

OPINION 6
US BATON OF VALUES
PASSES SEAMLESSLY**WORLD 8**
BIDEN FALLS FROM STAGE, SAYS
HE GOT 'SANDBAGGED'**MONEY 10**
SENSEX, NIFTY RISE ON GAINS
IN METAL, AUTO STOCKS

BHOPAL, SATURDAY JUNE 3, 2023; PAGES 12 ₹1.50

the pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com

CASEMIRO'S
MOTIVATION KEY
FOR MAN UTD IN
FINAL 11 SPORT

70 dead in Odisha triple train crash

Over 350 injured; one train derails, another crashes into it

PNS/PTI ■ BALASORE/HOWRAH

In a tragic triple train crash which took place in Odisha involving the Bengaluru-Howrah Superfast Express, the Shalimar-Chennai Central Coromandel Express and a goods train on Friday at least 70 people were killed and more than 350 injured.

They said several coaches of the 12864 Bengaluru-Howrah train travelling to Howrah derailed at Bahanaga Bazaar in Balasore district and fell on adjacent tracks.

"These derailed coaches collided with 12841 Shalimar-Chennai Central Coromandel Express and its coaches cap-sized too," a senior official said.

A goods train was also involved in the accident as the coaches of the Coromandel Express hit its wagons after getting derailed, the official said.

The accident happened around 7 pm, he said.

Over 350 people have been admitted to different hospitals



Rescue operation being conducted after four coaches of the Coromandel Express derailed after a head-on collision with a goods train, in Balasore district, on Friday evening PTI

across the district, officials said, adding that all private and Government hospitals have been put on alert in the nearby districts, including State

Capital Bhubaneswar. So far, 50 bodies could be brought out from under the overturned coaches, they said. A PTI reporter at the spot

said several people were trapped under the derailed coaches, and locals were assisting emergency services personnel to rescue them, but

darkness was hindering the operation.

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said he was rushing to the accident site. "Rushing to the site in Odisha. My prayers for the speedy recovery of the injured and condolences to the bereaved families. Rescue teams mobilised from Bhubaneswar and Kolkata. NDRF, State Govt. Teams and Airforce also mobilised. Will take all hands required for the rescue ops," he tweeted.

He also announced ex-gratia of ₹10 lakh for the deceased, ₹2 lakh for those grievously injured and ₹50,000 for those who got minor injuries.

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said he has reviewed the situation, and will be travelling to the accident site early Saturday.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he was distressed by the accident, and spoke with Vaishnaw to take stock of the situation.



On May 28, police detained the wrestlers for violating law and order when they marched towards the new Parliament without permission. The police then cleared the protest site. "We are distressed and disturbed by the unseemly visuals of our champion wrestlers being manhandled. We are also deeply concerned that they are considering discarding their hard-earned medals into the River Ganga," stated the 1983 World Cup-winning team in a release to PTI.

WFI chief denied nod for June 5 rally

Ayodhya: The district administration has denied permission to BJP MP and Wrestling Federation of India chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh to hold a rally here on June 5.

Singh, however, said he postponed the "Jan Chetna Maharally" at the Ram Katha Park for "a few days" due to the ongoing police probe into the wrestlers' charges against him.

Want justice for wrestlers via due legal process: Min

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Sports Minister Anurag Thakur on Friday said everyone wants justice to be delivered to the wrestlers demanding action against outgoing Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, but it will hap-

pen only after following the due process of law.

Thakur's remarks came days after the country's top wrestlers, protesting for more than a month over allegations of sexual harassment against Singh, threatened to immerse their medals in the Ganga river in Haridwar.

CAPSULE

GO FIRST TO RESTART OPS WITH 152 DAILY FLIGHTS

Mumbai: Cash-strapped Go First, which is undergoing voluntary insolvency resolution process, plans to restart operations with 26 planes and 152 daily flights, and has submitted the revival plan to aviation regulator DGCA, according to a source.

'WILL TAKE INFORMED CALL ON SEDITION LAW'

New Delhi: The Government will take an "informed and reasoned" decision on the Law Commission report on sedition after holding consultations with all stakeholders, Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal said on Friday and noted that recommendations in the document were "persuasive" but not "binding".

ANTI-TERROR COURT EXTENDS IMRAN'S BAIL

Lahore: Pakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan on Friday appeared before an anti-terrorism court here and secured an extension to his pre-arrest bail till June 13 in three cases including an attack on a top military commander's residence in Lahore, a court official said. P8

RUPEE GAINS 1 PAISA TO CLOSE AT 82.39 AGAINST \$

Mumbai: The rupee ended almost flat gaining 1 paisa to 82.39 against the US dollar on Friday amid positive sentiment in domestic equities markets.

2024 LS elections will throw surprising outcome: Rahul

PNS ■ WASHINGTON

Senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has asserted that the Opposition's strong unity and an unseen undercurrent were poised to "surprise" the people in the upcoming general elections in India.

Rahul was speaking at a media interaction on Thursday at the National Press Club in the United States, where he is currently on a three-city tour.

"I strongly believe that the Congress party will perform exceptionally well in the next two years." He added, "I sense the emergence of a hidden undercurrent...something that will catch people by surprise." Citing the recent outcome of the Karnataka Assembly elections, where Congress achieved a comfortable majority and ousted the BJP from power, Rahul pointed out the importance of observing the results of the next three or four State elections.

He emphasised that these upcoming contests serve as a better indicator of the future political landscape.

In response to a question about the unity of the Opposition in India, Rahul confirmed their strong alliance.



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi during an interactive session at the National Press Club, in Washington, USA on Thursday PTI

"The Opposition in India is quite well united, and I see this unity growing stronger with time. We are engaging in constructive conversations with all Opposition parties, and there is considerable progress being made," he stated.

However, he acknowledged the complexities that arise from competing with other Opposition parties, requiring some negotiation and compromise.

Nonetheless, Rahul expressed confidence in overcoming these challenges.

During the interaction, Rahul also addressed a range of

topics, including press and religious freedoms in India, issues faced by minorities, and the State of the economy.

When questioned about Prime Minister Narendra Modi's high global popularity, Rahul expressed his concerns about the capture of institutions and the press in India, indicating that he approached such information with caution.

Regarding the protection of minority rights in India, Rahul emphasised the importance of a robust and independent institutional framework.

IUML fully secular, claims Rahul, sparks political row

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's remark that the Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) is a "completely secular party" ignited a political battle on Friday.

The BJP accused the Kerala-based party of being influenced by the same ideology as the Muslim League,

while the Congress reminded the saffron party of its veteran leader LK Advani praising Mohammad Ali Jinnah during his visit to Pakistan in 2005.

During a media interaction at the National Press Club in Washington, DC, Rahul was questioned about his party's alliance with the IUML in Kerala in relation to secularism.

K'taka Cabinet clears Cong's all 5 poll guarantees



Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and his deputy DK Shivakumar and cabinet colleagues during a cabinet meeting in Bengaluru on Friday PTI

PNS ■ BENGALURU

The Karnataka Cabinet on Friday decided to implement the Congress party's five poll guarantees without any discrimination based on caste or religion. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah announced that the "Gruha Jyothi" scheme, which aims to provide up to 200 units of free electricity per month to every household, will be implemented from July 1. The CM said a timeline has been set to operationalise these schemes within the current financial year.

During a media confer-

ence, Siddaramaiah, who chaired the Cabinet meeting, informed reporters that detailed discussions were held regarding the guarantees and their implementation.

However, he did not disclose the cost of the five guarantees at the moment, stating that he would share the information later.

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar hailed it as a "historic day" as the Congress Government had taken concrete steps to fulfill the poll promises and had set a timeline for their implementation.

HC allows jailed Sisodia to meet ailing wife at home

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Friday permitted AAP leader Manish Sisodia, under arrest in cases related to alleged irregularities in the city Government's excise policy, to meet his ailing wife at his residence on Saturday.

Justice Dinesh Kumar Sharma directed the Tihar Jail Superintendent to take Sisodia, the former Deputy Chief Minister, to his residence where he has been allowed to meet his wife from 10 am to 5 pm.

Sisodia was first arrested by the CBI on February 26 for his alleged role in the scam and has been in custody since then. The HC has already denied him bail in the CBI case on May 30. He was arrested on March 9 in the case lodged by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and is currently in judicial custody.



BRICS pledges to combat terror, financing networks

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE/ AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/ CAPETOWN

A day after India called for united fight against terrorism and those financing it, the five-nation BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) grouping on Friday vowed to combat the menace in all its forms and manifestations, including the cross-border movement of terrorists, and terror financing networks and safe havens, a veiled reference to Pakistan.

Addressing the conclave on Thursday in Capetown, External Affairs Minister S



Jaishankar had described terrorism as the key threat to international peace and security and said all nations must take resolute measures against this menace, including its financing and propaganda.

Jaishankar has in the past described Pakistan as the "epi-

centre of terrorism" where terrorists like Hafiz Saeed, Masood Azhar, Sajid Mir and Dawood Ibrahim are sheltered.

In a joint statement titled "The Cape of Good Hope", the Foreign Ministers of BRICS expressed strong condemnation of terrorism "whenever, wherever and by whomsoever committed."

"They (ministers) are committed to combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including the cross-border movement of terrorists, and terrorism financing networks and safe havens," the joint statement said.

Day after Shah appeal, people surrender weapons in Manipur

PTI ■ IMPHAL

More than 140 weapons have been surrendered in different places in Manipur after Union Home Minister Amit Shah's appeal a day ago, sources said on Friday.

So far, 144 arms with 11 magazines have been recovered by the security agencies.

At least 98 people lost their lives and 310 others were injured in the ethnic violence in Manipur that broke out a month ago, according to a statement issued by the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) on Friday. In all, 4,014 cases of arson have been reported since the violence broke out in the state on May 3, it said.

The Army, the Assam



Weapons surrendered at different locations in Manipur after Union Home Minister Amit Shah's appeal on Friday PTI

Rifles, the CAPFs and local police have been deployed in vulnerable places, it added. The Government appealed to the people to surrender the snatched arms & ammunition.

Shah, on the last day of his four-day visit to Manipur on Thursday, appealed to all concerned to surrender their weapons to the security forces and administration.

He had also warned that a search-and-combing operation would be carried out in the State soon and anyone found to possess any weapon would be prosecuted.

After the Home Minister's appeal in Imphal, more than 140 weapons have been surrendered till Friday morning, sources said.

They said the situation in Manipur was by and large peaceful in most districts and sporadic incidents of firing at or torching of empty houses by miscreants were becoming rare now as coordinated effort was made by different security agencies.

The surrendered weapons included self-loading rifles, carbine, AK and INSAS rifles, light machine guns, pistols, M16 rifles, smoke gun/tear gas, sten gun and grenade launcher.

Ethnic clashes broke out in the northeastern State on May 3 after a "Tribal Solidarity March" was organised in the state's hill districts to protest the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status.

A huge memorial of Maharaj Chhatrasal to be built in Chhatarpur

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that to keep the memory of Maharaj Chhatrasal intact, a huge memorial will be built after him in Chhatarpur. Chhatarpur municipality will be upgrade into municipal corporation. No stone will be left unturned in the development of the district. He said that by canceling the old tender of Chhatarpur Medical College, new tender has been ordered. Soon the new medical college building will be constructed at Chhatarpur at a cost of Rs 300 crore.

The Chief Minister attended Chhatarpur's Gaurav Diwas and Mahila Sammelan today. He not only gave many gifts to Chhatarpur district, but inaugurated and performed bhoomi

pujan of development works worth Rs 790 crore.

Chouhan said that Maharaja Chhatrasal was a great warrior and a symbol of valour. He established Hindu Swaraj. We should take inspiration from such a brave and great man. The Chief Minister said that the tender of the contractor who had not started the construction of Chhatarpur Medical College for a long time has been cancelled. Now orders for new tender have been given. Soon the construction work of the medical college will start in Chhatarpur.

Chouhan said that there was a time when daughters were considered a burden. Ladli Laxmi Yojana in the state has changed the thinking of the society and made the daughter a boon. Campaign is going on in the state for women empow-

erment. They are being led towards self-reliance through various schemes. We have reserved half the seats for women in the local elections, as a result of which a large number of women are sitting on the posts of panch, sarpanch, corporator etc. Social revolution has taken place in Madhya Pradesh to increase the importance of daughters and women. Registration fee has been exempted for buying property in the name of women. Pradhan Mantri Awas is in the name of both husband and wife. Land rights pattas are also being given in the name of husband and wife. For the economic empowerment of poor women, the Madhya Pradesh government has taken a historic decision to deposit Rs 1,000 each in the accounts of 1.25 crore sisters of the state by implementing the

Ladli Bahnas Yojana from June 10.

The Chief Minister said that there will be special gram sabhas in the state on June 8, in which the names of eligible women will be told. The approval letters will be delivered to them at home. He told the Ladli Bahnas that they should sing songs and enjoy in the village on the evening of 9th June, as money is going to come in their account. Programs will be held in all the villages at 5 pm on June 10 and at 6 pm I myself will have a virtual discussion with the women. After that the amount of the scheme will be transferred to the accounts of the sisters. Chief Minister Chouhan said that Ladli Bahna Sena will be formed in every village and ward. An army of 11 sisters will be formed in a small village and 21 in a big village. He

said that it is my endeavour to ensure that the income of the sisters of self-help groups of Aajeevika Mission should be Rs 10,000 per month. Due to these efforts, many of our sisters have become Lakhpati. He said that a decision has been taken to close the ahatas adjacent to the liquor shops. A decision has also been taken to give scooties to the girls who get good marks in class 12th. The poor are being made owners of the land by being presented with PM Awas and land pattas.

Chouhan said that terrorism will not be allowed to flourish on the soil of Madhya Pradesh. People involved in terrorist activities have been sent to jail. Expressing displeasure over the incident in a school in Damoh, he said that the matter is being investigated, the culprits will not be spared.



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan addresses a Mahila Sammelan and Gaurav Diwas programme in Chhatarpur, Madhya Pradesh on Friday. Pioneer photo

Police solving crimes using technologies in the State

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Under the guidance of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, effective action is being taken to control crimes and with the monitoring of DGP Sudhir Kumar Saxena, the members of the interstate bike thieves gang are being caught and the stolen bikes are being recovered.

Madhya Pradesh Police is not only taking the help of technology to reach these thieves, but is also catching them by conducting an intensive investigation campaign. Under this, the police in Jabalpur and Dhar districts including the capital Bhopal, acting promptly, have succeeded in arresting many bike thieves, including members of inter-state gangs.

The police, while taking action across the state includ-

ing Dhar, Indore, Jhabua, Alirajpur, Khandwa, Khargone, Barwani, Dewas, Ujjain, Jabalpur, Katni, Harda and Narsinghpur, have arrested members of such gangs, who are involved in motorcycle theft incidents in other states as well. Police arrested more than 25 accused of different gangs and recovered more than 250 bikes from them.

Bike thieves were arrested by conducting a campaign by the Madhya Pradesh police. Police have got great success in arresting 15 accused by seizing 125 motorcycles worth lakhs of rupees during the action taken by 15 police stations of Jabalpur district.

On the other hand, the Pithampur police of Dhar district seized 81 motorcycles worth Rs 50 lakh and arrested four accused and the Bagh police seized 40 motorcycles worth Rs 25 lakh and arrested

four accused.

In the interrogation done by the police, the accused have confessed to carrying out bike theft incidents in 9 districts of Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat.

Similarly, while taking action against bike thieves in capital Bhopal, 10 bikes worth Rs 11 lakh were seized from Aishbagh police station area and one accused was arrested after seizing 3 bikes from Ratibad.

The arrest of the accused took place in this manner:-

Ranjit Baghel, in-charge of Bagh police station of Dhar district, received information through an informer that three bike thieves were about to go from Bagh to Tanda on a motorcycle. During vehicle checking on the Tanda bypass near the police station, four people of the same appearance as told by the informer to the police were seen coming on

two motorcycles. He expressed his inability on asking for the documents of the vehicle. On being strictly questioned by the police, he confessed to having stolen the bike. After arresting, he also accepted the execution of other bike theft incidents and told that the stolen bikes are in Magarda.

Similarly, at Pithampur police station in Dhar district, on May 8 at around 8 pm, constable Dilip was informed by the informer that a gang of motorcycle thieves had been spotted in Sector 3 of Pithampur. On informing the station in-charge Sameer Patidar in this regard, he immediately formed a team and laid siege behind MPRDC Road, JBM Company, Khandhar and arrested four bike thieves on the basis of the description given by the informer.

Two-day national level youth conclave organised by IIFM concludes today

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The two-day national level "Youth Conclave" by the Indian Institute of Forest Management, Bhopal under the initiative "Mission Life" concluded on Friday.

About 200 participants took part in this conclave held from 01 to 02 June, out of which 5 participants have been declared winners.

The closing ceremony was graced by Yogesh Deshmukh, IPS, A.D.G., Cyber Cell, Bhopal, and M. Selevendran, I.A.S., I.G., Registration and Commissioner, Agriculture, M.P.

On the occasion of the closing ceremony, Dr. K. Ravichandran, Director, IIFM, said, "After these two days of assessment, I believe that the ideas of many participants pre-

About 200 participants took part in this conclave held from 01 to 02 June, out of which 5 participants have been declared winners

sent here are so creative that they can be implemented as programs in the future, you all are going to be the new leader of this country. It is my strong belief that the 200 who are present here can inspire 2000 for bringing change in behavior for a better future".

The first day of this Conclave, eminent personalities

of the country addressed the students on various topics of mission life. After the first-day Group discussion, 100 selected participants entered the speech competition. On the second day, speeches were given by each participant for a time duration of 5 minutes pertaining to the seven themes of Mission Life, after which 5 winners were announced on the basis of their performance by the jury.

Following this, IIFM organized a "Plogging Drive" in Van Vihar, Bhopal under Mission LiFE, in which all the participants actively participated and spread the word for a clean and green environment. The conclave concluded with the certificate distribution ceremony followed by the mesmerizing cultural performances given by the participants.

Fraudster arrested from Delhi

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Cyber crime police arrested fraudsters from Delhi who were cheating in the name of facilitating works in movies by posting videos of celebrities on social media, they used to extort money by luring them to do photoshoots with them, accused have duped victims to the tune of Rs 50 lakh.

The accused used to deposit money in installments in the name of registration. For two years, they were doing fraud by forming a fake company in Delhi. The team has found evidence of fraud of Rs 50 lakhs from them. The police are interrogating the accused in other cases as well.

On December 15, 2022, a model living in Bhopal got a call from Dream Makers Company based in Delhi. They said that you have been selected for the video dance suit of the company. For this Rs 15000 will have to be given online.

After this, on January 4, 2023, another person who introduced himself as the director of Dream Makers Company and said there is an offer for video shooting in Mumbai, the shoot will last for 10 days and Rs 17500 will be given daily.

For this artist card has to be made and would require Rs 53100 will have to be deposited in two parts for the card. The girl paid money in two installments. After a few days she received call and the accused informed that Rs 105000 have to be deposited, otherwise the money earlier deposited will not be returned.

After this, on May 5, the complainant lodged a complaint. The team started the search for the accused with the help of evidence and technical analysis given by the complainant. The location of the accused was found at Madhu Vihar, Delhi. From where the team arrested Waqar Alam and Alka Badonia.



Artists perform to welcome Nepal's Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' upon his arrival at Devi Ahilya Bai Holkar Airport in Indore. Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan also seen in pic. Pioneer photo

Various programmes to mark Environment day at IGRMS

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya Bhopal is organizing various programs and activities on the occasion of World Environment Day on June 5, 2023.

To achieve the integrated objective of nature and environmental protection with the participation of the general public the programs will start from 7.30 am in the museum premises with an interesting program of trekking cum tree introduction. In which the participating visitors will be informed about the cultural importance of the naturally available plant species in the museum and their special qualities. Starting from second gate of Museum this exciting journey will end at the entrance of Tribal habitat open air Exhibition going through the trees and prehistoric painted rock shelters located in the museum premises.

The second phase of the program will be dedicated to planting trees for the development of greenery in the museum premises as a symbolic expression of the resolve to return the earth to its beau-

ty. City's famous environmentalist Prof Dr. Yogesh Kumar Dubey Indian Institute of Forest Management Bhopal will give the museum popular lecture on the subject of "Environmental Crisis and Concerns: Way Forward for Sustainable Future" from 4.00 pm in the rock art auditorium And there will be prize distribution to the winners of the quiz and essay competition organized on International Museum Day.

It should be known that in the natural complex of about two hundred acres of the museum complex various known and lesser known biological and botanical resources are available many of which are probably present around us and it is useful for the entire human race by its natural qualities. But due to lack of proper information, we are not able to protect them.

All interested persons above 12 years of age will be able to participate in the trekking program being organized with the aim of sharing information and developing awareness about our natural heritage. Participants must register in advance to participate.

RMNH organises visit to PCB laboratory

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Regional Museum of Natural History, Bhopal (A Regional Centre of National Museum of Natural History, New Delhi) is organizing various programmes under Summer Nature Study Programme- Green Teen for the students of class 8 to 10.

A Study Visit of Laboratory of Central Pollution Control Board, Bhopal was arranged for the environmental pollution study on Friday for the participants of this programme.

Milind Kumar Nimje, Scientist-C; Ranu Verma, Scientist-C; Rashmi Thakur; Biologist, Alfa Monika Lakra, Senior Scientific Assistant ; Poulami C. Patil, Senior Scientific Assistant and their team detailed the information about Air Pollution, Water Pollution, Soil Pollution, Noise Pollution etc.

They also told about the parameters of pollutants, pollution monitoring methodologies including pollution controlling methods. At the end of visit a bag was distributed to all the participants which is made up of recycled and used plastic water bottles. During the visit, the seven points of Mission LiFE was also detailed.

Dr Abhijit launches a revolutionary Accessory Distribution System

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Dr Abhijeet, a noted surgical gastroenterologist, has initiated a path-breaking initiative aimed at empowering the differently-abled community, through the use of AI technology.

Leveraging the power of artificial intelligence, he has developed a state-of-the-art assistive delivery system that will revolutionize the way assistive devices are provided to people with disabilities.

This pioneering system understands the unique needs and preferences of each individual,

being able to recommend and deliver accessories tailored to their specific needs. By harnessing the power of AI, persons with disabilities will have access to a wide range of high-quality, assistive devices in the comfort of their own homes, enhancing their independence and quality of life.

