATIC Republic..." with assurance to secure Justice Liberty Equality and Fraternity — all remains in front of our eyes! Now the situation has come to such a pass that even the word "INDIA" also arrives as something "anti-national" or "alien" in the lexicon of the "nationalists"! Yes a certain leader of a particular political/ideological group has promptly castigated the word "INDIA" by associating it with "colonial legacy" immediately after the Opposition front has named its alliance "INDIA" (Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance)! Though the matter is extremely unfortunate and poses an assault upon the very dignity of the Constitution and the idea

Congress hits back



The Congress on Wednesday, July 19, hit back at Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma who took a swipe at the opposition coalition with his remarks that the British had named the country India — saying he should tell that to Prime Minister who

of India as well, it is least surprising as the particular force not only upholds the flag of a single language/religion in this diverse multilingual secular land of all, the concerned leader is also notorious for attacking Muslims in every possible opportunity without any basis — with the latest accusation being "conspiracy" by the Muslim vendors for an increase in prices of vegetables in his state! When a person holding a Constitutional Chair is required to be appearing and acting neutral while performing his/her duties towards citizens of all demographic credentials, how openly and nakedly can he paint Muslims of the state as "villain" in regular intervals? Just because of the increasing might of these folks in various Constitutional chairs blaming Muslims for a plethora of reasons, urgent necessity arrives to protect the Idea Integrity Unity Secularism and the Constitutional ethos of India from absolute devastation and the acronym "INDIA" provides the best umbrella under which the sane elements can unite and save the country from moral disintegration. Kajal Chatterjee | Kolkata

gave names such as 'Skill India', 'Start-up India' and 'Digital India' for programmes in the country. Is the Assam CM having a surplus of sour grapes in his mouth? But when 26 political parties call their formation INDIA (Indian National Developmental, Inclusive Alliance), he (Sarma) throws a fit and says the use of India reflects a 'colonial mentality'! He should go tell that to his Boss, the Congress leader said. The old video of the prime minister in which he is seen appealing to voters to 'vote for India'. Setting the tone for their 2024 Lok Sabha campaign, 26 opposition parties on Tuesday formed the INDIA grouping to unitedly take on the ruling NDA with Congress leader Rahul Gandhi asserting that the fight will be between INDIA and NDA. Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

DEATH OF HUMANITY

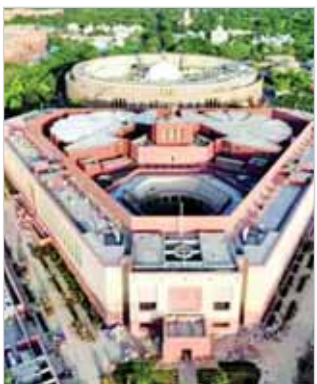
Sir — A heart-wrenching video depicting the horrifying plight of two women in Manipur being paraded and sexually assaulted by a merciless mob has sent shockwaves through our nation. It reflects the death of humanity. The irony is that the incident happened more than one month ago, but no one has been arrested till now, and the silence of our mainstream media, known for extensively debating trivial issues, is even more scary. Most of all, the refusal of our Prime Minister to speak on this matter is rather confusing and worrying. I remember our honourable Prime Minister, Mr Narendra Modi, had launched the "Beti Bachao Beti Padhao" campaign some years ago. It was intended to protect and empower our daughters, but regrettably, it appears to have remained a mere slogan. If it were true, such types of incidents would never have happened. F Akhtar | Hyderabad

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Fiery Monsoon session

It is likely to be one of the stormiest sessions with many controversial Bills and the Manipur issue

It is most likely to be the last Monsoon session of the Modi Government as elections would be held by May next year. The stage is set for yet another round of clashes between the Narendra Modi government and a newly united Opposition over a host of issues. Spread over 23 days with 17 sittings, the session begins in the old building and is later expected to move to the new building where it will conclude on August 11. The biggest issue to be debated, of course, would be Manipur which has been on the boil for over two and a half months and still burning. The Opposition would make all efforts to corner the government for its failure to quell the violence there. Of course, the Government will have the respite that Rahul Gandhi will not be there to question it. The government plans to take up seven Bills for consideration and passage and introduce 21 new draft legislations, including the Digital Personal Data Protection Bill and the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill. So far, there is no mention of a Bill on the Uniform Civil Code in the tentative list of legislative business, though rumours are rife that Government plans to table such a Bill in this session. Though an all-party meeting was called to ensure that Parliament functions smoothly, its chances are rather slim, especially since the government has avoided Manipur on national and international fora. The government will also face the Opposition heat over price rise, unemployment and alleged misuse of Central agencies to silence political opponents.



Bills that will be taken up for consideration and passing are The Biological Diversity (Amendment) Bill, 2022, The Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2023, The Multi-State Cooperative Societies (Amendment) Bill, 2022, The Repealing and Amending Bill, 2022, The Mediation Bill, 2021, The Digital Personal Data Protection Bill, 2023, The Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill, 2023. The last two are going to be fiercely debated. The GNCT Bill seeks to replace the contentious ordinance that curtails the powers of the elected state government on bureaucrats posted in Delhi. The ordinance effectively nullified the Supreme Court judgment that gave the Delhi government greater legislative and administrative control over civil services matters. This issue related to the Delhi ordinance is likely to dominate proceedings in both Houses. For months, Delhi CM and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) chief Arvind Kejriwal has been preparing for pushback on the ordinance in the Rajya Sabha. The AAP stands a good chance to stonewall the Bill if the Congress backs it. The Congress has announced that it will back the Delhi government as the ordinance "curtails constitutional rights and responsibilities of the elected government". So it is going to be all thunder and lightning at this Monsoon session.

PICTALK



Vendors wait for customers at a waterlogged market, at Nalaspada in Palghar district

PTI

Hacks for living it big in a small apartment

With just a little creativity and the right approach, you can transform a rather compact home into a functional living space



SANIYA KANTAWALA

As the population grows rapidly, urban spaces shrink and cost of dwelling spirals, apartments today are getting more cramped than ever. But these petite homes also have the unique opportunity to rethink limited square footage creatively. Sometimes a sprinkle of imagination and a dash of creativity can transform homes into stylish havens.



tiny spaces: petite, delicate pieces and overstuffed, oversized ones. Petite furniture accentuates the room's smallness, while bulky items can create a cramped and uncomfortable atmosphere. Finding the right balance is critical. **USE MIRRORS WISELY**

Mirrors can create the illusion of extended space while adding a touch of elegance to your decor, especially when placed thoughtfully. Use mirrors in galleries, hallways, small living rooms, or kitchens to brighten up confined areas by reflecting light and visually expanding the space. A clever hack for subtly amplifying the light in a room is strategically positioning mirrors across from other rooms or in corners that require illumination. **USE DEAD CORNERS**

Corners are often considered drab zones. However, in a small home, every inch counts. Hence, one should consider transforming corners into cosy bay window areas or reading nooks. Utilise recessed walls by adding open shelves and a comfortable chair, creating a perfect spot for various activities, such as an arts corner.

IN-OUT CONNECTION

For apartments, seamless indoor-outdoor connections can introduce more natural light and create an illusion of larger space. Expansive or wall-to-wall windows with transparent glass can conjure a tropical paradise ambience while visually elongating a room. **GO CLUTTER-FREE**

Maintaining an organised and clutter-free small room is of utmost importance. Clutter not only occupies physical space but also visually weighs down the room, making it appear more chaotic than it is. Hence, taking proactive steps to control and declutter the space becomes crucial. Regularly remove items that don't belong in the room. Try to store items in stylish and functional baskets that add to the room's decor while keeping clutter contained. Living large in a small apartment is within reach of these ingenious ideas. By implementing these ideas, you can transform a compact home into a functional living space.

(The writer is principal designer and founder of Saniya Kantawala Design)

OPEN PLAN LAYOUT

The open plan concept fosters intimacy and sociability and is a brilliant solution for maximising small spaces. One can seamlessly merge the dining and living room into one expansive area. Enhance the illusion of space by laying floor tiles along the room's length or breadth. Instead of features such as walls, go for glass partitions or screens that let light and view through. Alternatively, one can opt for half-walls.

MONOTONE SCHEMES

Monotone colours, particularly white, reflect a lot of light and create an illusion of spaciousness. Tight spaces such as bathroom or kitchen can make the most of such

RETHINK STORAGE

Select multi-purpose furniture. For instance, consider a sofa-cum-bed, which can be used as a cosy spot for reading during the day and transformed into a comfortable bed at night. A clever hack here is to opt for furniture with dual functionality. Install faux partition along one stretch of the room, painted the same colour as the walls, to discreetly contain storage units. Vertical storage is the way forward.

PROPORTION MATTERS

Choosing the appropriate sized furniture is crucial as it can significantly impact the room's perceived size and overall ambience. It is essential to avoid two extremes when selecting furniture for

FIRST COLUMN

INDIA-FRANCE CAN BE A POTENT FORCE

Together, the two countries can be an effective balancing power in the Indo-Pacific



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi undertook another high level to India's west, less than a month after his state visit to the US. The visit to France last week is a reminder of the changing geopolitics, aligned with 21st-century realities. If several rounds of vegetarian meals hosted by America's top leadership, the second chance to address a joint session of the US Congress were a teaser, France upped the game by bestowing the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, the highest civilian and military honour on PM, not to forget the proud Indian tri-services marching on Champs-Élysées. It is a reminder to India steadily taking the rightful place in the global order, specifically, when it comes to the Indo-Pacific region, to an extent catalysed by the presence of China, whose aggressive manoeuvres in the Indian Ocean region and beyond are forcing new alliances and partnerships.

It is significant that even though India hasn't clearly articulated its Indo-Pacific strategy, unlike France and US, there was a joint statement released during the PM's Paris visit. The note mentioned "Our countries believe in a free, open, inclusive, secure and peaceful Indo Pacific region. Our cooperation seeks to secure our own economic and security interests; ensure equal and free access to global commons; build partnerships of prosperity in the region; advance the rule of international law; and, working with others in the region and beyond, build a balanced and stable order in the region, with respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity."

A mention regarding PM Modi's envisioned SAGAR ((Security and Growth for All in the Region) and President Macron's vision of the security and cooperation being aligned, was made, to highlight the key glue for the 25-year-old India-France relationship. France has always partnered with India on the premise of strategic autonomy. This goes well for India, as it doesn't impose conditions for bilateral cooperation. It takes away the uncomfortable "Us vs Them", narrative, providing the breathing space for a healthy friendship to take life. That the India-France relationship has stood the test of time, such as France not imposing sanctions on India in the aftermath of nuclear tests, or not criticising India for its non-committal stance on Ukraine, is well documented.



The current roadmap extends the partnership to bring a larger bunch of partner countries located in the vast Indo-Pacific region under a common umbrella. The joint statement read "We will continue to work together to extend development cooperation to countries in the region, including in Africa, the Indian Ocean Region, South Asia, Southeast Asia and the Pacific. We will strengthen our plurilateral arrangements with Australia and UAE and build new ones in the region. We will strengthen our cooperation in regional forums such as the Indian Ocean Rim Association, the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium, the Indian Ocean Commission, the Djibouti Code of Conduct, the ADMM+ and ARF."

India and France are already working on a trilateral platform with Australia and UAE, and plan to expand the net on most critical areas of maritime cooperation, security, climate change etc to a wider bunch of nations impacted in the region. These nations while not as large, economically or area-wise, as compared to India hold strategic spots in the extended Indo-Pacific expanse, which India loosely defines as ranging from US east coast to the African west coast. This region also controls/hosts some of the most heavy traffic sea routes, through which billions of dollars' worth of goods are traded across the world. China is increasingly getting aggressive in the Indian Ocean region, slowly building strategic military bases by coercion (most often) in some of these smaller island nations threatening territorial sovereignty of many countries. A joint collaborative approach between India and France, taken together with a vision for the next 25 years augurs well to act as an effective balancing power.

(The writer is a policy analyst)

Human-tiger clash: Beyond the stripes

The overall increase in population doesn't indicate that all is well on the tiger conservation front; serious efforts are needed for tiger population recovery



B.K. SINHA



ARVIND KUMAR JHA

Tigers (*Panthera tigris*) are one of India's most iconic and charismatic species, known for their majestic presence in the wild. It has 53 tiger reserves covering an area of 75,796 sq. km and houses nearly 70% of the world's wild tiger population. Prime Minister's message in the Status of Tiger 2022 Report by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) quotes from Mahabharat: "Nirvano vadyate vyaaghr, nirvyaaghr chainplate venom" which means "If there is no forest, then the tiger gets killed; if there is no tiger, then the forest gets destroyed."

The total estimated tiger population in India increased from 2,967 in 2018 to 3,167 in 2022 with a 24.5% increase in the Shivalik Hills & Gangetic Plains, 12.4% in Central Indian Highlands & Eastern Ghats, and 11.4% in North Eastern Hills & Brahmaputra Plains landscape while the Sunderbans and Western Ghats Landscapes recorded a decrease of 12% and 16%.

