

WORLD 5

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MONEY 6

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SPORT 7

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Crash toll 288 & counting...

803 hurt in India's worst trains pile-up in Balasore

PNS ■ KOLKATA

The death toll from the triple train accident at Bahanaga Bazar in Balasore, Odisha, on Friday has now risen to 288. Preliminary investigations suggest that a signal was initially given for the Coromandel Express to enter the main line but was later taken off, causing the train to enter the loop line where it collided with a parked goods train.

In the aftermath of the tragedy, efforts to remove the mangled coaches and repair the tracks at the site have begun in full swing, according to a railway official. The accident involved three trains: The 12841 Shalimar-Chennai Central Coromandel Express, the 12864 Bengaluru-Howrah Superfast Express, and a goods train. It stands as one of the worst railway disasters in the country's history.

As per reports available until late Saturday afternoon, the accident claimed the lives of 288 people, while 803 individuals sustained injuries, including 56 with severe injuries. The two express trains were carrying over 2,200 passengers with reserved tickets, along with many others travelling in unreserved coaches.

The railways revealed that



Passengers wait at the site where Coromandel Express, Bengaluru-Howrah Express and a goods train derailed, in Balasore district on Saturday

PTI

the Coromandel Express, while passing through the up main line, collided with a stationary goods train in the loop line at Bahanaga Bazar station, located approximately 280 kilometres from Howrah and 171 kilometres from Bhubaneswar.

A loop line is a railway track connected at both ends to a main line, allowing trains to be diverted to accommodate passing trains.

The impact of the collision caused 21 coaches of the Coromandel Express to derail, with three coaches falling onto a neighbouring track where the Bengaluru-Howrah Express was simultaneously passing in the opposite direction.

Consequently, the Bengaluru-Howrah train collided with the fallen coaches, causing its rear two coaches to derail. The number of pas-

sengers with reserved tickets on the Coromandel Express was around 1,257, while the Bengaluru-Howrah Superfast Express had 1,039 passengers with reservations.

The railways has announced an ex-gratia relief of ₹10 lakh to the next of kin of those who died, ₹2 lakh to the seriously injured, and ₹50,000 for passengers with minor injuries.

Investigations are currently underway to determine any human error, signal failure, or other potential causes behind the tragic accident.

A preliminary inquiry report has been submitted, and a high-level probe, led by the commissioner of railway safety, South Eastern Circle, has been initiated by the national transporter.

Kavach could have saved lives, anti-collision system missing

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The tragic collision of three trains in Balasore on Friday night, resulting in the loss of over 288 lives and injuring 803 people, has raised questions about the absence of the Kavach system developed by the Indian Railways to prevent such accidents caused by driver error or other factors.

According to Indian Railways spokesperson Amitabh Sharma, the rescue operation has been completed, and restoration work is now commencing.

However, he acknowledged that the Kavach system was not available on the tracks in Balasore where the collision occurred.

Kavach is an automatic train protection (ATP) system developed by the Research Design and Standards Organisation in collaboration with three Indian firms.

Its purpose is to assist locomotive drivers in avoiding missing danger signals and controlling speeding, ensuring safe train operations even in low-visibility conditions.

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw personally tested the "Kavach" system and had previously expressed its success.

In a tweet from March last year, he mentioned the system's ability to automatically stop a locomotive before reaching another locomotive at a dis-



Rescue work underway after an accident involving Coromandel Express, Bengaluru-Howrah Express and a goods train, in Balasore district on Saturday

PTI

tance of 380 metres during rear-end collision testing.

Kavach functions by controlling train speed and automatically applying the brakes if the driver fails to do so in a timely manner. However, the absence of this crucial safety system on the tracks in Balasore raises concerns about the potential impact on acci-

dent prevention and mitigation.

As investigations into the tragic incident continue, the Indian Railways and relevant authorities will likely examine the reasons behind the unavailability of the Kavach system in Balasore and take necessary measures to ensure the safety of train operations in the future.

Guilty won't be spared: Modi at accident site

PNS ■ BALASORE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday expressed his deep anguish over the train crash in Odisha that claimed the lives of 288 people and assured that strong action would be taken against those responsible.

Speaking to reporters after visiting the accident site and meeting the injured at a hospital in Balasore district, Modi conveyed his heartfelt sorrow and emphasized that the government is taking the incident very seriously.

"The government is deeply saddened by the incident. We will not spare anyone found guilty, and they will face strong consequences for this tragedy," he stated. He further assured that instructions have been issued to ensure a thorough and swift investigation into the mishap.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacts with rescuers as he takes stock of the situation at the site of the accident involving Coromandel Express, Bengaluru-Howrah Express and a goods train, in Balasore district on Saturday

PTI

Modi acknowledged that while it is impossible to bring back the lives lost, the Government stands firmly with the affected families,

offering unwavering support. "We will leave no stone unturned in providing all necessary medical assistance to the injured," he added.

300 NDRF rescuers on job with cutters, canine squads

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Director General of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), Atul Karwal, said on Saturday that over 300 NDRF rescuers equipped with large metal cutters, canine squads, and heavy-lift equipment are working at the train accident site in Odisha.

Karwal stated that the NDRF is expected to conclude the search operation by Saturday evening.

Since the first NDRF team arrived at the accident site around 8.30 pm on Friday, the force has rescued 44 survivors and recovered 71 bodies from the wrecked railway coaches in Balasore district.

The NDRF is a federal contingency force operating under the Union Home Ministry.

"We have more than 300



NDRF personnel carry out rescue work after an accident involving Coromandel Express, Bengaluru-Howrah Express and a goods train, in Balasore district on Saturday

PTI

rescuers divided into nine teams working at the accident site. Our goal is to complete the search operation by this evening," Karwal said at the NDRF headquarters in New Delhi.

The initial NDRF team reached the site from its

regional response center in Balasore approximately one hour and fifteen minutes after the accident, which occurred around 7-7.10 pm on Friday. The remaining NDRF teams were deployed from Mundali in Cuttack district and Kolkata, according to Karwal.

Screams of help still ring in survivors' ears

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Train passengers, who survived the triple train crash on Friday, recounted horror. Recalling the incident, Anubhav Das, a passenger of the Coromandel Express which rammed into a goods train in Odisha's Balasore, said there was the sound of screeching brakes and then a loud crashing of metal.

Though he came out of the accident unhurt, the screams of help of those stuck in derailed mangled coaches still ring in his ears. "It was a horrific sight. There were people injured, some crawling from under the train's debris," he posted on Twitter. Later, he said, he came to know that not just his train but another express train was involved in the accident.

Initially, in a series of

tweets, Das described how he thought the accident unfolded.

Later, speaking with PTI, Das recalled in shock how he stepped out of his coach unaware that he had survived an accident involving three trains. At least 288 people were killed and more than 1,100 injured in the accident.

"I was at the very end of my train. Around 6.30 pm, we heard a very long thud and then jerks which seemed like the emergency brakes. At that moment, we realised some accident had occurred and we had to disembark from the coach to be safe.

So when we were about to disembark from our coach and opened the doors, we saw that there were three other coaches that had derailed opposite our train on the other line," he said.

CAPSULE

'INDIA INFRA ALONG LAC MATCHES UP WITH CHINA'

Pahalgam: India is matching up its infrastructure to China's projects at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and there is no need for concern, Border Roads Organisation (BRO) chief Lieutenant General Rajiv Chaudhry said on Saturday.

GOVT BANS 14 FIXED DOSE COMBO DRUGS

New Delhi: The Government has banned 14 fixed dose combination drugs including Nimesulide and Paracetamol dispersible tablets and Chlorpheniramine Maleate and Codeine syrup.

PUNJAB: OVER 14 KG HEROIN SEIZED, 2 HELD

Chandigarh: Security forces on Saturday recovered more than 14 kilograms of heroin in two separate operations in Amritsar and Fazilka districts of Punjab.

SC stays HC order to decide if rape victim is 'manglik'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court intervened on Saturday, issuing a stay order on a peculiar ruling by the Allahabad High Court which had instructed the head of the astrology department at Lucknow University to determine whether an alleged rape victim woman was 'manglik' (an astrological condition) or not.

Conducting a special session on Saturday, the apex court took suo motu cognisance of the matter and expressed its confusion



regarding the need for an "astrology report" during a bail application hearing.

The order by the High Court was issued on May 23 while considering the bail plea of the accused individual, who was alleged to have raped the woman after falsely promising to marry her.

59 MPs write to German envoy for early return of baby Ariha

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Fifty-nine Members of Parliament from nineteen political parties have collectively written a letter to the German Ambassador, urging the early repatriation of baby Ariha Shah, who has been placed in forced foster care in Germany for over twenty months.

The German authorities took custody of Ariha Shah on September 23, 2021, when she was just seven months old, citing alleged harassment by her parents. Among the signatories of the letter are MPs Jaya Bachchan (SP), Hema Malini (BJP), Shashi Tharoor (Congress), Mahua Moitra (TMC), Dr. Farooq Abdullah (NC), Priyanka Chaturvedi (SS-Udhav), and others.

The letter, addressed to the German Ambassador Dr Phillip Ackerman, emphasises that while they respect German laws, as no criminal cases have

been filed against the parents, the child should be repatriated to India.

"Baby Ariha was taken away from her parents in September 2021 when she was seven months old. The German Child Services took custody of the baby after she had suffered an accident and was hospitalised," the letter states.

"An initial investigation was conducted into allegations of child sexual abuse, but it was found to be baseless, and no charges were filed against the parents. Following this, the child was placed in special child care and then moved to foster care.

"As Members of Parliament, we have a special responsibility for the welfare of our citizens. We request you to take all necessary steps to bring the child back to India," the letter, signed by Rajya Sabha MP Dr John Brittas on behalf of the other 58 MPs, asserts.

India lost 1 tiger every alternate day this year

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

On an average, every alternate day one big cat has died in the country since January till May end. In the first five months, India has already lost 76 tigers against 56 last year during the same period.

These included 11 cubs and 25 female big cats. Besides natural deaths and territorial fights between the felines, officials in the Union Environment Ministry have attributed some mortalities to the harsh heat waves as well that the country is witnessing this time, stating that some felines could not cope with the dehydration.

An analysis of the data available from the website of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) shows that almost half of the deaths of the total tigers occurred inside the tiger habitat with as many being reported from the



fringes or outside the tiger reserves.

Madhya Pradesh which is presently grappling with the death of imported Cheetahs and their cubs at the Kuno Palpur Sanctuary has topped the list of tiger mortalities at 22 big cats in the last five months.

Maharashtra reported 16 deaths while Uttarakhand has witnessed ten tiger deaths. Karnataka reported five deaths.

Problems resolved with innovations in CM Jan Sewa Abhiyan-2

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

On the initiative of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, the Mukhyamantri Jan Sewa Abhiyan-2.0 was conducted from May 10 to May 31 to redress the problems of the common people in the state. A large number of applications have been disposed of during this period. The disposal of more than 60 lakh cases in a given period is a special achievement. The important thing is that on the call of Chief Minister Chouhan, during the campaign innovations were also made in many districts. Common application form was prepared in Jabalpur and made available to every rural and urban body. This made it easy to contact the applicants,

get various formalities completed and provide services on time. In Ratlam district, spiritual gurus and people's representatives did the work of creating awareness among the citizens for the solution of public problems. Street meetings were held in the district and requests were made to apply for desired services by giving yellow rice from house to house. In Bhopal, a provision was made to give appreciation letters and incentive amount to such officers and employees who made efforts to complete their work cent percent. In Morena district, Anganwadi workers and Jan Seva Mitras cooperated in taking such citizens who are elderly and Divyang to the camps. In Betul district, a "right measurement, right



knowledge, campaign to eliminate malnutrition" was also launched. In this, physical measurements of children below 5 years of age registered in Anganwadi centres were taken, due to this initiative was taken to identify malnourished children and provide them the benefit of nutrition rehabilitation centre. "Haq Dastavej, Sahuliyat

Aapki Abhiyan" (Rights Document, Your Convenience Campaign) was launched in Shahdol district. Permission, building completion and nodues documents were prepared and provided for residential and commercial buildings in urban areas. Evening camps were also organised in wards and panchayats in Damoh district, in which the officers attended and resolved the problems of the citizens. In the disaster management campaign in Indore district, the work of issuing fire NOC was done while ensuring the availability of fire fighter equipment in the shops and commercial establishments of the urban area. Not only this, training was also given for the use of these equipments. In Narmadapuram, Heartfulness Institute, Hyderabad and

Madhya Pradesh Jan Abhiyan Parishad jointly benefitted the citizens with a yoga training program. In Raisen district, on sudden death of the beneficiary under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, the work of providing benefits of the scheme to his dependents was done on priority. In Bhind district, camps were organised in educational institutions to get new learning licenses. Water dialogue programmes were also organised in Chhindwara district. < Discussions and debates were also held regarding water conservation and judicious use of water. The administrative staff in various districts cooperated in the innovations. The benefits of the innovations were also received by the citizens.



Congress MLA PC Sharma with women beneficiaries during a camp for filling forms under the Congress party's newly launched Nari Samman Yojana at ward no 27 Nehru Nagar Kotra in Bhopal on Saturday. Pioneer photo

Unseasonal rains continue in Bhopal, Indore and other places

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Unseasonal rains are continuing in the state, on Saturday, it started raining with strong winds in many areas of the state including Bhopal, Indore. Hailstones were witnessed in some areas. Good rainfall was reported in in Mandsaur, Vidisha and Raisen districts. Due to this change in the weather, people got relief from the strong sunlight and heat. The Meteorological Department has issued an alert for thunderstorms, rain and hailstorm in many parts of the state for the next few hours. Hail accompanied by rain has been predicted in 11 districts. According to the Meteorological Department, the effect of active Western Disturbance in North India is



visible in many districts including Bhopal, Indore, Ujjain. There are chances of rain on June 4 and 5 as well. In the second week of June, the phase of thunderstorms will start again. Monsoon can enter the state by June 20. In Bhopal, in the midst of strong sunlight, heat and

humidity since morning, clouds appeared in the afternoon. Strong winds started followed by rain. It started drizzling in some areas of the city at around 4 pm. After this it started raining heavily. In Indore, the weather suddenly changed in the afternoon and it started raining.

Due to which people got relief from the heat. Mandsaur and surrounding areas also received rain on Saturday afternoon. In many areas, hailstones with strong winds were witnessed. According to meteorologists, on June 1, Western Disturbance became active in North India, whose effect was visible from Friday itself. This is the reason why there was a change in the weather. It started raining in Vidisha and Raisen districts adjoining Bhopal after Saturday afternoon. The Meteorological Department has said that the weather will remain like this for the next 3 days.



Children present Balya Natya Geet (Children's Play song) during the concluding session of summer theatre camp organised by Children's theatre academy at Gandhi Bhawan in Bhopal on Saturday. Pioneer photo

Masks are an important medium of cultural expressions: Sapre

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Indira Gandhi rashtriya manav sangrahalaya bhopal organized the mask making workshop under the Museum Educational Program Do and. In this workshop the registered participants made their favourite masks from clay under the guidance of Sanjay Sapre. Sapre told the participants that mask means such a cover that changes form by wearing Masks and their many forms are an important medium of cultural expression through which cultures establish their identity and express feelings expressing your inner and outer reality. The mask reveals the whole personality rather than any one aspect of the person. After making masks out of clay, he also taught them to make moulds in Plaster of Paris. Sanjay Sapre told about the technique of making masks from clay that after collecting the soil from the banks of the pond or well, drying it and separating the pebbles. After that, put the soil in a vessel and mix it with water for 2-3 days. Clay is prepared by kneading the soil. After that, to make any kind of shape, take a round piece of clay and place it in the palm, making a circular

The mask reveals the whole personality rather than any one aspect of the person. After making masks out of clay, he also taught them to make moulds

shape, by raising the nose, ears, and eyes with the fingers of the hand, make the shape of the mask. Also, if any other clay toy is to be made, then they also shape it with the help of hand. After making the shape, keep it on a flat place of wood or stone, dry it in the sun and shade, after drying lightly, scrape it with a thin strip of bamboo and smooth the upper part of the mask. And dry it back in the sun and shade, if kept in direct sunlight, there is a possibility of cracking in the shape of the soil. After the shape is completely dry, it is smoothed again with thin paper, after that it is decorated with desired colours. After making the mask here, they are also learning to mould it with plaster of Paris.

Stamp duty tax on property transfer reviewed

PNS ■ DHAR

After the video conferencing instruction by I G registration Selvendran and Dhar collector Priyank Mishra Dhar district registrar Amresh Naidu reviewed the stamp duty tax collection from the municipal corporation which is imposed on the properties when the owner title of the property is changed from one person to another. District registrar Amresh Naidu instructed all the sub registrars of the Dhar district to visit municipal corporation and also increase the government revenue and also conduct spot verification of the properties and to register the case of stamp duty theft done by property holders to the district registrar office for further action. To work for Sampada 2 and also improve the office setup and work procedure so that the people coming for registry get thier work done promptly.

Ananya Baandal of Army Public School selected for Sainik School

PNS ■ MHOW

Ananya Baandal of Army Public School, Mhow has been selected to join Sainik School Chandrapur in Maharashtra State after clearing the All-India Sainik School Entrance Exam - 2023 (AISSEE) conducted on 08 Jan 2023. She scored 246 marks to secure the only vacancy for girl cadet in Defence Category at Sainik School Chandrapur and further underwent Medical Exam at Govt Hospital Chandrapur. Every year National Testing Agency (NTA) conducts the All-India Sainik School Entrance Exam for Admission to class VI and IX. A total of 1,01,835 students qualified in the exam conducted on Jan 08, 2023, of which approx 3500 students are expected to be selected for admission to various Sainik Schools based on their merit. Sainik Schools Society (SSS) is an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Defence, Govt of India. The Society runs 33 Sainik Schools and 18 New Sainik Schools across the country. Sainik Schools are English medium



residential schools affiliated to Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) which prepare Cadets to join the National Defence Academy (NDA), Khadakwasla (Pune), Indian Naval Academy, Ezhimala and other Training Academies for officers. Miss Ananya Baandal has been a brilliant student throughout as informed by her parents and the teachers of Army Public School, Mhow. She prepared for the exam through self studies and regular guidance of her teachers and parents. Ananya is the daughter of Col Vivek Baandal, a serving Army Officer and Sonal Baandal, a teacher by profession. She will join Sainik School Chandrapur on July 04, 2023 for Class VI.

Bhopal Bicycle Riders Group organises cycle rally



STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

On the occasion of World Cycle Day, enthusiastic cyclists of the city participated in the rally under the aegis of Bhopal Bicycle Riders Group and Team Cycle World, MP Nagar. The rally was flagged off by Vedit Gupta of Team Cycle World, MP Nagar. The rally passing through various routes of the city cul-

minated at Metro Plaza, Bitton Market. Senior cyclists of the city were honored at the conclusion. Lucky draw was done. Everest conqueror Bhagwan Singh told that one should be health conscious and highlighted the benefits of cycling. Rashida Riaz recalled the contribution of Manish Bhadauria in building the Bhopal Bicycle Riders Group. At present there are about

1500 include social media members in this group which includes budding and experienced cyclists. Vedit Gupta of Team Cycle World distributed the prizes. Amit Das, Saurabh Tiwari, Vinod Pandey and Ravindra Ambadkar of Bhopal Bicycle Riders Group expressed their views on the benefits of cycling. In the end refreshments were distributed by Rashida Riaz.

