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DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR
RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH
DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADA

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the pioneer

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INDIA CLINCH
HISTORIC
DOUBLES TITLE
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Heatwave in 3 States claims over 100 lives

With temp at 40+ degrees, UP saw 54 deaths, eastern Bihar reported 44 fatalities

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW/PATNA

The scorching heatwave sweeping across Uttar Pradesh (UP), Bihar, and Odisha has claimed around 100 lives over the past three days. As temperatures soared above 40 degrees Celsius in multiple regions, northern UP recorded 54 deaths, while eastern Bihar reported 44 fatalities.

The Ballia district hospital has been hit particularly hard, with the death toll reaching 54 due to heat-related incidents, including an additional 20 fatalities reported in the last 24 hours. Meteorological officials have issued a yellow alert for intense heatwave conditions in parts of UP, raising concerns about the well-being of the population.

Dr SK Yadav, the Medical in-charge, revealed that over the past three days, approximately 300 people have been admitted to the district hospital for various ailments, with 54 people succumbing to the severe heat con-



Family members bring their patient to a hospital during a heatwave that has claimed many lives, in Ballia, Uttar Pradesh on Sunday. PTI

ditions. The high number of deaths in Ballia has prompted the UP Government to initiate an investigation, leading to the transfer of Chief Medical Superintendent Diwakar Singh.

"We have ordered a probe to determine how so many people died within a short span of time in Ballia. A team of doctors from the health directorate will investigate the cause of these deaths.

We have an ample stock of medicines, and the Government will ensure proper treatment for patients," stated Brijesh Pathak, the Health Minister.

In response to the crisis, doctors and healthcare workers have had their leave cancelled, and health workers in rural areas are actively engaged in addressing the situation. Additional beds have been made available in the

emergency ward to accommodate the influx of patients. The district hospital administration has established a 15-bed special ward in compliance with the district administration's instructions. Most of the admitted patients are aged 60 and above, exhibiting symptoms such as high fever, vomiting, diarrhea, breathing difficulties, and heart attacks. *Continued on Page 2*

Fear looms over Bengal panchayat elections

Candidates being threatened to force them to withdraw nominations

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

A wave of fear has gripped districts in Bengal ahead of the forthcoming panchayat elections, as Opposition candidates face intimidating tactics to force them to withdraw their nominations. The alleged Trinamool Congress muscle-men, who failed to prevent Opposition candidates from filing their nominations through force, have resorted to symbolic threats and acts of violence.

With June 20 being the last date for the withdrawal of nominations, Opposition candidates have started receiving ominous messages in the form of white robes, sweets, scented sticks, and white garlands. These items hold symbolic meaning, as white robes or sarees are typically worn by widows. Threatening letters sent to candidates have contained messages like, "See you at the funeral... Advance condolences... Ask your husband to withdraw the nomination." Minati, the wife of a CPI(M) candidate in Nadia district,



received a two-line letter with such a threat.

Another threatening letter to a CPI(M) candidate read, "Mark your choice on the walls of your house... Bomb, Hansua (chopper), or bullets... we shall oblige adequately... we will take care of wife... don't worry."

Reports of such parcels and threats have emerged from various parts of the State, particularly in the southern districts of South 24 Parganas, Bankura, and Hooghly.

Speaking on the condition of anonymity, a CPI(M) candidate hiding in Kolkata expressed concern for the safety of his family members. He revealed that his wife had received a white saree, garlands, and sweets along with a "good luck" message for the panchayat polls. Despite the threats, he asserted that he would not withdraw his nom-

ination under any circumstances. However, threats have escalated into acts of violence. In Coochbehar district, the brother-in-law of a BJP candidate was found brutally murdered near his house. Junior Union Home Minister and local BJP MP Nisith Pramanik accused the Trinamool Congress of the murder.

This incident brings the death toll related to the panchayat elections to eight in the past ten days.

Reports of threats and attacks on Opposition workers' houses have surfaced from Malda, Murshidabad, South 24 Parganas, North 24 Parganas, Hooghly, and West Burdwan.

Congress candidates in Manikchak, Malda district, have been hiding in mango orchards to avoid potential harm. *Continued on Page 2*

CAPSULE

4 HELD FOR CHEATING US CITIZENS OF \$20 MN

New Delhi: The Delhi Police in coordination with FBI Legal Attache and Interpol has arrested four men for allegedly cheating US citizens of more than \$20 million by running fake call centres. According to police, the accused Parth Armarkar (28), Vatsal Mehta (29), Deepak Arora (45) and Prashant Kumar (45) were arrested from different parts of the country. Police said the accused operated call centres in Uganda and in several parts of India. P3

94% UP HOMES SAW DAILY POWER CUTS

Noida: As people are reeling under sweltering heat and humid weather in north India, a survey conducted by a social media platform LocalCircles showed 86 per cent of the households in Noida and 94 per cent in Uttar Pradesh have experienced daily power outages in the ongoing month of June. The findings are based on responses from over 14,000 respondents located in 56 of the 75 districts of the State. According to the survey, 94 per cent of households in Uttar Pradesh surveyed say they have been facing power outages daily in June. P3

IIT ADVANCED RESULTS OUT, HYDERABAD EXCELS

New Delhi: The IIT Advanced results were announced on Sunday which will pave the way for successful candidates to secure a berth in the 23 IITs across the country. As per the results, maximum number of candidates have qualified from IIT Hyderabad zone followed by IIT Delhi Zone and IIT Bombay zone. Among the top 500 candidates, 174 are from IIT Hyderabad zone followed by 120 from IIT Delhi zone and 103 from IIT Bombay zone. P4

2 sisters shot in Delhi over 10K



Relatives and family members of the two women who were allegedly killed by four to five men in south west Delhi's Ambedkar Basti Ranjan Dimri

One assailant owed money to their brother

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a shocking incident, two sisters were shot dead in Dr Ambedkar Basti located in South Delhi's RK Puram in the early hours of Sunday. The brutal attack was a result of an argument over a loan of Rs 10,000 given by their brother. The critically injured victims,

identified as Jyoti (30) and Pinky (29), tragically lost their lives during treatment at Safdarjung Hospital. Three individuals, named Arjun, Dev and Michael have been arrested in connection with the case, according to the police.

A grainy video captured by local residents shows the terrifying moment of the shooting. Gunshots can be heard amidst a barrage of abuse, while the footage also reveals the gunmen firing their weapons before fleeing the scene. *Continued on Page 2*

SOL student stabbed by 3 others outside DU college

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a horrifying incident outside Aryabhata College in Delhi University's South Campus on Sunday, a first-year student was stabbed to death, according to the police. The victim, identified as 19-year-old Nikhil Chauhan, resided in Paschim Vihar and was pursuing a BA (Hons) in Political Science from the School of Open Learning (SOL).

On receiving a call from Charak Palika Hospital, the police promptly rushed to the scene. Preliminary investigations indicate that a student from the School of Open Learning allegedly misbehaved with Chauhan's girlfriend on the college premises around a week ago.

On Sunday, around 12:30 PM, the accused student and three of his associates reportedly met Chauhan outside Aryabhata College and allegedly stabbed him in the chest, as confirmed by a senior police officer. *Continued on Page 2*

After efficient cyclone handling PM praises India's disaster mgmt skills

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In his monthly radio address, 'Mann ki Baat', Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday commended the efficient management of the Biparjy cyclone in Gujarat, stating that India's disaster management has become an example for others.

He touched on various topics, including the forthcoming International Yoga Day and the Emergency period in India's history. The Prime Minister also discussed the eradication of tuberculosis, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's contributions, and India's recent sports achievements.

Modi expressed gratitude for the successful handling of the cyclone that struck the Gujarat coast last week. He highlighted the resilience and preparedness of the people of Kutch, emphasising that India's disaster management capabilities have become exemplary. Modi emphasised that the collective power of Indian people can overcome any challenge, no matter how significant or difficult. *Continued on Page 2*



RSS appeals for peace in Manipur

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) on Sunday condemned the ongoing violence in Manipur and appealed to the Government, including local administration, police, security forces and Central agencies to take every possible step to restore peace immediately. Stressing that there is no place for hatred and violence in a democratic setup, the RSS said both sides should overcome the trust deficit, which caused the present crisis, and initiate dialogue to restore peace. *Detailed report on P4*

Cong slams PM for 'maun on Manipur'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress has strongly criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his conspicuous silence regarding the escalating ethnic violence in Manipur, as the clashes between the Meitei and Kuki communities continue to claim numerous lives. With over 100 casualties reported in the past month, the situation demands urgent attention.

Taking a swipe at the Prime Minister, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh remarked, "So, yet another 'Mann Ki Baat', but complete silence ('Maun') on Manipur. *Continued on Page 2*

Gold plating was managed by donor, says BKTC

Refutes charges of ₹125 cr scam by priest at Kedarnath Temple

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Badrinath-Kedarnath Temple Committee (BKTC) has trashed the allegations surrounding the gold plating of the sanctum of Kedarnath Temple, labeling them as part of a calculated conspiracy. Harish Gaur, the temple's media in-charge, asserted on Sunday that the acceptance of donations and the subsequent gold plating of the sanctum were carried out in accordance with the provisions outlined in the Badrinath-Kedarnath Temple Committee Act of 1939, with the donors themselves taking responsibility for the task.

The clarification came after Santosh Trivedi, a senior priest at the Kedarnath Temple and vice-president of Char Dham Mahapanchayat, raised concerns about apparent irregularities in the gold layering work within the temple's sanctum sanctorum. Trivedi alleged a substantial scam amounting to Rs 125 crore in the gold layering project at the Kedarnath Temple. According to reports, a businessman donated 230 kg of gold to the temple, specifically for the purpose of adorning the sanctum sanctorum. *Continued on Page 2*



Will revise lines that hurt sentiments, says 'Adipurush' dialogue writer Shukla

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Facing all-around criticism for allegedly hurting the religious sentiments of Hindus, the makers of the mythological epic film 'Adipurush' have made the decision to revise certain dialogues.

The film, starring Prabhas, Kriti Sanon, and Saif Ali Khan, has received backlash for its choice of dialogues, which were deemed as pedestrian and disrespectful.

In response to the outcry, the dialogue writer Manoj Muntashir Shukla said on Sunday that amendments will be made to the contentious lines in the coming week. The revisions aim to address the concerns raised by the audience and ensure a more respectful portrayal of the revered characters from the Ramayana. "For me, there is nothing greater than your feelings. I can



give countless arguments in favour of my dialogues, but this will not lessen your pain. The producer and director of the film, along with me, have decided to revise some of the dialogues which are hurting you, and they will be added to the film this week," Shukla stated in a statement shared on his official Twitter account. Directed by Om Raut and produced by T-Series, the big-

ly Bajrang (Hanuman) portrayed by Devdatta Nage.

In his statement, written in Hindi, Shukla acknowledged that it is possible that in a three-hour film, he may have written something that differs from the viewers' imagination for just three minutes. However, he urged viewers not to hastily label him as a "Sanatan drohi" (one who disrespects the Hindu religion).

"The first lesson one can learn from Ramkatha is to respect every emotion. What is right or wrong changes with time, but the feeling is constant. I wrote more than 4,000 lines as dialogues in 'Adipurush', and some sentiments got hurt by five of those lines. In those hundreds of lines where Shri Ram was glorified and Maa Sita's chastity was described, I was hoping to receive praise for them, which I don't know why I did not get," Shukla added. *Continued on Page 2*

AP ■ GENEVA

A project using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to track social media abuse aimed at players at the 2022 World Cup identified more than 300 people whose details are being given to law enforcement, FIFA said on Sunday.

The people made "abusive, discriminatory, or threatening posts (or) comments" on platforms like Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, TikTok and YouTube, soccer's governing body said in a report detailing efforts to protect players and officials during the tournament played in Qatar.

AI tracking social media abuse identifies 300 people from Qatar World Cup posts

AP ■ GENEVA

The biggest spike in abuse was during the France-England quarterfinals game, said the final report from a project created jointly by FIFA and the players' global union FIFPRO. It used AI to help identify and



About 20 million posts and comments were scanned and more than 19,000 were flagged as abusive. AP

hide offensive social media posts. "Violence and threat became more extreme as the tournament progressed with players' families increasingly referenced and many threatened if players returned to a particular country - either the nation they represent or where they play football," the report said. About 20 million posts

and comments were scanned and more than 19,000 were flagged as abusive. More than 13,000 of those were reported to Twitter for action.

Accounts based in Europe sent 38 per cent of the identifiable abuse and 36 per cent came from South America, FIFA said. "The figures and findings

in this report do not come as a surprise, but they are still massively concerning," said David Aganzo, president of Netherlands-based FIFPRO.

Players and teams were offered moderation software that intercepted more than 2,86,000 abusive comments before they were seen.

The identities of the more than 300 people identified for posting abuse "will be shared with the relevant member associations and jurisdictional law authorities to facilitate real-world action being taken against offenders," FIFA said.

"Discrimination is a criminal act. With the help of this tool, we are identifying the perpetrators and we are reporting them to the authorities so that they are punished for their actions," FIFA President Gianni Infantino said in a statement. *Continued on Page 2*

Ahead of talks, Wangchuk starts 7-day 'climatic fast' in Ladakh

PTI ■ LEH

Sonam Wangchuk, a prominent engineer whose life inspired a character in the Bollywood blockbuster "3 Idiots", on Sunday began a seven-day hunger strike here in support of his campaign for the protection of the fragile environment of Ladakh.

Wangchuk's 'climatic fast' — the second time in the past six months — comes a day ahead of talks between the Ministry of Home Affairs and a six-member joint delegation of Leh-based Apex body and Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) who are seeking full statehood, constitutional safeguards under sixth schedule, separate Lok Sabha seats for the two districts and recruitment and job reservation for the youth of Ladakh.

"We have dedicated the first day of the climatic fast for the success of the talks between the central government and our leaders," Wangchuk, who was joined by a large number of locals at NDS Stadium, told reporters.



He said thousands more across Ladakh are observing fast and holding prayers.

"Ladakh is a sensitive and crucial region with regard to both the environment as well as the presence of China and Pakistan across its borders. We want a solution to our issues peacefully without any disturbance or agitation," he said.

Wangchuk welcomed the initiation of talks between the Centre and the leaders of Ladakh and "We are hopeful of a positive outcome which will be beneficial for our coming generations."

The education reformist

said Ladakh witnessed large-scale development after getting the union Territory status in 2019 but lost "the safeguards for its environment, land, culture and democratic rights".

Wangchuk said the other motive behind his fast is to attract the attention of people around the globe, especially those living in the cities to make necessary changes in their lifestyles for saving the environment.

"My appeal to the people is to live simply in the big cities so that we in the mountains may simply survive. My fast is like an alarm bell to the world

as we have to make necessary changes to reverse global warming which is impacting our mountains and glaciers, threatening the lives of the people and the animals," he said.

Wangchuk said his fast is in support of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led 'Mission Life' initiative aimed at mobilising at least one billion Indians and other global citizens to take individual and collective action for protecting and preserving the environment in the period 2022 to 2027.

"We introduced the website 'livesimply.org' four years ago. I appeal to people to visit the website and take a pledge for changing their lifestyle. I want at least seven lakhs pledges and the day it happens, I will end my fast," he said.

However, Wangchuk, who had earlier staged a five-day hunger strike in January, said he will continue the fast for seven days if the target number of seven lakh pledges is not achieved by then. "It will be followed by more such climatic fasts for mobilising people in its support"

Guj: 3D mapping tech, anti-drone system to make debut in Rath Yatra



PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

The 146th edition of the renowned Lord Jagannath Rath Yatra in Ahmedabad in Gujarat on June 20 will see the use of 3D mapping technology for the first time as part of a host of security arrangements, a senior police official said on Sunday.

Ahmedabad police commissioner Prem Vir Singh said the procession will see heavy deployment of personnel en route and anti-drone mechanism to take down unauthorised unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).

"For the first time in the Rath Yatra in Gujarat, the entire route and especially strategic points will be monitored using 3D mapping tech-

nology," he said.

Three-dimensional profiling of a location helps in improved visualisation and information acquisition, officials said.

In another first, anti-drone technology will be in place to ensure no unauthorised drones are used during the Rath Yatra, Minister of State for Home Harsh Sanghavi said.

"As many as 198 rath yatras will be taken out across the state. Along with the main procession, six smaller processions will be taken out in Ahmedabad alone. Security personnel with 2,322 body-worn cameras and 25 vehicles with CCTV and GPS system will be used to monitor the 20-kilometre route of the procession," he said.

SP-RLD alliance almost over

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Samajwadi Party's alliance with Rashtriya Lok Dal is almost over and a formal announcement of parting of ways is likely to be made after the conclave of the opposition parties at Patna on June 23. The Jat dominated political outfit, RLD, has decided to contest the 2024 Lok Sabha elections in alliance with the Congress.

Asked if there was a strain in the relationship of his party with the SP, RLD state president Ramashish Rai said, "The party workers are disappointed with the outcome of the recently-concluded urban local bodies' polls in Uttar Pradesh. They feel the results could have been different had the SP and RLD fought together."

Rai, however, stressed that "since we are aiming for a big transformation, the RLD wants the SP, Congress and Azad Samaj Party to sink their differences and work together to bring about a change."

SP spokesperson Rajendra Chaudhary, when contacted, said his party's alliance with the RLD was "fully intact".

A senior RLD leader said the rank and file of the party



wanted their party chief Jayant Chaudhary to free himself from the shadow of the SP and "not become a martyr" in case Akhilesh Yadav wanted to go alone in the parliamentary polls.

"The RLD workers of Uttar Pradesh in general and those from the western parts of the state in particular, feel that Akhilesh Yadav will finish the RLD. The party has a natural alliance with the Congress," he added.