Tigers with remarkable adaptability expanded into new areas in the states of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. This expansion signifies positive progress, but the conservation scenario in many regions is disturbing. Local tiger populations have become extinct in areas like Sri Venkateswara National Park of Andhra Pradesh, as also in Kawal Tiger Reserve of Telangana, Satkosia of Odisha, and Sahyadri of Maharashtra. The states of Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, and Andhra Pradesh require serious conservation efforts for tiger population recovery. The small and genetically unique population of tigers in Simlipal of Odisha requires prioritized conservation inputs.

The biodiversity-rich protected areas within the Western Ghats as also in adjacent areas show a reduction in tiger population with decreases reported in the Wayanad landscape of Kerala, BR Hills of Karnataka, and border regions of Goa and Karnataka. Other regions like Sharavathi of UP and Mookambika and Bhadra of Karnataka also show substantial tiger occupancy declines. Although the Periyar landscape's population is stable, tiger occupancy has gone down outside of Periyar. In Kanyakumari and Srivilliputhur one notices local extinctions of tiger populations. The landscape of North Eastern Hills and Brahmaputra remains secure but the Sunderbans landscape, a mangrove ecosystem, shows a decline. Since tigers' presence in a forest indicates a thriving ecosystem, declines in their population and extinctions are a matter of extremely serious concern.

The overall increase in population at the national level doesn't indicate that all is well on the tiger conservation front in India. Central Indian landscape witnesses the highest level of conflict between tigers and humans. The high tide of development in the western Ghat region has resulted in increased habitat destruction and even conflicts. Deforestation caused by encroachment, land-use changes, and infrastructures has fragmented forests and damaged wildlife corridors in many areas causing hindrances to wildlife movement. In addition, unregulated grazing, over-harvesting of minor forest produce, forest fires, illegal hunting, defaunation, exotic species plantations, and climate change implications



CENTRAL INDIAN LANDSCAPE WITNESSES THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF CONFLICT BETWEEN TIGERS AND HUMANS

(The writers are former IFS officers and Principal Chief Conservator of Forests)

have increased the instances and impacts of human-wildlife conflict.

The conflicts translate into cattle kills, human kills, and tiger kills by revenge-triggered poisoning and poaching with the lucrative trade in tiger body parts also contributing in a major way. Apart from the area-specific sociocultural, socioeconomic, and socioecological aspects leading to conflicts; politics before and after is all-pervasive. In 2021-22 the number of humans killed by tigers was 31 while the number of tiger deaths was 110 and 13 tigers were captured.

Some recently legislated statutory instruments are likely to make the threats more intense. The free and unlimited access to minor forest produce collection due to non-specification of its 'extent' in the community right titles recognized by District Level Committees (DLCs) under the Forest Rights Act 2006 (FRA) coupled with the considerably scattered pockmarks of agriculture regularized inside forests add to the frequency of human and wildlife interaction.

Many DLCs, violating primarily sections 3(1)(i) and 4(3) of the Act, have illegally granted management rights over tiger reserve areas to Gram Sabhas. Notable ones are 5,544 ha. in the Dhantari district of Chhattisgarh; 781 ha. in the Navegaon Nagzira sanctuary of Maharashtra; 12,527 ha. to 10 villages in core and buffer areas of Achanakmar and Sitanadi Udanti of Chhattisgarh; and sizeable areas of Tansa and Biligiri of Maharashtra and

Karnataka respectively. Rights are granted similarly outside the national parks and sanctuaries (PAs) also that sustain tigers and their prey base populations. Ironically, not a single 'critical wildlife habitat' has been declared despite FRA providing for the same.

The decriminalization of offences like cattle trespass, and bamboo felling in the reserved forest by excluding it from tree's definition under the Indian Forest Act 1927 are going to impact habitats adversely and increase human-wildlife interaction. The proposed relaxations and exclusion of areas by Forest Conservation Bill 2023 are going to increase the potential, area coverage, and implications of human-tiger conflict.

While we cannot depend on selected pockets showing growth in populations today, the current trend calls for urgent action to restore populations and prevent the extinction of small tiger populations. With tigers getting extinct, the entire ecosystem would suffer a domino effect. The conservation efforts must include restoration of habitats, increasing ungulate populations, and planned reintroduction of tigers in zero to low-density areas along with well-designed strategies to contain human-tiger conflict. Unplanned reintroductions and habitat modifications must be avoided as they may raise tiger populations but force tigers into human-dominated landscapes. Measures such as eco-friendly construction techniques, mitigation structures, lower mining

impacts, and rehabilitation of mining sites will reduce conflicts in all areas. Keeping wildlife corridors functional by creating conservation reserves and community reserves will allow gene flow between tiger populations ensuring their long-term survival.

Tigers must get more and relatively inviolate spaces to survive. Improving the stakes of local people in the long-term sustenance of forests and wildlife can make this happen. Locals will prefer tiger conservation if they can relate the reduction in crop depredation to the control of ungulate populations by tigers. Eco-tourism is another definite way to unlock regular and substantial cash flows in local people's favour. A profitable engagement as stakeholders with tour operators and hoteliers will make them support tigers.

Simultaneously, sustainable benefits from the collection, value addition and marketing of minor forest produce like mahua flowers, seeds, barks, leaves etc. from non-PAs will support forest conservation. Carbon financing for cultivating trees on their fragmented agricultural patches having poor productivity promises yet another opportunity to create a win-win situation for people as well as habitats. Appropriate statutory and financial support, stronger but sensitive enforcement agencies, timely compensations, and changing conclusively the mindset of 'Your tiger killed my cattle' will enable India to write a better future for tigers and the ecological treasures they represent.

The human angle of entrepreneurial skill sets

Along with the major trait of independence, vision is a projection of an entrepreneur's mind where s/he breathes life into an opportunity

A general definition of an entrepreneur is a person who identifies "opportunities" in an environment that have the potential to generate wealth by making profits. These could be situations where an entrepreneur establishes new products, services, resources or procedures, which can be sold at a higher price than their cost of production.

So, if entrepreneurship is taking advantage of any potential profit-making opportunity, then why is everyone not an entrepreneur? Keeping the external factors constant, the reason lies in the variation of individual characteristics and personal motivational factors. Even though it may be very easy to talk about identifying



HIMA BINDU KOTA

opportunities and pursuing them to make profits, in actuality opportunities can be very subjective.

Opportunities may not be cognizable to most people; and in many situations, perceived as risky. Thus, how people perceive different opportunities and their willingness and abilities to pursue them have a crucial impact on any entrepreneurial journey. Therefore, in this context, we can say that entrepreneurship is an extremely personal journey, of people's ability to recognise opportunities, envision opportunities and pursue them by taking risks.

Let us take an example of vision. Vision is nothing but a projection of an entrepreneur's mind where he breathes life into an opportunity, giv-

ing his interpretation of how to exploit the same. Make no mistake that all visions are accurate. Many times, entrepreneurs make judgment errors in valuing an opportunity. The opportunity may not be worthy or may not be valuable in its existing form.

Risk and return generally have a linear relationship. This means that if one takes a higher risk, his return can be potentially higher. While taking risks for a future higher gain can be safely predicted in an established business, it may not be as straightforward in entrepreneurship. Many times, entrepreneurs start new companies in already existing markets, where industry dynamics and risk-return relationships are known. But there are several cases where



entrepreneurs find new industries to start their companies. Such entrepreneurs are willing to take risks, handle the fear of the unknown and cope with the lack of surety of desired outcomes.

Let us take an example of the biotechnology industry. The future of this revolutionary industry, when in its

nascent stages in the 1970s, was at best unpredictable. 'Research & development', 'venture capital', and 'technology transfer' were some terms given to the world by this industry. Since, most of the time, in biotechnology, the product was a bio-organism, there was no clarity about product patents. Over the years, things started falling into place, including the patent rules. Keeping external factors like high capital requirements aside, the ability of an individual to work in an ambiguous and risky environment is to be noted.

In 1973, Cohen and Boyer discovered recombinant DNA technology, which jump-started the biotechnology industry. While Cohen collaborated with venture capitalist

Swanson and created Genentech, Boyer remained in academia. Here again, human factors kick in and these entrepreneurs with higher optimism and greater tolerance for risk, contribute to the variation in risk-tolerance behaviour across the entrepreneurs' pool. So, an individual's ability to not get discouraged in the face of low success and willingness to progress despite these odds is also crucial for an entrepreneurial journey.

Surprisingly, research shows that individuals with high tolerance to ambiguity find unpredictability appealing instead of frightening. The wheels of the entrepreneurial journey also run on the higher achievement needs of entrepreneurs. Since many entrepreneurs have a greater

requirement to show achievements, they generally involve themselves in activities that entail greater individual skills and a hands-on approach.

Their actions are result-oriented, they seek clear feedback on performance. This individual character is known to be a strong differentiator between an entrepreneur and an employee. Overall, all these above-mentioned individual entrepreneurial characteristics can be summed up into one major trait of independence. Entrepreneurs' desire to be independent in taking control of their own lives, judgments and responsibilities; be it pursuing opportunities that may not be visible to others or being responsible for their outcomes, plays an ever-important role.

(The writer is an educator)

QURAN DESCECRATION

Iraq orders expulsion of Sweden's envoy

AP ■ BAGHDAD

Iraq's prime minister ordered the expulsion of the Swedish ambassador from Iraq and the withdrawal of the Iraqi charge d'affaires from Sweden on Thursday as a man desecrated of a copy of the Quran in Stockholm with permission from Swedish authorities.

The diplomatic blowup came hours after protesters angered by the planned burning of a copy of the Islamic holy book stormed the Swedish Embassy in Baghdad early Thursday, breaking into the compound and lighting a small fire.

Online videos showed demonstrators at the diplomatic post waving flags and signs showing the influential Iraqi Shiite cleric and political leader Muqtada al-Sadr before a planned burning of the Islamic holy book Thursday in Stockholm by an Iraqi asylum-seeker who burned a copy of the Quran in a previous demonstration last month.

Following the incident, the Swedish Embassy announced that it had closed to visitors without specifying when it would reopen.

Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani said in a statement after meeting with security officials that Iraqi authorities will prosecute those responsible for the arson as well as referring "negligent security officials" for investigation. However, the statement also said that the Iraqi government had informed its Swedish counterpart on Wednesday that Iraq would cut off diplomatic relations should the Quran burning go forward.

Hours later, Sudani announced the ordered expulsion of the Swedish ambassador.

The announcement came after two men held an anti-Islam protest on a lawn about 100 meters (300 feet) from the Iraqi Embassy in Stockholm.

One of them, identified by Swedish media as Salwan Momika, an Iraqi Christian living in Sweden, stepped on and



kicked the Quran, but didn't set it on fire.

Momika also stepped on and kicked an Iraqi flag and photographs of Sadr and of Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

About 50 people including journalists and a handful of counterdemonstrators who chanted religious slogans watched the demonstration from behind police barricades as plainclothes and uniformed officers stood by.

Following the protest and Sudani's announcement, the head of Iraq's Media and Communications Commission announced it had suspended the license of Swedish communications company Ericsson to operate in Iraq.

Before the planned protest in Stockholm dozens of men climbed over the fence at the complex containing the Swedish Embassy in Baghdad, Video footage showed men trying to break down a door, setting a fire and standing, some shirtless in the summer heat, inside what appeared to be a room at the embassy, an alarm audible in the background.

Others later performed pre-dawn prayers outside of the embassy. As dawn broke, police and other security officials gathered at the embassy as firefighters tried to douse the flames from the ladder of a fire truck. Some demonstrators still stood at the site, holding plac-

ards showing al-Sadr's face, apparently left alone by police.

The Swedish Foreign Ministry said in a statement that its staff were safe.

"We condemn all attacks on diplomats and staff from international organizations," the ministry said.

"Attacks on embassies and diplomats constitute a serious violation of the Vienna Convention. Iraqi authorities have the responsibility to protect diplomatic missions and diplomatic staff," Swedish Foreign Minister Tobias Billström called the attacks "completely unacceptable" in a statement and said the ministry would summon Iraq's charge d'affaires in Stockholm, slamming Iraqi authorities for "seriously failing" in their responsibility to protect the embassy and its personnel.

The Finnish embassy in Baghdad is adjacent to the Swedish embassy, in an area enclosed by blast walls.

Finland's ambassador to Iraq, Matti Lassila, told the Finnish public broadcaster YLE that the staff of the Swedish and Finnish embassies were proactively evacuated Wednesday and were uninjured.

Iraq's Foreign Ministry also issued a statement condemning the attack and promising to hold the perpetrators accountable, without explaining how it allowed the breach to happen or identifying who carried out the assault.

'China doesn't want a trade war with US'

AP ■ WASHINGTON

China does not want a trade war with the United States but will retaliate against any further US restrictions on technology and trade, the Chinese ambassador to the US said. Ambassador Xie Feng criticised US curbs on the sale of microchips and chipmaking equipment to China that were imposed last year by the Biden administration. Beijing has described the measure as part of an effort to "contain" China.

"China does not shy away from competition, but the definition of competition by the US side I think is not fair," Xie said Wednesday at the Aspen Security Forum, a security and foreign policy conference in Aspen, Colorado.

"The United States is trying to win by keeping China out," he said, referring to measures to curb US technology

sales to Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei over security concerns.

"This is like restricting the other side to wear outdated swimwear in a swimming contest while you yourself (are) wearing a Speedo," he said.