The AI-powered accessory distribution system works by collecting data from various sources, including user feedback, expert consultations and accessibility guidelines. This comprehensive approach ensures that the selected accessories are not only technologically advanced but also

ergonomically designed to meet the diverse needs of the differently-abled community. The system continuously learns and adapts itself based on user feedback.

Dr. Abhijeet Deshmukh said that his mission is to remove barriers and empower persons with disabilities by providing them with the tools they need to live life to the fullest. With this innovative AI-powered system, he aim to break down barriers and create a more inclusive society. By ensuring easy access to assistive devices, he believe they can achieve their goal of greater independence, mobility and overall well-being for individuals with disabilities.

Dr. Abhijeet, apart from the assisted delivery system, is committed to providing comprehensive support and guidance to the differently-abled throughout their journey.

His team of experts is available to provide personalized assistance, answer questions and provide technical support to ensure a seamless experience for all users. The launch of the groundbreaking AI-powered assistive delivery system marks a significant milestone in its ongoing commitment to empowering the disabled community.

2,600 kgs of poppy straw seized from truck

PNS ■ NEEMUCH

In continuance of Anti-Drug operations, on the basis of specific intelligence, officers of Central Bureau of Narcotics (CBN), M.P. Unit intercepted a Truck Near Hotel Galaxy, Untiya, N.H.- 48, Vadodara (Gujarat) and recovered 104 white plastic bags of Poppy Straw (Doda Chura) weighing 2597.850 Kgs on the night of Thursday and Friday. After receiving specific intelligence that a Truck having Registration No. of Rajasthan would be carrying huge quantity of Poppy Straw from Jharkhand to Rajasthan via Gujarat, team of officers of CBN MP Unit was formed and dispatched on May 30, 2023.

Strict Surveillance on the suspected route was kept and after successful identification of vehicle by CBN offi-



cers, the truck was intercepted Near Hotel Galaxy, Untiya, N.H.- 48, Vadodara (Gujarat) on 01.06.2023. The truck was carrying plastic white bags of dried Red Chilli as cover cargo.

On sustained questioning, the occupant of vehicle revealed that Poppy Straw was loaded in the truck behind the cover cargo. As it was not possible to search the vehicle on highway due to safety & security issues, it was decided to bring it to nearest

CBN office. After reaching CBN office, the vehicle was thoroughly searched and total 104 white plastic bags of Poppy Straw weighing 2597.850 Kgs were recovered behind the 50 white plastic bags of dried Red Chilli.

After completion of legal formalities, the Truck along with Poppy Straw & cover cargo have been seized and one person has been apprehended under the provisions of NDPS Act, 1985.



BJP MLA Krishna Gaur garlands a statue of senior BJP leader and former Chief Minister late Babul Gaur after unveiling his statue on the birth anniversary of the leader at Saket Nagar in Bhopal on Friday. Pioneer photo

AIIMS Bhopal to organise Cyclothon on Saturday

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

AIIMS Bhopal announces the organization of a "Cyclothon" event tomorrow on World Bicycle Day, June 3, 2023 starting at 5:30 AM. This event aims to promote cycling as a sustainable and healthy mode of transportation while encouraging all to embrace an active lifestyle.

Cyclohone is an exciting initiative that underscores the

importance of physical fitness and the numerous benefits of cycling. The event strives to create awareness and inspire a positive change towards a healthier and more sustainable community.

The event is open to participants from various sectors of AIIMS Bhopal, including faculty, resident doctors, nursing staff, students, and house-keeping personnel. The starting point for the Cyclohone is the Transit Hostel, conve-

niently situated next to the Executive Director Prof Dr. Ajai Singh's Bungalow. Participants are invited to join this event and contribute to its success, as we collectively raise awareness about the significance of physical fitness.

AIIMS Bhopal has appealed to the people to come together to celebrate World Bicycle Day and emphasize the importance of incorporating physical fitness into daily lives.

Guv inaugurates National Entrepreneurship Awareness Camp

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Governor Mangubhai Patel has said that the hard work done by women in the field of entrepreneurship has increased their confidence. Determination and power are the identity of the power of woman.

Maatrushakti is putting in its best of hard work to achieve goals. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the country is moving forward with the vision of women's development. The Union Budget also underlines the same thing. Women are getting global platform from G-20. Today, one woman out of 5 entrepreneurs, is emerging in the field of development.

Self-help groups have done remarkable work in the

matter of economic development of women. Many underprivileged women have proved themselves and contributed not only to the family but also to the country's economy.

The daughters and sisters who are moving forward through self-help groups are also discharging family responsibilities. Mudra and Startup Schemes by the central government have opened up new dimensions of women's development. He said that this awareness program for entrepreneurship will further accelerate the learning process.

Prior to this, Governor Mangubhai Patel and the guests inaugurated the one-day Entrepreneurship Awareness Camp of Indian Institute of



Entrepreneurship and National Commission for Women at Vikram Kirti Mandir Ujjain by lighting the lamp. Union Minister of State for Child, Women and Child Development Munjpara Mahendrabhai said that the Central Government is moving on the agenda of women's development. The work of their empowerment is being given top priority. Today

there is a need to develop such an ecosystem through which capacity building of women entrepreneurs can be done. The Central Government's Mudra Yojana, Startup Yojana and Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan accounts have done remarkable work in empowering women.

Chairperson National Commission for Women Rekha Sharma said that women constitute half of the country's population, if we leave them behind then economic progress will be hindered. Today, women are at the forefront of startups in India. Not only this, 60 per cent women are running their enterprises by taking loans. The central government has also implemented many schemes for women. There is a need for a net-

working platform for women, where they can express themselves. Also, their mentorship is also highly needed.

Director Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship Sunil Shukla said that the way India is developing in the last 10 years, the participation of women is apparent. The Institute of Entrepreneurship has been working continuously in the country for 40 years. Women are becoming more conscious and becoming inclined towards entrepreneurship. He said that entrepreneurs are not born but made. He said that his organization is working for this purpose. Smt. Meenakshi Negi, Member Secretary, National Commission for Women gave the welcome address.



BJP Rajya Sabha MP Vinay Sahasrabudhe visits Rani Kamalapati Railway Station during a Maha Jansampark Abhiyan after completion of 9 yrs of center's BJP Government, in Bhopal on Friday. Pioneer photo



Students visit the Central Pollution Control Board laboratory during summer nature study programme, organised by Regional Museum of Natural History in Bhopal on Friday. Pioneer photo

New technology will be used to fill potholes, says Minister

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Public Works Minister Gopal Bhargava has said that new technology will be used for repairing potholes on roads in the state. With this technique, better quality work can be done in less time. This technique will be implemented as a pilot project in 7 districts of the state in the first phase.

Public Works Minister Gopal Bhargava has said that due to rain and traffic of overloaded vehicles, potholes form on the roads. Road repairing work is done continuously with quality, but the time taken for repair work and its quality are questioned. The Public Works Department has decided to adopt new modern techniques of jet puncture, velocity puncture and infrared for repairing potholes on roads. He said that before implementing the infrared recycling technology, jet puncture technology and velocity puncture repair technology, a detailed study has been done by the senior technical officers of the department. In this technique no waste material is generated during operation. With this work can be done in all seasons including monsoon.

Madhya Pradesh leading state in ensuring clean, safe water availability: Centre

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Availability of clean water in sufficient quantity is a key component of Jal Jeevan Mission. Swachh Jal Se Suraksha (SJSS) campaign was launched by the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti for the availability of safe and clean water. Madhya Pradesh has been included in the leading state in the report of the campaign.

Congratulating for this achievement, CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan said that the Madhya Pradesh government is working pactly on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's resolution to provide pure water to every household. The achievement of Swachh Jal Se Suraksha campaign is another strong example of the public-participation model of development of Madhya Pradesh. CM Chouhan said that the government and citizens are moving ahead on the path of progress shoulder to shoulder in Madhya Pradesh.

Minister of State for Public Health Engineering Brijendra Singh Yadav has congratulated the

CM Chouhan said that the government and citizens are moving ahead on the path of progress shoulder to shoulder in Madhya Pradesh

officers and employees of the department, citizens and all the women who ensured their effective participation by getting testing training on this achievement.

The water quality monitoring and inspection activities of the States/UTs for the period from October 2, 2022 to March 31, 2023 were evaluated in a nationwide campaign by the Ministry of Jal Shakti. A report has been issued after assessing the performance of the States/ Union Territories in the campaign.

The campaign aims at widespread public participation at village, district and state level for water quality testing and creating awareness about water quality.

The campaign includes testing of PWS sources in all villages for chemical parameters and bacteriological parameters (post monsoon), household water quality testing in villages, water quality testing in schools and anganwadi centres, remedial work done for contaminated samples, training of women to conduct water quality testing using FTK/H2S kit at village level etc.

Water quality testing was done in 51 thousand 129 (99.44 percent) villages for chemical parameters and 50 thousand 932 (99.06 percent) villages for bacteriological parameters (post monsoon) in Madhya Pradesh during the campaign. A total of 94 thousand 294 (95.2 percent) drinking water samples were tested in schools and 58 thousand 464 (95.62 percent) in anganwadi centres. Women in 42 thousand 595 villages were trained to conduct water quality testing using Field Testing Kits (FTK). Also, out of 11 thousand 606 contaminated samples reported, remedial action has been taken for 11 thousand 505 (99.13 percent).



Madhya Pradesh police bust 25 members of a racket of vehicle lifters and recovered more than 250 motorbikes from their possession during raids in Bhopal, Jabalpur, Dhar and many cities of the state, on Friday.. Pioneer photo

Citizens of Nepali origin welcome Nepali Prime Minister

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan accorded warm welcome to the Prime Minister of Nepal Pushp Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' and the delegation accompanying him at Indore airport on Friday.

Overwhelmed by the cordial behaviour of CM Chouhan, Prime Minister of Nepal Prachanda said that it does not seem that he has met him for the first time. Along with Prime Minister Prachanda, other guests included Ganga Dahal, Nepal's Foreign Minister Narayan Prakash Sod and other

ministers and senior officials.

Chouhan said that India and Nepal are very ancient nations. India and Nepal may be two bodies but culturally they are one. The cultural splendour, civilization and rituals of both are the same. The CM said that the relations between India and Nepal will be further strengthened in the days to come.

The cultural scenario of Madhya Pradesh was displayed on the arrival of the Prime Minister of Nepal Prachanda in Indore. The Gangaur of Nimar, accompanied by the exuberant dance of Bhagoriya, was presented to welcome the guests.

A 50-member team of the youth of "Shree Swar Dhvaj Pathak", Indore welcomed the Prime Minister Prachanda while making announcements with drums and saffron flags. Kathak dance was presented by the girls in the reception.

Prime Minister Prachanda also met public representatives at the VIP lounge of Indore airport and also tasted Poha and Samosa of Indore. Chief Minister Chouhan informed him about the specialties of Indore. CM Chouhan met the citizens of Nepali origin present in the airport premises after the

departure of Prime Minister Prachanda to Ujjain and appreciated their performance by meeting various groups that came to give cultural presentations.

Water Resources Minister Tulsiram Silawat, Tourism and Culture Minister Usha Thakur, MP Shankar Lalwani, Rajya Sabha MP Ms. Kavita Patidar, Mayor Pushyamma Bhargava, Chairman of Indore Development Authority Jaipal Singh Chavda, MLAs Malini Gaur, Ramesh Mendola and Mahendra Hardia, Sudarshan Gupta, Gaurav Randive and citizens welcomed the guests.

Lakhs of dairy farmers pledge for 'Dairy of the World'

New Delhi: Lakhs of dairy farmers and their families committed themselves towards making India the 'Dairy of the World' on the occasion of World Milk Day saying that the only way forward to alleviate rural India from the poverty and bring about socio economic change is by working towards establishing the country as the global leader in the dairy sector.

On the occasion, the dairy farmers members of 22 Milk Producer Companies (Farmer Producer Organizations which embodies principles that are similar to Cooperatives) came together and committed themselves to: 'Make India Dairy of the World by increasing India's share to the total world production'; 'Provide quality milk and milk products to consumers by sourcing milk even from the remotest part of the country'; 'Provide a competitive price to farmer members through a fair and transparent process of milk collection and making payments in their respective bank accounts' and 'Increase milk productivity through breed improvement programs and better animal management practices'.

Meenesh Shah, Chairman of National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) and its subsidiary NDDB Dairy Services, which is at the forefront of driving India's efforts towards apex global position in milk production, said, "The world dairying community only months' back paid rich tributes to rural India and dairy farmers at the World Dairy Summit 2022."

जाहिर सूचना

सर्व साधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि श्रीमती सरिता आनन्द पति श्री आनन्द कुमार निवासी 140, एन-3 / ए, आर. को. सेक्टर, बरखेड़ा, बी.एच.ई.एल. भोपाल (म.प्र.) ने अपने स्वामित्व एवं अधिपत्य का एक किता आवामिष मकान जो प्लॉट क्रमांक- 243, (क्षेत्रफल 810 वर्गफीट), जो खसरा क्रमांक 3813/2/1, 514/403/1 एवं 517/381 के अंग भाग पर निर्मित है, स्थित ग्राम बरखेड़ा पटवानी, वार्ड क्रमांक- 54, तहसील हुजुर जिला भोपाल (म.प्र.) जिसकी चतुर्थ सीमाएं निम्न प्रकार से हैं:- पूर्व में - रोड, पश्चिम में - भूखण्ड / भवन क्रमांक 244, उत्तर में - भूखण्ड / भवन क्रमांक 242 एवं दक्षिण में - भूखण्ड / भवन क्रमांक 244, को विक्रय करने हेतु मेरे पक्षकार से अनुबंध कर व्याना राशि प्राप्त कर ली है एवं उक्त संपत्ति का मूल विक्रय पर दिनांक 11 जून, 2022 एवं क्रमांक अ-1/18315 एवं दस्तावेज क्रमांक 663 पर दर्ज है जो कि श्री श्रीमती कमला पति स्वामी श्री दादाजी निवासी-382, एन-2, सी-सेक्टर, बरखेड़ा, बी.एच.ई.एल. भोपाल के नाम से है जो पूर्व में मूल विक्रय पर दिनांक 11 जून, 2022 गुम हो गया है एवं मेरा पक्षकार उपरोक्त संपत्ति को क्रय करके उपरोक्त विक्रय पर की प्रमाणित प्रतिलिपि एवं अपने अन्य मूल दस्तावेजों के साथ बंधक रखकर पंजाब एण्ड सिंध बैंक, शाखा धारपुर, भोपाल से वित्तीय सहायता प्राप्त करना चाहते हैं। इस संबंध में यदि किसी भी व्यक्ति / सरकारी, गैर सरकारी संस्था / बैंक को कोई आपत्ति है तो इस सूचना के प्रकाशन के सप्त दिवस के अंदर लिखित आपत्ति प्रस्तुत की। समयावधि बीत जाने के पश्चात मेरा पक्षकार बकाया राशि भुगतान कर विक्रय पर अपने पक्ष में निश्चित कर लेवेगा एवं इस हेतु इसके उपरान्त किसी प्रकार की कोई आपत्ति मान्य नहीं होगी।

अध्वक्ष
स्थान : भोपाल (हंसराज मूर्तिजी)
दिनांक: 02/06/2023 श्रीमती उमा मोहनदास एडवोकेट्स

146/8, प्रीमियर सेक्टर,एन.पी. नगर, जौन-1, भोपाल (म.प्र.) फोन : 2575105, मो. 9425004680

Cleanliness Bhopal competition results out

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Results of cleanest Bhopal competition under Swachh Survekshan 2023 by Municipal Corporation Bhopal were declared in the presence of the Chief Minister of the State Shivraj Singh Chouhan.

Cleanest Bhopal competition organized last night on the occasion of Bhopal Gaurav Divas. The winners of the Resident Associations and Markets were announced.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that those who contributed to the cleanliness of the city will be honored at the Chief Minister's residence. On this occasion, CM Chouhan congratulated the winners of the cleanest competition and also took a group photograph.

Medical Education Minister Vishwas Kailash Sarang congratulated the winning resident associations and market.

In the program, MP V.D. Sharma and Sadhvi Pragma

Cleanest Bhopal competition organized last night on the occasion of Bhopal Gaurav Divas. The winners of the Resident Associations and Markets were announced

Thakur, Mayor Malti Rai, MLAs Rameshwar Sharma, Krishna Gaur, Chairman Bhopal Development Authority Krishna Mohan Soni, Chairman Electronic Board of M.P. Shaitan Singh Pal, Corporation Chairman Kishan Suryavanshi, President of District Panchayat Norang Gurjar, Former Mayor Alok Sharma and other public representatives and officers and a large number of dignitaries were present at Motilal Nehru on Thursday.

In the main hospitality of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chaihan the winners of the cleanest competition in the program of Bhopal Gaurav Divas held at the stadium were announced. Two Resident Associations and Committees from each Zone out of the participating Resident Associations were declared as the winner while 1st, 2nd and 2nd in the Cleanest Market Competition. The third place area markets were also announced.

On this occasion, the Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said that Bhopal is now the center of the country. It is the cleanest capital, we have to take it further and make it number 1 in cleanliness.

Shivraj Singh Chouhan said everyone should work together for the cleanliness of the city. With an appeal to make the country's first city in cleanliness, Bhopal is not only the country but in the world we have to make the city that follows the best of culture and traditions.

सेन्ट बैंक होम फाइनेन्स लिमिटेड
Cent Bank Home Finance Limited
Registered Office : Bhopal Corporate Office : Mumbai
Subsidiary of Central Bank of India

Branch Office:- Plot no.2, M.P. Nagar, Near Roopsingh Stadium City Centre, Gwalior (M.P.) - 474002, Ph.: 0751-4010206, 2429694

NOTICE UNDER SECTION 13(2), READ WITH SECTION13(8) AND 13(13) OF SARFAESI ACT, 2002 TO BE PUBLISHED IN NEWS PAPER WHEN THE SAME IS RETURNED UNDELIVERED REFUSE TO ACCEPT AND ACKNOWLEDGE

A notice is hereby given that the following Borrower/Co-borrower and Guarantors have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from the Cent Bank Home Finance Limited and the loans have been classified as Non Performing Assets (NPA). The notices were issued to them under Section 13(2) of Securitization and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 on their last known addresses, We have indicated our intention of taking possession of mortgaged Property owned by following Borrowers/Guarantors as per section 13(4) of the Act in case of your failure to pay the amount mentioned below within 60 days. Details are hereunder.

S. No.	Name of Borrower/ Co-Borrower / Guarantors	Description of Mortgaged Property	Amount Outstanding Demand Notice Date
1.	Mr. Mahesh Pal S/o Mr. HariRam Pal Mrs. Sapna Pal W/o Mr. Mahesh Pal Mr. Rajendra Pal S/o Mr. HariRam Pal Mrs. Shashi Pal W/o Mr. Rajendra Pal Mrs. Indra Pal W/o Mr. HariRam Pal Permanent Add - Bhapkar Ki Goth, Daulat Ganj, Lashkar, Gwalior (M.P.)-474001 Property Address- Navgrah Colony, Sector No.2, Near Mata ka Mandir, Lashkar, Gwalior, (M.P.) - 474001, A/c No.: 00502090000017	Property owner- Mrs. Indra Pal W/o Mr. HariRam Pal Ward No.47, Patwari Haika No.41/1, Part of Survey No. 1487, Village Kota, Navgarh Colony, Lashkar, Gwalior (M.P.)-474001, Area1800 Sq.Ft. Boundaries : East-Shelvar Property, West - Property of Shri Bhagwan Singh Banjara & Sellar, North-Road, South-Road.	₹ 38,38,032.00 + interest & other charges (Thirty Eight Lakh Thirty Eight Thousand thirty two Only) Demand Notice Date 20.02.2023 NPA Date 09.07.2022
2.	Mr. Karan Singh S/o Mr. Tulsi Ram Mrs. Bhawana Pankaj W/o Mr. Karan Singh Permanent Add: Sone Lal ka Pura, Post- Surpura, Tehsil- Ater, District -Bhind (M.P.)-477001, Property Add: Duplex No. 4, Ward No. 23, Shamshan Ghat Road, Shanti Nagar, Morar, Gwalior- (M.P.)-474006 A/c No.: 00502070002237	Property owner- Mr. Karan Singh S/o Mr. Tulsi Ram & Mrs. Bhawana W/o Mr. Karan Singh- Part of Survey No. 3437, No. 23, Village- Morar, Shamshan Ghat Road, Morar, District- Gwalior-474006, Area 765 Sq.ft, Boundaries : East- House Mr. Gagan Shaky West-Road 20 Ft. wide, North-House Gajraj Singh Tomar, South-House Gajraj, Singh Tomar	₹ 20,00,693.00 + interest & other charges (Twenty Lakh six hundred Ninety three Only) Demand Notice Date 21.01.2023 NPA Date 23.11.2022

The steps are being taken for substituted service of notice. The above Borrower/Co-borrower and Guarantor (s) (wherever applicable) are hereby called upon to make payment of outstanding amount within 60 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which further steps will be taken after expiry of 60 days from the date of this notice under sub-section (4) of Section 13 of Securitization and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.

Place: Gwalior, Date : 02-06-2023 Authorised Officer Cent Bank Home Finance Ltd., Gwalior

बैंक ऑफ बरौडा
Bank of Baroda

Bank of Baroda,
Arera Colony Branch, Bhopal

DEMAND NOTICE

Notice issued under section 13(2) of Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 Read with Rule 3(1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Whereas the undersigned has issued notice on dates mentioned below in table (sent by regd. Post) under section 13(2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002. r.w. Rule 3(1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 to you and to repay the dues mentioned therein within 60 days from the receipt of the said notice, which were returned undelivered and I have reason to believe that you are avoiding service of demand notice on you. Now, therefore, notice is hereby given to you to repay the banks dues within 60 days from this Notice failing which the recovery shall be made as per rules and we, the secured creditor, shall be entitled to exercise all or any of the rights under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002. r.w. Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. The content of the notice is as under.