"Muslims have made up their mind to go with the Congress. And, if the RLD, Congress and Azad Samaj Party come together, there will be no need for anyone else. RLD workers have already said that there is no threat from the Congress. The threat is from Akhilesh Yadav," the senior RLD leader said.

Gold plating was managed by donor, says...

From Page 1
However, Trivedi contends that instead of gold, the sanctum sanctorum has been layered with brass.

Placing forth the sequence of events, Gaur said the donor himself wanted to embellish the temple's sanctum with gold. The proposal was approved during a board meeting of the temple committee, and the necessary permissions were obtained from the State Government to proceed with the gold plating work. The entire project was conducted under the supervision of experts from the Archaeological Survey of India.

The temple committee emphasized that they had no

direct involvement in the project's execution. The donor took personal responsibility for the arrangement, commissioning jewellers to prepare copper plates, which were subsequently coated with layers of gold by their own team of skilled artisans. From the procurement of gold to the installation on the temple walls, every aspect was meticulously managed by the donor. Upon completion of the work, bills and vouchers were handed over to the BKTC through their appointed goldsmiths, and all transactions were dutifully recorded in the stock book, adhering to established regulations. The temple authorities further clarified that the

donor did not impose any conditions on the BKTC or requested a certificate under Section 80G of the Income Tax Act regarding the donation.

Amidst the escalating controversy, Trivedi continues to assert that a staggering scam of Rs 125 crore has taken place and has called for a thorough investigation into the alleged irregularities. The senior priest has even threatened to initiate protests against the accused if a fair and impartial probe is not promptly conducted.

In response to the allegations, the BKTC strongly refuted them, presenting the detailed breakdown of gold usage. The committee clarified that a total of 23,777.800 grams of gold, valued at approximately Rs 14.38 crore, was utilized for the sanctum sanctorum of the Kedarnath Temple.

Heatwave in 3 States claims...

From Page 1

Manish Pathak, a resident of Ballia who recently lost his father, expressed his concerns amidst the scorching temperatures. He shared that the emergency ward is receiving five to six patients per hour, and despite concerted efforts, the death toll continues to rise, raising alarm among the public and officials alike.

The scorching heatwave has plunged Ballia into a state of despair, leaving residents fearful of venturing outside. The streets wear a deserted look as people seek refuge from the extreme temperatures. This unprecedented situation has shocked the community, as the district has never witnessed such a high number of heat-related fatalities. "I have never seen people dying in such large numbers due to the heat," lamented a concerned resident.

Ballia, along with central and eastern UP, continues to grapple with oppressive heat. On Sunday, the district experi-

enced a maximum temperature of 43 degrees Celsius, surpassing the normal range by five degrees. With a relative humidity of 25 per cent, the impact of the heat has been intensified.

Atul Kumar Singh, a scientist from the India Meteorological Department (IMD), highlighted that temperatures across the entire State are currently above normal. "No relief is expected in the next 24 hours. Consequently, the IMD has extended the 'Yellow Alert' for heatwave conditions until June 19 in parts of UP," he said.

In neighbouring Bihar, the situation is equally dire. Out of the 44 reported deaths, 35 occurred in the city of Patna alone, while the remaining nine were reported from other districts. Patna, the capital of Bihar, experienced a staggering maximum temperature of 44.7 degrees Celsius on Friday, with temperatures surpassing 44 degrees Celsius in 11 other districts.

Cong slams PM for...

From Page 1

While the Prime Minister praised India's disaster management capabilities, he conveniently ignored the entirely man-made [actually self-inflicted] humanitarian disaster unraveling in Manipur."

Ramesh sharply criticised the Prime Minister's emphasis on disaster management achievements while disregarding the grave situation in Manipur, which is a result of internal conflicts. He further highlighted the absence of any peace appeal from the Prime Minister, raising pertinent questions about Modi's concern for Manipur. The mention of the non-auditable PM-CARES Fund further fueled concerns about the Prime Minister's commitment to addressing the pressing issues faced by the region.

Fear looms...

From Page 1

Despite the danger they face, they remain determined to continue their candidature, relying on the support of the angry villagers.

In Raninagar area of Murshidabad district, posters have been left threatening Congress and Left candidates to withdraw their nominations or face dire consequences, including imprisonment or worse.

The posters suggest possible collusion between the police and the intimidators.

In Sandeshkhali, Basirhaat, BJP candidates have sought refuge in the party office in Kolkata, alleging that the police are either dismissing their cases or pressuring them to withdraw their nominations under false charges. Further incidents have occurred in Arambagh, Hooghly district, where a CPI(M) candidate was molested and severely beaten for refusing to withdraw her nomination. In Diamond Harbor, the houses of BJP party colleagues were attacked with bombs.

SOL student stabbed by 3 others outside...

From Page 1

The victim was immediately rushed to the nearby Charak Palika Hospital, where doctors declared him dead. The police suspect that the attack on Chauhan occurred following an argument between him and the accused persons over the earlier incident of misbehavior.

The authorities successfully identified the accused

people and are currently examining the CCTV footage from the crime scene to establish the precise sequence of events. Special teams have been formed to apprehend the suspects, the police announced.

They have registered a case in connection with the incident and plan to hand over the victim's body to his bereaved family members after completing the post-mortem examination.

IN THE COURT OF Shri Vikash
Judicial Magistrate - Ist Class, Gurugram

M/S IIFL HOME FINANCE LTD
VS
RAJA SHAKHAR G
CIS NO - 27017/2018
CNR No. HRGR03-038957-2018
Next Date:- 03-07-2023 at 10.00 a.m.

PUBLICATION ISSUED TO:
Raja Shakharg G :-
Address: FLAT NO 201 H NO-8/13/21/ SAI RESIDENCY STREET NO 3 HEMA NAGAR BODUPPAL HYDERABAD 500039
In above titled case, the accused could not be served. It is ordered that accused should appear in person or through counsel on 03-07-2023 at 10.00 a.m.
For details logon to <https://highcourthd.gov.in/> trs=district.notice&district=Gurugram

Judicial Magistrate, Ist Class Gurugram
Dated, this day of 05-06-2023

IN THE COURT OF Shri Vikash
Judicial Magistrate - Ist Class, Gurugram

M/S IIFL HOME FINANCE LTD
VS
Nemuri sai Nagaraj
CIS NO - 10448/2018
CNR No. HRGR03-023504-2018
Next Date:- 10-07-2023

PUBLICATION ISSUED TO:
Nemuri sai Nagaraj :-
Address: 1-14-32 LOTHUKUNTA TIRUMALAGIRI SECUNDRABAD HYDERABAD
In above titled case, the accused could not be served. It is ordered that accused should appear in person or through counsel on 10-07-2023 at 10.00 a.m.
For details logon to <https://highcourthd.gov.in/> trs=district.notice&district=Gurugram

Judicial Magistrate, Ist Class Gurugram
Dated, this day of 07-06-2023

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Munna Lal S/o Ram Chandra Gaur R/o, Flat-202, Tower-F, Samridhi Luxuriya Avenue, Sports City, Plot-SC-02/D, Sector-150, Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar-201301, Uttar Pradesh, have changed my name from Munna Lal to Munna Lal Goud for all future purposes.

PD(067)A

I, Munna Lal S/o Ram Chandra Gaur R/o, Flat-202, Tower-F, Samridhi Luxuriya Avenue, Sports City, Plot-SC-02/D, Sector-150, Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar-201301, Uttar Pradesh, have changed my Spouse name from Saitha Goud to Saritha Goud for all future purposes.

PD(068)A

I, ShashiBala Chauhan, W/o Anil Kumar Chauhan, R/o Flat No. 122, DPS Apartments, Plot No. 16, Sector-4 Dwarka, Delhi-110078, that shashiBala Chauhan will be known as Shashi Chauhan for all the future purposes.

PD(069)A

THANKSGIVING

Thank you holly spirit blessings Celine

PD(070)C

AI tracking social media abuse...

From Page 1

"We also expect the social media platforms to accept their responsibilities and to support us in the fight against all forms of discrimination," he said.

FIFA and FIFPRO have extended the system for use at the Women's World Cup that starts next month in Australia and New Zealand.

Will revise lines...

From Page 1

The writer-lyricist, who won the National Film Award for Best Lyrics in "Saina," expressed that he holds no complaints against the audience.

"If we stand against each other, Sanatan will lose. We have made 'Adipurush' for Sanatan Seva; it's a film that you are watching in large numbers, and I believe you will continue to watch it in the future," he further stated.

Mounted on a reported budget of Rs 500 crore, "Adipurush" claimed to have raised Rs 140 crore on its release day, Friday, according to the makers

2 sister shot in RK Puram...

From Page 1

As panic ensues, one woman can be seen lying on the ground.

According to the police, a group of 15 to 20 armed men arrived at Ambedkar Basti in RK Puram, Southwest Delhi, around 4 AM. They knocked on a door and pelted it with bricks. Despite their continuous attempts, when nobody opened the door, they eventually left. However, the attackers returned when the homeowner Lalit, who they were seeking, stepped out of the house with his two sisters to inquire about the incident. They opened fire suddenly, resulting in the tragic deaths of the sisters. Lalit was also grazed by a bullet but managed to escape. He informed the police that he had a financial dispute with a local

individual named Dev.

Manoj C, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (South-West), stated that the police received a distress call at 4:40 AM from the RK Puram police station, reporting the shooting of the caller's sisters. Preliminary investigations revealed that the assailants targeted Lalit, the victims' brother, due to a monetary dispute. "The prime accused and his two associates were arrested in connection with the incident," he added.

The incident has sparked a political controversy in the national Capital. Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal took a swipe at Lieutenant-Governor (L-G) VK Saxena, asserting that Delhi would have been the safest place if the law and order situation were under the

jurisdiction of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) instead of the L-G. Kejriwal expressed condolences to the victims' families and criticised the handling of the law and order situation. His comments drew a sharp response from Delhi BJP leaders, including Union Minister Meenakshi Lekhi, who claimed that Kejriwal lacks understanding of the law.

According to the family, the attack followed a heated argument between Lalit, their brother, and individuals who had borrowed money from him. Lalit had demanded the return of the loan, leading to the altercation. Later that night, the borrowers arrived at the house with the intention of harming Lalit, but the sisters intervened and were tragically shot instead.

After efficient cyclone handling PM praises...

From Page 1

"The strength of disaster management that India has developed over the years is becoming an example today. Cyclone Biparjoo wrecked so much havoc in Kutch, but the people of Kutch faced it with full courage and preparedness," he said.

"Be it the biggest goal, be it the toughest challenge, the collective force of the people of India, the collective power, solves every challenge," the Prime Minister said.

On the upcoming International Yoga Day, which will be celebrated on June 21, Modi said he will be in the United States on that day, leading yoga enthusiasts in America. The theme for this year's Yoga Day is 'Yoga for Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' or 'Yoga for the Welfare of All as

One World-One Family'

Reflecting on the history of India, Modi recalled the dark era of the Emergency, which took place on June 25, 1975. He condemned the atrocities committed against those who supported democracy during that period. He reaffirmed India's commitment to democratic values and the supremacy of the Constitution, stating that the nation must never forget the significance of June 25.

Shifting the focus to healthcare, the Prime Minister announced India's goal of eradicating tuberculosis by 2025. He acknowledged the efforts of the 'Ni-kshay Mitra' initiative, a movement against the disease, implemented by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.

Modi paid tribute to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, praising his bravery, governance, and management skills. He highlighted Maharaj's contributions to water management and the navy, stating that they continue to inspire and enhance India's historical pride. The Prime Minister also celebrated the achievement of India's women's junior hockey team, which secured their maiden Women's Junior Asia Cup in Japan's Kakamigahara, Gifu Prefecture. Modi acknowledged the significance of Lord Jagannath's Rath Yatra, a grand procession celebrated with enthusiasm in various States across the country.

He fondly recalled attending the Yatra in Ahmedabad during his time in Gujarat, praising the diversity and unity it represents, emphasising the spirit of "Ek Bharat-Shreshtha

Bharat" (One India, Great India).

During his address, the Prime Minister highlighted individual efforts for the public good, citing examples such as the revival of an extinct river in Uttar Pradesh's Hapur district and the Miyawaki technique from Japan, which can be used to transform infertile areas into green spaces. He encouraged the nation to adopt such techniques, referencing the success of Teacher Raafi Ramnath from Kerala, who created a mini forest called "Vidyavanam" with over 115 varieties using the Miyawaki method.

The Prime Minister concluded his address by seeking the blessings and support of the people as he prepares for his upcoming visit to the United States.

AAP, BJP trade barbs after 2 sisters killed over ₹10,000

Delhi would've been safest had law and order been under AAP Govt, says Kejriwal; MoS Lekhi hits back at Delhi CM

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Hours after two sisters were shot dead in South West Delhi's RK Puram area early on Sunday over Rs10,000 owed to their brother by the assailants, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal flayed the BJP and the Centre over the "poor" law and order situation in the national Capital and said Delhi would have been safer if law and order was "under the AAP Government instead of LG."

His comments, however, drew a sharp reaction from Delhi BJP leaders including Union Minister Meenakshi Lekhi, who claimed that Kejriwal does not understand the law.

Leader of Opposition Ramvir Singh Bidhuri accused him of trying to settle political scores with Lt Governor VK Saxena as he has exposed the AAPians. There was no immediate reaction from the LG office to the allegations.

Taking to Twitter, Kejriwal said, "Our thoughts are with the families of both women. May their souls rest in peace."

He added, "The people of Delhi have started feeling very unsafe. Instead of fixing the law and order of Delhi, they



(Centre) are conspiring to capture governance in the whole of Delhi. If today, the law and order situation was under the AAP government instead of LG, Delhi would have been the safest." Condemning the alleged murder of two sisters in the Ambedkar Basti near RK Puram in South Delhi, AAP convener and Delhi Chief Minister said, "Our thoughts are with the families of both women. May their souls rest in peace."

Later, addressing a press conference, AAP chief spokesperson Priyanka Kakkar cited a recent report which said that a murder takes place in Delhi every two days. "We question the source of these weapons and demand to know why the Delhi LG, Vinai

Kumar Saxena, has turned a blind eye to this escalating violence. Our repeated attempts to engage with the LG have been met with silence and inaction.

The AAP had attacked Lt Governor VK Saxena over the alleged "deteriorating" law and order in the city earlier as well.

Reacting to Kejriwal's comments, Lekhi said, "I want to remind the people of Delhi that this is the same Arvind Kejriwal whose MLAs were involved in (the) Delhi riots. They were involved in killing IB (Intelligence Bureau) officer Ankit Gulel (catapults), guns (and) petrol bombs were supplied by these people. Can such people be given the responsibility of law and order?" The Union Minister of State for Culture stressed that

the RK Puram incident was the fallout of personal enmity and the government did not have any role in it.

She said, "Wherever such an incident has happened, the role of the government is to register an FIR and take strict action against the accused and produce them in the court of law."

"The system of trial courts is under the Delhi government. So, whenever this case comes up in the court, in this case the Saket court, you should ensure that the guilty are punished."

When asked about Kejriwal's allegations, Lekhi said, "The person who does not understand the law is sitting as the chief minister. I am surprised at this."

Bidhuri said that this is a

time pay condolences to the victim family and Kejriwal and his party has indulged in politics on dead people. "This is not the first time, he had targeted Raj Niwas or Vinai Kumar Saxena. He and his party target Lieutenant Governor on daily basis without knowing the facts. How many times did he meet with the Delhi police commissioner or with the Lieutenant Governor on the issue of law and order situation of the state? How many times has he held meetings with the MPs on this issue? Only playing politics is his task said Bidhuri. "Is Punjab, where AAP is in power, is a crime free state or Ram Rajya established in the state," he questioned.

BJP leader and MP Manoj Tiwari when asked about Kejriwal's comment said, "I don't want to speak much on this, people who are doing politics on such incidents fail to fulfil their prime responsibilities. Continuous fire incidents are being reported in Delhi, which needs to be stopped."

Advising the Delhi Chief Minister over rising crime in Delhi, Tiwari said, "Arvind Kejriwal should work over such rising anger-related issues in Delhi."

'Noida sees daily outages'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

As people are reeling under sweltering heat and humid weather in north India, a survey conducted by a social media platform LocalCircles showed 86 per cent of the households in Noida and 94 per cent in Uttar Pradesh have experienced daily power outages in the ongoing month of June. The findings are based on responses from over 14,000 respondents located in 56 of the 75 districts of the state. As many as 100 people have died due to extreme heat in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar in the last three days. While 54 people have died in Uttar Pradesh, 44 people have lost their lives due to the extremely hot weather in Bihar.

According to the survey, 94 per cent of households in Uttar Pradesh surveyed say they have been facing power outages daily in June. Also, 65 per cent of those surveyed in Uttar Pradesh are facing power outages three or more times on average every day, it claimed.

Overall in Uttar Pradesh, six per cent of the respondents stated that they have no knowledge as "we have 24x7 power backup", the survey found.

In Gautam Buddha Nagar district (Noida), 86 per cent of households surveyed confirmed experiencing daily power outages this month, with 35 per cent of them saying the outages last more than two hours, according to the survey.

On average, 43 per cent said they experienced power outages at their homes once or twice a



day, while 32 per cent said three-five times and four per cent said 10 to 20 times daily. There were 14 per cent of people who said "I don't know because we have 24x7 power backup", the survey showed.

In Noida, 4,141 responses were received from households and 62 per cent of the respondents were men while 38 per cent were women.

"It is unfortunate that despite the preparedness claims by power corporations in the state, over 90 per cent of households are facing daily power outages in the current month and 74 per cent are facing outages of over 2 hours in a day in one of the most populous states despite getting supplies through the national power grid," LocalCircles said in a statement. LocalCircles stated that all respondents in the survey were verified citizens who had registered with the platform to participate.

The findings shed light on the persistent power supply issues faced by a significant portion of households in Noida and Uttar Pradesh, highlighting the need for improved infrastructure and measures to address these frequent power outages.