China earlier this month imposed export curbs on two key metals used in computer chips and solar cells, a measure widely seen as retaliation for the US restrictions on microchips. Earlier this year, Beijing restricted sales of products from Micron Inc., the biggest US producer of memory chips.

"Definitely it's not our hope to have a tit for tat," Xie said. "We don't want a trade war, technological war. We want to say goodbye to the Iron Curtain, as well as the Silicon Curtain." Xie's comments come as Washington and Beijing are trying to patch up their relationship, which has hit new lows in recent months over a slew of issues including a suspected Chinese spy balloon that flew over US territory and tensions over trade, technology, human rights and China's claim to Taiwan and much of the South China Sea.

As part of efforts to mend ties, three top US officials visited Beijing in recent weeks. John Kerry, the US special envoy on climate, concluded talks on Wednesday with Chinese officials on ways to combat climate change and restore high-level cooperation between the two countries.

He was preceded earlier this month by Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen. Last month, Secretary of State Antony Blinken travelled to China on a visit focused on reopening communication channels between the two countries and reviving stalled

talks between their militaries.

Xie said China is "eager" to have a "stable, healthy relationship" with the US. He said immediate "concrete" improvements could include increasing the number of passenger flights between China and the US — which were heavily curtailed during the pandemic — and renewing the countries' cooperation agreement on science and technology. On the issue of the Ukraine war, Xie reiterated Chinese officials' talking points that Beijing respects countries' sovereignty and territorial integrity but also acknowledged "legitimate and reasonable security concerns." China says it is neutral in the conflict, but in practice it has shown Russia support by organising frequent state visits and joint military drills with Moscow. For self-governed Taiwan, which China considers a breakaway province, Xie said

the priority is to stop an upcoming stopover in the US by Taiwanese Vice President and presidential front-runner William Lai.

The stopover, expected as part of a trip next month by Lai to Latin America, is like a "gray rhino charging at us," Xie said.

China opposes any formal exchanges between its diplomatic partners and Taiwan and has reacted angrily to such visits in the past. In April, China conducted war games around Taiwan after Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen met with US officials in Los Angeles while on her way back from Central America.

The director of the US de facto embassy in Taiwan, Sandra Oudirkirk, said Wednesday there is "absolutely no reason" for China to use Lai's transit "as a pretext for any sort of provocative action."

One dead, 48 injured in suspected gas explosion

AP ■ JOHANNESBURG

One man died and at least 48 people were injured after a suspected underground gas explosion ripped open roads and flipped vehicles in the heart of South Africa's biggest city, authorities and emergency services said on Thursday. Firefighters found the man's body under a vehicle. The cause of the blast at evening rush hour Wednesday in downtown Johannesburg remained unclear. The company that supplies gas to that part of the city said it did not believe its underground pipelines were responsible, as authorities first thought.

An investigation was underway as city authorities brought in specialists to determine what other underground pipes or cables there were in the area and if there was a threat of another explosion or gas leak. "We are still searching for the source," said Panayaz Lesufi, the premier of the Gauteng province, where Johannesburg is located. Firefighters discovered the body of the man in a nighttime search of the blast area, Emergency Management Services spokesperson Robert Mulaudzi said on Twitter. Lesufi said 12 people remained in several Johannesburg hospitals for medical treatment. The

other 36 people who were hurt had been discharged, he said.

Some people were evacuated from the area Wednesday night due to fears of a second explosion or that multi-story buildings in a downtown section of the city might collapse. Lesufi said "the damage is extensive." However, people returned to the busy area in Johannesburg's central business district on Thursday morning, either to go back to their homes or get to work.

Authorities estimated that an area covering five city blocks was damaged and at least six roads were affected. At least 34 vehicles were damaged, with some of them flipped on their sides or lying on top of other vehicles. Others had tumbled into gaping crevices that appeared in the middle of roads as the damage resembled a scene from an apocalyptic movie. The explosion happened just before 5.45 pm on Wednesday, Lesufi said, just as many people were gathering on the streets to catch a minibus taxi home, one of South Africa's most common commuting methods. Most of the damaged vehicles were minibus taxis.

Eyewitnesses said some people were sitting in the buses when the explosion threw them into the air.

China ready to fix stalled ties with US: Xi tells Kissinger

PTI ■ BEIJING

President Xi Jinping on Thursday told Henry Kissinger that China is ready to discuss the "correct way" to halt the slide of its relations with the US and sought the help of veteran American diplomat to fix the ties as he did 50 years ago by establishing diplomatic ties between the two countries.

Kissinger, the former US Secretary of State, who turned 100 in May this year remained the most influential figure in Beijing since his successful ping-pong diplomacy in 1971 pitting Communist China against its ideological mentor the then Soviet Union tilting the Cold War balance of power at that time. Successive Chinese Communist Party leaders turned to him for guidance on the trajectory of China's ties with the US which helped Beijing to expand its economic and diplomatic clout in the world, until in the last 10 years when the American leaders began identifying China as a major threat as it emerged as the world's second-largest economy and major military power next only to the US. The ties hit rock bottom with tough anti-China policies perused by both Donald Trump and the current Joe Biden



Presidencies with a host of trade and tech bans besides the formation of influential strategic groupings like Quad, consisting of the US, India, Japan, Australia, and AUKUS comprising Australia, US and UK, which China says are aimed at containing its rise. Kissinger's current visit to Beijing comes after the trips by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen this month besides Washington's top climate envoy John Kerry's tour to recalibrate the stalled relations. Xi, who in stark contrast avoided meeting with the visiting US officials, however, drove to the opulent Diaoyutai state guest house in Beijing to meet Kissinger and sought his help to

repair the China-US ties.

Villa Five of the Diaoyutai guest house where Xi met Kissinger was where the centenary met the Chinese leaders during his first visit to Beijing in 1971 to establish ties with China under Richard Nixon's Presidency. Fifty-two years ago, at a crucial turning point in China-US relations, Chairman Mao Zedong, Premier Zhou Enlai, President Richard Nixon and Kissinger, with remarkable strategic vision, made the right choice to seek cooperation between China and the United States, kicking off the process of normalization of bilateral relations, Xi said in his meeting with the centenary who officials say is on a "private trip".

| FEEDBACK INFRA PRIVATE LIMITED | | | | | | |
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| STATEMENT OF STANDALONE UNAUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER ENDED JUNE 30, 2023 | | | | | | |
| (Rupees in Lakhs) | | | | | | |
| Sl. No. | Particulars | Quarter Ended June 30, 2023 | Quarter Ended March 31, 2023 | Quarter Ended June 30, 2022 | Year to date for Current Year Ended June 30, 2023 | For Year Ended March 31, 2023 |
| | | Unaudited | Audited | Unaudited | Unaudited | Audited |
| 1 | Total Income from Operations | 4,710 | 4,562 | 5,215 | 4,710 | 19,245 |
| 2 | Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary Items) | (2,821) | (3,608) | (1,685) | (2,821) | (10,151) |
| 3 | Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary Items) | (2,821) | (3,608) | (1,685) | (2,821) | (10,151) |
| 4 | Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary Items) | (2,165) | (2,763) | (1,263) | (2,165) | (7,626) |
| 5 | Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)] | (2,165) | (2,824) | (1,263) | (2,165) | (7,687) |
| 6 | Paid up equity share capital | 1,636 | 1,636 | 1,636 | 1,636 | 1,636 |
| 7 | Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) | (19,004) | (16,839) | (10,414) | (19,004) | (16,839) |
| 8 | Securities premium account | 1,739 | 1,739 | 1,739 | 1,739 | 1,739 |
| 9 | Net Worth | (17,368) | (15,203) | (8,778) | (17,368) | (15,203) |
| 10 | Paid up debt capital / Outstanding Debt | 54,870 | 54,791 | 52,546 | 54,870 | 54,791 |
| 11 | Outstanding Redeemable Preference Share | - | - | - | - | - |
| 12 | Debt Equity Ratio (10/9) | (3.16) | (3.60) | (5.99) | (3.16) | (3.60) |
| 13 | Earnings Per Share (for continuing and discontinued operations) | | | | | |
| | Basic | (13.23) | (16.89) | (7.72) | (13.23) | (46.61) |
| | Diluted | (13.23) | (16.89) | (7.72) | (13.23) | (46.61) |
| 14 | Capital Redemption Reserve | NA | NA | NA | - | NA |
| 15 | Debt Redemption Reserve | 1,210 | 1,210 | 1,210 | 1,210 | 1,210 |
| 16 | Debt Service Coverage Ratio (DSCR) * | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.01 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| 17 | Interest Service Coverage Ratio (ISCR) * | 0.04 | 0.02 | 0.17 | 0.04 | 0.01 |
| Additional information as per Regulation 52(4) of SEBI (LODR) Regulations, 2015 | | | | | | |
| 1 During the quarter ended June 30, 2023, principal and interest amount was due on Non-Convertible Debenture but not paid. | | | | | | |
| 2 There has been no improvement in financial strength of the company during the quarter and company continued to face financial constraint, therefore company has not got the credit rating reassessed therefore credit rating agency CARE has assigned INC (ISSUER NOT COOPERATING). | | | | | | |
| 3 Debentures are secured by way of first pari-passu charge by hypothecation of entire current assets, movable fixed assets of the Company both present and future, Corporate Guarantee of the Promoter Company and pledge of shares of subsidiary Company. These are to be secured against first pari-issue charge over total assets to the extent of total assets cover of atleast 1.5 times. The total asset coverage ratio is 1.23, times as on June 30, 2023. | | | | | | |
| * Notes 1: Adopted definitions for Ratios: Ratios has been computed as follows Debt Equity Ratio = Total Debt / Total Equity Total Debt = Non current borrowings + current maturities of non-current borrowings Total equity = Equity share capital + Other equity + Compulsory convertible instruments to equity Interest Service Coverage Ratio (ISCR) = (EBDIT-Current Tax)/Gross Interest Debt Service Coverage Ratio (DSCR) = (EBDIT-Current Tax)/(Gross Interest + Principal Repayment of long Term Debts excluding repayment from refinancing of debt) Assets Coverage Ratio = (Total assets) / (Total borrowing excluding unsecured borrowings and compulsory convertible instruments to equity) | | | | | | |
| Note - 2 | | | | | | |
| a) The above is an extract of the detailed format of the Quarterly financial results filed with the Stock Exchange under Regulation 52 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 (as amended). The full format of the quarterly financial results are available on the Stock Exchange website www.bseindia.com and on the Company website www.feedbackinfra.com | | | | | | |
| b) For the items referred in the Regulation 52(4) of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 the pertinent disclosures have been made to the Bombay Stock Exchange website www.bseindia.com and on the Company's website www.feedbackinfra.com | | | | | | |
| c) The above financial results for the period ended June 30, 2023 have been reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors in the meeting held on 19 th July 2023. | | | | | | |
| d) The Statement has been prepared in accordance with the Indian Accounting Standards ("Ind AS") as prescribed under Section 133 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with relevant rules issued thereunder and in terms of Regulation 52(1) of SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 and SEBI's Master Circular No. SEBI/HO/DDHS/PoD1/P/CIR/2023/108 dated 29 July, 2022 amended on 30 June, 2023 | | | | | | |
| e) The Company is primarily in the business of consultancy. The Board of Directors of the Company, which has been identified as being the chief operating decision maker (CODM), evaluates the Company's performance, allocate resources based on the analysis of the various performance indicator of the Company as a single unit. Therefore, the Company's business activity falls within a single business segment in terms of Ind AS 108. | | | | | | |

For and on behalf of Board of Directors of
Sd/-
Hari Om
Director
DIN.:10045489

Place : Gurugram
Date : July 19, 2023

Thousands of UK doctors walk out

AP ■ LONDON

Thousands of senior doctors in England began a 48-hour walkout on Thursday to demand better pay and conditions, paralysing hospitals and leaving only emergency care covered.

The severe disruptions are the latest in months of industrial action by public sector workers amid UK's ongoing cost-of-living crisis. They come just two days after junior doctors staged the longest strikes in the history of the state-funded National Health Service.

Thousands of operations and appointments have been cancelled, and health officials say the impact of the latest round of strikes to hit the country's public health system is likely to be the biggest yet, because almost no work can be done at hospitals unless it's supervised by a senior doctor.

Senior doctors, known as consultants in the UK, will only be "on call" for urgent work such as critical cancer care until Saturday morning.

The Conservative government has offered a 6 per cent pay increase to the doctors, but the British Medical Association, the doctors' union, called this "derisory".

It said doctors have seen real-term take-home pay fall by more than a third over the last 14 years, and accused authorities of refusing to engage in negotiations on pay.

Union executive Dr Vishal Sharma said that many in his profession felt "undervalued and overworked". "Consultants will stand on the picket lines today, because we are angry and at rock bottom. We never wanted to be forced into taking this huge step" Sharma said. "Ministers have done absolutely nothing to stop this action taking place."

Yellen visits Vietnam, seeking to build ties

AP ■ HANOI

The US considers building strong economic and security ties with Vietnam a priority, US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said Thursday as she met with Vietnamese officials in a visit aimed at fortifying America's relations across Asia.

Yellen arrived in Vietnam after visits to Beijing and to India, where she attended financial meetings of the Group of 20 major industrial economies.

