

**OPINION 6**  
WHY ACCOUNTABILITY IS SO IMPORTANT

**WORLD 8**  
IMRAN URGES JUDICIARY TO HALT VICTIMISATION OF PARTY MEMBERS

**MONEY 10**  
MARKETS SNAP RECORD-BREAKING RUN ON INFOSYS SHOCKER; DOWN 1%

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BUMRAH TO PLAY PRACTICE GAMES AT NCA 12 SPORT



## MORE HORROR TALES FROM MANIPUR SURFACE

Tribal groups, MLAs reveal many incidents of rape-murder



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ IMPHAL/NEW DELHI

After Manipur Chief Minister Biren Singh made a shocking admission on Thursday that many more cases similar to the parading of a naked woman on the streets of Phainom village in Kangpokpi District took place in the State, reports have surfaced about four more such cases of rape and murder that occurred back-to-back between May 3 and May 6.

The disclosure was made by a group of ten Kuki-Zomi MLAs, seven of them from the BJP, and later by two tribal groups to the National Commission for Women (NCW) on June 12 itself. These MLAs released a statement highlighting four other incidents where women belonging to the community have either been raped or murdered since May 3. Their statement comes in the wake of the recent cruelty to women who were paraded naked on May 4 in the Kangpokpi district of Manipur.

The statement also mentioned a few other incidents of

rape and murder in Manipur. "The murder of a Kuki-Zomi mother and her two daughters in their residence at Uripok, Imphal; the kidnapping of a Kuki-Zomi woman from Checkon and brutally raped twice in Langol and Ngarian Hill; the lynching of two nursing students in Porompat, left to die on the streets but miraculously survived; the merciless killing of a Kuki-Zomi mentally unsound woman in the heart of Imphal city are the most inhumane and barbaric crimes against women and humanity," the statement read.

MLA LM Khaute shared the statement on Twitter also highlighting the brutal case of the beheading of David Thiek, terming these as cases of "barbarism and crimes of utmost savagery."

The Kuki Zomi MLAs strongly condemned these acts of cruelty and savagery perpetrated by the Meitei militias against their fellow helpless, defenceless, and innocent Kuki-Zo people and demanded a CBJ probe in such cases.

Meanwhile, according to CNN-News18, two tribal organisations in Manipur claimed that they wrote to the NCW on June 12 about the horrific brutalisation of Kuki women, a video of which has now gone viral, but received no response. The North American Manipur Tribal Association (NAMTA) and Kuki academics based in India and the USA had sent a letter to the commission 37 days before the video of the Kuki women being paraded naked and gang-raped shook the country.

In their letter, they detailed what happened to the Kuki survivor, stating that on May 4, two women from B Phainom village of Kangpokpi District were disrobed, paraded naked, beaten, and then encircled by a marauding Meitei mob and raped in public. The State police commandos remained mere spectators to the lynchings and torching of homes. The victims are now housed at a Churachandpur district relief camp.

In a press statement, the NCW acknowledged receiving the complaint and said: "Another complaint was received from individuals outside Manipur out of which one was from outside India. In this regard, the D.O letter dated 19/06/2023 from Commission (NCW) was immediately sent to CS for taking necessary action."

*Continued on Page 2*

## PM must speak, says Opp; Govt retorts you don't want discussion



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A massive ruckus ensued in both the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha on the second day of the monsoon session on Friday as the Opposition parties demanded Prime Minister Narendra Modi's statement on the pressing issue surrounding Manipur. Amid the continuous protests and slogans raised by the opposition, both houses were adjourned till Monday.

The outrage was sparked by a disturbing video that went viral, showing two women from a tribal community in Manipur being paraded naked. The Opposition parties have been demanding a discussion on the issue and an elaborate statement from PM Modi.

In the Lok Sabha, members from the Congress, the DMK, and the Left raised slogans demanding the Prime Minister's response on the issue. The Government accused the Opposition parties

of not being "serious" in discussing the matter.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said the Government is ready for a discussion. "Manipur incident is definitely very serious and understanding the situation, the PM himself has said that what happened in Manipur has put the entire nation to shame. The PM has said that the strictest action will be taken over the incident," said Rajnath.

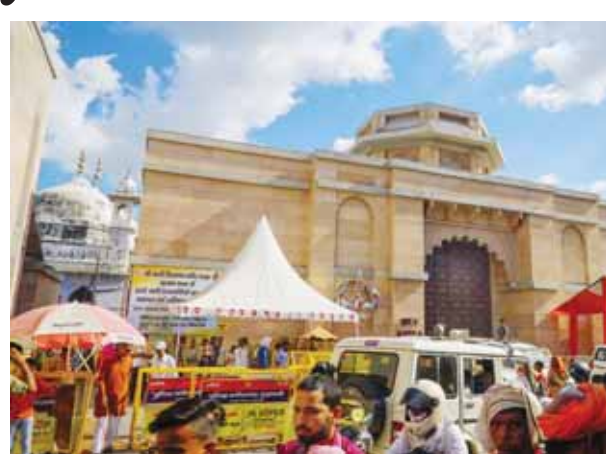
He added, "We do want a discussion in Parliament over Manipur. I had said this in the all-party meeting, and I reiterate this in Parliament that we want a discussion in the House over Manipur. But I see that there are a few political parties that unnecessarily want to create a situation here so that the discussion on Manipur can't take place. I am clearly leveling allegations that this Opposition is not serious over Manipur as they should have been..."

*Continued on Page 2*

## Gyanvapi masjid survey allowed

Varanasi court asks ASI to carry out excavations also if needed

PTI ■ VARANASI



A court here on Friday directed the Archaeological Survey of India to conduct a "detailed scientific survey" — including excavations, wherever necessary — to determine if the Gyanvapi mosque located next to the Kashi Vishwanath temple is built upon a temple.

The mosque's 'wazukhana', where a structure claimed by Hindu litigants to be a 'shivling' exists, will not be part of the survey — following an earlier Supreme Court order protecting that spot in the complex.

District judge AK Vishvesh directed the ASI to submit a report to the court by August 4, along with videos and photographs of survey proceedings.

"The Director of ASI is also directed to conduct a detailed scientific investigation by using GPR (Ground Penetrating Radar) survey, excavation, dating method and other modern techniques of the present structure to find out as to whether same has been constructed over a pre-existing structure of Hindu temple," the order said.

It specifically directed the use of GPR technology for survey "just below the three domes of the building in question", and to conduct an excavation there "if required".

Hindu activists, who claim that a temple existed earlier at the site and was demolished in

the 17th century on the orders of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb, hailed the court order.

A throng of people outside the court received the news with slogans of "Har Har Mahadev".

The court had on July 14 reserved its order after hearing both the Hindu and Muslim sides.

The petition filed by the Hindu group, seeking the right to regular worship of sculptures of Hindu deities on the mosque's outer wall, had sought court directions to the ASI to survey the complex.

Its counsel had said the situation will become clear after examining the three domes of the Gyanvapi complex, the western wall and the entire complex in a modern manner.

The mosque management's counsel Mohammed Tauhid Khan said it will challenge the Varanasi court's order.

"It is not acceptable and we will move to a higher court against it. This survey could cause damage to the mosque," he said.

Apart from the mosque's domes, the order mentions the need to survey beneath the western wall and beneath the cellars. The ASI should also conduct an exercise on the plinth and pillars to determine the age and nature of the building, the judge said.

The order asked the ASI to ensure that there is no damage to the "structure standing on the disputed land".

The Varanasi district court had on May 16 agreed to hear a plea for an ASI survey, following an Allahabad High Court order.

Earlier, the Supreme Court had ordered the protection of the area around the claimed "shivling", found when another court ordered a video survey of the complex.

The mosque management maintained that the structure is part of the water fountain mechanism at the 'wazukhana', the reservoir where devotees perform ablutions before offering namaz.

## Another accused house burnt down



People set ablaze the house of Manipur sexual assault case accused, in Tuinomkhopi in Manipur on Friday

All 4 accused remanded in 11-day police custody

PTI ■ IMPHAL

All the four accused, who were allegedly part of a mob that disrobed and paraded two women in Manipur on May 4, were remanded in 11-day police custody on Friday.

The arrests were made on Thursday, a day after the 26-second video surfaced. Meanwhile, the house of another suspect, who is yet to be arrested, was vandalised and torched by angry locals on Friday afternoon, police said.

According to police, the suspect's house was located at Wangjing in Thoubal district. "The suspect is yet to be arrested."

He fled home after coming to know that police were looking for him," an official said.

The house of the key accused was torched on Thursday, hours after he was arrested by police. According to police, he was seen prominently directing the mob at B Phainom village of Kangpokpi district in the video.

*Continued on Page 2*

## Didi urges Opposition CMs to visit Manipur

PNS ■ KOLKATA

TMC chief and Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has called upon the Chief Ministers of Opposition-ruled States to jointly take a delegation to Manipur to assess the ground situation there.

"I had a talk with Arvind (Kejriwal) and I will request other Chief Ministers too jointly visit Manipur," Mamata said, adding the date of such visit would be made public soon.