Disciplinary proceedings against IAS YVVJ Rajasekhar: Bharadwaj

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Services Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj on Saturday said that the Delhi government will initiate disciplinary proceedings against IAS officer YVVJ Rajasekhar after receiving multiple complaints against him. A detailed dossier has been submitted to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal urging him to take action and transfer him with immediate effect," Bharadwaj said. The minister raised allegations against Rajasekhar including blatant insubordination, undisciplined behaviour and falsification of material facts and other serious transgressions. Taking a dig at the Arvind Kejriwal government, Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva said that Kejriwal is trying to create an environment

by getting his Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj to make statements to remove the Vigilance Secretary as well and appoint his own officer in vigilance department to get clean chit in excise scam, sheeshmahal controversy, FBU controversy. Delhi BJP President has questioned Chief Minister Kejriwal and Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj that if Vigilance Secretary is as corrupt as they have been propagating for the last 20 days, then why did it come to the notice of the Chief Minister only after the Supreme Court order of May 11 ? Chief Minister Kejriwal should show when on any day before May 11 he or any of his ministers had spoken a word against any officer in Delhi ? Earlier in a press statement, Bharadwaj alleged that the letter (to the Chief Minister) details the history of corruption

and misconduct of Rajasekhar who is currently posted as Special Secretary Vigilance in the Delhi government. In a detailed dossier submitted to the CM, Bhardwaj has shed light on the alarming record of Rajasekhar's involvement in various acts of corruption and misconduct. The officer has a long history of being on radar of CBI, CVC & Vigilance and is in habit of keeping unauthorised possession of sensitive Vigilance files for ulterior motives. The minister expressed grave concerns regarding the negative impact of Rajasekhar's presence in the Vigilance Department, highlighting the urgent need for his transfer or removal. He has denounced Rajasekhar for his continuous dissemination of false, frivolous, and concocted misinformation for personal gain. Drawing attention to the

violation of AIS (Conduct) Rules 1968, the Minister has called for disciplinary proceedings to be initiated against Rajasekhar, ensuring that appropriate action is taken to address his transgressions. Additionally, he has recommended that the numerous complaints of corrupt practices and misconduct involving Rajasekhar be referred to an investigative agency. "At no stage, as is amply clear from the above referenced orders, were any instructions issued to Secretary (Vig.) to put up files to the office of the Minister. Despite these written orders, Rajasekhar has deliberately, willfully and illegally held hostage umpteen files pertaining to Vigilance Department, seemingly due to ulterior motives," the note reads. On Friday, the Delhi Police have registered an FIR against

unidentified persons in connection with removal of sensitive files and documents from the office of special secretary (vigilance) YVVJ Rajasekhar. The alleged incident occurred on the intervening night of May 15-16, after Rajasekhar was discharged from his duties as special secretary (vigilance) by Vigilance Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj and the files and records at his disposal were to be handed over to another officer. Delhi police has registered an FIR under section 380/464/465/120B of Indian Penal Code 1860 against unidentified persons at IP Estate police station on Thursday on the basis of a complaint filed by Rajasekhar. Leader of Opposition in Delhi Ramvir Singh Bidhuri also criticised the Bharadwaj for targeting Rajasekhar with political motives.



People light candles to pay tributes to the passengers who were killed in the triple train accident in Balasore district Odisha, in Bhopal on Saturday. At least 265 passengers were killed and another 900 injured in the accident. Pioneer photo



Children from different schools during a clay model mask making workshop at Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya in Bhopal on Saturday. Pioneer photo

Bhopal police running Srujan programme for upliftment of girls

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Under noble initiative Srujan program for the upliftment of girls belonging to weaker sections and prevention of crime against women is run by Bhopal Police Commissionerate. Taking a special initiative by the Bhopal Police Commissionerate, "Srujan" program is operated since last year for the upliftment, security and self-confidence of adolescent girls under the community policing scheme. In this sequence, in the fifth phase of the "Srujan" program, Srujan Group Training Camp-5 was started at Vikram School, Piplani Police Station. Bhopal Police Commissionerate, with the help of social organizations, organizes training camps for self-defense and legal knowledge and self-protection to girls in local settlements, and also help through career guidance. In this sequence, "Srujan" program-5 was started today with the cooperation of Bhopal Police and Uday Samajik Sanstha. Addressing the program, DCP (HQ) Vineet Kapoor told about the purpose of Srujan program, and also said that through various schemes like Police Didi, Srijan, Sahyog etc. since then, it is continuously working for the upliftment and awareness of women and girls, and is empowering and making women aware to prevent child crime and domestic violence. ACP Govindpura Aditya Tiwari, Station House Officer Piplani Ajay Nair, team of Uday Sanstha and other officers and about 150-180 girls and women of Shakti Samiti participated in the program. Under special initiative by the Bhopal Police Commissionerate, under the Community Policing Scheme, for the upliftment, safety and self-confidence of adolescent girls, since last year.

NIA court extends police remand of three suspects arrested from Jabalpur

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The remand of three suspects arrested from Jabalpur has been extended till June 10. All three were presented for the second time in the Special NIA Court of 9th ADJ Nitiraj Singh Sisodia and were sent to judicial custody till June 10. In the first appearance, the court handed over Syed Mamoor Ali, Mohd Adil Khan and Mohd Shahid to ATS for 7 days remand (till June 3). All three were caught in a joint operation by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and Madhya Pradesh ATS on May 26-27. They were accused of working on a terrorist module linked to ISIS. The team raided 13 places in Jabalpur. Sharp weapons, ammunition, incriminating documents and digital devices were seized. An NIA spokesperson said that in August 2022, the name of accused Mohammad Adil Khan had come to the notice of the investigating agency. Since then he was being investigated. The NIA registered a case on May 24

The team raided 13 places in Jabalpur. Sharp weapons, ammunition, incriminating documents and digital devices were seized

after receiving information about pro-ISIS activities. Adil and his aides are accused of being involved in propaganda of ISIS through social media platforms as well as grassroots program 'Dawa'. This module used to hold meetings in local mosques and homes and was hatching conspiracies to spread terror in the country. Khan was running some YouTube channels, Instagram and WhatsApp groups. Investigation revealed that all the three accused are fundamentalists. Their plans were to carry out violent Jihad. They were involved in raising funds, disseminating ISIS propaganda material, trying

to trick youth, recruiting and procuring arms and ammunition for the purpose of carrying out terrorist activities. Syed Mamoor Ali formed a group by the name of 'Fisabilillah'. He was also running a WhatsApp group with the same name. He was trying to buy a pistol with his associates. For this, he was in contact with the illegal arms supplier. Investigation revealed that the third accused Shahid was trying to collect weapons. He had made a plan to buy pistols as well as IEDs and grenades, so that he could carry out violent incidents. The NIA had called Advocate Naem Khan, living in the Supreme Plaza Apartment of Civil Line area in Jabalpur, to Bhopal after giving a notice. He has appeared in the case of under-world don Abu Salem. The NIA team had reached Naem's house. Around 25 to 30 officers searched the house. Took information about his son as well. The NIA has given notice to Naem Khan asking him to reach the CID office in Bhopal with his son, said Naem.



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan bids a warm send off to Nepal's Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' during his departure at Devi Ahilya Bai Holkar Airport in Indore. Madhya Pradesh on Saturday. Pioneer photo

'Kanpur Files' on Sikh massacre of 1984 to be released this year

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

GM Foundation's production house Global Middas Capital (GMC) has announced the making of a film titled "The Kanpur Files". In a press conference held at Delhi Press Club on Friday, producer Inder Preet Singh told that his film will be based on the real events of the 1984 Sikh genocide. The full name of the film is "The Kanpur Files - 1984 Sikh Genocide". The premeditated mass killings, looting and violent incidents against Sikhs



in Uttar Pradesh's Kanpur district during 1984 will be brought to the screen with facts, evidence, witnesses and victims in this docu-drama film. Inder Preet Singh said that this incident was very

unfortunate. But it is a matter of regret that even after so many years of the incident, no action was taken against the culprits and neither the victims got justice. The release date of the film

'Kanpur Files - 1984 Sikh Massacre' has been probable on October 31, 2023. Inder Preet Singh says that his film will provide a strong base to those fighting for democratic rights, civil liberties and human rights, to take up the case in the United Nations for justice for the victims of genocide. He told that for the first time on February 5, 2019, 35 years after the incident, to punish 127 people involved in the killing of Sikhs in Kanpur and to provide justice to the victims, the SIT was formed through the efforts of Sardar

Kuldeep Singh Bhogal, president of the All India Riot Victims Relief Committee, 1984, and Prasoon Kumar, a Supreme Court lawyer, which identified and prosecuted those involved in the killings. But those who lost everything in the massacre are still waiting for justice. All India Riot Victims Relief Committee, 1984 President Sardar Kuldeep Singh Bhogal and Supreme Court lawyer Prasoon Kumar were also present in this press conference. He also referred to the massacre of Sikhs in Kanpur in 1984.

Action taken on Amulya garden

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Under the presence of heavy police force illegally operated restaurant was razed to by joint effort of District Administration, Police and Municipal Corporation at Amulya Garden located in Ishwar Nagar near Bawadia Kalan Bridge. Liquor was being sold illegally in the restaurant and was also served to the customers. The staff of the Excise Department has taken action here. Despite this the illegal activities did not stop. On this, the administration came into action on Saturday. Excise officer Sajendra Mori said that liquor was being traded and distributed illegally by building a restaurant at this place. Several times the Excise

staff raided and caught drinking illegal liquor and took fraudulent action, but the operator continued to serve and sell liquor without license. Illegal liquor party was organised three days ago on which the notice was issued. The restaurant garden is built on the land of Amya Kumar Dutta, a resident of Delhi and was taken on rent by Vijay Kumar Mishra and a restaurant was being run here. Illegal sale of liquor, serving of liquor and other activities were taking place in this restaurant. Officials of the Excise Department said that information related to illegal sale and serving of liquor was being received at this restaurant. Constant liquor parties were happening at this place and whose valid license was also not taken by the operator.

Stipend along with skill development

Bhopal: Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that by increasing the skill development capacity of the youth in the state, they will be linked with employment. Effective implementation of 'Mukhyamantri Seekho-Kamao' scheme has been initiated to teach skills for employment on the lines of learn and earn. He said that it is the intention of the state government to ensure that the youth of the state become employment providers rather than seeking it. For this, the state government has also implemented several schemes related to self-employment. In this series, this scheme has been implemented, which is based on industry oriented training. In 'Mukhyamantri Seekho-Kamao Yojana', stipend has also been arranged along with providing skill training to the youth in the service sector and industries. Youth will be given vocational skill training with the latest technology and process. With this innovative system, the youth will get new opportunities daily for employment, progress and development. An initial target has been set to make one lakh youth of the state proficient in more than 800 courses in 46 sectors of the scheme. Under the scheme, local residents of Madhya Pradesh aged 18 to 29 years, who have passed class 12th or less will be given a monthly stipend of Rs 8 thousand, ITI passed will be given Rs 8 thousand 500, diploma passed Rs 9 thousand and graduate or educational qualification youth Rs 10 thousand. Total 75 percent of the stipend fixed by the state government will be paid to the trainees through DBT. 25 percent of the minimum stipend fixed by the concerned establishments will have to be deposited in the bank account of the trainees.

Cheat posing as officer at DGP office nabbed

Bhopal: The Bhopal Crime Branch has arrested a fraudster posing as an officer of the DGP's office, accused would call policemen, threatening them in the name of transfer and departmental inquiry, asking for money. Contact list of more than 50 government officers and employees has been received from the accused. The accused used to work as a guard in a hotel in Indore. There, after hearing about the functioning of the police from the wireless set installed in the car of the police officer and employee, he planned to commit fraud. Sub-Inspector of Madhya Pradesh Police lodged a complaint that a person is calling from an unknown number and asking for money from the employees in the name of suspending and transferring him as an officer of the police department. Considering the seriousness of the matter, a team was constituted for investigation. The team traced the mobile number on the basis of technical analysis and tracked Budhshen Mishra (29) of Panwar, Rewa. During interrogation, the accused admitted to posing as a police officer and calling from a fake number and asking for money in the name of suspension and transfer. Police have seized two mobiles and three SIM cards from the accused. Contact list of more than 50 government officers and employees has been received from the accused. Police are interrogating the accused in other cases. A case of cheating has already been registered on this. During interrogation, the accused told that he used to work as a guard at Gurukripa Hotel in Indore.



WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

DRM (Commercial) Jabalpur, on behalf of President of India e-auction for GMU & SMU Catering stalls at D, E&F category of stations. **Category:** Catering, **Catalogue No.:** JBP-C-Catering5, **Station:** Sohagpur, **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-SGP-GMU-157-23-4, **Asset Details:** SGP-CS-1, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 10:30 hrs., **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-SGP-GMU-29-23-4, **Asset Details:** SGP-CS-6, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 10:40 hrs., **Station:** Bankhedli, **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-BKH-GMU-160-23-4, **Asset Details:** BKH-CS-1, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 10:50 hrs., **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-BKH-GMU-36-23-5, **Asset Details:** BKH-CS-2, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 11:00 hrs., **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-BKH-GMU-171-23-4, **Asset Details:** BKH-CS-4, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 11:10 hrs., **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-BKH-GMU-37-23-4, **Asset Details:** BKH-CS-5, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 11:20 hrs., **Station:** Kareli, **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-KY-GMU-158-23-4, **Asset Details:** KY-CS-1, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 11:30 hrs., **Station:** Jaitwar, **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-JTW-GMU-13-23-4, **Asset Details:** JTW-CS-1, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 11:40 hrs., **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-JTW-GMU-184-23-4, **Asset Details:** JTW-CS-2, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 11:50 hrs., **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-JTW-GMU-12-23-4, **Asset Details:** JTW-CS-3, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 12:00 hrs., **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-JTW-GMU-10-23-4, **Asset Details:** JTW-CS-4, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 12:10 hrs., **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-JTW-GMU-14-23-4, **Asset Details:** JTW-CS-5, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 12:20 hrs., **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-JTW-GMU-8-23-4, **Asset Details:** JTW-CS-6, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 12:30 hrs., **Station:** Beohari, **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-BEHR-GMU-18-23-3, **Asset Details:** BEHR-CS-5, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 12:40 hrs., **Station:** Bandakpur, **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-BNU-GMU-185-23-4, **Asset Details:** BNU-CS-2, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 12:50 hrs., **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-BNU-GMU-37-23-4, **Asset Details:** BNU-CS-3, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 13:00 hrs., **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-BNU-GMU-23-23-4, **Asset Details:** BNU-CS-4, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 13:10 hrs., **Station:** Patharia, **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-PHA-GMU-30-23-4, **Asset Details:** PHA-CS-3, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 13:20 hrs., **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-PHA-GMU-31-23-4, **Asset Details:** PHA-CS-4, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 13:30 hrs., **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-PHA-GMU-33-23-4, **Asset Details:** PHA-CS-5, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 13:40 hrs., **Station:** Makronia, **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-MKRN-GMU-159-23-4, **Asset Details:** MKRN-CS-4, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 13:50 hrs., **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-MKRN-GMU-27-23-4, **Asset Details:** MKRN-CS-5, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 14:00 hrs., **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-MKRN-GMU-28-23-4, **Asset Details:** MKRN-CS-6, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 14:10 hrs., **Station:** Khurai, **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-KYE-GMU-22-23-4, **Asset Details:** KYE-CS-4, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 14:20 hrs., **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-KYE-GMU-23-23-4, **Asset Details:** KYE-CS-5, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 14:30 hrs., **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-KYE-GMU-25-23-4, **Asset Details:** KYE-CS-6, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 14:40 hrs., **Station:** Sohagpur, **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-SGP-SMU-19-23-3, **Asset Details:** SGP-CS-2, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 14:50 hrs., **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-SGP-GMU-21-23-3, **Asset Details:** SGP-CS-3, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 15:00 hrs., **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-SGP-SMU-24-23-3, **Asset Details:** SGP-CS-4, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 15:10 hrs., **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-SGP-SMU-26-23-3, **Asset Details:** SGP-CS-5, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 15:20 hrs., **Station:** Bankhedli, **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-BKH-SMU-40-23-3, **Asset Details:** BKH-CS-3, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 15:30 hrs., **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-BKH-SMU-41-23-3, **Asset Details:** BKH-CS-6, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 15:40 hrs., **Station:** Kareli, **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-KY-SMU-170-23-3, **Asset Details:** KY-CS-3, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 15:50 hrs., **Station:** Shridham, **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-SRID-SMU-32-23-3, **Asset Details:** SRID-CS-4, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 16:00 hrs., **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-SRID-SMU-38-23-3, **Asset Details:** SRID-CS-5, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 16:10 hrs., **Station:** Sihora Road, **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-SRH-SMU-9-23-3, **Asset Details:** SRH-CS-6, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 16:20 hrs., **Station:** Bandakpur, **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-BNU-SMU-169-23-3, **Asset Details:** BNU-CS-1, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 16:30 hrs., **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-BNU-SMU-42-23-3, **Asset Details:** BNU-CS-5, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 16:40 hrs., **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-BNU-SMU-43-23-3, **Asset Details:** BNU-CS-6, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 16:50 hrs., **Station:** Patharia, **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-PHA-SMU-15-23-3, **Asset Details:** PHA-CS-6, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 17:00 hrs., **Station:** Makronia, **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-MKRN-SMU-16-23-3, **Asset Details:** MKRN-CS-1, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 17:10 hrs., **Lot No.:** Catg-JBP-MKRN-SMU-39-23-3, **Asset Details:** MKRN-CS-3, **Auction End:** 16.06.2023, 17:20 hrs., **Auction Start (All Lots):** 16.06.2023, 10:00 hrs., Prospective Bidders are requested to visit e-Auction Leasing module on IREPS website (www.ireps.gov.in). The Lot-wise details are available therein under the above mentioned catalogue no. E-Auction information is also available on the notice board of Divisional Railway Manager (Commercial), West Central Railway, Jabalpur. **For Divisional Railway Manager (Commercial), West Central Railway, Jabalpur**

कोरोना को हराना है, तो टीका लगवाना है



यूको बैंक

(भारत सरकार का उपयुक्त)



UCO BANK

(A Govt. of India Undertaking)

Zonal Office : Plot No.22, Jail Road, Arera Hills, Bhopal Tel.: 0755-4046009

Appendix-IV-A [See proviso to rule 8(6) & (2)]

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF MOVABLE & IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

E-auction Sale Notice For Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with provision to Rules 8(6) & (2) of The Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the borrower(s)/guarantor(s) that the below described moveable/immovable properties Hypothecated/pledged/charged to **UCO Bank, Arera Colony Branch**, the secured creditor, the possession of which has already been taken by the authorized officer of **UCO Bank, Arera Colony Branch**, the secured creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on **23.06.2023**, for recovery of amount mentioned below plus any unrecovered interest and other expenses due to **UCO Bank, Arera Colony Branch**, the secured creditor from below mentioned Borrowers & Guarantors.