"The United States considers Vietnam a key partner in advancing a free and open Indo-Pacific," Yellen told Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh, according to remarks provided by the US Treasury Department.

A "free and open Indo-Pacific" refers to the latest iteration of broad U.S. diplomacy aimed at cultivating stronger ties with other countries in the region to counter China's growing sway among its neighbours.

"Vietnam is also a close economic partner, with our two-way trade reaching record highs last year and the United States serving as Vietnam's largest export market," Yellen said. "It is a priority for our administration to deepen our economic and security ties with Vietnam in the months and years to come."

Yellen briefly sat atop a bright green scooter during a visit to a factory in Hanoi's lush green suburbs, where Sulex Motors, a five-year-old Vietnamese startup, makes EV scooters and batteries. Climate change poses an existential threat to the world but also provides a "key economic opportunity" and way to build "greater resilience into our economies," she said, describing the facility as "impressive".

Yellen said the US is committed to mobilising USD 15 billion to support Vietnam's adoption of renewable energy as a part of the Just Energy



Transition Partnership or JETP — a financial promise made by the Group of Seven advanced economies to help the country phase out its reliance on fossil fuels. Such projects have offered similar incentives to South Africa and Indonesia.

Speaking earlier to a group of business women and economists, Yellen said she was encouraged by growing investments in Vietnam in industries including computer chips and renewable energy.

Yellen's visit is part of concerted US efforts to balance China's growing influence in the Indo-Pacific.

Earlier this year, Secretary of State Antony Blinken visited Vietnam weeks after the 50th anniversary of the US troop withdrawal that marked the end of America's direct military involvement in Vietnam. He pledged to boost relations to new levels.

Diplomatic relations between the two countries were only restored in 1995. Since then, bilateral trade has grown, reaching a high of \$138 billion in goods trade last year.

"We have worked closely to address the legacies of the war," Yellen said. China's border is less than 60 miles (96 kilometres) from Hanoi and Vietnam, like many of China's neighbours, has had maritime and territorial disputes with Beijing in the South China Sea. The two sides fought a brief war in 1979. But China is Vietnam's biggest trading partner.

Russia aims more retaliatory strikes

AP ■ KYIV

Russia pounded Ukraine's southern cities with drones and missiles for a third consecutive night Thursday, keeping Odesa in the Kremlin's crosshairs after a bitter dispute over the end of a wartime deal that allowed Ukraine to send grain through the key Black Sea port. The strikes killed at least two people in Odesa. In Mykolaiv, a city close to the Black Sea, at least 19 people were injured, including a child, Ukrainian officials said.

Russia has targeted Ukrainian critical grain export infrastructure since it vowed "retribution" this week for an attack that damaged a crucial bridge between Russia and the Moscow-annexed Crimean Peninsula. Russian officials blamed that strike on Ukrainian drone boats.

The strikes on Ukraine's grain export infrastructure have helped drive up food prices in countries facing hunger.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the end of the deal would result in more human suffering, with potentially millions of people affected. The grain deal provided guaranteed that ships would not be attacked entering and leaving Ukrainian ports, while a separate agreement facilitated the movement of Russian food and fertiliser.

The Russian military on Thursday described its strikes on Odesa, a city whose downtown area is described by the United Nations' cultural agency

UNESCO as possessing "outstanding universal value," as "retaliatory."

In January, UNESCO added Odesa's historic center to its list of endangered World Heritage Sites, with UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay saying the "legendary port that has left its mark in cinema, literature and the arts." Despite multiple Russian artillery attacks and airstrikes during the war that began in February 2022, Odesa had not previously been subjected to the heavy barrages that have targeted other towns and cities in Ukraine's south and east.

The Russian Defense Ministry said in a statement that it targeted "production shops and storage sites for unmanned boats" in Odesa and the nearby city of Chornomorsk.

In the Mykolaiv area, the Russian military claimed to have destroyed Ukraine's fuel infrastructure facilities and ammunition depots.

Neither sides' claims could be independently verified.

The previous night, an intense Russian bombardment using drones and missiles damaged critical port infrastructure in Odesa, including grain and oil terminals. The attack destroyed at least 60,000 tons of grain.

In what appeared to be a tit-for-tat move, Ukraine's Defence Ministry announced that as of Friday, all vessels in the Black Sea heading to Russian ports "may be considered by Ukraine as such carrying military cargo with all the



In this image provided by the Ukrainian Emergency Service, people react after a Russian attack at a residential area in Odesa, Ukraine on Thursday. Agencies

associated risks." That may result in higher insurance costs for those ships.

Russia's Defence Ministry said earlier this week that Moscow had formally declared wide areas of the Black Sea dangerous for shipping and warned that it would view any incoming ship as laden with weapons, effectively announcing a sea blockade.

The European Union's foreign affairs chief condemned Russia's targeting of grain storage facilities.

"More than 60,000 tons of grain has been burned," Josep Borrell said in Brussels on Thursday, regarding Moscow's recent tactics. "So not only they withdraw from the grain agreement... but they are burning the grain."

German Foreign Affairs Minister Annalena Baerbock said at the same meeting that the EU is involved in interna-

tional efforts to get Ukrainian grain to the world market.

"The fact that the Russian president has canceled the grain agreement and is now bombing the port of Odesa is not only another attack on Ukraine, but an attack on the people, on the poorest people in the world," she said.

"Hundreds of thousands of people, not to say millions, urgently need grain from Ukraine."

The White House warned on Wednesday that Russia was preparing possible attacks on civilian shipping vessels in the Black Sea. The warning could alarm shippers and further drive up grain prices.

Russia has laid additional sea mines in the approaches to Ukrainian ports, White House National Security Council spokesman Adam Hodge said in a statement.

"We believe that this is a

coordinated effort to justify any attacks against civilian ships in the Black Sea and lay blame on Ukraine for these attacks," the statement said.

Carlos Mera, head of agricultural commodities markets at Rabobank, said wheat prices have risen about 17 per cent over the last week, calling it a surprising rise that started even before the grain deal ended Monday and attributing it to "a little bit of panic."

A lot of the wheat exported from Ukraine goes to very poor countries, such as those in North Africa, he said. People in those places are already struggling with food insecurity and high local food prices.

Russia, meanwhile, has been exporting record amounts of wheat in recent months despite complaints that its agricultural exports have been hindered. There is "a vast list of underdeveloped countries that depend on Ukrainian and Russian wheat," Mera said.

"And with prices going up, people will have to pay more for that wheat, which means more expensive bread in those countries."

Russia has blasted Ukrainian towns and cities since the start of the war. Ukraine's Western allies have helped upgrade its air defense systems.

The latest military aid package from the United States, announced by the Pentagon on Wednesday, includes funding for four National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile Systems, or NASAMS, and munitions for them.

Minister warns Imran of arrest

Islamabad (PTI): Pakistan's Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah on Thursday warned Imran Khan that he might be arrested if the former prime minister fails to cooperate with the investigation into the leaking of national secrets in what has widely come to be known as the 'cipher case.'

Sanaullah's warning came a day after a close aide of Khan accused his ex-boss of using a diplomatic cable from Pakistan's mission in the US to build an "anti-establishment narrative".

The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) might arrest Khan, the chief of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, if he fails to cooperate with their investigation into the cipher case, the minister said. Sanaullah in the press conference lent credence to the confessional statement by Khan's ex-principal secretary Azam Khan accusing the 70-year-old cricketer-turned-politician of using a cipher from Pakistan's mission in the US to gain political mileage and build an "anti-establishment narrative" on the back of the "confidential" document and assailed the former prime minister. The FIA in a notice to Khan asked the PTI chief to appear before the bureau here on July 25 in connection with the cipher probe, Dawn News reported. "If he does not cooperate during the inquiry stage, he could face possible arrest. Following the investigation, the FIA will make recommendations based on evidence regarding those who are complicit and against whom criminal cases should be filed," Sanaullah said.

Court acquits Pak PM in money laundering case

PTI ■ LAHORE

An accountability court in Pakistan acquitted Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his family members on Thursday in a multi-million-dollar money laundering case after the anti-corruption agency failed to provide any solid evidence against them.

"An Accountability Court acquitted Prime Minister Shehbaz, his wife Nusrat, his son Hamza and daughter Javaria in the PKR 7 billion money laundering case filed by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) in 2020," a court official told PTI. The official said the court acquitted the premier and his family members after the NAB failed to provide any solid evidence against the suspects regarding the laundering of millions of dollars abroad, especially to the United Kingdom. The official further said the court, however, declared another daughter of the premier, Rabia Imran, a proclaimed offender and issued her an arrest warrant.

Rabia had left for the UK since she was named in the case. The corruption case was filed by the NAB in 2020 during the tenure of Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government. The Sharif family termed the case a political victimisation. In October last

year, a special court of the Federal Investigation Agency also acquitted Shehbaz in the PKR 16 billion money laundering case.

On July 10, his son, Suleman Shabbaz, was also acquitted in the same case.

Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) senior leader barrister Aitzaz Ahsan alleged that former Pakistan Army Chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa and the military establishment had rescued the Sharif family from conviction in corruption cases against them.

"Bajwa sahib has rescued the Sharif family from conviction in cases and he has committed a big crime," Ahsan said. He said the cases against Prime Minister Shehbaz, his elder brother former premier Nawaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz Sharif were open-and-shut and their conviction was evident but they were rescued by the top man. The ousted prime minister Khan had already declared that the Sharif family is given relief in court cases under a deal with the powerful military establishment. Last month, the accountability court acquitted former prime minister and elder brother of Pakistan premier, Nawaz Sharif, in a case of alleged illegal allotment of plots in Punjab province in 1986.

Wagner mercenaries launch joint military training

AP ■ MOSCOW

Mercenaries from Russia's military company Wagner on Thursday launched joint drills with the Belarusian military near the border with Poland following their relocation to Belarus after their short-lived rebellion, a move that prompted Warsaw to re-deploy its troops.

The Belarusian Defence Ministry said that the week-long maneuvers will be conducted at a firing range near the border city of Brest and will involve Belarusian special forces.

The ministry added that

Wagner's combat experience will help modernise the Belarusian military. A video released on Wednesday appeared to show Wagner's chief Yevgeny Prigozhin for the first time since he led last month's rebellion.

In the video, Prigozhin was seen telling his troops they will spend some time in Belarus training its military to help "make the Belarusian army the second strongest army in the world" before deploying to Africa.

In addition to their involvement in Ukraine, Wagner mercenaries have been sent to Syria and sever-

al African countries since the private army was created in 2014. In his revolt that began on June 23 and lasted less than 24 hours, Prigozhin's mercenaries captured the military headquarters in the southern Russian city of Rostov-on-Don without firing a shot and then moved as close as 200 kilometres (125 miles) of Moscow. The mutiny faced little resistance and the mercenaries downed at least six military helicopters and a command post aircraft, killing at least 10 airmen. Prigozhin had called it a "march of justice" to oust Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu and General

Staff chief Gen. Valery Gerasimov, who demanded that Wagner forces sign contracts with the Defence Ministry.

He ordered his troops back to their camps after Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko brokered a deal to end the rebellion in exchange for an amnesty for Prigozhin and his fighters and a permission to relocate to Belarus.

The revolt posed the most serious threat to Russian President Vladimir Putin's 23-year rule, eroding his authority and exposing the government's weakness.

Pakistan deploys Army to ensure security during Muharram

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan on Thursday decided to deploy Army troops across the country to ensure security and prevent sectarian violence during the month of Muharram. The decision was taken after the authorities in Sindh, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Islamabad, Gilgit-Baltistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir had sought the deployment of regular troops to maintain law and order.

The central government summoned the Army under Article 245 of the Constitution, which authorises the "deployment of Army troops/assets and civil armed forces troops/assets" to ensure peace.

A notification from the interior ministry mentioned that the exact number of troops, date, and area of deployment of the Army would be worked out by the local authorities.

Muharram marks the beginning of the new Islamic year. The first ten days of the month are important as Imam Hossein, the grandson of Prophet Mohammed, was killed on the tenth of the month by the then-government forces.

The Shiite Muslims especially revere the martyrdom of Imam Hossein and hold special ceremonies including processions.

However, extremists among the Sunni Muslims consider the Shiites as heretics and target them through terrorism.

Pakistan is home to the second-largest Shiite population after Iran and also has a bloody history of sectarian strife.

Kremlin defends decision not to let Putin attend BRICS Summit

PTI ■ MOSCOW

The Kremlin on Thursday defended its decision not to let President Vladimir Putin travel to South Africa next month to attend the BRICS Summit in person, saying Moscow has done this before and the Russian leader will still be able to exchange views with his counterparts from the grouping online. "We are talking about full participation. It will be both the president's address and — if necessary — participation in an exchange of views," Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov said in response to a request to specify the format of Putin's participation.

BRICS includes Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. The association's 15th summit will be held in Johannesburg, South Africa, on August 22-24. It will be the first BRICS Summit to be hosted in person since the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent global restrictions. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov will personally represent Russia at the event. President Putin is facing an arrest warrant from the International Criminal Court's (ICC) for alleged war crimes.

Lavrov has on many occasions represented the country at international events, Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said, adding that Moscow has adopted this practice in the past. "It's up to us to decide and a decision has been made.