Accusing the BJP of blocking Central funds, Mamata's nephew and TMC general secretary Abhishek said that he would personally lead large



crowds of Trinamool supporters to gherao the national BJP leaders in Delhi.

"I will personally lead thousands of TMC supporters to Delhi on October 2, the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi ... in order to extract our money that they have stopped," the junior Banerjee said.



Water pumps in use to drain out the floodwaters from the Mahatma Gandhi memorial at the Raj Ghat in New Delhi on Friday

## Modi surname: SC to hear Rahul's plea on August 4

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday issued a notice on an appeal filed by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi against a Gujarat High Court order that refused to suspend his conviction and two-year jail term in a criminal defamation case. The court fixed August 4 as the date for hearing his plea to stay the guilty verdict.

"The whole point right now is whether the conviction has to be stayed or not," said a bench of justices BR Gavai and PK Mishra as it sought responses from BJP leader Purnesh Modi, who is the complainant in the case, and the Gujarat Government.

During the brief hearing, the court expressed surprise at the high court's lengthy judgment on the matter. Senior counsel Abhishek Manu Singhvi appeared for Gandhi,



and senior advocate Mahesh Jethmalani represented the complainant.

Justice Gavai, at the beginning of the hearing, disclosed his family's association with the Congress party but clarified that it would not affect his judgment in the case. Both lawyers confirmed that they had no issue with Justice Gavai hearing the matter.

Singhvi argued for an early hearing, pointing out that Gandhi has suffered as an MP and missed two Parliamentary sessions due to the conviction.

*Continued on Page 2*

## 'INDIA' to meet after Aug 15

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The next meeting of the Opposition alliance 'INDIA' is likely to be held next month, probably after August 15, in Mumbai. The alliance leaders have started coordinating for several committees, with campaign management, communication, and overseeing rallies being top on the agenda.

A senior leader from one of the alliance groups said that the Mumbai meeting, coordinated by Shiv Sena's Uddhav Thackeray and NCP's Sharad Pawar, will be crucial to finalise the nitty-gritty of the alliance and seat sharing. In the meeting, the 26-party pact, known as the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA), is expected to discuss seat-sharing, poll preparations, and campaign management among its partners.

Probable dates for the conclave were discussed during the Opposition parties' meeting on Parliament Strategy, held at the chamber of Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge on Friday.

During the meeting, Kharge expressed satisfaction with the unity observed within the members who participated in the Patna and Bengaluru meetings. The leaders decided to plan the meeting after August 15 in Mumbai, with representatives of Shiv Sena and NCP volunteering to host it.

Sources mentioned that AAP's representative proposed holding one of the Opposition meetings in Punjab as well.

Previously, the June Patna meeting was hosted by JD (U) leader and Bihar CM Nitish Kumar and his deputy Tejaswi Yadav, while the Bengaluru meeting was hosted by Karnataka Congress.

*Continued on Page 2*

## DGCA OK's Go First op with 114 daily flights

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has approved Go First's plan to restart operations with 15 aircraft and 114 daily flights, subject to certain conditions. The airline which stopped flying on May 3, is undergoing an insolvency resolution process.

DGCA said the airline's resumption plan for operating 15 aircraft and 114 daily flights has been reviewed and accepted. "The acceptance is subject to the outcome of the writ petitions/applications pending before the High Court of Delhi and the (National Company Law Tribunal) NCLT, Delhi," it said.

This comes after the airline's Resolution Professional Shaileendra Ajmera recently invited Expressions of Interest (EOIs) from potential bidders. "The sale of tickets shall be



commenced only after the approval of flight schedule by DGCA," it said.

The airline on Thursday informed on Twitter that due to operational reasons, all its flights have been cancelled at least until July 23, 2023. Go First may resume scheduled flight operations on the availability of interim funding and approval of flights scheduled by DGCA, it said. Further, the DGCA has directed Go First to ensure compliance with all the applicable regulatory requirements and the continued airworthiness of the aircraft engaged in operations.

*Continued on Page 2*

## Tihar produces Yasin in SC; apex court, CBI, SG shocked

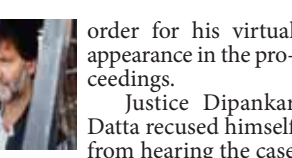
PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court, the Solicitor General, and the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) order for his virtual appearance in the proceedings.

Justice Dipankar Datta recused himself from hearing the case expressed shock on Friday over a serious security lapse by Tihar jail authorities and security agencies when convicted terrorist Yasin Malik was physically produced in the SC, instead of appearing through virtual mode.

Justices Surya Kant and Dipankar Datta expressed their surprise as there was no specific instruction for Malik's physical appearance.

Malik, a Kashmiri separatist leader, arrived in the apex court to defend himself in a case filed by the CBI related to the killing of Air Force officers and the kidnapping of Rubaiya Sayeed. He filed an appeal against a Jammu Court



involving Malik's physical production in a Jammu court to stand trial in kidnapping and murder cases.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta strongly objected to Malik's presence in the Supreme Court, pointing out that the procedure requires approval from the Registrar of the Court for such appearances. Mehta rebuked the jail officials present in court for allowing Malik to appear physically and informed the Bench that Section 268 of the Criminal Procedure Code, which empowers the Government to keep convicts of serious offenses in prison, applies to him.

*Continued on Page 2*



# FOOD DISTRIBUTION AT RELIEF CAMPS



Social worker distribute food to the flood-affected people in the makeshift relief camps in New Delhi on Friday



Ranjani Dimri Pioneer

## Yamuna above danger mark again

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The water level of the Yamuna in Delhi crossed the danger mark of 205.33 metres yet again on Friday, further delaying rehabilitation efforts in the flood-affected low-lying areas.

This has prompted instructions from the Delhi government to ensure the safety of residents of low-lying areas — many of whom had just returned home. Meanwhile, rainfall is predicted in the Capital over the coming week. The Central Water Commission's (CWC) data showed the water level reached 205.34 metres at 6 pm on Friday and may rise further to 205.45 metres by night.

There have been marginal fluctuations in the water level over the last two-three days amid rain in the upper catchment areas, primarily in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

The Delhi Government has directed officials to maintain vigil in vulnerable areas and make arrangements to shift people to safer locations after rise in the water level of



river Yamuna. The Yamuna had been receding gradually after reaching an all-time high of 208.66 metres on July 13. Following the forecast, the city government advised the officials to maintain vigil in their respective areas and take necessary action at vulnerable points. The officials have also been advised to warn people living close to river embankments and make arrangements to shift them to safer places. The water level dropped below the danger mark by 8 pm on Tuesday after flowing above the threshold for eight days. It receded to 205.22 metres at 5 am on Wednesday, before it started rising again and breached the danger mark.

## 'Floodwaters drained out, Rajghat restored'

New Delhi: Mahatma Gandhi's memorial at Rajghat has been freed of waterlogging, a week after waters from the Yamuna river inundated the complex. The river touched an all-time high level of 208.66m this month and flooded low-lying areas.

In a tweet, the L-G said, "Sincere and consistent efforts since July 15 by all stakeholder agencies have resulted in restoration of the Rajghat Samadhi area and its approach." "The stagnant flood water has been substantially drained out and restoration of pavements and landscaping is underway," he said.

"Used this opportunity to pay homage to the Father of the Nation this morning. Kudos to the officials & workmen who worked ceaselessly," Saxena added. Officials on Friday said, Delhi Lt Governor VK Saxena who was supervising the operation to drain flood water from the lawns and pathways of the memorial, visited Rajghat and took stock of the situation.



Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena paying tribute to Mahatma Gandhi after restoration of the Rajghat Samadhi area and its approach. The stagnant flood water has been substantially drained out and restoration of pavements and landscaping is underway

"Water from the main area of the memorial was completely pumped out and it was dried and cleaned now. Senior officers of the Delhi government, including the chief secretary, were constantly monitoring the work on the L-G's instructions," an official said. Last

## Power demand reaches 7,398 MW in Capital

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With no rain for the third day in a row, the hot and sultry weather in the national capital pushed the peak power demand in the city to 7,398 MW Friday afternoon — the highest this year so far. The State Load Dispatch Centre (SLDC) Delhi's real time data showed that the peak demand was 7,398 MW at around 3.10 pm. The peak power demand measures the power consumption in megawatt at any given time within 24 hours of a day.

The previous highest peak demand in this year was 7,226 MW on June 14. The highest even peak power demand of Delhi was recorded at 7,601 MW in June last year, officials said. Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Twitter said that despite the power demand peaking on Friday, there was 24-hour power supply in the city. "... No power cuts."

son. The demand was successfully managed by BSES discoms - BRPL and BYPL - in their respective distribution areas, said a company spokesperson.

Cooling load caused by extensive use of airconditioners, coolers and fans is the main reason behind Delhi's power load during the summers, they said. In fact, according to estimates, around 50 per cent of Delhi's power demand in summers is because of the cooling load, discom officials said.

A Tata Power Delhi Distribution Ltd (TPDDL) spokesperson said the peak demand was 2,163 MW in the discom's area that was met successfully, without any network constraint and power outage.