Last date for submission of online bids is **22.06.2023** between **1.00 PM to 4.30 P.M.**

Date & Time of E-auction : 23.06.2023 **upto 5.00 PM** as per (IST) with unlimited extensions of 10 minutes each.

Name of the Borrowers Account & Guarantors	Demand notice Dt. Possession Notice Outstanding Amt.	Description of movable /immovable Properties & Name of Property Owner	Reserve Price EMD Bid Increment Amt.
Borrower : M/s RVR Technologies LTD	20/04/2021 24/09/2021	Movable Properties to be sold standing in the name of RVR Technologies situated at plot no. 4, sector-C, New Industrial Area, Mandideep	
Directors – 1. Mr. Akshay Pahwa 2. Mr. Ravindra Thapar 3.Mr. Prabhu Narayan Pandey	₹ 730.35 Lakhs + Any unrecovered interest/expense & charges.	Banbury Plant	₹ 3,54,58,000/- ₹ 35,45,800/- ₹ 1,00,000/-
Guarantor: 1. Mr. Akshay pahwa s/o Mr. Rajneesh Pahwa 2. Mr. Rajneesh Pahwa s/o Mr. Sant Prakash Pahwa		Local (jointed) Tube Unit Machines	₹ 47,85,000/- ₹ 4,78,500/- ₹ 50,000/-
		Export Oriented Unit	₹ 1,89,33,000/- ₹ 18,93,300/- ₹ 1,00,000/-
		Latex Tube Machine	₹ 44,07,000/- ₹ 4,40,700/- ₹ 50,000/-
		Boiler,Transformer with sub station,	₹ 63,68,000/- ₹ 6,36,800/- ₹ 50,000/-
		Tyres, tubes & Raw Material	₹ 2,13,44,000/- ₹ 21,34,400/- ₹ 1,00,000/-
		Immovable Property : Structure on Industrial property (Leasehold property) admeasuring area 27951 sq. Mtr. situated at Plot No- 4, Sector - C, New Industrial Area Mandideep, Tehsil- Goharganj, District- Raisen MP. Boundaries: North-West- No. 02 & 2A, South- Road, East-Plot No. 03, West- other land Owner- M/s RVR Technologies Ltd. Physical possession	₹ 6,72,71,000/- ₹ 67,27,100/- ₹ 1,00,000/-

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided below website: <https://mstcecommerce.com/auction/home/ibapi/index.jsp> & <https://ibapi.in>

Since UCO Bank has taken Physical possession of the aforementioned properties, it is the responsibility of prospective bidders to inspect the properties and satisfy themselves about the same and the bidder has to make their own due diligence regarding property.

The borrower/guarantor are hereby notified to pay the sum as mentioned above along with up to dated interest and ancillary expenses before the date of auction, failing which the property will be auctioned/sold and balance dues if any will be recovered along with interest and cost.

This is also treated as 15 days statutory notice under SARFAESI Act.

Note : Interested bidder have to make user ID & Password them selves & it will take minimum two days time. Therefore bidders are requested to prepare user ID & Password before Last Date.

Date: 04.06.2023
Place: Bhopal

Authorised Officer
UCO Bank

ODISHA TRIPLE TRAIN CRASH

Express entered loop line, hit goods train: Probe

Signal goof-up

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Preliminary investigations have revealed that the Coromandel Express train involved in a horrific rail tragedy in Odisha on Friday entered the loop line and crashed into a goods train parked there instead of the main line just ahead of the BAHANAGAR Bazar station, a source said.

The coaches of Bengaluru-Howrah Superfast Express capsized after crashing into the coaches of Coromandel Express that had scattered on the adjacent track.

While Coromandel Express was at a speed of 128 kmph, Bengaluru-Howrah Superfast Express was running at a speed of 116 kmph. The report has been submitted to the Railway Board, sources said.

The loop lines of the Indian Railways are constructed in a station area -- in this case, the BAHANAGAR Bazar station -- to accommodate more trains to ease out the operations. The loop lines are generally 750 metres in length to accommodate full-length goods train with multiple engines.

The two trains were carrying around 2,000 passengers. At least 288 people have been killed in the accident and near-



ly 1,000 injured.

An eyewitness to the incident, Anubhav Das, also told PTI that local authorities and railway officials had initially indicated that the train he was travelling on -- Coromandel Express -- had rammed into the goods train.

However, none of these accounts was officially confirmed by the railways.

While a thorough probe is underway, none of the authorities has so far talked about any possibility of a sabotage.

The national transporter has initiated a high-level probe into the train crash in Odisha's Balasore, which will be headed by the commissioner of railway safety, South Eastern Circle, officials said.

The commissioner of rail-

way safety works under the Ministry of Civil Aviation and investigates all such accidents.

"A M Chowdhary, CRS, SE Circle, will inquire into the accident," a spokesperson of the Indian Railways said.

The national transporter has also said anti-train collision system "Kavach" was not available on the route.

The crash involved Bengaluru-Howrah Superfast Express, Shalimar-Chennai Central Coromandel Express and a goods train.

"The rescue operation has been completed. Now, we are starting the restoration work. Kavach was not available on this route," Indian Railways Spokesperson Amitabh Sharma said.

The railways is in the

process of installing "Kavach", an anti-train collision system, across its network.

Kavach alerts when a loco pilot jumps a signal (Signal Passed at Danger -- SPAD), which is the leading cause of train collisions. The system can alert the loco pilot, take control of the brakes and bring the train to a halt automatically when it notices another train on the same line within a prescribed distance.

While sources had earlier said a signalling failure could be the reason behind the crash, railway officials said it is not yet clear if Coromandel Express entered the loop line and hit the stationary goods train or it first derailed and then hit the parked train after entering the loop line.

Survivors recount tales of horror

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Returning home to their families after several months of working in south India, passengers aboard the 12864 Bengaluru-Howrah Superfast Express suddenly heard a loud thud, following which they fell off their berths and lights went off. They were just five hours away from their destination in Howrah when the train they were travelling got involved in a triple train accident at BAHANAGA Bazar station in Odisha's Balasore district.

The train, which was running a little over three hours late from its schedule, was moving towards its next stop Balasore, some 20 km away, when the accident took place around 7 pm on Friday.

Mizan Ul Haq, a resident of Bardhaman, was in one of the coaches at the rear of the train. "The train was running at a high speed. Around 7 pm, a loud sound was heard and everything started moving in all directions and I fell down on the floor from the upper berth as the lights went off inside the compartment," Haq, who was returning home from work in



Karnataka on a holiday, said.

He said that somehow, he managed to come out of the damaged coach and then to safety.

"It was ghastly, many people with grave injuries were lying around beside mangled coaches," Haq, who was lucky to have escaped with minor injuries, told PTI at Howrah station, where medical aid, food and other assistance were provided by the railway authorities to the surviving passengers.

The unaffected 17 coaches of the 12864 Bengaluru-Howrah Superfast Express reached Howrah at 1 pm on Saturday with 635 passengers, of whom 40 to 50 people were administered medical treatment on arrival, North Howrah

Deputy Commissioner of Police Anupam Singh said.

He said that five of them were sent to hospital for further treatment, while others left for their destinations.

Rekha, a Bengaluru resident coming to Kolkata for a visit, said that she was in a coach ahead of the wagons that got derailed.

"It was total chaos initially. We got off our compartment out of fear and sat in the nearby fields in the darkness till our train finally started for Howrah in the wee hours," she said.

Another Bardhaman resident, a carpenter who works in Bengaluru, said he was injured in the chest, feet and head when the coach in which he was travelling turned turtle.

Efforts on to identify victims says TN Govt



PTI ■ CHENNAI

Three survivors of the train accident in Balasore in Odisha have returned to Chennai, even as the Tamil Nadu government is engaged in efforts to identify victims of the mishap but no official report on the injuries or toll pertaining to the state has been received from the Odisha government, Additional chief secretary of the revenue department Kumar Jayant said on Saturday.

Chief Minister M K Stalin reviewed the state of preparedness of the official machinery, especially the medical team, in coping with the situation in providing treatment to the injured when they arrive on June 4.

"About 250 people have moved from Bhadrak towards the south, particularly Chennai, through a special train today. So anybody who is able to travel has moved. We have not got any report on the death of passengers from Tamil Nadu," Jayant said.

Envoys of several countries offer condolences

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Envoys and missions of several countries condoled the loss of lives in the tragic train accident in Odisha and expressed solidarity with India. The accident involving three trains in Odisha's Balasore district killed at least 288 people and injured 803, in one of the worst railway tragedies in the country.

In a tweet, US Ambassador to India Eric Garcetti said, "On behalf of the US Mission in India, I extend our deepest condolences to the families of those who lost their lives in the tragic train accident in Balasore."

"We stand with India and the people of Odisha in this time of grief," he said.

Many questions to ask of PM, Railway Minister, says Cong

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Saturday said the "horrendous" train accident in Odisha reinforces why safety should always be the foremost priority and asserted that there are many questions to ask of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw but "those can wait" as the immediate task is of rescue and relief.

Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge has deputised the party's leader in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury and AICC Odisha in-charge A Chella Kumar to immediately visit the accident site to take stock of the situation and oversee the relief efforts being undertaken by its workers and frontal organisations, AICC general secretary (organisation) K C Venugopal



said.

In a statement, Kharge said, "At this moment of grave national tragedy on account of the terrible train disaster in Odisha, I have instructed the entire Congress party organisation to extend all possible help."

A number of Congress leaders from different states have either already reached or will soon reach Balasore, he said, and extended heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families. "We have many questions to ask of the prime minister and the railway min-

ister but those can wait since the immediate task is of rescue and relief," Kharge said.

In a video statement, Kharge said it was the time to stay united and pointed out that several state governments have come forward to help out with the rescue efforts in Odisha, including the Siddaramaiah-led Karnataka government.

"I want to ask the PM and the Railway Minister that it should be found out how did this happen and who is responsible. We always talk about safety but still such an incident happened which had not happened in the history of railways. But all this can be discussed later as now it is the time to be united and support the central government and for all leaders to come together to help the people and share their grief," he said.

Saw my brother lying in pool of blood, mother shielding him from mob: Manipur violence survivor



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Soon after ethnic clashes broke out in Manipur last month, 20-year-old Jamngaihkim Gangte and six of her family members left their home in Imphal to get to a nearby CRPF relief camp. However, only four of them made it after hours of dodging murderous mobs and being cooped up in a car boot.

While two of them were killed by a mob, one of them was separated from the family and found days later.

The family managed to reach Delhi and is among more than 60 living in two relief camps set up in Dwaraka for those affected by the Manipur violence, which claimed at least 98 lives.

As violence broke out in Manipur on May 3, Gangte and her family moved to a relative's house in Imphal and returned home the next morning.

"When we returned home, we found out that there was a CRPF relief camp nearby. So,

we packed some essentials and important documents and decided to go there," Gangte told PTI.

She and her family members -- her mother, brother, sister-in-law, cousin and aunt with her one-year-old baby -- left in a car. Some of her cousins were travelling in another car.

"We left around 10 am and the roads were empty for some time. Around half-a-kilometre from the camp, our car was surrounded by a mob. Some people opened the doors and pulled us out of the car. They poured kerosene on the car and set it on fire," Gangte said. "The mob started beating my brother and we were trying to protect him. Then a man made us sit on a bench and started questioning us about our ethnicity. We told them that we were Mizo and they almost let us go but some of them doubted us and stopped us," she said.

Gangte's relatives who were travelling in the other car managed to flee.

Brij Bhushan seems to be quite valuable to BJP: Moily

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Senior Congress leader M Veerappa Moily took a dig at the government over the alleged "inaction" against Wrestling Federation of India chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, saying he seems to be quite valuable in the BJP's scheme of things.

The former Union minister said it is quite disturbing to note that the wrestlers are protesting and losing patience after having put up a fight for justice for a long time.

The criminal investigation particularly on the chief of the WFI is "brazenly partisan and biased," Moily said.

"The law of the land is quite clear that there should be zero tolerance on sexual harassment. As the author of the world's best and ideal law of POCSO, after the Nirbhaya tragedy, I do not understand how the accused, including BJP MP Brij Bhushan Singh, were not arrested even after registration of a second FIR," he said in a statement.

"The president of the WFI seems to be quite valuable in the BJP's scheme of things. While it is proved that no one can be punished without due process of investigation and trial but the question involved is of probity which should have the highest standard," he said.

PC slams law commission backing sediton law

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

With the law commission backing the sediton law, senior Congress leader P Chidambaram on Saturday said the panel's recommendation is a case of the "doctor prescribing a cure that is worse than the disease".

The former home minister said a draconian law in the statute book is an invitation to the rulers to misuse it and this hypothesis has been proved many times over.

Chidambaram's assertion comes after the law commission backed the penal provision for the offence of sediton, saying repealing it altogether can have serious adverse ramifications for the country's security and integrity.

The commission has recommended enhancing the jail term in sediton cases from a minimum of three years to seven years, contending that it would allow the courts greater room to award punishment in accordance with the scale and gravity of the act committed.

In a tweet, Chidambaram said the recommendation of the Law Commission that examined the validity and relevance of section 124A (sediton) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) is a "case of the doctor prescribing a cure that is worse than the disease".

Conference on connectivity investments to NE States held



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A two-day conference to explore connectivity investments and identify concrete projects in north-eastern states was held in Meghalaya from Thursday. The meet included the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), the European Union (EU) Delegation to India.

Giving details here on Saturday, the MEA said the conference also explored possibilities for projects with India's neighbours (Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh), for implementation under the India -- EU Connectivity Partnership, which was launched during the India -- EU Leaders Meet in May 2021. The Conference was inaugurated by Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad Sangma and Minister of State for External Affairs Rajkumar Ranjan Singh.

He stressed the importance placed by the central government on Connectivity initiatives, both within the country, and as part of India's Development Partnership abroad. He also highlighted the tremendous opportunities for India -- EU Triangular Development Cooperation in South Asia and the Indo --

Pacific.

Chief Minister Sangma emphasized the importance of interstate and cross border connectivity for the North East region as a whole, and for Meghalaya in particular. In that regard, Sangma referred to India's 'Act East' Policy, within which Meghalaya has an 'Act South' Policy focussing on the need to improve connectivity between Meghalaya and Bangladesh. He suggested a 'Zonal Approach' to connectivity, involving neighbouring states that caters to the needs of each state.

The second day of the Conference saw technical sessions on the themes; Digital Connectivity, Energy Connectivity, Transport Connectivity and Connectivity and Beyond focusing on projects linking the Northeast with India's neighbourhood, as part of the 'Act East' and 'Neighbourhood First' policies. The sessions saw participation from senior officials of the central government, the EU Commission, Government(s) of the North Eastern States of India, North Eastern Council, stakeholders from Nepal, Bangladesh and executives from private sector with presence in the region.

14 common FDC drugs banned

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Commonly available over-the-counter (OTC) drugs Nimesulide, Chlopheniramine Maleate and Codeine syrup besides Paracetamol used for treatment of common infections, cough, and fever are among the 14 fixed dose combination (FDC) drugs that have been banned by the Government. It said that there is "no therapeutic justification" for these medicines and that they may involve "risk" to individuals. The Union Health Ministry issued a notification in this regard recently.

The banned drugs included those used for treating common infections, cough and fever -- combinations such as Nimesulide + Paracetamol dispersible tablets, Chlopheniramine Maleate + Codeine Syrup, Pholcodine + Promethazine, Amoxicillin + Bromhexine and Bromhexine + Dextromethorphan + Ammonium Chloride + Menthol, Paracetamol + Bromhexine + Phenylephrine + Chlorpheniramine + Guaiphenesin and Salbutamol + Bromhexine.

The move comes following recommendations by an expert committee.

The expert committee said that there is "no therapeutic justification for this FDC (fixed dose combination) and the FDC may involve risk to human beings. Hence, in the



larger public interest, it is necessary to prohibit the manufacture, sale or distribution of this FDC under section 26 A of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940. In view of the above, any kind of regulation or restriction to allow for any use in patients is not justifiable."

"And whereas, on the basis of the recommendations of the Expert Committee and the Drugs Technical Advisory Board, the Central Government is satisfied that it is necessary and expedient in public interest to regulate by way of prohibition the manufacture for sale, sale and distribution for human use of the said drug in the country," the notification stated.

FDC drugs are those which contain a combination of two or more active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) in a fixed ratio.

In 2016, the government had announced the ban on the manufacture, sale and distribution of 344 drug combinations after an expert panel, set up at the behest of the Supreme Court had stated they were being sold to patients without scientific data and the order was challenged by the manufacturers in court.

Turkiye’s Erdogan takes oath of office, ushering in his third term

AP ■ ANKARA

Turkiye's longtime leader, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, took the oath of office on Saturday, ushering in his third presidential term that followed three stints as prime minister. Erdogan, 69, won a new five-year term in a runoff presidential race last week that could stretch his 20-year rule in the key NATO country that straddles Europe and Asia into a quarter-century.

The country of 85 million controls NATO's second-largest army, hosts millions of refugees and played a crucial role in brokering a deal that allowed the shipment of Ukraine grain, averting a global food crisis.

Erdogan was sworn in during a session in parliament before an inauguration ceremony at his sprawling palace complex. Supporters waited outside parliament despite the heavy rain, covering his car with red carnations as he arrived.

All eyes are on the announcement of his new Cabinet later on Saturday. Its lineup should indicate whether there will be a continuation of unorthodox economic policies

or a return to more conventional ones amid a cost-of-living crisis. Dozens of foreign dignitaries are travelling to attend the ceremony, including NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and Carl Bildt, a high-profile former Swedish prime minister. They are expected to press Erdogan to lift his country's objections to Sweden's membership in the military alliance — which requires unanimous approval by all allies.

Turkiye accuses Sweden of being too soft on Kurdish militants and other groups that Turkiye considers to be terrorists.

NATO wants to bring Sweden into the alliance by the time allied leaders meet in Lithuania on July 11-12, but Turkiye and Hungary have yet to endorse the bid. Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban will also be attending the ceremony.

According to state-run Anadolu Agency, other leaders in attendance include Azerbaijan's Ilham Aliyev, Venezuela's Nicolas Maduro, South Africa's Cyril Ramaphosa, Armenia's Nikol



Pashinyan, Pakistan's Shahbaz Sharif, and Libya's Abdul Hamid Dbeibah.

Erdogan was sworn in amid a host of domestic challenges ahead, including a battered economy, pressure for the repatriation of millions of Syrian refugees and the need to rebuild after a devastating earthquake in February that killed 50,000 and levelled entire cities in the south of the country.