This practice has been used more than once," she said, commenting on Putin's decision not to attend the summit in person.

When asked if the move stemmed from the ICC arrest warrant against Putin, Zakharova warned against looking for "hidden meanings." "Russia takes part in many international events this way, like many other countries," she added. On March 17, the ICC issued arrest warrants for Putin and Russian Presidential Commissioner for Children's Rights Maria Lvova-Belova, alleging that they were responsible for "unlawful deportation" and transfer of population, including children, from Ukraine to Russia. Moscow has said that since Russia was not party to the ICC Rome Statute, the court's decisions were legally void for the country. On Wednesday, South African Presidential Spokesman Vincent Magwenya told Russia's state-owned TASS news agency that Pretoria and Moscow took into consideration South Africa's obligations under the Rome Statute when deciding on the form of President Putin's participation in the BRICS summit in August. "The commitment to South Africa's successful hosting of the summit, the historic nature of this upcoming BRICS summit, and a recognition of South Africa's legal obligations to the Rome Statute guided the deliberations over the participation of Russia during the summit," Magwenya said in response to a question.

US jobless claims fall again as labour market continues to flash strength

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Fewer Americans applied for unemployment benefits last week with the labour market continuing to cruise along despite higher interest rates intended to cool hiring. US applications for jobless claims fell by 9,000 to 228,000 for the week ending July 15, from 237,000 previous week, the Labour Department reported on Thursday. The four-week moving average of claims, which

evens out some of the weekly volatility, fell by 9,250 to 237,500. Jobless claim applications are viewed as reflective of the number of layoffs in a given week. For three weeks in late May and early June, jobless claims had appeared to reach a sustained, higher level, above 260,000. But

the past four weeks, claims have retreated and the labour market remains historically healthy.

Since more than 20 million jobs vanished when the COVID-19 pandemic hit in the spring of 2020, US employers have added jobs at a blistering pace, more often than not beating forecasts. Despite the fastest interest rate hikes since 1989, the unemployment rate has hardly budged and remains historically low at 3.6 per cent.

Fed officials have said that the unemployment rate needs to rise well past 4 per cent to bring inflation down, but a report last week showed that consumer prices fell to their lowest level since early 2021 — 3 per cent in June compared with a year earlier — and much closer to the Fed's target of 2 per

cent. The US economy has broadly been resilient in the face of the Federal Reserve's aggressive rate-hiking campaign in its effort to extinguish persistent inflation not seen since the early 1980s. The US economy grew at a 2 per cent annual pace from January through March. Combined with a resilient labour market, most economists now expect Fed officials to go through with another rate hike or two before the end of the year in its ongoing fight against inflation. In June, the Fed chose not to increase the central bank's benchmark borrowing rate for the first time in 15 months, though some officials said they expect to add another half-point to rates by the end of the year.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform public in general that Kotak Mahindra bank Ltd has organized an auction in below mention respect of Vehicles. **VEHICLES FOR SALE**

1) TATA LPT407FB - REG. NO. DL1AD0748 -YOM 2019. MINIMUM RESERVE PRICE-515192.4

2) ASHOK LEY AL2518CBG REG. NO. RJ09GC8560-YOM-2020. MINIMUM RESERVE PRICE-824736

UNDER HYPOTHECATION WITH MIS KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK IS UNDER SALE IN ITS "AS IS WHERE IS CONDITION". INTERESTED PARTIES CAN GIVE THEIR QUOTATIONS (ONLINE/OFFLINE) WITHIN 15 DAYS FROM THIS PAPER PUBLICATION I.E. ON OR BEFORE 05-08-2023 (PLEASE NOTE THAT CLOSING AUCTION DATE WOULD NOT BE A WEEKLY OFF / HOLIDAY).

BRANCH ADDRESS: KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK LTD., PLOT NO.7 INSTITUTIONAL AREA, SECTOR- 125 NOKIA NEAR DELL CAMPUS NOKIA (U.P) UP-201313 OR CONTACT: ABHINAV LAL KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK LTD. CONTACT / 0778988481 EMAIL-Abhinav.lal@kotak.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the public that 40% of the share of Flat No. 202, 2 nd Floor, K-1 Building, 412, MG Road, Old DLF, Gurugram, measuring 1000 sq. ft. is being transferred to Mr. Yatharth Verma, by virtue of it being willed by the original 40% owner (Late) Smt. Mithla Verma to her husband (Late) Shri Baldev Raj Verma and he further willing it to his grandson, Mr. Yatharth Verma. Any person having any objection regarding this transfer is requested to inform the same in writing along with the proof regarding the objection at H.No. 1276, Sector 19-B, Chandigarh, within 30 days from the date of this notice. Issued by: Yatharth Verma (Self) Date: 21-07-2023 Mobile No. 9878871969

APPENDIX- IV-A

[See proviso to rule 8 (6)]
Sale Notice for sale of Immovable Property
E-Auction Sale Notice for sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) and Rule 9(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described Immovable Property mortgaged to Indiabulls Housing Finance Ltd. [CIN: L65922DL2005PLC136029] ("Secured Creditor"), the physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of the Secured Creditor, will be sold on "as is where is", "as is what is" and "whatever there is" basis on 07.08.2023 from 02.00 P.M. to 04.00 P.M., for recovery of Rs. 21,01,108/- (Rupees Twenty One Lakh One Thousand One Hundred Eight only) pending towards Loan Account No. HHLDM009371333, by way of outstanding principal, arrears (including accrued late charges) and interest till 13.07.2023 with applicable future interest in terms of the Loan Agreement and other related loan document(s) w.e.f. 14.07.2023 along with legal expenses and other charges due to the Secured Creditor from RAJINDER (PROPRIETOR), DEEPAK ENTERPRISES) and DEEPAK @ DEEPAK SHARMA. The Reserve Price of the Immovable Property will be Rs. 13,00,000/- (Rupees Thirteen Lakh only) and the Earnest Money Deposit ("EMD") will be Rs. 1,30,000/- (Rupees One Lakh Thirty Thousand only) i.e. equivalent to 10% of the Reserve Price.

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

BUILT - UP PROPERTY ON SECOND FLOOR, WITHOUT ROOF / TERRACE RIGHTS, WITH UNDIVIDED AND INDIVISIBLE PORTIONATE LAND RIGHTS, BEARING PART OF PROPERTY NUMBER 15048, OLD PLOT NUMBER A-4, HAVING AN AREA MEASURING 47 SQUARE YARDS OR 39.29 SQUARE METERS, OUT OF KHASRA NUMBER 191-192, SITUATED IN THE AREA OF VILLAGE SIKDARPUR, IN ABADI OF BALBIR NAGAR, ILLAQA SHAHDARA, DELHI - 110032 WITH ALL ITS RIGHTS, TITLE, INTEREST, FIXTURES, CONNECTIONS, WITH UNDIVIDED AND INDIVISIBLE PORTIONATE LAND RIGHTS, COMMON FACILITIES OF ENTRANCE AND PASSAGE RESTRICTED COMMON FACILITIES TO GO TO TERRACE AND OTHER PORTIONS OF THE SAID PROPERTY FOR MAINTENANCE / INSPECTION OF DISH ANTENNA / T.V. ANTENNA, WATER TANK INSTALLED ON THE TOP FLOOR, SEWER CONNECTIONS, SANITARY FITTINGS AND SUCH OTHER ESSENTIAL SERVICES, BUT WITHOUT ANY OTHER RIGHT IN THE TERRACE AND OTHER PORTIONS OF THE SAID PROPERTY AND IS BOUNDED AS UNDER :- EAST : SERVICE LANE, NORTH : PROPERTY OF OTHERS, WEST : ROAD 16 FEET WIDE, SOUTH : PROPERTY OF OTHERS

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided on the website of the Secured Creditor i.e. www.Indiabullshomeloans.com. For bidding, log on to www.auctionfocus.in

Date : 17.07.2023
Place : DELHI
Authorized officer
Indiabulls Housing Finance Limited

MADHYA PRADESH MADHYA KSHETRA VIDYUT VITARAN COMPANY LTD.

(Government of M.P. Undertaking)
Nishtha Parisar, Bijaltee Nagar, Govindpura, Bhopal-462023
(Ph. No. : 0755-2602033-36, Fax No. : 0755-2589821, 2586636)

TENDER NOTICE

MPMKVVCL, Bhopal invites online Bids from Agencies for supply & execution of below mentioned works as per Tender Specification under RDSS Scheme :-

| Tender Specification Number | Particular of material for Procurement | Lot & Name of Circle | Approx. Value (Rs. Lakh) | Tender Fee (Incl. GST) (In Rs.) | Date of Pre Bid Conference | Date of Opening of Tender |
|-----------------------------|--|---|--------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| MD/MK/04/957 | Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of New 11 KV Lines, LT Line on AB cable, Distribution Transformer Substation and Supporting works such as DPs, TPs, crossing etc. for separation of 11 KV Mix Feeders & Mix DTRs under Revamped Reforms-based and Results-linked Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) Feeder Separation (FSP) Package-IV, Lot-III-A (Raisen Circle) and Lot-III-B (Sehore, Narmadapuram & Vidisha Circle) of MPMKVVCL, Bhopal under Revamped Reforms-based and Results-linked Distribution Sector Scheme- (RDSS). | Package IV, Lot-III-A (Raisen Circle) | 8848.89 | 23600.00 | 24.07.2023 03.00 PM | 08.08.2023 03.00 PM |
| MD/MK/04/958 | Separation of 11 KV Mix Feeders & Mix DTRs under Revamped Reforms-based and Results-linked Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) Feeder Separation (FSP) Package-IV, Lot-III-A (Raisen Circle) and Lot-III-B (Sehore, Narmadapuram & Vidisha Circle) of MPMKVVCL, Bhopal under Revamped Reforms-based and Results-linked Distribution Sector Scheme- (RDSS). | Package IV, Lot-III-B (Sehore, Narmadapuram & Vidisha Circle) | 2127.69 | 11800.00 | | |

Other details and full tender document would be available on our Company website <https://portal.mpcz.in> & MP Govt. website <https://mptenders.gov.in> very shortly. M.P. Madhyam/110945/2023

CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER (PROC.)

Markets settle at fresh lifetime highs

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Extending winning momentum to the sixth day, equity benchmarks Sensex and Nifty scaled fresh record high levels on Thursday, driven by unabated foreign capital inflows and intense buying in banking and FMCG stocks.

A recovery in the rupee added to the momentum, forex traders said.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 474.46 points or 0.71 per cent to settle at its fresh all-time closing high of 67,571.90.

The benchmark recovered all its early lost ground during the afternoon trade. During the day, it rallied 521.73 points or 0.77 per cent to hit its lifetime intra-day peak of 67,619.17.

The NSE Nifty is on the verge of breaching the psychologically crucial 20,000 mark and closed a few points shy of the level.

Rising for the sixth straight session, the NSE flagship climbed 146 points or 0.74 per cent to end at its record closing high of

19,979.15. During the session, it soared 158.7 points or 0.80 per cent to reach its fresh record high of 19,991.85. In the last six sessions, the BSE benchmark has jumped 2,178 points or 3.33 per cent, and the Nifty rallied 594.85 points or 3.06 per cent.

"Unlocking of value by heavyweights (like RIL & ITC) is apprising the main indices. The anticipation of good Q1 results from Banks, is providing an extra boost to drive to new highs. Mixed cues from global peers are not disturbing the mood of the domestic market as FIIs inflows stay put to the prospects of the Indian economy," Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said.

ITC was the biggest gainer in the Sensex pack, rising nearly 3 per cent, followed by Kotak Mahindra Bank, ICICI Bank, Maruti, Bharti Airtel, State Bank of India, Sun Pharmaceutical Industries, Axis Bank, Reliance Industries, Hindustan Unilever and JSW Steel.

On the other hand, Infosys, UltraTech Cement, HCL Technologies, Bajaj Finserv, Larsen & Toubro,



Titan, Tata Consultancy Services and Wipro were the laggards.

Market sentiment remains upbeat on robust foreign flows and a healthy macroeconomic outlook. Expectations of the end of the monetary tightening cycle in the US after the July policy meeting are also contributing towards higher foreign flows into the Indian bourse, Devarsh Vakil, Deputy Head - Retail Research, HDFC Securities, said.

The major US indices continue rallying behind an earnings season that has brought stronger-than-expected results so far, Vakil added.

NSE and BSE conducted a special pre-open session for Reliance Industries Ltd on

Thursday on account of the demerger of its financial services business Reliance Strategic Investments Ltd.

Jio Financial Services Ltd (JFSL), the demerged financial services unit of Reliance Industries Ltd, was valued at about USD 21 billion, ahead of Adani group firms, Coal India and Indian Oil (IOC).

A total of 1,748 stocks advanced while 1,632 declined and 132 remained unchanged on BSE.

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge climbed 0.19 per cent and the midcap index went up marginally by 0.05 per cent.

Among the indices, FMCG rallied 1.45 per cent, bankex jumped 1.40 per cent,

healthcare (1.05 per cent), financial services (0.90 per cent) and energy (0.57 per cent).

IT declined by 0.81 per cent, teck (0.53 per cent), power (0.43 per cent), consumer durables (0.37 per cent) and capital goods (0.29 per cent).