The peak power demand crossed the 7,000 MW mark for the first time this year on June 13. It has crossed the 7,000 MW-mark twice in July so far. In 2018, the peak power demand breached the 7,000 MW mark for the first time, reaching a peak of 7,016 MW, in Delhi.

The highest peak power demand in the previous years was 7323 MW in 2021, 6314 MW in 2020, 7409 in 2019 and 7016 MW in 2018.

## Service dept set to take action against 437 appointed by Govt

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government's Service Department is all set to initiate action against 437 private persons appointed as advisers, fellows and consultants by the Aam Aadmi Party government following the Supreme Court's ruling dismissing the plea of Delhi government seeking stay on the Service Department order to this effect.

Top sources said the Supreme Court has not struck down its July 5 order on removal of these fellow/assistants and consultants issued by the Services Department.

The top court has dismissed the plea seeking stay of this order. "Now, action is to be taken as per the letter dated July 05, 2023 immediately for

removal of Fellows / Associate Fellows / Consultants, etc., failing which Services Department would be required to proceed against the Head of the Departments as per the said letter", sources said.

Appearing for the Lieutenant Governor, counsel Harish Salve submitted that the consultants were terminated because their appointment was arbitrary.

Arguing on behalf of the Delhi government, counsel Abhishek Manu Singhvi argued that the Lieutenant Governor has terminated the contract of 437 consultants, working with various departments of the government of NCTD without any consultation with the elected government. Additionally, the letter issued by the Lieutenant Governor on 5 July 2023 ter-

minating the engagement of specialists/fellow/consultants is also sought to be stayed.

The controversy erupted after the Delhi government Services Department issued an order that 437 private persons appointed as advisers, fellows and consultants whom the Arvind Kejriwal government hired via "back door entry" are "void ab initio" (void from the beginning) and asked the departments concerned to stop their services.

The Lieutenant Governor secretary has alleged that the AAP-led government employed 437 individuals, most of whom were found to be party workers, to run a "parallel civil service" while flouting "constitutional norms of reservation", "manipulating the selection process" and "rigging the selection criterion".

## Saxena OK's Delhi Private Security draft rules 2023

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena has approved the long pending draft "Delhi Private Security Agencies (Regulation) Rules, 2023 aimed at regulating the functioning of the private security agencies in the national Capital.

The draft rules were framed by the Home Department, Delhi government on the lines of model rules notified by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India (Vide Notification dated 15.12.2020) and in consultation with the Law Department, Delhi government, under Private Security Agencies (Regulation) Act, 2005. The rules, among other things, provide for the procedure for verification of char-

acter and antecedents of the private security guards and supervisors, the type of training prescribed for the personnel, physical standards and other conditions.

Further, the rules make it clear that all the training agencies shall submit the details of security guards/supervisors, trained batch-wise to the controlling authority within 30 days of completion of each batch along with copy of their training certificates in online/offline mode. The rules also deal with the number of supervisors to be employed and the form in which a photo identity card has to be issued.

The Home Department sought approval of the Lieutenant Governor in the light of 'Enforcement of Private Security Agencies (Regulation) Act, 2005 and FDI policy'

issued by the Union Home Ministry which states that "Public Order and Police" are state subjects and 'Internal Security' is the responsibility of the Central Government.

The matter was examined by the LG's Secretariat in terms of judgment dated 25.04.2014 of the Supreme Court, as per which, the Private Security Agency Act is a law made under entry 97 of the Union List. Therefore, it is outside the legislative competence of Delhi Assembly.

The draft rules are proposed to be notified in exercise of powers conferred under section 25 read with clause (1) and (2) of the Private Security Agencies (Regulation) Act, 2005 which provides power of state government to make rules for carrying out the provision of the Act.

## Month-long survey to verify voter list starts

New Delhi: Over 13,649 Booth Level Officers will conduct door-to-door surveys from July 21 to August 21 in the national Capital to enlist voters and remove errors from the electoral list ahead of the general elections next year.

The BLOs will verify all entries in the Voter Lists and sought their cooperation in creating mass awareness amongst citizens about need to provide correct information to visiting BLOs regarding unenrolled eligible citizens, prospective voters (who will be 18 years old on or before 01.10.2024) as well as dead and permanently shifted electors to make electoral rolls pure, healthy, and inclusive in all aspects. Chief Electoral Officer of Delhi, Dr. Ranbir Singh held a meeting with all Recognised Political Parties. Representatives

from Indian National Congress (INC), Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP), National People's Party (NPP) and Communist Party of India (CPI(M)) attended the meeting.

In the meeting, Singh shared with them schedule and details of ensuing Special Summary Revision (SSR) of Electoral Rolls (with reference to 01.01.2024 as qualifying date) and month long door to door Survey by BLO from July 21, to August 21. Singh briefed the political parties about roles and responsibilities of their Booth Level Agents (BLAs) who are appointed by them for each polling station to coordinate with concerned BLOs for inclusion of left-out eligible citizens and deletion of dead or permanently shifted electors. SR

## MCD ready to combat dengue: Shelly

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Amid the threat of a "significant increase" in the number of cases of vector-borne diseases in the wake of recent flooding due to Yamuna waters, Delhi Mayor Shelly Oberoi on Friday said the civic body was all prepared to combat any such situation. Oberoi said AAP MLAs and councillors will go door-to-door to educate people about dengue prevention.

At a press conference, she also said that people should cooperate with dengue breeding checking (DBC) staff when they visited households and warned of penal action in case breeding of larvae is found during the inspection of sites. "The PHED (public health and engineering department) and the MCD (Municipal Corporation of Delhi) all prepared to combat vector-borne



diseases. Municipal councillors, MLAs and RWAs all stakeholders will work together in this, and I appeal to people to cooperate with our DBC staff as well," she said.

The mayor said, "We don't want to, but challan will be done if violations are found during the inspection of households, construction sites and other places." A review meeting was held by the mayor on Friday on the dengue situation, and it was attended by Municipal Commissioner Gyanesh Bharti and heads of various departments.

government's failure in dealing with the challenges posed by monsoons and floods and urges immediate action to address the rising cases of diseases.

Over 160 dengue cases have been reported in the national capital till mid-July this year, the highest for this period since 2018, according to a municipal report released this week. The report issued by the MCD also said that 54 cases of malaria have been recorded in the same period.

There is a possibility of a rise in dengue and malaria cases in the national capital this year due to flooding in several areas, Oberoi had said on Monday. Directions have been issued to departments concerned to take steps to check mosquito breeding and clear silt and sludge left by the Yamuna waters, she said.

## DJB officers selling water tankers, alleges Sachdeva

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi BJP on Friday claimed Delhi was reeling under a water crisis and the ruling AAP regime was callous towards the needs of the citizens who were also facing the danger of waterborne diseases like typhoid and cholera.

Levelling these charges here, Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva also claimed Delhi Jal Board junior engineers were selling water tankers. He said Delhiites are facing a major water crisis despite restoration of flood hit water treatment plants and Yamuna overflowing.

Areas like Majnu Ka Tila, Burari, Walled City, Karol Bagh, Patel Nagar assembly to Vikaspuri assembly, Kalka ji, Greater Kailash assemblies to Mehrauli Chatarpur assemblies and Bijwasan assembly to Najafgarh assembly are getting sparse or no water.

The water supply situation is very bad in major cluster areas around Naraina, Kirti Nagar, Dwarka, R.K. Puram, Vasant Vihar, Matia Khan, Idgah, Azadpur, Jahangirpuri, Narela where even water tankers supply has been stopped, Sachdeva said.



Villages around Mahipalpur to Najafgarh which are at tail end of supply line are getting almost no water supply even after restoration of water treatment plants, he added.

Sachdeva also said situation is so bad that in Water Minister Saurabh Bhardwaj's Greater Kailash constituency there is colony called Sant Nagar where over 250 houses with over 900 families living therein have been getting erratic and dirty water supply for over a month and now the situation has taken a further tide.



'Showcasing Tripura at Varanasi' conducted successfully

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Tripura is a unique semi-hilly state in the North East region of India, surrounded on three sides by international borders and home to a diverse mix of tribal cultures, natural resources, and religious groups.



Inaugural function of showcasing Tripura being held at Varanasi on Friday.

Farmers Welfare and Power, Government of Tripura, reiterated the state government's commitment to promote local produce, artisans and the land as such.

The North East region was the rich heritage that the city portrays, its recognition as a promoter of a vibrant handloom and handicraft industry and naturally being an important cultural centre and an emerging commercial hub in the region.

15,09,303 saplings to be planted

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Preparations are going on in full swing for making the ambitious plantation campaign of the state government a grand success in the state.



UPPCL Chairman M Devraj reviewing the progress of plantation drive in Varanasi on Thursday.

gave details about the progress, including pit digging, availability of plants in the government nursery, plant transportation, Plantation Monitoring System (PMS), progress of Network Management System (NMS) portal, preparation of special forest, public participation, public awareness programme, medium of publicity etc.