Name of the Borrower/ Guarantor	Description of the Secured Assets	Amount Outstanding Demand Notice Date
Borrowers: M/s Gravity Infracon India Private Limited Through its Directors : 1. Anand Singh Solanki, 2. Parmal Singh Kandil Flat No. 201, 2nd Floor H Block, Virasha Heights, E-8 Extension, Bhopal - 462039	EM of plot no. 13 part of survey no. 1, 2 Min, 147, 148, 149, 154 Min, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163 & 164 admeasuring area of 139.40 Sq mtr. situated at Kunj Bihar Colony, Phase-I Mouja Jadeuakalan Nagar, Morar dist. Gwalior owned by Shri Parmal Singh Kandil S/o Shri Babu Singh Kandil, Boundaries: East: Plot No. 12, West : Plot No. 14, North : Plot No. 22, South: Common Road Colony 25 feet	Overdraft Working Capital O/s as on 01.05.2023 ₹ 24,39,547.72 Interest + Charges Rates of interest (BRLRR+ SP (0.25)+ 0.85%) 12/05/2023 NPA Date 01.05.2023
1. Anand Singh Solanki (Director & Guarantor) Address : 1. 35 Globus City, Opp Kali Mata mandir, Chunabhatti, Kolar Road, Bhopal - 462016 2. 62-C New Govindpur, Near University Registrar Bunglow, Thapipur, Morar, Gwalior - 474011 2. Parmal Singh Kandil (Director & Guarantor) Address : 06, Kunj Vihar Colony, Phase-I, Near Water tank, Gole Ka Mandir, Gwalior - 474005	Hypo. of all equipments, machines, furnitures & fixtures at the two branches of Slim & Slim Slimming Centre & Beauty Parlour at Baghmughaliya Extension & Katara Hills. Shop No. 6, Opp Daurika Parisar, Bghmughaliya, Bhopal - 462023	O/s as on 10.04.2023 T/L ₹ 927838.25 BGECLS ₹ 360000.00 T/L ₹ 787500.00 BGECLS ₹ 250000.00 Total ₹ 2325338.25 04/05/2023 NPA Date-10.04.2023

Notice is hereby given to public not to transact / enter into any agreement and to mortgagors not to sell/ transfer the above said secured assets without permission of the bank in terms of sec 13(13) of the act.

Date : 03-06-2023, Place : Bhopal Authorised Officer, Bank of Baroda

Bring norms against misuse of sedition law, says panel

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Law Commission has backed the penal provision for the offence of sedition, saying repealing it altogether can have serious adverse ramifications for the security and integrity of the country. Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code dealing with sedition is at present under abeyance following directions of the Supreme Court issued in May, 2022.

The Commission said repealing the provision on the mere basis that certain countries have done so is essentially turning a blind eye to the glaring ground realities existing in India and that it can be retained with certain safeguards to prevent its misuse.

In its report submitted to the Government recently, the panel said cognizant of the views on the misuse of Section 124A, it recommends that model guidelines curbing them be issued by the Centre. "In this context, it is also alternatively suggested that a provision



analogous to Section 196(3) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 (CrPC) may be incorporated as a proviso to Section 154 of CrPC, which would provide the requisite procedural safeguard before filing of a FIR with respect to an offence under Section 124A of IPC," chairman of the 22nd Law Commission Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi (ret'd) said in his covering letter to Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal.

While it is imperative to lay down certain procedural guidelines for curbing any misuse of Section 124A dealing with sedition by law enforcement authorities, any allegation of misuse of the provision does not by implication warrant a

call for its repeal, the report said. The Commission also said that sedition being a "colonial legacy" is not a valid ground for its repeal.

In its report submitted to Meghwal, the Law Commission also said the existence of laws such as Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and the National Security Act does not by implication cover all elements of the offence envisaged under Section 124A of the IPC. "Further, in the absence of a provision like Section 124A of IPC, any expression that incites violence against the government would invariably be tried under the special laws and counter-terror legislations, which contain much more

stringent provisions to deal with the accused," the report "Usage of the Law of Sedition" said. It observed that each country's legal system grapples with its own different set of realities.

"Repealing Section 124A of IPC on the mere basis that certain countries have done so is essentially turning a blind eye to the glaring ground realities existing in India," it said. In his covering letter, Justice Awasthi recalled that the constitutionality of Section 124A was challenged before the Supreme Court.

Union of India assured the Supreme Court that it was re-examining Section 124A and the court may not invest its valuable time in doing the same." Pursuant to the same, the top court directed the Central Government and all the State Governments to refrain from registering any FIR or taking any coercive measures, while suspending all continuing investigations in relation to Section 124A.

India stresses need for UNSC reform

'The current composition of the Security Council no longer aligns with the realities of our interconnected and multi-polar world'

PNS/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/UNITED NATIONS

With India constantly calling for restructuring the United Nations Security Council(UNSC), envoys and policy experts have said the institution in its current structure is "perverse and immoral." They also said the time to reform it is now adding the UNSC is "a perpetuation of the colonisation project" and does not reflect the rise of new powers and shifting geopolitical landscape. They also said status quo is untenable.

Speaking at a Roundtable on Security Council Reform at the UN headquarters hosted by the Permanent Missions of Brazil, India, South Africa and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines late Thursday, India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj said, "The current composition of the Security Council no longer aligns with the realities

of our interconnected and multi-polar world." "The Council structure, designed in a different era, does not reflect the rise of new powers, the shifting geopolitical landscape and the aspirations of nations striving for a fairer and more equitable global order," she said. The roundtable was held with the aim to bring in the perspective of the Global South on the long-pending issue, keeping in mind the pressing urgency for reformed multi-lateralism architecture in the United Nations representative of contemporary geo-political realities.

Kamboj stressed that the urgency of UNSC reform is also underscored by the unprecedented global challenges that transcend borders.

"Climate change, terrorism, pandemics, and humanitarian crises require collective efforts and shared responsibilities," she said, adding that a reformed Security Council will "enable us to pool resources,



expertise and perspectives from a wider range of countries, empowering us to confront these issues with greater effectiveness and unity."

Asserting that the "time for Security Council reform is now," Kamboj called on the Member States to "seize" the opportunity to revitalize and strengthen the United Nations by making it more inclusive, representative and responsive to the needs and aspirations of all nations.

President of India's leading think tank Observer Research Foundation (ORF) Samir Saran said in a deeply heterogeneous, multipolar world, it is "untenable" that a group of victors of war from another century should be in charge of manag-

ing the world of today. "The war is history and so is the influence and capabilities of some of the members in the room. I think the current structure of the UNSC is perverse and immoral. It is a perpetuation for many of us from the Global South of the colonisation project.

The burden of the war was borne by the colonies while the privileges of peace benefited the colonisers and their allies," he said. Saran noted that in past decades, "we have seen how the will of the comity of nations has been negated by one or more of permanent members" of Council. China, France, Russia, the UK and the US make up the five permanent members of the 15-nation Council.

Govt pushing for developed India by 2047: Def Min

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

With growing stature of India, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Friday said with power comes great responsibility quoting a famous dialogue from Hollywood blockbuster 'Spiderman' to emphasise that India's responsibility will increase in sync with its rising position.

Making this observation here while addressing an event, Rajnath said he envisioned a developed India that ensures that universal values like democracy, religious freedom, dignity and world peace are established across the globe.

The defence minister said the government is working to build a developed India by 2047, focusing on almost all sectors of the country. "India is not an emerging but a resurgent power which is regaining its place on the global eco-



nomic map under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi," he said.

The defence minister also underlined the need for building a welfare state with high standard of living, social harmony and equal participation of women in the development process.

He began his address by stating that until the 17th century, India had a remarkably strong economy, constituting over a quarter of the world's GDP, but it lost its glory due to a weak military and political

slavery. The defence minister asserted that the government is working on both these fronts to ensure that India regains its old glorious status. He stated that no stone is being left unturned to create a strong, young and tech-savvy armed force on the back of robust defence industry which indigenously manufactures state-of-the-art weapons and equipment, while efforts are also being made to get rid of the colonial mindset.

"A strong military not only secures the borders, but also protects the culture and economy of a country. The goal is to build a strong, self-reliant and prosperous nation, which caters to its own needs as well as the requirements of friendly countries," he said.

"This is an era of renaissance. It is time to re-establish India as a global superpower," he added, according to the defence ministry. Talking about the political landscape in the

country, Rajnath said political parties are integral to a democracy and it cannot survive without them. At the same time, he rued that many political parties in India do not operate based on any ideology and their politics revolve around a person or a family or a caste.

"I think such politics should have no place in a developed India. Politics should be based on ideology and values and not on the basis of family, religion and caste," he said, speaking at Times Network's India Economic Conclave.

"If I talk about the political future of India, I wish that as we move ahead, our democracy should be strengthened in the same way. Criminalisation of politics should end, and our country should move forward on the path of credible politics. Politics should be understood as a medium of public service," he said.

ED raids VIPS Group of Cos in Pune for FEMA violations

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Friday said it has conducted searches at Pune and Ahmednagar in connection with FEMA violations by VIPS Group of Companies and Global Affiliate Business engaged in various illegal trade, crypto exchange and wallet services. The searches yielded seizure of cash and bank balances to the tune of Rs 18.54 crore.

VIPS Group of Companies was managed and controlled by Vinod Khute. "The ED initiated an investigation under Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 against Vinod Khute and others. Khute is presently residing in Dubai and is the mastermind of various illegal trade, crypto exchange, wallet services being operated through

VIPS Group of Companies and the proceeds were being siphoned off through Hawala to various foreign countries," the agency said in a statement.

The FEMA probe has revealed that Global Affiliate Business which is an affiliate programme that markets business in affiliate marketing by selling products through e-commerce shopping portal, was being operated through an application namely "Global Affiliate Business" available on Google Play Store as well as Apple Store, it said.

However, it was revealed that Global Affiliate Business has been running an illegal and unauthorized multi-level marketing scheme wherein if a person opts for the scheme as a member and refers other consumers/ clients on the application/ website, a commission on

his investment/ expense on the application is credited in his account/ wallet."In this manner, funds to the tune of Rs 125 crore have been collected from various investors. Further, Global Affiliate Business has also been found to be marketing the business of Kana Capital which is engaged into brokerage under which various clients of trade forex, crypto, stocks etc.," it said.

Kana Capitals in consultation with directors of VIPS group of companies also conducted various weekly training programmes for clients of Global Affiliate Business for investment in VIPSWALLET and VIPSFINTOCK for purchase of sale and purchase of crypto, stocks, and how to lure other consumers/ clients into illegal and unauthorized multi level marketing schemes.

Govt hopes to pay 85-90% MGNREGS workers through ABPS by June-end: Min



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Union rural development ministry is hopeful of covering 88 to 90 per cent of active MGNREGS workers under the mandatory Aadhaar-based payment system (ABPS) before the month ends, officials said on Friday.

The deadline to make workers registered under the national employment guarantee scheme a part of the payment system ends on June 30. The ministry has asserted that workers will not be refused work if they do not have an

Aadhaar number. So far, around 74.9 per cent active workers have been marked eligible for the payment system, according to data on the ministry's website.

The rural development ministry has asked states to organise camps and follow-up with beneficiaries to achieve 100 per cent coverage under ABPS.

It has also clarified that beneficiaries should be requested to provide their Aadhaar number, but should not be refused work if they do not have one. Data on the min-

Send baby back: India tells Berlin

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Taking note of an Indian baby girl put in foster care in Germany, New Delhi on Friday urged it to send her back at the earliest. She is living in foster care in Berlin for over 20 months. India said it is impor-

tant for the child to be in her linguistic, religious, cultural and social environment.

This appeal came as German authorities had taken custody of Ariha Shah on September 23, 2021, when she was seven months old, alleging that the parents harassed her.

India will rule automobile sector in five years: Gadkari

PTI ■ VAPI (GUJ)

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari on Friday expressed confidence that India will become the largest automobile market in the world in the next five years under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The Union minister for road transport and highways was addressing a gathering in Vapi town of Gujarat's Valsad district after inaugurating 'Rajju Shroff ROFEL University' campus.

"At present, the size of the Indian automobile industry is Rs 7.5 lakh crore. The industry has so far created 4.5 crore jobs, and it pays the maximum Goods and Services Tax (GST) to the Central and state governments," Gadkari said.

India was previously at fourth position in the world (automobile market) after Japan, the US and China, but recently the country surpassed Japan to become No. 3, he said.

"And, I am confident that within five years, thanks to the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, we will be No.1 and the size of the industry will be Rs 15 lakh crore," the minister said.

Given the qualified manpower and raw material available in the country, he expressed confidence that India can become the number one economy in the world in future.

PMLA Special court sentences man to four years' RI in drugs case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The PMLA Special Court, Jalandhar has convicted one Mahabir Singh of Amritsar on money laundering charges and sentenced him to four years rigorous imprisonment along with a fine of Rs 20,000 in a narcotics case relating to seizure of 15 kg of heroin.

Further, his immovable properties which were earlier attached by the ED have been confiscated under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), the ED said.

The ED initiated investigation in 2009 on the basis of an FIR registered at Sadar police station in Amritsar

INS TRISHUL VISITS PORT ANJOUAN ISLAND

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The PMLA Special Court, Jalandhar has convicted one Mahabir Singh of Amritsar on money laundering charges and sentenced him to four years rigorous imprisonment along with a fine of Rs 20,000 in a narcotics case relating to seizure of 15 kg of heroin.

Further, his immovable properties which were earlier attached by the ED have been confiscated under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), the ED said.

The ED initiated investigation in 2009 on the basis of an FIR registered at Sadar police station in Amritsar

under various sections of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985 and Arms Act, 1959 against accused Mahabir Singh and others.

Accused Mahabir Singh was earlier convicted by Special Court, Amritsar under NDPS Act with regard to recovery of 15 kg of heroin.

Investigation conducted by the ED revealed that the "proceeds of crime" generated from drug trade were invested by the accused in immovable properties which were subsequently attached by the ED. After investigation, the ED filed a Prosecution Complaint or chargesheet in 2017 under PMLA.

INSHORT

INS TRISHUL VISITS PORT ANJOUAN ISLAND
New Delhi: As part of the Indian Navy's long range deployment, its warship INS Trishul visited port Anjouan, Comoros from May 31 to June two. The ship anchored off Anjouan Island on May 31 and was received by civil-military leadership. As part of the visit, Captain Kapil Kaushik, the Commanding Officer, called on senior government officials at Anjouan. Professional interactions with Comoros Armed Forces and Comoros Coast Guard, sports fixtures and a joint Yoga session with Comoros Defence forces were undertaken by the ship during the stay in harbor, navy officials said here on Friday.

AMARNATH YATRA TRACK TO BE RESTORED SOON
New Delhi: The Border Road Organization (BRO) will complete the restoration works on Amarnath Yatra track by 15 June well before the Yatra commences on 01 July 2023. The scope of work involves snow clearance, widening of the track, restoration of all foot bridges, fixing of hand rails and construction of break walls, the defence ministry said here on Friday. Earlier the Yatra track from Baltal to the Holy Cave was maintained by Public Works Department, Jammu and Kashmir and the one from Chandanwari to Holy Cave was maintained by Pahalgam Development Authority. The tracks were handed over to the BRO in September 2022 for maintenance and upgradation.

VIRTUAL SCO SUMMIT DUE TO MANY FACTORS: MEA
New Delhi: India on Friday said the decision to host the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation(SCO) summit next month in the virtual format was taken after reviewing several factors and no announcement was made that high-profile event will be held in person. This assertion by ministry of external affairs(MEA) spokesperson Arindam Bagchi here came after the MEA on May 30 said India assumed rotating Chairmanship of SCO at the Samarkand Summit last year. Under India's first-ever Chairmanship, the 23rd Summit of SCO Council of Heads of State will be held in virtual format on July four, chaired by PM Modi.



Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat pays tribute to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj on the 350th anniversary of his coronation, in Nagpur on Friday

PTI

‘Month-long riots left 310 hurt, 98 dead’

37K people in 272 relief camps, says Manipur Govt



PTI ■ IMPHAL

At least 98 people lost their lives and 310 others were injured in the ethnic violence in Manipur that broke out a month ago, the Government said in a statement on Friday. A total of 37,450 people are in 272 relief camps at present, said the statement, issued by the Chief Minister’s Office (CMO).

In all, 4,014 cases of arson have been reported since the violence broke out in the State on May 3, it said. “The number of deaths is 98 and the number of injured reported is 310,” it said.

Over the last one month, the State police has registered 3,734 cases and arrested 65 people for their involvement in the violence, the statement said.

“Sporadic incidents of firing or torching of houses by miscreants are becoming rare now as coordinated effort is made by different security agencies,” it said. The Army, Assam Rifles, CAPFs and local police have been deployed in vulnerable places, it added. Till now, 84 companies of central armed forces have been deployed, the statement said.

“More companies are being

deployed. Flag march and area domination exercises are being carried out widely. Search operations will be conducted from today to recover snatched arms and ammunition,” it said.

Meetings were being held with village heads and civil society organisations to resolve conflict and bring peace, it said, claiming that the situation is normal in most of the districts.

Curfew has been relaxed for 12 hours in Imphal West, Imphal East, Bishnupur and Pherzawl, for 11 hours in Kangpokpi, for 10 hours in Churachandpur and Chandel, for eight hours in Jiribam and Tenugopal, and for seven hours in Thoubal and Kakching districts, it said.

There is no curfew in Tamenglong, Noney, Senapati, Ukhrul and Kamjong, it added. “Movement of essential items along the NH-37 has been ensured,” the statement said, noting that around 450 trucks were on the move with essential items. An uneasy calm prevailed in Manipur a day after Home Minister Amit Shah left the state, concluding his four-day visit and announcing a slew of measures to bring back normalcy.

Another district-level BJP leader killed in West Bengal

Suvendu demands Didi’s resignation, TMC claims intra-party rivalry

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Yet another district-level BJP leader was murdered in Bengal prompting State Opposition leader Suvendu Adhikari to demand Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee’s resignation for her alleged failure as the State’s police Minister.

The demand by Adhikari came after Prashant Roy Basunia an Anchal general secretary of the BJP at Dinhata in Coochbehar district of North Bengal was on Friday morning shot dead in front of his mother following brief heated exchanges with some alleged Trinamool Congress goons, sources said.

Basunia’s mother said that the entire family had fled to Delhi in the face of rampant TMC attacks after the 2021 Assembly elections that saw Mamata Banerjee roaring back to power for the third-consecutive term.

“As soon as we returned to Dinhata they started threatening us... Finally they came today and shot my son from point blank range,” the victim’s mother said. Trinamool legislator from Dinhata Udayan Guha however, said that



Basunia had fallen victim to intra-party rivalry in the BJP.

“It was the result of intra-party bickerings,” he said adding, Basunia himself had a criminal past. “He was under police radar because of his involvement in anti-social activities,” Guha said.

Demanding the Chief Minister’s resignation Adhikari said, “Today’s incident once again proves that the law and order of Bengal has completely collapsed... As the police minister she has failed to control bomb blasts, political murders ... We demand her immediate resignation.” The BJP leader demanded CBI investigation into the murder.

As hordes of TMC workers were deserting TMC and joining the BJP, the ruling party was resorting to political murders, he said reminding how scores of BJP workers had been murdered by the TMC after it came back to power in 2021.

I can change Bengal in six months if made CM: Mithun

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KOLKATA

In what is being seen as Mumbai cine star Mithun Chakraborty’s hidden chief ministerial ambitions, the BJP leader on Friday said that he would change the face of Bengal in six months’ time if he were to become the State Chief Minister. Alleging that there was a complete collapse of the State administrative system Chakraborty said that he would change things in six months if he was given the chance to become the Chief Minister.

“There is complete collapse of the system in Bengal... It is all round deterioration... But it can be corrected... If by default I am made the Chief Minister for six months then you will see the change,” Chakraborty said inviting immediate attack from the ruling Trinamool Congress.

Calling Chakraborty a chit fund accused who had gone to the BJP to evade arrest, State ruling party spokesperson Kunal Ghosh said, “This is a man who was accused in the chit fund scam... In order to escape arrest he has joined BJP ... And now he is saying all sorts of things against Mamata Banerjee who made him an MP. He is a traitor... He doesn’t deserve any attention because the BJP will never come to power in Bengal.”



HC defers hearing in Chhota Rajan’s suit against Netflix

Jailed don seeks to restrain release of series ‘Scoop’

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Friday deferred the hearing of a suit filed by incarcerated underworld don Rajendra S Nikhalje alias Chhota Rajan seeking to restrain release of a Netflix television-series ‘Scoop’ - based on the killing of journalist Jyotirmoy Dey -- on the grounds of infringement on his

personal life, till June 7.

Rajan, who is lodged at Tihar Jail in the national Capital, had moved the High Court on Thursday - had sought restraint on the release of the tele-serial alleging that the serial makers had made a reference to his name (Rajan), image, purported voice and other names associated with Rajan. Rajan has sought Re 1 as damages for personal infringement. The HC Vacation Judge Justice Shivkumar G Dige adjourned the hearing of Rajan’s suit till June 7 after noting that since the television series was already on the air, there was no urgency in the matter. He grant-

ed time to the makers of the television serial to have their say on the serial. “Scoop” is based on a biographical account of one of the co-accused in the Dey murder case, journalist Jigna Vora, who was later acquitted in the case. In his suit, Rajan told the High Court: “My client has been shown as the one behind the murder of Dey. He is convicted in the case. His appeal is pending before the High Court. Should he be portrayed like this in front of the whole world? Lakhs of people are going to watch it. It is going to create a lot of problems for him” Desai argued on behalf of Rajan.



Fifty-six-year-old Dey, who was an Editor (Special Investigations) with ‘Mid-Day’, was gunned down by a group of motorbike-riding gangsters at Powai in north-east Mumbai on June 11, 2011. It may be recalled that a Special Court had on May 2, 2018 convicted Chhota Rajan and eight others for the sensational murder and sentenced

Security forces eliminate Pak ultra in Dassal forest

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

A joint team of security forces on Friday eliminated a terrorist, believed to be a Pakistani, in the forest area of Dassal Gujran, roughly 4 kms from Rajouri. The security forces were keeping a close watch in the surrounding areas following inputs about the presence of a group of terrorists. Intelligence reports had also suggested that the hiding terrorists were planning another strike on security forces in the area. Defence PRO Lt-Col Devender Anand in Jammu said, “Soon after recording a suspicious movement in the forest area of Dassal Gujran (near Rajouri) on the night of 01/02 June 2023 the security forces had laid a joint operation”.

The contact was established between the security forces after a terrorist hiding in the dense forest area opened fire on a search party in the wee hours of Friday. According to local reports the firing continued from both sides for over three hours.

With the first light, the



search operations were launched by the joint teams of security forces. The Defence PRO said, the terrorist was neutralised during the heavy exchange of fire. The dead body of the foreign terrorist was later retrieved from a gorge, where he had taken position during the exchange of fire. This is the third such incident reported from the Jammu region in the last three days.