Turkiye is grappling with a cost-of-living crisis fuelled by inflation that peaked at a staggering 85 per cent in October before easing to 44 per cent last month. The Turkish currency has lost more than 10 per cent

of its value against the dollar since the start of the year.

Critics blame the turmoil on Erdogan's policy of lowering interest rates to promote growth, which runs contrary to conventional economic thinking that calls for raising rates to combat inflation.

Unconfirmed media reports say Erdogan plans to reappoint Mehmet Simsek, a respected former finance minister and deputy prime minister, to the helm of the economy. The move would signify a return by the country — which is the world's 19th largest economy according to the World Bank — to more orthodox economic policies.

In power as prime minister and then as president since 2003, Erdogan is already Turkiye's longest-serving leader.

He has solidified his rule through constitutional changes that transformed Turkiye's presidency from a largely ceremonial role to a powerful office. Critics say his second decade in office was marred by sharp democratic backsliding including the erosion of institutions such as the media and judiciary and the jailing of opponents and critics.

Key step toward landmark treaty to end plastic waste

AP ■ PARIS

Global negotiators have agreed to craft an initial draft treaty to end plastic pollution, a preliminary but crucial step toward tackling one of the most lasting sources of human waste.

Environmental advocates cautiously welcomed the outcome of five days of UN talks in Paris on plastic pollution, but expressed concern that the petroleum industry and some governments would water down the eventual treaty. Most plastic is made from fossil fuels.

Delegates at the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for Plastics agreed on Friday evening to produce an initial draft before their next meeting in Kenya in November, participants said.

The committee is charged with developing the first international, legally binding treaty on plastic pollution, on land and at sea.

A coalition of “high-ambition” governments led by Norway and Rwanda, along with environmental groups, want to end plastic pollution altogether by 2040 by slashing



production and limiting some chemicals used in making plastics.

“Projections suggest that a child born today will see plastic production double by the time they turn 18, but we know that the consequences of increasing plastic production will be disastrous for our health, the planet, and the climate,” said Dr Tadesse Amera, who led the International Pollutants Elimination Network's delegation at the talks.

“The stakes are high, but

we are optimistic by the growing awareness among delegates of the need for global controls.”

Countries with big petroleum industries like the US, China and Saudi Arabia are focusing instead on plastic recycling, and want country-by-country rules instead of across-the-board limits.

Stew Harris, senior director for global plastics policy at the American Chemistry Council, argued for allowing each government to “use the right tools based on their

Debt deal frustrates many Democrats

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Democrats are deeply conflicted about the food aid requirements that President Joe Biden negotiated as part of the debt ceiling deal, fearing damage has been done to safety net programmes that will be difficult to unravel in the years ahead as Republicans demand further cuts.

Bargaining over toughening work requirements for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programme, commonly known as food stamps, made the focal point for the White House and House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., up until the end.

Negotiators from both sides made clear, publicly and privately, that it was the biggest area of disagreement and almost led to the talks breaking down several times.

In the end, Democrats warily accepted new requirements for some able-bodied recipients in exchange for food aid.

Republicans agreed to drop some work requirements for veterans, homeless people and

others.

The result of the tense back-and-forth was a deal that played to both sides, but one that many Democrats agonised over as they weighed whether to vote for the package this past week.

Many struggled to square cutting access to food for marginalised communities with an outcome that allowed the United States to avoid defaulting on its debt.

“In order for this country to not default on its bills, we then turned and made our most vulnerable communities default,” said Rep. Cori Bush, D-Mo. Years before she came to Congress, Bush lived in a car with her then-husband and two young children after the family had been evicted from their rental home.

The federal aid programme provides monthly funds — sometimes as little as \$6 a day — to allow low-income individuals and families to buy groceries.

It is the largest programme in the country focused on fighting hunger, with 41 million

people using benefits last year alone to purchase food, according to the Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service, which administers the program.

By 2025, new requirements will apply to able-bodied adults from age 49 to 54 without dependents — an increase of five years. Those individuals will be required to work or attend training programs for at least 80 hours a month if they want to receive more than three months of SNAP benefits within a three-year period.

Republicans have tried for decades to expand work requirements for these government assistance programmes, arguing they result in more people returning to the workforce, despite several studies that have found they have little impact on employment.

“We’re going to return these programs to being a life vest, not a lifestyle. A hand up, not a handout and that has always been the American way,” Rep. Mike Johnson of Louisiana, the vice chair of the

House Republican conference, told reporters.

The White House countered that Republican proposition by getting GOP lawmakers to waive the work requirements for new groups — veterans, individuals who are homeless or facing housing instability and youth aging out of foster care — to balance out the number of people who would now be facing these new restrictions.

The end result could be more people receiving SNAP benefits overall. An estimate from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office released Tuesday said that the changes in the debt ceiling package would add almost 80,000 people to the rolls of SNAP in an average month.

But the trade-off of seemingly helping some groups while hurting others still left the left flank of the Democratic Party — lawmakers who have supported Biden and helped pass his agenda for the first two years of his term — frustrated by the outcome.

That was especially the

case as advocates, including the nonpartisan National Alliance to End Homelessness, warned of a disturbing trend across the country of an increase in the number of older adults who are becoming homeless, some for the first time.

“What we should not be playing is oppression Olympics,” Bush said. “Like which one gets to hurt today? Which one gets to get to that finish line to hurt today? That's not where we should be as a society.”

Bush, a member of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, voted “no” on the debt limit deal on Wednesday night after she spent days hearing from advocate groups and constituents on the issue.

“I think it's important that (Biden) understands that it's good for us to have a strong, no vote because this isn't a deal that he would have made if we hadn't been held hostage,” Democratic Rep. Pramila Jayapal of Washington state, chair of the Progressive Caucus, told The Associated Press this past week.

2 injured in shootout on Israel-Egypt border

PTI ■ JERUSALEM

Israeli troops were engaged in a shootout in southern Israel along the Egyptian border, the military said Saturday.

It gave few details in a short statement, but said two people were wounded. Israel and Egypt signed a peace agreement in 1979 and maintain close security ties. Fighting along their shared border is rare.

The exchange of fire reportedly took place around the Nitzana border crossing between Israel and Egypt. The crossing is located about 40 kilometres (25 miles) southeast of the point where Israel's border with Egypt and the Gaza Strip converge.

Lanka Prez urges party unity to handle economic crisis

PTI ■ COLOMBO

President Ranil Wickremesinghe has called for joint action by all parties for Sri Lanka to emerge from the unprecedented economic crisis.

Wickremesinghe, who made the remarks while addressing a legal conference held at the Central Resort of Nuwara Eliya on Friday, said that none of the political parties in Parliament currently possess a 50 per cent voter base.

The economic challenges faced by the country ten months ago as an “unprecedented situation in history,” Wickremesinghe, also the debt-ridden island nation's finance minister said.

“It has been 10-11 months since our country faced a state of failure. However, we have

managed to establish law and order, political stability, and economic stability in our nation. Yet, we are aware that this stability is only temporary, and we still have a long road ahead to overcome the challenges we face,” the president stressed.

“Therefore the need is for unity among the parties, not solely for the purpose of elections, but to steer the country towards recovery from the ongoing economic crisis,” he said.

Wickremesinghe stressed that while the re-establishment of law and order and political and economic stability is crucial, it does not imply that Sri Lanka has wholly overcome the crisis.

Sri Lanka was hit by an unprecedented financial crisis

in 2022, the worst since its independence from Britain in 1948, due to a severe paucity of foreign exchange reserves, sparking a major political and humanitarian crisis in the island nation.

The debt-ridden country was marred with protests leading to the ouster of the powerful Rajapaksa family from politics. Wickremesinghe took charge as the country's president following the resignation of Gotabaya Rajapaksa on July 9 last year.

Wickremesinghe has spearheaded the economic recovery since then obtaining an IMF bailout while implementing strict reforms.

His repeated calls for cross-party support to handle the crisis came to be rejected by opposition parties.

Dar: Pak not to default on sovereign commitments

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Debt-ridden Pakistan's Finance Minister Ishaq Dar on Saturday said that his country would not default on any sovereign commitments and overcome the current economic problems through long-term reforms.

Speaking to a delegation of the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), which called on him here ahead of the finalisation of budget 2023-24, Dar also said that there is not a single day's delay in Pakistan's sovereign commitments.

“Pakistan would not default and overcome the current economic problems through long-term reforms. The government's top priority was to ensure that there is not a single day's delay in Pakistan's sovereign commitments,” said the minister.

Dar warned people against speaking ill of the nation's economy.

“Some people like to give dates that Pakistan will default on so and so date. They should be ashamed. They should be well-wishers and be loyal to their soil,” he said.

Dar said that Pakistan was a sovereign country with assets worth trillions of dollars while its external debts were USD 100 billion, adding that only one asset relating to gas infrastructure was about 50 per cent of the total debt.

The minister assured that the country would come out of the current challenges and would also create a sovereign wealth fund.

Pak govt hints at holding general elections this year

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif-led Pakistan's coalition government has decided to throw open its coffers for massive public spending during the next financial year, finally giving the strongest signal to hold the general elections on time this year, according to a media report on Saturday.

The evidence has been gleaned from the 31 per cent hike in the next fiscal year's federal development budget to Rs 950 billion, reported the Express Tribune newspaper.

The decision to increase the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) from the

earlier proposed Rs 700 billion to Rs 950 billion was taken by Prime Minister Sharif, minutes before the scheduled meeting of the Annual Plan Coordination Committee (APCC) on Friday.

The paper reported that the confusion was apparent as the Ministry of Planning had distributed the APCC working paper among all stakeholders based on the Rs 700 billion PSDP size. But Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal told the media that the size of the PSDP will be Rs 950 billion.

The budget 2023-24 is expected to be presented before the parliament on June 9 and after a discussion, it would be voted upon before the end of

June.

The current parliament will complete its term by mid-August, elections are expected by early October.

It is rumoured that as provided in the Constitution, the parliament under extraordinary circumstances may increase its term by one year, but the size of the PSDP shows that the government is entering into election mode, the report added.

The ousted prime minister and the chief of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party, Imran Khan, has been demanding early elections in the cash-strapped country. The Sharif-led government has rejected Khan's demand.

Rishi Sunak planning London-based global AI watchdog: Report

PTI ■ LONDON

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak is considering a London-based global artificial intelligence (AI) watchdog to oversee any threats posed by the fast-growing technology, according to a UK media report on Saturday. Sunak will discuss ways to cooperate on monitoring AI when he meets US President Joe Biden at the White House next week, according to ‘The Times’.

Among the ideas under consideration in Downing Street is setting up a global AI

authority in London, modelled on the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The IAEA, founded in 1957 with 176 countries including India as members, monitors the use of nuclear energy, promotes safe standards, and checks that it is not used for military purposes.

A British minister told the newspaper that the UK would be “the best place” in the world for any new body because many leading companies already have a strong presence here. Though plans are at an



early stage, if Sunak pushes ahead, the UK government could seek to recruit rapidly to get the authority up and running. “The Prime Minister is very alive to the need for international alignment on the

approach to AI as the technology evolves to ensure we can benefit from the opportunities but manage the risks,” a government source was quoted as saying by ‘The Times’.

The possibility of Sunak creating a regulator comes as the European Union (EU) is refining its Artificial Intelligence Act, which is expected to take a hard line on oversight of the sector.

The US is also considering how to regulate but is expected to be less severe, as the world grapples with concerns about the safety of AI technology.

Indian girls jump on global coding bandwagon in ChatGPT era

IAN S ■ MUMBAI

For Aradhya Awasthi, a class 6th student in Delhi-NCR, coding is being creative, having fun and learning to be innovative. For Tanmit Kaur, who is in class 9th, learning coding helps open new career avenues and create solutions to solve real-life problems.

As the demand for skilled coders and software developers skyrocket in a post-pandemic era, especially in the age of generative AI (aka ChatGPT) and other next-gen technologies, Indian girls are not far behind and are now learning the ropes to become world-class coders.

I am fascinated by algorithm-based careers like in the world of finance. Coding has not only instilled confidence in me but has also given me a fresh career option which I may explore later in life to build innovative solutions to solve real-life problems,' Kaur, a student at Noida-based Indraprastha Global School, told IANS.

Amid widespread tech layoffs, developers have emerged as the most sought-after role in India, especially those who can design, develop and maintain the front-end and back-end of a



web application, according to job portal Indeed.

Developers today make up five of the top 10 job roles. The job roles that have seen the highest growth since pre-pandemic are data engineer (353 per cent), site reliability engineer (260 per cent), assistant engineer (254 per cent), application developer (235 per cent) and cloud engineer (220 per cent).

There are 45,000 Artificial Intelligence (AI) job openings in India, with data scientists and Machine Learning (ML) engineers being among the

most sought-after careers, according to a latest report by TeamLease Digital, a tech staffing firm.

Parul Malhotra, a senior software development engineer with global leading web and mobile app development company GeekyAnts became a developer as she loved the idea of solving real-world issues through programming.

'I have built a few world-class web apps in the last three years and worked with people from across the globe. Coding has provided me a way to solve

problems, contribute to technological advances and communicate with people from different countries and backgrounds,' she told IANS.

According to Apple CEO Tim Cook, coding is the only global language and he wishes that more Indian students, including girls, learn coding early in school days so that they can create world-class products and solve real-life problems as they grow up.

Coding is the only global language. It is a way to express yourself and arguably, we need

more of that in the world and bring the world closer,' Cook, who has always emphasised that coding should be taught as early as elementary school, had told IANS in April during his India visit.

Indore's Asmi Jain, 20, has been selected among the winners of Apple's 'WWDC23 Swift Student Challenge,' who created original apps using the Swift coding language.

At Medi-Caps University in Indore, she found out her friend's uncle had to undergo brain surgery. As a result, he was left with eye misalignment and facial paralysis.

Jain sprung into action, designing her winning playground to track a user's eye movements as they try to follow a ball moving around the screen.

'It was important for me to create an app playground that could positively impact the lives of people like him,' said Jain.

According to her, coding lets her create things that help her friends and the community. 'It gives me a sense of independence that is very empowering,' she added.

According to Mohit Thukral, an alumnus of

Stanford University and Director, Indraprastha Global School, technology is going to be the mathematics of the 21st century.

'Every student is going to have to know a certain minimum level of knowledge of technology, coding, and others. Technology is an enabler and introduction of skill-based courses such as design thinking, robotics, coding and AI at our school is just the beginning,' he told IANS.

Nikita Tomar Mann, the principal at the school, said that it is a fallacy that coding is a skill only required by those who choose the career of a coder or software programmer.

'For the future citizens of the new world order, Coding will be a vital 'Life Skill'. Creativity, critical thinking and problem-solving are touted as some of the skills of the 21st century, and one of the best ways to master these skills is to learn coding right from early schooling years,' she emphasised.

According to Parul, coding should be a part of the curriculum for students as it can equip them with logical and algorithmic thinking skills.



RBI-MPC may lower inflation forecast marginally: Bank of Baroda Chief Economist

IAN S ■ CHENNAI

The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) may lower the inflation forecast marginally and will not change the repo rate at the upcoming meeting owing to inflation being down and increased liquidity, said a top economist in Bank of Baroda.

'The MPC will not change the repo rate. The inflation is less than five per cent and will be in the coming months,' Chief Economist

Madan Sabnavis, Bank of Baroda told IANS.

The consumer price index (CPI) inflation moderated in April-23 to 4.70 per cent year-on-year (YoY) and remained within the RBI's target range (2-6 per cent) for the second consecutive month.

Adding further Sabnavis said the liquidity has increased and so the RBI-MPC's stance will also not change.

According to Sabnavis, the MPC may lower inflation forecast marginally.

Indian American Ajay Banga takes over as World Bank President

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Indian American Ajay Banga on Friday took over as the President of the World Bank, making him the first person of colour to head either of the two global financial institutions, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

On May 3, the Executive Directors of the World Bank selected Banga, 63, as the 14th President of the World Bank for a five-year term.

In February, President Joe Biden announced that the US would nominate Banga to lead the World Bank.

'Join us in welcoming Ajay Banga as the new President of the World Bank Group. We are committed to creating a world free from poverty on a livable planet,' the World Bank said in a tweet with a picture of Banga entering the bank headquarters here on Friday.

'I wish Ajay Banga all the best as he takes up his new role as President of the World Bank today. I look forward to continuing the deep partnership between our institutions to do good and help those most in need,' IMF managing director Kristalina Georgieva said in a tweet.

Banga has become the first-ever Indian-American to head the World Bank. He replaces David Malpass, who announced his decision to step down in February.

Banga most recently served as Vice Chairman at General Atlantic. Previously, he was President and CEO of Mastercard, a global organization with nearly 24,000 employees.

Under his leadership, MasterCard launched the Center for Inclusive Growth, which advances equitable and sustainable economic growth and financial inclusion around the world. He was the Honorary Chairman of the International Chamber of Commerce, serving as Chairman from 2020-2022.

He became an advisor to General Atlantic's climate-focused fund, BeyondNetZero, at its inception in 2021. Banga served as Co-Chair of the Partnership for Central America, a coalition of private organizations that works to advance economic opportunity across underserved populations in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. He was previously on the Boards of the American Red Cross, Kraft Foods, and Dow Inc.

Banga is a co-founder of The Cyber Readiness Institute and was Vice Chair of the Economic Club of New York. He was awarded the Foreign Policy Association Medal in 2012, the Padma Shri Award by the President of India in 2016, the Ellis Island Medal of Honor and other awards.

Not merger but only transfer of policyholder related assets, liabilities of Sahara Life: SBI Life

IAN S ■ NEW DELHI

SBI Life, a subsidiary of country's biggest lender State Bank of India (SBI), has said it is not a merger between the two companies but only a transfer of the policyholder related assets and liabilities of Sahara Life Insurance.

On Friday regulator Irdai directed SBI Life Insurance to takeover the policy liabilities of around two lakh policies along with assets of stressed Sahara India Life Insurance Co Ltd (SILIC).

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.

Following the Irdai order, SBI Life assured two lakh policyholders of 'high levels' of service and commitment as is accorded to our customers.

'We have started and we are expeditiously working on the process of integrating all these policyholders in our systems. While the full integration may take some time, we request these policyholders to reach out to us on our helpline number 1800 267 9090 or email us at saharalife@sbilife.Co.In,' it said

SBI Life will shortly reach out to these policyholders and intimate them about various



touch points and manner of servicing for a smooth transition, it said.

Sahara Life Insurance was also not allowed to underwrite new business. Thereafter, further

Share of flex space in corporates' real estate portfolio rises to 10-12% from 5-8% pre-Covid: Colliers

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian corporates are fast embracing flexible workspace which now accounts for 10-12 per cent of their real estate portfolio compared to 5-8 per cent pre-COVID pandemic, according to Colliers.

Real estate consultant Colliers has recently released a report 'Global Occupier Outlook 2023' that revealed that many corporates in Asia Pacific are deferring decisions on taking office space on lease as they are grappling with the complexities of the hybrid work model.

'The lack of clarity and macroeconomic uncertainty are posing challenges for businesses in projecting their space requirements,' it added.