District Magistrate S Rajalingam, giving details to the nodal officer, said 100 per cent progress of digging pits for plantation has been made for the first phase drive while dividing all areas into sectors and zones.

officers concerned that all departments should complete 100 per cent tree plantation work as per the target by paying special attention to security, necessary arrangements and proper monitoring work.

1,100 open LT line wires of transformers replaced

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

In order to improve the power supply condition in the entire region and check the power theft cases, Purvanchal Vidut Vitran Nigam Limited (PUVVNL) has been replacing open/ dilapidated low tension (LT) lines with aerial bunched (AB) cables under the Revamped Scheme.

Friday informing that the work of replacing 1,100 open LT line wires of transformers with AB cables has been completed so far.

The replacement of these LT lines with AB cables will ensure quality power supply to about 1,99,823 houses. Besides, work is in progress to replace LT lines of 5,373 transformers.

Air Force Day parade to be held in Prayagraj

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The Indian Air Force (IAF) will be celebrating its 91st anniversary on October 8. Keeping with the new tradition of hosting the Air Force Day celebrations in different parts of the country, this year's Air Force Day parade and air display will be held in Prayagraj.

Three railway stations of Pratapgarh to be renamed after famous deities

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Three railway stations of Pratapgarh will be renamed after famous deities associated with these stations. Pratapgarh Junction will now be Belha Devi Dham, Antu station will be Maa Chandrika Devi Dham and Vishwanathganj station will be Shanidev Dham Vishwanath.

Ministry to change the names of Pratapgarh Junction and Antu and Vishwanathganj railway stations on the basis of religious importance of these stations. The MP had contended that since religious faith is also attached to these places, their sentiments should be considered while renaming these stations.

the Indian Army through murals depicting famous battles along with military weapons, tanks among others, to inspire the youth of the city. The stretch lies opposite to Commissioner residence, right from Mazar crossing, passing besides NCC headquarters and Gandhi Bhavan, Law and Commerce faculty of Allahabad University.

on one side of the stretch of this road," said SK Sinha, Mission manager, Smart City Limited. He added the murals of Army warriors with their weapons mounted over a structure will be created, showing the warriors fighting the war. It may also depict the wars which happened years ago.

Polymer dosing plant inspected

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Commissioner of Police (CP) Ashok Mutha Jain, along with District Magistrate (DM) S Rajalingam, on Friday inspected the Polymer Dosing Plant, a water purification plant of the Jalkal department here on Friday.

the spot. During this, the CP and district magistrate also inspected the 132/33 KV GIS transmission power sub-station Alaipur. Many other senior officers were also present.

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The scenic surroundings will add to the appeal of the stream of aircraft flying by in close formation.

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PAPER WITH PASSION

## The Manipur blot

The incident proves the destructive potential of fake news and the Govt's failure to safeguard its citizens

Manipur, which has seen unprecedented violence in the last two months, has shocked the nation again. The news of shaming two women is discomfiting as it exposes the government's failure to restore peace and normalcy in the state. The northeastern state witnessed a horrific incident that shook the nation's conscience when two women were paraded naked in public following the spread of a malicious fake news story. This deplorable act reflects the grave consequences of misinformation and the inability of the government to protect its citizens. The incident highlights the urgent need for both media literacy and government accountability in addressing the growing menace of fake news in our society. The incident, though it took place two months back, came to light recently as the internet was suspended. A false rumour began circulating on social media platforms and messaging apps in Manipur, claiming that the two Kuki women were involved in the kidnapping of a Meitei child. The unverified news quickly gained traction, fuelled by the lack of fact-checking and the absence of responsible journalism in the region. As the rumour spread like wildfire, an enraged mob took matters into their own hands, setting off a chain of events that would forever scar the women's lives. On May 3, a frenzied mob confronted the two Kuki women and subjected them to an unimaginable ordeal. Driven by anger and misinformation, the mob stripped the women of their dignity by parading them naked through crowded streets. The incident was not only a grave violation of their human rights but also a stark reminder of the devastating consequences of fake news in an already sensitive and vulnerable region.

The incident also shed light on the government's failure to protect its citizens. Despite the growing menace of misinformation, there was a clear lack of proactive measures taken by the government to combat the spread of fake news in the state. The absence of regulatory frameworks to curb the dissemination of false information has left the population susceptible to manipulation and violence. Furthermore, the failure of law enforcement agencies to intervene promptly and control the mob highlights a deep-rooted issue of inadequacy in ensuring the safety and security of citizens. The lack of immediate action allowed the situation to escalate rapidly, leading to the horrifying public humiliation of the two women. In the aftermath of the Manipur incident, civil society, human rights activists and citizens demanded urgent action from both the government and social media platforms. The government must take tangible steps to strengthen law enforcement and improve emergency response mechanisms to prevent such incidents from occurring in the future. Holding those responsible for the heinous act accountable through a fair and transparent legal process is essential to ensure justice for the victims.

### PICTALK



A man helps a visually-impaired man wade through a waterlogged road amid monsoon rains, in Mumbai

## Why accountability is so important

Let us face up to the reality of the losses on our borders and take some firm action rather than spend time concealing facts from the domestic audience



DEEPAK SINHA

It is a matter of immense national pride for all of us to have witnessed the successful launch of Chandrayaan-3 on its epic journey and landing on the moon's South Pole. Though well begun is only half done, one is hopeful that the team of dedicated scientists, engineers and technicians behind this project are rewarded for their wholehearted dedication and untiring efforts towards this mission with complete success.

The very fact that ISRO has achieved so much, with a minuscule budget of around Rs 650 Crores to boot, speaks volumes for its focus. Some movies cost more to make! It is therefore extremely puzzling as to why our engineers dealing with more mundane issues of town and infrastructure planning have made such a hash of things all around the country, as the monsoon plays out.

Of course, unexpected extreme weather may have been responsible for some of the havoc, but why was this not foreseen and catered for? After all a veritable army is employed, and paid for by taxpayers' money, for just this very thing! We have also had an array of civil servants and politicians, including the Prime Minister, travelling the world and attending a host of conferences and symposiums on mitigating the impact of climate change, on taxpayers' money of course. These have been nothing more than holiday jaunts for the participants.

Accountability, or to be more specific, the lack of it, is the issue here in Delhi. The unseemly fight between the elected government and a puppet Lieutenant Governor, beholden to the Central Government in more ways than one, has allowed the bureaucracy to do as it pleases and get away with daylight murder. Fortunately, nobody has yet suggested we turn Delhi into another ersatz Venice, in the way MS Mamata Banerjee has attempted to make Kolkata into another imitation of London.

Somehow non-accountability seems embedded in our DNA. Whichever facet of governance one turns one attention to suffers from this cancer. Take Manipur,



where by all accounts, an intense civil war rages on, with cases of rape and murder being documented almost daily, with no end in sight. Instead, as was to be expected, the Naga community now finds itself being slowly dragged into the quagmire with one of their community recently murdered.

Despite the universal condemnation, whether the Prime Minister speaks up publicly is unimportant. Though, he has now been forced to break his months-old vow of silence following the horrific and shameful video of Meitei crowds parading two naked Kuki women on mainstream media. More importantly, why has his government not substantially intervened as yet? In such circumstances what can one expect from complicit local politicians and bureaucrats who are a part of the problem and not the solution?

But this is not an issue restricted to the political establishment or those in government. Mainstream media could not be bothered till now and paid only lip service to the issue. Those from civil society who never lose an opportunity to focus the spotlight on human rights and alleged violations by the security forces



SOMEHOW NON-ACCOUNTABILITY SEEMS EMBEDDED IN OUR DNA. WHICHEVER FACET OF GOVERNANCE ONE TURNS ONE ATTENTION TO SUFFERS FROM THIS CANCER

have not uttered even a squeak. That certainly is a pointer to the disturbing fact that those who covertly financially incentivise their initiatives have felt it necessary that Manipur should burn. This is not just local politics playing out, but something far more reprehensible and sinister.

In the same vein the BJP much touted nationalistic agenda and supposedly "muscular foreign policy" has turned out to be a damp squib, as it has cut no ice with China. The External Affairs Minister needs to clarify if we have any realistic hope of recovering the estimated 3000 square km of territory, that some analysts have alleged, we claim but can no longer patrol, in Eastern Ladakh.

In this context, the wishy-washy excuse of differing perceptions about the alignment of the LAC or whataboutism with regard to the loss of much of the Aksai Chin in the 1950s cuts no ice. As Mr Shyam Saran, former Foreign Secretary, points out by doing so, our side has implicitly conceded to Chinese perceptions and double-speak. The fact is, if we are unwilling to categorically and publicly state our position on the alignment of the LAC, why would the

Chinese clarify their position? They see "salami slicing" actions as legitimate. We, of course, refuse to face up to the reality of the losses and spend more time concealing facts from the domestic audience rather than taking any firm action. Whinging, it seems is the default mode of all our governments.