The local administration had decided to close down the schools in the close vicinity of the encounter site to prevent any mishap.

The search operation was still on at the time of filing this report. Unconfirmed reports said two to three terrorists were hiding in the area when the gun-battle started.

Guj court rejects anticipatory bail plea of BJP MP’s father in case of abetting doctor’s suicide

PTI ■ VERAVAL

Sessions court in Gujarat’s Gir Somnath district on Friday rejected the anticipatory bail plea filed by BJP MP Rajesh Chudasama’s father Naranbhai Chudasama in a case of abetment to suicide.

The court of sessions judge P G Gokani in Veraval town rejected 62-year-old Naranbhai’s anticipatory bail plea, citing that the police investigation in the case has just started and it will not be appropriate to give any relief at this juncture,

especially when the crime is of a serious nature. An FIR was registered against the Chudasamas in May after Dr Atul Chag, a well known MD physician in the town, was found hanging from a ceiling fan at his house on February 12.

The police registered an FIR against the MP from Junagadh Lok Sabha seat, and his father under Sections 306 (abetment to suicide) and 506-2 (criminal intimidation) of the Indian Penal Code.

While the legislator has not filed any plea as yet, Naranbhai filed a plea a few days ago seeking anticipatory bail on var-

ious grounds.

As per the FIR, registered three months after the doctor’s death, the Chudasamas had a close relationship with him for the last 20 years and had borrowed nearly Rs 1.75 crore from him in instalments since 2008 by winning his trust. They allegedly gave Dr Chag a few cheques.

However, when they stopped responding to Dr Chag’s repeated requests to return the money, he deposited one of their cheques of Rs 90 lakh in a bank, but it was dishonoured, the FIR

stated.

Days before the suicide, the duo allegedly abused Dr Chag verbally and threatened to kill his only son Hitarth for demanding the money back, the FIR stated, adding that the threat and the thought of losing money and his son deeply upset the doctor, who took the extreme step out of shock and fear.

In his plea, Naranbhai claimed that although no concrete evidence has been found against them so far, the police suddenly lodged an FIR against them just because his son is an MP.

Guv ‘dismisses’ Bengal Govt’s claim of not being consulted on VC appointments

PTI ■ KOLKATA

West Bengal Governor Dr CV Ananda Bose on Friday “dismissed” state Education Minister Bratya Basu’s claim that Bose had appointed interim vice-chancellors for 11 universities without consulting the State Government. He implicitly said that there had been consultation but that his office had not necessarily agreed with the State Government’s recommendations. “Consultation does not mean concurrence,” said Bose on the sidelines of a programme held at Raj Bhavan.

Calcutta, Jadavpur and Burdwan universities are among the 11 varsities where interim VCs have been appointed by the Governor, who is the chancellor of all the State-aided or run varsities.

Sources in Raj Bhavan claimed that 10 interim VCs, barring one in Dakshin Dinajpur district, joined duty and signed the guidelines issued by the Chancellor.

“The interim vice-chancellor of a university in Dakshin Dinajpur district was getting threatening calls from unidentified people, hence he chose not to join,” a source in the state education



department said.

Hours after the Governor’s office issued a list appointing interim VCs on Thursday, Basu said the Raj Bhavan’s decision was “unilateral” and “violates the law”.

“We came to know from the news media that the honourable chancellor has appointed Vice-Chancellors of 10 State-aided universities. These

appointments were made without consulting the department. This was done in contravention of the rules laid down for the appointment of VCs and this is illegal. In these unprecedented circumstances we, on behalf of the department, are taking legal opinions on what steps could be initiated in future,” Basu tweeted.

“On behalf of the higher education department, we are respectfully requesting the vice-chancellors who have been appointed illegally to reject this appointment,” the minister tweeted.

In an apparent response to Basu’s tweet, the governor said, “Raj Bhavan clarifies that consultation in the matter of appointment of interim VCs or authorising someone to perform the functions of an interim VC has been done.”

Vijayan to preside over World Kerala Sabha in New York

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI



Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and his Cabinet colleagues are on Cloud Nine as they are set to leave the Indian shores for a ten-day trip to the US and Cuba. Vijayan will preside over the World Kerala Sabha to be held in New York, which according to the CPI-M leaders in the State as well as in the US, is the largest-ever congregation of Malayalees seen anywhere outside India.

Tickets to share the podium with the Chief Minister are being sold at an unbelievable price of Rs 85,00,000 per person. The holders of these tickets can share the table with Vijayan, according to Manmadhan Nair, a New York-based CPI-M activist.

The donors would get special audience with the Chief Minister when they call on their relatives in Kerala and this is being seen as a scheme by the industries department of the State to make overseas Malayalees invest in their home State.

Though the CPI-M-led Kerala Government had completed seven years in office, the Ministers and party leaders are groping in the dark when asked about the economic and industrial development of the State. To make matters worse, three farmers committed sui-

cide in the State in quick succession as a result of debt they accrued because of the indifferent approach of cooperative banks in Kerala.

“We do not expect the Chief Minister’s trip to yield any results because people in US know well that Kerala under the CPI-M is not a safe bet,” said Ramesh Chennithala, former Leader of the Opposition and slammed the sale of tickets for premium seating next to the Chief Minister.

However, the Chief Minister’s entourage is confident of attracting US entrepreneurs to Kerala to set up businesses here.

The fact that the Central Government could not do any harm to the Chief Minister or his family despite unleashing all central agencies on them over charges of gold smuggling, money laundering and high-level corruption, has bolstered their confidence.

Saddled with ₹8 lakh-crore loans, Telangana plunged into debt trap: Union Min



PTI ■ HYDERABAD

Union Minister for Tourism G Kishan Reddy on Friday slammed the K Chandrasekhar Rao-led BRS government for plunging Telangana into a debt trap on the back of alleged rampant corruption and suicides of farmers.

After hoisting the national flag at the historic Golconda Fort on Telangana’s 10th State Formation Day, Reddy said there is a need to introspect whether the State is transforming according to the aspirations of the people and martyrs of the statehood movement.

“The budget debt of the State is Rs 3.12 lakh crore. Through PSUs, corporation banks, NBFCs, NABARD, Power Finance Corporation and RBI, the Government raised

about Rs 8 lakh crore debt. The State is plunging into a debt pile... Telangana borrowed over Rs 8 lakh worth loans from various organisations,” he charged.

He alleged that the State Government has slipped into a position where it is unable to pay salaries to its employees and bills to small contractors.

“Telangana was made as a slave in the hands of one family. There is rampant corruption in the state,” he further fired.

He said as many as 360 people in the first phase of the struggle and about 1,200 people died in the third phase of the Telangana statehood struggle. He claimed that the state government has borrowed money from all the institutions that can give loans in the world and the debt funds were not spent on welfare and development.

TDP fought for equal justice for both: Naidu

PTI ■ AMARAVATI

The Telugu Desam Party (TDP) fought for equal justice for both Andhra Pradesh and Telangana States during bifurcation, N Chandrababu Naidu said on Friday.

The TDP chief made these remarks as nine years have passed since the bifurcation of the former undivided Andhra Pradesh, and the 10th anniversary of Telangana Formation Day has been grandly celebrated. “With a view to developing the State after bifurcation, TDP had taken the ‘Nava Nirmana Deeksha’ and despite the State being in a deficit budget, we have taken all possible measures to take Andhra Pradesh on the progressive path,” said the former Chief Minister in a Press note shared on Friday night.

He said that freedom fighter Potti Sriramulu, who is considered the founding father of Andhra Pradesh, had sacrificed his life for the formation of the Telugu State in 1952 and former Chief Minister NT Rama Rao had floated the TDP for the progress of the Telugu community.



The Indian flag flutters alongside the EGRIP Dome on the breathtaking Greenland ice sheet on Friday.

FIRST COLUMN

KARNATAKA GOVT TO
CREATE A MILLION JOBS

Its mass entrepreneurship programme will create 10 lakh jobs in the first 100 days



LAKSHMI VENKATARAMAN **VENKATESAN**

With expectations running high, the newly minted Karnataka Government of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has both an obligation and an opportunity to redress the unemployment concerns raised by 28% of Karnataka's youth and fulfil their aspirations. Rahul Gandhi, taking full cognisance of this issue, has promised 10 lakh jobs in the next five years. The Congress Government led by Siddaramaiah can get a head start on fulfilling these promises, in its first 100 days, by laying the foundation for sustainable job creation and by instituting programs and policies for mass skilling and entrepreneurship. The challenges for Karnataka are manifold. As per an analysis of Karnataka PLFS data, overall youth unemployment is at nearly 16% but of that subset, educated young people are the most vulnerable. Nearly 35% of educated young people are unemployed and only 14% of women are gainfully employed. To give immediate relief to the unemployed, Rahul Gandhi has proposed the Yuva Nidhi scheme of providing Rs. 3000 per month to unemployed graduates and Rs. 1500 every month to unemployed diploma holders. This, however, needs to be augmented by bold, new long-term solutions that address the root cause of unemployment rather than symptom management. While doing so the new government needs to avoid the pitfalls of past misguided interventions - mismatches between types of skilling and industry needs and mandating the private sector to hire a fixed number of workers - to name a few. Mass entrepreneurship in Karnataka has the potential to empower a significant number of young people to set up their own enterprises spread across a wide range of geographies – especially in Northern Karnataka and in rural areas. An imaginative collaboration between government, private sector, civil society, and youth could be a game changer in democratising enterprise creation, setting up innovation funds, and building industry-specific programmes and partnerships with incubators, accelerators and youth-centric NGOs. To make entrepreneurial opportunities widely accessible, awareness generation campaigns can be launched through Rural Business Idea Contests, and Entrepreneurial Hackathons in educational institutions. Entrepreneurship needs to be made an integral part of education in schools and colleges in Karnataka similar to what the Delhi Government has done.



Banks must lend more to micro-enterprises rather than dole out small loans (the average Mudra loan is Rs. 27,000) to create viable businesses that build assets and generate jobs. Additional efforts should be made to support women as 85% of them face challenges in availing bank loans. Karnataka can also launch state-wide mentor programmes, particularly for the educated unemployed as mentoring greatly improves chances of entrepreneurs' success, according to a study conducted across 17 countries by Sage. Rural and sector-specific entrepreneurship can be encouraged by providing rural-specific infrastructure, connectivity, grants, subsidies, low-interest loans, and tax breaks. Special schemes, grants, and mentorship programs should be instated to address gender disparities and promote gender equity. Digital entrepreneurship can be encouraged through digital literacy training, support for digital platforms and marketplaces, and digital innovation. Key gaps in the policy landscape need to be filled by providing an enabling ecosystem with infrastructure and connectivity, simplifying regulations and expanding incentives to non-technology and non-Bengaluru-based startups. These steps, planned and executed synergistically, can help Karnataka realise the vision of creating 10 lakh jobs in five years for its youth and women, through a grassroots mass entrepreneurship movement spanning every town, taluka and village. *(The writer is the Founding and Managing Trustee of Bharatiya Yuva Shakti Trust)*

India's stake in Awami League's Victory

Bangladesh will again become a centre of anti-India activities, should a BNP-Jama'at-led coalition return to power in Dhaka in coming elections



India must do everything possible, within four corners of international law and with absolute respect for Bangladesh's sovereignty, to help Sheikh Hasina-led Bangladesh Awami League win the parliamentary elections scheduled in that country in January 2024. Begum Khaleda Zia-led Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), the main opposition party, which is allied to the Bangladesh Jama'at-e-Islami (Jama'at) and other fundamentalist Islamist organisations, is pathologically anti-India. Bangladesh will again become a centre of anti-India activity and promoter of north-eastern India's secessionist insurgent groups, should a BNP-Jama'at-led coalition return to power in Dhaka. A look at the record of the BNP-Jama'at-led coalition government when it was in power from 2001 to 2006, makes this clear. The issuance of threats to India, the active promotion of secessionist insurgent violence in north-eastern India, and attempts to create a climate of hostility toward India in Bangladesh were the three main features of Dhaka's policy towards Delhi. An important example of the threats was one by its foreign minister, M. Morshed Khan, at a seminar in Dhaka on September 7, 2004. Referring to what he said were restrictions imposed by India on the import of goods from his country, he said, "Dhaka could end India's three billion-dollar trade here by issuing an SRO (Statutory Rogatory Order) on all Indian goods entering Bangladesh." Striking an even more minatory note, he said, "Bangladesh is India-locked. Delhi should also remember that the seven north-eastern Indian states are Bangladesh-locked." While an attempt to



THREATS TO INDIA, THE ACTIVE PROMOTION OF INSURGENTS, VIOLENCE IN NORTH-EASTERN INDIA, AND ATTEMPTS TO CREATE A CLIMATE OF HOSTILITY TOWARD INDIA WERE MAIN FEATURES OF DHAKA'S POLICY TOWARDS DELHI

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

intimidate India was implicit in his reference to the vulnerability of India's north-eastern states vis-à-vis Bangladesh, an attempt to sow discord between these states and the rest of India was scripted into his blasting of the "Central Bank of India" (Reserve Bank of India?) for acting unilaterally against the interests of the common people of India (by imposing non-tariff barriers) such as not allowing individual states to open letters of credit without permission from Delhi. The policy of providing sanctuary and support to north-eastern India's rebel groups, began when Bangladesh was East Pakistan, but halted after liberation in 1971 when Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was in power and resumed after his assassination. Begum Khaleda Zia's government pursued it with vigour. In fact, when she was the leader of the opposition in Bangladesh's national parliament, she had referred to rebels of the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) and other insurgent groups of north-eastern India as "freedom fighters." Not surprisingly, her government ridiculed India's protests supported by information. Referring to the list of insurgent camps in Bangladesh provided by India's Border Security Force (BSF), Major-General Mohammad Jahangir Alam Khan of the Bangladesh Rifles, visiting India for talks with BSF's director-general, Ajay Raj Sharma, said in Delhi on September 28, 2004,

"There is not a single camp in Bangladesh. We looked for the camps' locations given in the BSF list. Some of the addresses were of our cantonment area and of our headquarters....some of the addresses even pertained to the Bay of Bengal." In sharp contrast, the present government under Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has not only shut these camps down but handed over to India some of the key insurgent leaders it could apprehend. As a part of its attempt to create an anti-India temper in Bangladesh, Begum Khaleda Zia's government even insinuated that India was behind the dastardly grenade attack on the Awami League's rally in Dhaka on August 21, 2004. Sheikh Hasina survived—albeit with injuries—the attack, which was aimed at killing her and eliminating the Awami League's top leadership. Twenty-four (including 22 on the spot) died and 300 were injured. Among those who succumbed to their injuries was Ivy Rahman, secretary of the Awami League's women's affairs wing and wife of Zillur Rahman, then the party's general secretary and subsequently the country's president. Justice Joynul Abedin, a senior judge of the High Court Division of Bangladesh's Supreme Court, appointed on August 22 as a single-person commission to inquire into the attack, submitted his report on October 2, 2004. He said at a press briefing before submitting his report that local and

foreign terrorists and other culprits had launched the attack in a pre-planned way to destroy Bangladesh's democracy, independence and sovereignty. A report in the Independent of Bangladesh on October 3, 2004, which cited dispatch by the Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha, the country's government-controlled national news agency as stating this, further said that, according to the commission, the attackers were foreign agents. Justice Abedin, who had once been a BNP functionary, did not identify the foreigners. Asked to elaborate on what he meant by saying that the grenade attack was the work of foreign agents, he said during a telephone conversation with Golam Mohiuddin of Bangladesh's daily, Prothom Alo on October 3, that he had taken into special consideration Bangladesh's geographical location and the politics of the sub-continent. He further said, "it becomes foreign the moment one crosses the geographical boundary of the country." Asked whether the commission's report mentioned the foreign country which was the closest (obviously India) he did not deny it but said, "I cannot answer this question of yours." This clearly implied that India could have been the country. Significantly, among those sentenced by a special tribunal on October 10, 2018, for complicity in the grenade attack, were important BNP leaders.

Flawed ICMR paper on vaping continues to cause harm

Another year records over 13 lakh tobacco deaths in India alone because regular combustible cigarettes and tobacco remain widely available to all ages

While other countries reconsider their tobacco control options and embrace tobacco harm reduction, with some even reversing previous bans on nicotine vaping, we in India seem obsessed with the "implementation" of an ill-conceived ban on ENDS/E-cigarettes. People have even filed PILs against e-cigarettes and become instant celebrities. In all this noise, no one appears to care that regular combustible cigarettes and tobacco remain widely available to all ages - with the last GYTS (Global Youth Tobacco Survey - 4) even showing 8.5% of current underage tobacco users with an average age of initiation at 9-11 years (Total population of 0-16-year-olds: ~ 38-40 crores or



KIRAN **MELKOTE**

(The author is the director of the Association of Harm Reduction Education and Research)

25% of our population) – there are multiple tobacco sellers in plain sight of schools yet we hardly bat an eyelid. Why is this not worrying anyone enough to file PILs against this? Why no one is calling for the "implementation" of the cigarette and tobacco laws banning sales to minors? Yet, if we are fixated on e-cigarettes or rather nicotine vapes (or I'll start calling nicotine gum cigarette gum), it's time we take a long hard look at the infamous ICMR white paper on ENDS released 4 years ago that led to the ban on the manufacture, transport, sale etc. of nicotine vapes. The paper called for a complete ban on vaping but the law does allow personal use. This paper was roundly criticized at the time by

renowned global experts as well as by senior doctors at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi. The claim of harm reduction was incorrectly assessed by the ICMR paper. The contrast should have been between risks posed by nicotine vapes versus risks posed by cigarettes and bidis. Instead, the contrast was between uncertain long-term health effects versus widespread nicotine addiction in youth. So what harm exactly does "nicotine addiction" cause? Especially if the nicotine is separate from tobacco. Looking at the various proven carcinogens and toxic chemicals in tobacco and the clear absence of these in nicotine vapes, there is no magical process by which

vaping becomes nearly as dangerous as smoking. The relative risks have been estimated as 95% to 99% safer than cigarettes and even if these figures are overstated, the fact remains that nicotine vapes are far, far safer than cigarettes or bidis. There is no combustion in nicotine vapes (apart from poorly designed lab studies where vaping coils are overheated and burned to failure and the smoke is inhaled by poor trapped rats). In the real world, a vaper getting a "burnt taste" from a dried coil would immediately stop and get a new coil or cartridge. Every single time. Nicotine vapes were also implicated in the EVALI outbreak where illegal THC cut with Vitamin E acetate was found to be the culprit.

Despite the wide availability of nicotine vapes, there has not been a corresponding rise in EVALI. Papers with an unsound methodology that claimed vaping caused heart disease have also been retracted. The ICMR paper also called into question "tobacco cessation claims" of nicotine vapes saying they were unproven. On the contrary, nicotine vapes are now the most popular means to quit smoking worldwide. A recent Cochrane review in Nov 2022 (78 studies, 40 RCTs, total of 22052 subjects) showed "high-certainty evidence that ECs with nicotine increase quit rates compared to NRT". The UK government has even launched the "swap to stop" programme where 1 million

smokers will receive free nicotine vapes to reach a smoke-free society by 2030. A statement by 15 past presidents of SRNT (Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco) calls for considering the use of nicotine vaping as a means to double the quit rate. The preponderance of evidence globally is in favour of nicotine vaping as preferable to smoking. A prominent concern also raised by the ICMR paper was about vaping being a "gateway" into tobacco use and ending up in a "nicotine addiction" even after cessation of smoking or as some folks have put it: exchanging one addiction for another. We need to consider two things here. First, nicotine is not carcinogenic and is not associat-

ed with the detrimental effects of tobacco. There are no studies that have established any detrimental effects of long-term nicotine replacements. Second, the "gateway" theory has been comprehensively debunked in the real world. The same youth who smoke tend to also vape. It's not vaping that has suddenly led to young people picking up a smoking habit. The ban on nicotine vaping has not served the cause of tobacco control. It has instead boosted cigarette sales and led to the current situation where youth awareness of vaping has increased to nearly 25%. A situation where tobacco control people think nicotine vapes are more dangerous than cigarettes or bidis and have largely ignored the latter.

Debt ceiling deal gets Senate nod

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Fending off a US default, the Senate gave final approval late on Thursday to a debt ceiling and budget cuts package, grinding into the night to wrap up work on the bipartisan deal and send it to President Joe Biden's desk to become law before the fast-approaching deadline.

The compromise package negotiated between Biden and House Speaker Kevin McCarthy leaves neither Republicans nor Democrats fully pleased with the outcome.

But the result, after weeks of hard-fought budget negotiations, shelves the volatile debt ceiling issue that risked upending the US and global economy until 2025 after the next presidential election.

Approval in the Senate on a bipartisan vote, 63-36, somewhat reflected the overwhelming House tally the day before, relying on centrists in both parties to pull the Biden-McCarthy package to passage — though

Democrats led the tally in both chambers. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said ahead of voting that the bill's passage means "America can breathe a sigh of relief."

Afterward he said, "We've saved the country from the scourge of default."

Biden said in a statement following passage that senators from both parties "demonstrated once more that America is a nation that pays its bills and meets its obligations — and always will be."

He said he would sign the bill into law as soon as possible. "No one gets everything they want in a negotiation, but make no mistake: this bipartisan agreement is a big win for our economy and the American people," the president said.

The White House said he would address the nation about the matter at 7 pm EDT Friday.

Fast action was vital if Washington hoped to meet next Monday's deadline, when Treasury has said the US will

start running short of cash to pay its bills, risking a devastating default.

Raising the nation's debt limit, now \$31.4 trillion, would ensure Treasury could borrow to pay already incurred US debts.

In the end, the debt ceiling showdown was a familiar high-stakes battle in Congress, a fight taken on by McCarthy and powered by a hard-right House Republican majority confronting the Democratic president with a new era of divided government in Washington. Refusing a once routine vote to allow a the nation's debt limit to be lifted without concessions, McCarthy brought Biden's White House to the negotiating table to strike an agreement that forces spending cutbacks aimed at curbing the nation's deficits. Overall, the 99-page bill restricts spending for the next two years, suspends the debt ceiling into January 2025 and changes some policies, including imposing new work requirements for older Americans receiving food aid

and green lighting an Appalachian natural gas line that many Democrats oppose.

It bolsters funds for defense and veterans, cuts back new money for Internal Revenue Service agents and rejects Biden's call to roll back Trump-era tax breaks on corporations and the wealthy to help cover the nation's deficits. It imposes automatic 1 per cent cuts if Congress fails to approve its annual spending bills. After the House overwhelmingly approved the package late on Wednesday, Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell signaled he too wanted to waste no time ensuring it became law.

