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NEW DELHI, SATURDAY JUNE 3, 2023; PAGES 12 ₹3



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

70 dead in Odisha triple train crash

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

PNS/PTI ■ BALASORE/HOWRAH

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

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

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

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

The accident happened around 7 pm, he said.

Over 350 people have been admitted to different hospitals



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

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

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

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

darkness was hindering the operation.

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

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

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

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

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1983 World Cup winners back wrestlers, hope 'justice prevails'

Khap sets June 9 deadline for Brij Bhushan's arrest

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Members of the 1983 World Cup-winning cricket team, including Kapil Dev and Sunil Gavaskar, have expressed their support for the protesting wrestlers and urged them not to make hasty decisions, while also hoping that their issues will be heard and resolved. At the same time, a "khap mahapan-chayat" in Kurukshetra set a deadline of June 9 to take action on its demand for the arrest of Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, the outgoing chief of the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) and BJP MP. Singh has been accused of sexually harassing several women wrestlers.

In a joint statement, the members of the 1983 World Cup winner team conveyed their distress and concern after witnessing the visuals of wrestlers being manhandled, but they expressed their belief that rule of law will prevail.

The statement comes in response to the protest by wrestlers Vinesh Phogat, Sakshi Malik, and Bajrang Punia, who have been demanding the arrest of Brij Bhushan for the alleged sexual exploitation of women wrestlers. The wrestlers had threatened to immerse their medals into the holy river Ganga during their protest in Haridwar on May 30 but did not carry out the act.



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

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WFI chief denied nod for June 5 rally

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

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

Want justice for wrestlers via due legal process: Min

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

pen only after following the due process of law.

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

CAPSULE

GO FIRST TO RESTART OPS WITH 152 DAILY FLIGHTS

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

COP STABBED WHILE FRISKING SUSPECT

New Delhi: A Delhi Police ASI, manning a picket under the Zakhira flyover Moti Nagar, was stabbed by a man when the cop was frisking him for "acting suspicious".

'WILL TAKE INFORMED CALL ON SEDITION LAW'

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

ANTI-TERROR COURT EXTENDS IMRAN'S BAIL

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

2024 LS elections will throw surprising outcome: Rahul

PNS ■ WASHINGTON

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

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

"I strongly believe that the Congress party will perform exceptionally well in the next two years." He added, "I sense the emergence of a hidden undercurrent...something that will catch people by surprise."

Citing the recent outcome of the Karnataka Assembly elections, where Congress achieved a comfortable majority and ousted the BJP from power, Rahul pointed out the importance of observing the results of the next three or four State elections.

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

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



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

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

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

Nonetheless, Rahul expressed confidence in overcoming these challenges.

During the interaction, Rahul also addressed a range of

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

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

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

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IUML fully secular, claims Rahul, sparks political row

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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



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

PNS ■ BENGALURU

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

During a media confer-

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

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

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

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HC allows jailed Sisodia to meet ailing wife at home

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

Detailed report on P3



BRICS pledges to combat terror, financing networks

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE/ AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/ CAPETOWN

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

Continued on Page 2

Day after Shah appeal, people surrender weapons in Manipur

PTI ■ IMPHAL

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

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

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

The Army, the Assam



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

List of major train accidents since 2012

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

At least 50 people died and 350 were injured on Friday in a triple train crash in Odisha's Balasore district, one of the worst train accidents in recent history.

Following are the major train accidents in the last 10 years:

2012: On May 22, in the Hampi Express mishap, a cargo train and the Hubli-Bangalore Hampi Express collided close to Andhra Pradesh. There were roughly 25 fatalities and about 43 injuries as a result of the train's four bogies derauling and one of them catching fire.

2014: On May 26, in the Sant Kabir Nagar area of Uttar Pradesh, the Gorakhdham Express, which was headed towards Gorakhpur, collided with a halted goods train in close proximity to Khalilabad station, resulting in 25 fatalities and more than 50 injuries.

2016: On November 20, the



Indore-Patna Express 19321 derailed close to Pukhrayan in Kanpur, India, killing at least 150 passengers and injuring more than 150.

2017: On August 23, nine train coaches of the Delhi-bound Kaifiyat Express derailed near Auraiya, Uttar Pradesh, causing at least 70 injuries.

On August 18, the Puri-Haridwar Utkal Express derailed in Muzaffarnagar, killing 23 people and injuring nearly 60 others.

2022: On January 13, at least 12 coaches of the Bikaner-Guwahati Express derailed in the West Bengal region of Alipurduar, leaving 9 persons dead and 36 others injured.

2023: On June 2, at least 50 people were killed and more than 350 injured in a horrific triple train crash in Odisha involving the Bengaluru-Howrah Superfast Express, the Shalimar-Chennai Central Cooromandel Express, and a goods train.

UGC's new norms for deemed university status

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Higher education institutions which are less than 20 years old will now be eligible to apply for deemed university status and private universities will have to create executive councils like central universities, according to the University Grants Commission's revised guidelines.

The Centre on Friday released the revised guidelines for existing higher education institutions to get the deemed to be status by simplifying the eligibility criteria in order to establish more quality-focused deemed universities.

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan released the UGC (Institutions Deemed to be Universities) Regulations, 2023, which will replace the 2019 guidelines.

According to Pradhan, the new rules are built on the principle of a "light but tight" regulatory framework envi-



sioned in the National Education Policy 2020.

"The new simplified guidelines will encourage universities to focus on quality and excellence, strengthen the research ecosystem and have a long-term impact in transforming our higher education landscape. The norms will facilitate creation of many more quality-focused deemed to be universities in an objective and transparent manner," Pradhan said.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) Act provides for the central government to declare any institution other than a university the status of institution deemed to be university. The first set of regulations in this regard was notified in 2010 and these

were subsequently revised in 2016 and 2019.

Under the 2019 guidelines, the higher education institutions having "existence for not less than 20 years" were eligible for applying for the status. However, the revised guidelines have now replaced it with multi-disciplinarity, NAAC grading, NIRF ranking and NBA grading.

It means any multi-disciplinary institution having valid accreditation by NAAC with at least 3.01 cumulative grade point average (CGPA) for three consecutive cycles, NBA accreditation for two-thirds of eligible programmes for three consecutive cycles or in the top 50 of any specific category of NIRF for the last three years continuously will be able to apply for the deemed status, the guidelines stated.

Besides, a cluster of institutions managed by more than one sponsoring body or a society can also apply for deemed to be university status, it added.

CBI books ITNL for 'causing loss' of over ₹6,524 crore to Canara Bank-led consortium

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has filed an FIR against IL&FS Transportation Network Limited (ITNL) and its then directors for allegedly causing a loss of more than Rs 6,524 crore to a 19-bank consortium led by Canara Bank, officials said on Friday.

In its FIR, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has booked Mumbai-based ITNL and its directors Karunakaran Ramchand, Deepak Das Gupta, Mukund Gajanan Sapre and then chief financial officer (CFO) Dilip Lalchand Bhatia for alleged criminal conspiracy and cheating as well as under the provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act.

The agency recently conducted searches in Delhi, Gurugram and Mumbai at the premises of the accused persons, the officials said. It is alleged that the



accused entered into a criminal conspiracy to cheat 19 banks under multiple banking arrangements (the Canara Bank being the largest lender).

The loan account was declared a non-performing asset (NPA) in 2018 and subsequently, categorised as "fraud" in 2021.

In its complaint to the CBI, which became the basis for the FIR, the Canara Bank has alleged that the accused misappropriated the sanctioned credit facilities through cheating, diversion of funds, circular transactions between related and sister concerns and misrepresentation of books of income and expenditures.

Vijayan to preside over World Kerala Sabha in NY

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

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

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

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

1983 World...

From Page 1

"Those medals represent years of effort, sacrifice, determination, and grit, and are not only their own but the nation's pride and joy. We urge them not to make any hasty decisions in this matter and fervently hope that their grievances are heard and resolved quickly. Let the rule of law prevail," the statement further read.

Kapil Dev, the legendary captain of the 1983 team, said, "I am not going to say anything individually; the entire 1983 team stands by the statement we have issued." The statement was also supported by other members of the 1983 batch, including Roger Binny (current BCCI President), Sunil Gavaskar, Mohinder Amarnath, K Srikanth, Syed Kirmani, Yashpal Sharma, Madan Lal, Balwinder Singh Sandhu, Sandeep Patil, and Kirti Azad.

The 1983 World Cup final was held at Lord's on June 25, 1983. Former cricketers Anil Kumble, Robin Uthappa, and Irfan Pathan have also shown solidarity with the protesting

wrestlers, while active cricketers are yet to comment on the controversy.

Meanwhile, in Kurukshetra a "khap mahapanchayat" demanded the arrest of Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh and granted the government a deadline until June 9 to take action on this demand.

Rakesh Tikait, the leader of Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU), told reporters after the mahapanchayat that the WFI chief should be immediately arrested.

If the government fails to act on this demand by June 9, the agitation will escalate through the organization of panchayats across the country, and the wrestlers will return to Jantar Mantar in Delhi to continue their protest. Representatives from various khaps (clan councils) and farmers' organizations gathered at the Jat Dharamshala, coming from different regions including Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh.

Previously, farmer outfits demonstrated their support by holding a "khap mahapanchayat" in Uttar Pradesh and staging a series of protests in Punjab and Haryana on Thursday, standing in solidarity with the wrestlers who have accused Singh of sexually harassing female grapplers, including a minor.

K'taka Cabinet...

From Page 1

Before the Assembly polls, the Congress had pledged to implement the following guarantees upon coming to power: Providing 200 units of free power to all households (Gruha Jyoti), offering ₹2,000 monthly assistance to the woman head of every family (Gruha Lakshmi), distributing 10 kg of free rice to each member of below poverty line (BPL) households (Anna Bhagya), granting ₹3,000 per month to unemployed graduate youth and ₹1,500 to unemployed diploma holders (both aged 18-25) (YuvaNidhi), and facilitating free travel for women in public transport buses (Shakti).

Siddaramaiah announced that the "Gruha Jyoti" scheme, which aims to provide up to 200 units of free electricity per month to every household, will be implemented from July 1.

However, customers will need to pay the arrears. The Government will consider the one-year average of power consumption and provide free electricity up to 10 per cent more than the average usage to prevent misuse.

Regarding the "Gruha Lakshmi" scheme that grants ₹2,000 per month to women heads of households, Siddaramaiah stated that it would be implemented from August 15. Applications can be submitted online from June 15 to July 15, and applicants must provide their Aadhaar and bank account details, which will be processed before the scheme's launch in August.

The scheme will benefit both BPL and above poverty line (APL) cardholders, as well as the beneficiaries of social security schemes. Under the "Anna Bhagya" scheme, 10 kg of food grains will be distributed to each member of BPL households and Antyodaya card holders from July 1.

Siddaramaiah explained that the scheme would begin in July, as the food grains for June had already been dispatched, and additional food grains needed to be procured.

The Chief Minister also announced the commencement of the "Shakti" scheme, enabling women to travel for free in public transport buses (excluding AC and luxury buses) in Karnataka from June 1.

COIMBATORE BOMB BLAST: Supplementary chargesheet against 5 filed

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Friday filed a supplementary chargesheet against five accused in the Coimbatore car bomb blast case of October 2022.

The five men charge-sheeted on Friday are Umar Faaruq, Firose Khan, Mohamed Thoulfee, Sheikh Hidayatullah and Sanofar Ali. Six accused were earlier charge-sheeted by the NIA on April 20, 2023, in the case under various sections of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and the Explosive Substances Act.

The case relates to an explosion in front of the ancient Arulmigu Kottai Sangameswarar Thirukovil Temple at Eswaran Kovil Street in Ukkadam, Coimbatore on October 23 last year.

70 dead in Odisha...

From Page 1

"Distressed by the train accident in Odisha. In this hour of grief, my thoughts are with the bereaved families. May the injured recover soon. Spoke to Railway Minister @AshwiniVaishnav and took stock of the situation. Rescue ops are underway at the site of the mishap and all possible assistance is being given to those affected," he tweeted.

Four units of the Odisha Disaster Rapid Action Force (ODRAF), three units of NDRF and 60 ambulances were working to rescue the injured, officials said. The Odisha Government has issued helpline 06782-262286. The railway helplines are 033-26382217 (Howrah), 8972073925 (Kharagpur), 8249591559 (Balasore) and 044-25330952 (Chennai).

Expressing concern over the accident, in which a large number of people from West Bengal were involved, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said she was monitoring the situation along with the chief secretary and other officials.

"We are coordinating with Odisha government and South Eastern Railways for our people's sake. Our emergency control room has been activated at once with numbers 033-22143526/22535185. All out efforts for rescue, retrieval, aid and assistance initiated," she tweeted. West Bengal Chief Secretary HK Dwivedi said the state was sending a team led by minister Manas Bhunia and MP Dola Sen to the spot.

BRICS pledges...

From Page 1

The ministers said terrorism should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilisation or ethnic group and rejected double standards in countering terrorism and extremism conducive to terrorism, the statement said.

They reaffirmed their unwavering commitment to contribute further to the global efforts of preventing and countering the threat of terrorism on the basis of respect for international law, in particular the Charter of the United Nations, and human rights, emphasising that States have the primary responsibility in combating terrorism with the United Nations continuing to play central and coordinating role in this area.

2024 LS...

From Page 1

While acknowledging India's existing strong system, he pointed out its weakened State and highlighted the need for independent institutions that are not subject to pressure or control.

Rahul stated that this situation is an aberration in India, and if the Congress party were to come to power, they would swiftly restore and strengthen these institutions.

Furthermore, Rahul stressed the criticality of press freedom for a thriving democracy, noting that it encompasses not only media liberties but also political access and the institutional framework that facilitates dialogue and negotiation among the Indian people. He expressed concerns

IUML fully secular, claims...

From Page 1

In response, he asserted, "The Muslim League is a completely secular party. There is nothing non-secular about the Muslim League."

The BJP strongly reacted to Rahul's statement, alleging that the IUML shares the same mindset as Jinnah's All India Muslim League.

Union Minister Anurag Thakur launched a scathing attack on Rahul, stating, "These are the same people who stayed back after partition. They formed the Muslim League and became MPs. They advocated for Sharia law and

which embraced Savarkar's two-nation theory.

Dubey added, "The same Muslim League with whom BJP founder SP Mookerjee and Hindu Mahasabha formed coalition Governments in Bengal, Sind, NWFP (North-West Frontier Province)."

Pawan Khera, the head of Congress' media department, fiercely responded to the BJP's criticism, suggesting that the BJP-RSS have a deeper understanding of Pakistan's politics and Jinnah's Muslim League due to their historical "jugal-bandi" (partnership).

"He said the NDA Government led by Atal Bihari Vajpayee had sent IUML leader E Ahamed to Geneva to represent India. IUML established the largest Sanskrit University in Kerala. The BJP also made an alliance with IUML for Nagpur Municipal Corporation. The omniscient Vishwaguru of WhatsApp

nursery, please enrich your knowledge," Khera claimed in a Hindi tweet.

In response, the IUML welcomed Rahul's assertion that their party is completely secular, attributing it to the Congress leader's party experience. IUML General Secretary PK Kunhalikutty stated in a Facebook post, "Rahul's statement that the Muslim League is a secular party is based on his party's experience. We regard it with great responsibility. The Muslim League has had a close relationship with the Congress since the days of Indira Gandhi."