Without accountability, we're going nowhere and it needs to start with this government holding those responsible for the Ladakh fiasco accountable. Is it worried that by doing so they would have to concede the Prime Minister had deliberately mis-spoken when he famously gave the Chinese a clean chit? Holding to account members of the security and intelligence establishment should not in any way be linked to politics. It was indeed an unhealthy trend set by Mr Vajpayee's government following the Kargil Conflict that needs to be reversed, and quickly, lest we find ourselves even more deeply embarrassed in the future.

(The writer is a military veteran, currently a Visiting Fellow with the Observer Research Foundation and Senior Visiting Fellow with the Peninsula Foundation, Chennai)

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### PM BREAKS SILENCE

Sir — Having three months of violence, deaths and displacement the PM broke his long silence after a video depicting the heinous acts perpetrated on the two women. He is yet to comment on the crisis as a whole has cost Manipur and India greatly. A word of condemnation from the PM and a strict warning against mischief earlier-Manipur has been burning since May -could have made a difference on the ground. It would have also spared India the blushes on the global stage. The European Parliament's censure is a recent example.

Mr Modi's party is in power both at the Centre and the state. The truth is that be it Manipur's prolonged suffering in recent times or the pain inflicted by the pandemic or, even earlier, by demonetisation, Mr Modi's regime has fallen short, quite often, of alleviating the misery of the people.

K Mazhar | Hyderabad

#### OPPOSITION MEETING

Sir — The two-day meeting of oppositions in Bengaluru is over with a coordination committee set to be formed at the next meeting in Mumbai and named the party INDIA. Meanwhile, BJP also addressed NDA in Delhi including 38 parties. The NDA's parallel show of strength made it obvious that the BJP is not taking the Opposition lightly. The all-important question is: do these parties have the firepower and cohesion to stop the BJP's juggernaut in 2024? The 26 parties account for around 150 seats in the Lok Sabha, less than half the NDA's current strength. The Congress, which is in power in Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh continues to be the premier Opposition party. Much will depend on whether the Congress and its INDIA partners such as AAP and the Trinamool Congress can rise above their differences. Going by the split in the Shiv Sena and the NCP, the BJP will stop at nothing to cripple the Opposition camp.

MT.Farooqi | Hyderabad

#### Guard against monsoon fury



The current Monsoon season has claimed at least 60 persons in various rain-related incidents in Maharashtra, including 16 in the Raigad hillside tragedy, even as the coastal Konkan region will get more rainfall this week, the State Disaster Management Department said. The maximum number of fatalities have been reported from Raigad (16, and counting), Mumbai (12), Jalgaon (8), Buldhana (4), Washim, Yavatmal, Chandrapur

(3 each), Beed, Thane, Bhandara (2 each), and one each in Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg, Sangli, Solapur, Nandurbar, Ahmednagar, Wardha, Amravati, and Gadchiroli. Given the wet conditions expected ahead, the SDRF has been deployed in Nanded and Gadchiroli, and the NDRF are stationed in Palghar, Thane, Raigad, Ratnagiri, Kolhapur and Sangli in full readiness. Major rivers like Jagbudi and Vashishth (Ratnagiri), Kundalika, Savitri and Patalganga (Raigad) have shot above the danger levels owing to the heavy rains. As per the report the coastal Konkan regions were clobered with heavy rains on Thursday - Raigad (198.0 mm), Thane (145.7 mm), Palghar (134.3 mm), Ratnagiri (129.2 mm), and Mumbai (99.0 mm). With this, the rain in coming days is going to play havoc in Maharashtra so be alert.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

Home Minister produced no substantial results. Not only are doubts being raised about the participation of the state government there but all information is being withheld owing to factors such as an internet ban. Members of the fact-finding team were also charged with crimes by the police.

When the Monsoon Session of Parliament opened, it was expected that at least a significant debate would occur in the House, showing the common concern and direction of the government's efforts. However, on the first day, as the opposition raised a fuss demanding the Prime Minister's statement, the ruling party shrugged, claiming that the opposition had decided not to allow the Parliament to function. This is quite unfortunate. In such serious matters, both the opposition and the government should rise above their stubbornness and ensure better use of Parliament.

Abhijit Roy | Jamshedpur

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

## Unending mysteries of neurological disorders

On World Brain Day, let us take resolve to understand and root out neurological disorders which are multiplying rapidly

World Brain Day is celebrated annually on July 22 to raise awareness about brain health. It was proposed by the World Federation of Neurology, established on this day in 1957, to commemorate their inception, and shine a global spotlight on neurological conditions. Awareness programmes are conducted globally on World Brain Day to help people understand the connection between brain diseases and neurological diseases. Simultaneously, World Brain Day stresses the importance of early detection and timely treatment of neurological disorders. The human brain is the control centre of the body. It works alongside the nervous system, which comprises the spinal cord, nerves, and neurons. This intricate system governs various aspects, such as your senses and muscle control. Damage to the brain can have extensive consequences.



affects the entire nervous system—the brain, spinal cord and nerves. These diseases arise from injuries or abnormalities in the nervous system.

However, genetic disorders and unhealthy lifestyle choices may also trigger neurological diseases in humans. The Pan American Health Organization and WHO jointly reported that rising neurological disease-related disabilities and deaths present a global public health challenge.

The report further highlights that neurological conditions were responsible for approximately 533,172 deaths throughout the entire region in the year 2019. Furthermore, AIMS reveals a shocking statistic indicating one stroke-related death every

four minutes in India. Likewise, the International Association of Cancer Registries (IARC) reports over 28,000 brain tumour cases annually in the country, resulting in 24,000 deaths per year. It is noteworthy that stroke, headache disorders, and epilepsy are the primary causes of the neurological disorder burden in India.

**Symptoms and Risk Factors** Neurological diseases generally start with symptoms such as memory loss, loss of balance, weakness in limbs, vision problems Dizziness or vertigo, Numbness Slurred speech hearing problems convulsions/seizures. It is important to recognise these symptoms for early diagnosis and treatment of neurological disorders.

**Risk Factors** ●Neurological disorders can impact individuals across all age groups, but certain conditions like Parkinson's Disease primarily afflict the elderly population.

●Inborn genetic problems and immune disorders can cause neurological diseases in children.

●Vascular disorders, medication side-effects, hor-



RAVINDRA SRIVASTAVA

monal disorders (thyroid, diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, family history of degenerative neurological conditions, lack of Vitamin B12, and prolonged exposure to toxins may also cause neurological disorders.

**The importance of treatment** Untreated neurological diseases can cause life-threatening conditions such as brain tumours, cerebral palsy, meningitis, multiple sclerosis, stroke, and dementia. Timely diagnosis and treatment are, therefore, crucial for managing and improving patients' quality of life.

**Govt's Intervention** The Indian Government has implemented several welfare initiatives like Ayushman Bharat—Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna to address various health conditions, including neurological disorders. Sincere and targeted efforts are essential for the effective implementation of these initiatives, which have the potential to bring about significant positive change on a large scale.

(The writer is Director Neurosurgery, Primus Hospital

## FIRST COLUMN

## BUILDING HEALTHY INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Interpersonal skills are important because they enable individuals to communicate



SAKSHI SETHI

In the words of Beatrice Vincent "The people with whom you work reflect your own attitude. If you are suspicious, unfriendly and condescending, you will find these unlovely traits echoed everything about you. But if you are on your best behaviour, you will bring out the best in the persons with whom you are going to spend most of your working hours."

Interpersonal skills, the most common word often talked about nowadays, is a specific type of social skill. It's how an individual speaks, listens and acknowledges others and acts accordingly. Interpersonal competencies help an individual interact, communicate and collaborate with others effectively. As part of an individual's development as a human being, we need to communicate with others at some point in time. Throughout each stage of an individual's life, an individual is faced with different and new circumstances in which they meet people and connect with them so that they can grow and develop an understanding and outlook on life.

Interpersonal skills are traits one can rely on when one interacts and communicates with others.

Practising good interpersonal skills help an individual to communicate more effectively with friends and family. Be it workplace or home, individuals at every stage are required to communicate and interact with a wide range of people - be it from suppliers or customers to immediate colleagues, teams, managers or any other co-worker. The individual's ability to do so effectively can make the difference between a successful working life, and one spent wondering what went wrong. There are several obvious jobs and careers such as financial advisors and brokerage, Computer programmers and developers, and Healthcare provision including doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals where interpersonal skills are vitally important. Being able to listen to; what one is saying and what they are not articulating' enables a person to provide recommendations that match their competencies. Often at times, people are not truly paying attention to a conversation by planning their next point or sentence. Practicing the art of Active listening which is a means to be fully concentrated on



what is being said is one of the most fundamental components of communication. Also, it improves performance, and effectiveness, and helps others achieve their full potential. Along with that attending workshops or online classes, seeking opportunities to build relationships, being thoughtful about ways of interactions, seeking mentorship and setting goals for oneself can provide structure thereby making the learning efficient.