Touting its budget cuts, McConnell said on Thursday, "The Senate has a chance to make that important progress a reality." Having remained largely on the sidelines during much of the Biden-McCarthy negotiations, several senators insisted on debate over their ideas to reshape the package.

But making any changes at

this stage would almost certainly derail the compromise and none were approved.

Instead, senators dragged through rounds of voting late into the night rejecting the various amendments, but making their preferences clear. Conservative Republican senators wanted to include further cut spending, while Democratic Sen. Tim Kaine of Virginia sought to remove the Mountain Valley Pipeline approval. The energy pipeline is important to Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., and he defended the development running through his state, saying the country cannot run without the power of gas, coal, wind and all available energy sources. But, offering an amendment to strip the pipeline from the package, Kaine argued it would not be fair for Congress to step into a controversial project that he said would also course through his state and scoop up lands in Appalachia that have been in families for generations.



President Joe Biden falls on stage during the 2023 United States Air Force Academy Graduation Ceremony at Falcon Stadium, on Thursday at the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo. AP/PTI

Iran releases 1 Danish, two Austrian citizens

Berlin (AP): Iran has released one Danish and two Austrian citizens, the European countries said on Friday, thanking Oman and Belgium for their help in getting the trio freed. Austrian Foreign Minister Alexander Schallenberg said he was "very relieved" that Kamran Ghaderi and Massud Mossaheb were being brought home after "years of arduous detention in Iran".

Denmark's foreign minister, Lars Lokke Rasmussen, said that he was "happy and relieved that a Danish citizen is on his way home to his family in Denmark after imprisonment in Iran". He didn't name the person, saying their identity was "a personal matter" and he couldn't go into details.

Schallenberg thanked the foreign ministers of Belgium and Oman for providing "valuable support", without elaborating on what form it took. Lokke Rasmussen thanked Belgium and said that Oman "played an important role". An Oman Royal Air Force Gulfstream IV, which had been on the ground in Tehran for several days, took off shortly before the announcement.

Albanese stresses need for diplomacy, guardrails in dealing with China

AP ■ SINGAPORE

As tensions grow between the United States and China in the Asia-Pacific, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese told a gathering of top defense officials on Friday that open channels of communication are critical for preserving peace, while also advocating effective deterrence. Albanese, who has been expanding Australia's military power in response to China's growing military assertiveness in the South China Sea, the South Pacific and the East China Sea, said he has also been working to stabilise the country's diplomatic relations with China. "We recognise there are fundamental differences in our two nations' systems of government, our values and our world views," he said in his keynote address to the annual Shangri-La dialogue.

"But we begin from the principle that whatever the issue, whether we agree or disagree, it is always better and it is always more effective if we deal direct." Both US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin and China's new defense minister, Gen. Li Shangfu, were in the



A police officer guards near the entrance of the Shangri-La Hotel, the venue for the 20th International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Shangri-La Dialogue, Asia's annual defense and security forum, in Singapore on Friday. AP/PTI

audience as Albanese spoke.

Ahead of the conference, Li rejected a request from Austin to meet on the sidelines, but the two shook hands before sitting down at opposite sides of the same table just before Albanese's address. Both the US and China have been intensifying efforts to win influence in the region, and

the weekend dialogue, hosted by the International Institute for Strategic Studies think tank, provides an opportunity for one-on-one discussions with their regional counterparts, diplomats and leaders. Austin opens the dialogue on Saturday with a speech, and Li will follow on Sunday. Australia is a stal-

wart American ally in the region, and Albanese stressed that while China's "extraordinary economic transformation" has been a benefit to the entire region, China has also benefited from "a regional architecture that facilitates free trade, encourages the sharing of knowledge, spurs innovation and builds people-to-people connections."

"American leadership has been an indispensable part of this," he said. He also said there was a need for "guardrails" to ensure that no "one nation imagines itself too big for the rules," which he said is part of the reason he has found it necessary to boost.

Australia's defense capabilities. Beijing has strongly criticised Australia's participation in the so-called AUKUS partnership, which links it with the United States and Britain to create an Australian fleet of eight nuclear-powered submarines. "Australia's goal is not to prepare for war, but to prevent it through deterrence and reassurance and building resilience in the region, doing our part to fulfill the shared responsibility," he said.

Jens Stoltenberg heading to Turkiye in fresh push on Swedish membership

Brussels (AP): NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg will hold talks with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and other senior Turkish officials this weekend as pressure mounts on Turkiye to lift its objections to Sweden joining the military organisation.

In a statement on Friday, NATO headquarters said Stoltenberg would attend Erdogan's inauguration, after the long-term Turkish leader won an election runoff last weekend.

The former Norwegian prime minister will also take part in meetings in Turkiye on Sunday. No details were provided.

NATO wants to bring Sweden into the fold by the time allied leaders meet in Lithuania on July 11-12, but Turkiye and Hungary have yet to endorse the move. All 31 member countries must ratify a candidate's accession protocol for it to join.

Biden falls from stage, says he got 'sandbagged'

Colorado (AP): President Joe Biden quipped that he got "sandbagged" on Thursday after he tripped and fell — but was uninjured — while onstage at the US Air Force Academy graduation.

Biden had been greeting the graduates in Colorado Springs, Colorado, at the front of the stage with salutes and handshakes, and turned to jog back toward his seat when he fell. He was helped up by an Air Force officer as well as two members of his US Secret Service detail. Onlookers, including some members of the official delegation onstage, watched in concern before Biden, who at age 80 is the oldest president in US history, returned to his seat to view the end of the ceremony.

"I got sandbagged," the president told reporters with a smile when he arrived back at the White House on Thursday evening before pretending to jog into the residence. Two small black sandbags had been

onstage supporting the teleprompter used by Biden and other speakers at the graduation.

"He's fine," White House communications director Ben LaBolt tweeted after the incident. "There was a sandbag on stage while he was shaking hands."

Biden has been dogged by questions about his age and his fitness to serve, and his missteps have become fodder for political rivals as he campaigns for a second term in 2024. He has stumbled before going up the stairs and onto Air Force One and he once got caught up in his bike pedals while stopping to talk to reporters near his home in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware.

Biden's personal doctor said after the president's most recent physical exam in February that Biden "remains a healthy, vigorous 80-year-old male, who is fit to successfully execute the duties of the Presidency."

Prachanda may visit China next month

Kathmandu (PTI): Nepal Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal "Prachanda" is likely to visit China next month or in early August, a leader of the ruling party said on Friday, in what could be the senior Maoist leader's second bilateral visit abroad since assuming office in December 2022. Prachanda on Wednesday left for India on an official visit for talks with his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi and other leaders to further bolster the age-old, multifaceted and cordial ties between the two countries.

Prachanda is currently leading a high-level delegation of more than 100 members to India. This is the 68-year-old Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPN-Maoist) leader's first bilateral visit abroad since assuming office last year.

Following his visit to India, he is likely to visit China next month.

Elahi re-arrested

Lahore (PTI): The President of Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party Parvez Elahi was on Friday arrested again minutes after a judicial magistrate here ordered his release in an embezzlement case.

Elahi, a close aide to former prime minister Khan, was a day earlier arrested outside his residence in Punjab province in the Rs 70 million corruption case related to the embezzlement of development funds allocated for the Gujrat district. The former chief minister of Punjab province was re-arrested by officials of the Anti-Corruption Establishment Punjab in a corruption case registered against him in Gujranwala, Geo News reported. Judicial Magistrate Ghulam Murtaza Virk issued Elahi's release order while announcing the verdict he had reserved on a plea seeking the PTI leader's physical remand. "Parvez Elahi should be released if he is not wanted in any other case," the verdict said. Murtaza had reserved the verdict after hearing the former

Punjab chief minister's case, where ACE Punjab requested the court for his 14-day physical remand. Elahi's counsel Advocate Rana Intizar informed the court that all documents related to the projects were available. "Anti-corruption watchdog is introducing its own law under which the judge hearing the cases will be of their choice," the council said, adding that on January 17 a payment worth Rs 360 million was made when Naqvi was the chief minister. Earlier on Friday, the 77-year-old leader claimed innocence and said that he was a "supporter" of the Pakistan Army, urging party supporters to stay strong. Speaking to reporters before his appearance in the court, Elahi said: "I am innocent and a supporter of the Pakistan Army." While speaking to Geo News, Elahi without naming anybody took a jibe at the former party leaders who announced their decision to part ways with PTI chief Imran Khan, saying that he won't hold any press conference.

Anti-terror court extends Imran bail till June 13

PTI ■ LAHORE

Pakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan on Friday appeared before an anti-terrorism court here and secured an extension to his pre-arrest bail till June 13 in three cases, including an attack on a top military commander's residence in Lahore, a court official said. Khan, 70, who appeared before the ATC Lahore amid high security, reiterated that he faces "serious threats" to his life. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party chairman also appeared before the Lahore High Court to seek an extension to his bail in the murder case of PTI worker Zille Shah. The Lahore High Court has extended his bail in the case till June 6.

The ATC, Judge Ijaz Ahmad Buttar questioned why he (Khan) is not joining the investigation in the case related to the attack on Lahore Corps Commander House known as Jinnah House. Khan

Usman Buzdar to quit politics

PTI ■ LAHORE

Usman Buzdar, the former chief minister of Pakistan's Punjab province, on Friday, became the latest leader of ex-prime minister Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party to quit politics in the aftermath of the May 9 violence.

Several PTI leaders, including former human rights minister and ousted prime minister Imran Khan's close aide Shireen Mazari, have quit the party following the "Black Day" violence triggered by the arrest of the cricketer-turned-politician in the Al-Qadir case. "First of all, I condemn the May 9



incidents. The military installations which were targeted were properties of the state of Pakistan and I believe we should avoid such incidents,"

told him that he was facing serious threats to his life," the court official told PTI after the hearing. "He (Khan) said he had requested the investigators to allow him to join the probe through a video link which was

declined. The judge however directed him to join the investigation and extended his bail till Jun 13," the official said.

Violence erupted across Pakistan on May 9 when crick-

Centrist parties alarmed over support for German far-right

Berlin (AP): Prominent members of German mainstream parties have expressed alarm at a new poll that shows support for the far-right Alternative for Germany at a record high.

The DeutschlandTrend survey, conducted monthly by infratest dimap for public broadcaster ARD, that was released on Thursday puts voter support for Alternative for Germany at 18 per cent, on a par with Chancellor Olaf Scholz's Social Democrats.

In the 2021 election, Scholz's party received 25.7 per cent of the vote, while Alternative for Germany, or AfD, got 10.3 per cent.

"This (...) is a disaster and should be understood as an alarm signal for all parties of the center," said Norbert Roettgen, a senior lawmaker for the main opposition Christian Democrats, whose support stood at 29 per cent in the poll of 1,302 voters conducted from May 30-31. The margin of error was up to three percentage points.

Roettgen said his own centre-right party should ask itself why it hasn't profited as much from voters' unhappiness at the government.

His party colleague Serap Guler said the strong support for AfD should alarm all democratic parties.

"We bear responsibility for changing this again quickly," she said late on Thursday.

AfD previously hit 18 per cent in the DeutschlandTrend survey in September 2018 amid discord in then Chancellor Angela Merkel's coalition government.

Scholz's three-party coalition with the environmentalist Greens and the libertarian Free Democrats has faced strong headwind recently over high immigration and a plan to replace millions of home heating systems in the country.



Office of the Superintending Engineer

1st Circle, Public Works Department, Almora

Phone/Fax: 05962-230295 Email: sepwdalm@rediffmail.com

Letter No. : 2281(I)/Nivida-01/2023-24

Dated : 02/06/2023

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING (E-Tendering)

Short Term E-TENDER NOTICE

The superintending Engineer, 1st Circle, Public Works Department, Almora invites tender through **E-Tendering (Two Bid System)** on behalf of Honourable Governor of Uttarakhand for following works. All other information will be available from dated 06/06/2023 & onwards on website <http://www.uktenders.gov.in>

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Cost of work (Rupee in lakh)	Cost of Tender Form	Earnest Money (Rupee in lakh)	Validity of Tender	Time of Completion	Contractor's Category of Registration for tendering
1	Construction Division PWD Almora Construction of motor road from Km. 1.800 of Nirai Motor Road to Oliya gaon Lachampur and Supakot under State Sector in Someshwar Constituency, District Almora (Phase-II Stage-II)	₹ 168.98 Lakh with GST	₹ 5000.00 + 18% GST	₹ 2.86 Lakh	60 Days	12 Months (including Raining /Winter Season)	Class "B" & Higher in Road work in Central Govt./ Any state Govt./ Any Govt. Undertaking

Dev Shah crowned Spelling Bee champ

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Dev Shah, a 14-year-old eighth-grader from Florida, who correctly spelled the word "psammophile" has won the 2023 Scripps National Spelling Bee, a prestigious contest where children of Indian origin have ruled the roost.

Shah correctly spelled the word to win the 95th national bee and the USD 50,000 prize on Thursday. "It's surreal," Shah said onstage after the confetti fell on his head and he lifted the trophy high above.

"I don't know if it's settled in. My legs are still shaking," he said at the competition in National Harbor, Maryland.

"I made a lot of sacrifices these last three months and I'm glad I made them," Shah said. "I'm glad to now get back what I sacrificed." After much anticipation about a possible spell-



off, a smiling Shah won by correctly spelling "psammophile", a plant or animal that thrives in sandy areas, the Washington Post newspaper reported.

"Psammo meaning sand, Greek?" he asked. "Phile, meaning love, Greek?"

Shah instantly identified

the roots of his word, but asked for all the information just to be safe, while smiling slightly in a way that suggested he was pretty sure he had it, the New York Times newspaper reported.

Shah cut back on his extracurricular activities to dedicate more time to the dictionary. Some days he would not even go to school, since exams were over. He'd be better off studying, Shah figured. That end-of-year field trip his classmates at Morgan Fitzgerald Middle School went on? No thanks.

"I knew I had to study," Shah said. "It paid off."

Other words that Shah correctly spelled during the competition include: bathypitotmeter, tolsester, rommack, aegagrus, schistorrhachis, poliorcetics, Perioeci, exhortation, cocomat and ardoise.

‘Stop sending weapons to the battlefield’

China’s Ukraine envoy urges govts

AP ■ BEIJING

China's Ukraine envoy called on other governments on Friday to "stop sending weapons to the battlefield" and appealed for peace talks at a time when Washington and its European allies are ramping up supplies of missiles and tanks to Ukrainian forces trying to recapture Russian-occupied territory.

Li Hui said Russian and Ukrainian officials were open to peace negotiations, but he gave no indication they were any closer to happening.

Chinese leader Xi Jinping's government says it is neutral and wants to serve as a mediator but has supported Moscow politically. Foreign analysts saw little chance of progress from Li's visits to the countries because neither side is ready to stop fighting, but sending an envoy gave Beijing an opportunity to expand its global diplomatic role.

"China believes that if we really want to put an end to war, to save lives and realize peace, it is important for us to stop sending weapons to the battlefield, or else the tensions will only spiral up," Li told reporters.

China is the only major government that has good relations with both Russia and Ukraine and has leverage as one of the biggest export markets for both. Xi's decision to send an envoy was welcomed by the Ukrainian government but prompted questions about China's motives after Beijing declared it had a "no limits" friendship with the Kremlin ahead of the February 2022 invasion.

Beijing released a proposed peace plan in February, but Ukraine's allies insisted President Vladimir Putin must first withdraw Russian forces.



Ukraine's Defense Minister Oleksiy Reznikov, second left, arrives at the Shangri-La Hotel for the 20th International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Shangri-La Dialogue, Asia's annual defense and security forum, in Singapore on Friday. AP/PTI

Germany and the European Union headquarters, said Beijing was ready to send a second delegation to discuss a possible "political settlement" but gave no indication what China's next move might be.

Li referred several times to outsiders "adding fuel to the fire" and making comments that "exacerbate the situation."

He didn't name any party but used language Chinese officials invoke when criticising US dominance in global affairs. "Who is the real troublemaker in the world and the real security threat in the world? The global community has a keen understanding of that," Li said.

Li defended Beijing's "strategic partnership of coordination" with Russia as more beneficial to the world than other governments he didn't name.

"Compared with some countries' actions, clinging to Cold War mentality, ganging up with other countries, creating small circles for bloc confrontation and carrying out hegemonic bullying actions, these are completely different practices," he said.

Li criticised a report by The Wall Street Journal, citing unidentified officials, that he had proposed a cease-fire that would leave Russia in control of Ukrainian territory. He rejected that as "not in line with the facts" and suggested whoever spread that story might want to sabotage peace efforts.

"It is a move to sow discord between China and Ukraine," Li said.

Li also called for steps to protect the Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, adding to appeals by the International Atomic Energy Agency this week for both sides to commit to preventing any attack on the facility to avoid a "catastrophic incident."

Germany and the European Union headquarters, said Beijing was ready to send a second delegation to discuss a possible "political settlement" but gave no indication what China's next move might be.

Li referred several times to outsiders "adding fuel to the fire" and making comments that "exacerbate the situation."

He didn't name any party but used language Chinese officials invoke when criticising US dominance in global affairs. "Who is the real troublemaker in the world and the real security threat in the world? The global community has a keen understanding of that," Li said.

Li defended Beijing's "strategic partnership of coordination" with Russia as more beneficial to the world than other governments he didn't name.

"Compared with some countries' actions, clinging to Cold War mentality, ganging up with other countries, creating small circles for bloc confrontation and carrying out hegemonic bullying actions, these are completely different practices," he said.

Li criticised a report by The Wall Street Journal, citing unidentified officials, that he had proposed a cease-fire that would leave Russia in control of Ukrainian territory. He rejected that as "not in line with the facts" and suggested whoever spread that story might want to sabotage peace efforts.

"It is a move to sow discord between China and Ukraine," Li said.

Li also called for steps to protect the Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, adding to appeals by the International Atomic Energy Agency this week for both sides to commit to preventing any attack on the facility to avoid a "catastrophic incident."



Ukraine's Defense Minister Oleksiy Reznikov, second left, arrives at the Shangri-La Hotel for the 20th International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Shangri-La Dialogue, Asia's annual defense and security forum, in Singapore on Friday. AP/PTI

US: Tanks, F-16 jets part of long-term strategy for Ukraine

AP ■ PARIS

Training for Ukrainian forces on advanced US Abrams tanks has begun, and while those systems will not be ready in time for the imminent counteroffensive, those weapons will be critical in the longer-term to Ukraine ultimately pushing Russia out of its occupied territories, Joint Chiefs chairman Gen. Mark Milley said.

Tank training began as the US and allies began to work out agreements to train Ukrainians on F-16 fighter jets — another long-wished-for advanced capability. Ultimately, while the tanks are needed to expel Russian forces from Ukrainian territory, the F-16s would be part of a longer-term security plan to deter future attacks, Milley said Thursday.

"Everyone recognises Ukraine needs a modernised Air Force," Milley said.

"It's going to take a considerable amount of time," Milley said detailed planning on class sizes, the types of

flying tactics and locations for training was underway now between the US and allies such as the Netherlands and the UK that have already pledged to provide F-16s.

The US has not said yet whether or not it will provide jets, but President Joe Biden has said the US will support F-16 training.

As those details get worked out, Abrams tank training moved ahead.

About 200 Ukrainian soldiers began an approximately 12-week training course in Germany on the US tanks over the weekend to teach them how to maneuver, fire and conduct combined arms operations with the advanced armoured system.

Another 200 troops are getting trained on tank fuelling and fuel truck maintenance.

The US training schedule is timed to get the troops up to speed on the systems before 31 of the 70-tonne Abrams tanks the US has promised to Ukraine are scheduled arrive by this fall.

‘No truce sans peace deal that includes Russia withdrawal’

Kyiv (AP): US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Friday that there can be no cease-fire in the war in Ukraine unless it is part of a "just and lasting" peace deal that includes Russia's military withdrawal.

Blinken said that "a cease-fire that simply freezes current lines in place - and enables Putin to consolidate control over the territory he has seized, and rest, rearm, and reattack - that is not a just and lasting peace."

Russia must also pay a share of Ukraine's reconstruction and be held accountable for launching its full-scale invasion of its neighbour in February 2022, Blinken said in a speech during a visit to Finland, which recently joined NATO and shares a long border with Russia.

Allowing Moscow to keep the one-fifth of Ukraine territory it has occupied would send the wrong message to Russia and to "other would-be aggressors around the world," according to Blinken.

Washington is ready to support peace efforts by other countries, including recent overtures from China and Brazil, he said. But any peace agreement must uphold the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence. The United States is a leading Western ally and supplier of arms to Kyiv to help it push back against the Kremlin's forces. China, which says it is neutral and wants to serve as a mediator but has supported Moscow politically, on Friday urged countries to stop sending weapons to Ukraine.

In Ukraine, air defences shot down more than 30 Russian cruise missiles and drones Friday in Moscow's sixth air attack in six days on Kyiv, local officials said.

The Ukrainian capital was simultaneously attacked from different directions by Iranian-made Shahed drones and cruise missiles from the Caspian region, senior Kyiv official Serhii Popko wrote on Telegram.

Kyiv thwarts 6th air assault in 6 days

Kyiv (AP) Ukrainian air defences shot down more than 30 Russian cruise missiles and drones in Moscow's sixth air attack in six days on Kyiv, local officials said on Friday.

The Ukrainian capital was simultaneously attacked from different directions by Iranian-made Shahed drones and cruise missiles from the Caspian region, senior Kyiv official Serhii Popko wrote on Telegram.

A 68-year-old man and an 11-year-old child were wounded in the attack, with private houses, outbuildings and cars sustaining damage from falling debris, according to Ukraine's Prosecutor General's Office.

A recent spate of attacks on the capital has put strain on residents and tested the strength of Ukraine's air defences while Kyiv officials plot what they say is an upcoming counteroffensive to push back the Kremlin's forces 15 months after their full-scale invasion.

Kyiv was the target of drone and missile attacks on 17 days last month, including daylight attacks.

Moscow's strategy could backfire, however, according to the Institute for the Study of War, a Washington-based think tank.

The air campaign aims to "degrade Ukrainian counteroffensive capabilities, but ... the Russian prioritisation of Kyiv is likely further limiting the campaign's ability to meaningfully constrain potential Ukrainian counteroffensive actions," it said in an assessment late Thursday.