BJP National spokesperson and MP Sudhanshu Trivedi alleged a connection between the regional party and Jinnah's organisation, which played a significant role in the Muslim partition movement. "For the Congress, parties such as AIMIM, Muslim

League, and Indian Secular Front, a West Bengal party formed by a Muslim cleric, are considered secular, while the PFI, a banned radical Islamic organisation, is seen as a cultural body," he stated.

Mocking Rahul, Trivedi questioned the wisdom behind his claim. In response to the BJP's criticism, Congress spokesperson Gourav Vallabh emphasised that the party Rahul referred to is the IUML, which is a registered political party in India.

"Is a registered party in India not considered secular? Does the Election Commission register ineligible parties? I would like to remind the BJP that this is not the party with which Syama Prasad Mookerjee aligned to form the Government in Bengal," Vallabh stated during a press conference at the AICC headquarters.

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

PUBLIC NOTICE: Builder Cancellation

This is to bring to your notice that **AISHVARY/ RAJENDER KUMAR GUPTA** (borrower/s) has availed Home loan facility vide facility agreement number **LBDEL00002185984** located at situated **Flat bearing No-C/UH-1202, Urban Homes, Shahpur Bamhetta, Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh**. The borrower/s has failed to pay the contractual amount to the builder as per the terms and conditions of the agreement.

The Bank had informed the same to the borrower through letter dated **May 26, 2023**, informing that **UH REALCON PRIVATE LIMITED** has cancelled the allotment of the above mentioned property. You are therefore requested to resolve this matter with the builder within 7 days from the date of this publication.

Please take further notice that post cancellation of the allotment of the said property ICICI Bank shall not be bound and/or responsible for any other allotment done by the builder.

Dated: June 03, 2023 For ICICI Bank Limited
Place: Delhi/ NCR Sd-

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

PUBLIC NOTICE: Builder Cancellation

This is to bring to your notice that **SUBHASH CHAND/ DEEPA** (borrower/s) has availed Home loan facility vide facility agreement number **LBGHZ00002516282** located at situated **Flat bearing No-A/UH-707, Urban Homes, Shahpur Bamhetta, Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh**. The borrower/s has failed to pay the contractual amount to the builder as per the terms and conditions of the agreement.

The Bank had informed the same to the borrower through letter dated **May 26, 2023**, informing that **UH REALCON PRIVATE LIMITED** has cancelled the allotment of the above mentioned property. You are therefore requested to resolve this matter with the builder within 7 days from the date of this publication.

Please take further notice that post cancellation of the allotment of the said property ICICI Bank shall not be bound and/or responsible for any other allotment done by the builder.

Dated: June 03, 2023 For ICICI Bank Limited
Place: Delhi/ NCR Sd-

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

PUBLIC NOTICE: Builder Cancellation

This is to bring to your notice that **YOGENDRA PAL SINGH/ SUNEETA PAL** (borrower/s) has availed Home loan facility vide facility agreement number **LBNO000002271959** located at situated **Flat bearing No -D/UH-602, Urban Homes, Shahpur Bamhetta, Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh**. The borrower/s has failed to pay the contractual amount to the builder as per the terms and conditions of the agreement.

The Bank had informed the same to the borrower through letter dated **May 26, 2023**, informing that **UH REALCON PRIVATE LIMITED** has cancelled the allotment of the above mentioned property. You are therefore requested to resolve this matter with the builder within 7 days from the date of this publication.

Please take further notice that post cancellation of the allotment of the said property ICICI Bank shall not be bound and/or responsible for any other allotment done by the builder.

Dated: June 03, 2023 For ICICI Bank Limited
Place: Delhi/ NCR Sd-

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Devashisha S/o Jagdamba Parshad R/o E-192-A, Second Floor Gali No-5, East Vinod Nagar Delhi-110091 declare that Deva Shish and Devashisha both are same and one person. My correct name is Devashisha.

PD(048)C

FORM NO. 5 DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL

600/1, University Road, Near Hanuman Setu Mandir, Lucknow-226007 (Area of Jurisdiction-Part of Uttar Pradesh)

Summons for Filing & Appearance by Publication

O.A.No.784/2022 Date-09-05-2023 [Summons to defendant under section 19(3) of the Recovery of Debts due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 read with Rules 12 and 13 of the Debts Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993]

ICICIBANKLTD.Applicant
Versus
MOHIT AND OTHERS
...Defendants

To, Defendants:-

2. ROSHI GULATI
W/o. MOHIT
R/o. H-804, Princess Park, Sector-86, Old Faridabad, Faridabad-121002.

In the above noted application, you are required to file in Paper Book form in two sets along with documents and affidavits (if any), personally or through your duly authorized agent or legal practitioner in this Tribunal, after serving copy of the same on the applicant or his counsel/duly authorized agent after publication of the summons, and thereafter to appear before the Tribunal on **09/11/2023 at 10:30 A.M.** failing which the application shall be heard and decide in your absence.

Registrar, Debts Recovery Tribunal, Lucknow

Special Secy Vigilance missing files

FIRS against unknown persons

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has registered an FIR against unidentified persons in connection with removal of sensitive files and documents from the office of special secretary (vigilance) YVVJ Rajasekhkar.

The alleged incident occurred on the intervening night of May 15-16, after Rajasekhkar was discharged from his duties as special secretary (vigilance) by Vigilance Minister Saurabh Bhardwaj 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 Rajasekhkar.

Bhardwaj, in a tweet, claimed Vigilance Secretary Sudhir Kumar had informed in a report to Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar on May 16 that "shadow files" of documents in Rajasekhkar's office were created on his directions. Sharing



a portion of this purported report, the minister tweeted, "Mr Sudhir Kr, Sec Vigilance was appointed by LG not us. He had clearly written on 16.5.2023 to CS Mr Naresh Kr that shadow files were created on his directions. Nothing to do with Minister & it was in knowledge of his junior Mr Rajsekhkar. Still false FIR against unknown?"

"Mr Rajsekhkar in his note below accepts work was withdrawn from him, he sent 76 files to his boss. Why did he retain rest of the files? Was it not illegal to retain files when work was withdrawn? If files were tempered who tempered the

to have been removed from the office of Directorate of Vigilance.

Rajasekhkar was looking into sensitive matters including those related to the construction of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's official residence and now-scrapped excise policy of the government, inquiry relating to Directorate of Information and Publicity payments, matters relating to Delhi Jal Board, Gold Theft Inquiry in Trade and Taxes Department, Nexus between Prison officials and Minister of Prison, Demolition of Heritage Structure by the then CEO, DJB and Feed Back Unit.

In the Factual Report submitted to his superiors, it was brought out that certain grounds were contrived to paralyze the ongoing inquiries and false note was generated by Minister, Saurabh Bhardwaj, alleging extortion racket against the Special Secretary looking into these inquiries and thereby divesting the said Special Secretary (Vigilance) of his work. This was followed by breach/ trespassing into the room of Special Secretary

(Vigilance) as per the directions of Minister, Saurabh Bhardwaj, during night hours of 15-16th May, 2023 for the purpose of tampering with the records with mala-fide intentions.

In his report, Rajasekhkar had said that he strongly objected to his room being opened and files removed on May 15 night. Alleging that the documents were taken to a nearby room for photocopying, he had suspected "tampering" with records related to sensitive probes.

Thereafter, it was also informed in the Factual Report that in the name of an NGO, one Advocate submitted a complaint to Delhi Services Minister Saurabh Bhardwaj, which was later on found to be false and fabricated.

In the Factual Report it was submitted that the consequences of events clearly demonstrate that allegations made or contrived with design and ulterior motives by making forged/ false/ fabricated documents/ complaints on behalf of NGO who immediately submitted on 18.05.2023 that they never made such complaint.

Jailed Sisodia allowed to meet ailing wife at home

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Friday permitted AAP leader Manish Sisodia, under arrest in cases related to alleged irregularities in the city government's excise policy, to meet his ailing wife at his residence on Saturday. Justice Dinesh Kumar Sharma directed the Tihar Jail Superintendent to take Sisodia, the former deputy chief minister, to his residence where he has been allowed to meet his wife from 10 AM to 5 PM.

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

The high court made it clear that Sisodia shall not interact with media or any other person except his family members, and also not access phone or internet. "Let the petitioner be taken to his house



Saturday from 10 am to 5 pm to meet his wife," the court said.

The high court, which was hearing Sisodia's petitions for regular bail and interim bail in the money laundering case lodged by the ED, reserved its orders. Sisodia, represented by senior advocate Mohit Mathur, has sought interim bail on the ground of deteriorating health of his wife who is suffering from multiple sclerosis. The high court also directed the ED to verify the medical documents of Sisodia's wife and asked it to file a report positively by Saturday evening.

In the CBI case involving alleged corruption, the high court has kept the interim bail plea pending. Additional

Solicitor General S V Raju, representing the ED, argued earlier also a similar interim bail plea was filed by Sisodia on identical grounds which was later withdrawn, hence no ground was made for calling for a report from the agency.

He said Sisodia's wife was suffering from the ailment for the last 23 years, and as the AAP leader was holding 18 portfolios, he was a very busy minister and had no time for home. So she can be taken care of by an attendant, and the court may grant Sisodia permission to go with an escort and visit his wife, Raju said.

During the day, the high court also heard arguments and reserved order on the bail plea of businessman Vijay Nair, the AAP's communication in-charge and a co-accused in the money laundering case arising from the alleged scam.

Senior advocate Rebecca John, representing Vijay Nair, argued the ED has converted this bail hearing into a mini trial by taking four dates. He has been accused of raising money from the 'South Group' to be paid as kickback to officials and politicians.

Metro begins tunnelling drive with 'Bhoomi' in Derawal Nagar

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Metro on Friday started a tunnelling drive by the Tunnel Boring Machine named "Bhoomi" from Derawal Nagar to Pulbangash on a forthcoming corridor under its 'Phase IV' project, officials said.

The TBM was launched at Derawal Nagar metro station site on 'Line 8', being built from Janakpuri West to R K Ashram, in the presence Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) Managing Director Vikas Kumar and other senior officials, they said.

The length of the tunnel is approximately 3 kilometres. The depth of tunnelling will vary from 12.4 meters at Derawal Nagar station up to 25.9 m near the Najafgarh Drain.

Therefore, the TBM will traverse through varying geological levels underground, the DMRC said in a statement.

In a first-of-its-kind exercise, the Delhi Metro is equipping all its TBMs with the BEAM (Bore Tunneling Electrical Ahead Monitoring) System in this phase, officials said. It enables the TBM to predict on a real-time basis the geological strata, up to 20 metre ahead of the machine's cutter head face, and predict any unexpected encounter with filled wells, cavities, and aquifers which may lead to settlement over the ground if hit by the TBM without proper treatment, the statement said.

The BEAM system is a non-intrusive ground predicting technique especially designed for the underground construction industry.

Father gets 7 years RI for 'riot path' to son who gets 3 years in prison

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A city court on Friday sentenced a man to rigorous imprisonment for seven years and his son to three years of simple imprisonment in two separate cases, saying the father, instead of showing the "right path" to his son, himself "acted ghastly". The court, which was hearing the cases related to the 2020 northeast Delhi riots, also observed that communal riots are among the most violent forms of public disorder that afflicts society.

Additional Sessions Judge Pulastya Pramachala was hearing two cases against Mithhan Singh and his son Jony Kumar who were convicted of various offences, including those under IPC sections 147 (rioting) and 436 (mischief by fire or explosive substance with intent to destroy house, etc.). "Convict

Jony Kumar shall undergo rigorous imprisonment for a period of seven years and convict Mithhan Singh shall undergo simple imprisonment for a period of three years for offence punishable under Section 436 IPC," the judge said in the orders.

"Communal riot is that menace, which poses a serious threat to the sense of fraternity among the citizens of our nation. Communal riots are treated as one of the most violent forms of public disorder that afflicts society and it leads to not only loss of life and property but also causes great damage to social fabric," the judge added. Noting the background of the convicts, ASJ Pramachala said the overall assessment showed "they were prone to get carried away by a misconceived sense of religious cause".

AAP to start door-to-door drive against ordinance

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

New Delhi: Delhi AAP convener Gopal Rai on Friday said the maharally on June 11 will serve as a platform for the residents of Delhi to express their indignation towards the Central Government's ordinance.

Holding a meeting to assign the preparation responsibilities to office bearers, Rai said AAP workers will start conducting a door-to-door campaign from June 5 and encourage Delhi residents to attend the rally.

"The rally serves as a platform for the residents of Delhi to express their indignation and rage towards the Central government's ordinance.

"It is essential to recognise that the Constitution grants every citizen right to vote, and any attempt by an individual or organisation to undermine this right should be met with a united public voice of opposition," he said.

Min inspects underground water reservoir in Patparganj

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Water Minister Saurabh Bhardwaj on Friday conducted an on-site inspection of the 2.4 MGD (Million Gallons per Day) capacity underground reservoir (UGR) located in Patparganj while Delhi Jal Board (DJB) Vice Chairman Somnath Bharti visited the Shvikas Society in IP Extension and met the residents of various societies to get first hand assessment of water supply and sewerage related problems.

During his visit, Bhardwaj instructed the officials of Delhi Jal Board to promptly address the issues related to the drinking water supply in the respective areas.

Recently, there have been complaints about water supply from several residents of the Patparganj constituency.

To address these complaints promptly and assess



the situation, he instructed the DJB officials to identify the reasons for the declining water levels and restore the water flow.

On the other hand, Bharti met local residents of IP Extension and they told him that their societies were getting supply of contaminated water for the last many days and people have been facing lots of problems due to this.

Bharti assured that the problem of contaminated water supply would be resolved for good within the month. He instructed DJB officials to

replace the old water pipelines. Taking cognizance of media reports on this matter, the DJB Vice Chairman also spoke to the complainant on the phone and assured to come to her society and meet the residents of the societies to understand the problems.

"There is a problem of contaminated water supply in three societies here. DJB will replace the old pipeline of these three societies and a plan for the same has been prepared by the DJB," reads a statement issued by DJB.

NCR PULSE

TOLL-FREE HELPLINE TO SHARE INFO ON CRIMINALS

New Delhi: The Delhi Police on Friday released a toll-free helpline number on which the general public can share information on crimes and criminals anonymously, officials said. Reward will be provided for the 'eyes and ears' scheme "for useful information", Special Commissioner of Police Sanjay Singh said on Twitter. "Join as 'EYES & EARS' of @DelhiPolice. You can give information about crime & criminals at a Toll Free HELPLINE No. 14547. Caller has the option to disclose his identity or not & it is kept secret. Reward is given for useful information in appropriate cases #TogetherSafeDelhi," he tweeted.

'GIVE PROTECTION TO SAME-SEX INTERFAITH COUPLE'

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court on Friday directed the Delhi Police to provide protection to a same-sex interfaith couple. The couple is facing threats from one of the petitioner's family, approached the High Court seeking protection. One of the petitioners is Hindu, the other is Muslim. Justice Rajnish Bhatnagar directed the local police to provide protection to the petitioners. He also directed the concerned Station House Officer (SHO) and beat officer to provide their numbers to the petitioner so that they can be contacted by the couple and the court directed them to respond immediately.