Passengers of cluster, DTC buses face hardship

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Daily Commuters using Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) and cluster buses are facing hardship in morning and evening due to transport department's decision to rationalise 102 bus routes in order to reduce 'dead mileage' (distance between depot to starting destination).

The rationalisation of bus routes have created several problems for daily commuters as number of buses has been reduced and so the frequency of buses. A large number of daily commuters have lashed out the Kejriwal government's decision to rationalise bus routes to reduce dead mileage. Some of them have tweeted while some have approached the transport department urging to increase buses frequency.

Taking a note on several complaints from commuters, prompting Delhi Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot to intervene.

"All changes/modifications made in the routes and or timing will be reviewed personally by me shortly. Necessary action will be taken so that no inconvenience is caused to passengers," he said in a tweet.

Several commuters availing buses between 9 am pm to 9 pm complained of difficulties in getting one. Ravi Taneja who commute from Bhajanpura to Noida sector 43 daily said there is no bus after 9 pm on this route. Even in the morning, the frequency of route 33 has been reduced to one fourth.

BJP accuses AAP Govt of ₹800 crore 'panic button scam'



Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva with party leader Ramvir Singh Bidhuri addresses Press conference, in New Delhi on Sunday

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi BJP on Tuesday alleged a Rs 800 crore scam involving panic buttons installed by the transport department through vendors in private taxis and buses and demanded that a case should be registered against AAP leader and transport minister Kailash Gahlot.

Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva and Leader of Opposition Ramveer Singh Bidhuri in a joint press conference on Sunday alleged the Arvind Kejriwal saying this is a big scam in which earlier Rs 9,000 was being charged per taxi in the name of panic button, which has now been increased to Rs 17,000. In the last five, this government has collected Rs 800 crore in the name of panic button. Not only this, its renewal fee is also being charged separately.

"The money collected from the Panic Button in the name of women's safety has gone in the pockets of Gahlot, Kejriwal and officers involved in this corruption," the BJP leaders said.

The BJP leaders further challenged the statement of Delhi Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot, in which he had claimed that Panic Buttons

installed in taxis and buses are working. Bidhuri on Sunday tweeted and challenged Gahlot to come to see the demonstration of failure of panic buttons in taxi cabs before the media outside his residence.

After this, BJP leaders showed in front of the media by pressing the panic button installed in the taxis, on which no one came to help. State spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor while coordinating the press conference said that this Panic Button scam by the Kejriwal government, who talks about women's safety every day, is a big case of corruption.

Sachdeva said that just a few days back the Leader of Opposition showed before the media that the Panic Buttons installed in the taxis plying in Delhi were not working and waited for hours but no one came to help.

Despite all this being in front of the media, Gahlot is claimed that the Panic Buttons are working.

Challenging the transport minister, the Delhi BJP President said that the transport minister should make public those cases in which the AAP government helped by pressing the panic button in Delhi.

Youth stabbed to death

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 22-year-old man was stabbed to death by a man and his two sons after he asked them not to hurl abuses at passersby in Outer Delhi's Mangolpuri. According to a senior police official, they received information regarding the incident at around 2:50 a.m. The victim, Sahil, was admitted to Sanjay Gandhi Memorial Hospital by his aunt.

The police recorded a statement from one Rahul, an eyewitness in the matter, and lodged an FIR accordingly.

Rahul alleged that Sahil was assaulted by Pramod and his two sons, Malli and Binder, who are neighbours of the victim.

"Malli stabbed the victim, and both Pramod and Binder restrained him. Binder had been hurling abuses at passersby around midnight. When Sahil asked him to stop, it angered Binder. This led to an argument, following which Binder called the other two accused, who then assaulted Sahil," said the police.

Sahil was admitted to Sanjay Gandhi Memorial Hospital, where he succumbed to his injuries during treatment.



'Aerocity-Tughlakabad Silver Line to have longest platform'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Aerocity metro station on the Tughlakabad-Aerocity Silver line corridor planned for Phase 4 will have the longest platform among all silver line metro stations, with a length of 289 metres.

The length has been designed to accommodate heavy passenger traffic as the station will be a triple interchange facility, connecting the Airport Express line to the Delhi-Alwar Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) and the new Silver line.

According to Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC), the general length of underground metro stations in phase 4 is about 225 metres but this new station will be the longest among all phase 4 stations with a length of 289 metres.

"Its extensive length has been carefully designed to accommodate the anticipated passenger traffic since in the

future this station will be a key triple interchange facility with connectivity among the Airport Express Line, the Silver Line, and the RRTS corridor.

This station will be a terminal station, which will provide direct connectivity from the NCR City of Faridabad along with South Delhi to West Delhi and especially, the Indira Gandhi International Airport, it said.

"There will be three entry and exit points at this station, one connecting the business hub of Aerocity and the other two entry and exit structures will connect the station with NH-8 and the nearby locality of Mahipalpur through a pedestrian subway, thereby improving accessibility to the airport," the statement said.

4 cheat US citizens of \$20 mn through fake call centres, held

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police in coordination with FBI Legal Attache and Interpol has arrested four men for allegedly cheating US citizens of more than 20 million dollars by running fake call centres. According to police, the accused Parth Armarkar (28), Vatsal Mehta (29), Deepak Arora (45) and Prashant Kumar (45) were arrested from different parts of the country, including the kimpin, for allegedly defrauding the US nationals to the tune of 20 million dollars. Police said the accused operated call centres in Uganda and in several parts of India, including Delhi.

A senior police officer said Mehta, a native of Ahmedabad in Gujarat, is the head of the crime syndicate and supervised the functioning of the Uganda-based call centre.

Special Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) H S Dhaliwal said their team received information through IFSO, Special Cell through secret informers and also from the FBI through Interpol, indicating that some international cybercriminals, in conspiracy with each other and with the aid and assistance of co-conspirators



The Special Cell of the Delhi Police busted international cyber crime syndicate by arresting four people

based in India, the US and Uganda, were running call centers by posing as employees of the US Internal Revenue Service, Social Security Administration, Drug Enforcement Administration, and other US agencies.

"We received information that one accused, Parth Armarkar, impersonated Uttam Dhillon. During his career, the real Uttam served as the Acting Administrator of the US Drug Enforcement Administration and as the Director of INTERPOL Washington. Armarkar defrauded victims of over six millions of USD through call centers operating in Uganda, Africa. He is an Indian nation-

al and occasionally visits India," Dhaliwal said. He is an Indian national and visits India occasionally, the officer added.

"The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Delhi Police shared technical evidence and information on Armarkar, which led our team to identify his whereabouts in Ahmedabad from where he was running part of the criminal activities," the senior police officer said.

Armarkar was primarily operating his criminal activities out of Uganda. However, he also ran some part of his activities from different jurisdictions of India in assistance with his international co-conspirators.

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday came down heavily on the BJP at the Centre over the alleged worsening condition of Indian Railways, saying the Government has destroyed the well-running fleet of trains.

Kejriwal claimed that AC and sleeper coaches of trains have become worse than the general compartments as the passengers with allotted berths don't get adequate space to sit or sleep.

He further questioned how

Kejriwal: Centre has destroyed well-running fleet of trains

the saffron party can run the country if it is unable to run the railway system.

Kejriwal's tweet was met with a sarcastic reply by the BJP, which attacked him over the condition of the Delhi Transport Corporation buses.

Kejriwal retweeted several tweets wherein people had complained about air-conditioned and sleeper coaches



being overcrowded with people who did not have reservation.

"They destroyed the fleet of the well-running railways. Today, even if you take reservation of AC coach, you will not get a seat to sit or sleep. AC and sleeper coaches are worse than general," the AAP convener said in a tweet in Hindi.

"They do not know how to run the government. They don't

understand at all. This is an illiterate government. It is ruining every field," Kejriwal added.

In another tweet, the Delhi CM, without taking Prime Minister Narendra Modi's name, said, "The one who cannot run trains, how will he run the country?" AAP Leader and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh highlighted the abysmal state of the railways in a press confer-

ence. He also raised concerns over the lack of seat availability, deteriorating passenger facilities, and the mishandling of accidents, with subsequent cover-ups using CBI inquiries.

AAP leader further highlighted the dire situation of railway facilities and safety. "Despite purchasing tickets, passengers are left without seats, forced to travel like animals. Reservations are unavailable, trains are scarce, and frustrating delays increase. When accidents occur, the BJP government conveniently orchestrates a CBI inquiry to cover up their negligence.

Atishi highlights city Govt's education model at Cambridge

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Education Minister Atishi addressed the faculty at Cambridge University, UK, highlighting the Arvind Kejriwal government's initiatives involving actively engaged parents in the learning process, bridging the gap between teachers, principals, and families from diverse socio-economic backgrounds to transform Delhi's tin-shed schools into

some of India's best educational institutes, with the Faculty of Education.

Atishi said that Arvind Kejriwal government's education model has given hope to millions of children across Delhi and Punjab and this has proved that if governments muster the political will to bring change, change is definitely possible.

Atishi also highlighted the deep-seated divide in the Indian

education system, where access to quality education often hinges on economic disparities.

In a statement, her office the minister vividly recounted her initial shock upon witnessing the deplorable conditions of Delhi government schools when she first assumed her role as an advisor to the then Education Minister Manish Sisodia in 2015.

"The foul stench of neglected toilets permeated the air,



dilapidated classrooms lacked basic facilities, and students were forced to study in sub-standard environments. The transformation of Delhi's education landscape became the top priority for the Aam Aadmi Party-led government, with a relentless commitment to improving school infrastructure and cleanliness, thus eradicating the notion that government school attendees were considered second-class citizens," she

added. Atishi is currently in the UK to participate in the Cambridge India Conference and engage with the leadership of Cambridge University to explore further partnership opportunities.

The minister said, "The government's unwavering commitment to the professional development and motivation of teachers, recognizing their pivotal role in shaping the future

of students by sending them to renowned institutions worldwide, such as IIM Ahmedabad, and universities in the UK, Finland, and Singapore, the government expressed them to global best practices in education.

"Empowered and inspired, teachers and principals began to recognize their value and contributions, fostering a new sense of purpose and dedication. They developed a sense of

ownership towards their schools and students."

Moreover, the government actively engaged parents in the learning process, bridging the gap between teachers, principals, and families from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. The introduction of Mega Parent-Teacher Meetings (PTMs) allowed parents to interact directly with educators, fostering a collaborative approach to education.

Modi hails Indian sportspersons

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Hailing the achievements of Indian sportspersons, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said India often found no mention in international events earlier, but things have changed now and even a few weeks' success list is quite long.

In his monthly 'Mann Ki Baat' radio broadcast, Modi said this month, there have been several great news for India from the sports world.

The Indian team raised the glory of the Tricolour by winning the Hockey Women's Junior Asia Cup for the first time, he said. "This month itself, our men's hockey team also won the Junior Asia Cup," Modi pointed out.

"With that, we have also become the team with the most wins in the history of this tournament," he added.

The Indian junior team also did wonders at the Junior Shooting World Cup, Modi said, adding that it has secured the first position in this tournament.

"Of the total gold medals in this tournament, 20 per cent



have come in India's account alone," he said.

The Asian U20 Athletics Championship was also held this June and in this, India remained in the top three in medal tally among 45 participating countries, the prime minister said.

"Earlier, there used to be a time when we used to come to know about international events but often there was no mention of India in them. But today, I am just mentioning the successes of the past few weeks, even then the list has become so long. This is the real strength of our youth," he said.

There are many such sports and competitions where India is making her presence felt for the first time, Modi stressed.

"For example, in the long jump, Shrishankar Murali has

won a bronze for the country in a prestigious event like the Paris Diamond League. This is India's first medal in this competition. One such similar success has been registered by our Under Seventeen Women Wrestling Team in Kyrgyzstan. I congratulate all these athletes of the country, their parents and coaches for their efforts," he said.

The prime minister said the hard work put in by the country's sportspersons at the national level is behind this success in international events.

"Today, sports are organised with a new enthusiasm in various states of the country. These give players a chance to play, win and learn from defeat," he said, citing the example of the Khelo India University Games organised in Uttar Pradesh recently.

"A lot of enthusiasm was observed in the youth. Our youth have broken 11 records in these games... Punjab University, Amritsar's Guru Nanak Dev University and Karnataka's Jain University have occupied the first three places in the medal tally," Modi noted.

RSS appeals for peace in Manipur

Says no place for violence and hatred in democratic set-up

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) on Sunday condemned the ongoing violence in Manipur and appealed to the government, including local administration, police, security forces and central agencies to take every possible step to restore peace immediately.

In a statement, RSS general secretary Dattatreya Hosabale also urged them to ensure a seamless supply of relief materials to those displaced due to the violence, along with "necessary actions to maintain peace and harmony" in the northeastern state.

Stressing that there is no place for hatred and violence in a democratic setup, the RSS said both sides should overcome the trust deficit, which caused the present crisis, and initiate dialogue to restore peace. The RSS also appeals to the civil society, political groups and the general public of Manipur to take every possible initiative to put an end to the present "chaotic and violent situation" and also ensure safety



of human lives and permanent peace, he said.

"The continuous violence that is going on in Manipur for the last 45 days is extremely worrisome. The violence and uncertainty that started in Manipur after a recent rally organised in Churachandpur on May 3 at the time of Lai Haraoba festival is condemnable," the RSS general secretary said.

He said it is "very unfortunate that the spate of unrest and violence that erupted afterwards among those who have been living a peaceful life with mutual harmony and cooperation for centuries has not yet stopped".

"The Sangh appeals to the government, including local administration, police, military and the central agencies to take every possible step to immediately stop this painful violence, ensure the seamless supply of relief materials among the displaced along with necessary actions to maintain peace and harmony," Hosabale said.

More than 100 people have lost their lives in the ethnic violence between Meitei and Kuki community people in Manipur that broke out a month ago.

The state government has imposed a curfew on 11 districts and suspended internet services.

EAM slams recent attempts to vandalise Indian High Commission

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Taking strong exception to the recent attempt to vandalise the Indian High Commission in London, External Affairs Minister Jaishankar has said "things do get my under my skin" when people do not respect India.

This sharp comment by him in a podcast interview came in the backdrop of alleged Khalistan supporters trying to vandalise the Indian High Commission on March 19. The protesters also tried to grab the Indian national flag.

Speaking on several issues related to Indian foreign policy, Jaishankar said "I had actually landed from a plane, when I saw this man climbing up the Indian High Commission in London and was trying to pull down the flag... It got under my skin," Jaishankar said.

"When people try to score points... personal points I just shrug it. When 'I' gets pushed, and that 'I' is not me, but 'India'... That sense that you are not given respect and people are descending, some times ambush you," Jaishankar added. Earlier, he had accused the



United Kingdom (UK) of not meeting the obligation of providing security to the diplomats of the Mission, which is expected of a country where a high commission or a consulate is located.

"On the flag and the security of the high commission, in this particular case in the UK - whenever any country sends an embassy anywhere abroad, it is the obligation of the receiving country to provide security for a diplomat to do his work.

It is the obligation of the receiving country to ensure the embassy or the high commission or the consulate and their premises are respected. These obligations were not met," Jaishankar said at an event organised by Bengaluru South MP Tejasvi Surya.

HIV pathogen can lie dormant in brain: Research

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

There's bad news for HIV patients. Researchers have revealed that although current therapies such as current antiretroviral therapy (ART) can successfully block the HIV virus from replicating further, the pathogen can lie dormant in the brain.

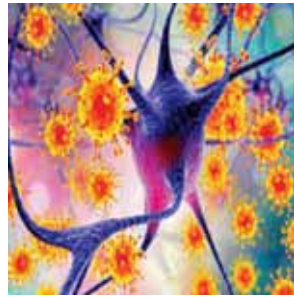
"Discontinuation of treatment can reignite the progression of infection to AIDS," as per a study published in the Journal of Clinical Investigations.

As a part of its life cycle, the human immunodeficiency virus-1 (HIV) inserts a copy of its DNA into human immune cells. Some of these newly-infected immune cells can then transition into a dormant, latent state for a long period of time, which is referred to as HIV latency.

Although current therapies, such as current antiretroviral therapy (ART), can successfully block the virus from replicating further, they cannot eradicate latent HIV. If treatment is ever discontinued, the virus can rebound from latency and lead to AIDS.

Scientists have been searching for where exactly these latent cells are hiding in the body.

The research, published in the Journal of Clinical



Investigations, confirms that microglial cells, which are specialised immune cells with a decade-long lifespan in the brain, can serve as a stable viral reservoir for latent HIV.

"We now know that microglial cells serve as a persistent brain reservoir," said first author Yuyang Tang, Assistant Professor of Medicine in the Division of Infectious Diseases and member of the University of North Carolina HIV Cure Center.

"This had been suspected in the past, but proof in humans was lacking. Our method for isolating viable brain cells provides a new framework for future studies on reservoirs of the central nervous system and, ultimately, efforts towards eradicating HIV," Tang added.

Now that the researchers know that latent HIV can take refuge in microglial cells in the brain, they are now considering plans to target this type of reservoir.

Green Growth conference held to achieve Carbon Net Zero

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Various measures are being taken to achieve green growth which is a safe handle to confront the threats of global warming and shape a safe economic future with an ultimate aim to achieve Carbon Net Zero by 2070 as envisaged by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India told representatives from the Asia-Pacific region who had gathered recently at an international conference.

At the conference on "Productivity and Green Growth: New Interlocking Paradigms", Sundeep Kumar Nayak, IAS, Director General, National Productivity Council (NPC) explained how the Council has been promoting productivity enhancement making the country move towards green growth. He also elaborated the need to prioritize green finance in decoupling industrial growth from environmental degradation and highlighted practical approaches to achieve the same.