"The market is witnessing frenzied buying support from foreign investors, and it's just a matter of time that the benchmark Nifty will top the 20K mark. Such has been the rally that some of the mild negative flows too are getting discounted in this bull run," Shrikant Chouhan, Head of Research (Retail), Kotak Securities Ltd, said.

Foreign Institutional

Investors (FIIs) continued their buying activity as they bought equities worth Rs 1,165.47 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data.

The rupee gained 12 paise to close at 81.96 (provisional) against the US dollar on Thursday.

In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong ended lower.

European markets were trading in the green. The US markets ended in positive territory on Wednesday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.13 per cent to USD 79.56 a barrel.

"Nifty should most likely cross the 20k mark on Friday, given the ongoing momentum and clear strength visible in the market. Strong heavy weights results are likely to further influence the market direction in the near term."

Investors eagerly await Reliance Q1 results, which will be announced Friday, and management commentaries on the same along with further details on Jio's financial listing," Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Retail Research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd, said.

Weak loans of banks to fall to 3-3.5% of gross advances by March 2025: S&P

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

S&P Global Ratings on Thursday projected Indian banking sector's weak loans will decline to 3-3.5 per cent of gross advances by March 31, 2025 as structural improvements and good economic prospects would support the resilience of financial institutions. In its mid-year global bank outlook, S&P said India's economic growth prospects should remain strong over the medium term, with GDP expanding 6-7.1 per cent annually in fiscal years 2024-2026.

India to remain the fastest-growing economy in Asia-Pacific, and the fastest-growing large economy globally, it said.

"We project the banking sector's weak loans will decline to 3-3.5 per cent of gross loans by March 31, 2025 on the back of structural improvement, including healthy corporate balance sheets, tighter underwriting standards, and improved risk-management practices," S&P Primary Credit Analyst Deepali Seth Chhabria said.



S&P also said that stronger balance sheets and higher demand should boost bank loan growth, but deposit growth would lag. "The small and mid-size enterprise sector and low-income households are vulnerable to rising interest rates and high inflation. But we believe that interest rates in India are unlikely to rise materially. This should limit the risk for the country's banking industry," Chhabria said.

S&P further said that slower global growth and external demand will weigh on economic activity and could fuel further inflation. "However, given that India is domestically oriented, we expect the economic growth to be less affected. We assume the impact on the banking sector will also be modest."

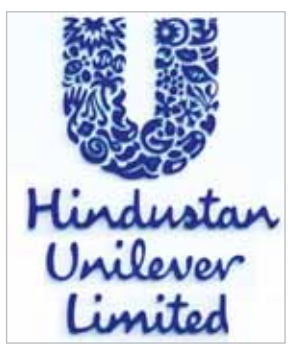
FMCG sector seeing gradual volume growth in Q1: HUL CFO

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

FMCG industry is witnessing a gradual volume growth led by urban market with rural also turning positive in the first quarter of the fiscal after witnessing an over double-digit decline in the past, Hindustan Unilever Ltd CFO Ritesh Tiwari said on Thursday.

Commodities prices have remained stable and inflation continues to moderate thereby leading to resurgence of small and regional players many of whom had vacated the market during peak of inflation, he said during an earnings call.

"With most commodities remaining stable in the quarter, inflation continues to moderate. Consequently, we are seeing a gradual recovery in market volume growth.



FMCG market volumes grew in mid single digit led by urban," Tiwari said.

He further said, "Rural market volumes which at one point in time were declining in double digits have just been positive in this quarter."

However, these growths have come on the back of decline in volumes in the past.

"If you look at market growth on a two-year CAGR basis, total volume growth is still marginally negative," Tiwari said.

With softening of inflation, he said competitive intensity in the market is increasing.

"Media deployment which saw a steep reduction during high inflationary period has started normalising and it's almost bound to 2019 levels. We are also witnessing resurgence of small and regional players, many of whom had vacated the market during the peak of inflation," Tiwari said.

On the outlook, he said the near term operating environment continues to be volatile with weather-related risk.

He said the progress of monsoon needs to be closely watched along with any impact of El Nino on agricultural activities and rural demand.

Rubrik debuts \$10 million ransomware recovery warranty in India

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Rubrik, the Zero Trust Data Security Company, introduced a \$10 million Ransomware Recovery Warranty, a first-of-its-kind in the industry for qualified customers in India. This warranty reinforces Rubrik's commitment to customer business resilience, ensuring rapid recovery and restoration of critical operations in the event of a ransomware attack. Bipul Sinha, co-founder & CEO, emphasised the challenge of eliminating the risk of ransomware

due to the ever-growing sophistication of cybercrime, urging organizations to remain vigilant and prepared.

Ransomware attacks have become a substantial threat, reaching an estimated \$8.4 trillion globally. According to the Rubrik Zero Labs State of Data Security report, over half of the 1,600 surveyed IT and security leaders experienced ransomware attacks in the past year. In India, 26 per cent of respondents reported over 100 attempted cyber attacks on their organisations within the last year, resulting in 51 per cent of companies losing customers due to such attacks.



Govt announces re-bidding under PLI for advanced chemistry cell manufacturing

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government on Thursday announced the re-bidding of production linked incentives for 20 GWh Advanced Chemistry Cell manufacturing -- India's Rs 18,100-crore programme to boost local battery cell production.

The Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI) will facilitate a stakeholder consultation with industry representatives on July 24, 2023 for their inputs and suggestions before the start of the re-bidding process of remaining 20 GWh capacity.

"The ministry is committed to finalize the bidding documents and proceeding with the rebidding process at the earliest," an official statement said.

With this auctioning process, the prospective appli-



cations in the electric vehicles, maintaining grid stability, solar rooftop, consumer electronics etc. With India's commitment towards renewable energy and achieving net-zero by 2070, energy storage is expected to play a crucial role in the overall energy ecosystem.

The government approved the PLI scheme 'National Programme on ACC Battery Storage' for achieving a manufacturing capacity of 50 Giga Watt Hour (GWh) of ACC to enhance manufacturing capabilities with a budgetary outlay of Rs 18,100 crore. Under the initiative, the emphasis of the government is to achieve greater domestic value addition, while at the same time ensuring that the levelised cost of battery manufacturing in India is globally competitive.

cants can submit their bids to set up domestic manufacturing facility for advanced chemistry cell, which will help them qualify for incentives under ACC PLI scheme.

ACCs are the new generation of advanced storage technologies that can store electric energy either as electrochemical or as chemical energy and convert it back to electric energy as and when required.

Rupee rises 12 paise to close at 81.96 against US dollar

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

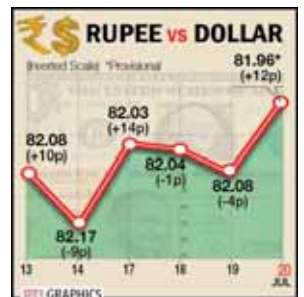
The rupee gained 12 paise to close at 81.96 (provisional) against the US dollar on Thursday, as domestic equity benchmarks scaling all-time high levels and weakness in the American currency overseas boosted investor sentiments.

Besides, steady foreign fund inflows into domestic capital

markets also supported the local unit, forex traders said.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 82.05 against the US dollar and settled 12 paise higher at 81.96 (provisional) against the previous close.

During the day, the domestic unit witnessed an intra-day high of 81.97 and a low of 82.05. On Wednesday, the rupee



had closed at 82.08 against the dollar.

The rupee traded with a slight positive bias on positive domestic markets and a soft dollar. The domestic equity market touched fresh all-time highs, boosting the domestic currency.

"We expect the rupee to trade with a slight negative bias on the underlying strength of the

dollar ahead of the FOMC meeting next week. Rising crude oil prices and weak Asian currencies may also weigh on rupee," said Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas.

However, the surge in domestic equities and steady foreign inflows may support rupee at lower levels. "Traders may take cues from weekly

unemployment claims and Philly Fed manufacturing PMI data from the US. We expect the USDINR spot to trade between 81.60 to 82.50 in the near term," Choudhary said.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, fell 0.10 per cent to 100.18.

Jindal Stainless acquires remaining 74% stake in JUSL for ₹958 crore

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Jindal Stainless on Thursday said it has acquired the remaining 74 per cent stake in Odisha-based Jindal United Steel Limited for Rs 958 crore. Jindal United Steel Limited (JUSL) has become a 100 per cent owned subsidiary of JSL, which held 26 per cent stake in it earlier, a company statement said.

"JSL has now acquired the remaining 74 per cent equity stake in JUSL for a cash consideration of Rs 958 crore. The transaction makes JUSL a 100 per cent owned subsidiary of JSL," JSL said.

JUSL has been operating the hot strip mill (HSM) of 1.6 million tonne per annum (MTPA) capacity and a cold rolling mill of 0.2 MTPA capacity. It is also undergoing capacity expansion of up to 3.2 MTPA at Jajpur, Odisha.

JSL Managing Director Abhyuday Jindal said, "Given the strong outlook on stainless steel and the association of JUSL and JSL, the board of directors of JSL decided to consolidate all the critical facilities of stainless steel manufacturing under one umbrella."

This acquisition would result in improved synergies between both companies and a preferred governance structure, thereby enhancing the value for all stakeholders, he said.

The board of directors and JSL shareholders had earlier approved the transaction. Jindal Stainless is the country's largest stainless steel making company with an annual melt capacity of 2.9 million tonnes (MT). It has two stainless steel manufacturing units located in Haryana and Odisha.

BUSINESS BRIEF



DELHI METRO COMMENCES PARKING FACILITY AT PALAM METRO STATION

NEW DELHI: In order to provide more convenience to its commuters, Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) today opened Parking facility at Palam Metro station on Magenta Line (Line- 8 i.e., Janakpuri West to Botanical Garden). This parking lot (near Gate No.1) can accommodate around 40 cars and 450 two wheelers (including Bicycles). This parking facility will be of great benefit to the local residents from the adjoining areas such as Palam Village, Mangla Puri, Raj Nagar, Sadh Nagar etc. who use Palam Metro station for their daily commute.

POWERGRID LIGHTENS UP REMOTE VILLAGES ON CHUSHUL VALLEY

NEW DELHI: In a significant development towards making electricity accessible in the remotest parts of the country, Power Grid Corporation of India, Limited (POWERGRID) on 17th July 2023 completed the Rural electrification network in Chushul Valley habitations touching to Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China in Durbuk block of Leh Ladakh. The network involves completion of overhead HT/LT network in four (04) border Village habitations of Chibra, Satoh, Kherapullu & Parma coming under Village :- Kargyam of Durbuk Block. POWERGRID executed this work as part of the consultancy work being assigned by Ladakh PDD under the centrally sponsored scheme of PMDP.

MEGA-TRENDS FOR COMMERCIAL VEHICLE INDUSTRY

GURUGRAM: The 2nd Edition of the CII Indian Commercial Vehicle Conclave took place on Thursday in Gurugram, where industry leaders gathered to shed light on the transformative mega trends shaping the Indian Commercial Vehicle (CV) sector. "To support the Government's vision of achieving Net Zero Green House Gas emissions by 2070, the industry is working diligently on various forms of alternate fuels, with Electric Vehicles (EVs) being one of them," said Girish Wagh, Executive Director of Tata Motors Ltd.

PTI ■ PANAJI

While huge amount of investment is occurring in the renewable energy sector, a large proportion of it goes to developing countries and the rest of the world get hardly any fund, Ajay Mathur, Director General of International Solar Alliance, said on Thursday.

Talking to PTI at the sidelines of an event during G20 fourth Energy Transitions Working Group meeting, Mathur said that the net zero emission target is possible.

Investment in renewable energy concentrated in developing countries: Expert

"We see a huge amount of investment occurring in renewable energy in general and solar in particular. In 2022, the investment in renewable area was approximately 500 billion dollars of which half was in the solar," he said.

Mathur said, "The problem is that the vast amount of this money went to the countries like China and large emerging devel-

oping countries while rest of the world, hardly got anything."

He said that the investment in Africa (African continent) for example was less than 5 per cent.

Mathur said that the investment is "extremely differentiated, it is not universal".

Speaking about the challenges faced by the solar energy sector, Mathur said the "large amount of solar occurring par-

ticularly as large solar farms and not as small solar across the world, where it effects common people".

He said that the challenge is that the solar energy goes in the small application sector as well.

Without naming any country, Mathur said that the problem is also that there is huge concentration of production capacity in one country.

Sebi allows MFs to introduce new categories under ESG scheme; issues disclosure framework

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Capital markets regulator Sebi on Thursday allowed mutual funds to introduce five new categories under ESG (environmental, social and governance) scheme and put in place a disclosure framework for them.

The five new categories are -- exclusions, integration, best-in-class and positive screening, impact investing and sustainable objectives.

Presently, mutual funds can launch only one ESG scheme under the thematic category of equity schemes.

The provision of a new category for ESG schemes will be applicable with immediate effect, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said in a circular.

The regulator said these measures will facilitate green financing with a thrust on enhanced disclosures and mitigation of greenwashing.

Sebi has mandated ESG schemes to invest at least 65 per cent of assets under management (AUM) in listed entities, where assurance on the BRSR (Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting) Core is undertaken.