MAN FOUND HANGING FROM CEILING FAN

New Delhi: The body of a 40-year-old man was found hanging from a ceiling fan inside a house in Delhi's Dwarka area on Friday morning. At 11:23 am, police received information that foul smell was emanating from a flat in Sector 16B. The house was found locked from inside. A fire brigade was called and the door was broken open, a senior police official said. Inside the house, the body of the man was found hanging from the ceiling fan with a plastic rope, he said. The deceased was identified as Mayank Khatri (40). He was unemployed, the official said.

'G'GRAM WATER SUPPLY LINE IMPORTANT PROJECT'

New Delhi: Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal said that Gurugram water supply line is an important project, which will cater to the drinking water needs of Gurugram and Manesar population, as projected up to the year 2050. Also, the Mewat feeder project has also been prepared and both these projects will cost about Rs 2,267 crore. The Chief Minister was presiding over a meeting with the officials of the Irrigation and Water Resources department regarding remodeling of Gurugram water supply line in Gurugram. During the meeting, a detailed discussion was also held regarding the concept of Mewat feeder pipeline project with a presentation. Chief Executive Officer, Gurugram Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA) PC Meena joined the meeting virtually.

MIN HOLDS REVIEW MEET FOR MANUAL SCAVENGERS

New Delhi: Identifying and rehabilitating manual scavengers in Delhi and ensuring safety and training of sanitation workers who clean septic tanks, Delhi government's SC/ST Minister Raaj Kumar Anand on Friday held a preparedness review meeting with the officials of various departments and expressed concern that some of the people who died in cleaning sewer have not been paid the compensation so far. According to government's data a total of 105 such cases in Delhi, the relatives of 17 people have not yet been paid the full amount of compensation. The meeting was also attended by DM, SDM, Delhi Police, Delhi Jal Board, Municipal Corporation, SC/ST Department and senior officers from various departments working on it.

Edu Min: Govt school teachers capable of being best in world

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

New Delhi: The Delhi Government school teachers have proved that they are capable of being among the "best" in the world, Education Minister Atishi said on Friday at Global Teaching Professionals Olympiad (TPO). Teachers from government schools here were among 6,000 participants from five countries who competed in the olympiad.

The Delhi government's Directorate of Education (DoE) in collaboration with CENTA, hosted the olympiad, to "acknowledge the talents" of teachers in Delhi and the other participants, officials said. The Delhi Government school teachers have "announced to the world that they have the competence to be the best.

100th episode of 'Mann ki Baat' live broadcast

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi BJP facilitated live broadcast of the 100th episode of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Mann Ki Baat' at 6530 organisational blocks across the national Capital on Saturday.

Union Ministers, MPs, and office bearers of National and Delhi BJP listened to the Mann Ki Baat programme along with the workers. Apart from this, many civic organisations, RWA, business bodies made through their respective mediums to listen to the Mann Ki Baat program at various places. Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh along with several officials listened to the Mann Ki Baat program at the BJP headquarters.

After listening to the programme, he said PM Modi's Mann Ki Baat plays important



role in establishing connectivity with Public. He further went on say "a person who is big-hearted can only emotionally connect with large number of people. This is a spiritual journey of PM's life."

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman while talking to media after listening the programme with BJP workers at Gagan Vihar in East Delhi, said Modi's Mann Ki Baat programme has completed 100 episodes but till date he never speaks as a prime minister but has kept his words as a prime servant of the country.

Delhi Police 'purr-fect' reply to Musk amuses netizens

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

As Twitter owner and billionaire Elon Musk wondered whether there are cats in the police squad like there are dogs, Delhi Police's Twitter handle on Friday clarified that cats are not included in the police squad but one might get booked for 'feline-y' and 'purr-pretation' — in a clever wordplay of felony and perpetration.

With a cat reference of feline and purr, the question was not from Elon Musk originally, as the Tesla CEO said it was his son 'Lil X' who asked if there are police cats, like dogs. "Hi @elonmusk, please tell Lil X that there are no police cats because they might get booked for feline-y and 'purr'pretation," the Delhi Police tweeted.



Many netizens have given a thumb-up to this amusing wordplay by the law enforcement agency of India's national Capital, and some have called it a "purr-fect" response. Delhi Police's official Twitter handle has been set abuzz since this punny reply with a clever wordplay on

'felony' and 'perpetration', was put in the morning on the microblogging site.

"That was marvellous," tweeted user @IndiaPran, while another user @_naveenish wrote, "Purr fact. What's next?". Elon Musk's tweets are closely followed ever since he took over Twitter last year. On Thursday, hordes of Twitter users had responded to the Tesla founder's tweet and also mentioned name of his son, Lil X. His tweet has clocked over 21 million views and triggered a 'cats vs dogs' debate among netizens. "Well, Lil X, it seems like the world needs some 'paw enforcement' to keep the streets safe! Time to train those feline officers for some purrfect crime-fighting!",

@TraderDAO_AI tweeted. Some users shared images of cats and dogs together in law enforcement uniform, to underline that both animals can do the job.

"Can we have police kittens too! They're so cute, you just have to obey," @ProjectTXA tweeted. Many responded to Musk's tweet, saying, "fair question". User @Senor_Penguito responded with an image of colourful toy penguins, with a caption, "Police penguins", while a few others shared images of rabbits, lions and a few other animals in 'police uniform'.

Musk's post has also triggered funny memes and zany comments drawing mirth from netizens. "Pawlice Cat," user @WhaleWire wrote with an

image of a wide-eyed cat. "I hear police cats always catch the purr-petrators!" user @LadyOfCrypto1 tweeted.

Twitter user @LittleGel had a more hilarious take on Musk's tweet, replying with a poster meme that says 'Cats don't tell police where your drugs are' with an image of a four-footed feline animal in the post. But, the Delhi Police's response has left netizens in splits too. "Oh boy, Delhi police with Global meme standards," wrote user @vipul19 and added an emoji at the end.

The Delhi Police in the past too has come with quirky tweets at times to raise awareness on road safety or just engage in a harmless banter, much to netizens' amusement. On May 6 this year, the

Cop hurt while trying to arrest two robbers

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi police head constable was injured on Friday while he was trying to arrest two assailants whom he suspected to be involved in a robbery in the southwest area of the city.

A PCR call was made by head constable Naresh of Vasant Kunj South police station around 2 am regarding an encounter with the criminals near Aerocity National Highway-8, a senior police officer said.

The staff spotted the movement of a suspicious car, suspected to have been used in a robbery, and started chasing it. During the chase, the vehicle came near Aerocity NH-8 picket where they signalled them to stop, the officer said.

@DelhiPolice tweeted: "You cannot be King Charles, but helmet is your crown." During Holi season on March 7, in response to a tweet by a food service aggregator — "someone please tell shubham from gur-gaan we don't deliver bhaang ki goli. He has asked us 14 times", @DelhiPolice had replied: "If anyone meets Shubham... Tell him not to drive if he consumes bhaang."

On March 7, 2021, latching on to a Pakistan Instagram user's viral video of the meme, the official Twitter handle of Additional DCP-I West Delhi District had said: "Yehe Hum hain... Yehe Hooke Hain... Aur ab Pawri nahi ho rahi hai PS- Some Pawris are not only injurious to health they are illegal too."

Bring norms against misuse of sedition law, says panel

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

UNSC structure perverse: Experts

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



PNS/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/UNITED NATIONS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

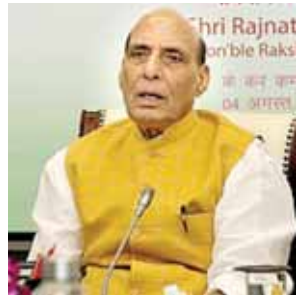
Govt pushing for developed India by 2047: Def Min

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ED raids VIPS Group of firms in Pune for FEMA violations

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

Addressing the 55 cadets of the King Fahd Naval Academy of Saudi Arabia on Thursday, he said the maiden training by the Indian Navy is a testimony to the growing friendship between Saudi Arabia and India.

Cadets of the Royal Saudi Naval Force (RSNF) along with five Directing Staff are attached with the First Training Squadron ships, INS Tir and INS Sujata, as part of afloat training with the Indian Navy, navy official said in New Delhi.

Training at Kochi is testimony to growing friendship between India, Saudi Arabia: Navy chief

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/KOCHI

Signifying the growing defence ties between the two countries, the first batch of naval cadets from Saudi Arabia are undergoing sea training at the Southern Naval Command, Kochi. Navy chief Admiral R Hari Kumar interacted with the trainees.

Addressing the 55 cadets of the King Fahd Naval Academy of Saudi Arabia on Thursday, he said the maiden training by the Indian Navy is a testimony to the growing friendship between Saudi Arabia and India.

Cadets of the Royal Saudi Naval Force (RSNF) along with five Directing Staff are attached with the First Training Squadron ships, INS Tir and INS Sujata, as part of afloat training with the Indian Navy, navy official said in New Delhi.

The Navy chief acknowledged the help received from the government of Saudi Arabia during the recent evacuation of Indian nationals from Sudan.

Emphasising the close relations and cooperation between the two navies, Admiral Kumar reaffirmed that the joint exercises, staff talks and training exchanges with the RSNF have progressed well over the years and signifies the strong bond between the two Navies, the Navy said in a release.

He also pointed out that both the countries shared similar views with regard to maritime security and closely operate with each other towards ensuring safe and secure seas in the region. The Navy chief was apprised of the ongoing harbour and afloat training activities including familiarisation of sea sorties. He was also briefed on the progress made by the trainees within training period.

कार्यालय, नगर पालिक निगम, भिलाई (छ.प्र.)

निविदा सूचना

क्रमांक/लो.क.वि./जोन-4/2023/324/126 भिलाई, दिनांक 31/5/23

एकीकृत पंचायत प्रणाली अंतर्गत सक्षम श्रेणी में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से निम्नलिखित निर्माण कार्य हेतु निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है:-

क्र.	सिस्टम क्र.	कार्य का नाम	निविदा लागत (राशि रु. किये जाने की लाख में)	निविदा आनलौड अंतिम तिथि
1.	135805	जोन क्र 04 के अंतर्गत जोन 01, जोन 02, एवं जोन 03 में पूर्व स्वीकृत सीवरेंज ट्रीटमेंट प्लांट निर्माण के स्थान पर सीवर लाईन पुनः निर्माण कार्य।	970.915	19.06.2023

निविदा स्वीड पोस्ट/रजिस्टर्ड डाक से स्वीकार किये जावेंगे। उपरोक्त निर्माण कार्य की निविदा की सामान्य शर्तें, धरोहर राशि, विस्तृत निविदा विज्ञापन, निविदा दस्तावेज व अन्य जानकारी संचालनालय की वेबसाइट eproc.cgstate.gov.in में भी देखी जा सकती है। (धर से निकलने वाले गीले एवं सूखा कचरे को अलग कर सफाई मित्र (रिक्शा) की देवी।)

हस्ता/-
जोन आयुक्त

FORM NO. 5 DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL 600/1, University Road, Near Hanuman Setu Mandir, Lucknow-226007 (Area of Jurisdiction-Part of Uttar Pradesh)

Summons for Filing & Appearance by Publication

O.A. No. 191/2023 Date: 08/05/2023

(Summons to defendant under section 19(3) of the Recovery of Debts due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 read with Rules 12 and 13 of the Debts Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993)

ICICI BANK LTD. ...Applicant Versus ANKUSH PUNDER & OTHERS ...Defendants

To, Defendants:-
1. ANKUSH PUNDER S/O PAPPU SINGH R/O Flat No. 2, Peerwalli Gali, Gopal Nagar, Sec-107, Salar Pur Kheda G.B. Nagar, Noida-201304.

Also At- Flat No. 2001, Plot No. Gh-01 1 Sector Eta 2, Greater Noida, Noida-201303, U.P.

2. PAPPU SINGH S/O DUTT SINGH PUNDER R/O Flat No. 2, Peerwalli Gali, Gopal Nagar, Sec-107, Salar Pur Kheda G.B. Nagar, Noida-201304

In the above noted application, you are required to file in Paper Book form in two sets along with documents and affidavits (if any) personally or through your duly authorized agent or legal practitioner in this Tribunal, after serving copy of the same on the applicant or his counsel/duly authorized agent after publication of the summons, and thereafter to appear before the Tribunal on 21/11/2023 at 10:30 A.M. failing which the application shall be heard and decided in your absence.

Registrar
Debts Recovery Tribunal,
Lucknow

FORM NO. 5 DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL 600/1, University Road, Near Hanuman Setu Mandir, Lucknow

Summons for Filing Reply & Appearance By Publication

Date 11.05.2023

(Summons to defendant under Section 19(3), of the Recovery of Debts due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 read with Rules 12 and 13 of the Debts Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993)

Original Application No. 131 of 2023 ICICI Bank Ltd. Vs Neha Singh & Others

To, 1. Neha Singh W/o Shri. Dhananjay Kumar R/O-1, 1304, Super Tech Livingstone, Crossing Republic, Ghaziabad, U.P.-201001.

Defendant No. 1.

2. Dhananjay Kumar S/o Shri. Binod Kumar Singh R/O-C-1, 1304, Super Tech Livingstone, Crossing Republic, Ghaziabad, U.P.-201001.

Defendant No. 2

3. M/s Elegant Infracore Pvt. Ltd. Registered office at -177, 1st Floor, Hargovind Enclave, Delhi-110092 Through its Authorized Signatory Defendant No. 3

In the above noted Original application you are required to file reply in Paper Book form in two sets along with documents and affidavits (if any) personally or through your duly authorized agent or legal practitioner in this Tribunal, after serving copy of the same on the applicant or his counsel/duly authorized agent after publication of the summons and thereafter to appear before the Tribunal on 08/11/2023 at 10:30 A.M. failing which the application shall be heard and decided in your absence.

Registrar
Debts Recovery Tribunal,
Lucknow

Send baby back, India tells Berlin

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said here Ariha's continued stay in the German foster care and "infringement" of her social, cultural and linguistic rights is of deep concern to the government of India and the parents. On Thursday, Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde wrote a letter to External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar seeking his assistance in bringing Ariha back home.

"We would like to reiterate that Ariha Shah is an Indian national and her nationality and socio-cultural background is the most important determinant of where her foster care is to be provided. We urge German authorities to do all that is necessary to send Ariha to India at the earliest, which is also her inalienable right as an Indian national," Bagchi said.

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

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

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

FORM NO. 5 DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL 600/1, University Road, Hanuman Setu Mandir, Lucknow

Summons For Filing Reply & Appearance By Publication

Date 19.05.2023

(Summons to defendant under Section 19(3) of the Recovery of Debts due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 read with Rules 12 and 13 of the Debts Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993)

Original Application No. 237 of 2023 ICICI Bank Ltd. Vs Sunil Jindal & Others

To, 1. Sunil Jindal- S/o - Sri Girraj Singh Jindal R/O House No. 538, Sector-14, Near DAV School, Faridabad, Haryana- 121007 Defendant No. 1.

2. Shalini Jindal W/o- Sri Sunil Jindal, R/O House No. 538, Sector-14, Near DAV School, Faridabad, Haryana-121007 Defendant No. 2.

3. SRS Entertainment Ltd. Office: SRS Multiplex City Centre, Sector-12, Faridabad, Haryana - 121007 Through its Director/ Authorized Signatory Defendant No. 3.