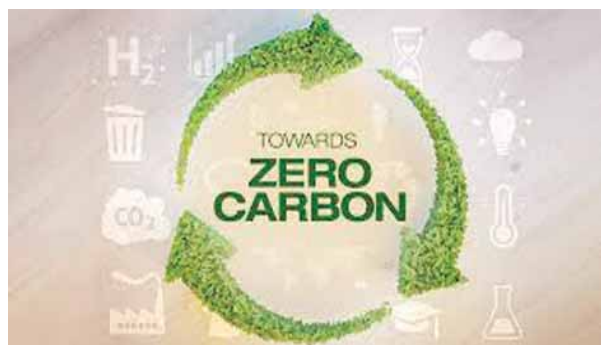
Earlier, Asian Productivity Organization, Tokyo Secretary General Dr. Indra Pradana Singawinata echoed similar views saying that we needed to go beyond environmental protection and adopt a broader, more holistic measure of sustainable development that captures not only the ecological but

also the social, cultural, and human dimensions of well-being. Ensuring that sustainability is inclusive means guaranteeing the involvement of all stakeholders in decision-making processes, especially those most affected by environmental challenges, said Dr Singawinata.

The event witnessed participation from experts, policymakers, industry leaders, and stakeholders who discussed strategies for institutional strengthening for green growth, financing mechanisms, leveraging ESG ratings to boost green finance and realizing net zero emission targets for achieving higher productivity and green growth.

International participants were those from countries such as Republic of Korea, Taiwan, Malaysia, Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore, Fiji etc.

APO National Awards for the year 2022 were also announced during the conference. GMR Rao, Group



Chairman, GMR Group was conferred with APO National Award for Productivity Advocate for his exemplary work in championing the cause of productivity while Professor Pradip Kumar Ray, Emeritus Professor, IIT Kharagpur was conferred with APO National Award for Productivity Technical Expert in recognition to his grass root level work encompassing productivity modeling, ergonomics, safety engineering, and lean engineering operations management.

The conference was addressed by international experts including Dr Hung Suck Park Distinguished Chair, Professor, Department of Chemical Engineering, Ulsan College, Ulsan, ROK; Dr. Kaushik Deb, Senior Research Scholar, Center on Global Energy Policy, Columbia University, USA and Nicholas Gandolfo, Director, Sustainable Finance Solutions (AsiaPacific), Sustainalytics, Singapore.

Govt formulates plan to address learning gap caused by Covid-19

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ PUNE

To address the significant learning gap caused by the two-year pandemic-induced shutdown of schools and higher education institutions, the Indian Government has formulated a comprehensive capacity-building plan for students and teachers across the country.

The plan consists of two key initiatives: the National Professional Standard for Teachers (NPST) and the National Mentoring Mission (NMM). The NPST aims to establish rigorous teaching standards in secondary education, while the NMM offers an opportunity for teachers to enhance their skills through mentoring programs conducted by retired teachers, scholars, and education experts.

Sanjay Kumar, Secretary of the Ministry of Education, highlighted on Sunday the government's commitment to streamline the education system before the implementation of the National Education Plan (NEP). He emphasized the importance of sensitizing the teaching force and expressed confidence in achieving positive outcomes through these initiatives. Kumar shared these insights on the sidelines of the ongoing Education Working Group G20 Summit in Pune.

Both the NPST and NMM will be supported by the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) and will



aim to standardize teaching practices in alignment with the NEP. These initiatives are applicable to all categories of secondary and higher secondary education, including government, private, and public schools.

Kumar emphasized the need for a 21st-century teaching workforce that upholds the highest professional standards and encompasses technical skills and value-based ethics. He stated that while post-independence efforts primarily focused on higher education, the government is now prioritizing secondary education as the foundation for realizing the vision of an Atmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India).

The second day of the National Conference on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy brought together representatives from various states, union territories, and experts in the field to discuss the capacity-building and training of teachers in a blended learning mode.

Lamchonghoi Sweetie Changsan, speaking at the conference, highlighted the National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement (NISHTA), which was extended to include foundational literacy and numeracy at the secondary level. This initiative aims to improve the quality of teachers and enhance student learning outcomes. She also mentioned the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) for the Foundational Stage, which provides a common base and standardized learning outcomes across the country.

Changsan emphasized the blended learning approach, which combines traditional and online methods to enhance the learning experience, maximize effectiveness, and expand access to education.

These initiatives reflect the government's commitment to transforming the education system and ensuring quality education for all students in India.

IIT Advanced Results Announced: IIT Hyderabad Zone Dominates

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The results of the highly anticipated IIT Advanced exam were announced on Sunday, opening doors for successful candidates to secure coveted spots in the 23 prestigious Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) across the country.

According to the results, the maximum number of candidates have qualified from the IIT Hyderabad zone, followed by the IIT Delhi zone and the IIT Bombay zone. Among the top 500 candidates, 174 belong to the IIT Hyderabad zone, while 120 and 103 candidates hail from the IIT Delhi zone and IIT Bombay zone, respectively.

Vavilala Chidvilas Reddy from the Hyderabad zone clinched the top rank in the JEE-Advanced, the entrance exam for IITs. IIT Guwahati, the conducting authority of this year's JEE-Advanced, reported that Reddy secured an impressive score of 341 out of 360 marks. Nayakanti Naga Bhavya Sree, also from the IIT Hyderabad zone, emerged as the top female candidate with a score of 298 marks.



Remarkably, six out of the top 10 rank holders are from the IIT Hyderabad zone. The second rank was secured by Ramesh Surya Teja from the Hyderabad zone, followed by Rishi Kalra from the Roorkee zone. Raghav Goyal (Roorkee), Addagada Venkata Sivaram (Hyderabad), Prabhav Khandelwal (Delhi), Bikina Abhinav Chowdhary (Hyderabad), Malay Kedia (Delhi), Nagireddy Balaaji Reddy (Hyderabad), and Yankanti Pani Venkata Maneedhar Reddy (Hyderabad) achieved subsequent ranks.

In addition to the Indian candidates, 13 foreign candidates and 155 Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) have also qualified the exam. The rank list criteria, as explained

by a senior official from IIT Guwahati, takes into account the aggregate marks obtained in Mathematics, Physics, and Chemistry.

Candidates must meet both subject-wise and aggregate qualifying marks to be included in the rank list. This year, the exam featured a lower percentage of negative marking, with more questions without penalties. These changes instilled confidence in the students, resulting in a higher cutoff, explained the official.

A total of 1,80,372 candidates appeared for both papers in the IIT-JEE Advanced, of which 43,773 candidates successfully qualified. Out of the qualifiers, 36,204 were male students, while 7,509 were female students.

UPA-3 very much possible' in 2024: Sibal

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Rajya Sabha MP Kapil Sibal Sunday said a UPA-3 government coming to power in 2024 is "very much possible" provided the Opposition parties have a commonality of purpose, an agenda reflecting it and are ready for "give and take" when fielding candidates to take on the BJP in the Lok Sabha polls.

Sibal, a prominent Opposition voice and a former Congress leader, also said that instead of a common minimum programme, the Opposition parties should talk about a "new vision for India".

His remarks come days before a crucial meeting of Opposition parties, hosted by Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar in Patna on June 23, where top Opposition leaders such as Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, former AICC chief Rahul Gandhi, TMC supremo Mamata Benerjee, AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal, among others, are set to deliberate on the way forward for forming an anti-BJP coalition for the Lok Sabha polls next year.

In an interview with PTI,



Sibal said the Congress' win in Karnataka assembly polls was an example that the BJP can be defeated but cautioned against making sweeping statements for 2024, asserting that a Lok Sabha election is fought on different grounds altogether.

The former Union minister also insisted that the fight for 2024 was not against Prime Minister Narendra Modi but "against the ideology that he seeks to perpetuate". Sibal said UPA-3 could be a "reality" in 2024 provided the Opposition parties have a commonality of purpose, an agenda which reflects it and that they move forward with the mindset that there "needs

to be a lot of give and take".

"There needs to be give and take at the time of distribution of tickets in those states and constituencies where two or more political parties' candidates are vying for the same seat. Once these three things are agreed upon, I think UPA-3 is very much possible," Sibal told PTI over phone from New York.

Asked if it would be practically possible to put up joint candidates against the BJP when there are serious differences in Opposition ranks, Sibal said talk of differences was an "overstatement", citing that in many of the states, certain political parties are truly dominant.

Over 2 lakh jobs 'eliminated' from PSUs: Rahul

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Sunday claimed that over two lakh jobs have been "eliminated" from PSUs and alleged the government was "trampling" on the hopes of youngsters to benefit a few "crony capitalist friends".

Gandhi said Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) used to be the pride of India and the dream of every youngster for employment, but today, they are "not the priority of the government".

"Employment in PSUs of the country has come down from 16.9 lakh in 2014 to only 14.6 lakh in 2022. Do jobs decrease in a progressing country? 1,81,127 jobs lost in BSNL; 61,928 in SAIL; 34,997 in MTNL; 29,140 in SECL; 28,063 in FCI; 21,120 in ONGC," he said in a tweet in Hindi.

Hitting out at the government, Gandhi said those who made false promises of providing two crore jobs every year "eliminated" more than two lakh jobs instead of increasing their numbers.

"On top of this, contract recruitment has almost doubled in these institutions. Is increasing contract employees



not a way of taking away the constitutional right of reservation? Is this a conspiracy to privatise these companies," the Congress leader asked.

"Industrialists' loans waived and government jobs eliminated from PSUs! What kind of 'Amrit Kaal' is this," he added.

If this really is 'Amrit Kaal', then why are jobs disappearing like this, Gandhi further asked.

"The country is grappling with record unemployment under this government as the hopes of lakhs of youngsters are being trampled for the benefit of a few crony capitalist friends," he alleged.

Biparjoy: Zero deaths, lakh evacuated due to good Centre-State coordination: Sources

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The evacuation of over a lakh people to shelter homes within three days before Cyclone Biparjoy made landfall in Gujarat indicated good coordination between the state and Central Governments and minimised damage, official sources said on Sunday.

They said no deaths have been reported till now because of the cyclone.

The cyclone made landfall near Jakhau on the Kutch coast of Gujarat on Thursday evening, felling trees and electric poles and damaging houses.

In nine Gujarat districts, a minister each from the state and the Centre was deputed to oversee the preparations, a senior official added.

Keeping in mind the aim of 'zero casualties', a senior official said the primary objective was to evacuate people residing



within a 10-kilometre radius of the expected impact zone.

"A comprehensive plan was devised to identify the number of people residing within the 0-5-kilometre and the 5-10-kilometre radius. In Kutch district alone, 122 villages were identified within the 0-10-kilometre range while 72 villages fell within the 0-5-kilometre radius," the official said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi took stock of the situation himself and directed the actions that should be taken. He also

gave guidance to Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, the official said.

"This is the best example of disaster management," he added.

On June 11, Patel sent the ministers to each Gujarat district to oversee the preparations. The prime minister instructed that ministers from both the central and state governments should be directly involved in the preparations to avoid any untoward incident, especially in the Saurashtra region's Gir-Somnath, Porbandar, Junagadh, Jamnagar and the Kutch districts where the cyclone was expected to have the most severe impact, the official said.

The cyclone affected eight coastal districts of Gujarat.

The official added that 707 babies were born in the shelter homes.

The coastal regions of Kutch and other areas affected by the cyclone are home to ports such

as Kandla, Mundra, Mandvi and the Jakhau Fisheries Port.

"These ports were bustling with commercial activity, including the arrival and departure of thousands of trucks and the presence of numerous ships. Ensuring the safety of the labourers and removing ships from the port area was a priority. Meetings were conducted with stakeholders to coordinate the evacuation efforts," the official said.

Another significant challenge was convincing the coastal residents to move to designated shelter homes, he added.

"Public representatives from the block panchayat level to central ministers visited the villages to counsel and educate the residents about the severity of the situation. The collective effort successfully led to the evacuation of over 1,08,000 (1.08 lakh) people to shelter homes in safe locations within three days from

June 12 to 14," he said.

The official added that the administration's efforts were also extended to safeguard the well-being of animals, a vital part of the region's economy.

"Over 2,00,000 (two lakh) animals were safely relocated to higher ground from the coastal areas of Kutch to protect them from the cyclone's impact," he said.

According to the India Meteorological Department, the depression -- a remnant of the cyclonic storm -- over central parts of south Rajasthan and its neighbourhood moved east-northeastwards at a speed of 10 kilometres per hour in the morning.

It is very likely to continue to move east-northeastwards and maintain the intensity of depression during the next 12 hours, the weather office said.



Goa gears up for G20 tourism meets, delegates arrive

PTI ■ PANAJI

Goa is all set to host two crucial back-to-back G20 meets on the tourism track starting Monday besides a host of side events to promote cruise tourism as a "model for sustainable and responsible travel" and showcase the cultural heritage of the coastal state.

Delegates have begun arriving in Goa to take part in the fourth G20 Tourism Working Group (TWG) meeting and the G20 Tourism Ministerial meeting slated to be held here from June 19-22, officials said on Sunday.

The purpose of the TWG meeting is to discuss and address global tourism challenges and opportunities, they said.

At the Dabolim International Airport here, delegates were welcomed amid strains of Goan music and flamenco performances by dancers. The airport premises have been decked up with vibrant posters themed on G20 and natural beauty of the coastal state.

"About 20 delegates arrived yesterday and, several of them arrived today morning as well, both Indian and foreign delegates. About 60 delegates in total are expected to arrive by tonight," a senior official in the Goa government told PTI.

The two G20 meets come days after cyclone Biparjoy made a landfall in the coastal areas of Gujarat leaving a trail of destruction behind in that western state.

Hectic preparations are underway in Goa for the two key G20 events, which will also bracket the International Yoga Day (IYD) celebrations on June 21. Preparations have been made keeping in mind heavy monsoon rains but there is "absolutely no concern" at present over any impact on the programmes due to the impending cyclone Biparjoy, a top official in the tourism ministry had said in Delhi on Wednesday.

Cyclone Biparjoy weakened and moved towards south Rajasthan on Friday, after ravaging the Kutch and Saurashtra regions of Gujarat on June 15.

An official in Panaji, earlier this week, said with the pre-monsoon spell in Goa, all activities on beaches have come to a standstill and lifeguards have installed red flags at vulnerable spots.

Tourism ministry officials had earlier said that a Yoga session for G20 delegates was planned to take place at Dona Paula beach, but in view of rainy weather in Goa, all Yoga-related events will now be hosted in indoor facilities.

"The G20 ministers will take part in a Yoga session at the Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Indoor Stadium, and get to experience this ancient ethos of India," a senior official had told PTI in Delhi earlier.

Union Minister of State for Tourism Shripad Naik on Friday conducted a comprehensive review of the preparations for the G20 events.

In conjunction with these events, the Ministry of Tourism has organised celebrations for the IYD at Durbar Hall, Raj Bhavan. All ministers and delegates from G20 nations will actively participate in this session, embracing the spirit of unity and well-being, officials said.

The fourth G20 Tourism Working Group meeting will be held from June 19-20. The G20 ministerial meeting after the TWG meeting is scheduled to be held from June 21-22, with ministers of tourism from the G20 countries and other invited guests to discuss the outcomes of the previous working group meetings and adopt a joint declaration on tourism cooperation, they said.

All G20 tourism ministers of all member countries, invited countries and heads of international organisations have requested for "bilateral meetings with our tourism minister for mutual cooperation and deliberation on tourism-related matters", an official said in Delhi earlier.

A number of side events have also been lined up on the sidelines of the main G20 meets. Promoting cruise tourism as a model for sustainable and responsible travel will be one of the focus areas among the side events.

DMK sacks leader for 'indiscipline' after BJP leader Khushbu slams him for 'crass comments'

PTI ■ CHENNAI

BJP leader and actor Khushbu Sundar on Sunday slammed a DMK platform speaker for his purported remarks about her, taking exception to his "crass comments" and said the National Commission for Women, of which she is a member, will take up the matter by itself.

With Sundar raking up the issue on Twitter and later emotionally addressing a press conference, the ruling party announced that the platform speaker, Sivaji Krishnamurthy, was being dismissed from the party for indiscipline and bringing disrepute to it.

At a press meet hours after tweeting on the issue, Sundar broke down and was visibly emotional throughout. Sundar said she has already taken up the matter with the Tamil Nadu State Commission for Women.

Earlier, she uploaded a video of Krishnamurthy on



her Twitter page and said, "The crass comments of this habitual offender shows the political culture prevalent in DMK." "There are many like him in that rut. Abusing women, passing lewd cheap comments about them goes unchecked and is probably rewarded with more opportunities."

Tagging Stalin, she said, "What you don't realise is he not only insults me, but you & a great leader like your father (the late M Karunanidhi). The more space you provide him, the more political space you will lose. Your party is becoming a safe haven for uncouth

Recall Gandhi's Talisman when in doubt: Rajnath to young babus

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday invoked Mahatma Gandhi's 'Talisman' and urged the young civil servants and the aspirants to "recall the face of the poorest man" whenever in doubt.

Addressing a gathering of successful candidates of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) exams and civil services aspirants, Singh said, "At the time of making a decision, remember the statement of Mahatma Gandhi, in which he had advised to recall the face of the poorest man you have seen, and ask your heart that the step that you are mulling to take, how useful will it be for him, will it benefit him?"

"Before we make any decision, we have to think what will be the effect of our decision on the person standing on the bottom rung of the society. The day from which you start working with this thought, believe



me, you will get a sense of self-satisfaction," Singh said.

The current Lok Sabha MP from Lucknow, Singh is the former Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh. He said the stature of India in the international forum has risen in the past nine years and the world now listens to it attentively.

He emphasised that now a superpower like the United States of America (USA) prepares diligently to welcome and host India's Prime Minister and the foreign media also shares the country's success stories. "A huge responsibility is on your shoulders. You are going

to serve at a time when the country has entered the 'Amrit Kaal'. When you will be at the end of your term by 2047, the country will be celebrating its 100th year of independence.