Ukrainian air defences intercepted all 15 cruise missiles and 21 attack drones, Ukraine's chief of staff, Valerii Zaluzhnyi, said.

Meanwhile, border regions of Russia once again came under fire from Ukraine. Recent cross-border raids have also rattled those regions of Russia and put the Kremlin on guard.

That could be a Ukrainian strategy to disperse Russian

WH wants to engage Russia on nukes control in post-treaty world

Washington (AP): The Biden administration is ready to talk to Russia without conditions about a future nuclear arms control framework even while taking countermeasures in response to the Kremlin's decision to suspend the last nuclear arms control treaty between the two countries, White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan said on Friday, Russian President Vladimir Putin announced in February he was suspending Russia's cooperation with the New START Treaty's provisions for nuclear warhead and missile inspections, a move that came as tensions worsened after Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. Russia did say it would respect the treaty's caps on nuclear weapons.

Sullivan said at the Arms Control Association's annual meeting said that the United States is committed to adhering to the treaty if Russia also does, and that Washington wants to open a dialogue on a new framework for managing nuclear risks once the treaty expires in February 2026. "It is in neither of our countries' interest to embark on opening the competition in the strategic nuclear forces," Sullivan said. "And rather than waiting to resolve all of our bilateral differences, the United States is ready to engage Russia now to manage nuclear risks and develop a post 2026" pact.

forces before a counteroffensive begins.

"Russian commanders now face an acute dilemma of whether to (strengthen) defences in Russia's border regions or reinforce their lines in occupied Ukraine," the UK ministry of defence said on Friday.

Boris offers unredacted WA messages to UK COVID inquiry

London (PTI): Boris Johnson, who was the British prime minister during the height of COVID, on Friday offered to hand over all his unredacted WhatsApp messages to the public inquiry set up to investigate the government's handling of the pandemic.

The latest move further complicates matters as it bypasses the Rishi Sunak-led government's decision to seek a judicial review into inquiry chair Baroness Heather Hallett's order for all such messages to be handed over.

After missing a deadline on Thursday for the handover of the documents which include Johnson's messages, the UK Cabinet Office said in a statement that government officials should not be required to provide material that is "irrelevant".

"While I understand the government's position, I am not willing to let my material become a test case for others when I am perfectly content for the inquiry to see it," said Johnson in a letter addressed to Baroness Hallett.

The 58-year-old former prime minister said he was handing over "all unredacted WhatsApps" he provided to the Cabinet Office and said he has asked it to hand over his notebooks, which he no longer has access to.

Mawar threatens floods and mudslides in some regions

AP ■ NAHA

Heavy rains intensified by Tropical Storm Mawar fell on Japan's main archipelago on Friday, halting trains and transit and threatening floods and mudslides in central and western regions, while residents were urged to use caution.

Warnings were issued in parts of western and central Japan, with up to 25 centimeters (10 inches) of rain forecast through Saturday evening.

Residents in vulnerable areas, including those in Mie, Wakayama, Aichi and Shizuoka prefectures in central Japan, were warned of the potential for flooding and mudslides and advised to go to evacuation centers if possible. Television footage showed swollen rivers in residential areas in Wakayama city, including one where brown water rose as high as the bottom of a bridge over it.

In Tokyo, the few pedestrians on the rainy streets clutched umbrellas as winds blew tree branches around.

Afternoon classes were also cancelled at some schools. Ferry operations in the Tokyo Bay were cancelled for the rest of Friday.

Heavy rain and mudslide warnings were also issued in the nearby city of Yokohama, where a number of



evacuation centers were opened. Shinkansen super-express trains were suspended between Tokyo and Shin Osaka in western Japan due to heavy rain, according to the Central Japan Railway Co. Flights and ferries in southern Japan also were canceled due to continuing strong winds.

More than 17,500 homes in seven of the nine prefectures serviced by the Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings lost power.

Mawar remained well offshore in the Pacific Ocean, but its winds were strong enough as it passed Okinawa to cause injuries.

Japan birth rate record low amid concerns over shrinking and aging population

AP ■ TOKYO

Japan's birth rate declined for a seventh consecutive year in 2022 to a record low of 1.26, the Health Ministry said Friday, adding to a sense of urgency in a country where the government is seen as too slow to take measures to address its rapidly shrinking and aging population.

The average number of children a woman gives birth to in her lifetime fell to 1.26 in 2022 from 1.30 a year earlier, tying the record low from 2005, according to the annual population statistics.

The fertility rate is far below the rate of 2.06 - 2.07 considered to be needed to maintain a population.

Japan's population of more than 125 million has been declining for 16 years and is projected to fall to 87 million by 2070.

A shrinking and aging pop-



ulation has huge implications for the economy and for national security as Japan fortifies its military to counter China's increasingly assertive territorial ambitions.

The number of newborns in Japan also fell 5% to 77,747 babies last year, another new low, the Health Ministry said. The number of deaths jumped 9% to 1.57 million, as the population shrank by

798,214, continuing a 16-year streak of declines.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida has set tackling the declining births as one of his top policy goals and pledged to introduce further drastic measures.

"A last chance for us to reverse the declining births is before the young population is expected to decline drastically in 2030," Kishida told a panel of

experts commissioned to compile a package of measures at a meeting Thursday.

The government plans to secure annual funding of about 3.5 trillion yen (\$25.2 billion) over the next three years for a new child care package, which includes child birth and rearing allowances as well as increased subsidies for higher education. Kishida's government said it would come up with specific measures and secure funding by the end of the year.

Experts say the proposed measures are mostly additional funding for existing ones and don't address underlying problems. Many younger Japanese have balked at marrying or having families, discouraged by bleak job prospects, corporate cultures that are incompatible with both parents — but especially women — working, and a lack of public tolerance for small children.

PUBLIC NOTICE
General public is hereby informed that Mr. Haaji Sahid was the owner of the land area measuring 400 Sq. Yards, out of Kharsa No. 2726, situated at Khushi Park Village- Loni, Bargarha & Tahsil- Loni, Dist- Ghaaziabad, U.P. by virtue of Sale Deed dated 16.12.2009, regd. at doc. No. 28299, who died. The above-said property is to be financed & mortgaged with my client i.e. Piramal Capital and Housing Finance Ltd and the only surviving heirs of Late Mr. Haaji Sahid are Mrs. Zaida, Mr. Danish Malik, Mr. Imran Malik, Md. Aarif & Mrs. Shahida. If any person(s) have any objection(s) or claim in this property, then contact the undersigned within 7 days from date of this notice on below address, failing which, it will be assumed that there are no claims or issues in respect of the aforesaid property.
Raghav Tiwari, Advocate
Ch. 850, Patiala House Courts,
New Delhi - 110001 Mob.: +91-9078186326

PUBLIC NOTICE
General public is hereby informed that Mrs. Astha Jain was the owner of the Property Bearing No.C-15/33, area measuring 50 Sq. Yds. i.e., 41.80 Sq. Meters, out of Kharsa No. 725/486/65, situated at Village- Moujpur, in the abadi of Gali No.4, Arjun Mohalla, Illaga Shandara, Delhi-110053, by virtue of Sale Deed dated 08.01.2007, regd. at doc. No. 20, who died. The above-said property is to be financed & mortgaged with my client i.e. Piramal Capital and Housing Finance Ltd and the only surviving heirs of Late Mrs. Astha Jain are Mrs. Honey Jain & Mr. Gaurav Jain. If any person(s) have any objection(s) or claim in this property, then contact the undersigned within 7 days from date of this notice on below address, failing which, it will be assumed that there are no claims or issues in respect of the aforesaid property.
Raghav Tiwari, Advocate
Ch. 850, Patiala House Courts,
New Delhi - 110001 Mob.: +91-9078186326

Baba Farid University of Health Sciences, Faridkot
Admission Notice for BPT, BMLT & B.Sc Medical (APB) Courses, session 2023
Online applications through University website alongwith requisite registration fee are invited upto 15.06.2023 from eligible candidates for admission to Bachelor of Physiotherapy, Bachelor in Medical Laboratory Technology & B.Sc Medical (Anatomy, Physiology & Biochemistry) Courses, session 2023. The Last date for Submission of Online Fee through payment gateway is 16.06.2023. For Eligibility/Prospectus/Schedule / Details/Updates visit the University website i.e. www.bfuhs.ac.in.
REGISTRAR
nil/12/107/2023/24651 Dated CHD - 6/2/2023

GURU NANAK DEV UNIVERSITY, AMRITSAR
Department of Education
Centralized Entrance Test and Counselling for Admission to M.Ed. course and B.Ed. M.Ed. three years integrated course (2023-24).
Admission to M.Ed. course in the Department of Education and all the Affiliated Colleges of Education of Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar shall be through Common Entrance Test and Centralized Counselling; admission to B.Ed. M.Ed. three years integrated course through centralized counselling for affiliated colleges on the basis of merit of marks obtained in the qualifying examination. Admission is also open to other programmes of the Department of Education namely ITEP courses (B.A./B.Sc./ B.Com. B.Ed.), B.Ed. Special Education (MD), B.Sc./Advanced Diploma course in Early Childhood Care and Education, M.A. Education (Educational Management & Leadership) and M.A. Education courses. For online registrations the last date of applications is 11-07-2023. All the interested applicants must register on the admission portal of the university <http://www.gnuadmissions.org>. For further details concern above mentioned admission portal. For any enquiry contact cet.m.ed2018@gmail.com
Sd/- Coordinator
NA/12/16818/2023/24684 Dated CHD - 6/2/2023

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) 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 constructive 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 06.07.2023 from 02.00 P.M. to 04.00 P.M., for recovery of Rs. 11,73,057/- (Rupees Eleven Lakh Seventy Three Thousand Fifty Seven only) pending towards Loan Account No. SHVLDPC00400304, by way of outstanding principal, arrears (including accrued late charges) and interest till 22.05.2023 with applicable future interest in terms of the Loan Agreement and other related loan document(s) w.e.f. 23.05.2023 along with legal expenses and other charges due to the Secured Creditor from RAHUL, HARI DASS, SANDEEP, LOVE KUMAR SETHI and KRISHNA SETHI.
The Reserve Price of the Immovable Property will be Rs. 10,00,000/- (Rupees Ten Lakh only) and the Earnest Money Deposit ("EMD") will be Rs. 1,00,000/- (Rupees One Lakh only) i.e. equivalent to 10% of the Reserve Price.
DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY
FLAT NO. UGF-3, UPPER GROUND FLOOR (REAR RIGHT SIDE- SOUTHERN EASTERN PORTION), PLOT NO. B-12/18, DLF ANKUR VIHAR, LONI, HADBAST VILLAGE, SADULLAHABAD, GHAZIABAD, UTTAR PRADESH- 201002.
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 : 29.05.2023
Place : GHAZIABAD
Sd/
Authorized Officer
INDIABULLS HOUSING FINANCE LTD.

G20
NORTHERN RAILWAY
CORRIGENDUM
Ref: i) Tender Notice No. 94/2022-23 dated 17.03.2023.
ii)-Tender No. 15225019 due on 14.06.2023.
In reference to above tender, the due date has been extended from 14.06.2023 to 14.07.2023. All other terms and conditions remain unchanged.
The corrigendum has been published on website www.irps.gov.in.
1695/2023
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Baba Farid University of Health Sciences
Sadiq Road, Faridkot-151203
Ph: 01639-256232,256236
ADMISSION NOTICE -B.Sc PARA MEDICAL COURSES, SESSION 2023
Online applications are invited w.e.f 03.06.2023 to 15.06.2023 through University website alongwith requisite fee from eligible candidates for applying admission to B.Sc Para Medical Courses, session 2023 i.e. B.Sc. Anesthesia Technology, B.Sc. Intensive Care Unit Techniques, B.Sc. Operation Theatre Technology, B.Sc. Medical Radiography & Imaging Technology, B.Sc. Radiotherapy Technology, B.Sc. Optometry, B.Sc. Dialysis Techniques, B.Sc. Orthopedic Assistant & Plaster Techniques, B.Sc. Emergency Responder, B.Sc Cardiac Technology, Bachelor of Audiology and Speech Language Pathology. Note: For Schedule/Eligibility/detail/Fee/Prospectus visit University website i.e. www.bfuhs.ac.in
Sd/- REGISTRAR
nil/12/108/2023/24654 Dated CHD - 6/2/2023

UNITED TEXTILES LIMITED									
Regd. Off:- 7th K.M. Stone, Barwala Road, Hisar									
CIN: L17115HR1993PLC032092									
STATEMENT OF AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS									
FOR THE QUARTER AND YEAR ENDED 31MARCH, 2023									
(Rs. in Lakhs, except per share data)									
	Particulars	Quarter Ended				Year Ended			
		31.03.2023 Audited	31.12.2022 Unaudited	31.03.2022 Audited	31.03.2022 Audited	31.03.2023 Audited	31.03.2022 Audited		
I	Revenue from operations	350.64	357.51	444.38	1652.88	1767.61			
II	Other Income	(5.41)	9.33	2.92	5.85	6.51			
III	Total Revenue (I+II)	345.23	366.84	447.30	1658.73	1774.12			
IV	Expenses								
(a)	Cost of materials consumed	254.52	137.38	252.33	953.50	1177.82			
(b)	Purchases of stock-in-trade	22.10	22.97	-	67.52	-			
(c)	Changes in inventories of finished goods work-in-progress and stock-in-trade	(17.54)	61.64	0.33	(37.33)	(5.87)			
(d)	Employee benefits expense	16.22	22.67	15.63	59.81	46.56			
(e)	Finance costs	(5.76)	16.50	7.33	40.44	34.64			
(f)	Depreciation and amortization expenses	24.80	31.60	22.23	112.13	68.35			
(g)	Other expenses	49.71	73.68	149.29	458.57	448.80			
	Total expenses (IV)	344.05	366.43	447.14	1654.63	1770.30			
V	Profit/(Loss)before exceptional items and tax (III-IV)	1.18	0.41	0.16	4.10	3.82			
VI	Exceptional items	-	-	-	-	-			
VII	Profit/(Loss)after exceptional items but before tax (V-VI)	1.18	0.41	0.16	4.10	3.82			
VIII	Tax expense:								
(i)	Current tax	(3.39)	1.43	2.00	-	2.54			
(ii)	Deferred tax	3.72	(1.42)	(1.30)	1.07	(0.91)			
	Total tax expense	0.33	0.01	0.70	1.07	1.63			
IX	Profit/ (Loss) for the period From continuing operations (VII-VIII)	0.85	0.40	(0.54)	3.03	2.19			
X	Other comprehensive income (OCI):								
A.	Items that will not be reclassified to profit or loss								
(i)	Re-measurement gain (losses) On defined benefit plans	2.00	-	0.04	2.00	0.42			
	Income tax effect on above	(0.50)	-	(0.01)	(0.50)	(0.11)			
	(ii) Equity instrument through Other Comprehensive Income (Gain on Fair Valuation of Long Term Investment)	-	-	-	-	-			
	Income tax effect on above	-	-	-	-	-			
	Total Other Comprehensive Income (X)	1.50	-	0.03	1.50	0.31			
XI	Total Comprehensive Income (Comprising Profit/(Loss) and Other comprehensive income For the period) (IX+X)	2.35	0.40	(0.51)	4.53	2.50			
	(Comprising Profit (Loss) and OCI for the year)								
XII	Paid-up equity share capital (Rs. 10 Per share)	300.00	300.00	300.00	300.00	300.00			
XIII	Reserve/Other equity share	-	-	-	745.88	741.32			
	Earnings per equity share								
(i)	Basic	0.63	0.01	(0.02)	0.10	0.07			
(ii)	Diluted	0.62	0.01	(0.02)	0.10	0.07			
Note:									
1. The aforesaid results were placed before and reviewed by the Audit Committee at its meeting held on 30th May,2023 and approved by the Board of Directors at its meeting held on the same date. The Statutory auditors have carried out limited review of these financial results.									
2. There are no separate reportable segments as per the Indian Accounting Standard (Ind AS-108) on segment reporting.									
3. The Figures have been regrouped/rearranged wherever considered necessary to facilitate comparison.									
For United Textiles Limited Vivek Aggarwal (Whole Time Director) DIN No. 07072920									
Place : Hisar Date : 30th May, 2023									

Sensex, Nifty rise on gains in metal, auto stocks

PTI ■ MUMBAI
Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty closed higher on Friday after two days of fall, helped by buying in metal, telecom and auto stocks amid a firm trend in global markets.
Automakers led by Maruti Suzuki India, Hyundai, Mahindra & Mahindra reporting robust wholesales of passenger vehicles and GST collections crossing Rs 1.50 lakh crore for the third straight month in May also added to the optimism.
The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 118.57 points or 0.19 per cent to settle at 62,547.11. During the day, it jumped 291.3 points or 0.46 per cent to 62,719.84.
The NSE Nifty advanced 46.35 points or 0.25 per cent to finish at 18,534.10.
On a weekly basis, the BSE benchmark gained 45.42 points

or 0.07 per cent, and the Nifty climbed 34.75 points or 0.18 per cent.
“This week, the Indian market was volatile. However, it was able to regain momentum led by a positive domestic outlook accompanied by global cues. Auto stocks garnered attention as sales numbers for May came in strong, with a sequential recovery boosting sentiment across the sector.
“The hope that the Fed will refrain from a rate hike has provided comfort to the global equity market,” Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said.
Tata Steel was the biggest gainer in the Sensex pack, rising nearly 2 per cent, followed by Maruti, Mahindra & Mahindra, Sun Pharma, Larsen & Toubro, Titan, Bharti Airtel, Power Grid, ITC, State Bank of India and Nestle.
In contrast, Infosys, Wipro,



HCL Technologies, Tata Consultancy Services, IndusInd Bank, Tech Mahindra, Reliance Industries and Bajaj Finance were among the laggards.
“Auto stocks were in focus after reporting better-than-expected sales numbers for May. Also, with the monsoon

arrival expected early next week, the rural and agri-related stock would also be in focus,” Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Retail Research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd, said.
In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge climbed

the approval of US debt ceiling legislation, Deepak Jasani, Head of Retail Research, HDFC Securities, said.
In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong ended in the green.
Equity markets in Europe were trading in positive territory. The US markets ended higher on Thursday.
GST collections recorded a 12 per cent rise in May at over Rs 1.57 lakh crore, according to official data released on Thursday.
Manufacturing activities in India advanced further and touched a 31-month high in May, supported by a stronger increase in new orders and favourable market conditions, which in turn generated more employment opportunities, a monthly survey said on Thursday.
Automakers led by Maruti Suzuki India, Hyundai, Mahindra & Mahindra, and Toyota Kirloskar Motor on Thursday reported robust wholesales of passenger vehicles in the domestic market for May riding on strong demand for SUVs.
Global oil benchmark Brent crude jumped 1.74 per cent to USD 75.57 a barrel.
Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 71.07 crore on Thursday, according to exchange data.
The rupee appreciated by 9 paise to 82.31 (provisional) against the US dollar on Friday.
“With markets on the ten-terhooks ahead of the debt ceiling vote in the US Senate and OPEC+ meeting over the weekend, Monday’s trading session could witness heightened volatility,” Riches Vanara, Technical And Derivatives Analyst, stoxbox, said.

Irdai: SBI Life to takeover liabilities of 2 L policies, assets of SILIC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Regulator Irdai on Friday directed SBI Life Insurance Company to takeover the policy liabilities of around two lakh policies along with assets of Sahara India Life Insurance Co Ltd (SILIC) with immediate effect.
The decision was taken at the meeting of the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai) in view of deteriorating financial health of the SILIC.
“The Authority has identified SBI Life Insurance Company Limited (SBI Life), which is one of the largest life insurers in the country with satisfactory financials, as the acquirer insurer of the life insurance business of SILIC.
“SBI Life shall take over the policy liabilities of around two lakh policies of SILIC, backed by the policyholders’ assets, with immediate effect,” Irdai said in its order.
In a statement, the Irdai said it has also taken necessary steps to ensure the smooth transition for all policyholders of SILIC.
A committee comprising of Member (Actuary), Member (Life), and Member (F&I) has been constituted for implementation of the order in a time-bound manner.
“SBI Life has been directed to take adequate steps to reach out to the policyholders of SILIC, with regard to servicing of policies, including setting up of a dedicated cell to address the queries of the policyholders of SILIC, and also publish necessary details on their website,” it said.
Sahara India Life Insurance was granted a Certificate of Registration in 2004 to transact the business of life insurance. In view of the certain serious issues on the financial propriety and governance aspects of the insurer, the authority had appointed an administrator to manage the business of the insurer in 2017, Irdai said.
The insurer was also not allowed to underwrite new business. Thereafter, further directions were issued to the insurer to meet the regulatory requirements.
“Despite being provided ample opportunities and sufficient time to ensure compliances, SILIC has failed to comply with directions of the authority and take any affirmative steps to protect the interests of its policyholders,” the regulator said.
Further, the policy data of SILIC reveals that the company’s portfolio is showing run-off trend.

Govt asks industry to cut edible oils MRP by ₹8-12 per litre as global prices drop

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Friday directed edible oil associations to further reduce the maximum retail price (MRP) of major edible oils by Rs 8-12 per litre with immediate effect, in line with the global market.
“Some companies which have not reduced their prices and their MRP is higher than other brands have also been advised to reduce their prices,” the food ministry said after a meeting, chaired by food secretary Sanjeev Chopra, with the industry representatives.
Price to distributors by the manufacturers and refiners also



needs to be reduced with immediate effect so that the price drop is not diluted in any way, it said.
It was also impressed upon that whenever a reduction in price to distributors is made by the manufacturers/refiners, the benefit should be passed on to the consumers by the industry and the ministry may be kept informed on a regular basis, it added.
With the edible oil prices continuing to show a downward trend and set to witness further reduction by the edible oil

industry, the ministry said, “the Indian consumers can expect to pay less for their edible oils. The falling edible oil prices will help in further cooling inflation fears if any.”
Industry representatives including Solvent Extraction Association of India and Indian Vegetable Oil Producers’ Association were present in the second meeting convened within a month to discuss further reduction in retail prices of edible oils amidst a continued fall in the global prices.
In the meeting, the ministry said the international prices of imported edible oils are continuing on a downward trend

and therefore, the edible oil industry needs to ensure that the prices in the domestic market also drop commensurately.
The industry was told to ensure the price drop in the global market is passed on expeditiously to the end consumers and not in a delayed manner as is observed now.
“The leading edible oil associations were advised to take up the issue with their members immediately and ensure that the maximum retail price (MRP) of major edible oils to be reduced further by Rs 8-12 per litre with immediate effect,” the ministry said in a statement released after the meeting.