Interpersonal skills are not only valuable for a leader, but they are such values that one uses in everyday life. Discovering, practising and mastering these skills will lead to the production of better teams. Interpersonal skills are important to live a happy and successful life. In every footstep of a person's life, the interpersonal skills of an individual are tested and observed, and those who have excellent interpersonal skills are always successful in both professional and personal living. The best step to form good and healthy interpersonal relationships is in the early years since the support and efforts received at that age will affect the ability to socialise and communicate for the rest of life. Remember, interpersonal skills are important because they enable individuals to communicate effectively and build positive relationships with others. When an individual improves their communication, empathy and relationship-building skills, they can enhance their emotional intelligence, increase self-awareness, and develop a better understanding of themselves and others. Be it emotional support or material support, every person must feel that they are being reciprocated. By being assertive, one can express themselves clearly, logically and with common sense. It is henceforth worth spending time developing good interpersonal skills.

(The writer is an educator)

## Dharavi: A human-centric transformation



GAUTAM ADANI

On his bucket list, former world heavyweight boxing champion Mike Tyson listed two places in India that he wished to visit: the Taj Mahal and & Dharavi



My first tryst with Dharavi was in the late 1970s. New to Mumbai, I was just another anonymous youngster lured to the big city by opportunity and my optimism that I would sparkle in the diamond trade. Even back then, Dharavi was a melting pot of a diverse array of beliefs, cultures and languages from every part of India. I was mesmerised by the industrious chaos that I saw in Dharavi's alleys, where just about every Indian language seemed to echo with equal urgency. But there was order in that chaos, seemingly provided by the soul of Dharavi. I could never define it but felt it very strongly.

That visit to Dharavi was both humbling and disturbing. The community's struggle for survival, laced with equanimity and happiness, inspired me. However, it also burned a question into my mind: Will their fate ever change?

My amazement is no less today. Seeing Dharavi sprawled out like a giant human quilt below the landing approach to Mumbai Airport is not only a reminder of stoic human adaptation and Mumbai's capacity to embrace settlers of contrastive origins but also a grim reminder of a community living in urban squalor, forever waiting for its revival. Against this backdrop, when this opportunity to renew Dharavi came calling, I seized it with both hands. I eagerly wanted to do it as it had a huge personal connect with my first impression of Mumbai. Perhaps, it was because of this overzealousness that our bid was 2.5 times the next highest. A new chapter of pride and purpose is beginning. It is a historic opportunity for us to create a new Dharavi of dignity, safety and inclusiveness.

As we embark on this completely uncharted journey, I am aware of the colossal challenges ahead. Even in comparison with Singapore's trailblazing project to resolve its housing crisis in the



OUR BID WAS 2.5 TIMES THE NEXT HIGHEST. A NEW CHAPTER OF PRIDE AND PURPOSE IS BEGINNING. IT IS A HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY FOR US TO CREATE A NEW DHARAVI OF DIGNITY, SAFETY AND INCLUSIVENESS

(The author is Chairman of the Adani Group)

1960s, Dharavi is a unique project in a league of its own for three reasons: Firstly, it is one of the world's largest urban resettlement and regeneration projects. Approximately a million people will be rehabilitated and resettled.

Secondly, rehabilitation entails the resettlement of not only the residential units but also of diverse establishments of various sizes and scales dealing with trading, shopping and other business transactions. The entire ecosystem and business fabric of diverse and distinct trades thriving in Dharavi will be rehabilitated and rehoused.

Thirdly, the project will aim for comprehensive and holistic redevelopment as it caters to the housing and rehabilitation needs of both eligible and ineligible residents. While I have no fixed ideas or preconceived notions about redeveloping Dharavi, what I do have are good intent and an iron will for a human-centric transformation with the people of Dharavi at its centre. It will be a bottom-up project reflecting their views and sentiments to the maximum extent possible. We will create an institutionalised mechanism to capture the sentiments of not only the people of Dharavi but also of the finest brains and every caring Mumbaikar, who are equal stakeholders in this journey of transforming Dharavi. The new Dharavi will reflect the quintessential character of Mumbai - the spirit, grit, unity in diversity, colour and determination - without losing the timeless essence of the old Dharavi. We will also create a state-of-the-art world-class city, which will reflect a resurgent,

self-assured, growing India finding its new place on the global stage as the 21st century belongs to India.

It is also my commitment that the only move the eligible residents of Dharavi will make will be to their new homes. Not only will they see their homes being constructed in front of their eyes but they will also have a say in shaping it. What their homes do not have now, we will provide - gas, water, electricity, sanitation and drainage, healthcare and recreational facilities, and open spaces - and they will also have access to a world-class hospital and a school. Gone, like a faded memory, will be the pain of inadequacy. In its place will be a new Dharavi that hums with pride.

Apart from resettlement, livelihood is a big challenge. I intend to transform Dharavi into a modern city hub by looking at ways and means to support and strengthen existing micro-enterprises and small industries and by promoting new-age jobs with a special focus on youth and women. This will be achieved using a multi-pronged strategy with the help of sectoral experts and civil society. It could be a combination of training centres focused on upskilling, common facility centres for product-based as well as service-based entrepreneurship models, R&D centres, data centres, MSME help desks, etc. Another important element could be the creation of organised and systemic marketplaces in line with the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC).

The effort to transform Dharavi is not new but has a long

history of nearly half a century. This time, some smart changes in the tender design based on earlier learnings ensured bidders' participation and its successful completion. For example, this tender catered to the rehabilitation of ineligible tenants. Further, the inclusion of 45 acres of railway land adjacent to Dharavi facilitates in-situ resettlement and day-zero project commencement.

It is important to mention that this project would not have seen the light of day but for the unflinching support and commitment of the successive state governments and political parties of Maharashtra coupled with the present central government which provided railway land.

My team and I are aware that the design and implementation of the Dharavi project are challenges monumental in both scale and dimensions. We are also aware that the project will test our resilience, our capability and our execution skills to their limits. Over the years, the Adani Group has developed a solution-oriented culture backed by a highly motivated, experienced and energetic team. I am confident that, with the support of all stakeholders, we shall create history and make Dharavi, Mumbai and India proud.

After we are done, if Mike Tyson does visit Dharavi again, he may not be able to recognise the Dharavi he saw earlier but I am sure that he will still find its soul as spirited and alive as ever. God willing, the likes of Danny Boyle will discover that the new Dharavi is producing millionaires without the slumdog prefix.

## Unravelling Ayushman Card's impact on healthcare

By addressing the barriers to healthcare access and affordability, Ayushman Bharat strives to improve health and reduce health inequalities

Ayushman Bharat, also known as the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY), is a pioneering healthcare scheme launched by the Government of India in September 2018. The program aims to provide health insurance coverage to economically vulnerable individuals and families, offering them financial protection against catastrophic health expenditures. Ayushman Bharat Card (ABC) is a significant step towards achieving universal health coverage in India and improving access to quality healthcare services. This policy of the union government has shown her eagerness to provide health security to the weaker sections of the society following models of successful



M UROOJ RABBANI



DAUD SALIM FARUQUE

(Authors are the President and Secretary of the Foundation for Evidence-based Development in India (FEDI) respectively. Views expressed are personal)

economies where such programs have delivered attractive outcomes.

## Current State of Evidence:

ABC provides Health Insurance Coverage to over 500 million individuals from low-income households. Beneficiaries receive a health card that enables them to access a wide range of secondary and tertiary healthcare services at empanelled public and private hospitals. It strives to provide Financial Protection to vulnerable populations from the burden of high healthcare costs. Evidence suggests that catastrophic health expenditures can push households into poverty. ABC significantly reduces out-of-pocket expenses for hospitalizations thereby protecting families

from financial hardships and preventing them from falling into debt traps. ABC ensures a broad network of Empaneled Hospitals, both public and private, across the country. As of now, around 29000 hospitals have been empanelled under the scheme. This network expansion has been particularly significant in rural and underserved areas.

ABC provides Coverage for Pre-Existing Conditions including chronic diseases. By providing access to affordable care for conditions like diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and cancer, ABC improves disease management, enhances health outcomes, and reduces long-term healthcare costs. The ABC program has made significant

progress in Expanding Health Coverage across India. As of now, over 23.40 Crore beneficiaries have been enrolled. This expansion has improved access to healthcare services for millions of individuals who were previously uninsured or lacked the financial means to afford quality care. ABC has leveraged Technology-Driven Approach to facilitate data collection and analysis, enabling evidence-based decision-making.

## Evidence-based comparison

It's implied that ABC draws inspiration from countries where similar policies have proven their potential. To better understand the strengths and limitations of ABC, it is valuable to compare it with foreign healthcare

programs.

That gives insights into different approaches to achieving universal healthcare coverage and assesses the potential effectiveness of ABC within a global context. This evidence-based comparison will explore similar programs in various countries, considering factors such as program scope, implementation strategies & funding mechanisms.

Talking of the USA at the very outset, Affordable Care Act (ACA) aims to expand access to healthcare coverage and reduce costs for Americans. It primarily focuses on reducing the number of uninsured individuals and improving the quality of healthcare services. It expanded Medicaid eligibility for low-income individu-

als and provided subsidies to help make insurance more affordable.