"I would like you to be prepared for the upcoming challenges. Together we can face them and take India on the path of a developed nation," he said.

Giving a piece of advice to future officers, he said, "You also have to keep in mind to listen carefully to good points suggested by a public representative, and if it is appropriate, then implement it. The public representative will definitely raise the issues related to the people in front of you. So, you have to work together with the public representatives in your area."

Singh said, "There will be different types of challenges in front of you. I urge you that no matter how many challenges and difficulties come, never allow the child within you to die."

Amarnath Yatra: Security preparedness reviewed

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

Ahead of the beginning of Amarnath yatra from July 1, the Army Commander Northern Command, Lt-Gen Upendra Dwivedi Sunday reviewed the security and operational preparedness of the troops to ensure peaceful conduct of the annual pilgrimage.

The Union Territory administration led by Lt-Governor Manoj Sinha is already geared up to receive the pilgrims and making elaborate arrangements for their comfortable stay and transportation to the cave shrine.

During his visit to one of the base camps located at Panjarni, the Army Commander was briefed by the supervising officers about the measures taken to ensure successful conduct of the yatra.

Chief Engineer Project BEACON also briefed the army commander about the logistics provided for the yatra period. Troops of the Indian army guard the yatra and dominate the higher reaches to prevent any infiltration bid from across the line of control.

Indian army also provides medical facilities, helipads, habitat construction, deploys emergency rescue teams, and seamless communication network to ensure successful conduct of the pilgrimage every year.

Cong, BJP trade charges as rice politics heats up in Karnataka

PTI ■ BENGALURU

The rice politics in Karnataka heated up with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah accusing the Centre of creating obstacles to supply rice for its poll guarantee of 10 kilograms rice to each member of the BPL family under the 'Anna Bhagya' scheme.

Siddaramaiah said Karnataka is not demanding rice for free as the state is ready to purchase it. To this, the state

unit of the BJP hit back saying Siddaramaiah was intentionally creating confusion whereas the fact was that the Centre had promised to give only 5 kg rice free of cost, which it is doing.

BJP stalwart and former chief minister B S Yediyurappa warned that his party will not accept if the Congress government gave even "one gram less" than the promised 10 kg rice under the 'Anna Bhagya' scheme. CM Siddaramaiah alleged: "The Central Govt is doing pol-

itics. We had written to them (Food Corporation of India) on June 9 that they should give us 2.28 lakh metric tonne rice. They answered on June 12 that they will supply the same. However, on June 14, the MD and the chairman of the Food Corporation of India wrote to us that it cannot give us rice."

"What should we conclude if they agree on June 12 saying that they have seven lakh metric tonne of rice and later deny that they don't have rice?"

Siddaramaiah questioned. When asked why he should not speak to the Union Minister for Food, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution Piyush Goyal, Siddaramaiah said if the FCI officials had told him to speak to the minister then he would have done that.

"But when the FCI officials had agreed for rice, why should I speak to others? They are giving an excuse today that we did not speak to him (Goyal)," the Chief Minister charged.

Expelled from Congress, former MLA Deshmukh rejoins BJP

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Less than a month after he was expelled from the Congress, former MLA Ashish Deshmukh on Sunday rejoined the BJP ahead of the next year's Lok Sabha and Maharashtra Assembly elections. Deshmukh was inducted back into the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Nagpur in the presence of Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister and senior party leader Devendra Fadnis on Sunday. Deshmukh had joined the BJP. He contested that election and won from the Katol Assembly seat in Nagpur district, defeating his uncle and Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) nominee Anil Deshmukh.

However, he resigned from the BJP in 2018 following differences with the party leadership and later joined the Congress. He was the Congress nominee against BJP's Devendra Fadnis from Nagpur South West seat in the 2019 Assembly polls.

The Congress last month expelled Deshmukh over his public statements against the party leadership. He had said Congress leader Rahul Gandhi should apologise to the OBC community over his "Modi surname" remarks.

Uddhav faction MLC Kayande set to join Shinde-led Shiv Sena

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Shiv Sena (UBT) MLC Smanisha Kayande will on Sunday evening join the Shiv Sena led by Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, a spokesperson of his party said.

The development comes on a day when Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Uddhav Thackeray is scheduled to address a State-level convention of his group workers in Mumbai.

Shiv Sena (UBT) leaders hit out at Kayande, saying despite getting everything in the organisation she has chosen to leave it.

On Saturday, former MLA Shishir Shinde resigned from the Thackeray-led faction.

Shiv Sena spokesperson and MLA Sanjay Shirsat told reporters on Sunday that Kayande along with many others will join the party at 5 pm in the presence of CM Shinde at his official residence 'Varsha'.

Shirsat did not name Shishir Shinde, but claimed many more leaders will join the CM-led party.

Kayande is a member of the state Legislative Council and her term expires on July 27, 2024. She is an MLC from the Legislative Assembly quota.

The Shiv Sena split in June last year after Eknath Shinde and 39 other party MLAs rebelled against then



Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray and toppled the Maha Vikas Aghadi coalition government of the Sena, NCP and Congress.

Eknath Shinde later became chief minister with the BJP's support and the Election Commission of India subsequently granted his faction the original party name and 'bow and arrow' symbol, while the Thackeray group was named Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray).

The Eknath Shinde and Uddhav Thackeray-led factions of the Shiv Sena will on Monday celebrate the party's foundation day at separate events here.

Meanwhile, Shiv Sena (UBT) leaders hit out at Kayande, saying despite getting everything in the organisation she has chosen to leave it.

India been giving befitting reply to anyone casting evil eye : Nadda

PTI ■ SIVSAGAR

BJP national president J P Nadda on Sunday asserted that India has been giving a befitting reply to anyone casting an evil eye on the country.

He also maintained that the country has been on a growth trajectory in the last nine years under the BJP-led NDA government. Speaking at a party rally here, Nadda said the government has worked to strength-



en India's security. "Be it during the Doklam (India-China military) stand off or the surgical strike, India has shown no one can cast an evil eye on us," he said.

Nadda said the NDA government's nine years at the Centre have been marked by strong decisions, taking the country forward. "Before 2014, India was known for corruption, policy paralysis and scams. Now, we are known for a

decisive, strong and forward-marching government," the senior BJP leader said.

"The Congress only knew politics of appeasement, vote bank, corruption... inciting clashes among our own people," he claimed, taking a swipe at the opposition party.

Nadda also said the country's image has undergone a drastic transformation, especially at the international forum, under the current regime.

Need for robust snakebite management as mortality rises by 8K/year: Researchers

ARCHNA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

There is a need for a robust snakebite management policy in the country to prevent the snakebite envenomation (SBE, ie, death due to snakebite), a team of researchers including from the ICMR has said as they suggested a slew of measures as Health Ministry officials prepares a blueprint for the proposed national programme to curb the snakebite cases in India.

According to a recent national mortality survey India had 1.2 million snakebite deaths (average 58,000/year) between 2000 to 2019, an increase of about 8,000 deaths/year compared to the earlier estimated survey (2001-2003).

Snakebite disproportionately affects children living in impoverished rural communi-

ties. The WHO has recently reinstated snakebites on its list of Neglected Tropical Diseases and launched a comprehensive Strategy for the Prevention and Control of Snakebite Envenoming.

The researchers have flagged concern that implementation of existing standard treatment guidelines have remained very poor in public and private healthcare system.

Noting that majority of deaths could have been prevented, the researchers have stressed on addressing the burden of snakebites through health system capacity building. These can be done through establishment of a dedicated snakebite clinical research cum training centre (SCRTC).

They have also batted for making the snakebites notifiable in the national programme to

gauge the actual burden and its inclusion in the medical graduation (MBBS) curriculum and awareness among medical fraternity and community National programme for prevention and control of snakebite in India

Rahul K Gajbiye and Hrishikesh Munshi from Department of Clinical Research Laboratory, ICMR-National Institute for Research in Reproductive & Child Health, Mumbai and Himmatrao Bawaskar, Bawaskar Hospital & Clinical Research Centre, Mahad in Maharashtra in a review article in recent edition of IJMR said that large population engaged in agricultural activities and those in snakebite-prone rural areas, several slum areas are exposed to abundant venomous snakes.

There is lack of community awareness regarding preven-

tion and control of snakebites. Majority of the snakebites occur in rural/tribal areas with poor transportation facilities, especially during the night hours, thereby contributing to higher deaths.

They said that the national programme should consider the diversity of venomous snake species and their toxins in different geographical regions in India.

"The available polyvalent anti-venoms do not neutralize the venom of certain species such as the hump-nosed pit viper (Hypnale hypnale)," they said.

Hence, the Government should consider establishing region-specific venom banks and make provision for region-specific ASV during the process of implementation of the national snakebite programme.

PM Modi going on US tour instead of resolving crisis in Manipur, says Uddhav

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Shiv Sena (UBT) president Uddhav Thackeray on Sunday criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi over his scheduled visit to the US, and asked why he was going abroad instead of visiting Manipur to resolve the crisis in the violence-hit north-eastern state.

Addressing a State-level convention of his party, the first since the rebellion split Shiv Sena last year, he also dared the BJP-led Central Govt to implement the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in the country. "One part of our country is in the grip of violence and Modi hasn't gone there or taken steps to resolve the crisis, but is going to America," Thackeray said.

The PM will be going on a state visit to the US and Egypt from June 20 to 25.

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PAPER WITH PASSION

Think rationally

The 'rationalisation' of NCERT books has sparked a heated debate about its very rationale

The NCERT's exercise to rationalise its text books has led to the deletion of references including passages on the theory of evolution, references to the Cold War, the Mughal courts, and industrial revolution, the 2002 Gujarat riots, the contribution of agriculture to the Indian economy, and a section on challenges to democracy. The changes were made during a syllabus rationalisation exercise carried out by the council to reduce the burden on students given the Covid-19 pandemic. For the record, the pandemic is officially over. Now, Yogendra Yadav and Suhas Palshikar, whose names were mentioned in the NCERT textbooks of political science as chief advisors, have urged NCERT to drop their names as they feel textbooks have been "mutilated beyond recognition". Taking a cue from the duo, 33 more academics have asked the NCERT to take their names off the revised textbooks. Meanwhile, more than 100 academicians have alleged that their counterparts who wanted their names to be dropped from the textbooks were trying to capture media attention, and seem to have forgotten that textbooks are an outcome of collective intellectual engagement. They maintain that the school curriculum has not been updated for nearly two decades.

In recent years, concerns have been raised regarding the BJP and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) attempting to rewrite the history and curriculum of India. The RSS has been accused of pursuing a revisionist agenda aimed at shaping the narrative of India's past and moulding the education system to align with their ideological views. Allegedly, they have sought to modify textbooks to present a version of history that emphasises Hindu nationalist perspectives and downplaying the contributions of minority communities. This has led to heated debates, as many argue that such revisions undermine academic integrity and promote a narrow understanding of the country's diverse history. The BJP and RSS advocate for a concept known as "cultural nationalism," which seeks to promote a homogenous understanding of Indian culture based on Hindu traditions and values. This emphasis on cultural nationalism is distorting the inclusive and pluralistic fabric of India's society. They have attempted to reinterpret certain historical events and figures to fit their ideological framework. This includes attempts to rewrite the narrative surrounding India's independence movement, downplay the role of certain freedom fighters, and selectively highlight aspects that align with their ideological agenda. Critics argue that this revisionism undermines the nuanced understanding of history and hinders the development of critical thinking skills among students. The curriculum changes have raised serious concerns about the politicisation of education and the distortion of historical narratives. It is crucial to have an inclusive education and a nuanced understanding of the past to have a vibrant democracy.

present a version of history that emphasises Hindu nationalist perspectives and downplaying the contributions of minority communities. This has led to heated debates, as many argue that such revisions undermine academic integrity and promote a narrow understanding of the country's diverse history. The BJP and RSS advocate for a concept known as "cultural nationalism," which seeks to promote a homogenous understanding of Indian culture based on Hindu traditions and values. This emphasis on cultural nationalism is distorting the inclusive and pluralistic fabric of India's society. They have attempted to reinterpret certain historical events and figures to fit their ideological framework. This includes attempts to rewrite the narrative surrounding India's independence movement, downplay the role of certain freedom fighters, and selectively highlight aspects that align with their ideological agenda. Critics argue that this revisionism undermines the nuanced understanding of history and hinders the development of critical thinking skills among students. The curriculum changes have raised serious concerns about the politicisation of education and the distortion of historical narratives. It is crucial to have an inclusive education and a nuanced understanding of the past to have a vibrant democracy.

PICTALK



Peacocks on a hot summer day, in New Delhi, PTI

Is opposition to GM crops emotional?

Food is needed for human survival and with diminishing agricultural lands we cannot rely solely on traditional breeding or indigenous varieties

Agriculture and human civilization have evolved side by side. Early reports of farming can be seen during the predynastic period around 5000-3000 BCE. Archaeological evidence from the Indus Valley civilization points to agriculture during 2,500 BCE. During the passing of the period from predynastic to the present era we could see a lot of changes in human civilization. The cultivation practice that we have been following is also evolving. People have been cultivating crops for thousands of years, transporting them to new regions of the planet, and modifying them to fit their requirements at every stage of the process.

The discovery of laws of inheritance by Gregor Mendel in the 1800s made hybridization a popular tool in crop improvement, where we cross-bred various varieties of the same species. With the discovery of the structure of DNA in 1953 and subsequent developments in molecular biology scientists have started applying various molecular tools in plant breeding. In the 1980s, sci-



entists also developed techniques for engineering novel features by mixing and matching DNA from various plant and animal species through genetic engineering, popularly known as transgenic or genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

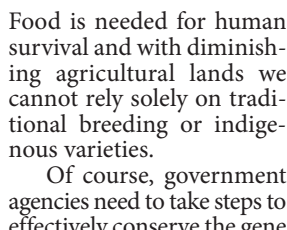
Throughout our history, we can see that we have modified our crop plants using the latest available scientific knowledge during the time. It's important to note that while there is opposition to GM crops, there are also proponents who highlight potential benefits such as increased crop yield, reduced pesticide use, and enhanced nutritional content.

Some of the concerns raised by the public may be worth debating. But all these concerns are relevant to traditional breeding also. Since people have been farming

for such a long time, nearly all crops grown today have been genetically improved, whether through domestication, selective breeding, hybridization, radiation or chemicals, or changes made directly to plant genes by humans. When we implemented the green revolution in the country, along with food security, it also led to the depletion of many of our indigenous varieties and species of plants and also led to pollution through the large-scale use of fertilizers and pesticides. It also threatened the existence of many microbes and animal species.

This practice is still being followed by our agriculture community. Still none of the so-called 'activists' opposed the unhealthy practice being followed. Then why is this stiff opposition to GM plants, when GM plants and products are already in our ecosystem and even in our bodies, that have entered indirectly through adulterated products?

It's worth noting that the scientific consensus supports the safety and potential benefits of GM crops.



BIJU DHARMAPALAN

Food is needed for human survival and with diminishing agricultural lands we cannot rely solely on traditional breeding or indigenous varieties. Of course, government agencies need to take steps to effectively conserve the gene pool of our traditional varieties. We need to prevent the cultivation of not only GM crops but also domesticated or hybrid varieties. In this way, we can conserve our gene pool for the future.

Blindly opposing the fruits of modern science like genetic engineering or recombinant engineering will harm even the survival of the human race on this planet. Of course, instead of bringing GM under the monopoly of corporate companies, the government should promote GM cultivation through its agencies like KVKs or through agriculture departments. This will help in gaining public confidence in accepting this novel technology.

(The writer is a science communicator & columnist. Views expressed are personal)

When 'Sulekha' inked freedom

The legacy of the 'Swadeshi Fountain Pen' and 'Sulekha Ink' lives on. We owe so much to the courage and resilience of our freedom fighters

Recently on June 14 a tweet by Damayanti Datta on Satish Chandra Dasgupta the scientist and inventor of the 'Swadeshi Fountain Pen Ink' - which was later named "Sulekha" by Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore - caught my attention. In the tweet, Damayanti pointed to June 14, 1932, when Mahatma Gandhi had requested Dasgupta to create a 'Swadeshi Fountain Pen' ink. This ink went on to become part of our childhood and school days too. Chelpark was a much later - but popular - edition to this brigade.

The concept of a portable writing instrument with an ink reservoir can be traced back to ancient times. However, it was not until the 19th century that the fountain pen, as we know it today, started to take shape. Initially, fountain pens were imported from Europe and used primarily by the British ruling class in India. However, as the nationalist movement gained momentum, Indians began to question their dependence on foreign goods and sought to develop indigenous alternatives.

Mahatma Gandhi recognized - and gave a clarion call to the Indians - the importance of self-reliance in challenging British domination. He advocated for the use of indigenous products and actively discouraged the use of imported goods. In this case, the use of fountain pens - being an integral part of education and communication - was seen as a symbol of this dependence on foreign powers. Gandhi's persuasive words inspired many individuals, including Satish Chandra Dasgupta, to take up the cause of manufacturing indigenous fountain pens.

In response to Gandhi's call for self-reliance, Dasgupta established a manufacturing unit in Calcutta in the 1920s, aiming to produce pens that would rival their foreign counterparts. He assembled a team of skilled artisans and engineers and began experimenting with various designs and materials. After several trials and iterations, Satish Chandra Dasgupta successfully created the 'Swadeshi Fountain Pen', a testament to Indian crafts-



manship and ingenuity. The pen was meticulously designed to cater to the needs of the Indian market, with a focus on durability, ease of use, and affordability. The 'Swadeshi Fountain Pen' was not only a functional writing instrument but also a symbol of national pride and resistance. Its design incorporated elements of Indian art and culture, with intricate engravings of national symbols and inspirational quotes from prominent Indian leaders. In tandem with the development of the 'Swadeshi Fountain Pen', Dasgupta also recognized the need for a high-quality ink that would complement the pen's performance. He introduced 'Sulekha Ink', a locally produced ink that matched the standards of imported varieties. This ink was crafted from natural ingredients and boasted vibrant colours and smooth flow, making it ideal for use with the 'Swadeshi Fountain Pen'. He also employed skilled chemists to refine the ink formula, utilizing indigenous materials to create a product that surpassed the quality of foreign imports.