The balance AUM of the scheme can be invested in companies having BRSR disclosures. This requirement will be applicable from October 1, 2024. With regards to disclosure requirements for ESG schemes, Sebi said mutual funds will have to clearly disclose the name of the ESG strategy in the name of the concerned ESG fund.

ICRA revises growth outlook for NBFCs; expects another strong performance in FY24

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

ICRA has revised upward the growth outlook for the current financial year for the retail loans of Non-Bank Financial Companies (NBFC-Retail) and Housing Finance Companies (HFC-Retail), which account for the bulk of the overall sector.

The NBFC-Retail asset under management (AUM), estimated at around Rs 14 lakh crore as of March 2023, is expected to grow at a higher pace of 18-20 per cent in FY24 vis-à-vis the previously estimated level of 12-14 per cent, as growth in the unsecured loans segment, consisting of personal & consumption loans, unsecured small enterprise loans and microfi-



nance loans, would remain strong, the rating agency said in a report.

At the same time the HFC-Retail AUM, it said, estimated at around Rs 7 lakh crore as of March 2023, consisting of home loans (HL) and loan against property (LAP), is expected to grow at a relatively moderate 12-14 per cent (albeit higher than the previous estimate of 11-13 per cent) during the same period

on the back of rising competition from banks.

With a growth expectation of 10-12 per cent in the infrastructure and other wholesale loans of NBFCs and HFCs, the total sector AUM, consisting of retail and other wholesale loans (including infrastructure loans), that stood at about Rs 40 lakh crore as of March 2023, is estimated to grow at about 13-15 per cent in FY24, it said.

The NBFC-Retail AUM grew by a robust pace of about 26 per cent in the last fiscal, on the back of an uptick witnessed in all loan segments but was primarily driven by the unsecured loans, which expanded by 44 per cent, it said. Unsecured loans increased at a CAGR of 27 per cent over

the five-year period ended FY2023, while secured loans grew at 11 per cent during the same period, it said, adding unsecured loans expected to remain the key growth driver in the current fiscal too.

The jump in unsecured credit can also be partly attributed to the borrower-focused approach of entities vis-à-vis their product-focused approach in the past, it said.

Evolution of credit bureaus and improved under-standing of borrower-level cash flows over the years have helped NBFCs fine-tune their underwriting models, it said, adding, the cross-sell of different loan products is being adopted to strengthen the hold on the franchise by improving borrower engagement.

New Zealand claim historic win in WC opener

AP ■ AUCKLAND

Hannah Wilkinson scored the only goal as co-hosts New Zealand recorded a historic 1-0 win over Norway in the opening game of the Women's World Cup on Thursday.

It was the country's first-ever victory at the tournament and came in front of more than 42,000 in Auckland, the biggest crowd in New Zealand football history.

It came at the end of a day which started when New Zealand's largest city was shaken in the morning by a shooting which left two people and the gunman dead, the incident happening in a downtown area close to where several World Cup teams, including Norway, were staying.

The host country's prime minister, Chris Hipkins, attended the match alongside FIFA president Gianni Infantino at Eden Park, where a moment's silence was held in memory of the victims.

The Football Ferns, who are co-hosting the first 32-team Women's World Cup with Australia, were not overawed by the occasion as they



went on to claim a deserved victory thanks to Wilkinson's early second-half goal.

"I still have goosebumps. We waited for this moment for such a long time," said New Zealand's Czech coach, Jitka Klimkova.

"Hearing our fans behind us was just an unforgettable moment, for me as a coach and for all the players involved. It is an incredible, incredible feeling."

New Zealand had not won any of their 15 previous matches across five previous appearances at the tournament and had set ending that dreadful record as their modest objective this time.

They duly did so against the former World Cup winners, to the delight of a near-sell-out crowd of 42,137 fans, a national record for any football match in the country, men's or women's.

Their margin of victory on a cold, wet and windy evening could even have been greater, had Ria Percival not missed a late penalty.

Qualifying for the knockout stages from Group A is now a realistic aim, with Switzerland and minnows the Philippines their other opponents.

Australia 'heartbroken' after Kerr injury blow

AP ■ SYDNEY

Co-hosts Australia dedicated their win over Ireland to "spiritual leader" Sam Kerr after she was ruled out of at least their first two Women's World Cup games with a calf injury on Thursday.

The Chelsea forward is the country's all-time leading scorer and the face of the tournament, but the skipper missed the Matildas' opening 1-0 victory in Sydney and is out of the clash with Nigeria next week.

"Unfortunately I sustained a calf injury yesterday in training," she said in a statement released close to kickoff. "I wanted to share this with everyone so there is no distraction from what we came here to achieve."

"Of course I would have loved to have been out there tonight, but I can't wait to be a part of this amazing journey which starts now," added the 29-year-old.



Arsenal defender Steph Catley took over as captain against Ireland and scored the only goal from the penalty spot.

"Heartbreak to be honest," she said of the Kerr news, calling the star striker their "spiritual leader".

"It is one of the most difficult things you can go through as a team, one day out from the biggest tournament in our lives, probably

the best player in the tournament going down.

"Other teams are probably frothing -- it is great for them."

"But we got a lot of relief from the way she reacted and we put ourselves out there tonight and made sure we got the win for her."

The team said their medical staff will "re-assess her following our second group-stage match".

Henderson set to join Gerrard in Saudi – Reports

AP ■ LIVERPOOL

Liverpool captain Jordan Henderson is set to join former teammate Steven Gerrard at Saudi club Al Ettifaq after a deal was struck between the clubs, The Athletic reported on Wednesday.

Henderson, 33, led the Reds to their first Premier League title for 30 years in 2020, a year after lifting the Champions League.

However, the England midfielder has been tempted to join Gerrard after reportedly being offered a deal worth up to £700,000-a-week (\$915,000).

Liverpool are set to receive a fee of £12 million (\$15.5 million).

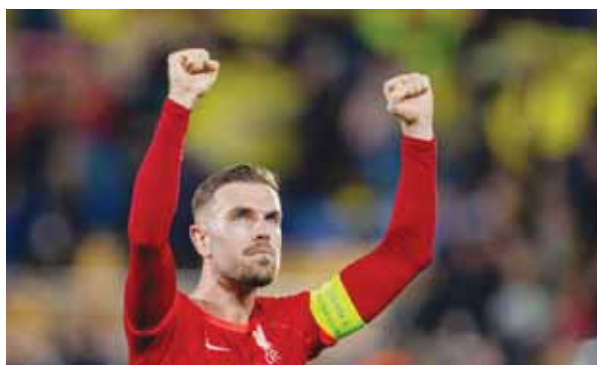
Gerrard was appointed manager of Al Ettifaq earlier this month. Henderson joined Liverpool from Sunderland in 2011 and succeeded Gerrard as skipper at Anfield in 2015.

He had been left out of Jurgen Klopp's squad for a friendly against Karlsruhe on Wednesday.

Liverpool are also set to lose Fabinho to the influx of investment by Saudi clubs with the Brazilian on the brink of a £40 million move to Al-Ittihad.

Klopp has also seen midfielders Naby Keita, Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain and James Milner depart on free transfers since the end of last season.

But Liverpool have reinforced that area of the field with the signings of Alexis Mac Allister and Dominik Szoboszlai.



Inter sign free agent Cuadrado to fan fury

AP N MILAN

Juan Cuadrado has signed for Inter Milan, the Serie A club announced on Wednesday as fans protested the arrival of the Colombia winger after being released by bitter rivals Juventus.

In a statement Inter said that the 35-year-old had signed a one-year deal with the San Siro club after eight years at Juve, where he won five league titles and reached the Champions League final in 2017.

"It's an honour to be here at one of the biggest teams in Europe," Cuadrado told Inter TV.

"I had many offers, but Italy is a second home for me. My family is very attached to this country, and there was the opportunity to stay here and play for a big team with a fantastic history."

"I chose Inter because we



all know what they represent on a global level.

"The important thing is for my family and I to feel good. We had the opportunity to remain in a place that, for us, is home. It's definitely the best choice."

Cuadrado has also played for Italian clubs Udinese, Lecce and Fiorentina. He made his move to Juventus permanent in 2017 after initially joining on loan from Chelsea.

Cuadrado, who has played 115 times for his country, will slot in as a deputy to Netherlands international Denzel Dumfries at right wing-back in Simone Inzaghi's side.

Prannoy loses in 2nd round of Korea Open

PTI ■ YEOSU

Indian badminton ace HS Prannoy made an early exit from the Korea Open Super 500 tournament as he lost his second round match to Lee Cheuk Yiu of Hong Kong here on Thursday.

World number 10 Prannoy, seeded fifth in the tournament, lost 15-21, 21-19, 18-21 to his opponent ranked eight places below him in a closely-contested match that lasted one hour and six minutes.

In another men's singles match, Priyanshu Rajawat gave a spirited fight against world number four and top-seeded Kodai Naraoka of Japan before losing 14-21, 21-18, 17-21 in a second-round match that went on for one hour 22 minutes.

The Indian women's doubles pair of Treasa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand was no match to the second seeded South Korean opponents Na Ha Baek and Hee So Lee as they lost 11-21, 4-21 in just 33 minutes in the second round.



The same was in case of the Indian mixed doubles pair of Rohan Kapoor and Sikki Reddy as they lost to fourth seeded Chinese pair of Zhe Yan Feng and Ping Dong Huang 15-21,

12-21 in 35 minutes.

Olympic medallist PV Sindhu and Kidambi Srikanth had lost their respective women's and men's singles opening round matches.

Protest against Asian Games trials exemption reaches IOA door

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Many junior wrestlers, their parents and coaches reached the IOA headquarters here on Thursday, demanding the withdrawal of exemption granted to Vinesh Phogat and Bajrang Punia from the Asian Games trials, a day after their protest in Haryana's Hisar.

Around 150 people, including family members of the wrestlers, are seeking a meeting with Indian Olympic Association (IOA) President P T Usha and ad-hoc panel chief Bhupender Singh Bajwa.

"All we want is a meeting with IOA top brass. We will not accept any biased decision. This is wrong. We are here to request the panel to withdraw exemption granted to Bajrang and Vinesh," Vikas Bhardhwaj, the coach of promising Antim Panghal, told PTI.

The reigning U-20 world champion Panghal and U-23 Asian champion Sujeet Kalkal had slammed the ad-hoc committee's decision as unjust and unfair and asserted that they are capable of beating Bajrang and Vinesh if they are pitted against them in the trials.



The duo were, however, not present at the IOA Bhawan.

The IOA ad-hoc panel, led by Bajwa, had on Tuesday

free style 65kg and women's 53kg weight class.

Panghal and Sujeet have also filed a petition at the Delhi High Court, demanding that a directive be issued to the IOA ad-hoc committee to quash the exemption granted to Bajrang and Vinesh.

In a tweet, World Championships and Commonwealth Games silver medallist Anshu Malik, who was part of the wrestlers' protest at Jantar Mantar in January, expressed her support for the junior grapplers.

Arsenal crush MLS All Stars

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Declan Rice made his Arsenal debut and Kai Havertz scored his first goal for the Gunners as Mikel Arteta's side hammered the Major League Soccer All Star team 5-0 in a friendly at Audi Field on Wednesday.

Rice became the most expensive British player in history when Arsenal signed the England midfielder from West Ham for a reported £105 million (\$137.5 million, 122.4 million euros).

The England international was introduced from the bench in the 65th minute to huge cheers from the overwhelmingly Arsenal supporting crowd.

German Havertz, who joined Arsenal from London rivals Chelsea last month, was brought on after half-time and grabbed the fifth goal in the 89th minute.

The Premier League runners-up, began their pre-season tour of the United States,



in style with Gabriel Jesus's brilliant chip in the fifth minute.

Saka had a hand in Arsenal's second goal, in the 23rd minute, bursting down the right and then picking out Leandro Trossard who created himself some space before firing home a superb strike.

Rooney made five changes at the interval but any hopes of a comeback ended quickly when one of those subs, St. Louis City defender Tim Parker, handled at close range an attempted cross from Jesus.

It was a harsh decision but Jorginho made no mistake from the spot to make it 3-0.

There was some concern for Arteta when Trossard limped off with an injury but the man who replaced him, Gabriel Martinelli, made an impact, scoring the fourth.

Havertz rounded off the win in the final minute, chesting down a Marquinhos cross and confidently drilling home.

Indian football team enters sub-100 FIFA ranking

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian men's football team on Thursday achieved sub-100 FIFA ranking for the first time since 2018 as it moved up one spot to 99th after its SAFF Championship triumph.

India had beaten strong teams Lebanon and Kuwait on penalty shoot-out in the semi-final and final respectively in the SAFF Championships in Bengaluru earlier this month.

Lebanon also gained two places to be just below India at 100th spot while Kuwait moved up four places to be at 137th in the latest FIFA chart issued on Thursday.

India now has 1208.69 points.

India's best FIFA ranking was 94th, attained in 1996. The country had also reached 99th spot in 1993 and 96th in 2017 and 2018. It was placed at 100th last month.

India go down to Germany 0-2

PTI ■ RUSSELSHEIM

Indian women's hockey team capped a disappointing outing, going down to Germany 0-2, for its third straight defeat of the tour here.