4. M/s Gaursons India Ltd. Registered Office: 305, Arunachal Building, 19, Barakhamba Road, Connaught Place, New Delhi-110001 Through its Managing Director Defendant No. 4.

In the above noted Original application you are required to file reply in Paper Book form in two sets along with documents and affidavits (if any) personally or through your duly authorized agent or legal practitioner in this Tribunal, after serving copy of the same on the applicant or his counsel/duly authorized agent after publication of the summons and thereafter to appear before the Tribunal on 08/12/2023 at 10:30 A.M. failing which the application shall be heard and decided in your absence.

Registrar
Debts Recovery Tribunal,
Lucknow

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that our client Mr. Bhuvan Chand Bhatt S/o Late Hari Datt Bhatt is the owner of Flat No. C-2, First Floor, covered area measuring 72.46 sq. mtr., Plot No. 21, Block C, Shalimar Garden Ext.-II, Pusa, Ghaziabad. He has lost the Original Sale Deed dated 24/02/2004, vide its registration number is 1174 & Second Sale Deed dated 07/04/1998 vide its registration number is 217 (FIR dated 21/05/2020 for the same).

Any person dealing with the any documents may do so on their own risk and our client shall not be responsible in any manner whatsoever, however any claim on the basis of title documents will be entertained within 15 days of publication, failing which any such right, title, interest or claim, if any, will be deemed to have been waived and no binding on our client.

Rakesh Kumar Advocate
Chamber No. 119, First Floor, Front side Tehsil Compound, Main Road, Ghaziabad. Mob. No. 9911958676

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given on behalf of Mrs. Babli who is purchasing the Plot No.37, area measuring 50 Sq. Yds. (41.805 Sq. Mtrs.), out of Kharsa No. 820/11mm, situated at Balraj Nagar, Village Bahata Hazar, Parsana & Tehsil, District Ghaziabad (U.P.) from Mr. Sanjeev Kumar Yadav, who are owner of the aforesaid property vide Sale Deed 05/07/2022, which is duly registered vide Document No. 10568, at Sub-Registrar, Loni, Ghaziabad; and intend to mortgage against the financial assistance from Unmeed Housing Finance Private Limited. That the Surviving Member Certificate (SMC) of Late Mrs. Sumitra & Death Certificate Late Mrs. Sumitra; is Lost/Misplaced/Not available. To comply the requirements of BANK/NBFC, we give this public notice that if any Person having any type of claim/right/title/interest/creating mortgage over the said property, may inform in writing, at the address mentioned below, about his objections, within 7 days from today, failing which it shall be presumed that the said property is free from all type of Encumbrances, lien etc.

Lucern Legal LLP
Plot no.136, (Basement) Uday Park, New Delhi-110049; Contact# 011-40046316

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the Public at large that Original Share Certificate along with its receipt, Allotment Letter, Possession Letter etc. of FLAT No. 609, INDIAN AIRLINES OFFICERS & ENGINEERS C.G.H.S. LTD. (Known as Matri Apartment) PLOT No. 17, SECTOR-10, DWARKA, NEW DELHI-110075, has been lost/misplaced by my client i.e. HARPREET SINGH, S/O LATE SOHAN SINGH and an NCR/FIR has been registered/registered vide online portal of Delhi Police vide LR No.508766 dated 01/06/2023. My Client has applied for duplicate/transfer the said flat in his name in record of Society/RCS/DDA. The said flat is free from all encumbrances. Founder/claimant please inform/claim in writing to the concern society/RCS/DDA within 15 days starting from the date of publication of this notice and thereafter the user/holder of lost/misplaced/missing documents/article shall be responsible for the same.

Legalpath Competent Lawyers LLP
207, Plot-1, MLU Sector-10, Dwarka, New Delhi-110075 (Phone:9871268399)

Indian students on dharna in Toronto over deportation

New Delhi/Toronto: Several former Indian students, who were facilitated by agents in India using fraudulent documentation to come to Canada, and now facing possible deportation, are staging a demonstration in Greater Toronto Area or GTA. These students have gathered at the makeshift location on Airport Road in Mississauga for an indefinite demonstration.

These students continue their protest, which began on Monday, till the deportation process is stopped, reports from Toronto said. They have gathered at the makeshift location in Mississauga.

According reports, these students arrived in Canada between 2017 and 2019, and in rare instances, in 2020. They started receiving notices from the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) in 2021 and last year, for a hearing as the agency concluded the letter of offer of

admission to a Canadian higher education institution, which formed the basis of their study permits, was "fake." The majority of the affected students were represented by a Jalandhar based counselling firm. The students said they were being victimized for no fault of theirs. In an open letter under the banner of Victim Students released in March, they said, "We are desperate for justice; we are victims of fraud; we have no criminal level but facing a removal order."

The current protest, which began in Monday, was triggered by a removal order received by Lovepreet Singh, who is originally from Mohali in Punjab. He was asked by the CBSA to leave country on June 13. One of former students involved in protest, originally from Amritsar, said they will continue protest till Lovepreet's deportation on June 13 is cancelled and "a solution is found to our cases." PNS/Agencies

INSHORT

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

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

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

'Month-long riots left 310 hurt, 98 dead'

37K people in 272 relief camps, says Manipur Govt



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

In all, 4,014 cases of arson have been reported since the violence broke out in the State on May 3, it said. "The number of deaths is 98 and the number of injured reported is 310," it said. Over the last one month, the State police has registered 3,734 cases and arrested 65 people for their involvement in the violence, the statement said.

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

"More companies are being

Another district-level BJP leader killed in West Bengal

Suwendu demands Didi's resignation, TMC claims intra-party rivalry

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KOLKATA

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

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

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

Security forces eliminate Pak ultra in Dassal forest

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

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

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



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

The local administration had decided to close down the schools in the close vicinity of the encounter site to prevent any mishap. The search operation was still on at the time of filing this report. Unconfirmed reports said two to three terrorists were hiding in the area when the gun-battle started.

HC defers hearing in Chhota Rajan's suit against Netflix

Jailed don seeks to restrain release of series 'Scoop'

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

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

personal life, till June 7.

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

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

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

them to life imprisonment, while it acquitted journalist Jigna Vora and another accused for lack of evidence. Appearing on behalf of Rajan, Senior Advocate Mihir Desai told the High Court that of all the other persons depicted in the series, only Rajan's real face and name had been used in the television series.

Desai argued that an appeal against the conviction was pending in the Bombay High Court, and hence the trial court's conviction could not be used against him. "The order of conviction cannot be used against Rajan in any defamatory manner or otherwise tarnish or malign his

name and reputation merely with the sole intention to gain profits, by any third person, especially in absence of his consent," Rajan stated in his suit.

In his suit filed before the commercial division of the High Court, Rajan has sought Re 1 as damages for the alleged infringement. Judge Dige wanted to know as to how Rajan's suit would fall under Commercial Courts Act since the latter has sought only Re 1 as damages.

The Judge said that if the suit qualified as a commercial suit, then the suit would be sent for mediation as per the procedure under law.

आरोग्यं परमं भाग्यं स्वास्थ्यं सर्वार्थसाधनम्



“भारत में आज जीवनशैली से जुड़ी बीमारियां बढ़ रही हैं और उससे युवा भी प्रभावित हो रहे हैं। लेकिन जीवनशैली में मामूली बदलाव से जीवनशैली से जुड़ी इन बीमारियों से बचा जा सकता है। फिट इंडिया अभियान जीवनशैली में मामूली बदलाव लाने का एक प्रयास है।”
- नरेन्द्र मोदी

World Cycle Day

June 3, 2023



आओ, मिलकर साइकिल दिवस मनाएं
धरती और पर्यावरण दोनों बचाएं



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Green Day

We must realise that we can afford to ignore environmental issues only at our own peril

The World Environment Day, celebrated annually on June 5, is unlike any other for, if nothing else, the sheer importance it holds for our survival and that of our future generations. It's quite understandable to scoff at yet another 'World This Day' or 'World That Day', especially since it doesn't hold any personal or intimate meaning in our lives such as our birthday or Mother's Day or Father's Day but what lends it gravitas is that it's much more than an individual's celebration: It calls for joint efforts by the global communities - in fact all of humanity - to protect, safeguard and conserve nature, lest we all shall perish before too long. With the increasing urgency of environmental issues, this day serves as a powerful reminder that we cannot afford to overlook the state of our environment. Unfortunately, and as a result of mankind's own doing, the world today faces unprecedented environmental challenges, including climate change, deforestation, loss of biodiversity, pollution and water scarcity, among others. These issues not only impact ecosystems and wildlife but also pose severe threats to human health, livelihood and future generations. The day aims to unite diverse stakeholders, including individuals, organisations, Governments and communities around the world, in fostering global collaboration and solidarity. It also serves as a platform for sharing ideas, best practices and innovative approaches to tackle environmental challenges effectively.



In this light, we must train ourselves to make sincere efforts in becoming more aware of the causes that have led to, and are still leading to, issues like global warming, water scarcity and deforestation. On a very basic scale, it's also high time to plant and nurture trees as well as to reduce mankind's carbon footprint by cutting down on the greenhouse gas emissions by adapting to greener and healthier technologies rather than shamelessly using air-conditioners and fossil fuel-guzzling vehicles. In this time and age, when we have technologies such as electric vehicles available to us for use, what stops us from holding out that little bit of extra down payment initially and go for an electric vehicle which would stand us and the environment in good stead in the years to come? From minimising waste, recycling material and conserving energy to promoting eco-friendly transportation and embracing renewable resources, the global citizen must vow individual action in mitigating environmental degradation. Though the Governments have already woken up to this existential threat, what with a host of groupings like COP 27 working overtime to tackle the menace, it also helps promote policy changes and advocacy efforts. The day reminds Governments to enact and enforce environmental regulations, supports the development of sustainable policies and encourages lawmakers to prioritise environmental protection. So let's not stand in the way of a green Earth; in fact, let's help lay a new path that rejuvenates our tiring planet.

PICTALK



A view of the Raigad Fort on the 350th anniversary of the coronation of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj

US baton of values passes seamlessly

Its military leadership is today poised for an unprecedented normalcy of top two positions to be held by the citizens of African-American ethnicity



BHOPINDER SINGH

Colin Powell was the most decorated and highest-ranking black man in United States military history, ascending to National Security Adviser, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), and later Secretary of State (first black on all three accounts). The soldier and diplomat were even speculated to run for Presidency as a Republican, which he ultimately declined (though in later years, he did call fellow Republican, Donald Trump, a 'national disgrace'). The dignified Soldier-Secretary would have been conscious of his black or African-American identity in 1958 as a newly commissioned officer, but as the wise soldier late reflected, "Let it (racism) be a problem to someone else... Let it drag them down. Don't use it as an excuse for your shortcomings". America was to evolve for the better on the inclusivity front, and soon had the likes of Barack Obama and Kamala Harris, at even more senior leadership positions.

Today, American Military leadership is poised for an unprecedented normalcy of two top positions to be held by Americans of African-American ethnicity i.e., Secretary of Defence, Lloyd Austin (retired Four-Star General) and the newly nominated Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), General Charles Brown Jr. As nominated CJCS, Charles Brown would replace General Mark Milley and would serve at the pleasure of the President of USA for a four-year term. Amongst his many professional accomplishments, Milley of course would be remembered for standing up to retain and burnish the apolitical credentials of the 'Uniform' - he had rebuffed attempts to use his image in the election campaign by then President Donald Trump and had also famously apologised for his presence at an event that created a perception of military involvement in domestic politics. He bluntly reiterated that the Armed Forces did not serve a King or Dictator, "We take an oath to the Constitution, not an individual". The unflinchingly apolitical stance of the American Military leadership was pivotal in



denying the recklessly divisive attempt of Donald Trump to overcome the shock of the 6th January 2021, insurrection moment. Amongst the few US Presidents with virtually no Military connection, yet with an unearned urge to appropriate the institution of the Armed Forces to build his political muscularity, Trump was denied the same by the ramrod straight and constitutional posture of the US Armed Forces leadership, who simply refused to bend.

Not only did the likes of Mark Milley stand up for constitutional propriety but also for widening opportunity and intake for societal 'minorities' e.g., blacks, who remained vastly underrepresented at top leadership levels. A couple of years back, Milley pointed out that while Gen Charles Brown was amongst the 2% Air Force pilots of African-American ethnicity when he joined the Air Force in 1984, the ratio of Blacks as Air Force pilots was still an abysmal 2%, over 35 years later! Incidentally, Mark Milley himself is a 'White' and was serving under arguably the 'Whitest of White' President i.e., Donald Trump, who may not have perceived Milley's concern as a pressing issue, given his penchant and politics of majoritarianism. But then, such is the cloth from which the 'Uniform' ought to be sewn.



NOT ONLY DID THE LIKES OF MARK MILLEY STAND UP FOR CONSTITUTIONAL PROPRIETY BUT ALSO FOR WIDENING OPPORTUNITY AND INTAKE FOR SOCIETAL 'MINORITIES', EG BLACKS, WHO REMAINED VASTLY UNDER-REPRESENTED AT TOP LEADERSHIP LEVELS

Even General Brown when questioned on the aftermath of George Floyd's murder had released a video of his own experiences (in a non-partisan way) where he accepted that as a black man in America his black experiences, "didn't always sing of liberty and equality" - such a powerful comment from him, was not held against him in his subsequent career trajectory. His commentary was fully compliant with the Constitution and apolitical, even if it riled the dispensation, then.

Now, the Pentagon will see yet another product of a fine American culture i.e., 'Military Families', in the form of Gen Charles Brown Jr. As Biden alluded, "General Brown is a warrior, descended from a proud line of warriors" - his father had served for 30 years and retired as Colonel, while his grandfather was drafted in World War 2. Soldering is a proud and immensely respected tradition in the American consciousness, and President Joe Biden remains justifiably proud of his late son, Major Beau Biden (Judge Advocate General's Corps), who served in Iraq (including a 7-month deployment in a combat zone).

From an Indian perspective, General Brown is supposed to be an authority on the challenges posed by

Chinese expansionism, especially given his experience as Air Component Commander for the United States Indo-Pacific Command. He has also visited India during the successful completion of a joint Indo-US Air Force exercise, Cope India, focused on enhancing capabilities, aircrew tactics and force employment. He had noted then, "Cope India is just one part of an ongoing effort to strengthen the relationship between the US Air Force and the Indian Air Force". General Brown's familiarity along with that of Secretary of Defense as a former Commander of US Central Command (responsible for military operations in the Middle East & Afghanistan theatre), ensures that the top two in the US Security apparatus are well-versed with India's dual challenges of China and Pakistan.

Finally, as Lloyd Austin hailed Gen Brown, "Throughout his career, he has insisted on doing right by his teammates and their families", this rings true for the 'Uniformed' fraternity universally, as the baton moves seamlessly from one to the other.