RBI proposes norms on cyber resilience, digital payment security controls for PSOs

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank on Friday proposed to establish robust governance mechanisms for authorised non-bank payment system operators (PSOs) to effectively address emerging cybersecurity risks.
Towards this goal, the central bank has issued a ‘Draft Master Directions on Cyber Resilience and Digital Payment Security Controls for Payment System Operators’.
The draft directions cover governance mechanisms for the identification, assessment, monitoring and management of cybersecurity risks, including information security risks and vulnerabilities. They also specify baseline security measures to ensure safe and secure digital



payment transactions.
The central bank said existing instructions concerning security and risk mitigation for card payments, prepaid payment instruments (PPIs) and mobile banking will remain in effect.
“To effectively identify, monitor, control and manage cyber and technology related risks arising out of linkages of PSOs with

unregulated entities, who are part of their digital payments ecosystem, PSOs shall ensure adherence to these Directions by such unregulated entities as well, subject to a mutual agreement,” the draft directions said.
The RBI has invited stakeholders to provide comments and feedback on the draft by June 30. “The Board of Directors (Board) of the PSO shall be responsible for ensuring adequate oversight over information security risks, including cyber risk and cyber resilience,” the draft said.
Additionally, as per the draft, PSOs will be required to develop an approved Cyber Crisis Management Plan (CCMP) to detect, contain, respond to, and recover from cyber threats and attacks.

Forex kitty drops \$4.34 billion to \$ 589.14 billion

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Falling for the second consecutive week, India’s forex reserves dropped by USD 4.339 billion to USD 589.138 billion for the week ended May 26, the Reserve Bank said on Friday.
In the previous reporting week, the reserves had declined by USD 6.052 billion to USD 593.477 billion.
It can be noted that in October 2021, the country’s forex kitty had reached an all-time high of USD 645 billion. The reserves have been declining as the central bank deploys the kitty to defend the rupee amid pressures caused majorly by global developments.
For the week ended May 26, the foreign currency assets, a major component of the

reserves, declined by USD 4.014 billion to USD 520.931 billion, according to the Weekly Statistical Supplement released by the RBI on Friday.
Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves.
Gold reserves dropped by USD 225 million to USD 44.902 billion, the RBI said.
The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were down by USD 84 million to USD 18.192 billion, the apex bank said.
The country’s reserve position with the IMF was down by USD 17 million to USD 5.113 billion in the reporting week, the apex bank data showed.

Goldman sees RBI pausing again on June 8 review

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Forecasting a steeper fall in inflation to the tune of 50 bps lower than previously projected, a Wall Street brokerage sees the central bank leaving the policy rates unchanged at 6.5 per cent in the forthcoming review on June 8.
Analysts at Goldman Sachs India in a report on Friday said the headline inflation will average 5.3 per cent this year, which is within the RBI target of 2 per cent plus or minus 4 per cent, even though they expect some risk to food inflation stemming from crop damages due to unseasonal rains.
It can be noted that retail

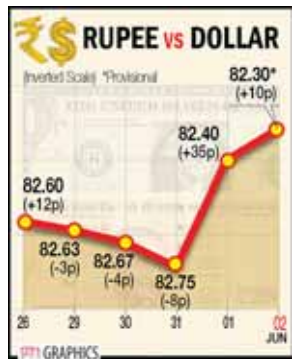
inflation has declined to an 18-month low of 4.7 per cent in April from 5.7 per cent in March. Moreover, core inflation has also fallen to 5.2 per cent in April.
Going forward, we see average headline inflation at 5.3 per cent in 2023, which is within the RBI target of 2-6 per cent. This means that in Q2 of 2023 (Q1 of FY24) headline inflation is likely to be around 50 bps below the most recent RBI forecast. This will have the RBI keeping the policy repo rate unchanged at 6.50 per cent in the June 8 policy meeting and expect the central bank to remain on hold till the end of the year, the agency said in the report.

Rupee rises 9 paise to close at 82.31 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee appreciated by 9 paise to 82.31 (provisional) against the US dollar on Friday, supported by broad dollar weakness and a positive trend in domestic equities.
At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened on a positive note against the US dollar and settled at 82.31 (provisional), up 9 paise over its previous close.
During the day, the domestic unit witnessed an intra-day high of 82.27 and a low of 82.38 in the day trade.
On Thursday, the rupee

closed at 82.40 against the US currency.
“The Indian rupee strengthened for the second consecutive day on positive domestic markets and a weak US dollar. However, a rebound in crude oil prices capped sharp gains,” said Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst, Sharekhan by BNP Paribas.
The dollar index, which gauges the greenback’s strength against a basket of six currencies, fell 0.12 per cent to 103.43.
Global oil benchmark Brent crude futures advanced 1.28 per cent to USD 75.23 per



barrel. “We expect rupee to trade with a slight positive bias in the near term on risk-on sentiments in the global mar-

kets amid debt-ceiling bill being passed and rising odds of a pause in rate hike by the US Federal Reserve in June,” Choudhary said.
Choudhary further added that concerns over global economic slowdown and recovery in crude oil prices may prevent sharp upside.
“Traders may remain cautious ahead of US non-farm payrolls and unemployment rate data. We expect USDINR spot to trade in between 81.80 to 82.80 in the near-term,” Choudhary said.
Besides, positive macro-economic data supported the local unit, traders said.

Centre imposes stock limits on pulses till Oct to prevent hoarding

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

To prevent hoarding and check price rise, the Centre on Friday imposed stock limits on all pulses, except moong, held by wholesalers, retailers, importers and millers till October. The stock limits are imposed with immediate effect. An order in this regard has been issued by the Union Food and Consumer Affairs Ministry. Retail prices of pulses rose by more than 20 per cent during the January-June period of this year, according to the ministry’s data.
According to the ministry, the stock limit of 200 tonnes has been imposed on wholesalers provided they do not hold more than 200 tonnes of one variety of pulses. For retailers, the stock limit will be 5 tonnes.
In the case of millets, the stock limit will be the last three months of production or 25 per cent of annual installed capacity, whichever is higher.
Lastly, for importers, the stock limit will be the same as that of wholesalers for stocks held/imported prior to May 15, 2021.
And for pulses imported after May 15, the stock limit applicable on wholesalers will apply after 45 days from the date of customs clearance, the order said.

ONGC to maintain financial flexibility as earnings steady: S&P

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned ONGC’s operating cash flows will rise over the next 12-24 months due to higher production volumes, stable earnings from domestic gas production, and the removal of a windfall tax on crude oil, S&P Global Ratings said on Friday.
“This should help the company maintain its good credit quality, despite its investment plans and healthy shareholder distributions,” the rating agency said in a statement.
ONGC is India’s largest oil

and gas producer.
“We estimate that ONGC’s domestic production volumes will rise by 8-10 per cent for fiscal 2024 (year ending March 31). The increase is attributable to the start of oil production from its block in the Krishna Godavari basin later this year,” S&P said.
At the same time, production at the Sakhalin-1 project of ONGC Videsh Ltd (OVL) should also recover to fiscal 2022 levels, after a period of disruptions because of geopolitical issues.
Oil and Natural Gas

Corporation produced a total of 42.8 million tonne of oil equivalent (mmtoe) in fiscal 2023 compared with 43.4 mmtoe in fiscal 2022. OVL produced a total of 10.2 mmtoe in fiscal 2023, down from 12.3 mmtoe in fiscal 2022.
“Growth in production volumes will outstrip the impact of moderating oil prices on ONGC’s earnings, in our view. We estimate the company’s EBITDA at Rs 1-1.1 lakh crore over fiscals 2024 and 2025, compared with about Rs 98,700 crore in fiscal 2023,” it said.

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Future Lifestyle Fashions Ltd has received a total claim of Rs 2,155.53 crore from 12 financial creditors in the corporate insolvency resolution process (CIRP) initiated against this Future group company recently.
The resolution professional of the company has provisionally admitted claims of Rs 2,117.03 crore and claims worth Rs 38.5 crore are “under verification,” said the latest data shared by Future Lifestyle

Fashions Ltd (FLFL) on the exchanges.
As per the provision of the Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code, a Committee of Creditors (CoC) of FLFL has been formed and it will have its first meeting next week.
“We wish to inform you that the first meeting of CoC of Future Lifestyle Fashions Limited (under CIRP) will be held on Tuesday, June 6, 2023,” it said.
On May 4, the Mumbai bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) had

directed to initiate CIRP against FLFL, admitting a petition from Bank of India. This is the third company of the Kishore Biyani-led Future Group to be dragged into CIRP by its creditors for defaulting on loans.
Its flagship firm Future Retail Ltd and logistics and infra arm Future Enterprises are already facing insolvency proceedings.
FLFL was considering asset monetisation to pare its debts, however, it did not materialise. It had entered into a One Time Restructuring (OTR) Plan with

lenders also.
The company has in-house retail chains Central and Brand Factory, exclusive brand outlets (EBOs) and other multi-brand outlets (MBOs) of nearly a dozen apparel labels, including Lee Copper, Champion, aLL, Indigo Nation, Giovanni, John Miller, Scullers, Converse and Urbana in its portfolio.
According to the regulatory filing, State Bank of India leads the CoC of FLFL with 22.51 per cent voting share. It had an admitted loan of Rs 476.59 crore.

3rd SEED JESSICA PEGULA STUNNED

AP ■ PARIS

Jessica Pegula quickly gathered her belongings and marched out of Court Philippe Chatrier after a 6-1, 6-3 loss to Elise Mertens in the third round on Friday at the French Open, a far earlier exit than the No. 3-seeded American has been used to at Grand Slam tournaments lately.

Pegula was a quarterfinalist at four of the five most recent majors, including a year ago at Roland Garros.

She's never gone further than that stage at a Slam and never really got into this match against the 28th-seeded Mertens on a day with a breeze at about 10 mph (15 kph) and a chill in the low 60s Fahrenheit (low teens Celsius).

"I feel like I was still playing good points. Elise was just

being really tough, not making a lot of errors and making me play every single ball. And with the windy conditions, I felt like it definitely played into her game," said Pegula, whose parents own the NFL's Buffalo Bills and NHL's Buffalo Sabres.

"She returned well and I thought that she used the wind on both sides to her advantage," Pegula said. "She was playing aggressive on the side with the wind and then, against the wind, I think she was playing some really good defense."

Mertens is a 27-year-old Belgian who was a semifinalist at the 2018 Australian Open and twice has reached the US Open quarterfinals.

But she still has not made it beyond the fourth round on the red clay in Paris. She will attempt to do that when she



plays Sunday against 2021 French Open runner-up Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova, who beat No. 24 Anastasia Potapova 4-6, 6-3, 6-0.

With Pegula joining No. 5 Caroline Garcia, No. 8 Maria Sakkari and No. 10 Petra Kvitova on the sideline, four of the top 10 women's seeds already are gone. That's part of a pattern this year at Roland Garros: Only 12 seeds made it through two rounds, the fewest in Paris since the field expanded to 32 seeds in 2002.

With the losses by Pegula and Potapova, only 10 remain.

Another woman from the United States joined Pegula on the way out early on Friday: Peyton Stearns, the 2022 NCAA champion for the University of Texas, was eliminated by No. 9 Daria Kasatkina 6-0, 6-1 in 55 minutes.

In other early results Friday, No. 2 Aryna Sabalenka, the Australian Open champion in January, won, as did men's No. 11 seed Karen Khachanov.

Stearns, a big hitter who defeated 2017 French Open champion Jelena Ostapenko in the second round, simply could not find her targets. More than half of Kasatkina's 59 points came via the 30 unforced errors by Stearns. Pegula had similar issues, making 28 unforced errors to only 13 by Mertens.

It was a rough start for Pegula. When she dumped a forehand into the net, Pegula chucked her racket off the ground, already down 4-0. The deficit was 5-0 after fewer than 20 minutes. There was more of the same in the second set. Mertens used drop shots effectively, and Pegula couldn't get going.

Fritz shushes booing crowd

AP ■ PARIS

The French Open crowd was not happy with American player Taylor Fritz after he beat one of their own — indeed, their last man in the bracket — so they booed and whistle relentlessly. Fritz's response? He told them to shush. Over and over again.

Fritz, a 25-year-old from California who is seeded No. 9 at Roland Garros, got into a back-and-forth with the fans at Court Suzanne Lenglen after his 2-6 6-4 6-3 6-4 comeback victory over 78th-ranked Arthur Rinderknech in the second round on Thursday night.

Rinderknech attempted a lob that landed long on the

last point, and Fritz, who had been running toward the baseline to chase the ball, immediately looked up into the stands and pressed his right index finger to his lips to say, essentially, "Hush!"

He held that pose for a bit as he headed back toward the net for a postmatch handshake, then spread his arms wide, wind-milled them a bit as if to egg on the rowdiness, and yelled: "Come on! I want to hear it!" During the customary winner's on-court interview that followed, more jeers rained down on Fritz, and 2013 Wimbledon champion Marion Bartoli kept pausing her attempts to ask a question into her microphone.



Parul targets Asian Games medal

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Two months of high-altitude training at Colorado Springs in the USA has done wonders for Indian long-distance runner Parul Chaudhary, who is aiming for a medal in the upcoming Asian Games in China as well as breaking Lalita Babar's 3000m steeplechase national record.

The 28-year-old Chaudhary has been training at Colorado Springs — which is at an altitude of 1800m above sea level — along with star men's 3000m steeple-chaser Avinash Sable since March 20.

She set a national record of 15:10.35s in the 5000m race at the Track Festival in Walnut, California, on May 6 before clocking her personal best of 9:29.51s in her pet event of 3000m steeplechase at the USATF Los Angeles Grand Prix on May 26.

"I have benefitted immensely from the high-altitude training at Colorado Springs. Last year, I was here (Colorado Springs) for just 25 days, but this time, it has been two months now here, doing high-altitude training," Chaudhary told PTI from her training base at Colorado Springs.

"The continuous training for two months is showing in my timing. The season has been great for me so far. I am currently in training-cum-competition mode, and once the main international competitions of the season start, I hope to achieve my goals."

Chaudhary, the daughter of a farmer from Bahrala village in Uttar Pradesh's Meerut district, is currently training under foreign coach Scott Simmons and Indian coach Jaiveer Singh.

Target is Asian Games medal and breaking Lalita Babar's national record

In the senior circuit for nearly 10 years without much international success, Chaudhary is hoping this season to be a defining one as she aims for medals in the Hangzhou Asian Games in September-October.

In the 2018 Asian Games, the 5000m gold-medal winner had clocked 15:08.08s while the silver winner ran 15:30.57s, which is much more than the national record set by Chaudhary last month.

Europa League final referee harassed by Roma fans at airport

AP ■ ROME

Europa League final referee Anthony Taylor and his family had to be escorted away by security at Budapest airport after outraged Roma fans directed insults at him and threw a chair in his direction, a video published on the Gazzetta dello Sport website showed.

Roma has largely blamed Taylor for its penalty shootout loss to Sevilla in the final on Wednesday. Roma coach Jose Mourinho lashed out at the referee in his post-match news conference and then was seen

insulting Taylor with a series of expletives in the garage of the Puskas Arena in Budapest, Hungary, as his team prepared to depart the stadium.

The English top-tier soccer's referees association said in a statement that it "is aware of videos circulating on social media showing Anthony Taylor and his family being harassed and abused at Budapest Airport."

"We are appalled at the unjustified and abhorrent abuse directed at Anthony and his family as he tries to make his way home from refereeing the UEFA Europa League final.

We will continue to provide our full support to Anthony and his family," the referees association added.

UEFA is still awaiting the referee's report from the match.

Roma general manager Tiago Pinto continued the attack on Taylor in a statement to Italian news agency ANSA on Thursday.

"We at AS Roma don't want to raise doubts about Sevilla's merits. We believe that with our opponents we put on a great final and honored the stage offered to us by UEFA in the best way," Pinto said.

Lakshya enters Thailand semis

PTI ■ BANGKOK

Star Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen stormed into the semifinals of Thailand Open Super 500 tournament with a straight game demolition of Malaysia's Leong Jun Hao in men's singles here on Friday.

The 21-year-old from Almor punched the air after unleashing a jump smash which sealed his 21-19 21-11 win over the qualifier from Malaysia in the quarterfinals.

The win helped him to enter the last four for the first time this season, having come close in Indonesia Masters, where he exited in the quarterfinals.

The Indian, whose ranking has slipped to world number 23 from a career-high of six fol-

lowing below-par performances this season, will take on either fifth seed Lu Guang Zu of China or Thailand's second seed Kunlavut Vitidsarn in the semifinals.

Kiran George's giant run, however, came to an end after he went down 16-21 17-21 against Toma Junior Popov of France in another men's singles match.

It was an exciting contest as Lakshya and Leong kept pushing each other from the start. But after a 10-11 deficit at the interval, the Indian fell behind as the Malaysian managed to hold a 16-10 lead.

But Lakshya then changed gears, stepping up the pace in the rallies to restore parity at 17-17 before pocketing the opening game as Leong looked tired.

Szymon to remain referee for CL final after apology: UEFA

AP ■ GENEVA

Polish soccer referee Szymon Marciniak apologised on Friday for speaking at a business event tied to a far-right politician and was confirmed by UEFA to officiate next week's Champions League final.

Marciniak's appointment for the game between Manchester City and Inter Milan on June 10, months after he refereed the World Cup final in Qatar, was at risk on Thursday after a Warsaw-based anti-racism group alerted UEFA to his conference appearance this week.

UEFA said on Friday it accepted Marciniak's "profound apologies and clarification" and that anti-racism group Never Again had also then asked for the referee to be retained.

Casemiro's winning mentality key for Man Utd in final



AP ■ LONDON

A few concerns were raised when Brazil midfielder Casemiro completed his move to Manchester United in August.

Would he still have enough motivation after nine trophy-filled years at Real Madrid?

Could he adapt quickly enough to the English game?

Was a 30-year-old defensive midfielder really worth USD 60 million and a reported weekly wage of USD 435,000?

The answers, without doubt, have been yes, yes and absolutely yes.

Take away Erling Haaland and the signing that had the biggest impact in English soccer this season is surely Casemiro, who — in the words of his coach — has exceeded expectations "by far."

"He keeps surprising you," United manager Erik ten Hag said.

"He's such a brilliant football player."

If there's one player Ten Hag would want to have available for the FA Cup final against

Manchester City on Saturday, it's Casemiro.

Quite simply, the difference with and without him is huge.

Casemiro started 24 of United's 38 league games this season, and was a substitute in four others. According to statistics compiled by the Who Scored website, United conceded an average of less than a goal a game when Casemiro was in the team and 1.5 goals when he wasn't.

He made 3.2 tackles per game in the Premier League, the third highest behind Fulham's Joao Palhinha and Leeds' Tyler Adams.

United conceded 57 goals in the league last season. With Casemiro stationed in front of the defense, that number was down to 43 this season as United secured a return to the Champions League and all the riches that brings.

So, yes, Casemiro really was worth it.

Ten Hag noted upon arriving at United at the end of last season that a leader in central midfield was the

biggest thing missing in a team which had been getting by with an oft-maligned "McFred" (Scott McTominay and Fred) axis.

"We studied this and we searched for this — it was not easy because there aren't many in the profile who fits to the standard of Manchester United," Ten Hag said, before listing what Casemiro brings.

"We know him as very good with organization, anticipation, winning duels, fighting and keeping the team together. But in possession, his passing distribution and finishing is very important."

More than that, his winning mentality — fostered at Madrid, where he won five Champions League titles and the Spanish league three times — is something United had been missing in the post-Alex Ferguson era.

It has that now and it's mostly because of the arrival of Casemiro and another former Madrid player, Raphael Varane.

"The pressure is something we are used to playing with. And we need the pressure — it's not that kind of pressure that limits you," Varane said.

"Sometimes quality is not enough — you need the motivation, character, passion on the pitch, because in the top level in the Premier League, there are good players in any team. But to play in this kind of clubs you need something else ... something different, that character to fight, to assume the responsibility, to never hide on the pitch, to be ready to face every challenge you can."



Raducanu parts ways with coach

AP ■ LONDON

Emma Raducanu, the 2021 US Open champion, will no longer work with Sebastian Sachs, who had been her fifth coach in the past two years.

Raducanu announced the split via a Twitter post on Thursday.

"I have really enjoyed Seb's coaching and working with him, it's unfortunate that circumstances made it unfeasible for both of us to continue right now and we have decided to part ways," her post said.

"I wish Seb all the best moving forwards."

Raducanu hasn't played since April and announced last month she would miss the French Open and Wimbledon because she needed what she called "minor" procedures on both hands and an ankle. She said then she expected to be sidelined for a few months.

Her record during an injury-plagued 2023 is 5-5.

Raducanu became one of the stars of tennis two years ago, when she made a surprising run to the fourth round at Wimbledon while ranked outside the top 300, then, soon after, won the US Open at age 18 to become the first qualifier to claim a Grand Slam singles title.

Kerala Blasters' appeal against fine refected

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The All India Football Federation on Friday rejected Kerala Blasters FC's appeal against the Rs 4 crore fine imposed on them for misconduct and abandonment of their ISL playoff match against Bengaluru FC.

The committee also rejected KBFC's head coach Ivan Vukumanovic's appeal against the fine of Rs 5 lakh and a 10-game ban imposed on him.

In both cases, the Appeal Committee upheld the earlier decisions of the Disciplinary Committee and were asked to "pay the respective fines within two weeks".

Their ISL playoff on March 3 sparked controversy as Kerala Blasters walked off the field claiming that Sunil Chhetri's winning strike from an extra time freekick was not "legitimate".



They claimed that referee Crystal John did not blow the whistle before Chhetri took the kick and the players were not ready.

By virtue of their extra-time lead Bengaluru FC were declared 1-0 winners and advanced into the ISL semifinals.

"The appeal of the appellant team is denied and that Kerala Blasters FC is instructed to pay the fine of Rs 4 crore imposed by the Disciplinary Committee,"

the Appeal Committee stated in its decision.

On the appeal made by Ivan Vukumanovic, the Appeal Committee said: "This Committee holds that the appeal of the Appellant Coach is denied and that Ivan Vukumanovic is instructed to pay the fine of Rs 5 lakh and serve the suspension for 10 matches and the ban from being a part of the team dressing room and team bench, irrespective of the team he is contracted with.