Nike Lorenz (52nd minute) and Charlotte Stapenhorst (54th) scored the two goals for the home side in the third and final match of the Indian team's tour of Germany, on Wednesday.

The Indian team had lost to China (2-3) and Germany (1-4) in its previous two outings here.

The three-match German tour was a part of the Indian team's preparations for the upcoming Hangzhou Asian Games.

In the final match of the tour, the Indian team was able to hold on to the Germans in a 0-0 stalemate until the third quarter.

But, intense action unfolded in the fourth quarter when Germany unleashed a lethal attack.



India had earned two penalty corners in the previous quarters, but they were unable to convert them.

Germany took the lead, striking from their third penalty corner through Lorenz, who had scored a double in Tuesday's first match against India.

Stapenhorst struck a fine field goal for the German to complete the tally.

Up next, the Indian women's hockey team will travel to Terassa for an international tournament to mark the 100th anniversary of the Spanish Hockey Federation.

Rohit and Jaiswal's fifties take India to 121/0 at lunch

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian opener Rohit Sharma and Yashasvi Jaiswal maintained their sublime form in the Caribbean to take their team to 121 for no loss at lunch on day one of the second Test against West Indies here on Thursday.

Young Jaiswal (52 batting off 56) and skipper Rohit (63 batting off 102), who both scored hundreds in India's dominant win in the opening Test, looked set for another epic partnership. The visitors scored at a run rate of 4.65 in 26 overs.

Jaiswal was dropped at first slip by Alick Athanaze off Jason Holder on the penultimate ball of the session.

The game also marks the 100th Test between the two teams and captains of both India and West Indies were handed a special memento by legend Brian Lara to commemorate the occasion before the start of the game.

The turning pitch in Dominica suited India really well and a more lively track was expected at Queen's Park Oval but the curator decided not to leave any grass on the surface.

The West Indies pacers



could not create enough chances after their captain Kraigg Brathwaite put the opposition in to bat with an intent to make use of the early morning moisture in the pitch.

The ball was doing a bit

Yashasvi Jaiswal provided a half chance in the sixth over but it was put down at gully. Rohit Sharma got the bulk of the strike in the first hour and he made full use of it

but both Kemar Roach and Alzarri Joseph struggled to consistently bowl in the fourth stump channel.

They chose to use the short ball against the Indian openers but the move backfired. Rohit first unleashed his

trademark pull off Roach for the first six of the game before Jaiswal pulled Joseph away for another maximum.

Jaiswal provided a half chance in the sixth over but it was put down at gully.

Rohit got the bulk of the strike in the first hour and he made full use of it.

The India skipper played a gorgeous cover drive off Shannon Gabriel before the pacer bowled one short and the seasoned batter was happy to pull it away for another boundary. India were placed comfortably at 57 for no loss after the first hour of play.

Rohit brought his half-century with a six off Roach in the 19th over. It was a pull shot again from the captain that went all the way.

Jaiswal at the other end was quick to slash anything wide and picked up the pace towards the end of the session. He brought his fifty with an on the up drive off Joseph.

Left-arm spinner Jomel Warrican bowled five overs in the session but did not get much assistance from the pitch.

India won the first Test by an innings and 141 runs. Jaiswal made 171 on debut.

Hardik, Gill could be rested for Ireland T20s

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's T20 captain Hardik Pandya could be given a break from the three-match series against Ireland starting August 18 as part of workload management in a busy year including the Asia Cup and the big-ticket ODI World Cup at home, BCCI sources said.

Even Shubman Gill, who is now an automatic pick across three formats, could be rested keeping the global event in mind.

The 29-year-old Pandya is one of the key members of India's ODI team and his all-round prowess adds necessary balance to the side and hence the team management and the national selection panel is expected to deal with him cautiously.

"Nothing is finalised yet and it will also depend on how Hardik is feeling after the one-dayers and T20s in the West Indies. There is travelling involved and only a short turnaround of three days before one flies from Florida to Dublin.

"With World Cup being of primary importance, one has to factor in his workload. Let's not forget he will be Rohit's deputy in the World Cup," a BCCI source told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

Pandya is expected to play a key role during India's white-ball leg of West Indies



tour where the team will play eight international games in 18 days in three Caribbean nations and the United States.

India play three ODIs and five T20s against the West Indies in Bridgetown (Barbados), Tarouba (Trinidad), Georgetown (Guyana) and Florida (United States) between July 27 to August 13.

In Ireland, India play three T20s in a space of five days (August 18, 20 and 23) and if Pandya flies from USA to Ireland and then to India before jetting off to Colombo for Asia Cup, the workload will be immense.

When the workload is measured, even training sessions are taken into account -- duration of batting or number of overs sent down while bowling.



Pakistan beat Sri Lanka by four wickets in 1st Test

AP ■ GALLE

Opening batsman Imam-ul-Haq hit an unbeaten 50 to steer Pakistan home in their tricky chase of 131 against Sri Lanka and win the first Test by four wickets on Thursday.

The tourists started the final day on 48-3 and lost three more wickets, including skipper Babar Azam for 24 off Prabath Jayasuriya, before they achieved the target in the first session.

Haq started the day on 25 and remained calm with Azam and then left-handed partner Saud Shakeel, who made a brisk 30 after his unbeaten 20 in Pakistan's first innings.

Left-arm spinner Jayasuriya took four wickets including two on the evening of day four to give the hosts a glimmer of hope, but Haq stood firm.

Azam came out roaring as he hit a boundary off the first ball of the day and looked fluent in his 28-ball stay before being trapped lbw by Jayasuriya.

Shakeel took on the bowlers as well but off-spinner Ramesh Mendis got him caught behind.

Haq reached his eighth Test fifty before Jayasuriya took another wicket and Agha Salman came out to hit the winning six.

Shakeel stood out for his maiden Test double century in Pakistan's 461 all out and a handy first-innings lead of 149 in the rain-hit match.

Pakistan spinners Noman Ali and Abrar Ahmed made it count with three wickets each on Wednesday to help bowl out Sri Lanka for 279 despite Dhananjaya de Silva's stubborn 82.

De Silva made 122 in Sri Lanka's first innings of 312 after the hosts elected to bat first but soon Pakistan took control.

Pakistan pace spearhead Shaheen Shah Afridi took a match haul of five wickets on

Azam lauds 'improved' Shakeel after Test win

AP ■ GALLE

Pakistan skipper Babar Azam said on Thursday his team's latest Test hero Saud Shakeel had stepped up his game and showcased new shots in his match-winning unbeaten 208 against Sri Lanka.

"Saud has improved a lot. He has been working hard after the New Zealand series," Azam said of the man of the match.

"He attended two camps in Lahore and Karachi. I spoke with him and he told me he had developed a few shots which he applied in this innings.

"As captain, I am very satisfied with his performance. When he came to bat we had lost four wickets and Saud and Salman built the partnership."

Azam added: "When your team-mate performs well and your team wins the match it gives a lot of confidence, especially in different conditions, and youngsters like Saud, Salman and Abrar Ahmed stepped up and performed."

Shakeel looked assured in his stroke-making in his marathon knock and then a cameo of 30 on the fifth day.

Dhananjaya de Silva stood out for Sri Lanka with his 122 in the first innings and then 82 in the second but the rest of the batting faltered.

Skipper Dimuth Karunaratne acknowledged their batting had flopped.

his return to Tests since a knee injury put him out of action a year ago at the same venue.

The second match of the two-Test series starts Monday in Colombo.

Team India's smooth transition is a tribute to domestic system: Dravid

PTI ■ PORT OF SPAIN

A robust domestic system that churns talent by the dozen with a process of putting them through the grind has helped Indian cricket deal with tough transition phases in a seamless manner, head coach Rahul Dravid said.

As the erstwhile head of National Cricket Academy and in charge of pathways cricket (India U-19 and India A), Dravid monitored a lot of current India players like Shubman Gill, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Ishan Kishan, Mohammed Siraj to name a few.

He himself as a player was a part of a very tough transition phase between 2008-12 when Sourav Ganguly, Anil Kumble, VVS Laxman and Sachin Tendulkar left the international scene one by one.

"It's a tribute to the domestic system," Dravid said. "It's a tribute to the environment around the team that a lot of young players are able to come in and perform straight-away," he added in the context of how Yashasvi Jaiswal, who came into the side in place of Cheteshwar Pujara, started with a brilliant 171 on debut.

"A lot of credit should go to the domestic system for producing these kind of players, especially in the batting department, and also the relaxed environment the team here has been able to create to



allow young players to come and express themselves.

"So it's nice from our perspective as a coach to see young players come in, perform straightaway and do really well, whether it's Yashasvi in the last game or the way Shubman has grown over the last six-eight months or seeing the way Ishan (Kishan) came in and kept in

the last game on a difficult wicket, he did a really good job.

"So there's been a lot of young players, we've seen even in one days and T20s, who've come through and done really well. So yeah, credit to our domestic system, NCA and a lot of other people who can make that possible for us," he added.

AP ■ MANCHESTER

Mitchell Starc struck an early blow before England's Zak Crawley and Moeen Ali denied Australia another breakthrough on the second day of the fourth Test at Old Trafford on Thursday.

England were 61-1 in reply to Australia's first-innings 317 at lunch, with Crawley 26 not out and Moeen unbeaten on 31.

In the process, Moeen became just the fourth England player after Ian Botham, Andrew Flintoff and current team-mate Stuart Broad to complete the Test 'double' of 3,000 runs and 200 wickets.

Both Crawley and Moeen gave England supporters numerous nervous moments as they repeatedly played and missed outside off stump attempting attacking shots against world Test champions Australia's pace attack.

Yet in a match England have to win if they are to stand a chance of regaining the Ashes at 2-1 down with two to play, they somehow survived.

Starc strikes before England's Moeen Ali completes all-round double

jagged off the pitch and took the outside edge to have the opener caught behind for just one.

Moeen had been in red-ball retirement until the start of this series but was recalled following Jack Leach's season-ending back injury.

And he was only batting at number three after Ollie Pope was ruled out from the remainder of the Ashes with a dislocated shoulder suffered in the second Test at Lord's.

No member of England's top order coveted the problem position, with Moeen seemingly acting as a 'human shield' for the middle-order shotmakers.

Two successive deliveries on Thursday summed up Moeen's recent batting form.

He luckily edged Australia captain Pat Cummins past gully for four to go to 3,000 Test runs but he left-handed batsman drove the fast bowler's next ball for an elegant boundary.



Crawley had made 20 when given out lbw to recalled all-rounder Cameron Green but the batsman's review indicated the ball would have missed leg stump.

Earlier, Chris Woakes

India A face B'desh A in Emerging Asia Cup semis

PTI ■ COLOMBO

After a dominant show in the league phase, India A will be favourites to seal a spot in the final of the Emerging Asia Cup when they face Bangladesh A in the semifinal here on Friday.

The most refreshing aspect about India's undefeated run so far in the tournament is that they have found multiple heroes in times of need.

India will be hoping for an encore of that all-round show against a tricky and competitive opponent in Bangladesh.

Pacer Harshit Rana (4/41) and captain Yash Dhull (108) were India's star performers against the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in their tournament opener that they won by eight wickets.

However, that role was taken over by left-arm spinner Nishant Sindhu (4/14) and openers B Sai Sudarshan (58) and Abhishek Sharma (87) against Nepal. India crushed Nepal by nine wickets.

Pacer Rajvardhan Hangargekar, who is the top wicket-taker in the tournament with eight wickets, too had chipped in with three scalps in that match.

In a keenly anticipated match, India cantered home against Pakistan by 8 wickets. In this match, Manav Suthar and Nikin Jose joined Sai Sudarshan and Hangargekar as their key players.



Hangargekar grabbed five wickets (5/42) and Sai Sudarshan (104) slammed a hundred to hog the headlines. But Nikin (53) and left-arm spinner Suthar (3/36) did the support cast job to perfection.

However, Bangladesh are no mere pushovers.

After a defeat against Sri Lanka in the tournament opener, Bangladesh showed presence of mind to beat Oman and Afghanistan to reach the last

four stage.

Tanzid Hasan and Mahmudul Hasan spearheaded their batting making 128 and 111 runs respectively, while pacer Tanzim Sakib led their bowling taking seven wickets.

Bangladesh will hope that the experienced Soumya Sarkar can make an impact against India.

India will also have an eye on the first semifinal in which Pakistan take on hosts Sri Lanka.

Broad became just the fifth bowler in Test history to take 600 wickets.

James Anderson had gone wicketless Wednesday on his Lancashire home ground

But with Thursday's first ball, delivered from the end named after him, England's all-time leading wicket-taker had Cummins caught for one by skipper Ben Stokes at cover-point.

Woakes, who starred with bat and ball in England's third-Test win at Headingley, was initially denied his fifth wicket by a no-ball after No 11 Josh Hazlewood edged to second slip.

There was no doubt, however, when Hazlewood, on four, edged high to Duckett at third slip to give the 34-year-old figures of 5-62 in 22.2 overs -- Woakes's fifth five-wicket haul in 47 Tests.

Starc was 36 not out, with Australia seeking a win that would give them their first Ashes series victory in England since 2001.

achieved by both Marnus Labuschagne and Mitchell Marsh.

Despite bowling with an older ball as first change, Woakes had led England's attack as veteran paceman