It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that the 'Swadeshi Fountain Pen' and 'Sulekha Ink' became iconic symbols of India's struggle for independence. They represented the

nation's determination to break free from the shackles of colonialism and foster self-reliance in all aspects of life. The pens and ink gained popularity in due course and people embraced it in their lifestyle. The success of the 'Swadeshi Fountain Pen' and 'Sulekha Ink' also had a lasting impact on the Indian manufacturing industry. Their production inspired other entrepreneurs to explore indigenous alternatives in various sectors, fostering a sense of pride and promoting economic growth. The fountain pen industry in India witnessed a significant boost, with numerous manufacturers emerging and contributing to the country's self-sufficiency in the years to come.

In an era dominated by digital communication, where ballpoint pens and keyboards have become the norm, the fountain pen stands as a timeless relic that exudes elegance, sophistication and a touch of nostalgia. Despite technological advancements, the allure of the fountain pen has not waned; instead, it has evolved into a prestigious symbol that embodies craftsmanship, individuality, and the art of writing. One can also say that the tactile connection between the writer, pen, and paper adds a layer of intimacy to the



THE SUCCESS OF THE 'SWADESHI FOUNTAIN PEN' AND 'SULEKHA INK' ALSO HAD A LASTING IMPACT ON THE INDIAN MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY

act of writing and enhances the pleasure of putting thoughts onto paper. The fountain pen's association with achievement and status has contributed to its prestigious image. Throughout history, prominent figures, including renowned writers, intellectuals, and business leaders, have used fountain pens as a mark of distinction. Whether it was Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, Sarojini Naidu, or Rabindranath Tagore, the fountain pen served as a medium through which these freedom fighters conveyed their thoughts, aspirations, and visions for an independent India. The act of writing with a fountain pen became a statement of defiance against the oppressors. The legacy of the 'Swadeshi Fountain Pen' and 'Sulekha Ink' lives on in the memories of many unsung heroes, like Satish Chandra Dasgupta deserves to be remembered for his indomitable spirit and his power of innovation. They serve as a testament to the courage and resilience of those who fought for India's freedom and continue to inspire generations and nurture local industries.

(The writer is Programme Executive, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti)

and dictatorship. The non-BJP state governments are not getting their share of taxes and other things, since when the Modi government came to power, and even if they get it, it is in a discriminatory manner. What will happen if tomorrow the state governments also rebel, and do not send any GST and other taxes from the states to the centre? What if the state governments do not allow ED, CBI, and IT to enter their states tomorrow? The Modi government should first read the central government relations, read the recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission. The centre should behave like a guardian without discrimination. MT Farooqi | Hyderabad

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

DOUBLE MURDER

Sir - In a shocking incident, two sisters Pinky (30) and Jyoti (29) were shot dead in Delhi's Ambedkar Basti area of RK Puram on Sunday morning. Shortly after, three people identified as Arjun, Michael and Dev were arrested in connection with the murder of these two women. It seems that the assailants came for the victim's brother primarily to settle a money settlement issue, but shot the two girls after they didn't find him.

Delhi chief minister (CM) Arvind Kejriwal immediately attacked the Modi government and said the national capital would have been the safest place had the law-and-order situation been under the AAP dispensation instead of the Lieutenant Governor. Aam Aadmi wonders if CM Kejriwal could not stop his ministers of a small cabinet from committing crimes in jail, and he thinks he is better placed to control all the crimes if the Delhi police is under him. People want to know from CM Kejriwal: are such incidents of domestic violence not reported in his ruled state Punjab, where police are under the AAP government? Actually, CM Kejriwal forgot that it's impossible for any government (except the politicians and VIPs) that police can be present at every nook and corner for the aam aadmi. May their souls rest in peace. Sending my deepest condolence to the family of the deceased.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

CONSERVE GROUNDWATER FOR FUTURE

Sir - The abundance of water has played a critical part in diverse civilisations taking root and making this planet worth living. But, a few decades have altered the way we use this precious resource due to rampant industrialization, overuse, human greed, the needs of an ever-growing population etc.

Climate change is turning out to be a more complex phenomenon even though mankind is trying to understand and devise various methods to mitigate its evil effects.

NO FCI foodgrains for Karnataka



Food Corporation of India (FCI) is refusing to provide food grains to the Karnataka government. Congress had announced 5 guarantees in Karnataka to give 10 kg of food grains. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah implemented that plan just some days ago. This is the vendetta politics of the Modi government

Earlier studies focused on the melting of ice sheets and glaciers as primary factors for altering the earth's movements. But, the latest study sheds fresh light on water's ability to change earth's rotation ever since it was discovered in 2016. Recent findings published in the journal Geophysical Research Letters state that groundwater pumping has shifted the mass of water making the earth tilt about 80 centimetres east between the years 1993 and 2010 which can affect the climate of our planet.

Newer studies have only enhanced our knowledge of critical issues of water depletion. Among the causes of climate change, the redistribution of ground water especially in western North America and northwestern India actually has the largest impact on the drift of the rotational pole. For instance, from 1993 to 2010 humans pumped 2150 gigatonnes of groundwater equivalent to more than 6 millimetres of sea level rise. Groundwater depletion is a universal phenomenon. It can be slowed down only when sustained and dedicated efforts are made for decades.

So, the conservation and preservation of groundwater is our foremost duty, if we are to ensure its availability for our

future generations. Moreover, if the human species is to survive and thrive water conservation must be done on a war footing. Vijay Singh Adhikari | Nainital

UNIFORM CIVIL CODE Sir - India is home to people of different castes, communities and religions. The Hindus, the Muslims, the Sikhs and the Christians practice their religion differently. How can they be brought under the uniform civil code? In the alternative as advised by Dr. Ambedkar in the constituent assembly, the uniform Civil Code may be enacted with a proviso that it will only apply to those who agree to be controlled by it. It would be feasible for the government as well to maintain fraternity and tranquillity if the uniform Civil Code accommodates the freedom of choice as it was done in the case of the Special Marriages Act 1954. Uniformity must not be confused with unity that happens only with inclusiveness and not by imposing something on a community against their will. Jahangir Ali | Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

STRIVE TO HAVE A ROBUST MIND

It can be achieved through the practice of yoga, pranayama and meditation



RAVI VALLURI

The human mind over a period of time becomes robust through the technique of assessment of individual differences, behavioural modifications and various skills. Maharishi Patanjali in his treatise Patanjali Yoga Sutra, wrote, Tado drashtu swarupe avastham, (Sutra 3), implying that the seer then rests or remains in his/her own nature. This exalted state can be achieved by a disciplined mind. It would be worthwhile to perceive and comprehend Sutra 4: Vrutti sarupyamitarata, that is, a seeker identifies oneself with the modulations of the mind all the time.

The human mind is perpetually bombarded by innumerable thoughts and at the same time is engaged with the outside world all the time. With eyes wide open in a wakeful state an individual is ensnared by the senses of sight, smell, sound, touch and taste. In such a state it has to empty itself and metamorphose to attain tranquility.

PAINTER FROM MILAN

An Italian painter was fascinated by the paintings of Raja Ravi Varma and the epic Mahabharata. This artist was overwhelmed with the divine portraits of Hindu deities painted by the legendary Indian painter. Raja Ravi Varma had successfully carved a niche for himself through dexterous fusion of European techniques with Indian sensibilities and made the paintings affordable for Indian art lovers through lithographs. Meanwhile, the proficient Italian painter embarked upon his odyssey to delineate the story of the epic Mahabharata on canvas. He visited several libraries, researched the subject and spent close to ten years and perceived various nuances, undercurrents and emotions of the epic penned by sage Veda Vyasa.



He psychologically coached and up skilled his mind through techniques of looking back into various incidents in his life, understand the meaning of love and affection and discovered bonding and togetherness among erudite scholars of Mahabharata and the fraternity of painters. Vigorous training disciplines and lays down what can be termed as a regimen to harness and upgrade skill-sets. Such kind of upgradation is essential for the human mind to avoid falling into set patterns and instead discover something new.

THE MIND DEMANDS PROOF

An untrained mind perennially demands proof. It is not a disciplined mind and is still not open to develop psychological skills. Sutra 5 of Patanjali Yoga Sutra states that, Vrutayaha panchtayyah klish-taklishtaha, meaning that modulations in the human mind are five-fold and could be agonizing or not painful at all. There are some vrutis or modulations of the mind which are unwelcome and unbidden. This has been further explained in Sutra 6, Pramanaviparyayavikalpanidra-smrutayaha; the human mind is either in quest of proof, on the path of wrong understanding, in a state of imagination, in a state of sleep or memory.

NATURAL STATES

They may well appear paradoxical but these are all natural stages in life. And it is perhaps essential that the human mind is exposed to such thought processes; for it is from doubts that solutions arise. But it is essential to clear the dark clouds of doubt that envelope the human mind in order to seek clarity. This too can be achieved through developing psychological skill-sets of practice (abhyasa) and discipline. The examples of the Italian painter and the fabled archer Arjuna immediately figure on the list; how their minds could become robust by singularly pursuing the path through practice and discipline. "Knowing others is intelligence. Knowing yourself is true wisdom. Mastering others is a strength, mastering yourself is true power," said Lao Tzu.

(The writer is the CEO of Chattisgarh East Railway Ltd, East West Railway Ltd and is a faculty of the Art of Living)

Tax reforms are yielding good results

The Income Tax Department has successfully used technology to reach out to the assesses in non-intrusive ways



UTTAM GUPTA

A major factor that has helped the Modi - government keep up the tempo of investment in building infrastructure and other development activities and continues with welfare schemes in desired measure without causing any slippage in fiscal deficit target has to do with a steep rise in tax collection.

The gross tax revenue (GTR) - including total direct tax collection, proceeds from Goods and Services Tax or GST, customs and excise duty - net of refunds - surged from around Rs 21,11,000 crore during the financial year (FY) 2019-20 to Rs 30,50,000 crore during 2022-23 - an increase of about 50 per cent. Even as GTR during 2020-21 languished at around Rs 22,17,000 crore (courtesy of Corona pandemic), a major boost came during 2021-22 and 2022-23. Unlike in the past when invariably, the revised estimate (RE) or the actual number for the relevant year would fall short of the budget estimate (BE), in these two years, the position reversed with the RE/actual exceeding the BE - that too by a substantial margin.

During 2021-22, the RE of GTR at Rs 25,20,000 crore (RE includes actual for the 10 months up to January 31, 2022 and estimate for the remaining two months of the FY i.e. February and March; it is mentioned in the budget for the following year i.e. 2022-23 presented by the Union Government on February 1, 2022) was Rs 300,000 crore higher than the BE of Rs 22,20,000 crore. The 'actual' albeit for all 12 months of the FY at Rs 27,10,000 crore turned out to be even higher than the RE of Rs 1,90,000 crore.

Thus, the actual GTR during 2021-22 was a whopping Rs 490,000 crore higher than the BE. For 2022-23, the finance minister, Nirmala Sitharaman had set a target (read: BE) for GTR at Rs 27,60,000 crore. Against this, the RE (as given in the budget for 2023-24 presented on February 1, 2023) at Rs 30,40,000 crore was Rs 280,000 crore higher. The 'actual' at Rs 30,50,000 crore was even higher than the RE by Rs 10,000 crore. When compared to the BE, the actual was higher by a huge Rs 290,000 crore.

In May 2022, the government announced a cut in central excise duty (CED) on petrol and diesel to give relief to consumers from the high prices of these fuels resulting in a revenue loss of about Rs 90,000 crore. But, for this, actual GTR during 2022-23 would have been even higher at Rs 31,40,000 crore exceeding the BE by Rs 380,000 crore.

The reason for this spectacular performance is primarily two-fold. First, during 2021-22, nominal GDP (taxes being levied as a percentage of the value of income-generating activities in different sectors that make up the GDP, and their collection increases in tandem with it) grew by 18.4 per cent which was 4 per cent higher than 14.4 per cent growth assumed at the time of arriving at the BE. Likewise, during 2022-23, nominal GDP grew by 15.9 per cent which was 5.6 per cent higher than the 10.3 per cent growth assumed in the budget. The other factor has to do with the tax-GDP ratio. For any given level of nominal GDP, if this ratio is higher, that would lead to higher tax collection.

For 2022-23, Sitharaman had arrived at BE for GTR assuming a tax-GDP ratio



AFTER SUCCESSFULLY STEERING THROUGH THE TURBULENT TIMES CAUSED BY CORONA PANDEMIC DURING 2020-21 THE GOVERNMENT KEPT UP THE MOMENTUM OF INVESTMENT IN THE FOLLOWING TWO YEARS TO LEAD GROWTH FROM THE FRONT.

(The writer is a policy analyst)



of 10.7 percent. If one were to apply this ratio to the actual nominal GDP value for 2022-23 (around Rs 27200,000 crore), GTR would come to Rs 2910,000 crore. Against this, the actual GTR was Rs 30,50,000 crore. Divide this by actual nominal GDP, we get the tax-GDP ratio of 11.2 per cent which is higher than what was assumed in the budget. Likewise, the actual tax-GDP ratio during 2021-22 was 11.5 per cent against 9.9 per cent assumed in the budget. In short, the unprecedented surge in tax collection isn't just due to an increase in economic activity as manifested in higher growth of GDP but also due to a larger number of entities paying taxes and each entity paying more which is reflected in the higher tax-GDP ratio. On both counts, Modi - government deserves credit for doing all that is necessary to give a boost to GDP as well as the tax-GDP ratio.

After successfully steering through the turbulent times caused by Corona pandemic during 2020-21 (there wasn't any let up in investment in infrastructure despite heavy financial commitments to protect health and livelihoods), the government kept up the momentum of investment in the following two years to lead growth from the front. Besides, it created a conducive environment for the private sector to invest on one hand and boost aggregate demand on the other. The reform measures included inter alia expediting decisions and making

the process policy-driven, ease of doing business, simplification of rules, speeding up clearances, cutting bureaucratic red tape, use of technology in delivering services, sector-specific policy reforms, boost to start-ups and MSMEs (micro small and medium enterprises), measures to attract foreign investment and so on.

On the taxation front, major reforms measures include a steep reduction in corporate income tax (CIT) rate to 15 per cent for new manufacturing enterprises and to 22 per cent for existing firms; a reduction in the personal income tax (PIT) with emphasis on doing away with exemptions and deductions; abolition of dividend distribution tax (DDT). As for indirect taxes, the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime has been rationalized and restructured from time to time with a focus on reducing the tax burden and ease of doing business. While these have combined to give a push to GDP, relentless efforts have been made by the tax authorities - in both direct and indirect taxation - to ensure compliance and prevent evasion.

In the indirect taxes area, the government has focused on strengthening of GST infrastructure with emphasis on driving all businesses to be a part of the GST network, and truthfully report all transactions (generation of e-way bills, and e-invoices are mechanisms to make it happen) and prevent fraudulent input tax credit or ITC (an acronym for a

refund of tax paid by a supplier on purchase of inputs) claims.

These measures ensure that businesses at all levels in the supply chain are under the department's gaze on a real-time basis enabling timely action. During 2022-23, the Directorate General of GST Intelligence (DGGI) detected GST evasion of over Rs 100,000 crore. The efforts continue at a vigorous pace as may be seen from a recent nationwide crackdown by the GST authorities which has resulted in the detection of tax evasion of Rs 30,000 crore. As a result, the indirect tax to GDP ratio has gone up from 4.7 per cent during 2019-20 to 5.2 per cent during 2022-23.

On the direct tax front, the Income Tax department has successfully used technology to reach out to the assesses in non-intrusive ways; for instance, by sending e-mail reminding them to file a return if not already or generating an 'auto-populated' form - a form in which income of the assesses from various sources is pre-filled. In particular, intensive and extensive use of 'data analytics' and 'artificial intelligence' has prompted assesses to report their income accurately thereby avoiding short payment. As a result, the direct tax to GDP ratio increased from 5.3 per cent during 2019-20 to 6 per cent during 2022-23.

This being higher than the indirect tax to GDP ratio of 5.2 per cent shows that the government is moving towards a more progressive taxation structure.

Communication is key to fighting mental health

Communication is necessary for healing or even seeking help, whether the communication is with self or surrounding people

Mental health is often stigmatized, and many people are reluctant to speak up about their mental distress due to the fear of judgment and shame. On 6th June, Shahid Kapoor in an interview with 'Humans of Bombay' said, "Living a slightly schizophrenic reality until I met my wife." One can only imagine how problematic that statement is on its own. The colloquial use of mental illness to explain one's life events further reinforces the stigma already strongly associated with mental health in a country like ours.

According to the National Institutes of Health, 2021, the stigma attached to mental health reduces the chances of someone reaching out for



MOITRAYEE DAS

AND



CHERISH MUNDHRA

(Moitrayee Das is Assistant Professor of Psychology at FLAME University, Pune and Cherish Mundhra is pursuing a master's in Clinical Psychology)

help. Stigma against people specifically with substance use disorders is hard to deal with as people continue to see such disorders as character flaws which leads to a treatment-averse mindset even among physicians and health-care providers (Volkow et al., 2021).

Unfortunately, but not surprisingly, the prevalence of mental health conditions in India is alarming according to the WHO report of 2017. Their findings conclude that India is the most depressed country in the world with over 56 million people suffering from depression and 38 million from anxiety disorders (World Health Organization, 2017). Strangely enough, even with such statistics, mental illness

remains taboo, with many people still believing that mental illnesses are a myth or a sign of weakness and can be overcome with time, exercise and willpower.