According to Colliers' experts, companies are facing the dilemma of striking a balance between providing employees with desired flexibility and realigning their portfolios for the next evolution of the workplace.

However, Colliers said that Indian office space occupiers have been quick to adopt flex spaces, attracted by the flexi-



bility, agility, and cost-effectiveness.

'Flex spaces are becoming an integral part of occupiers' portfolio, with its share in occupiers' total portfolio rising to 10-12 per cent in 2023, from 5-8 per cent before the pandemic in 2019, as per interactions with industry experts,' the consultant said.

Going forward, Colliers said that flex spaces will continue to see strong growth.

Flexible workspace continue to support occupiers in realigning their portfolios and space considerations to suit a hybrid working style.

Peush Jain, Managing Director, Office Services, India, said, 'Flex spaces have emerged as a core strategy for occupiers to adopt a decentralised workspace model, serving as a promising alternative to the traditional paradigm.'

As compared to shorter lease tenures of 1-2 years pre-pandemic, occupiers are now going for longer commitments of 3-5 years with flex space operators as they look to integrate flex space as a long-term solution.

During 2022, leasing of office space by flex space operators touched record 7 million square feet across top 6 cities.

Across the APAC region, Colliers said that occupiers are keen on realigning their office portfolios to meet business needs while providing the flexibility employees desire.

The right real estate portfolio is key to keeping culture intact, attracting and retaining best talent, and controlling operational costs, it added.

FPIs invest ₹ 43,838 crore in India in May

IAN S ■ NEW DELHI

Foreign portfolio investors (FPI) invested Rs 43,838 crore in the Indian stock markets in May. VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services, said the FPIs were aggressive buyers in the market in May having invested Rs 43,838 crore through the stock market and primary market put together.

A survey among foreign portfolio investors showed that India is now the consensus overweight among all emerging markets. In May, India attracted the largest investment among all emerging markets, and FPIs were sellers in China, he added.

FPIs are likely to continue their investment in India in June too since the latest GDP data and high frequency indicators reflect a robust economy gaining further strength.

Financials, automobiles, telecom and construction are attracting big investments, he said.

Nifty racing to the all-time high of 18887 and breaking the record are highly possible in the next few trading days.

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 had said.

Further, the policy data of SILIC reveals that the company's portfolio is showing run-off trend. The financial position has been deteriorating with rising losses and higher percentage of claims to total premium.

If the trend is allowed to continue, the situation will wors-

en and lead to erosion of capital and SILIC may not be able to discharge its liabilities towards policyholders, thereby endangering the interest of its policyholders,' Irdai had said.

It said the action against SILIC has been taken after due consideration of all the facts and circumstances.

The authority added in its meeting held on June 2, 2023 that the action was warranted to protect the interest of the policyholders of SILIC.

Further, Irdai said it will continue to monitor the situation and also issue necessary directions as required in the interest of the policyholders of SILIC.



All new Model 3 cars qualify for \$7,500 EV tax credit in US: Tesla

IAN S ■ SAN FRANCISCO

Electric car-maker Tesla has announced that every new Model 3 vehicle now qualifies for \$7,500 EV tax credit in the US.

With this, the starting price of a Tesla Model 3 -- after federal tax credits -- may once again be below the \$35,000 mark.

Tesla's website claimed every new Model 3 is eligible for the full \$7,500 federal tax credit in the US.

The EV tax credits were mandated by the US Congress last year as part of the Inflation Reduction Act. The aims to cut dependency on China for batteries.

Tesla CEO Elon Musk retweeted a screenshot of the website that displays the tax

credits available for each vehicle.

Tesla delivered a record 4,22,875 electric vehicles in the first quarter of 2023, beating the Wall Street estimates.

In the first quarter, the electric car-maker produced over 4,40,000 vehicles.

'We continued to transition towards a more even regional mix of vehicle builds, including Model S/X vehicles in transit to EMEA and APAC,' it said in a statement.

In the fourth quarter of 2022, Tesla delivered 4,05,278 and produced 4,39,701 units.

According to reports, a large percentage of deliveries came from vehicles produced in Shanghai gigafactory.

Tesla has adjusted the pricing for its electric vehicle in the US several times in the recent past.



Lanka President urges party unity to handle economic crisis

PTI ■ COLOMBO

President Ranil Wickremesinghe has called for joint action by all parties for Sri Lanka to emerge from the unprecedented economic crisis. Wickremesinghe, who made the remarks while addressing a legal conference held at the Central Resort of Nuwara Eliya on Friday, said that none of the political parties in Parliament currently possess a 50 per cent voter base.

The economic challenges faced by the country ten months ago as an 'unprecedented situation in history,' Wickremesinghe, also the debt-ridden island nation's finance minister said.

'It has been 10-11 months since our country faced a state of failure. However, we have managed to establish law and order, political stability, and economic stability in our nation. Yet, we are aware that this stability is only temporary, and we still have a long road ahead to overcome the challenges we face,' the president stressed.

'Therefore the need is for unity among the parties, not solely for the purpose of elections, but to steer the country towards recovery from the ongoing economic crisis,' he said. Wickremesinghe stressed that while the re-establishment of law and order and political and economic stability is crucial, it does not imply that Sri Lanka has wholly overcome the crisis.

Sri Lanka was hit by an unprecedented financial crisis in 2022, the worst since its independence from Britain in 1948, due to a severe paucity of foreign exchange reserves, sparking a major political and humanitarian crisis in the island nation.

OnePlus, known for its cutting-edge innovations, offers the OnePlus 2R model a special price of just Rs 8,999. Don't miss this opportunity to sport a trendy and functional accessory, at unmatched offers.

This year's EORS holds a lot of promise, with a wide range of products and exciting offers. Keep an eye out for Myntra-specials and EORS-specific product lines, ensuring you find something special for yourself, your family, or your friends.

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Myntra's 18th edition of EORS live: Grab irresistible offers by top brands across 20L products

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Ruud rallies to beat Zhang

AP ■ PARIS

Last year's finalist Casper Ruud rallied to beat Zhang Zhizhen in the third round of the French Open on Saturday, ending a strong run by the Chinese player.

The fourth-seeded Ruud, who lost to Rafael Nadal in last year's final, won 4-6, 6-4, 6-1, 6-4.

Zhang was the first Chinese man to reach the third round at Roland Garros since Kho Sin-Khie in 1937. Kho also reached the fourth round in 1936 but that proved a step too far for Zhang, despite a lightning start on Court Suzanne Lenglen.

Meanwhile, American Coco Gauff rallied to beat Mirra Andreeva of Russia in an all-teen showdown in the third round.

Experience eventually told as the 19-year-old Gauff, who was the runner-up at Roland Garros last year, prevailed 6-7(5), 6-1, 6-1, sealing the result with a cross-court backhand winner.

That ended an impressive Grand Slam debut for the 16-year-old Andreeva, who earlier this week became the youngest player to win a match in the women's main draw at the French Open since 2005.

Zhang broke Ruud in the opening game and went on to take the set as the Norwegian



player grew more and more frustrated.

Matters grew worse for Ruud as he found himself 0-40 down on his serve early in the second set but he collected his emotions and — after a topsy-turvy set — went on to level the match at his first opportunity.

Ruud then improved in the last two sets and sealed the match with a forehand down

the line on the first of two match points.

The match will be followed by an intriguing third-round encounter involving two teenagers: American Coco Gauff, who is 19, and Russian Mirra Andreeva, who is 16.

However, reigning Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina pulled out of the French Open before her third-

round match on Saturday because she is sick.

RYBAKINA PULLS OUT

Reigning Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina pulled out of the French Open before her third-round match on Saturday because she is sick.

"I just wanted to give 100%, and obviously I'm far from being 100%," Rybakina said. "If

I cannot breathe, there is no chance I can even run and try to compete."

The No 4-seeded Rybakina was supposed to face 132nd-ranked Sara Sorribes Tormo in the day's opening contest on Court Philippe Chatrier.

They were scheduled to begin playing at 11:45 a.m. local time, but instead, at that very moment, Rybakina sat down

behind the microphone at a news conference to explain why she was withdrawing from the year's second Grand Slam tournament.

Sounding stuffed up, Rybakina explained that she has been running a fever, didn't sleep well the past two nights and had difficulty breathing during a warmup session Saturday ahead of her match. She said a doctor told her there is a virus going around "here in Paris."

Rybakina, who won each of her first two matches this week in straight sets, was considered among the top contenders for the championship at Roland Garros. She has won her past 10 matches, including a tuneup title on red clay at the Italian Open last month.

She plays a power-built game based in part on one of the best serves on the WTA Tour, which she leads in aces this season.

Last July, Rybakina won her first major trophy, defeating Ons Jabeur in the final at Wimbledon.

Rybakina is a 23-year-old who was born in Moscow and has represented Kazakhstan since 2018, when that country offered her funding to support her tennis career. The switch was a topic of conversation during Wimbledon, because the All England Club barred athletes who represent Russia or Belarus from entering the tournament in 2022 due to the war in Ukraine.



Djokovic laments fans for booing

AP ■ PARIS

Novak Djokovic makes no secret of the way he loves to feed off negativity during a tennis match. Doesn't really matter whether he's ahead or behind on the scoreboard. The guy simply finds motivation and inspiration from all manner of slights, real and perceived.

Maybe it's how a chair umpire is officiating that particular day ... or the way Djokovic's entourage is sitting in place in the stands instead of rising to encourage him ... or the criticism he receives for wading into a political issue — all of which already have happened during this French Open.

Or maybe it's how he's treated by the spectators who, as they did on Friday during Djokovic's 7-6 (4), 7-6 (5), 6-2 victory over 29th-seeded Alejandro Davidovich Fokina in the third round at Roland Garros, get on his case and jeer

him for seemingly no good reason at all.

Which is what happened at Court Philippe Chatrier during the longest three-set Grand Slam match of the 22-time major champion Djokovic's long and distinguished career, clocking in at 3 hours, 36 minutes. He wasn't thrilled at how difficult things had been in the match, didn't love double-faulting three times in a single game, and really didn't like the feed-back coming from a portion of the fans.

"A majority of the people comes to enjoy tennis or support one or the other player. But they are individuals. There are people — there are groups or whatever — that love to boo every single thing you do. That's something that I find disrespectful and I frankly don't understand that," Djokovic said later at his news conference. "But it's their right. They paid the ticket. They can do whatever they want."

Nadal undergoes hip surgery

AP ■ PARIS

Rafael Nadal had arthroscopic surgery on Friday night for the injured left hip flexor that forced him to sit out the French Open for the first time since he won the first of his record 14 titles there in his 2005 tournament debut.

Nadal's spokesman, Benito Perez-Barbadillo, said three doctors were involved in the procedure, which was taking place in Barcelona.

Perez-Barbadillo said he expected to be able to pass along information about the operation on Saturday, which is Nadal's 37th birthday.

The Spaniard hasn't competed anywhere since he lost to Mackenzie McDonald in the second round of the Australian Open on Jan. 18. Nadal's movement clearly was restricted for much of that match and he ended up with his earliest exit at any Grand Slam tournament since 2016.

An MRI exam the next day revealed the extent of the injury,



and Perez-Barbadillo said at the time that Nadal was expected to need up to two months to fully recover. He initially aimed to enter the Monte Carlo Masters in March on his beloved red clay, but he wasn't able to play there, then subsequently sat out tournament after tournament, decreasing the likelihood that he would be ready for the French Open.

Nadal announced during a news conference at his tennis academy in Manacor, Spain, on May 18 that he would need to miss this year's trip to compete in Paris. He said he would need to take an indefinite break from tennis — no matches and not even any practices.

Indian pole vaulters' participation in doubt as poles stuck at airport

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The participation of two Indian pole vaulters in the Asian U-20 Athletics Championship in Yecheon, South Korea, beginning on Sunday was rendered doubtful after their equipment was not permitted in a South Korean as well as an Air India aircraft due to "technical issues" related to length of the poles.

Dev Kumar Meena (men's pole vault) and Sunil Kumar (decathlon, of which pole vault is one of the 10 events) were to compete in their respective events on Sunday but they left for Seoul in a South Korean flight on Friday, which is in alliance with Air India, without their poles.

Even Air India refused to carry the poles in its 12:05am flight on Friday, according to an official of the Athletics Federation of India.

The AFI official said that Air India refused to carry three poles measuring 5m each to be



used by the two athletes, on the ground of some "technical issues" concerning prescribed length of the items.

"The two athletes have already reached South Korea but their poles are stuck here in Delhi airport. Air India said they cannot allow the 5m-long poles under the current rules. It is strange that our athletes had gone to Busan (South Korea) with the same kind of poles only last year," the AFI official told PTI.

"We have been running here and there since yesterday

afternoon but Air India is not relenting. We are now trying, through our travel agent, to send the poles to Korea by FedEx Express Cargo flight later today. Let's see," the official said.

In fact, all the 55-member Indian contingent was to leave for South Korea from the Indira Gandhi International Airport here at 6:30pm Friday on Seoul-based Asiana Airlines flight, but the Indian coaches were told that they would not be allowed to take the three poles as well as the javelins.

The AFI had booked the

tickets through Air India with the help of a travel agency.

"All the paperwork relating to bookings and luggage were done by Air India as they have a tie-up with Asiana Airlines. On May 26, a mail was sent to Air India informing about the number of poles and javelins we will be taking to Korea, along with their size specification.

"But when the contingent reached IGI yesterday to board the flight, Asiana Airlines said Air India has not informed them about it and so the poles and javelins could not be allowed inside the aircraft," the AFI official said.

All the members of the contingent save for two coaches left for South Korea boarding the Asiana Airlines. The two coaches were held back to accompany the poles and javelins in an Air India flight to Seoul at 12:05am Friday.

"What was surprising was that Air India itself refused to carry the poles because of its length and some technical issues.

We even went to the Air India cargo office at the IGI to let in the poles and javelins as cargo, but to no avail.

"The javelins were finally allowed and the two coaches, initially held back, also boarded the Air India flight," the AFI official said.

"The two athletes had brought the poles in a domestic flight from Bengaluru and there was no problem then, don't know why it is different in this case."

Even if the three poles do not reach South Korea on time, the two athletes may still compete on Sunday by using equipment of other competitors or those provided by the organisers but that will affect their performance.

"They may still participate even if the poles do not reach on time. But normally the length of the pole depends on the height of the pole vaulter, so they may compete if they get poles of their size, otherwise they may not do their best."

India maul Uzbekistan in women's junior Asia

PTI ■ KAKAMIGHARA

Annu slammed a double hat-trick as India started their campaign in the women's Junior Asia Cup on an emphatic note with a 22-0 thrashing of a lowly Uzbekistan, here on Saturday.

Annu (13th, 29th, 30th, 38th, 43th, 51st) was the star performer for India, while Vaishnavi Vitthal Phalke (3rd, 56th); Mumtaz Khan (6th, 44th, 47th, 60th); Sunelita Toppo (17th, 17th); Manju Chorsiya (26th), Deepika Soreng (18th, 25th), Deepika (32nd, 44th, 46th, 57th), and Neelam (47th) were the others on target.

India began attacking the Uzbekistan citadel from the onset and took an early lead when as Vaishnavi (3rd) converted a penalty corner.

Mumtaz doubled India's lead three minutes later with a field strike.

Panjab regain KIUG champions crown

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Panjab University, Chandigarh (PUC), regained their overall champions crown after a gap of one edition as despite a clean sweep in fencing, Guru Nanak Dev University (GNDU), Amritsar, fell short on the final day of competitions at the Khelo Indian University Games (KIUG).

National Games champion Yash Ghangas was the other star attraction on the final day, thrilling all at the BBD University grounds in Lucknow, to pick up the gold for Chaudhary Bansi Lal University (CBLU) in the men's 100+kg category in judo.



The other four golds on the final day went to Mumbai University (judo women's

78+kg), Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU) who won the men's group traditional

yogasana gold at the SAC hall of the Indian Institute of Technology-Banaras Hindu University (IIT-BHU) campus in Varanasi and Chandigarh University (CU) and Maharshi Dayanand University (MDU), Rohtak, who picked up the two golds in weightlifting at the G.B. University in Greater Noida. PUC therefore finished with an overall tally of 69 medals including 26 gold, 17 silver and 26 bronze medals. GNDU amassed 24 gold, 27 silver and 17 bronze medals to finish second and in the top three for the first time.

Jain University, Karnataka, last time's champions, were third with 16 gold, 10 silver and six bronze medals.

Sainyam gives India golden start

PTI ■ SUHL

Chandigarh youngster Sainyam gave India a golden start to the ISSF Junior World Cup Junior here on Saturday by finishing atop the podium in the women's 10m air pistol competition.

Sainyam shot 238 in the final to leave Korean Kim Minseo behind in second place. The Korean shot 236.0 for silver while the bronze went to Chinese Taipei's Liu Heng Yu, who bowed after the 22nd shot of the 24-shot final, with a score of 216.9, 0.2 behind the Korean at that stage.

In other results, India's Suruchi Inder Singh also reached the women's pistol final, finishing sixth with a score of 154.1.

Amit Sharma in the junior men's 10m air pistol was the lone Indian finalist in the event and finished fourth to miss out on a medal. Italian Luca Arrighi won gold in the event.

Among other Indians in the fray, Urva Chaudhary finished 26th in women's air pistol with a qualification round score of 560. Sainyam had qualified third with 571 while Suruchi was fifth in qualifying with 571.

Cannot speak about Asian Cup target before Dec: Stimac

PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR

At 38, Sunil Chhetri remains a prized asset in the final third and among the fittest in the Indian football team, but his much younger colleagues in defence "dancing around balls" is a cause for concern for head coach, Igor Stimac.

Alongside brain, Stimac indicated he would do with a slice of brawn in his defenders. Four weeks of preparation time was on Saturday described as ideal by Stimac for the Asian Cup, for which the Croat said he will not be able to set a realistic target before December.

The continental showpiece is scheduled to be held in January-February next year in Qatar, where India has been clubbed alongside heavyweights Australia, Syria and Uzbekistan.

"There is no realistic target. It's more about real chances for us. We can speak in December when we find out how much time we're going to get for the operation, then I can be more realistic from this point of view.

"I cannot tell you about stages... For the Asian Cup, India never was placed better than the bottom of the group. So whatever we achieved, that we will be achievement, I would



say," Stimac said during a virtual press conference.

India was knocked out in the group stage in their last two appearances in the tournament in 2011 and 2019 respectively.

When discussions turned to his veteran striker and captain Sunil Chhetri, Stimac said he remains one of the fittest players in his squad after nearly two decades of top-flight football.

"Sunil has always been a role model and a leader in every sense for the boys and girls. But he's not only talking, he's showing that with his test results once again.

"In this camp, he was in top-five positions in all the tests we executed. So that's the best way of leading the team and showing them how much it can be done. Never mind the age, never mind the month or the year, so let alone what he speaks what he does on the pitch and how he works. That's what is the most important thing."

There are still eight months left for the Asian Cup and Stimac said in this period the team is looking to improve its

finishing, passing, pattern in the final third, and also the build-up.