(The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry. The views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

HOODWINKING VOTERS WITH FREEBIES

Sir - Buoyed by landslide victory in the Karnataka Assembly election, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has announced 100 units free electricity, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has laid strong foundation of freebies culture and it has not gone unrewarded. In the case of Karnataka, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar have acted in haste and are now repenting at leisure without showing that they are repenting. They are putting up a brave face saying that they would never go back on their promise. It is the wont for all the political parties to make announcements of welfare schemes or freebies without any condition before election. Conditions start trickling out soon after the election is over and the party is voted to power with people believing that the announcements made are implemented in extending the benefits. Politicians are hoodwinking the voters without giving any inkling of the possible conditions to be stipulated after the election. It is obligatory on the part of the government to give benefits without conditions whenever no conditions are stipulated before the election.

If the conditions are attached after the election, the courts have to direct the government to extend the benefits to all irrespective of the economic status of the people. If it is done so, the political parties clearly outline the conditions before election for availing benefits. It will enable the voters to or to not vote for a particular party. The political parties will eschew the practice of announcement of freebies without conditions before election and with conditions after election. Chaotic condition has prevailed in Karnataka after the freebies of high magnitude have been announced. The 200 units free electricity will exclude a large number of consumers if the contemplated idea of extending the benefit only to those consuming 200 units or less is implement-

IPL earnings show the way



This IPL - 2023 has earned about ₹49,000 crore for the BCCI via split media rights over five years (to the two companies Disney Star and Mukesh Ambani's JioCinema). As a bonus, almost every IPL T20 match is selling Housefull at almost every stadium. The Indian government

must take inspiration from IPL's pooling type method to earn big revenue via rather than periodically increasing taxes on essential goods.

Taking a leaf out of this, the Government should ask every citizen to contribute ₹1 or ₹10 or ₹100 ... depending on its funds needed. This way the government can coolly earn ₹140 crore / ₹1400 crore / ₹14,000 crore without burdening the citizens. Since the financial burden is equally shared, big pain will not be felt. Even one day's salary of all employees can be cut periodically. Better limit contribution from the poor to at the most ₹10. Another way is, the Government should nationalise the IPL T-20 tournaments to earn big money (instead of a periodical tax increase).

Ganapathi Bhat | Akola

ed. When it has been announced that 200 units of electricity are free, it unambiguously means that the first 200 units are free and the consumption in excess of 200 units is chargeable. Freebies are nothing but bribery.

KV Seetharamaiah | Bengaluru

OVERCOMING WATER SCARCITY

Sir - Water scarcity is a pressing issue today that demands immediate attention. By adopting efficient water conservation practices, we can make a significant difference. Emphasising the importance of responsible water usage, promoting rainwater harvesting and implementing modern irrigation techniques can conserve this vital resource. Public awareness campaigns and educational initiatives should highlight the significance of water conservation, encouraging citizens to adopt simple yet impactful habits like fixing leakages and reducing excessive water usage.

Jubel D'Cruz | Mumbai

POLITICS IS HURTING MANIPUR

Sir - So far more than 75 people have died in Manipur violence. Countless properties and houses have been burnt. Both Imphal

and New Delhi have governments of the same ideology. Which is nowadays called double engine government. Despite this, instead of decreasing, the violence is increasing day by day. The central government kept spending lip-service for the first 20 days as all of Karnataka was busy campaigning. At last Home Minister Shri Amit Shah visits Manipur but he does not do what he should have done. His silence on the order of the Imphal High Court which was later refused to be overturned by the Supreme Court i.e. the order granting Scheduled Tribe status to the majority Meitai community is surprising.

Imphal valley is dominated by Meitei. People of Meitai caste belong to the Hindu community. The hill districts are dominated by the Naga and Kuki tribes. The recent violence was seen more in Churachandpur hill districts. The game of keeping silence on the real issue of both the governments is actually a game of religious polarization, thus the political line of division between the minorities and the majority is drawn behind the violence.

Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshepur

The multiple benefits of community-driven learning

Learners band together in a supportive environment, pooling knowledge and focusing on growing personally as well as professionally



VAIBHAV SISINTY

Remember the days when getting a job meant you were pretty much set for life, and learning one skill meant you could get through your entire career until retirement? Well, those days are long gone! We're living in an age where tech is the real boss, and it's changing faster than you can say 'artificial intelligence'.

So, what's the secret to staying employable in this rapidly changing world? It's simple: never stop learning, folks. That's where upskilling comes in. And as more of us realise the importance of keeping up with the times, community-driven learning is starting to make waves.

Community-driven learning is a whole new approach where learners band together in a supportive environment, pooling their knowledge and focusing on growing personally, as well as professionally. It's all about learning together and getting better together.

Collective knowledge and experience - The thing about community learning is that you've got people from all walks of life coming together. That's a treasure trove of



insights and perspectives to tap into! Active discussions, project collaborations, and sharing of experiences can enable learners to tap into this extensive pool and gain a much broader understanding of the subject. Further, the peer-to-peer learning opportunities enrich the experience and provide real-world opinions that classic educational settings don't usually offer.

Enhanced motivation and engagement - Let's face it, learning on your own can get lonely. But when you part of a community, there's a sense of belonging and accountability. You're not just learning buddies; you're each other's cheerleaders. It's that sense of camaraderie that makes the learning experience a whole lot more enriching and fun.

Networking opportunities - Since the premise of

community-driven upskilling is based on collaborative learning and engagement, it fosters networking among learners. Also, learners might find their future business partner, their next job, or just some cool people to help them stay updated on the latest industry trends. It's precisely connections like these that we turn to in times of professional hardships, and what's a better way to forge these meaningful connections than by learning and struggling on projects together?

Continuous learning and lifelong engagement - Community-driven learning is not only helpful in better understanding different industries and functions but also fosters a lifelong learning and development mindset. As the skills, tools, and technologies keep changing every few years, it has become crucial for the modern workforce to regularly upskill, relearn, and engage with others to remain up to date on trends and technologies. Community-driven upskilling initiatives bring together like-minded individuals who all have the same

drive for continuous learning and growth.

Flexibility - Community-based learning offers great flexibility in terms of upskilling. The courses offered by digital platforms are of short durations such as one to four weeks, and sessions are held on weekends or in the evenings to accommodate learners with full-time jobs. The courses are affordable and what's not to love about learning real-world skills from industry experts, all from the comfort of your own home?

IN CONCLUSION

So, here's the bottom line: community-driven upskilling is revolutionizing professional development. It's not just about climbing the ladder; it's about fostering rapid growth. For those new to the corporate world, it's your pathway to better job satisfaction and stronger compensation. And this isn't a fleeting trend. It's about long-term resilience in your career. So get ready, because this journey into upskilling is just getting started.

(The author is Founder & CEO, of Growth School)



FIRST COLUMN

KARNATAKA GOVT TO CREATE A MILLION JOBS

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



LAKSHMI VENKATARAMAN VENKATESAN

With expectations running high, the newly minted Karnataka Government of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has both an obligation and an opportunity to redress the unemployment concerns raised by 28% of Karnataka's youth and fulfil their aspirations. Rahul Gandhi, taking full cognisance of this issue, has promised 10 lakh jobs in the next five years. The Congress Government led by Siddaramaiah can get a head start on fulfilling these promises, in its first 100 days, by laying the foundation for sustainable job creation and by instituting programs and policies for mass skilling and entrepreneurship.

The challenges for Karnataka are manifold. As per an analysis of Karnataka PLFS data, overall youth unemployment is at nearly 16% but of that subset, educated young people are the most vulnerable. Nearly 35% of educated young people are unemployed and only 14% of women are gainfully employed.

To give immediate relief to the unemployed, Rahul Gandhi has proposed the Yuva Nidhi scheme of providing Rs. 3000 per month to unemployed graduates and Rs. 1500 every month to unemployed diploma holders. This, however, needs to be augmented by bold, new long-term solutions that address the root cause of unemployment rather than symptom management. While doing so the new government needs to avoid the pitfalls of past misguided interventions - mismatches between types of skilling and industry needs and mandating the private sector to hire a fixed number of workers - to name a few. Mass entrepreneurship in Karnataka has the potential to empower a significant number of young people to set up their own enterprises spread across a wide range of geographies - especially in Northern Karnataka and in rural areas.

An imaginative collaboration between government, private sector, civil society, and youth could be a game changer in democratising enterprise creation, setting up innovation funds, and building industry-specific programmes and partnerships with incubators, accelerators and youth-centric NGOs. To make entrepreneurial opportunities widely accessible, awareness generation campaigns can be launched through Rural Business Idea Contests, and Entrepreneurial Hackathons in educational institutions. Entrepreneurship needs to be made an integral part of education in schools and colleges in Karnataka similar to what the Delhi Government has done.



Banks must lend more to micro-enterprises rather than dole out small loans (the average Mudra loan is Rs. 27,000) to create viable businesses that build assets and generate jobs. Additional efforts should be made to support women as 85% of them face challenges in availing bank loans.

Karnataka can also launch state-wide mentor programmes, particularly for the educated unemployed as mentoring greatly improves chances of entrepreneurs' success, according to a study conducted across 17 countries by Sage. Rural and sector-specific entrepreneurship can be encouraged by providing rural-specific infrastructure, connectivity, grants, subsidies, low-interest loans, and tax breaks. Special schemes, grants, and mentorship programs should be instated to address gender disparities and promote gender equity. Digital entrepreneurship can be encouraged through digital literacy training, support for digital platforms and marketplaces, and digital innovation.

Key gaps in the policy landscape need to be filled by providing an enabling ecosystem with infrastructure and connectivity, simplifying regulations and expanding incentives to non-technology and non-Bengaluru-based startups. These steps, planned and executed synergistically, can help Karnataka realise the vision of creating 10 lakh jobs in five years for its youth and women, through a grassroots mass entrepreneurship movement spanning every town, taluka and village.

(The writer is the Founding and Managing Trustee of Bharatiya Yuva Shakti Trust)

India's stake in Awami League's Victory

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



HIRANMAY KARLEKAR



India must do everything possible, within four corners of international law and with absolute respect for Bangladesh's sovereignty, to help Sheikh Hasina-led Bangladesh Awami League win the parliamentary elections scheduled in that country in January 2024. Begum Khaleda Zia-led Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), the main opposition party, which is allied to the Bangladesh Jama'at-e-Islami (Jama'at) and other fundamentalist Islamist organisations, is pathologically anti-India. Bangladesh will again become a centre of anti-India activity and promoter of north-eastern India's secessionist insurgent groups, should a BNP-Jama'at-led coalition return to power in Dhaka.

A look at the record of the BNP-Jama'at-led coalition government when it was in power from 2001 to 2006, makes this clear. The issuance of threats to India, the active promotion of secessionist insurgent violence in north-eastern India, and attempts to create a climate of hostility toward India in Bangladesh were the three main features of Dhaka's policy towards Delhi. An important example of the threats was one by its foreign minister, M. Morshed Khan, at a seminar in Dhaka on September 7, 2004. Referring to what he said were restrictions imposed by India on the import of goods from his country, he said, "Dhaka could end India's three billion-dollar trade here by issuing an SRO (Statutory Rogatory Order) on all Indian goods entering Bangladesh."

Striking an even more minatory note, he said, "Bangladesh is India-locked. Delhi should also remember that the seven north-eastern Indian states are Bangladesh-locked." While an attempt to



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

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

intimidate India was implicit in his reference to the vulnerability of India's north-eastern states vis-à-vis Bangladesh, an attempt to sow discord between these states and the rest of India was scripted into his blasting of the "Central Bank of India" (Reserve Bank of India?) for acting unilaterally against the interests of the common people of India (by imposing non-tariff barriers) such as not allowing individual states to open letters of credit without permission from Delhi.

The policy of providing sanctuary and support to north-eastern India's rebel groups, began when Bangladesh was East Pakistan, but halted after liberation in 1971 when Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was in power and resumed after his assassination. Begum Khaleda Zia's government pursued it with vigour. In fact, when she was the leader of the opposition in Bangladesh's national parliament, she had referred to rebels of the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) and other insurgent groups of north-eastern India as "freedom fighters." Not surprisingly, her government ridiculed India's protests supported by information. Referring to the list of insurgent camps in Bangladesh provided by India's Border Security Force (BSF), Major-General Mohammad Jahangir Alam Khan of the Bangladesh Rifles, visiting India for talks with BSF's director-general, Ajay Raj Sharma, said in Delhi on September 28, 2004,

"There is not a single camp in Bangladesh. We looked for the camps' locations given in the BSF list. Some of the addresses were of our cantonment area and of our headquarters....some of the addresses even pertained to the Bay of Bengal." In sharp contrast, the present government under Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has not only shut these camps down but handed over to India some of the key insurgent leaders it could apprehend.

As a part of its attempt to create an anti-India temper in Bangladesh, Begum Khaleda Zia's government even insinuated that India was behind the dastardly grenade attack on the Awami League's rally in Dhaka on August 21, 2004. Sheikh Hasina survived—albeit with injuries—the attack, which was aimed at killing her and eliminating the Awami League's top leadership. Twenty-four (including 22 on the spot) died and 300 were injured. Among those who succumbed to their injuries was Ivy Rahman, secretary of the Awami League's women's affairs wing and wife of Zillur Rahman, then the party's general secretary and subsequently the country's president.

Justice Joyrul Abedin, a senior judge of the High Court Division of Bangladesh's Supreme Court, appointed on August 22 as a single-person commission to inquire into the attack, submitted his report on October 2, 2004. He said at a press briefing before submitting his report that local and

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

This clearly implied that India could have been the country. Significantly, among those sentenced by a special tribunal on October 10, 2018, for complicity in the grenade attack, were important BNP leaders.

Flawed ICMR paper on vaping continues to cause harm

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

While other countries reconsider their tobacco control options and embrace tobacco harm reduction, with some even reversing previous bans on nicotine vaping, we in India seem obsessed with the "implementation" of an ill-conceived ban on ENDS/E-cigarettes. People have even filed PILs against e-cigarettes and become instant celebrities.

In all this noise, no one appears to care that regular combustible cigarettes and tobacco remain widely available to all ages - with the last GYTS (Global Youth Tobacco Survey - 4) even showing 8.5% of current underage tobacco users with an average age of initiation at 9-11 years (Total population of 0-16-year-olds: ~ 38-40 crores or



KIRAN MELKOTE

25% of our population) - there are multiple tobacco sellers in plain sight of schools yet we hardly bat an eyelid. Why is this not worrying anyone enough to file PILs against this? Why no one is calling for the "implementation" of the cigarette and tobacco laws banning sales to minors?

Yet, if we are fixated on e-cigarettes or rather nicotine vapes (or I'll start calling nicotine gum cigarette gum), it's time we take a long hard look at the infamous ICMR white paper on ENDS released 4 years ago that led to the ban on the manufacture, transport, sale etc. of nicotine vapes. The paper called for a complete ban on vaping but the law does allow personal use.

This paper was roundly criticized at the time by

renowned global experts as well as by senior doctors at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi.

The claim of harm reduction was incorrectly assessed by the ICMR paper. The contrast should have been between risks posed by nicotine vapes versus risks posed by cigarettes and bidis. Instead, the contrast was between uncertain long-term health effects versus widespread nicotine addiction in youth. So what harm exactly does "nicotine addiction" cause? Especially if the nicotine is separate from tobacco.

Looking at the various proven carcinogens and toxic chemicals in tobacco and the clear absence of these in nicotine vapes, there is no magical process by which

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

Nicotine vapes were also implicated in the EVALI outbreak where illegal THC cut with Vitamin E acetate was found to be the culprit.