There has been a disturbing trend of casually using mental health-related words colloquially. Phrases like "I'm so depressed", "you are being bipolar about it", or "She's gone psycho", amongst many others, have found a commonplace in our language. Media and its various platforms play a significant role in shaping and influencing everyday language patterns and trends. Unfortunately, instances of the colloquialism of mental health can be seen being promoted by every day news articles, affluent people and celebrities. Such state-

ments mitigate the severity of such disorders and overlook the distressing impact on individuals who genuinely suffer from them. It is extremely crucial to recognize these and sensitize people correctly, as they create and set harmful stereotypes. We as a society fail to understand how such language perpetuates narratives that further affect those suffering from it.

Van Beveren et al. 2020, conducted a study across 6 European countries to investigate how mental health problems are portrayed in print media. They concluded that mental health consistently relied on specific groups of terms. The most prominent words observed in the data were: 'mental illness as dangerous', 'mental wellbeing as

a matter of lifestyle', 'experiencing mental health problems as a unique story', and 'mental illness as socially situated'.

Language is a very important tool in shaping and upholding our thoughts and ideas. When discussing mental health the need for responsible language is highlighted frequently in several studies. Derogatory terms and casual language regarding mental health can increase discrimination against individuals with mental illnesses (Clement et al., 2015). The colloquial use of terms like "OCD", "Bipolar", "Anxiety" or "Depression" tends to associate negative behaviour rather than clinical definitions. This leads to a biased perception of when individ-

uals receive diagnoses related to these disorders.

It is funny to see how depression is referred to as the "common cold" of mental disorders. Only if people truly cared to understand the life-threatening effect of depression, would it do all of us some good. In India, Bollywood has a significant impact on people. People are always awed by the luxurious lifestyles of the celebrities. Netherland and Coliver (2018) explored through a study the effects of stars disclosing their mental health struggles and journey on public attitudes and concluded that such disclosures reduce stigma and encourage help-seeking behaviour.

It was truly wonderful to see Deepika Padukone open-

ly speak about her struggle with depression as well as promote her mental health foundation, LiveLoveLaugh since it was founded in 2015. But at the same time, what happens when Shahid Kapoor says he lived a schizophrenic reality. Such off-hand statements and casual usage of mental health conditions by celebrities risk oversimplifying and distorting the reality of these conditions. It could potentially lead to misunderstanding and discourage help-seeking behaviour. Mental health conditions should not be equated with personality quirks or individual preferences, and that can only happen when mental health education is imparted to children right from school.

Blinken holds talks with China FM

AP ■ BEIJING

On a mission to cool soaring bilateral tensions, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Sunday held extensive talks with his Chinese counterpart Qin Gang on a range of issues, including the Taiwan issue and the Ukraine war. Blinken arrived here this morning and held an extended round of talks with Qin, besides attending a state dinner.

Blinken's two-day visit to Beijing comes ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's state visit to Washington and his meeting with US President Joe Biden on June 22.

The talks are expected to include deepening defence cooperation and firming up the Quad alliance of the US, India, Australia and Japan, which China alleges is aimed at containing it.

Ahead of Blinken's visit to Beijing, US National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan said the US expects a "transformational moment" in Indian ties during Modi's visit to Washington and played down the US Secretary of State's visit to Beijing.

"Secretary Blinken's trip to China will be a significant event, but it's likely not even the most significant event of next week when it comes to US foreign policy," Sullivan told



US Secretary of State Antony Blinken (L) and China's Foreign Minister Qin Gang greet each other ahead of a meeting at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing on Sunday. Agencies

reporters in Tokyo on June 16.

Blinken's visit was largely seen as an attempt to keep the communication channels open between Washington and Beijing so that bilateral relations can be 'responsibly managed'.

Analysts say the visit signals a desire by both sides to restore engagement but cast doubt on the prospects of a breakthrough, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported. Both sides are yet to comment on the talks.

Before leaving for Beijing on Saturday, Blinken said one of his goals was to set up "open and empowered communications" with Chinese officials.

He said he would also speak "directly and candidly about (the US) very real concerns on a range of issues."

"Intense competition requires sustained diplomacy to ensure that competition does not veer into confrontation or conflict," he said. Blinken is the most senior official from the

Biden administration to have travelled to Beijing.

Ahead of his visit, Blinken had telephone talks with Qin on Wednesday during which they shared their concerns over each other's policies.

His planned visit in February was cancelled after the US shot a Chinese spy balloon flying over its airspace. Qin told Blinken that the US should respect China's position on the Taiwan question, stop interfering in China's internal affairs and stop undermining China's sovereignty, security and development interests in the name of competition.

China claims the self-ruled island of Taiwan as part of the Chinese mainland.

Qin expounded on China's solemn positions on the Taiwan question and other core concerns, an official statement here said.

Since the beginning of this year, Qin said, China-US relations have encountered new difficulties and challenges, for which it is crystal clear who is responsible. "Blinken is expected to establish a road map and timetable with the Chinese side on senior bilateral exchanges during the trip," Shanghai-based news site The Paper quoted as saying Wu Xinbo, head of US studies at Fudan University. Qin Feng, an

academic committee member of Peking University's Institute for Global Cooperation and Understanding, said Blinken's visit was part of the preparation for Chinese President Xi Jinping's trip to the United States in November, where he is expected to meet US President Biden on the sidelines of the APEC summit.

"In a way, the materialisation of Blinken's Beijing trip is a success by itself. It marks progress in the preparation for the two nations' leaders' summit, which was delayed by the balloon incident. There is lots of catching up to do at the working level now," Qin Feng said. On June 16, Chinese President Xi met Microsoft co-founder and philanthropist Bill Gates.

"I believe that the foundation of Sino-US relations lies in the people.

Under the current world situation, we can carry out various activities that benefit our two countries, the people of our countries, and the entire human race," he said after his meeting with Gates.

Biden told White House reporters Saturday he was hoping that over the next several months, he will meet with Xi again and talk about legitimate differences the two countries have and how to get along.

RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR

Both countries suffer heavy casualties: UK assessment

AP ■ KYIV

Russia and Ukraine are suffering high numbers of military casualties as Ukraine fights to dislodge the Kremlin's forces from occupied areas in the early stages of its counteroffensive, British officials said Sunday. Russian losses are probably at their highest level since the peak of the battle for Bakhmut in March, UK military officials said in their regular assessment.

According to British intelligence, the most intense fighting has centred on the south-eastern Zaporizhzhia province, around Bakhmut and further west in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk province.

While the update reported that Ukraine was on the offensive in these areas and had "made small advances," it said that Russian forces were conducting "relatively effective defensive operations" in Ukraine's south.

The Ukrainian military said in a regular update on Sunday morning that over the previous 24 hours Russia had carried out 43 airstrikes, four



missile strikes and 51 attacks from multiple rocket launchers.

According to the statement by the General Staff, Russia continues to concentrate its efforts on offensive operations in Ukraine's industrial east, focusing attacks around Bakhmut, Avdiivka, Marinka and Lyman in the country's Donetsk province, with 26 combat clashes taking place. Donetsk regional Gov. Pavlo Kyrylenko said that two civilians were killed, with a fur-

ther three wounded in the past day. Ukrainian officials said Russian forces also launched airstrikes on other regions of the east and south of the country.

One civilian was killed and four more wounded in Kherson province as a result of Russia's attacks, said regional Gov. Oleksandr Prokudin, while Zaporizhzhia regional Gov. Yurii Malashko said one person was wounded in Russian attacks that hit 20 settlements in the province.

France, Germany join forces against migration from Tunisia

Tunis (Tunisia): Ministers from Germany and France tasked with regulating migration are joining forces to try to curb deaths on dangerous routes across the Mediterranean Sea, travelling on Sunday for talks with the president and their counterpart in Tunisia, a major North African stepping stone for migrants trying to reach Europe at risk of their lives.

The two-day trip by the German and French interior ministers, Nancy Faeser and Gérald Darmanin, follows what is feared to be the deadliest migrant shipwreck in years in the Mediterranean — the capsizing last week of a fishing vessel packed with men, women and children trying to reach Italy from Libya, Tunisia's neighbour. More than 500 migrants are presumed to have drowned in the sinking Wednesday off the southern coast of Greece that renewed criticism of Europe's years long failure to prevent migration tragedies.

The UN migration agency said it could be the second-deadliest migrant shipwreck recorded — after the April 2015 capsizing of another vessel on the Libya-Italy route that killed an estimated 1,100 people. A statement from the German minister's office about her trip with Darmanin said: "We want to create legal migration routes in order to remove the basis for the inhumane business of smugglers. We want the human rights of refugees to be protected and the terrible deaths on the Mediterranean to stop."

Migrants, mainly from sub-Saharan Africa, undertaking perilous sea crossings from Tunisia in unprecedented numbers, European authorities are seeking reinforced action from the government of Tunisia's increasingly autocratic president, Kais Saied.

20 shot, one dead at party in Chicago

Willowbrook/Carson: At least 20 people were shot, one fatally, early on Sunday during a gathering in a parking lot in suburban Chicago, authorities said. TV news video showed the strip mall lot filled with debris and police tape in Willowbrook, about 20 miles (32.1 kilometres) southwest of Chicago. "There were at least 20 individuals shot. One victim is deceased," said Eric Swanson, deputy chief at the DuPage County sheriff's office. "The motive behind this incident is unclear. ... We transported numerous victims from the scene. Others just walked into area hospitals."

The conditions of the wounded were not immediately available, Swanson told reporters.

"It was supposed to be like a Juneteenth celebration. We just started hearing shooting, so we dropped down until they

stopped," witness Markeshia Avery told WLS-TV. Another witness, Craig Lotcie, said: "Everybody ran, and it was chaos."

8 WOUNDED IN SHOOTING

A shooting at a Southern California home left eight people wounded, authorities said Saturday.

ABC-TV reported authorities were dispatched shortly after midnight after the shooting occurred at a pool party in the city of Carson, south of Los Angeles. Victims were taken to hospitals, and two were listed in critical condition, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department said in a statement. The victims range in age from 16 to 24, the statement said.

Five were found at the home with injuries to the head, back and upper and lower body areas, the statement said.

Sudan begins ceasefire

AP ■ CAIRO

Sudan's warring parties began a ceasefire on Sunday morning after two months of fighting pushed the African nation into chaos. Residents in the capital, Khartoum, and its neighbouring city of Omdurman reported "relative calm" in the first hours of the cease-fire Sunday morning, after fierce clashes were reported the previous day.

The three-day truce came ahead of a pledging conference the UN and other nations will organise Monday to raise funds to cover Sudan's humanitarian needs. The UN says it received less than 16 per cent of the USD 2.57 billion required to help those in need in Sudan in 2023. Another USD 470 million more are needed to support refugees in the Horn of Africa region, it said.

The United States and Saudi Arabia, announced the cease-fire agreement Saturday. Both led concerted international



diplomatic efforts to stop the war over the past two months.

The US and Saudi Arabia said in a joint statement that the military and its rival paramilitary group, the Rapid Support Forces, agreed to halt fighting and "refrain from seeking military advantage during the ceasefire". Sudan plunged into chaos after months of worsening tensions between the rival generals exploded into open

fighting, in mid-April, across the country with the capital, Khartoum and the western Darfur region bearing the brunt of the armed conflict.

The fighting turned Khartoum and other urban areas into battlegrounds. More than 3,000 people lost their lives and over 6,000 others were wounded, according to Health Minister Haitham Mohammed Ibrahim.

Indian-origin man stabbed to death

London (PTI): A 38-year-old Indian-origin man was killed in a fatal stabbing outside an apartment block in south London and a 25-year-old man has been charged with his murder, as the Scotland Yard said its Specialist Crime Command is leading the investigation. Aravind Sasikumar died after being found with stab injuries outside a residential property in Southampton Way in Southwark on Friday.

The Metropolitan Police launched a murder investigation and charged Salman Salim, 25, with murder on Saturday, when he appeared before Croydon Magistrates' Court to be remanded in custody.

Salim is scheduled to appear at the Old Bailey court in London on Tuesday.

"Police were called at 01:27hrs (local time) on Friday, 16 June after a man was found with stab injuries outside a residential address in Southampton

Way," the Met Police said in a statement.

"Officers attended along with the London Ambulance Service. Despite the efforts of emergency services, Aravind died at the scene. A post-mortem examination carried out on Friday, 16 June confirmed he died as a result of stab wounds to the chest," the statement said.

The Met Police said the family of Sasikumar, reportedly originally from Kerala, have been informed and are being supported by detectives from the Met's Specialist Crime Command.

"Horrific murder in Southampton Way/Coleman Rd. Deepest sympathy to bereaved family. Contact police if you have any info that can help bring whoever did this to justice," tweeted Harriet Harman, Labour Party MP for Camberwell and Peckham in south London, soon after the incident on Friday.

Thousands protest against Serbia's President

AP ■ BELGRADE

Tens of thousands of anti-government protesters on Saturday staged marches in Belgrade and other Serbian cities against President Aleksandar Vucic, pledging to "radicalise" weeks of peaceful gatherings that have already shaken his populist rule.

The demonstrators in Belgrade blocked the main highway that leads through the capital and chanted slogans for Vucic to resign, something that he has repeatedly rejected over the past seven weeks of protests.

The protest initially erupted in response to two back-to-back mass shootings in early May that left 18 people dead and 20 others wounded, many of them pupils from a Belgrade elementary school. The protest-



ers have been demanding the resignations of top Serbian security officials and the revoking of broadcasting licenses for pro-government media and

responsible for the culture of violence that has been mainstay in Serbia since the wars in the Balkans in the 1990s that left more than 100,000 people dead.

Vucic, a former ultranationalist who took an active role in the breakup of the former Yugoslavia, now claims he wants to take Serbia into the European Union. He has said he will never accept the opposition demands. He has branded protest leaders as "hyenas" who want him and his family dead.

One of the protest leaders, Aleksandar Jovanovic, said that the demonstrations will continue, and vowed to further "radicalise" them with the blockade of roads and government buildings throughout Serbia. "Serbia will stop," he said. "We have to clean out this poison."

Projections indicate Swiss approve climate bill

AP ■ BERLIN

A majority of Swiss citizens on Sunday voted in favour of a bill aimed at introducing new climate measures to sharply curb the rich Alpine nation's greenhouse gas emissions, exit polls indicated. First polls by GFS Institute Berlin that were released by public broadcaster SRF showed that 57% of voters were in favour of the bill.

Exact results are expected later in the day. The referendum was sparked by a campaign by scientists and environmentalists to save Switzerland's iconic glaciers, which are melting away at an alarming rate.

Campaigners initially proposed even more ambitious measures but later backed a government plan that requires

Switzerland to achieve "net zero" emissions by 2050.

It also sets aside more than 3 billion Swiss francs (\$3.357 billion) to help wean companies and homeowners off fossil fuels. The nationalist Swiss People's Party, which demanded the popular vote, had claimed that the proposed measures would cause electricity prices to rise. Backers of the plan argued that Switzerland will be hard-hit by global warming and is already seeing the effects of rising temperatures on its famous glaciers.

"The supporters have reason to rejoice," Urs Bieri of the GFS Research Institute told SRF. "But by no means everyone is in favour of the law. The argument with the costs has brought many no votes."

London (PTI): A 20-year-old Indian-origin man has been sentenced to six years and nine months' imprisonment in the Welsh capital of Cardiff after admitting raping a woman in the city. Preet Vikal was caught on CCTV camera carrying the victim in his arms and later across his shoulders in Cardiff city centre, Wales, in the early hours of June 4 last year. It was this footage, along with an Instagram message exchange between him and the victim, that led to Vikal being identified and arrested by South Wales Police.

He was sentenced this week and has been directed to serve two-thirds of the sentence in custody and the remainder on licence, or under strict parole conditions. "Stranger attacks such as these are extremely unusual in Cardiff but in Preet Vikal we had a dangerous individual," said Detective Constable Nick Woodland of South Wales Police. "He took advantage of an intoxicated and vulnerable young woman who became separated from her friends. From the minute this was reported, we were absolutely 100 per cent committed to identifying the person responsible and bringing him to justice," he said. The victim told the court of being left shaken, unable to sleep, and feeling a sense of guilt as a result of the attack.

Indian-origin man jailed for rape in Wales

According to the police, Vikal came across the woman while she was on a night out with friends in Cardiff. She began to walk home from The Friary area in the city centre with friends but after an extensive trawl of CCTV footage from the night by the police she was later caught on camera being carried by Vikal on King Edward VII Avenue and North Road, a video released to the public showed this week.

Early June disruptions to Outlook were cyberattacks: MS

AP ■ BOSTON

In early June, sporadic but serious service disruptions plagued Microsoft's flagship office suite — including the Outlook email and OneDrive file-sharing apps — and cloud computing platform. A shadowy hacktivist group claimed responsibility, saying it flooded the sites with junk traffic in distributed denial-of-service attacks.

Initially reticent to name the cause, Microsoft has now disclosed that DDoS attacks by the murky upstart were indeed to blame.

But the software giant has offered few details — and did not immediately comment on how many customers were affected and whether the impact was global. A spokeswoman confirmed that the group that calls itself Anonymous Sudan was behind



the attacks. It claimed responsibility on its Telegram social media channel at the time. Some security researchers believe the group to be Russian.

Microsoft's explanation in a blog post Friday evening followed a request by The Associated Press two days earlier. Slim on details, the post

said the attacks "temporarily impacted availability" of some services. It said the attackers were focused on "disruption and publicity" and likely used rented cloud infrastructure and virtual private networks to bombard Microsoft servers from so-called botnets of zombie computers around the globe.

Microsoft said there was no evidence any customer data was accessed or compromised.