"Before the Asian Cup, India will pay some tournaments -- Merdeka Cup, Intercontinental Cup.

"There is the U-23, then there is the Merdeka Cup in October, then we are starting the World Cup qualifiers. Asian Cup prospects will depend on December preparations because things are changing on a daily basis. It depends on who are in form, who are in best position in December, they (players) are coming after a long domestic season behind. They need to stay in form and enter the Asian Cup on a positive note."

 HeroFinCorp.	HERO FINCORP LIMITED CIN: U74899DL1991PLC046774 Regd Office: 34, Community Centre, Basant Lok, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi-110057 Tel: 011-49487150 Email: litigation@herofincorp.com Fax: 011-49487150 Website: www.herofincorp.com
NOTICE UNDER SECTION 13(2) OF THE SECURITIZATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT, 2002	
Notice is hereby served on:	
1. Mr. Ram Kishore Gilda (Borrower/Addressee No. 1) Director, M/s Ujala Rubber Pvt. Ltd. Residing at: Ranjeet Hanuman Road, 364, Usha Nagar Extension, Indore, Madhya Pradesh- 452009	
2. M/s Ujala Rubber Pvt. Ltd. (Co Borrower/Addressee No. 2) Through its Directors, Having its office at: 211, Modi Tower, MTH Compound, Indore, Madhya Pradesh- 452007	
3. Mr. Pawan Gilda (Co Borrower/ Addressee No. 3) Director, M/s Ujala Rubber Pvt. Ltd. Residing at: 364, Usha Nagar Extension, Indore, Madhya Pradesh- 452009	
4. Mrs. Vimla Gilda (Co-Borrower/ Addressee No. 4) Director, M/s Ujala Rubber Pvt. Ltd. Residing at: Near Malhari Maartand Mandir, 364, Usha Nagar Extension, Indore, Madhya Pradesh – 452009	
5. Mrs. Payal Gilda (Co-Borrower/ Addressee No. 5) Director, M/s Ujala Rubber Pvt. Ltd. Residing at: Near Malhari Maartand Mandir, 364, Usha Nagar Extension, Indore, Madhya Pradesh - 452009	
(hereinafter referred to as " Borrowers ")	
1. The above-mentioned Borrowers had entered into LOAN AGREEMENT DATED 30.12.2021 with M/s. Hero FinCorp Limited (hereinafter referred to as "HFCL") having its Registered Office at 34, Community Centre, Basant Lok, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi-110057, for availing Rs. 91,12,678/- (Rupees Ninety-One Lakhs Twelve Thousand Six Hundred and Seventy Eight Only) hereinafter referred to as "financial facility 1") in the form of Loan Against Property vide Sanction Letter bearing Reference No. 21239455 dated 30.12.2021.	
2. The above-mentioned credit facility was secured by way of executed a Memorandum of Deposit of Title Deeds dated 20.01.2022 property mentioned below, in favour of HFCL: " Unit at Ground Floor on part of plot no. 364, Usha Nagar extension, Indore – 452009, Total plot area – 148.69 sq.mtr, Boundaries: East- Plot No. 365, West- Common Road and stairs, North-Colony road, South- Colony gali. "	
(hereinafter referred to as " Secured Property ")	
The above-mentioned properties shall hereinafter referred to as "Secured Assets". The Secured Assets has been mortgaged to HFCL as security/collateral so as to secure the due repayment of loan together with the interest and other charges. However, the Borrower defaulted in due repayment of Loan alongwith interest and other charges. In this regard, Demand Notice u/s 13(2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (hereinafter referred to as "SARFAESI Act, 2002"), was sent to the last known addresses available of the aforesaid Borrower with HFCL but some of the Notices remained undelivered.	
By way of this publication, HFCL hereby once again call upon the above mentioned Borrowers to pay the entire outstanding due of Rs. 91,94,794.37/- (Ninety One Lakh Ninety Four Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety Four Rupees and Thirty Seven Paise Only) due as on 05.05.2023 within 60 days of the publication of this Notice, failing which HFCL shall take all necessary actions under all or any of the provisions of SARFAESI Act, 2002 against the Secured Assets including taking possession and sale of the Secured Assets of the Borrower and/or Co-borrowers and any other action or relief as may be provided under SARFAESI Act, 2002.	
Further, in pursuance to the provisions of Section 13(13) of SARFAESI Act, 2002, the Borrowers are hereby prohibited from selling/transferring or alienating either by way of sale/lease or deal with the aforesaid Secured Assets, in any manner, whatsoever, in contravention with the provisions of aforesaid Loan Agreements and/or SARFAESI Act, 2002.	
The Public at large is also hereby informed that they should not deal, in any manner, whatsoever, with the aforementioned Secured Assets as HFCL has the First and Exclusive Charge over the same.	
Place: Indore Date: 04.06.2023	Authorized Officer, Hero FinCorp Limited

I want to bat with same intent that I showed in IPL and Ranji Trophy: Rahane

PTI ■ ARUNDEL

Back in India colours after nearly 18 months, senior batter Ajinkya Rahane doesn't want to have any "regrets" for the time lost and would like to bat in the upcoming World Test Championship final against Australia with the same "intent" like he did in the just-concluded IPL.

"Coming back after 18-19 months, whatever has happened, good or bad, I don't want to think about my past. I just want to start afresh and keep doing whatever I have been doing," Rahane told BCCITV on the sidelines of India's training session.

"Personally enjoyed playing for CSK as I have been batting well throughout the season, even before IPL. I had a very good domestic season and I felt good. So this comeback was a bit emotional for me."

Rahane, who was a part of CSK's fifth IPL title-winning side, has already received a lot of praise for his attacking batting and improved strike-rate in T20 cricket, and especially the 27-ball 61 against Mumbai Indians showed a shift in his intent.

"I want to bat with the same mindset and show same intent that I showed before coming here in IPL and Ranji



Trophy. I would not like to think about format whether it is T20 or Tests. The way I am batting now, I don't want to complicate things and the more I keep it simple, better it is for me," the veteran of 82 Tests and

4,931 runs said. The man, who led India to the most talked-about series triumph in Australia, back in 2021, also praised Rohit Sharma for leading the team admirably for the better part of this WTC cycle.

"I thought culture in team now is really good. Rohit is handling the team really well and I am sure Rahul bhai is also handling the team really well. That helps as well and atmosphere is really good. Whatever I am see-

ing right now is that everyone is enjoying each other's company," he said. Rahane thanked his family and friends for the support he got during his time away from the national team.

"It was (an) emotional

moment for me. When I got dropped, the support I got from my family was massive and dream was to play for India and that was massive. Playing for India matters a lot for me and I worked hard on my fitness and went back to domestic cricket."

"Thanks to BCCI and selectors and when I went back to domestic cricket, the goal was to play for India — be it Ranji Trophy and Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy or practice session, for me, every day that I was waking up, it was all about thinking that I can play for India again.

"What made my comeback possible was enjoying each and every moment, be it success or failure, and having no regrets. Learning from every individual in Mumbai Ranji team. You have to grow as a cricketer every single day, learning process should not stop," he said.

Playing in England is challenging, feels Rahane, who had scored a match-winning hundred in a Test match at Lord's back in 2014.

"It's all about mindset and reading the situation well, staying in (the) moment and playing it session by session. In England, you just don't look at the pitch but also keep an eye on the weather. In England, you never feel that you are in even if you are batting on 70," he said.

Team India using multi-coloured balls in fielding drills

PTI ■ PORTSMOUTH

The Indian team's training sessions over the years have had their share of innovations and it is now using multi-coloured rubber balls for catching practice in order to adjust to last-minute deviations which could cost the side dear.

One of the Indian team's fielding drills at the Arundel ground here saw rising star Shubman Gill taking catches with the colour of the ball being green.

There were also yellow coloured balls but not the lawn tennis balls one usually gets to see when keepers and close-in fielders take powerfully hit reflex catches.

"These are specially made rubber balls, not the ones we are used to seeing in gully cricket. This is made for fielding drills. These balls are named 'reaction balls' and it is used for fielding drills only in some specific countries, mainly England or New Zealand where breeze and colder conditions become a factor," a renowned fielding coach, who has worked at NCA and at national camps, told PTI.

Asked if there was any significance for the green coloured balls that was used to give catching practice to Gill,

he said: "I don't think there is any specific scientific or crick-eting reason for any specific colour. But certainly there is a reason for using that kind of rubber balls for catching practice — especially for slip fielders and keepers."

"In England, due to under-lying moisture and the lush green outer area (beyond 22 yards) means that the ball will wobble a lot more than usual.

"England is the only country and to some extent in New Zealand, you will find that deliveries that beat the batter's outside edge is deviating wick-edly, making it difficult to gather or catch the ball. The Dukes in England in fact wobbles even more," the coach added.

He then explained why these rubber "reaction balls" are being used for training.

"These balls are lighter in weight and hence it would wobble and also swing or deviate more. The idea is to get adjusted to this changing tra-jectory or line of the ball.

"Now coming to the colour the various colours are used because it is a human ten-dency to lose the sight of ball at last second. Various colours help you to judge the line of deviation till the last moment while catching the ball," he added.

Warner is looking good for WTC final: Khawaja

PTI ■ LONDON

Australian batting stalwart Usman Khawaja believes fellow opener David Warner is probably at his best as he prepares for the tough English summer, which includes the World Test Championship final against India and the Ashes.

Warner, 36, had endured a difficult tour of India earlier this year, and even though the Delhi Capitals skipper showed attacking intent while amassing 516 runs from 14 matches in the IPL, he will have his task cut out in the seaming English conditions.

However, Warner, likely on his final tour of England, received a big endorsement from Khawaja, who said the stalwart was "looking good" for the challenges ahead.

"I have seen him (Warner) bat in the last couple of days and, I don't want to jinx him, but he is looking good," Khawaja was quoted as saying by ICC.

While Warner was included in Australia's squad for the WTC final and the first two Ashes Tests, the selectors have also picked Marcus Harris and Matt Renshaw as options, but Khawaja believes if the veteran cricketer is in the playing XI, he will give it his best shot.

"This is probably the best I have seen him look in the nets for a while. That doesn't always correlate to runs, but if we are any chance of Davey Warner scoring runs this could be it. He always plays his best when his back is against the wall too," added Khawaja.



Warner aims to end Test career on a high

PTI ■ BECKENHAM

Star Australian opener David Warner on Saturday revealed his desire to end his red-ball career with a swansong Test at his home ground at the SCG against Pakistan in January.

Talking ahead of Australia's training session here, Warner, who is preparing for next week's World Test Championship (WTC) final against India, said he hopes the Sydney Test against Pakistan would be his last.

However, given his recent struggle in the longest format of the game, the southpaw isn't guaranteed a spot in the Australian Test side and he is well aware of it.

"You've got to score runs. I've always said the (2024) T20

World Cup would probably be my final game," Warner said.

"I probably owe it to myself and my family - if I can score runs here and continue to play back in Australia - I can definitely say I won't be playing that West Indies series.

"If I can get through this (WTC final and ensuing Ashes campaign) and make the Pakistan series I will definitely finish up then," he added.

After the WTC final, Australia are scheduled to play a five-match Ashes series against England.

Warner is a part of Australia's squad for the WTC final as well as the first two Ashes Tests. But the selectors have also picked Marcus Harris and Matt Renshaw as options.

Warner, apart from a magnificent double hundred against South Africa last December, has struggled for runs in recent assignments, managing a mere 26 runs in three Test innings in the recent tour of India before returning home injured.

He had also endured a forgettable campaign during the last Ashes, returning with an average of 9.50, the worst ever by an opener playing in 10 innings with England quick Broad dominating the 36-year-old.

"We saw when he scored a double century in his 100th game when everyone was writing him off and telling him he was done and it was his last game and he went out and gets 200. "You never write off a great player, so I am expecting runs," said Khawaja.

Warner indicated he would likely stick to his task during the Tests than get involved in any pre-Ashes banter with England cricketers, especially Broad who restricted the Australian to just 95 runs at an average less than 10 during the last Ashes in England.

"It (banter) just sells papers and clickbait, so I won't be getting involved in any of that stuff. I will leave it to themselves," said Warner of the Ashes series which will commence in Edgbaston on June 16. "Today, there is no real banter in the field. It is just about playing quality cricket and trying to get the upper edge on each other. It is a lot more connected these days than before which I think is great for the game," he added.

Long county stint will help me in WTC final: Labuschagne

PTI ■ LONDON

Leading Australian Test batter Marnus Labuschagne feels his long stint with English county side Glamorgan has helped him get fully prepared for the challenges in the run-up to the World Test Championship final against India, starting June 7.

Even as leading Australian cricketers, who are a part of the squad for the two assignments, including Ashes, were busy playing in the Indian Premier League, Labuschagne, the No.1-ranked Test batter in the world, was gearing up for the WTC final and the Ashes for the last to months playing county cricket.

The 28-year-old scored two centuries and a total of 504 runs in eight innings, and is confident of a good showing in the one-off game for Test supremacy against India, scheduled to begin at The Oval on June 7.

"I have been coming back (to country cricket) for five years now," Labuschagne was quoted as saying by ICC. "It is just part of



my normal routine of coming here. I love coming here, I love playing county cricket, I love the team at Glamorgan, I enjoy it so much otherwise I wouldn't be coming back," said Labuschagne.

The No.3 batter's decision to spend more than two months in England could have been driven by the fact that he scored only one half-century during the recent Border-Gavaskar Trophy, which India won 2-1 at home.

"It just helps that this year is a Test Championship Final and Ashes year so it is

very helpful for leading into the series," he said.

Labuschagne added that batting at No.3 brought with it the responsibility of giving solidity to the innings by playing responsible innings.

"Naturally, anyone that is batting No.3 for Australia is going to have responsibility," Labuschagne said.

"Even in 2019 (the last time in England for Ashes) it was my responsibility, it was my job to score runs and if I didn't score runs they (Australia team management) would find someone else to do my job and I don't think that changes," he said.

"It is about finding ways to score runs and contribute to the side in as many games as I can."

During the 2019 Ashes series, a lot of focus was on Labuschagne as David Warner, Steve Smith and Cameron Bancroft were returning for their first Test tour since the ban imposed on them following the 2018 'Sandpaper-gate' scandal in Cape Town.

PCB refuses to play ODI series in Lanka

PTI ■ KARACHI

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) is upset at Sri Lanka board expressing its desire to host the entire Asia Cup and has declined the latter's offer to play an ODI bilateral series in the island nation.

According to sources in the PCB, relations between the PCB and Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) have turned sour after its offer of hosting the entire Asia Cup

instead of four games being held in Pakistan as per the 'Hybrid Model' proposed by Najam Sethi.

"An example of the increasingly strained relations between the two boards emerged after the PCB turned down a proposal by the Lankans to play a few One-Day International matches next month in Sri Lanka," PCB source stated.

Pakistan is scheduled to visit Sri Lanka in July to play two

Tests of the next ICC World Test Championship cycle and apparently the SLC had suggested that Pakistan also play a few ODIs as they are optimistic their team will book a spot from the World Cup qualifiers in Zimbabwe and would need more exposure before the main event in October.

But a reliable source confirmed that the PCB after initially saying they would consider the proposal had turned it down

now.

"It is a clear indication that the PCB is not happy with the Sri Lankan board stepping in to offer to host the Asia Cup in September when it is Pakistan's turn to host the regional event at home," the source said.

He said in fact PCB chairman Sethi is also not happy with the response of the Bangladesh and Afghanistan boards over the Asia Cup issue.

Athletes left heartbroken by deadly train mishap

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Former India captain Virat Kohli and Olympic gold medalist Abhinav Bindra, among several other sportsper-sons, expressed their anguish over the devastating train accident in Odisha's Balasore district, that has killed at least 238 people and injured more than 900.

The train crash on Friday, involving the Bengaluru-Howrah Superfast Express, the Shalimar-Chennai Central Coromandel Express and a goods train, is one of the deadliest such accidents since inde-pendence.

Officials in Bhubaneswar said 200 ambulances, 50 buses and 45 mobile health units were working at the accident site, besides 1,200 personnel. The bodies were being taken to the hospitals in all kinds of vehicles, including tractors.

Kohli, who is in England with the India team for the World Test Championship final against Australia at The Oval from June 7, wished for the speedy recovery of the injured.

"Saddened to hear about the tragic train accident in Odisha. My thoughts and prayers go out to the families who lost their loved ones and wishing a speedy recovery to the injured," tweeted Kohli.

India's first individual Olympic gold medalist, rifle shooter Abhinav Bindra, he had been left heartbroken by the news of the accident.

"Heartbreaking news from Odisha about the devastating train accident. My heart goes out to all those affected and their loved ones during this incredibly difficult time. Please, let's all extend our support and prayers to them. May the injured recover swiftly," tweeted Bindra, the 2008 Beijing Olympics gold medalist in 10m air rifle.

The train crash, the fourth deadliest in India according to available records, happened near the Bahanaga Baazar station in Balasore district, about 250km south of Kolkata and 170km north of Bhubaneswar, around 7 pm on Friday, prompting the Railway Ministry to order a probe.

Pandya best allrounder in world cricket: Klusener

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Rating Hardik Pandya as one of the best fast-bowling all-rounders, former South African great Lance Klusener on Saturday believes the Indian possibly gave up on Test cricket a bit too easily to manage his workload.

Plagued by injuries, Pandya, who last played Tests for India in September 2018, has limited himself to only playing white-ball cricket and ruled himself out of the upcoming World Test Championship final against Australia.

"He (Pandya) is a fantastic cricketer, and if he can stay fit and continues to bowl 135+ kmph, he will always be challenging... as one of the best all-rounders in the world," Klusener told reporters in a media interaction at the Calcutta Sports Journalists' Club.

Pandya had ruled himself out saying it would not be "eth-ical" to take someone's place without even contributing one per cent in India's journey to the WTC final.

Asked if Pandya gave up on Test cricket a bit too easily, Klusener said, "Yes, possibly. Test cricket (is) always the pinnacle



of testing where you are as a cricketer, and testing yourselves. "Test cricket hasn't really changed much from way back but I also understand that times have moved on as well."

Klusener further said a fast-bowling allrounder is not a "dibbly-dobbler" but someone who can clock 135kph consistently. "Fast bowling allrounders need to be bowling 135+. I don't think there would be some dibbly-dobblers that we used to see in England, I don't think all that (is) effective anymore.

"I honestly believe that a guy like Ben Stokes who bowls 135+, those people are still gold in any form of the game," said Klusener, a member of the 1999 ODI World Cup team that had a heartbreak loss to Australia in the semi-final. But managing the

three formats in today's era has contributed to the decline of fast-bowling allrounder. However, Klusener believes their time will come again.

"I always think it goes in cycles. When I played, there were a lot of fast-bowling all-rounders... then we kind of saw the allrounders bowling spin.

"Certainly at this point in time, I don't see as many fast-bowling allrounders, I just think it's a cycle. We might just see in the next five years those kinds of cricketers coming through again. If we manage the work-loads correctly there is a lot of cricket, there's still a place for them in any team."