Despite the wide availability of nicotine vapes, there has not been a corresponding rise in EVALI. Papers with an unsound methodology that claimed vaping caused heart disease have also been retracted.

The ICMR paper also called into question "tobacco cessation claims" of nicotine vapes saying they were unproven. On the contrary, nicotine vapes are now the most popular means to quit smoking worldwide. A recent Cochrane review in Nov 2022 (78 studies, 40 RCTs, total of 22052 subjects) showed "high-certainty evidence that ECs with nicotine increase quit rates compared to NRT". The UK government has even launched the "swap to stop" programme where 1 million

smokers will receive free nicotine vapes to reach a smoke-free society by 2030. A statement by 15 past presidents of SRNT (Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco) calls for considering the use of nicotine vaping as a means to double the quit rate. The preponderance of evidence globally is in favour of nicotine vaping as preferable to smoking.

A prominent concern also raised by the ICMR paper was about vaping being a "gateway" into tobacco use and ending up in a "nicotine addiction" even after cessation of smoking or as some folks have put it: exchanging one addiction for another. We need to consider two things here. First, nicotine is not carcinogenic and is not associat-

ed with the detrimental effects of tobacco. There are no studies that have established any detrimental effects of long-term nicotine replacements.

Second, the "gateway" theory has been comprehensively debunked in the real world. The same youth who smoke tend to also vape. It's not vaping that has suddenly led to young people picking up a smoking habit.

The ban on nicotine vaping has not served the cause of tobacco control. It has instead boosted cigarette sales and led to the current situation where youth awareness of vaping has increased to nearly 25%. A situation where tobacco control people think nicotine vapes are more dangerous than cigarettes or bidis and have largely ignored the latter.

Debt ceiling deal gets Senate nod

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

But making any changes at

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

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



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

Iran releases 1 Danish, two Austrian citizens

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

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

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

Albanese stresses need for diplomacy, guardrails in dealing with China

AP ■ SINGAPORE

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

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



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

audience as Albanese spoke.

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

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

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

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

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

Jens Stoltenberg heading to Turkiye in fresh push on Swedish membership

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

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

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

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

Biden falls from stage, says he got 'sandbagged'

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Prachanda may visit China next month

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

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

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

Elahi re-arrested

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

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

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

Anti-terror court extends Imran bail till June 13

PTI ■ LAHORE

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

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

Usman Buzdar to quit politics

PTI ■ LAHORE

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

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



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

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

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

Violence erupted across Pakistan on May 9 when crick-

Buzdar told journalists during a press conference here. Buzdar, whose term as chief minister was cut short in March 2022, said he had always stood with the armed forces of Pakistan and would continue to do so, Geo News reported. "I have always committed to politics of nobility [...] but due to the current circumstances, I have decided to quit politics," the former chief minister, once considered close to Khan, the PTI chairman, said.

The former chief minister called on all stakeholders to reach a consensus and asked the authorities to release all those who were innocent from jail.

eter-turned-politician Khan was arrested by the National Accountability Board (NAB) from the premises of Islamabad High Court in a corruption case. Khan was released on bail two days later.

Centrist parties alarmed over support for German far-right

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

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

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

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

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

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

"We bear responsibility for changing this again quickly," she said late on Thursday. AfD previously hit 18 per cent in the DeutschlandTrend survey in September 2018 amid discord in then Chancellor Angela Merkel's coalition government.

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

Office of the Superintending Engineer
1st Circle, Public Works Department, Almora
Phone/Fax: 05962-230295 Email: sepwdalm@rediffmail.com

Letter No. : 2281(I)/Nivida-01/2023-24 Dated : 02/06/2023

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING (E-Tendering)
Short Term E-TENDER NOTICE

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

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

Dev Shah crowned Spelling Bee champ

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

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

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

"I don't know if it's settled in. My legs are still shaking," he said at the competition in National Harbor, Maryland. "I made a lot of sacrifices these last three months and I'm glad I made them," Shah said. "I'm glad to now get back what I sacrificed." After much anticipation about a possible spell-



off, smiling Shah won by correctly spelling "psammophile," a plant or animal that thrives in sandy areas, the Washington Post newspaper reported. "Psammo meaning sand, Greek?" he asked. "Phile, meaning love, Greek?" Shah instantly identified

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

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

"I knew I had to study," Shah said. "It paid off." Other words that Shah correctly spelled during the competition include: bathypytometer, tolster, rommack, aegagrus, schistorrhachis, poliorcetics, Perioeci, exhortation, cocomat and ardoise.

'Stop sending weapons to the battlefield'

China's Ukraine envoy urges govts

AP ■ BEIJING

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

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

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

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

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

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



China's goal is promoting peace talks and a cessation of hostilities," said Li, a former ambassador to Moscow.

European governments promised Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy missiles, tanks and drones when he visited Britain, France and Germany in mid-May.

Ukraine has received Patriot anti-missile systems from the United States, Germany and the Netherlands. The United States, Spain, Germany and France have pledged a total of 300 tanks.

US President Joe Biden earlier warned Xi of unspecified consequences if Beijing provided arms or military supplies to support Russia's invasion. China is buying more Russian oil and gas, which helps to shore up the Kremlin's export revenue after the United States, Europe and Japan cut off most purchases, but it appears to be avoiding anything that might trigger Western sanctions.

Li repeated Beijing's call for respect for the "territorial integrity of all countries" but gave no indication China was pressing Moscow to give back captured territory. Putin's forces occupy the Crimean Peninsula and parts of eastern Ukraine with mainly Russian-speaking populations. "China advocates for a balanced and just way to address security concerns," Li said. Li, who also visited Poland, France,

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

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

He didn't name any party but used language Chinese officials invoke when criticising US dominance in global affairs. "Who is the real troublemaker in the world and the real security threat in the world? The global community has a clear understanding of that," Li said. Li defended Beijing's "strategic partnership of coordination" with Russia as more beneficial to the world than other governments he didn't name.

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

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

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

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



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

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

AP ■ PARIS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

'No truce sans peace deal that includes Russia withdrawal'

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Kyiv thwarts 6th air assault in 6 days

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

That could be a Ukrainian strategy to disperse Russian

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

Washington (AP): The Biden administration is ready to talk to Russia without conditions about a future nuclear arms control framework even while taking countermeasures in response to the Kremlin's decision to suspend the last nuclear arms control treaty between the two countries, White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan said on Friday.

President Vladimir Putin announced in February he was suspending Russia's cooperation with the New START Treaty's provisions for nuclear warhead and missile inspections, a move that came as tensions worsened after Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. Russia did say it would respect the treaty's caps on nuclear weapons.

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

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

Boris offers unredacted WA messages to UK COVID inquiry

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

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

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

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

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



Mawar threatens floods and mudslides in some regions

AP ■ NAHA

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

Warnings were issued in parts of western and central Japan, with up to 25 centimeters (10 inches) of rain forecast through Saturday evening. Residents in vulnerable areas, including those in Mie, Wakayama, Aichi and Shizuoka prefectures in central Japan, were warned of the potential for flooding and mudslides and advised to go to evacuation centers if possible. Television footage showed swollen rivers in residential areas in Wakayama city, including one where brown water rose as high as the bottom of a bridge over it.

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

AP ■ TOKYO

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

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

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

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

A shrinking and aging pop-



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Raghav Tiwari, Advocate
Ch. 830, Patalia House Courts,
New Delhi - 110081 Mob. +91-9879188328

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

Raghav Tiwari, Advocate
Ch. 830, Patalia House Courts,
New Delhi - 110081 Mob. +91-9879188328

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

REGISTRAR
nil/12/107/2023/24651 Dated CHD - 6/2/2023

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

Sd/-
Coordinator
NA/12/168/18/2023/24684 Dated CHD - 6/2/2023

APPENDIX IV A
(See proviso to Rule 8(6))
Sale Notice for sale of Immovable Property
E-Auction sale notice for sale of immovable assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described Immovable Property mortgaged to Indiabulls Housing Finance Ltd. [CIN: L65922DL2005PLC136029] ("Secured Creditor"), the constructive possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of the Secured Creditor, will be sold on "as is where is", "as is what is" and "whatever there is" basis on 06.07.2023 from 02.00 P.M. to 04.00 P.M., for recovery of Rs. 11,73,057/- (Rupees Eleven Lakh Seventy Three Thousand Fifty Seven only) pending towards Loan Account No. HHLDCP0400304, by way of outstanding principal, arrears (including accrued late charges) and interest till 22.05.2023 with applicable future interest in terms of the Loan Agreement and other related loan document(s) w.e.f. 23.05.2023 along with legal expenses and other charges due to the Secured Creditor from RAHUL, HARI DASS, SANDEEP, LOVE KUMAR SETHI and KRISHNA SETHI.
The Reserve Price of the Immovable Property will be Rs. 10,00,000/- (Rupees Ten Lakh only) and the Earnest Money Deposit ("EMD") will be Rs. 1,00,000/- (Rupees One Lakh only) i.e. equivalent to 10% of the Reserve Price.

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY
FLAT NO. UGF-3, UPPER GROUND FLOOR (REAR RIGHT SIDE- SOUTHERN EASTERN PORTION), PLOT NO. B-12/18, DLF ANKUR VIHAR, LONI, HADBAST VILLAGE, SADULLAHABAD, GHAZIABAD, UTTAR PRADESH, 201002.
For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided on the website of the Secured Creditor i.e. www.indiabullshomefinance.com. For bidding, log on to www.auctionfocus.in

Date : 29.05.2023
Place : GHAZIABAD Sd/
Authorized Officer
INDIABULLS HOUSING FINANCE LTD.

G20 NORTHEN RAILWAY
CORRIGENDUM
Ref: I Tender Notice No. 94/2022-23 dated 17.03.2023.
ii)-Tender No. 15225019 due on 14.06.2023.
In inference to above tender, the due date has been extended from 14.06.2023 to 14.07.2023. All other terms and conditions remain unchanged.
The corrigendum has been published on website www.irpsa.gov.in. 1695/2023

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

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

Sd/
REGISTRAR
nil/12/108/2023/24654 Dated CHD - 6/2/2023

UNITED TEXTILES LIMITED
Regd. Off:- 7th K.M. Stone, Barwala Road, Hisar
CIN: L17115HR1993PLC032092
STATEMENT OF AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS
FOR THE QUARTER AND YEAR ENDED 31MARCH, 2023
(Rs. in Lakhs, except per share data)

Particulars	Quarter Ended		Year Ended	
	31.03.2023	31.12.2022	31.03.2022	31.03.2022
	Audited	Unaudited	Audited	Audited
I Revenue from operations	350.64	357.51	444.38	1652.88
II Other Income	(5.41)	9.33	2.92	5.85
Total Revenue (I+II)	345.23	366.84	447.30	1658.73
IV Expenses				
(a) Cost of materials consumed	254.52	137.38	252.33	953.50
(b) Purchases of stock-in-trade	22.10	22.97	-	67.52
(c) Changes in inventories of finished goods work-in-progress and stock-in-trade	(17.54)	61.64	0.33	(37.33)
(d) Employee benefits expense	16.22	22.67	15.63	59.81
(e) Finance costs	(5.76)	16.50	7.33	40.44
(f) Depreciation and amortization expense	24.80	31.60	22.23	112.13
(g) Other expenses	49.71	73.68	149.29	458.57
Total expenses (IV)	344.05	366.43	447.14	1654.63
V Profit/(Loss) before exceptional items and tax (III-V)	1.18	0.41	0.16	4.10
VI Exceptional items				
VII Profit/(Loss) after exceptional items but before tax (V+VI)	1.18	0.41	0.16	4.10
VIII Tax expense:				
(i) Current tax	(3.39)	1.43	2.00	2.54
(ii) Deferred tax	3.72	(1.42)	(1.30)	1.07
Total tax expense	0.33	0.01	0.70	1.63
IX Profit/(Loss) for the period From continuing operations (VII-VIII)	0.85	0.40	(0.54)	3.03
X Other comprehensive income (OCI):				
A. Items that will not be reclassified to profit or loss				
(i) Re-measurement gain/(losses) on defined benefit plans	2.00	-	0.04	2.00
Income tax effect on above	(0.50)	-	(0.01)	(0.50)
(ii) Equity instrument through Other Comprehensive Income (Gain on Fair Valuation of Long Term Investment)	-	-	-	745.88
Income tax effect on above	-	-	-	-
Total Other Comprehensive Income (X)	1.50	-	0.03	1.50
XI Total Comprehensive Income (Comprising Profit/(Loss) and Other comprehensive Income for the period) (IX+X)	2.35	0.40	(0.51)	4.53
XII Reserve/Other Equity				
XIV Earnings per equity share				
(1) Basic	0.03	0.01	(0.02)	0.10
(2) Diluted	0.03	0.01	(0.02)	0.10

Notes:
1. The aforesaid results were placed before and reviewed by the Audit Committee at its meeting held on 30th May, 2023 and approved by the Board of Directors at its meeting held on the same date. The Statutory auditors have carried out limited review of these financial results.
2. There are no separate reportable segments as per the Indian Accounting Standard (Ind AS-108) on segment reporting.
3. The figures have been regrouped/rearranged wherever considered necessary to facilitate comparison.

For United Textiles Limited
Vivek Agarwal
(Whole Time Director)
DIN No. 07079208
Place : Hisar
Date : 30th May, 2023

Sensex, Nifty rise on gains in metal, auto stocks

PTI ■ MUMBAI
Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty closed higher on Friday after two days of fall, helped by buying in metal, telecom and auto stocks amid a firm trend in global markets.

Automakers led by Maruti Suzuki India, Hyundai, Mahindra & Mahindra reporting robust wholesales of passenger vehicles and GST collections crossing Rs 1.50 lakh crore for the third straight month in May also added to the optimism.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 118.57 points or 0.19 per cent to settle at 62,547.11. During the day, it jumped 291.3 points or 0.46 per cent to 62,719.84.

The NSE Nifty advanced 46.35 points or 0.25 per cent to finish at 18,534.10.

On a weekly basis, the BSE benchmark gained 45.42 points

or 0.07 per cent, and the Nifty climbed 34.75 points or 0.18 per cent.

"This week, the Indian market was volatile. However, it was able to regain momentum led by a positive domestic outlook accompanied by global cues. Auto stocks garnered attention as sales numbers for May came in strong, with a sequential recovery boosting sentiment across the sector.

"The hope that the Fed will refrain from a rate hike has provided comfort to the global equity market," Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said.

Tata Steel was the biggest gainer in the Sensex pack, rising nearly 2 per cent, followed by Maruti, Mahindra & Mahindra, Sun Pharma, Larsen & Toubro, Titan, Bharti Airtel, Power Grid, ITC, State Bank of India and Nestle.

In contrast, Infosys, Wipro,



HCL Technologies, Tata Consultancy Services, IndusInd Bank, Tech Mahindra, Reliance Industries and Bajaj Finance were among the laggards.

"Auto stocks were in focus after reporting better-than-expected sales numbers for May. Also, with the monsoon

arrival expected early next week, the rural and agri-related stock would also be in focus," Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Retail Research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd, said.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge climbed



0.60 per cent and smallcap index jumped 0.57 per cent.