In the United Kingdom, National Health Service (NHS) provides comprehensive healthcare services, including hospital care, general practitioner services, and pharmaceuticals, to all residents of the United Kingdom. In Germany, Statutory Health Insurance, GKV, has a dual healthcare system that consists of statutory health insurance (GKV) and private health insurance. **Future Prospects:**

Strengthening Primary Healthcare: By focusing on preventive care, early intervention, and primary healthcare infrastructure, the program can improve health outcomes and reduce the

need for expensive hospitalizations.

Enhancing Quality of Care: Empanelment of more accredited hospitals, implementing robust quality assurance mechanisms, and monitoring patient satisfaction can help enhance the overall quality of care delivered through ABC.

Addressing Regional Disparities: Future efforts should concentrate on bridging the gaps by targeting underserved regions, incentivizing private sector participation, and improving the reach of healthcare services to marginalized populations.

Ayushman Card has emerged as a game-changer in India by addressing the barriers to healthcare access and affordability







Markets snap record-breaking run on Infosys shocker; down 1%

Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty tumbled over 1 per cent on Friday due to deep losses in IT behemoth Infosys which slashed its FY24 growth outlook.



Table with columns for 'TOP GAINERS' and 'TOP LOSERS' for both BSE Sensex and Nifty 50.

heavyweights surrendered to the bears, the small caps demonstrated resilience." Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services said.

28% GST to lead to write-off of \$2.5 bn in online gaming: Investors to PM

The GST Council's decision to levy a 28 per cent tax on real money online gaming industry will lead to an impairment of USD 2.5 billion of investment made in the segment, a group of 30 Indian and foreign investors said in a joint letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.



regime for the gaming sector globally, which will lead to a potential write-off of the USD 2.5 billion capital invested in this sector," the letter said.

"This will also adversely impact prospective investments to the tune of at least USD 4 billion in the next 3-4 years and hence the growth of the gaming sector in India," the letter said.

Further, on account of taxation of redeployed player winnings, the same money will get taxed repeatedly resulting in a scenario where over 50-70 per cent of every rupee will go towards GST, thereby making the online real money skill gaming business model unviable the letter said.

India's forex kitty swells to \$609 bn

India's forex reserves have swelled by USD 12.743 billion to USD 609.022 billion in the week ended July 14, making it one of the strongest weekly surges in the kitty in recent times, the Reserve Bank of India said on Friday.



Union Bank to sell 8 NAP accounts worth ₹3K cr to NARCL

Union Bank of India on Friday said it has identified eight troubled accounts worth Rs 3,000 crore to be sold to the national bad bank NARCL this fiscal.

Manimekhalai, the chief executive and managing director of the public sector lender, told reporters at the bank's post-earnings presser here.

Inflation set to overshoot RBI's target: Nomura

Consumer price inflation is expected to overshoot the Reserve Bank's tolerance mark of 6 per cent again in July and August due to the sky high vegetable prices, a Japanese brokerage said on Friday.



The Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) rose to 4.81 per cent in June from 4.31 per cent in May, driven by a spike in food prices.

Rupee falls 4p to close at Rs 81.97/\$

The rupee depreciated 4 paise to close at 81.97 (provisional) against the US dollar on Friday, weighed down by a rebound in the American currency and firm crude oil prices in global markets.

DLF Q1 profit rises 12% to ₹527 cr

Realty major DLF on Friday reported a 12 per cent rise in consolidated net profit to Rs 527 crore in the first quarter of this fiscal and announced its re-entry into the Mumbai property market to develop a housing project.

PFC to lend Rs 2.37 lakh cr to 20 clean energy projects

Power Finance Corporation (PFC) on Friday said it has entered into loan agreements worth more than Rs 2.37 lakh crore with 20 companies.



state-run company is awaiting the Reserve Bank's nod to launch a subsidiary from the International Financial Services Centre in Gandhinagar.

Hindustan Unilever shares fall nearly 4% post Jun qtr

Shares of Hindustan Unilever on Friday declined nearly 4 per cent, eroding Rs 23,155.22 crore from its market valuation after the company's first-quarter earnings failed to cheer investors.

Sebi cancels Progressive Comtrade registration in NSEL case

Capital markets regulator Sebi on Friday cancelled the registration of Progressive Comtrade for facilitating its clients to trade in illegal 'paired contracts' on the National Spot Exchange Ltd (now defunct).

mental to the interest of the securities market and accordingly the noticee can no longer be called a 'fit and proper person' for holding the certificate of registration as a broker in the securities market," Sebi's Executive Director V S Sundaresan said in the order.

360 ONE WAM Q1 PAT climbs 13% to ₹181 crore

The company's total revenues increased 17.6 per cent to Rs 434 crore in the quarter under review from Rs 369 crore in the April-June quarter of the preceding fiscal 2022-23.

India's coal production grows 8.55% to 223 MT in Apr-Jun

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# Spain crush Costa Rica in Women's WC

**AP ■ WELLINGTON**

Coach Jorge Vilda says Spain will try to eke the best out of Alexia Putellas at the Women's World Cup after she made a cameo off the bench in Friday's ominous 3-0 win over Costa Rica.

The Spaniards showed why they're among the favourites with a classy display in a Group C mismatch in Wellington, firing 46 shots against opponents who spent nearly the entire game defending and were flattered by the scoreline.

La Roja threatened a rout when all three goals came in the space of six minutes midway through the first half but they couldn't score again.

The European powerhouses received a boost in the 77th minute when reigning two-time Ballon d'Or winner Putellas entered the match, with her fitness under a cloud after cutting short a training session on Monday.

The Barcelona midfielder produced some neat touches over the closing minutes and Vilda said her limited minutes come under advice from medical staff.

The 29-year-old is still to complete a full game since returning in April from a serious knee injury.

"We are going to follow their recommendations and they



## Nigeria holds Olympic champions Canada with penalty save

**AP ■ MELBOURNE**

Christine Sinclair had a penalty saved as Olympic champions Canada were held 0-0 in their opener by Nigeria, who saw Deborah Abiodun pick up the first red card of this Women's World Cup.

The 40-year-old skipper Sinclair is hoping to make history in Australia and New Zealand by becoming the first player to score at six World Cups.

But she missed the chance to reach that milestone in Melbourne as her penalty early in the second half was saved by goalkeeper Chiamaka Nnadozie.

With few clear chances otherwise, that allowed the Super Falcons to come away with a morale-boosting draw in Group B, in which co-hosts Australia beat Ireland 1-0 on Thursday.

Canada have never gone beyond the semi-finals of the Women's World Cup but are hoping to go deep into this year's tournament on the back of winning gold at the Tokyo Games in 2021.

However, they had a disrupted build-up as



the team threatened to strike over pay, funding and contractual issues.

They are also missing key players due to injury and perhaps continue to rely too heavily on Sinclair, the all-time top scorer in international football.

recommended for today that Alexia could play a little bit," Vilda said. "Every single minute from her really counts, she's a really good quality player."

"What we're going to do in the future is our best to help her and get the best out of her."

Putellas' Barcelona teammate Aitana Bonmati was instead the game's dominant figure, named player of the match after creating numerous chances and finding the net herself.

In a match played in cold and wet conditions, the first goal

arrived in the 21st minute when Costa Rica defender Valeria del Campo sliced a low cross from Esther Gonzalez into her own net.

Bonmati doubled the lead before Gonzalez grabbed the third with a close-range volley.

## I'll never talk about Brazil, I am the coach of Real Madrid: Ancelotti

**AP ■ MADRID**

Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti moved on Thursday to tamp down discussion of his possible future move to the Brazilian national team, saying he was focused on the Spanish giants and their upcoming season.

"I will never talk about Brazil, about what is going to happen," the Italian told reporters in Los Angeles, where Real Madrid will play the first of four US friendlies on Sunday against AC Milan at the Rose Bowl.

"I am the coach of Real Madrid and I am staying here," Ancelotti insisted, two weeks after Brazilian Confederation president Edinaldo Rodrigues indicated Ancelotti was poised to become the first foreigner in almost 60 years to coach the Selecao after his Real Madrid contract expires.

That would put the Italian at the helm in time for the Copa America in the United States from June 2024, but Ancelotti said for him the subject was closed.

"I will never talk about this matter again," he said, noting that he had a contract with Real Madrid "until June 30, 2024".

Ancelotti also declined to comment on Madrid's chances of signing French star Kylian Mbappe, who is involved in a contract dispute with Paris Saint-Germain.

Mbappe "is a player who is not at Madrid," he noted. "To talk about players who are not here, it doesn't seem right to me."

Ancelotti did discuss his



plans for dealing with the departure of Ballon d'Or winner Karim Benzema, who last month inked a three-year deal with Al-Ittihad in Saudi Arabia.

He said he would experiment with a system that exploits the attacking potential of signings such as England's Jude Bellingham and Turkey's Arda Guler.

Even though an elite direct replacement for Benzema has yet to arrive, Ancelotti said he was satisfied with how the Real Madrid squad has come together for next season.

"For me, the squad has improved," he said. "We have lost a player who has been fundamental for years in Karim, whom we wish the best and who has been a club legend. But we have a very young group that we are convinced will give us a lot of satisfaction," he said.