Klusener believes India are well equipped to field a pace or spin-heavy lineup and it will be horses for courses for them in

Rohit, Surya among probables for Mumbai's off-season camp

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The newly-formed Mumbai selection committee, led by former India cricketer Raju Kulkarni, on Friday named 35 probable players, including big names like Rohit Sharma and Suryakumar Yadav for an off-season training camp scheduled to be held here next week.

Besides, India captain Rohit and Suryakumar, the list also includes Ajinkya Rahane and Shardul Thakur.

But their participation in the camp is unlikely as they are currently in England for the World Test Championship final against Australia starting June 7 at The Oval.

Shreyas Iyer, who missed the entire IPL due to a lower back injury and is currently recovering after undergoing a surgery in mid April, has also been named for the camp.

The BCCI had informed in a release that Iyer, who will also miss the WTC final, was slated to report to the National Cricket Academy for rehabilitation in

two weeks' time post his surgery.

The list released by the Mumbai selection committee include senior fast bowler Dhawal Kulkarni, all-rounder Shivan Dube, who had a terrific IPL for champions Chennai Super Kings, batting mainstay Sarfaraz Khan and Prithvi Shaw.

Right-arm fast bowler Siddharth Raut, who played a couple of matches for the 41-time champions in the Ranji Trophy last season, has been dropped.

The Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) president Amol Kale, vice-president Sanjay Naik, secretary Ajinkya Naik, joint-secretary Deepak Patil and members of the apex council on Thursday night hosted the advisory for cricketing matters, which was also attended by former player Milind Rege, Cricket Improvement Committee (CIC) chairman Lalchand Rajput among others at the Wankhede Stadium.

The upcoming cricket season was discussed during the gathering here.

"I love having every right to be as outspoken as I am, as any man would be"
— Chrissy Teigen



THE WORLD AT HER FEET

Sheetal, born without hands, is being feted as the world’s first para female archer who shoots using her feet. She has been labelled as a perfect role model for youngsters as she displayed raw courage and faced all her challenges in life with a determined resolve to succeed, writes MOHIT KANDHARI

At first sight it is very difficult to spot Sheetal Devi in a gathering of fellow players assembled at an archery range for regular practice sessions. A girl with less than five feet, Sheetal may come across as a small town girl, but in reality, she is not an ordinary athlete.

Hailing from a remote village of Lohi Dhar in Mughal Maidan area of Kishtwar district in Jammu & Kashmir, this 16-year-old girl has come a long way and is already making waves in the sporting world. At present she is being looked upon as India’s next big medal hope in the upcoming para-archery world championships and 2024 Paralympics in Paris.

Born without hands (phocomelia), a condition where both her hands were underdeveloped, Sheetal is being feted as the world’s first para female archer who shoots using her feet. Before winning her place of honour in the world of sports, Sheetal had left everyone spell bound with her ace performances and firm resolve to succeed.

Last week, when I visited the Archery range located in the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine board sports complex in Katra, several players greeted me with a big cheer.

While I acknowledged their greetings one by one, I shook hands with one of the seniors and paralympian Rakesh Kumar. Before meeting others, I asked him whether Sheetal was also around. It was then she also greeted me from an adjacent bench in a feeble voice.

After registering her presence, I too heaved a sigh of relief as I had travelled all the way from Jammu to meet her. I congratulated her for winning three medals --- one Gold, Silver and Bronze in the Para Archery World Ranking Tournament held in the Czech Republic between May 13 and May 21. She acknowledged with her sparkling eyes and mesmerising smile.

The Indian team secured nine medals out of which five medals were contributed by the archers from the Shrine board training academy.

Rakesh, a paralympian, and Sheetal won gold in Compound open mixed team and Compound men open doubles. Besides, Sheetal and Jyoti clinched silver in compound women open and bronze in compound women doubles. The Shrine archers contributed five medals for India in the total tally by which the country secured 2nd position in the event.

Lt Governor Manoj Sinha, who is also the Chairman of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, congratulated both the sports persons for their performances. He tweeted that “the entire nation is proud of their achievement and their feat will inspire millions of our youth.”

Chief Executive Officer of the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board Anshul Garg said the archers being trained at the Shrine Board’s Sports Complex will also

win medals in the forthcoming events of the archery at the international levels, thereby bringing laurels to the country, the UT of Jammu & Kashmir and the Shrine Board.

TRAINING HARD FOR 2024 PARA-OLYMPICS BERTH

A day after returning from the Czech Republic, Sheetal was back in the training academy without taking a single day break. Speaking to The Sunday Pioneer, Sheetal said, “I feel very happy after winning three medals in a recent event. I am upbeat and very optimistic. My josh is very high. My coaching and hardwork is showing positive results and now I am determined to secure my berth in the 2024 Paralympics and win a medal for my country.”

Referring to her training schedule, Sheetal said, “Each day we come to the academy and practice for about four hours between 8 and 12 pm before breaking for a two hour lunch break.”

During the training session Sheetal is assisted by her fellow players as and when required. The players also crack jokes and play mischief with each other. The second session starts at 2pm and the players call it a day after attending an hour long physical training session between 5pm and 6 pm.”

Her coach Kuldeep Vedwan told The Sunday Pioneer we have already started training for the next big event lined up in the month of July and September 2023.

Sheetal, along with other players, are focusing her energies on World Archery Para Championship scheduled in Pilsen, Czech Republic in the month of July and Para Asian Games in China between September 23 and October 8 to reserve their berth for the 2024 Paralympics scheduled to take place in Paris.

Talking about Sheetal’s journey, Kuldeep Vedwan told The Sunday Pioneer, “11 months ago Sheetal first arrived here at the Archery range. She was introduced to me by one of the volunteers working for a famous NGO. Before inducting her in the academy I interacted with her and tried my best to motivate her over a ZOOM meeting. Initially, I spent two long months carefully trying to understand her needs and how I could make her play archery and hit a bull’s eye. Before starting her training schedule, I again counselled her. Since then, she has not looked back.” Vedwan said, feeling elated over her recent performance.

Vedwan said it’s amazing that in such a short span of time she has really proved her mettle. By winning three medals in the recently concluded Para Archery World Ranking Tournament she has already secured her place in the upcoming Para Archery world championship scheduled to be organised in Pilsen, Czech Republic and para Asian Games. I am hopeful Sheetal will secure her berth in the Paralympics and win us a medal in the 2024 Paralympics in Paris.



“**RAKESH, A PARALYMPIAN, AND SHEETAL WON GOLD IN COMPOUND OPEN MIXED TEAM AND COMPOUND MEN OPEN DOUBLES. BESIDES, SHEETAL AND JYOTI CLINCHED SILVER IN COMPOUND WOMEN OPEN AND BRONZE IN COMPOUND WOMEN DOUBLES**”

SHEETAL’S JOURNEY

A native of Lohi Dhar village of Mughal Maidan area in Kishtwar, Sheetal’s initial phase of life was full of struggle. She was born without hands and it is with great difficulty that her parents, Man Singh, a farmer by profession and mother Shakti Devi, a home maker looked after her basic needs.

Tucked in the hills she received no other medical help in her formative years. As she grew up, she started using her feet to feed herself. As Sheetal was keen on pursuing her normal school studies so she gradually started using her feet for writing as well. She has passed her class 10th examination and is studying in class XI.

No one in the family discouraged her. Remembering her school days, Sheetal said, “I used to attend regular classes with other children in my village. I was never discouraged by any one. My teachers and my friends helped me a lot and supported me. I used to play with them like a normal child.”

Life took a sudden turn when she was spotted by a senior army officer at a local fair in Kishtwar district. The local army authorities approached her family and volunteered to support her. At that time Sheetal was nurturing her childhood dream of becoming a school teacher.

Fulfilling her desire Sheetal has been adopted by the Indian Army for her education since September 2019. Later with the help of reputed NGOs, the Indian Army had facilitated her travel and arranged other

logistics to explore the possibility of providing her with a prosthetic arm.

Sheetal’s parents accompanied her to Bangalore where she was first treated and later provided with the prosthetic arm. At present she is not using the same while undergoing training. After she won three medals she received lots of good wishes and blessings from netizens who rallied behind her and wished her luck for all her future championships.

She was labeled as a perfect role model for youngsters as she displayed raw courage and faced all her challenges in life with a determined resolve to succeed.

A BIG MOTIVATION

Practicing in the company of other players Sheetal feels motivated. To attend her regular practice sessions Sheetal reaches archery academy, wearing sleepers. During her day long training she prefers staying barefoot in the archery range in order to hit a bull’s eye.

On an average she is spending 6-7 hours under the guidance of her coach Kuldeep Vedwan at the archery range.

Before focusing on her target, she gently picks an arrow and adjusts it on the bow string. Using her feet, she adjusts the arrow against her shoulder and then triggers the shot with jaw and back muscles before hitting a bullseye.

“During training we interact with each other and discuss our performances. Fellow players in the academy are very helpful. They walk with me in the archery range and pull out the arrows after checking my score.”

“Our coach sir also evaluates our performance and wherever we need his guidance he chips in and does course correction.”

In Katra, Sheetal is staying with her mother and younger sister Shivani. Her mother Shakti sometimes visits the academy and spends time with her. Sheetal says, “When she was home her sister Shivani used to look after her basic needs. She is my dear friend.”

Commenting on the quality of training facilities Sheetal said we have been provided with excellent training facilities by

Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board authorities to ensure better performance in the field.

Apart from routine training sessions we attend physical training modules, perform yoga and meditation to maintain our calm and enhance our abilities to focus on our goals.

A former Olympian from Katra Rakesh Kumar, who participated in the Tokyo Olympics, said Sheetal is a very promising athlete and is training hard in the academy to realise her goal of winning a gold medal in the world championships and paralympics.

Rakesh Kumar is the senior most player in the academy. He is also working hard and setting high benchmarks for younger players to achieve their goals.

Rakesh told The Sunday Pioneer, “I started my journey six years ago after coming in contact with the coach Kuldeep Vedwan in 2017. He said, I met with a deadly accident in 2009. I was in a very bad condition but then I decided to keep myself busy and opened a mobile recharge shop in Katra. In 2017 I met my coach Kuldeep Vedwan.”

“When I met Rakesh, I motivated him and asked him to try archery at the academy.” He made a sincere effort and went on to become a para-Olympian

Kuldeep Vedwan also highlighted the role of Sports Authority of India, and the Archery Association of India for their support, and stressed the importance of psychologists and dietitians in sports.

Para Archer Rakesh said, “Archery is a mind-game. When we are participating in a championship we are bound to feel pressure. Our training gives us an edge. So, just like the coach is essential for us, psychologists are equally important.”

Highlighting another important aspect Rakesh said para-athletes face difficulties while moving from one place to another. “They spend maximum time in a wheelchair, we may not eat much, but digestion becomes a problem and so a good dietitian is very important.”

At present over two dozen budding archers from Tamil Nadu, Haryana, New Delhi and from different districts of Jammu & Kashmir are receiving training at the academy.

Manisha Bhadana, from Faridabad in Haryana has recently joined the training academy and is witnessing improvement in her game. She told The Sunday Pioneer that the atmosphere at the academy is very very competitive. “I feel motivated while receiving training in the presence of International players such as Para-Olympian Rakesh Kumar and young archer Sheetal.”

Pravin, an upcoming archer from Tamil Nadu said, he is training at the academy for more than six years and aiming to perform better in the coming championships. Amit Thakur from Reasi said, “We are focusing on Khelo India games and National Championships to perform better and earn medals.”

(The writer is Senior Correspondent of The Pioneer)

THAT SWELLING IN YOUR LIMBS COULD BE SERIOUS

Lymphedema, a chronic and debilitating condition, is becoming a major health issue in India where it primarily stems from two major causes: A parasitic infection known as filariasis and cancer-related surgeries. Another reasons can be genetic and poor lifestyle. A team of doctors from AIIMS Delhi’s Dept of Surgical Disciplines led by DR SUNIL CHUMBER shares with ARCHANA JYOTI, the panorama of the disease and bats for its integration into the healthcare system for better management, given spike in the cancer cases in India.



DR PIYUSH RANJAN



DR PRASSANA



DR SUNIL CHUMBER



DR AJAY MOHAN

What is Lymphedema and is it a problem in India?



Lymphedema is collection of the fluid in the tissue that is usually carried back by the lymphatics. It can cause severe swelling, discomfort, and a heightened risk of infections, significantly impacting the quality of life for those affected. In India, lymphedema primarily stems from two major causes: filariasis and cancer-related surgeries. Filariasis, a parasitic infection transmitted through mosquito bites, affects an estimated 120 million people in the country. It damages the lymphatic system and is a leading cause of lymphedema in India.

Surgery as an option

While conservative treatments like compression therapy and physical therapy play a crucial role in managing the symptoms, surgical interventions have emerged as a ray of hope for those with severe cases of lymphedema in recent years. Surgical options for lymphedema primarily focus on restoring lymphatic flow and reducing swelling. One such procedure is lymphaticovenous anastomosis (LVA), which involves creating connections between lymphatic vessels and nearby veins. This allows the rerouting of lymphatic fluid and reduces swelling. LVA has shown promising results in improving symptoms and quality of life for patients. Another surgical technique, known as vascularized lymph node transfer (VLNT), involves transfer-

ring healthy lymph nodes from one part of the body to the affected area. These transplanted lymph nodes restore the lymphatic function, aiding in fluid drainage and reducing swelling. Procedures like silastic tube insertion in the edematous tissue are being tried and may offer some relief. Debulking surgeries may be considered in grossly enlarged lymphedema cases however they can have high morbidity post procedure. While surgical interventions offer potential benefits, it is essential to note that they are not suitable for all cases of lymphedema.

Patients considering surgical interventions should consult with experienced lymphedema specialists who can assess their suitability and provide comprehensive guidance.

Understanding the triggers



To better understand lymphedema, it's important to explore its underlying causes. Various factors can contribute to the development of this condition, and recognizing these causes is crucial for its prevention and management.

Primary lymphedema is

genetic. It happens when there are faults in the genes responsible for the development of the lymphatic system, meaning that it cannot drain fluid as it should. The main risk factor for primary lymphedema is having close family members with the condition.

Secondary lymphedema occurs when damage or disruption to the lymphatic system is caused by external factors. Common causes include surgery, radiation therapy, cancer, infection, trauma, or other medical conditions. These factors can impair the flow of lymph fluid, leading to the development of lymphedema. Certain infections, such as filariasis, a parasitic infection transmitted through mosquito bites, can cause lymphedema. These infections can damage the lymphatic system, hindering its ability to properly drain fluid from the affected area. Obesity and a sedentary lifestyle can increase the risk of developing lymphedema. Excess weight puts additional pressure on the lymphatic system, making it harder for it to function properly.

mild to severe. It may also cause a feeling of heaviness or tightness in the affected area. Lymphedema can cause stiffness and limited movement in the affected limb or body part. You may find it challenging to perform certain activities or experience difficulty bending or straightening the affected joint. The skin over the swollen area may appear tight, thickened, or hardened. It may feel warmer to the touch and become more prone to infections. This discomfort may worsen with prolonged periods of standing or physical activity. Due to the compromised lymphatic system, individuals with lymphedema are at a higher risk of developing infections in the affected area. These infections may include cellulitis, which can cause redness, warmth, swelling, and pain.

Treatment: It often involves a combination of therapies, including compression garments, exercise, skincare, and manual lymphatic drainage. Remember, seeking medical advice and support is essential for effective management and minimizing the impact of lymphedema on your daily life.

Symptoms: Recognizing the symptoms of lymphedema is important for early detection and effective management of the condition. One of the primary symptoms of lymphedema is swelling in a specific body part, such as an arm or leg. The swelling may be persistent and can range from

Tips to keep lymphedema at bay

There is no guaranteed way to prevent lymphedema, there are steps you can take to minimize the risk and manage the condition effectively. By adopting a few healthy habits, you can help support your lymphatic system and reduce the likelihood of developing lymphedema.

- **Maintain a Healthy Weight:** Maintaining a healthy weight is crucial for minimizing the strain on your lymphatic system. Excess weight can impede lymph flow, increasing the risk of developing lymphedema. Follow a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins. Consult a healthcare professional for personalized guidance.

- **Exercise Regularly:** Engaging in regular physical activity helps promote lymphatic flow and overall circulation. Incorporate exercises that involve rhythmic movements, such as walking, swimming, or cycling. Start gradually and listen to your body, avoiding activities that strain or excessively stress the affected area.
- **Protect Against Infections:** Infections can exacerbate lymphedema symptoms, so it's essential to take precautions. Practice good hygiene, keep the skin clean and moisturized, and avoid cuts, burns, or insect bites. Use sunscreen to protect against sunburns and avoid prolonged exposure to extreme temperatures.

- **Avoid Constrictive Clothing:** Wearing tight clothing or accessories, such as tight bands or jewellery, can restrict lymph flow. Opt for loose-fitting, comfortable clothing that allows for unrestricted movement. Avoid constrictive items that may create unnecessary pressure on the affected areas.
- **Graduated Compression Garments:** If you are at a high risk of developing lymphedema or have already been diagnosed, your healthcare provider may recommend wearing graduated compression garments. These specially designed garments apply gentle pressure, aiding in lymphatic flow and reducing swelling.

Lymphedema after treatment for cancer

As the incidence of cancer is increasing, lymphedema is likely to become common in the coming years.

Lymphedema after cancer occurs due to the treatment offered for the cancer rather than the cancer itself. This is particularly seen among individuals, who have had lymph node surgery or received radiation therapy as part of their cancer management.

It is due to the disruption or damage caused to the lymphatic system during cancer

treatment, which impairs the normal flow of lymphatic fluid and leads to the accumulation of lymph in the affected tissues. Common examples include upper limb lymphedema after treatment for breast cancer and lower limb lymphedema after treatment for ovarian cancer.

The impact of cancer-associated lymphedema extends beyond the physical symptoms. The functional impairments resulting from reduced mobility and range of motion



DR GOPAL PURI

can interfere with daily activities, occupational tasks, and overall independence.

Managing cancer-associated lymphedema requires a comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach. Lymphedema therapists, healthcare providers with expertise in lymphedema management, play a critical role in developing individualized treatment plans.

These plans often include a combination of strategies such as manual lymphatic drainage, compression therapy, exercise and rehabilitation, skin care, and patient education.

Elastic stockings in treatment and prevention of lymphedema

The stockings work by exerting the greatest degree of compression at the ankle, with the level of compression gradually decreasing up the garment. The pressure gradient ensures that blood flows upward toward the heart instead of refluxing downward to the foot or laterally into the superficial veins. The application of adequate graduated compression reduces the diameter of major veins, which increases the velocity and volume of blood flow and improve lymphatic drainage.

Types of compression stockings:

- **Graduated or medical compression stockings-** They are designed for ambulatory patients and are manufactured under strict medical and technical specifications, including consistency and durability, to provide a specific level of ankle pressure and graduation of compression
- **Antiembolism stockings** Used to reduce the risk of deep vein thrombosis and designed for bedridden patients



DR BRAHMA KUMAR RATH

and do not meet the technical specifications for use by ambulatory patients, have different levels of compression.