Among the indices, metal climbed 1.71 per cent, realty jumped 1.33 per cent, telecommunication (1.06 per cent), auto (0.98 per cent), industrials (0.85 per cent), consumer discretionary (0.83 per cent), com-

modities (0.73 per cent), healthcare (0.72 per cent) and consumer durables (0.67 per cent). IT, tech, utilities, energy and oil & gas were the laggards.

Global stocks rose on Friday as sentiment was lifted by signs the US Fed will skip a rate hike at its next meeting and

the approval of US debt ceiling legislation, Deepak Jasani, Head of Retail Research, HDFC Securities, said.

In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong ended in the green.

Equity markets in Europe were trading in positive territory. The US markets ended higher on Thursday.

Manufacturing activities in India advanced further and touched a 31-month high in May, supported by a stronger increase in new orders and favourable market conditions, which in turn generated more employment opportunities, a monthly survey said on Thursday.

Automakers led by Maruti Suzuki India, Hyundai, Mahindra & Mahindra, and Toyota Kirloskar Motor on Thursday reported robust wholesales of passenger vehicles in the domestic market for May riding on strong demand for SUVs.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude jumped 1.74 per cent to USD 75.57 a barrel.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 71.07 crore on Thursday, according to exchange data.

The rupee appreciated by 9 paise to 82.31 (provisional) against the US dollar on Friday.

"With markets on the tenterhooks ahead of the debt ceiling vote in the US Senate and OPEC+ meeting over the weekend, Monday's trading session could witness heightened volatility," Riches Vanara, Technical And Derivatives Analyst, stoxbox, said.

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Regulator Irdai on Friday directed SBI Life Insurance Company to takeover the policy liabilities of around two lakh policies along with assets of Sahara India Life Insurance Co Ltd (SILIC) with immediate effect.

The decision was taken at the meeting of the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai) in view of deteriorating financial health of the SILIC.

"The Authority has identified SBI Life Insurance Company Limited (SBI Life), which is one of the largest life insurers in the country with satisfactory financials, as the acquirer insurer of the life insurance business of SILIC.

"SBI Life shall take over the policy liabilities of around two lakh policies of SILIC, backed by the policyholders' assets, with immediate effect," Irdai said in its order.

In a statement, the Irdai said it has also taken necessary steps to ensure the smooth transition for all policyholders of SILIC.

A committee comprising of Member (Actuary), Member (Life), and Member (F&I) has been constituted for implementation of the order in a time-bound manner.

"SBI Life has been directed to take adequate steps to reach out to the policyholders of SILIC, with regard to servicing of policies, including setting up of a dedicated cell to address the queries of the policyholders of SILIC, and also publish necessary details on their website," it said.

Sahara India Life Insurance was granted a Certificate of Registration in 2004 to transact the business of life insurance. In view of the certain serious issues on the financial propriety and governance aspects of the insurer, the authority had appointed an administrator to manage the business of the insurer in 2017, Irdai said.

The insurer was also not allowed to underwrite new business. Thereafter, further directions were issued to the insurer to meet the regulatory requirements.

"Despite being provided ample opportunities and sufficient time to ensure compliances, SILIC has failed to comply with directions of the authority and take any affirmative steps to protect the interests of its policyholders," the regulator said.

Further, the policy data of SILIC reveals that the company's portfolio is showing run-off trend.

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Friday directed edible oil associations to further reduce the maximum retail price (MRP) of major edible oils by Rs 8-12 per litre with immediate effect, in line with the global market.

"Some companies which have not reduced their prices and their MRP is higher than other brands have also been advised to reduce their prices," the food ministry said after a meeting, chaired by food secretary Sanjeev Chopra, with the industry representatives.

Price to distributors by the manufacturers and refiners also



needs to be reduced with immediate effect so that the price drop is not diluted in any way, it said.

It was also impressed upon that whenever a reduction in price to distributors is made by the manufacturers/refiners, the benefit should be passed on to

the consumers by the industry and the ministry may be kept informed on a regular basis, it added.

With the edible oil prices continuing to show a downward trend and set to witness further reduction by the edible oil

industry, the ministry said, "the Indian consumers can expect to pay less for their edible oils. The falling edible oil prices will help in further cooling inflation fears if any."

Industry representatives including Solvent Extraction Association of India and Indian Vegetable Oil Producers' Association were present in the second meeting convened within a month to discuss further reduction in retail prices of edible oils amidst a continued fall in the global prices.

In the meeting, the ministry said the international prices of imported edible oils are continuing on a downward trend

and therefore, the edible oil industry needs to ensure that the prices in the domestic market also drop commensurately.

The industry was told to ensure the price drop in the global market is passed on expeditiously to the end consumers and not in a delayed manner as is observed now.

"The leading edible oil associations were advised to take up the issue with their members immediately and ensure that the maximum retail price (MRP) of major edible oils to be reduced further by Rs 8-12 per litre with immediate effect," the ministry said in a statement released after the meeting.

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

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank on Friday proposed to establish robust governance mechanisms for authorised non-bank payment system operators (PSOs) to effectively address emerging cyber security risks.

Towards this goal, the central bank has issued a "Draft Master Directions on Cyber Resilience and Digital Payment Security Controls for Payment System Operators."

The draft directions cover governance mechanisms for the identification, assessment, monitoring and management of cybersecurity risks, including information security risks and vulnerabilities. They also specify baseline security measures to ensure safe and secure digital



payment transactions.

The central bank said existing instructions concerning security and risk mitigation for card payments, prepaid payment instruments (PPIs) and mobile banking will remain in effect.

"To effectively identify, monitor, control and manage cyber and technology related risks arising out of linkages of PSOs with

unregulated entities, who are part of their digital payments ecosystem, PSOs shall ensure adherence to these Directions by such unregulated entities as well, subject to a mutual agreement," the draft directions said.

The RBI has invited stakeholders to provide comments and feedback on the draft by June 30. "The Board of Directors (Board) of the PSO shall be responsible for ensuring adequate oversight over information security risks, including cyber risk and cyber resilience," the draft said.

Additionally, as per the draft, PSOs will be required to develop an approved Cyber Crisis Management Plan (CCMP) to detect, contain, respond to, and recover from cyber threats and attacks.

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

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Falling for the second consecutive week, India's forex reserves dropped by USD 4.339 billion to USD 589.138 billion for the week ended May 26, the Reserve Bank said on Friday.

In the previous reporting week, the reserves had declined by USD 6.052 billion to USD 593.477 billion.

It can be noted that in October 2021, the country's forex kitty had reached an all-time high of USD 645 billion. The reserves have been declining as the central bank deploys the kitty to defend the rupee amid pressures caused majorly by global developments.

For the week ended May 26, the foreign currency assets, a major component of the

reserves, declined by USD 4.014 billion to USD 520.931 billion, according to the Weekly Statistical Supplement released by the RBI on Friday.

Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves.

Gold reserves dropped by USD 225 million to USD 44.902 billion, the RBI said.

The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were down by USD 84 million to USD 18.192 billion, the apex bank said.

The country's reserve position with the IMF was down by USD 17 million to USD 5.113 billion in the reporting week, the apex bank data showed.

Goldman sees RBI pausing again on June 8 review

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Forecasting a steeper fall in inflation to the tune of 50 bps lower than previously projected, a Wall Street brokerage sees the central bank leaving the policy rates unchanged at 6.5 per cent in the forthcoming review on June 8.

Analysts at Goldman Sachs India in a report on Friday said the headline inflation will average 5.3 per cent this year, which is within the RBI target of 2 per cent plus or minus 4 per cent, even though they expect some risk to food inflation stemming from crop damages due to unseasonal rains.

It can be noted that retail

inflation has declined to an 18-month low of 4.7 per cent in April from 5.7 per cent in March. Moreover, core inflation has also fallen to 5.2 per cent in April.

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

Rupee rises 9 paise to close at 82.31 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee appreciated by 9 paise to 82.31 (provisional) against the US dollar on Friday, supported by broad dollar weakness and a positive trend in domestic equities.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened on a positive note against the US dollar and settled at 82.31 (provisional), up 9 paise over its previous close.

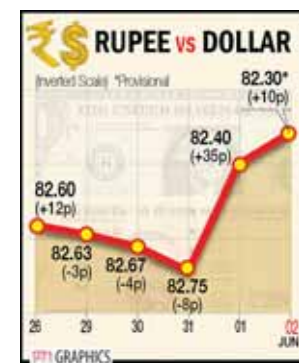
During the day, the domestic unit witnessed an intra-day high of 82.27 and a low of 82.38 in the day trade. On Thursday, the rupee

closed at 82.40 against the US currency.

"The Indian rupee strengthened for the second consecutive day on positive domestic markets and a weak US dollar. However, a rebound in crude oil prices capped sharp gains," said Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst, Sharekhan by BNP Paribas.

The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, fell 0.12 per cent to 103.43.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude futures advanced 1.28 per cent to USD 75.23 per



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



Sebi takes steps to boost liquidity in RFQ platform

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Capital markets regulator Sebi on Friday came out with guidelines for transactions in corporate bonds through Request for Quote (RFQ) platform by stock brokers in order to increase liquidity on the platform.

For all the trades in proprietary capacity, stock brokers will have to undertake at least 10 per cent of their total secondary market trades by value in corporate bonds in that month by placing quotes through one-to-one or one-to-many mode on the RFQ platform of stock exchanges from July 1, and further, the percentage will increase to 25 per cent from April next year, Sebi said in a circular.

Stock brokers will have to consider the trades executed by value through one-to-one (OTO) or one-to-many (OTM) mode of RFQ with respect to the total secondary market trades in corporate bonds, during the current month and immediately preceding two months on a rolling basis.

Further, only trades pertaining to proprietary capaci-

ty of stock brokers will be considered for the purpose of such calculations.

The RFQ or Request for Quote platform is a system or interface for inviting and/or giving quotes on an electronic platform. The platform was introduced as a 'participant-based' model, wherein all regulated entities, listed corporate bodies, institutional investors and all Indian financial institutions were eligible to register, access and transact.

In October 2022, Sebi allowed stock brokers to place bids on the RFQ platform on behalf of their clients to facilitate wider participation in the corporate bond market. This was in addition to the existing option of placing bids in a proprietary capacity.

Quotes on RFQ platforms can be placed to an identified counterparty -- one-to-one mode -- or to all the participants -- one-to-many mode.

Moreover, stock brokers have been encouraged to place bids in proprietary capacity or for clients on RFQ platform through OTM mode, as the same would contribute towards achieving better price discovery.

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned ONGC's operating cash flows will rise over the next 12-24 months due to higher production volumes, stable earnings from domestic gas production, and the removal of a windfall tax on crude oil, S&P Global Ratings said on Friday.

"This should help the company maintain its good credit quality, despite its investment plans and healthy shareholder distributions," the rating agency said in a statement.

ONGC is India's largest oil and gas producer.

We estimate that ONGC's domestic production volumes will rise by 8-10 per cent for fiscal 2024 (year ending March 31). The increase is attributable to the start of oil production from its block in the Krishna Godavari basin later this year," S&P said.

At the same time, production at the Sakhalin-1 project of ONGC Videsh Ltd (OVL) should also recover to fiscal 2022 levels, after a period of disruptions because of geopolitical issues.

Future Lifestyle Insolvency: RP receives claims of ₹2,155.53 cr from financial creditors

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Future Lifestyle Fashions Ltd has received a total claim of Rs 2,155.53 crore from 12 financial creditors in the corporate insolvency resolution process (CIRP) initiated against this Future group company recently.

The resolution professional of the company has provisionally admitted claims of Rs 2,117.03 crore and claims worth Rs 38.5 crore are "under verification," said the latest data shared by Future Lifestyle

Fashions Ltd (FLFL) on the exchanges.

As per the provision of the Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code, a Committee of Creditors (CoC) of FLFL has been formed and it will have its first meeting next week.

"We wish to inform you that the first meeting of CoC of Future Lifestyle Fashions Limited (under CIRP) will be held on Tuesday, June 6, 2023," it said.

On May 4, the Mumbai bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) had

directed to initiate CIRP against FLFL, admitting a petition from Bank of India. This is the third company of the Kishore Biyani-led Future Group to be dragged into CIRP by its creditors for defaulting on loans.

Its flagship firm Future Retail Ltd and logistics and infra arm Future Enterprises are already facing insolvency proceedings.

FLFL was considering asset monetisation to pare its debts, however, it did not materialise. It had entered into a One Time Restructuring (OTR) Plan with

lenders also.

The company has in-house retail chains Central and Brand Factory, exclusive brand outlets (EBOs) and other multi-brand outlets (MBOs) of nearly a dozen apparel labels, including Lee Copper, Champion, aLL, Indigo Nation, Giovanni, John Miller, Scullers, Converse and Urbana in its portfolio.

According to the regulatory filing, State Bank of India leads the CoC of FLFL with 22.51 per cent voting share. It had an admitted loan of Rs 476.59 crore.

Centre imposes stock limits on pulses till Oct to prevent hoarding

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

To prevent hoarding and check price rise, the Centre on Friday imposed stock limits on all pulses, except moong, held by wholesalers, retailers, importers and millers till October. The stock limits are imposed with immediate effect. An order in this regard has been issued by the Union Food and Consumer Affairs Ministry. Retail prices of pulses rose by more than 20 per cent during the January-June period of this year, according to the ministry's data.

According to the ministry, the stock limit of 200 tonnes has been imposed on wholesalers provided they do not hold more than 200 tonnes of one variety of pulses. For retailers, the stock limit will be 5 tonnes.

In the case of millets, the stock limit will be the last three months of production or 25 per cent of annual installed capacity, whichever is higher.

Lastly, for importers, the stock limit will be the same as that of wholesalers for stocks held/imported prior to May 15, 2021.

And for pulses imported after May 15, the stock limit applicable on wholesalers will apply after 45 days from the date of customs clearance, the order said.

3rd SEED JESSICA PEGULA STUNNED

AP ■ PARIS
Jessica Pegula quickly gathered her belongings and marched out of Court Philippe Chatrier after a 6-1, 6-3 loss to Elise Mertens in the third round on Friday at the French Open, a far earlier exit than the No. 3-seeded American has been used to at Grand Slam tournaments lately.
Pegula was a quarterfinalist at four of the five most recent majors, including a year ago at Roland Garros.
She's never gone further than that stage at a Slam and never really got into this match against the 28th-seeded Mertens on a day with a breeze at about 10 mph (15 kph) and a chill in the low 60s Fahrenheit (low teens Celsius).
"I feel like I was still playing good points. Elise was just

being really tough, not making a lot of errors and making me play every single ball. And with the windy conditions, I felt like it definitely played into her game," said Pegula, whose parents own the NFL's Buffalo Bills and NHL's Buffalo Sabres.
"She returned well and I thought that she used the wind on both sides to her advantage," Pegula said. "She was playing aggressive on the side with the wind and then, against the wind, I think she was playing some really good defense."
Mertens is a 27-year-old Belgian who was a semifinalist at the 2018 Australian Open and twice has reached the US Open quarterfinals.
But she still has not made it beyond the fourth round on the red clay in Paris. She will attempt to do that when she



plays Sunday against 2021 French Open runner-up Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova, who beat No. 24 Anastasia Potapova 4-6, 6-3, 6-0.
With Pegula joining No. 5 Caroline Garcia, No. 8 Maria Sakkari and No. 10 Petra Kvitova on the sideline, four of the top 10 women's seeds already are gone. That's part of a pattern this year at Roland Garros: Only 12 seeds made it through two rounds, the fewest in Paris since the field expanded to 32 seeds in 2002.
With the losses by Pegula and Potapova, only 10 remain.
Another woman from the United States joined Pegula on the way out early on Friday: Peyton Stearns, the 2022 NCAA champion for the University of Texas, was eliminated by No. 9 Daria Kasatkina 6-0, 6-1 in 55 minutes.