## Messi set for Miami debut but maybe off the bench

**AP ■ MIAMI**

Lionel Messi should make his debut for Inter Miami against Mexican club Cruz Azul on Friday but the seven-times Ballon d'Or winner may be limited to a role off the bench.

The Argentine arrived in South Florida last week to a wave of enthusiasm and was presented to fans at a special stadium event on Sunday. But since the initial hype, when club owner Jorge Mas described him as "America's number 10" and promised the move would "change the football landscape" in the USA, there has been a noticeable change of tone.

Messi only started training in earnest this week after spending time with his family on vacation and the opening game of the new Leagues Cup — which pits MLS and Liga MX teams together in a tournament format — may come too soon for the World Cup champion to start.

Co-owner David Beckham said on Tuesday that Messi will play "some part of the game" and coach Gerardo "Tata" Martino, Messi's compatriot and former Barcelona coach, had suggested he might start on the bench.

At the pre-match press conference, moved



to the downtown performing arts center in Fort Lauderdale due to the huge media interest, Martino said they would make a decision on how to use Messi after training on Friday.

"It is very difficult for people not to have

expectations," said Martino. "But it may take a while."

Spanish midfielder Sergio Busquets certainly doesn't feel ready yet for a full game in what will also be his debut.

## Alba joins 'Barca reunion' with Messi in Miami

**AP ■ MIAMI**

Former Spain international defender Jordi Alba has signed for Inter Miami, where he'll join up with former Barcelona team-mate Lionel Messi through 2024, the Major League Soccer club said on Thursday.

The announcement of the deal, which includes a club option for 2025, came two days after Inter owner Jorge Mas said Alba was on the way.

He will join Argentine superstar Messi and Spanish midfielder Sergio Busquets, another former Barcelona player, as Inter, co-owned by former England great David Beckham, seek to reverse their flagging MLS fortunes.

The 34-year-old Alba, who has made 93 appearances for Spain, terminated his contract with Barcelona in May.

The left-back won six Spanish league titles with Barca and was part of the team which won the 2015 Champions League. He also played in the Spain team which won the 2012 European Championship.

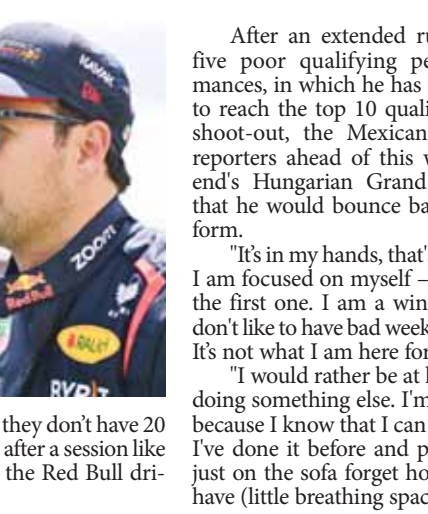
## Perez concedes Red Bull future is in his own hands

**AP ■ BUDAPEST**

Under-pressure Red Bull driver Sergio Perez admitted on Thursday that his future is in his own hands following Alpha Tauri's abrupt sacking of Dutch rookie Nyck de Vries.

Despite lying second in the drivers' championship after 10 races, although 99 points adrift of runaway defending champion and team-mate Max Verstappen, Perez conceded that his position with Red Bull was not entirely secure.

"You've seen it with other drivers and other teams," he said, referring to the pressure he felt. "They've had difficult peri-



ods, but then they don't have 20 replacements after a session like they do with the Red Bull drivers."

## WFI elections on August 12

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

The much-delayed elections of the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) will be conducted on August 12, it was announced on Friday, but the state of Maharashtra will not be part of the poll process as Returning Officer Justice MM Kumar declared that both rival factions were ineligible for participation.

The ad-hoc panel had scheduled the elections for July 6 but it was forced to reschedule the polls to July 11 after disaffiliated state bodies from Maharashtra, Haryana, Telangana, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh approached it for a hearing, claiming that their dismissal was not appropriate.

The panel heard the

aggrieved representatives of the state bodies but the polls could not go ahead even on July 11 with the Gauhati High Court staying the elections after the Assam Wrestling Association (AWA) sought the right to participate in the poll process.

The Supreme Court then paved the way for elections on Tuesday after staying the Gauhati High Court order.

The electoral college will now have 48 members with voting rights from 24 state bodies and the nominations for posts will be filed on August 1.

The scrutiny of the nominations will be conducted on August 2 and a final list of the candidates will be published on August 7. If election is required, voting will be conducted on August 12.

## Asiad trials set to be conducted behind closed doors

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

The IOA appointed ad-hoc committee has decided to conduct the Asian Games wrestling trials behind closed doors after parents of some of the wrestlers got into a heated argument with panel members at the IG Stadium on Friday.

Frustrated and heated exchanges were the order of the day as angry wrestlers and their family members threatened to boycott the trials in protest of the exemption given to Olympic medalist Bajrang Punia (65 kg) and world medallist Vinesh Phogat (53 kg). The families of wrestlers reached the trial venue and argued with the ad-hoc panel alleging that the decision was "unfair" and "unjust".

Parents of world U20 champion Antim Panghal and another wrestler Vikas Kaliraman's father Subhash Kaliraman got into a heated argument with the ad-hoc panel members.

Sensing trouble, the ad-hoc panel decided that it will be a restricted entry for the trials as no spectators will be allowed inside the wrestling hall. Ad-hoc panel member Gian Singh said the DCP of the region has been asked to have adequate personnel to ensure no one enters the hall. The trials will go ahead as per schedule and on Saturday selection will be done in six Greco-Roman and as many in women's categories. The trials for six men's freestyle divisions will take place on Sunday.

"Trials will take place tomorrow as the Delhi High Court has not given stay orders," Singh said. "Our job is to organise the trials and whoever comes first we will send his or her name to IOA. The decision on who they (IOA) want to send to the Asian Games after that is their job," he added.

## Wolves re-sign Doherty after Atletico Madrid exit

**AP ■ MADRID**

Wolves re-signed Matt Doherty on a free transfer on Thursday after the Republic of Ireland defender's exit from Atletico Madrid.

Doherty agreed a three-year deal with Wolves, where the right-back made more than 300 appearances during his first spell at the Premier League club.

The 31-year-old left Molinex in 2020 to join Tottenham but, after a disappointing stint in north London, he moved to Atletico Madrid in January on a six-month deal.

After making only two appearances for Atletico, Doherty has got his wish to return to the English top-flight.

transfer on Friday after the former Southampton winger left Turkish club Besiktas.

Redmond agreed a two-year contract with Burnley, who have the option of further season's extension to his deal.

The 29-year-old was a free agent after leaving Besiktas following a single season in Turkey, where he scored six goals in 28 games.

"I always had aspirations to play again in the Premier League. Burnley's project matches with my ambitions," Redmond said.

"The management team feel like they can enhance my game more and see the value I can bring on and off the field. It feels like a perfect match."

Redmond, who has one England cap, has played 264 times in the Premier League after spending six years at Southampton and three seasons at Norwich.

## Alcaraz finding it 'tough to believe' that he is Wimbledon champion

**AP ■ NICE**

Carlos Alcaraz on Friday said he finds it "tough to believe" he is Wimbledon champion as the Spaniard prepares to play the Hopman Cup mixed team tournament in France days after his triumph in London.

"Thinking I won Wimbledon is tough to believe. I can't believe that I won and beat Novak (Djokovic), probably it will take some days to believe," Alcaraz told journalists.

On Sunday, Alcaraz beat Djokovic in five sets to win the second Grand Slam title of his career.

"Since Wimbledon I didn't touch the racket, today will be the first time," said Alcaraz, who takes on 111th-ranked Belgian David Goffin later on Friday.

"I'm a little bit tired, I'm not going to lie," he said.

"I had some days off to rest a little bit. I'm feeling great right now. I'm here to make people happy watching the match."

The world number one battled past seven-time Wimbledon champion Djokovic after a defeat to the Serb in the French Open semi-finals during which he



suffered cramp.

But the 20-year-old believes that he was "not well prepared mentally" before the Paris claycourt tournament.

"I couldn't deal with the pressure that Novak put on. I relaxed, doing some mental exercise before the match that probably I didn't do in Roland Garros, that helped me a lot."

In Nice, Alcaraz teams up with 72nd-ranked Rebeka Masarova, against the Belgian pairing of Goffin and Elise Mertens.

"We're not used to playing with women, mixed doubles. I wanted to have this experience," he continued.

"It feels great. I'm really happy and excited to be here."

After the Hopman Cup, Alcaraz will compete in the Masters 1000 in Toronto from August 7 and Cincinnati from August 13.

"Right now my focus is on Toronto, which is a Masters 1000 and really important, and Cincinnati, but of course the main goal is the US Open," he added of the final Grand Slam of the year which begins on August 21 and where he will defend his title.

**BURNLEY SIGN REDMOND**

Newly promoted Premier League club Burnley signed Nathan Redmond on a free