- **Nonmedical support hosiery**

The compression is less uniform and not graduated. They can often be bought over the counter without a prescription

Accurate measurement of the limb diameter that conforms to the stocking manufacturer's guidelines should be performed by a trained health care professional. The stockings are contraindicated in the following cases i.e. Suspected or proven peripheral arterial disease, Severe peripheral neuropathy, Allergy to stocking material, Limb gangrene, oozing dermatitis and severe cellulitis, Extreme deformity of limb preventing correct fit.

External compression and massage



DR VIKRAM SAINI



DR NELSON

The restriction of lymphatic flow results in lymphedema. The condition can be improved with massage therapy. This ailment benefits from massage therapy that directs excess lymphatic fluid from the swollen area to functioning regions of the body where it can be effectively managed by the circulatory system. External compression plays a vital role in this condition. For mild swelling, a simple compression dressing can help whereas the use of multi-layered compression dressing is advised for moderate to severe swelling. The entire area is covered by the compression dressing, which is neither too tight nor too loose.

Every 4 to 6 months, the dressing needs to be changed as it gets loosen with time. Patients are usually advised to wear the compression garments during the day and remove it off at night, unless indicated.

One can wear as early as possible in the morning and continue while doing any form of work or mild exercises. Patients are advised to apply coconut oil on skin and to take care of limbs for any external injury. Skin care is recommended to prevent skin infections. Recent advances like automatic pneumatic compression devices can serve as viable self-management options for severe lymphedema patients.

VAST EXPERIENCE OF MASS VACCINATION

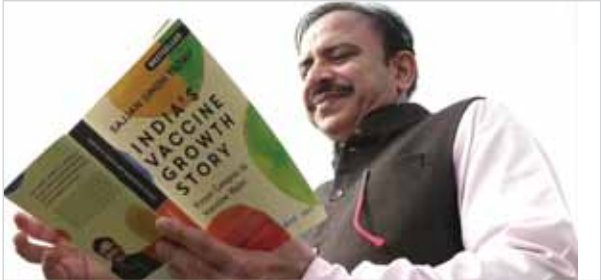
India has had vast experience of running mass vaccination campaigns in the past. Apart from the eradication of smallpox and polio through mass vaccination drives under its UIP, India has administered 390 million vaccines annually to pregnant women and children. India also had a trained workforce of 2.5 million health workers and 50,000 cold chain technicians (CCTs) to handle its UIP. An extensive countrywide cold-chain network was available for routine immunization as well. However, could India's success in routine immunization guarantee the same victory in its massive Covid-19 vaccination drive?

A MISSION FRAUGHT WITH FORMIDABLE CHALLENGES

India's COVID-19 vaccination campaign was unique in terms of its scale of operations, delivery timelines, infrastructural requirements and the large number of people needing immunization. While talking to me, Chesta Yadav, the

A tale of India's Vaccine Growth

Dr Sajjan Singh Yadav, Additional Secretary, Department of Expenditure in the Union Finance Ministry in his book 'India's Vaccine Growth Story - From Cowpox to Vaccine Maitri' traces India's ancient history of inoculation and vaccination--which happened much before British physician and scientist Edward Jenner developed the first jab against smallpox ---to current status of being frontrunner in vaccine production and supply for the world. Excerpts from the book:



DR SAJJAN SINGH YADAV

District Magistrate of Delhi's North-West district, admitted that 'the scale of Covid vaccination was huge in contrast to the target population for routine immunization'. While the UIP was confined mostly to government health facilities, the scale of Covid-19 vaccinations required vaccination centres to operate in other public and private spaces as well, she told me. In addition, the campaign necessitated large-scale adult immunization, hitherto not usual in India. Another daunting challenge was the rapid pace of vaccination to cover 1.4 billion people within the span of months needed to see the back of the pandemic. Apart from availability of vaccines, rapid expansion of

cold chain and other logistics, mobilization of human resources and their training were critical. Transporting vaccines at the right temperature was a gigantic task. 'This was especially daunting in the remote and hilly areas of the country,' said Dr Devansh Yadav, Deputy Commissioner, Changlang district of Arunachal Pradesh during interactions. The hilly district, with a dense forest cover, a tiger reserve, and numerous rivers and streams, is spread over 4,500 square kilometres.

Prioritization of target groups, dealing with vaccine hesitancy and eagerness, preventing misinformation, building community ownership and generating a demand for vac-

cines are other challenges that needed to be tackled. Dr A Muthamma, Health Secretary of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, rated 'the apprehensions of citizens regarding the safety and efficacy of the vaccine' as the most formidable challenge. 'Uploading data about

healthcare workers on the CoWIN portal in the initial phase was a huge challenge in a large part of Arunachal Pradesh due to the lack of a stable internet connection', Dr P Parthiban, Health Secretary of the State told me. This was reiterated by Akhil Arora, Principle Secretary,

Health, Government of Rajasthan. 'People in rural areas have limited accessibility and understanding of the portal,' he confided.

SO HOW DID INDIA OVERCOME THESE CHALLENGES? Effective Coordination And Fast-Tracking Decisions

According to India's Health Secretary, Rajesh Bhushan, 'excellent cooperation and coordination with all stakeholders, including various ministries of the union government, state governments, development partners, non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations, was a critical factor'. To make the drive a success, the Government of India adopted a whole-governmen-

tand whole-society approach for the vaccination drive, he told me. A robust governance mechanism was designed for effective coordination and swift decision-making.

At the national level, the National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration for Covid-19 (NEGVAC) provided regulatory guidance on vaccine trials, planning of vaccine administration, inter-sectoral coordination, financing, procurement and distribution, prioritization of population groups, supply chain infrastructure, vaccine safety surveillance, community engagement and awareness generation.

In the states, a state-level steering committee headed by the Chief Secretary was assigned

the policy guidance, coordination and oversight functions. A state-level task force was made responsible for planning and mapping vaccination sessions, strengthening cold chain infrastructure, identifying manpower, training and managing biomedical waste, developing a media plan to allay fears and misinformation, attracting people to vaccination centres and monitoring their progress. A District Task Force functions under the District Magistrate in every district. Similar task forces were also set up at the block and municipal levels. 'Island-level Monitoring Committees were constituted under the chairmanship of the Deputy Collector', Amit Satija, Health Secretary of Lakshadweep, informed. Lakshadweep is a federally administered territory of India comprising 36 small islands, many of which are uninhabited.

(The book has been published in English by Penguin Random House. Now it is all set to be published in 20 Indian Languages to help spread the story of India's global vaccine supremacy across the country.)

China creating another Xinjiang

President Xi Jinping is all out to prevent the Islamic radicals across China. The first was the western-most province of Xinjiang wherein he has been undertaking full-scale measures to shield the Uyghur Muslims to stay away from Muslim extremists. Even global governance institutions like the UN had complained against the Xi regime that the ethnic Uyghurs and other minorities are being targeted simply in the name of preventing Islamic terror in the country.

A report published by the UN accused China of serious violations of human rights against the Uyghur Muslims that may be termed as “crime against humanity”. The reality is that as per various international media sources and leaked videos from Uyghur detainees, Beijing is creating large concentration camps in the guise of training camps. And Chinese authorities are calling these camps as “Re-education Camps” or “vocational training centres”. The Human Rights Watch and other global rights agencies say that China is committing genocide in Xinjiang which the Communists completely deny.

Currently, the Hui Muslims in Yunnan are under threat from Beijing. To them, China is trying to create “Another Xinjiang” in Yunnan which they say they won’t allow it to happen. It’s a province that borders Burma, Laos and Vietnam. It’s again clamping down on religious freedoms of the Muslims and demolition of the mosques in these areas by the local authorities.

This month, thousands of ethnic Muslims came out in this Southwestern Province defying public orders to stop police from removing its dome and minarets. It took place in Najaiyang Village of the province where the locals fought with the authorities in a last-ditch attempt to save their sanctum sanctorum.

It is widely believed that all these measures are an integral part of what President Xi calls as an attempt to “sinicize” religion.

The Huis have a rich historical background. History says they are distant descendants of Arab and Persian traders who had come to Imperial China in the past. They are a group of nearly 11 million strong Muslim com-



munity living in scattered pockets from northwest to coastal belts of China. But Ningxia is an officially designated Autonomous Region for the Hui ethnic minority where they live.

Unlike the other ethnic minorities in China, they are widely assimilated with the majority Han community and their rich cultural traditions. Most of them speak Mandarin and live side by side with the powerful Hans. In recent years, they also have acquired more freedoms to practise their religious ceremonies than any other ethnic groups in China.

This is not the first time Beijing is trying to restrict Huis in Yunnan. Five years back, in 2018, the Hui community engaged in a tense standoff with the authorities when the latter came to demolish a newly constructed mosque. Thousands of Huis came out to stop government officials to safeguard the mosque in Ningxia, in the northwest part of the country.

But later, the Government

had replaced the domes and minarets of the mosque with indigenous Chinese style pagodas. So, the Hui Muslims are now quite familiar with the evil designs of the Communists of Beijing who have been making sustained efforts to pushing their long held religious and cultural traditions and symbols all these years.

Interestingly, a court order in 2020 ruled that recent additions to the mosque that includes a domed roof and minaret are not legal. So these could be removed or demolished as per law. It is believed that the administration is rightly acting under the directions of the court. Last week, the local security agencies warned the protesters to maintain law and order.

Sadly, the mosque that the local officials wanted to dismantle belonged to 14th century. It’s an ancient place of worship and largely revered by the Hui Muslims. Indeed, the town of Nagu wherein the incident sparked violence this week is considered as a historic

home and a rich cultural hub of the Hui people in Yunnan Province.

The “sinicization policy” aims to purge external or foreign religious beliefs. It strongly urges the ethnic minorities to align more closely with Chinese culture and more specifically with the standard codes of the official and the most powerful Communist Party of China (CPC), which follows an atheist line of thinking. So, the problem originates from here itself for the largely devoted and faithful Hui Muslims in this part of China.

Now, how have the Chinese people and officials reacted to this saga of violence against the ethnic Hui Muslims? Normally, officials stay tight-lipped in China. Whereas China has a huge social media called Weibo like the Twitter through which people express their views and at times criticise the Government and even the most powerful CPC. But this time, the government quickly removed all the anti-govern-

ment comments and views in regard to the mosque demolition in Nagu.

And in fact, one message supporting the Govt said national policy to handle such unrest is fine. The State should not allow any “wolfish extremists” to impact the law-and-order situation in the country.

It’s loud and clear that the majority of the Chinese people are either forced to live under the diktats of the Communists, especially under its authoritarian rule and rulers or they long for stability rather than unrest of any kind.

Xi’s new China is typically what he wants to be. The President forever is highly ambitious. With the falling western liberal order and rising global clout of China, Xi is fast mobilising the CPC, the Army, diplomacy, economy and finally his people into one central point that China will rise and rise. Xi is a combination of both power and paranoia. His is a regime conspiring to create imbalance in global governance, as many believe. For Xi,

he is working hard and fast to spread the message to his people, making China strong demands uniting under the Party.

And joining the Party is precisely a gateway into the vanguard of the Chinese elite forever. For him, the Party is the only future. And thus, once he echoed: “The Party-Government, the Armed Forces, society and academia; east, west, south, north and centre; the Party leads everything.” If this is what he foresees and expects compatriots to do, he will not allow Hui Muslims to preserve their age-old traditions and unique lifestyle strongly imbued with religiosity.

Today, Islamophobia in the West is abetting, but in China it is on the rise. But punching down the ethnic Huis and Uyghurs will not offer any readymade solution to the Communists. When the country is aspiring to be rich, resourceful and powerful in the global stage, it needs to be patient with cultural, regional,

ethnic and especially, religious differences.

The Party must accept assimilation of various cultural and religious strands as the world is fast encircled by multiple waves of globalisation and post-globalisation. But then continued atrocities and persecution of Hui and Uyghurs will certainly damage China’s reputation on the global stage. Xi is completely an anti-thesis of Mao as the latter desired for continuous revolution. Whereas Xi called for peaceful China meaning total stability? And for managing this stability, he will not mind “re-educating” the Hui’s the same way he and the Chinese statecraft has been doing for the Uyghurs so far in Xinjiang.

Finally, the liberal democracies and their leaders must be serious about China’s massive “sinicisation” of Uyghurs and now a fresh attempt at Hui Muslims. Truly, this “sinicisation” is nothing but the curtailment of one of the edifices of basic freedoms that is the right to freedom of religion available in most of the modern nations.

Innocuous as it may seem, but this is the beginning of a new trend of religious persecution of minorities with Chinese characteristics under the leadership of President Xi.

It must be stopped, and the world leaders should voice their concerns in global governance institutions. China must behave responsibly and like a law-abiding nation. Before venturing out to capture the global stage and records, Beijing must set its own house in order. Huis and Uyghurs have the same basic rights the way it is enjoyed by the majority Hans in China.

By targeting the ethnic Muslims, China is simply inviting the wrath of the global jihadists. It would be prudent on China’s part to stop atrocities on the Hui Muslims. Making Yunnan another Xinjiang would be fatal for China’s stability in the long run.

Denying the freedom to practice and enjoy ethnic religious rights goes against all basic universal tenets of human rights. It’s completely unfair to keep the Hui Muslims under a state of constant fear.

(The writer is currently the Head of the School of Humanities & Social Sciences, Geeta University, Panipat)

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MAKHAN SAIKIA

PERSPECTIVE

Climate change not a myth

The saddest part of the climate menace is that the poorest countries and island communities are the worst sufferers of climate change. Whereas they have not played any role in altering the environment



CHITRANGADA

Climate change is real. Not a myth. Anthropogenic elements are central to environmental disturbances. The fear is that humanity is in great danger. The situation today is escalating. We are advancing towards a catastrophe.

Climate change is one of the most emerging problems and we humans are the main predators to such things. Now the question arises: how are we going to stop it? We may have many motives and initiatives in our mind but are we able to implement them in a useful way? We can’t just see that we are the ones who have brought such destruction for the past 200 years. Fossil fuels and greenhouse gases are the uprising problems. The most astonishing part is that the earth is a system where everything is connected. If an area is affected, then the change is seen everywhere.

In 2021, the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres unveiled the UN Report on Climate Change called ‘State of the Global Climate 2020’. It is a report prepared by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), a key agency of the UN. The State of the Global Climate 2022 released by the

WMO indicates the continued rise of greenhouse gas emissions in the last year. It focuses on primary climate indicators like greenhouse gases, temperatures, sea level rise, ocean heat and acidification, sea ice and glaciers. The report seriously highlights climate change and extreme weather conditions. The Report states that drought, floods, and heat-waves are major parts of the globe, and the costs are rising for all. It is also reported that global mean temperature for the last 8 years has been recorded as the highest. Further, sea levels and ocean heat are at their record high. It is predicted that this trend will continue for centuries. The Report also says that sea ice in Antarctica falls to the lowest level. The continent of Europe has witnessed the breaking of glacier melts.

The Climate Change Synthesis Report 2023 released by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) highlights the state of the knowledge of climate change, its widespread impact, and risks. It says that human activities principally through emission of greenhouse gases, have unequivocally caused global warming, with global surface



temperature reaching 1.1 degree Celsius above 1850-1900 in 2011-2020. It’s alarming.

Another UN Report in the year 2021 highlighted that time is running out to tackle the climate crisis now. It was clearly said that even the deadly Covid-19 has failed to put a brake on relentless environmental change. Again, this WMO Report mentioned that because of the severe Covid-19 restrictions, the rich and advanced nations barely could help in assisting the climate-affected nations of the world. This pandemic has seriously delayed the delivery of climate finance and other protective

measures to extremely vulnerable nations, especially the small island developing countries like Tuvalu, Madagascar, Seychelles, Maldives, Fiji, Haiti, etc. The UN stressed that the year 2021 is the year of action for the protection of the people from the disastrous effects of climate disasters.

Besides other negative impacts of climate change, it is also preventing people from enjoying basic rights or human rights in many parts of the world. Last year, a group of young people filed a petition at the European Court of Human Rights. They complained to the Court that climate inaction is

a human rights violation. They all highlight a 1990s era treaty named ‘Energy Charter Treaty’ according to which governments are required to compensate energy companies and investors if public policies cut into their profits. And this refers to public policies that are made to fight environmental change.

We all must know that the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) 2021 for the first time tried to connect human rights and climate change to the table of the Conference of the Parties (COP). The aim of this move was to promote rights-based

climate actions and the integration of human rights in the historic Paris Agreement. Since then, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has expanded its work on human rights and climate change all around the globe.

Under the existing international human rights law and the UN Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) of 1948, all the states have the responsibility to protect its people from any foreseeable danger. These laws and conventions have the mandate to protect, respect and create conditions for fulfilling our human rights. The dangers heralded by climate disasters are ever present in our life today. It’s largely hampering us from enjoying the basic rights of the people. Under the existing international human rights law, the states and the world bodies have the responsibility to take immediate steps to mitigate the impacts of greenhouse gas emissions. And it must ensure that all of us have the necessary means to adapt to rapid climate changes.

The saddest part of the climate menace is that the poorest countries and island communities are the worst sufferers of climate change. Whereas

they have not played any role in altering the environment. But it is also true that these countries are directly or indirectly enjoying the benefits of the massive industrialization and post industrialization era. The products of all polluting and extractive industries produced by advanced nations are used by all of us including the poor and vulnerable nations. In that way, we all are part of the damages done to the Planet Earth today. So we need to refrain from all such practices that may harm or destroy this planet not only today but also in future also.

I, being a youngster, am still confused about what will happen to Planet Earth. Like me, millions are in a state of shock. But no one has the right to steal our future. No one has the divine will to bring back our planet to the pre-industrial level. What we can do is to prevent further disasters. We can plan for active mitigation efforts. It’s our home. Let’s preserve it together. But do remember that ‘Climate Abyss’ is one of the starkest realities of the 21st century.

(The writer is a young climate thinker based in Delhi-NCR)



Lucky number 14
Lucky colour Parrot Green
Lucky day Saturday

Lucky number 12
Lucky colour Grey
Lucky day Wednesday

Lucky number 22
Lucky colour Yellow
Lucky day Thursday

Lucky number 10
Lucky colour Indigo
Lucky day Wednesday

Madhu Kotiya is a tarot card reader, spiritual healer, and Founder, MShezaim Institute of Tarot and Divination. Contact details: madhu@indiatarot.com, www.indiatarot.com, M: 987328333



Each mind is unique

Beyond the one-pointed state is the 'concentrated mind'. This is a stage when mind literally becomes free from unwanted thoughts. One is then in full control of mind, whereby one is able to use it as an instrument to one's asking rather than being carried away by its habit tendencies. Having arrived at this state of mind, one comes out with one's optimum best, as it gets tuned up well to the all-powerful and all-knowing, all-pervading consciousness element – the cosmic mind.