In other early results Friday, No. 2 Aryna Sabalenka, the Australian Open champion in January, won, as did men's No. 11 seed Karen Khachanov.
Stearns, a big hitter who defeated 2017 French Open champion Jelena Ostapenko in the second round, simply could not find her targets. More than half of Kasatkina's 59 points came via the 30 unforced errors by Stearns. Pegula had similar issues, making 28 unforced errors to only 13 by Mertens.
It was a rough start for Pegula. When she dumped a forehand into the net, Pegula chucked her racket off the ground, already down 4-0. The deficit was 5-0 after fewer than 20 minutes. There was more of the same in the second set. Mertens used drop shots effectively, and Pegula couldn't get going.

Fritz shushes booing crowd

AP ■ PARIS
The French Open crowd was not happy with American player Taylor Fritz after he beat one of their own — indeed, their last man in the bracket — so they booed and whistled relentlessly. Fritz's response? He told them to shush. Over and over again.
Fritz, a 25-year-old from California who is seeded No. 9 at Roland Garros, got into a back-and-forth with the fans at Court Suzanne Lenglen after his 2-6 6-4 6-3 6-4 comeback victory over 78th-ranked Arthur Rinderknech in the second round on Thursday night.
Rinderknech attempted a lob that landed long on the

last point, and Fritz, who had been running toward the baseline to chase the ball, immediately looked up into the stands and pressed his right index finger to his lips to say, essentially, "Hush!"
He held that pose for a bit as he headed back toward the net for a postmatch handshake, then spread his arms wide, wind-milled them a bit as if to egg on the rowdiness, and yelled: "Come on! I want to hear it!" During the customary winner's on-court interview that followed, more jeers rained down on Fritz, and 2013 Wimbledon champion Marion Bartoli kept pausing her attempts to ask a question into her microphone.

Parul targets Asian Games medal

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Two months of high-altitude training at Colorado Springs in the USA has done wonders for Indian long-distance runner Parul Chaudhary, who is aiming for a medal in the upcoming Asian Games in China as well as breaking Lalita Babar's 3000m steeplechase national record.
The 28-year-old Chaudhary has been training at Colorado Springs — which is at an altitude of 1800m above sea level — along with star men's 3000m steeplechase Avinash Sable since March 20.
She set a national record of 15:10.35s in the 5000m race at the Track Festival in Walnut, California, on May 6 before clocking her personal best of 9:29.51s in her pet event of 3000m steeplechase at the USATF Los Angeles Grand Prix on May 26.
"I have benefitted immensely from the high-altitude training at Colorado Springs. Last year, I was here (Colorado Springs) for just 25 days, but this time, it has been two months now here, doing high-altitude training," Chaudhary told PTI from her training base at Colorado Springs.
"The continuous training for two months is showing in my timing. The season has been great for me so far. I am currently in training-cum-competition mode, and once the main international competitions of the season start, I hope to achieve my goals."
Chaudhary, the daughter of a farmer from Bahrala village in Uttar Pradesh's Meerut district, is currently training under foreign coach Scott Simmons and Indian coach Jaiveer Singh.
Target is Asian Games medal and breaking Lalita Babar's national record.
In the senior circuit for nearly 10 years without much international success, Chaudhary is hoping this season to be a defining one as she aims for medals in the Hangzhou Asian Games in September-October.
In the 2018 Asian Games, the 5000m gold-medal winner had clocked 15:08.08s while the silver winner ran 15:30.57s, which is much more than the national record set by Chaudhary last month.

Europa League final referee harassed by Roma fans at airport

AP ■ ROME
Europa League final referee Anthony Taylor and his family had to be escorted away by security at Budapest airport after outraged Roma fans directed insults at him and threw a chair in his direction, a video published on the Gazzetta dello Sport website showed.
Roma has largely blamed Taylor for its penalty shootout loss to Sevilla in the final on Wednesday. Roma coach Jose Mourinho lashed out at the referee in his post-match news conference and then was seen insulting Taylor with a series of expletives in the garage of the Puskas Arena in Budapest, Hungary, as his team prepared to depart the stadium.
The English top-tier soccer's referees association said in a statement that it "is aware of videos circulating on social media showing Anthony Taylor and his family being harassed and abused at Budapest Airport."
"We are appalled at the unjustified and abhorrent abuse directed at Anthony and his family as he tries to make his way home from refereeing the UEFA Europa League final. We will continue to provide our full support to Anthony and his family," the referees association added.
UEFA is still awaiting the referee's report from the match.
Roma general manager Tiago Pinto continued the attack on Taylor in a statement to Italian news agency ANSA on Thursday.
"We at AS Roma don't want to raise doubts about Sevilla's merits. We believe that with our opponents we put on a great final and honored the stage offered to us by UEFA in the best way," Pinto said.

Casemiro's winning mentality key for Man Utd in final

AP ■ LONDON
Manchester City on Saturday, it's Casemiro.
Quite simply, the difference with and without him is huge.
Casemiro started 24 of United's 38 league games this season, and was a substitute in four others. According to statistics compiled by the Who Scored website, United conceded an average of less than a goal a game when Casemiro was in the team and 1.5 goals when he wasn't.
He made 3.2 tackles per game in the Premier League, the third highest behind Fulham's Joao Palhinha and Leeds' Tyler Adams.
United conceded 57 goals in the league last season. With Casemiro stationed in front of the defense, that number was down to 43 this season as United secured a return to the Champions League and all the riches that brings.
So, yes, Casemiro really was worth it.
Ten Hag noted upon arriving at United at the end of last season that a leader in central midfield was the biggest thing missing in a team which had been getting by with an oft-maligned "McFred" (Scott McTominay and Fred) axis.
"We studied this and we searched for this — it was not easy because there aren't many in the profile who fits to the standard of Manchester United," Ten Hag said, before listing what Casemiro brings.
"We know him as very good with organization, anticipation, winning duels, fighting and keeping the team together. But in possession, his passing distribution and finishing is very important."
More than that, his winning mentality — fostered at Madrid, where he won five Champions League titles and the Spanish league three times — is something United had been missing in the post-Alex Ferguson era.
It has that now and it's mostly because of the arrival of Casemiro and another former Madrid player, Raphael Varane.
"The pressure is something we are used to playing with. And we need the pressure — it's not that kind of pressure that limits you," Varane said.
"Sometimes quality is not enough — you need the motivation, character, passion on the pitch, because in the top level in the Premier League, there are good players in any team. But to play in this kind of clubs you need something else ... something different, that character to fight, to assume the responsibility, to never hide on the pitch, to be ready to face every challenge you can."

Lakshya enters Thailand semis

PTI ■ BANGKOK
Star Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen stormed into the semifinals of Thailand Open Super 500 tournament with a straight game demolition of Malaysia's Leong Jun Hao in men's singles here on Friday.
The 21-year-old from Almor punched the air after unleashing a jump smash which sealed his 21-19 21-11 win over the qualifier from Malaysia in the quarterfinals.
The win helped him to enter the last four for the first time this season, having come close in Indonesia Masters, where he exited in the quarterfinals.
The Indian, whose ranking has slipped to world number 23 from a career-high of six fol-

Szymon to remain referee for CL final after apology: UEFA

AP ■ GENEVA
Polish soccer referee Szymon Marciniak apologised on Friday for speaking at a business event tied to a far-right politician and was confirmed by UEFA to officiate next week's Champions League final.
Marciniak's appointment for the game between Manchester City and Inter Milan on June 10, months after he refereed the World Cup final in Qatar, was at risk on Thursday after a Warsaw-based anti-racism group alerted UEFA to his conference appearance this week.
UEFA said on Friday it accepted Marciniak's "profound apologies and clarification" and that anti-racism group Never Again had also then asked for the referee to be retained.

Raducanu parts ways with coach

AP ■ LONDON
Emma Raducanu, the 2021 US Open champion, will no longer work with Sebastian Sachs, who had been her fifth coach in the past two years.
Raducanu announced the split via a Twitter post on Thursday.
"I have really enjoyed Seb's coaching and working with him, it's unfortunate that circumstances made it unfeasible for both of us to continue right now and we have decided to part ways," her post said.
"I wish Seb all the best moving forwards."
Raducanu hasn't played since April and announced last month she would miss the French Open and Wimbledon because she needed what she called "minor" procedures on both hands and an ankle. She said then she expected to be sidelined for a few months.
Her record during an injury-plagued 2023 is 5-5.
Raducanu became one of the stars of tennis two years ago, when she made a surprising run to the fourth round at Wimbledon while ranked outside the top 300, then, soon after, won the US Open at age 18 to become the first qualifier to claim a Grand Slam singles title.

Kerala Blasters' appeal against fine rejected

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
The All India Football Federation on Friday rejected Kerala Blasters FC's appeal against the Rs 4 crore fine imposed on them for misconduct and abandonment of their ISL playoff match against Bengaluru FC.
The committee also rejected KBFC's head coach Ivan Vukumanovic's appeal against the fine of Rs 5 lakh and a 10-game ban imposed on him.
In both cases, the Appeal Committee upheld the earlier decisions of the Disciplinary Committee and were asked to "pay the respective fines within two weeks."
Their ISL playoff on March 3 sparked controversy as Kerala Blasters walked off the field claiming that Sunil Chhetri's winning strike from an extra time freekick was not "legitimate".
They claimed that referee Crystal John did not blow the whistle before Chhetri took the kick and the players were not ready.
By virtue of their extra-time lead Bengaluru FC were declared 1-0 winners and advanced into the ISL semifinals.
"The appeal of the appellant team is denied and that Kerala Blasters FC is instructed to pay the fine of Rs 4 crore imposed by the Disciplinary Committee," the Appeal Committee stated in its decision.
On the appeal made by Ivan Vukumanovic, the Appeal Committee said: "This Committee holds that the appeal of the Appellant Coach is denied and that Ivan Vukumanovic is instructed to pay the fine of Rs 5 lakh and serve the suspension for 10 matches and the ban from being a part of the team dressing room and team bench, irrespective of the team he is contracted with."

Steady start for Manu Gandas

PTI ■ HAMBURG
Indian golfer Manu Gandas carded an even par 72 that placed him Tied-26th at the Porsche European Open here.
Gandas came into the DP World Tour because of the strategic alliance with the India's domestic PGTI Tour, where he topped the rankings last year.
Gandas, the lone Indian in the field as Shubhankar Sharma took time off this week to practice for the Open next month, had three birdies against three bogeys.
Gandas started from the first with a birdie but he bogeyed second, fourth and eighth and turned in 2-over. Birdies on 14th and 15th saved the day for him as he turned in a card of even par.
Germany's Max Kieffer carded a four under par 69 to share the first-round lead as he staked an early claim to become the first German winner on home soil for 15 years.

Stuttgart beat Hamburg in Bundesliga playoff

AP ■ STUTTGART
Hamburger SV's five-year wait to rejoin the Bundesliga looks set to continue.
Serhou Guirassy helped to put Stuttgart in a commanding position to keep its place in Germany's top division with a 3-0 win over Hamburg on Thursday in the first leg of their playoff.
Guirassy had failed to make the most of a one-on-one chance and had a penalty saved in the first half, but the Guinea forward grabbed Stuttgart's third goal early in the second half.
Hamburg's task was further complicated in the 69th minute when substitute Anssi Suhonen was sent off minutes after coming on for a studs-up lunge at Joshua Vagnoman's thigh.
The win puts Stuttgart,

Shields fighting for gender equality for women boxers

AP ■ DETROIT
Claressa Shields is perhaps in the prime of her career, establishing a big Olympic name as a two-time Olympic gold medalist and world champion in three weight classes to headline the first boxing card in the six-year history of Little Caesars Arena in the Motor City.
The undisputed middleweight champion became the first woman to earn a seven-figure payday in her last two fights and is expected to make another \$1 million Saturday night when she faces top-ranked contender Maricela Cornejo in the home of the Detroit Red Wings and Pistons. Shields grew up poor in Flint, Michigan, and has earned enough money to become rich at 28.
Still, she laments the gender inequities in boxing.
TV and streaming deals are 10 to 20 times more lucrative for men than women, according to Shields' promoter, Dmitriy Salita. Typically, male boxers make about \$3 million per fight while female fighters just recently started getting seven figures for a night in the ring, while some earn more and many make much less.
"We don't get the equal TV time, the equal promotion, equal

Association when it was founded in 1997. It's got a ways to go."
"They take a beating just like the men. They bleed just like the men, but they don't get paid just like the men."
Boxing Hall of Famer Christy Martin, whose bloody nose in the ring 27 years ago landed her on the cover of Sports Illustrated, said she would've never imagined women in the sport headlining cards in big-time arenas as they do now.
Martin, though, said the lack of a deep talent pool limits opportunities.
"If you look back at the real old-timers in the sport, they would fight every other week," the 54-year-old Martin said in a telephone interview from Texas. "Now, we're lucky to see champions once a year."
Shields (13-0, 2 knockouts) turned pro in 2016 after becoming the first US boxer — female, or male — to win consecutive Olympic gold medals and is averaging two fights a year. Cornejo (16-5, 6 KOs) replaced Hanna Gabriels (21-2-1, 12 KOs) last week in the 160-pound division title fight after the Costa Rican was removed from the card due to results from a Voluntary Anti-Doping Association test in May.

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Gill has recorded centuries across formats in the last six

months and was the standout batter in the IPL.

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

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

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

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

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

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



Australia unsure about India's bowling line-up

PTI ■ LONDON

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

India utilised three spinners during the recent Border-Gavaskar Trophy series with both Ashwin (25 wickets) and Jadeja (22) shining bright to help their side claim a 2-1 series win. Talking to local media prior to Australia's training session at the Kent County Cricket Ground in Beckenham on Thursday, assistant coach Daniel Vettori said the team management had a lot of discussion about India's probable bowling attack.

"We have been debating that," Vettori said.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

It's a grand final for us: Lyon

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

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

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

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

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

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

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



about this match," he added.

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

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

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

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

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

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

ECB CEO supports India getting 38% earnings share

PTI ■ DUBAI

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

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

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

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

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

However, Gould defended ICC's new allocation model.

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

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



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

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

"India play as many international fixtures as any other team in the world. And they do that because they know when they tour as an international team, they bring interest and revenue to that home side. I think it's important to see things in the round, in that regard," he added.

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

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

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

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

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

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



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

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

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

The final will be played on June 21.

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

Head Coach: Nooshin Al Khadeer

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



Afghanistan beat SL in 1st ODI

AP ■ HAMBANTOTA

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Tongue's debut makes family friend richer

PTI ■ LONDON

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Medal-less second day for India in Bishkek

PTI ■ BISHKEK

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

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

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

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

prepared," national coach Hargobind Singh told PTI.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Banarse reaches surfing final

PTI ■ MANGALORE

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

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

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



held on Saturday.

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

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

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

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