Steady start for Manu Gandas

PTI ■ HAMBURG

Indian golfer Manu Gandas carded an even par 72 that placed him Tied-26th at the Porsche European Open here.

Gandas came into the DP World Tour because of the strategic alliance with the India's domestic PGTI Tour, where he topped the rankings last year.

Gandas, the lone Indian in the field as Shubhankar Sharma took time off this week to practice for the Open next month, had three birdies against three bogeys.

Gandas started from the first with a birdie but he bogeyed second, fourth and eighth and turned in 2-over. Birdies on 14th and 15th saved the day for him as he turned in a card of even par.

Germany's Max Kieffer carded a four under par 69 to share the first-round lead as he staked an early claim to become the first German winner on home soil for 15 years.

Stuttgart beat Hamburg in Bundesliga playoff

AP ■ STUTTGART

Hamburger SV's five-year wait to rejoin the Bundesliga looks set to continue.

Serhou Guirassy helped to put Stuttgart in a commanding position to keep its place in Germany's top division with a 3-0 win over Hamburg on Thursday in the first leg of their playoff.

Guirassy had failed to make the most of a one-on-one chance and had a penalty saved in the first half, but the Guinea forward grabbed Stuttgart's third goal early in the second half.

Hamburg's task was further complicated in the 69th minute when substitute Anssi Suhonen was sent off minutes after coming on for a studs-up lunge at Joshua Vagnoman's thigh.

The win puts Stuttgart,



which finished third from bottom in the Bundesliga, on course to stay in the first division before the second leg of the playoff in Hamburg on Monday. Hamburg finished third in the second division.

There was a minute's silence before Thursday's game in tribute to the 15-year-old player who died after a post-match brawl at an interna-

tional youth tournament in Frankfurt last weekend.

Stuttgart got off to a great start with Konstantinos Mavropanos heading the opener inside the first minute.

The visitors had Daniel Heuer Fernandes to thank for keeping the score down. The Hamburg goalkeeper saved from Chris Führich, then got the better of Guirassy in a one-on-one, and also saved Guirassy's penalty in the 27th. Two minutes later he produced another save to deflect Führich's effort away.

Führich effectively created the second goal in the 51st when he eluded two Hamburg defenders and played a perfectly weighted pass for Enzo Millot, who crossed for the unmarked Vagnoman to score.

Guirassy finally scored with a header to a corner three minutes later.

Shields fighting for gender equality for women boxers

AP ■ DETROIT

Claressa Shields is perhaps in the prime of her career, establishing a big enough name as a two-time Olympic gold medalist and world champion in three weight classes to headline the first boxing card in the six-year history of Little Caesars Arena in the Motor City.

The undisputed middleweight champion became

the first woman to earn a seven-figure payday in her last two fights and is expected to make another \$1 million Saturday night when she faces top-ranked contender Maricela Cornejo in the home of the Detroit Red Wings and Pistons. Shields grew up poor in Flint, Michigan, and has earned enough money to become rich at 28.

Still, she laments the gender inequities in boxing.

TV and streaming deals are 10 to 20 times more lucrative for men than women, according to Shields' promoter, Dmitriy Salita. Typically, male boxers make about \$3 million per fight while female fighters just recently started getting seven figures for a night in the ring, while some earn more and many make much less.

"We don't get the equal TV time, the equal promotion, equal

pay," Shields said earlier this week in an interview with The Associated Press. "That's what I've been trying to do with my platform, make sure I get all of that."

Shields is boxing in a marquee event in part because sports-streaming service DAZN stepped up enough financially to help facilitate the fight.

Women in boxing have shown they can sell out big are-

nas, as Katie Taylor and Amanda Serrano did 13 months ago at New York's Madison Square Garden, but they're not compensated as well as men in the same sport.

"It's like any other profession where the women still haven't caught up," said Jackie Kallen, a 77-year-old former boxing publicist and manager, who was commissioner of the International Female Boxing

Association when it was founded in 1997. "It's got a ways to go."

"They take a beating just like the men. They bleed just like the men, but they don't get paid just like the men."

Boxing Hall of Famer Christy Martin, whose bloody nose in the ring 27 years ago landed her on the cover of Sports Illustrated, said she would've never imagined women in the sport headlining

cards in big-time arenas as they do now.

Martin, though, said the lack of a deep talent pool limits opportunities.

"If you look back at the real old-timers in the sport, they would fight every other week," the 54-year-old Martin said in a telephone interview from Texas. "Now, we're lucky to see champions once a year."

Shields (13-0, 2 knockouts)

turned pro in 2016 after becoming the first US boxer — female, or male — to win consecutive Olympic gold medals and is averaging two fights a year. Cornejo (16-5, 6 KOs) replaced Hanna Gabriels (21-2-1, 12 KOs) last week in the 160-pound division title fight after the Costa Rican was removed from the card due to results from a Voluntary Anti-Doping Association test in May.

India shouldn't pick WTC XI with pre-determined mindset: Prasad

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India should not pick the playing XI for the World Test Championship final with a pre-determined mindset like they did two years ago, says former chief selector MSK Prasad, who feels it would be very tough to fill the injured Rishabh Pant's shoes as his overseas feats are unparalleled.

India's move to pick two spinners — Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja — in the 2021 WTC final against New Zealand backfired as pacers dominated the game in over-cast conditions at Southampton.

Spin could play a role in the final against Australia at The Oval in London from June 7 but Prasad advised the team to take the final call depending on the conditions at that time.

"We went with two spinners and three fast bowlers in the mind but subsequently there was rain, we should have changed our plans, somehow we stuck to the same playing eleven. But that is in the past.

"It all depends on conditions at The Oval. The is the actual story of the movie, the pitch and conditions. We don't know how they will be over five days, so we should not pre fix our mind and understand the conditions and back your instincts," the former India wicketkeeper told PTI.

Pant, who has scored centuries in England, Australia and South Africa, won't be available



to counter attack if the top-order fails. Prasad feels KS Bharat is the automatic choice in Pant's absence but the latter's ability as a batter is rare.

"It is a pretty straightforward call to pick Bharat (over Ishan Kishan). It is really tough to fill the shoes of Rishabh especially in an away series. In the history of entire India cricket, no other wicketkeeper batter has hundreds in England, South Africa and Australia, so it's very difficult to replace him.

"You need to have a wicketkeeper who is fit and fine for

100 overs. This is a Test match and we need to think from that aspect. "But if you are thinking you can have Ishan Kishan, Bharat has been tried and tested and has played India A in England, so they might end up going with him," said Prasad, who was the chief selector between 2016 and 2020.

India's star studded top four comprising Rohit Sharma, Shubman Gill, Cheteshwar Pujara and Virat Kohli are expected to deliver against the likes of Mitchell Starc, Josh Hazlewood and Pat Cummins.

Ajinkya Rahane at five also adds to the experience of the batting unit.

"That is going to decide the fate of the game. How our top order is going to face their fast bowling. "With Gill in the form of his life, Rohit already has a hundred in England, Kohli has been in great form and Pujara has got lot of runs in county cricket and Ajinkya with his experience, it is the best we can have, they have to fight and win the game," Prasad said.

Gill has recorded centuries across formats in the last six

months and was the standout batter in the IPL.

"It is all about the mindset and Gill has adapted to different formats now. In IPL he did say about technical changes he made in his batting to improve strike rate. So, if a player can change his mindset as per format he is going to do well in any format.

"That is what he has done across formats. I hope he will replicate that form in England," said the 48-year-old who played six Tests and 17 ODIs between 1998-99.

If India does go with four pacers, then choosing between Ashwin and Jadeja becomes very difficult considering what they bring to the table, said Prasad.

"Jadeja has been so good of late that he can play as a specialist batter. It is a tricky call considering what both can bring to the table, it is hard to ignore. Ashwin with his 400 plus wickets and he is someone who is who can bowl on any surface. If it comes to that, it will be a very tough call," he said.

Another tough call will be to choose between Umesh Yadav and all-rounder Shardul Thakur.

"That is the trickiest part. If you see the statistics, Umesh is more successful in home conditions compared to away conditions, so picking Shardul gives you that batting advantage. You need to have long batting depth also against a quality attack like Australia," Prasad added.



Australia unsure about India's bowling line-up

PTI ■ LONDON

Australia are expecting Ravindra Jadeja to feature in India's playing XI in the World Test Championship final but are unsure about Ravichandran Ashwin's participation in the marquee contest to be played at The Oval starting June 7.

India utilised three spinners during the recent Border-Gavaskar Trophy series with both Ashwin (25 wickets) and Jadeja (22) shining bright to help their side claim a 2-1 series win.

Talking to local media prior to Australia's training session at the Kent County Cricket Ground in Beckenham on Thursday, assistant coach Daniel Vettori said the team management had a lot of discussion about India's probable bowling attack.

"We have been debating that," Vettori said.

"I think Jadeja will play because of the batting he brings to the table and how successful he has been at that No.6 position.

"Then the question will be around that fourth seamer and the all-rounder in (Shardul) Thakur and Ashwin, but they are (both) pretty good choices."

Vettori, however, feels Ashwin might just lose out on a spot in the playing XI because of team combination despite enjoying a decent record in England.

The experienced off-spinner has a total of 18 wickets at an average of 28.11 from seven matches in England but has played just one Test at The Oval.

"Ashwin is an incredible bowler and he will be first choice in most teams, and just with their combinations it may lead to that (him missing selection)," Vettori said.

"We expect The Oval to behave how it always behaves. "It is a good wicket, but it can offer a lot to the spinners as the game goes on."

Vettori also expects Cameron Green to play a big part in the WTC final, especially after his superb showing in the just-concluded IPL.

"Any cricket is preparation now. He is doing work in the background to make sure his bowling loads are up and he is actually ready for Test cricket," Vettori said of Green.

"We look at it like if you are involved in high-intensity, high-class cricket, we are happy with that as it means you are playing cricket.

"The hardest thing for guys is coming out of nothing and that might be a challenge for a couple of guys who have had an extended break and how they get up to speed as quickly as possible," he said.

It's a grand final for us: Lyon

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Off-spinner Nathan Lyon doesn't believe Australia's preparations for the World Test Championship final will be affected by the talk around the Ashes, terming the upcoming contest against India as "grand final".

India and Australia will square off in the WTC final at The Oval from June 7.

The five-Test Ashes against England beginning June 16 has dominated the headlines over the past few months as Australia seek to win the marquee series away from home for the first time in 22 years.

"Yes, we are playing the Ashes but we've got a big game that we're up for. This (WTC final) is our grand final, and then our season basically starts again," Lyon was quoted as saying by Australian Associated Press.

"That's probably where we're quite happy with where we're at with our planning. We are able to understand what we've got around the corner, and be OK. It's exciting to be part of the final and the fanfare and stuff around it, it's bloody special.

"I know every Australian fan is looking forward to the Ashes, and so they should be. But they should also be excited



about this match," he added.

Australia will head into the Ashes without any warm-up game with the WTC final being the lone match before the contest against England.

Lyon believes the 1-2 loss Test series in India earlier this year won't have any bearing on the upcoming contest.

"You can wipe off anything that happened in India," Lyon said.

"Both teams are really well rounded in their squads. It is going to be a really good challenge.

"India obviously have some class batters but they have some class fast bowlers as well. It's going to be a good challenge. Both squads going at it and competing for one game, it's going to be a really good challenge," he said.

"It's a fresh start. I'm looking forward to it"

ECB CEO supports India getting 38% earnings share

PTI ■ DUBAI

India make immense contribution in driving revenues and fuelling the growth of cricket globally and deserve to earn USD 230 million per year from 2024 to 2027 under ICC's proposed financial model, feels ECB chief executive officer Richard Gould.

According to the new proposed distribution model, the Indian cricket board (BCCI) could earn 38.5 per cent of the USD 600 million earnings over the next four-year commercial cycle with the ECB (USD 41.33 million) and Cricket Australia (USD 37.53 million) being the next highest earners.

The PCB is likely to take home USD 34.51 million (5.75 per cent), while the rest will be shared by the remaining eight full members.

In total, the 12 full members will get USD 532.84 million (88.81 per cent) with the remaining USD 67.16 million (11.19 per cent) going to the associate members out of the USD 600 million projected pool.

The proposals, which are due to be ratified by the ICC, were criticised as it will only further increase the financial disparity in the game.

However, Gould defended ICC's new allocation model.

"When you see where that value is created, I think it's understandable," Gould said on the latest episode of The Final Word podcast.

"There may be tweaks in the margins here or there, but the dominant position India is in is



based on India's ability to drive revenues and drive the sport forward. One point four billion people, one sport, ten (IPL) teams, one international team."

"What I'm also fascinated by is India's determination also to assist the world game. You look at the percentages and go 'Well, that's not fair it should be split equally'. But we've got to look at the size of the market.

"India play as many international fixtures as any other team in the world. And they do that because they know when they tour as

an international team, they bring interest and revenue to that home side. I think it's important to see things in the round, in that regard," he added.

Gould acknowledged the disparity, but he took a holistic view of the situation.

"I get it (the financial inequality). But I also understand how important India is, because without them we wouldn't have the kind of revenues that are coming into the game," he said.

"And I do think India make huge efforts to be responsible partners in this when I see the amount they travel around the world, taking India everywhere. I do think it is a balance.

"I think there is collective decision-making, both in India and within the ICC, and I think there is a real determination and understanding we need (for) cricket to be expanding and we need it to be healthy around the world."

Gould feels instead of the host nation retaining all revenue, boards need to pay touring sides during bilateral series.

Sehrawat to lead India 'A' in Emerging Women's Asia Cup



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Batting all-rounder Shweta Sehrawat will lead a 14-member Indian 'A' squad in the upcoming ACC Emerging Women's Asia Cup beginning in Hong Kong on June 12. India 'A' will begin their campaign on June 13 against hosts Hong Kong at the Tin Kwong Road Recreation Ground.

"The All India Women's Selection Committee on Friday announced the India 'A' (Emerging) squad for the upcoming ACC Emerging Women's Asia Cup 2023," BCCI said in a release. The tournament will feature eight teams which are divided into two groups.

India 'A' (Emerging) is a part of Group A which also features hosts Hong Kong, Thailand 'A' and Pakistan 'A', while Bangladesh 'A', Sri Lanka 'A', Malaysia and the United Arab Emirates are in Group B.

The final will be played on June 21.

SQUAD: Shweta Sehrawat (Captain), Soumya Tiwari (vice-captain), Trisha Gongadi, Muskan Malik, Shreyanka Patil, Kanika Ahuja, Uma Chetry (wicketkeeper), Mamatha Madiwala (wicketkeeper), Titas Sadhu, Yashasri S, Kashvee Gautam, Parshavi Chopra, Mannat Kashyap, B Anusha.

Head Coach: Nooshin Al Khadeer

SCHEDULE: June 13 - India 'A' vs Hong Kong; June 15 - India 'A' vs Thailand 'A'; June 17 - India 'A' vs Pakistan 'A'



Afghanistan beat SL in 1st ODI

AP ■ HAMBANTOTA

Sri Lanka has several head-saches ahead of its World Cup qualifiers in two weeks' time after suffering a heavy six-wickets defeat against Afghanistan on Friday.

Set a target of 269, Afghanistan got there with 19 deliveries to spare to take the opener of the three-match one-day international series.

Ibrahim Zadran was the hero for the visitors, top scoring with 98 runs. The opening batter took the Sri Lankan quicks to task during the Power Play as he raced to his half-century in just 35 balls.

Zadran, a 21-year-old right-handed batter, settled down after the field restrictions as he added 146 runs with Rahmat Shah for the second wicket as the Afghans proved Sri Lanka's total of 268 was way below par.

Kasun Rajitha broke the stand when he had Zadran caught at deep mid-wicket, just two runs short of his fourth ODI hundred. Zadran's 98 runs came off 98 balls with 11 hits to the ropes and two over it.

Sri Lanka also dismissed Rahmat Shah for 55 when Matheesha Pathirana claimed his first ODI wicket. But Hashmathullah Shahidi's 38 sealed the game for his side.

The Afghan captain shared 42 runs for the fourth wicket with Mohammad Nabi, who remained 27 not out.

Sri Lanka brought in the experienced Dimuth Karunaratne and Angelo Mathews to the ODI squad to address the team's batting woes.

But it was back to square one as they slumped to 84-4 with Mathews (12) and Karunaratne (4) not able to make big contributions.

Charith Asalanka held the Sri Lankan innings together with his seventh half-century and went on to score 91 off 95 balls with 12 fours. He was well backed up by Dhananjaya de Silva (51) as they shared a 99-run partnership for the fifth wicket. But Sri Lanka needed much more than that.

Asalanka's knock was some consolation for the Sri Lankans, but the former world champions needed the senior players to put their hands up as there were too many soft dismissals.

Afghanistan, which has already qualified for the World Cup in India later this year, was without star bowler Rashid Khan, who sat out with a lower back strain. But their bowlers responded well keeping Sri Lanka to a below-par total cutting down the work of the batters.

Tongue's debut makes family friend richer

PTI ■ LONDON

A family friend of Josh Tongue, who made his England Test debut against Ireland, has hit the jackpot for a wager he had placed 14 years back on the pace bowler that he would one day go on to represent the country.

Josh, a 25-year-old right-arm quick, received his England cap from pace bowling stalwart James Anderson on Thursday in the one-off Test against Ireland on Thursday, and though he did not take a wicket, the Worcester Academy product bowled 13 overs, conceding just 40 runs.

A pub landlord, Tim Piper — a family friend — had taken a 500-1 odds that Josh would eventually play for his country when the boy was just 11 years old.

When Josh, who was included in the squad as injury cover ahead of the Ashes, was announced in the playing XI against Ireland, Piper became richer by 50,000 pounds.

"It's been amazing, absolutely wonderful," Piper told Sen Radio on Friday.

"I never dreamt it would be this popular and people in the



pub can see me talking to people in America, India, Australia, they've got friends messaging them saying, 'what the hell happened in Redditch (a town south of Birmingham where Piper resides)'?"

Piper, who watched Josh from a young age and played backyard cricket with him, added he was happy to see the youngster get his Test cap from one of the all-time great bowlers Anderson.

"This (father Phil Tongue) is a friend of mine for 35 years, this (Josh) is his son and I see the work him and his wife have put in to chase this boy around England for the last 25 years. It's wonderful for the family and they were on the pitch today (Thursday) when he got his cap

presented by Jimmy Anderson. "It's just a fairytale," added Piper.

Josh, originally started off as a leg spinner and played Under-11s when he was six, and Piper had the belief that the youngster would one day play for the country.

"On Tuesday night someone phoned me up and said he's (Josh) playing. I was like, 'you what?'" Piper said.

"I look at Sky Sport, BBC Sport, I saw that he was starting (against Ireland) so obviously ran upstairs, got the betting slip out of the cupboard, it's been next to my passport for the last 14 years. I thought I bet to check this slip but I wrote it and read it correctly.

"It's there and I thought oh my God. He knew I bet on him from a young age... it was known in Worcestershire cricket club a bet had been put on him."

Piper is the landlord of the Cricketers Arms pub in Redditch and played with Phil Tongue in local tournaments in the 1990s.

"Even though it's 50,000 pounds to me, a lovely amount, but I'm so happy for the family," he added.

Medal-less second day for India in Bishkek

PTI ■ BISHKEK

Sajan Bhanwal made a spiritless comeback after trailing 0-7 but lost steam in the second period of his bronze medal play-off after three Indian women wrestlers made early exit as India endured a medal-less day at the UWW Ranking Series event here on Friday.

Bhanwal, who was passive initially, lost points in a jiffy from 'par terre' position against China's Rui Liu but logged five straight points to reduce the deficit. The Chinese wrestler was tired but Bhanwal too did not have much left in the tank and shook hands for a 5-7 defeat in the 77kg bout.

Vikas lost the 72kg bronze play-off to Georgia's Otar Abuladze. The Indian Greco-Roman team thus will return with just one medal — a bronze — that came through Manjeet in the 55kg category.

"We could have won at least 4-5 medals in this tournament. The competition was not much high, mostly the Asian wrestlers were competing. It was much tougher in the Croatian Ranking Series event. Sajan could have won today but since there was no national camp, our Greco-Roman wrestlers were not well-

prepared," national coach Har-gobind Singh told PTI.

"Usually they have better stamina but not having good practice has affected their fitness," he added.

The national camps for senior wrestlers were put on hold due to the ongoing agitation of top grapplers and the Indian Olympic Association's ad-hoc committee taking charge of the functioning of the Wrestling Federation of India.

In the women's competition, young Sonam Malik, who is returning from an elbow injury, and Nisha Dahiya suffered first-round defeats while Priya lost her quarterfinal bout.

Sonam, the silver medallist at the 2022 junior world championships, lost 3-5 to China's Jia Long in the qualification round.

The Asian championship silver medallist Nisha had a disappointing result in the 68kg competition as she lost by technical superiority to Uzbekistan's Firuza Ešenbaeva. The Uzbeki later lost her quarterfinal to Turkey's Nesir Bas, thus closing the repechage door on Nisha.

In the 76kg, Priya began with a 6-0 win over Ukraine's Anastasiya Osnich but lost the quarterfinal 1-10 to China's Qiandegenchagan.

Banarse reaches surfing final

PTI ■ MANGALORE

Sugar Banarse, the 17-year-old from Goa, came up with an impressive performance in the Women's Open category to reach the final of the 4th Indian Open of Surfing here on Friday.

Banarse, who collected the highest number of points (10.17), will look to defend her title on Saturday against tough competitors like Tamil Nadu's Kamali Moorthy (8.50) and Shrishti Selvam (4.74) and Karnataka's Sinchana Gowda (5.17).

In the Men's Open category, Sanjaikumar S, Srikanth D, Raghub Panseerselvam, Sathish Sarvanan, Manikandhan M, Kishore Kumar, Sankanthos M and Surya P advanced to the semifinals, scheduled to be



held on Saturday.

Srikanth D, who scored the highest number of points, said, "The waves were comparatively smaller than the previous day and but I am happy to do well today. I want to continue with the tempo and win the title."

The Grooms Boys (U16) category semifinals saw Tamil boys dominate as three out of four surfers from the state made it to the final. Teenage

surfer Kishore Kumar emerged as the highest scorer in the category for the second consecutive day (11.67) as he stunned everyone with his stellar performance.

Tayin Arun, with 9.17 points, and Harish P with 6.33, were other boys from Tamil Nadu to book final berths. Karnataka's only hope Pradeep Pujar earned 4.30 points to reach to the final.