While DDoS attacks are mainly a nuisance — making websites unreachable without penetrating them — security experts say they can disrupt the work of millions if they successfully interrupt the services of a software service giant like Microsoft on which so much global commerce depends.

It's not clear if that's what happened here.

"We really have no way to measure the impact if Microsoft doesn't provide that info," said Jake Williams, a prominent cybersecurity researcher and a former National Security Agency offensive hacker. Williams said he was not aware of Outlook previously being attacked at this scale.

"We know some resources were inaccessible for some,

but not others. This often happens with DDoS of globally distributed systems," Williams added. He said Microsoft's apparent unwillingness to provide an objective measure of customer impact "probably speaks to the magnitude."

Microsoft dubbed the attackers Storm-1359, using a designator it assigns to groups whose affiliation it has not yet established. Cybersecurity sleuthing tends to take time — and even then can be a challenge if the adversary is skilled.

Pro-Russian hacking groups including Killnet — which the cybersecurity firm Mandiant says is Kremlin-affiliated — have been bombarding government and other websites of Ukraine's allies with DDoS attacks. In October, some US airport sites were hit. Analyst Alexander Leslie of the cybersecurity firm Recorded Future said it's unlikely

Anonymous Sudan is located as it claims in Sudan, an African country. The group works closely with Killnet and other pro-Kremlin groups to spread pro-Russian propaganda and disinformation, he said.

Edward Amoroso, NYU professor and CEO of TAG Cyber, said the Microsoft incident highlights how DDoS attacks remain "a significant risk that we all just agree to avoid talking about. It's not controversial to call this an unsolved problem."

He said Microsoft's difficulties fending of this particular attack suggest "a single point of failure." The best defense against these attacks is to distribute a service massively, on a content distribution network for example.

back to 2009," he said.

Serious impacts from the Microsoft 365 office suite interruptions were reported on Monday June 5, peaking at 18,000 outage and problem reports on the tracker Downtime shortly after 11 a.m. Eastern time.

On Twitter that day, Microsoft said Outlook, Microsoft Teams, SharePoint Online and OneDrive for Business were affected.

Attacks continued through the week, with Microsoft confirming on June 9 that its Azure cloud computing platform had been affected. On June 8, the computer security news site Bleeping Computer.com reported that cloud-based OneDrive file-hosting was down globally for a time. Microsoft said at the time that desktop OneDrive clients were not affected, BleepingComputer reported.

Pakistan Senate passes Bill to limit disqualification period

Opp says attempt to ensure Nawaz Sharif's participation in polls

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's Senate has passed a bill to ensure no parliamentarian is disqualified for a lifetime, a move termed by the Opposition as an attempt to clear the way for former premier Nawaz Sharif's return to the country and his participation in the upcoming elections.

Nawaz Sharif was disqualified in 2017 by a five-member bench of the Supreme Court. In 2018, he became ineligible to hold public office for life after a Supreme Court verdict.

The 73-year-old former premier has been living in London since November 2019 for medical treatment after a Pakistani court allowed him a four-week reprieve.

Nawaz Sharif, who has served as the prime minister of Pakistan for three non-consecutive terms, was serving seven-year imprisonment in the Kot Lakhpat Jail in Lahore in the Al-Azizia corruption case before he left for London.

The Senate on Friday passed the bill seeking to limit the disqualification of lawmakers to five years with retrospective effect, the Dawn newspaper reported.

The move comes a day after Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif urged his elder brother Nawaz Sharif, the PML-N supremo, to return from London and lead the poll campaign of the party in the general election and become the premier of the nation for a record fourth time.

A copy of the bill presented in the Senate on Friday included an amendment to Section 232 (Qualifications and Disqualifications) of the

Election Act, 2017.

The amendments say that a person's eligibility to become a member of parliament will be decided according to the criteria set under Articles 62 and 63 of the Constitution.

The amendment added that the procedure, manner and duration of disqualifications and qualifications should be as specifically provided for in relevant provisions of Articles 63 and 64 of the Constitution.

"Where no such procedure, manner or duration has been provided for therein, the provisions of this Act shall apply," it added. Any person disqualified through a court decision will be disqualified for a maximum of 5 years starting from the day the verdict is announced. Disqualification under Article 62(1)(f) will not extend beyond five years.

Senate also passed amendments giving the right of announcing the date of election to the Election Commission of Pakistan.

The Opposition termed it "person-specific legislation" and an attempt to ensure Nawaz Sharif's participation in the upcoming elections.

The earlier two attempts by the PML-N-led coalition govt to reverse the lifetime disqualification of a person have failed.

The Supreme Court is hearing two legislations, including "The Supreme Court Review of Judgments and Orders Bill 2023" and the law to limit the Chief Justice's powers. These legislations were also termed as an attempt to reverse Nawaz Sharif's lifetime disqualification.

During the debate on the

'PML-N will win upcoming polls with thumping majority'

Lahore (PTI): The ruling Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) will win the upcoming general elections with a thumping majority and emerge as an effective parliamentary force, party Vice President Maryam Nawaz has said.

Maryam's assertion comes days after it emerged that her father and PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif could return from London and lead the party's poll campaign.

"PML-N will win the upcoming elections with a thumping majority and the party will emerge as an effective parliamentary force," The News quoted Maryam as saying on Saturday.

She called upon the party workers to start people contact campaign. According to the bill, the Opposition was asked not to oppose it, with a warning that "this sword might be used against former premier Imran Khan as well".

Senator Mushtaq Ahmad of Jamaat-i-Islami said there was no ambiguity in Articles 62 and 63 of the Constitution. He alleged that the government wanted to render qualification and disqualification clauses ineffective gradually.

The sources in the ruling coalition claimed it is unfair for the parliamentarians who have been disqualified for a lifetime



report, the top brass of the PML-N leadership is scheduled to meet Sharif in London soon. The matters related to possible date for next election, political situation in Pakistan and other issues will come for discussion in the meeting, the report added.

under Article 62 of the Constitution, the Geo News reported. There was an ambiguity, and the parliament has now removed it by limiting the disqualification period to five years, they said.

When asked whether the Supreme Court can take notice of this legislation, the sources claimed: "The parliament is supreme and it has the right to legislate and remove any ambiguity if there is any in a law or act. This was due, and it should have been done a long time ago."

Punjab anti-graft body summons Pak ex-PM

PTI ■ LAHORE

Pakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan has been asked to appear before the Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) of Punjab on Monday in connection with a case related to the purchase of over 5,000 kanals (625 acres) of land at throwaway prices through fraud.

The ACE has sent summonses to Khan, his sister Uzma Khan and her husband Ahmad Majeed in the land corruption case in Layyah district in Pakistan's Punjab province, a spokesperson of the ACE said on Saturday. The 70-year-old Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief has been asked to appear before the ACE headquarters on June 19, while Uzma and her husband have been informed to present themselves before the ACE DG Khan, The Express Tribune newspaper reported.

Earlier, Khan was summoned by the ACE on June 16 but he did not appear before it. The summons was affixed at Khan's Zaman Park residence in Lahore, it said.

The ACE has "clear evidence" of Khan's involvement in the Layyah corruption scandal, the spokesperson said, adding that pressure was exerted on revenue officials of Bani Gala - Khan's residence in Islamabad - for illegal transfer of land.

Uzma is accused of alleged fraud in the purchase of 5,261-kanal of land in Layyah district, reportedly worth billions of rupees, for a mere Rs 130 million. The ACE said that an FIR had been registered against the couple.

According to the spokesperson, the land was bought in 2021-22 through fraud, and Uzma and Majeed made a fake land transfer in

LAYYAH LAND SCAM



the project and the couple forced the landowners to sell their land to them.

The landowners have filed complaints against Uzma and others for forcibly buying their land, he said. The ACE said last week the suspect, using political influence, "snatched" 5000-kanal land from the local people who had been living there for many years. The spokesperson said the role of other officials involved in the fraud would be investigated.

Khan was booked in the Layyah land corruption case on Sunday. The total number of cases against him has now swelled to over 140 following his ouster as the prime minister of Pakistan in April last year.

Khan's cases mostly relate to terrorism, inciting the public to violence, arson attacks, blasphemy, attempted murder, corruption and fraud.

Ex-Central Bank chief worried about country's looming default

Islamabad (PTI): Pakistan needs a "constructive relationship" with the global financial institutions if it wants to avoid a default, the former chief of the cash-strapped country's central bank has said.

The remarks by Reza Baqir, the former governor of the State Bank of Pakistan came as he addressed the final session of the Pakis-tan Literature Festival, held on Saturday in London.

He said that if there is a default, Pakistan will go through a "painful, protracted process". Pakistan's chances for the revival of the current USD 6.5 billion International

Monetary Fund programme have almost diminished before it expires on June 30. Out of the USD 6.5 billion packages, the IMF has not yet disbursed USD 2.6 billion to Pakistan.

"I am concerned because our relationship with the international financial community has not improved over the last few months. The deterioration comes in terms of substance and communication. If we want to avoid default, we have to have a constructive relationship with those who are there," Baqir said. "We cannot antagonise the people whose generosity we need. But it looks like that is not where it is headed," he was quoted saying.

At least two killed, 26 missing in Nepal floods, landslides



Kathmandu (PTI): At least two people were killed and 26 others went missing as floods and landslides triggered by monsoon rains wreaked havoc in eastern Nepal, officials said on Sunday. A man was found dead and 21 others working at the under-construction Super Hewa Hydropower Project in Chainpur Municipality-4 have gone missing, the Kathmandu Post newspaper quoted police officials as saying.

Deputy Superintendent of Police Birendra Godar said it is yet to be ascertained whether the workers moved to a safer location following the flood or were swept away by Hewa River, the report said. In the neighbouring Panchthar district, a 9-year-old girl died after her house was swept away in a landslide. Five villagers of Chainpur have also gone missing after flooding in the area, police said. Preliminary investigation suggests the flood occurred after landslides at Chainpur Municipality-4 and Panchkhanan Municipality-9 blocked the river, the report added. Weather forecasters have warned heavy rains would continue in Nepal in the coming days, and issued alerts over rising water levels in rivers. Nepal is at the beginning of its monsoon season, which typically begins in June and ends in October.

Ugandan border town prepares to bury victims of rebel massacre

AP ■ LAMPALA (UGANDA)

A bereaved Ugandan border town on Sunday prepared to bury victims of a brutal attack by suspected extremist rebels on a school that left 42 dead, most of them students, as security forces stepped up patrols along the frontier with volatile eastern Congo.

One of eight people wounded in Friday night's attack, in which 38 students were killed, died overnight, said Mpondwe-Lhubirirha Mayor Selestev Mapoze.

"Most of the relatives have come to take their bodies" from the morgue, he said.

Some students were burned beyond recognition, and others were shot or hacked to death after militants armed with guns and machetes attacked Lhubirirha Secondary School, co-ed and privately owned, which is located about 2 kilometres (just over a mile) from the Congo border.

Ugandan authorities believe at least six students were abducted, taken as porters back inside Congo.

In addition to the 38 students, the victims include a school guard and three civilians.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres condemned the attack in a statement, urging "the importance of collective efforts, including through enhanced regional partnerships, to tackle cross-border insecurity between (Congo)



Relatives grieve as they wait to collect the bodies of villagers killed by suspected rebels as they retreated from Saturday's attack on the Lhubirirha Secondary School, outside the mortuary of the hospital in Bwera, Uganda, on Sunday

and Uganda and restore durable peace in the area."

The atmosphere in Mpondwe-Lhubirirha was tense but calm on Sunday as Ugandan security forces roamed the streets outside and near the school, which was protected by a police cordon.

Ugandan security forces have not given a detailed account of how the rebels, active in eastern Congo, were able to carry out the attack.

The group, known as the Allied Democratic Forces, or ADF, rarely claims responsibility for attacks. It has established ties with the Islamic State group.

The ADF has been accused of launching many attacks in recent years targeting civilians in remote parts of eastern Congo, including one in March

in which 19 people were killed.

The ADF has long opposed the rule of Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, a US security ally who has held power in this East African country since 1986. The group was established in the early 1990s by some Ugandan Muslims, who said they had been sidelined by Museveni's policies.

At the time, the rebels staged deadly attacks in Ugandan villages as well as in the capital, including a 1998 attack in which 80 students were massacred in a town not far from Friday's raid.

The attack followed the same playbook: violence against students. The attackers targeted two dormitories, using extreme force when the boys resisted, according to Ugandan officials.

Pak to try blasphemy suspects under terror charges

PTI ■ LAHORE

Succumbing to the demands of a radical Islamist party, the Pakistan government has agreed to try blasphemy suspects under terrorism charges in addition to the other sections of the country's penal code.

The Tehreek-i-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) ended its 25-day-long march protest at Sarai Alamgir, Gujrat district, some 200 km from Lahore, on Saturday after signing a pact with the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)-led federal government.

Federal Interior Minister

Rana Sanaullah said the government has accepted "all legitimate" demands of the TLP, especially on blasphemy laws.

In a 12-point agreement signed on Saturday with the TLP, the federal government agreed to book those accused of committing blasphemy and charged with Section 295-C (use of derogatory remarks, etc., in respect of the Holy Prophet) of Pakistan Penal Code under the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA), 1997, too.

"Besides, speedy trials of the blasphemy accused will be ensured. For the first time, a Counter Blasphemy Wing



(CBW) will be established under the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA)," Sanaullah said, adding the government would ensure steps to block blasphemous content on social media.

The radical Islamic group gained political capital as the federal government agreed to issue a letter declaring that the TLP was not a terrorist organisation, the Dawn newspaper reported.

The government also conceded to lift the ban on the coverage of TLP on broadcast and social media while agreeing to withdraw all political cases

filed against TLP workers and leaders. Sanaullah said the TLP leaders whose names have been taken off the Fourth Schedule of the Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997, will have the freedom of movement, and the federal government will issue directives to provincial governments for it.

According to Amnesty International, Pakistan's blasphemy laws are often used against religious minorities and others who are the target of false accusations.

The addition of terrorism charges will make the blasphemy suspects more vulnerable.

Will move ahead on judicial overhaul plan after talks crumble: Israeli PM

Tel Aviv (AP): Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Sunday his government intends to move ahead on contentious plans to change the country's judicial system after talks aimed at finding a compromise solution appeared to be crumbling.

The government's plans to overhaul the judiciary plunged Israel into one of its worst domestic crises ever earlier this year. Negotiations between the government and opposition parties somewhat alleviated the crisis with attempts to find a middle ground over proposed changes to the country's justice system. Those talks were jolted last week over a crisis surrounding the powerful

regular committee responsible for picking the country's judges. Opposition leaders said negotiations were frozen until the committee is formed.

At a meeting of his Cabinet on Sunday, Netanyahu said the opposition wasn't negotiating seriously and that his government would move ahead cautiously on the overhaul. "We will begin, this week, practical steps. We will do them in a measured way, responsibly, but in accordance with the mandate we received to make corrections to the justice system," he said. Netanyahu put the overhaul on hold in March after mass protests erupted in opposition to it.

Netanyahu opposes any interim US-Iran deal on N-programme

Tel Aviv (AP): Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Sunday that he opposes any interim agreement reportedly being negotiated between the US and Iran over its nuclear programme.

Netanyahu spoke after reports in Israeli media said understandings are being reached between Washington and Tehran that would seek to hold back Iran's nuclear programme somewhat, in exchange for some sanctions relief. The reports could not be independently confirmed and the US has publicly denied any such deal. Netanyahu said Israel had informed the US that "the most limited under-

standings, what are termed mini-agreements, do not - in our view - serve the goal and we are opposed to them as well." Israeli officials believe some understandings have already been reached limiting enrichment and that some funds have already been unfrozen.

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were discussing a confidential diplomatic assessment.

The Israeli news site Walla last week reported that under the emerging understandings Iran would limit its uranium enrichment to 60% in exchange for sanctions relief. The site also said the sides were

discussing reciprocal prisoner releases. State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said last week "there is no deal," adding that the reports were untrue.

In its report, Walla said Netanyahu had revealed details of the agreement at a recent parliamentary committee meeting. The US and Israel share intelligence and a prime focus of the countries' interactions is Iran and its nuclear programme. Netanyahu vehemently opposed the 2015 deal between Iran and world powers brokered by the Obama administration that sought to rein in Iran's nuclear programme.

Violent crime within Israel's Palestinian minority reaches new heights under Netanyahu

AP ■ LOD (ISRAEL)

A relentless wave of violent crime within Israel's Palestinian minority is turning cities and towns into bloody battlefields, exasperating a community feeling increasingly forsaken by Israeli authorities. Anger over the mounting insecurity is directed at Israel's government and its ultranationalist minister in charge of police, Itamar Ben-Gvir. Critics say that with his history of anti-Arab rhetoric, he cannot be trusted to combat the rising scourge.

The skyrocketing violence lays bare the deep inequities in Israeli society, with Arabs facing years of discrimination that activists say laid the groundwork for the unabating bloodshed.

More than 100 people have been killed in violent crime in Arab communities this year, nearly three times higher than at the same time last year, according to the Abraham Initiatives, a group that promotes Jewish-Arab coexistence and safe communities.

It also is more than three times the murder rate in the majority Jewish sector, according to official figures, despite Arabs making up just a fifth of the country's population of 9.7 million.

Authorities say they are trying their best. But activists see a direct link between the soaring figures and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government.

The coalition, which includes ultranationalist factions with anti-Arab hues, took

office in late December.

The head of one of those parties, Jewish Power's Ben-Gvir, has made racist remarks and before entering politics was convicted of incitement to violence and support for a Jewish terror group.

As national security minister, he now oversees the country's police force.

"Will a person who is busy making racist comments against Arabs protect them," said Thabet Abu Rass, co-director of the Abraham Initiatives. "We are citizens of this country. We deserve to feel secure like anyone else in this country. And that is his responsibility."

Israel's Palestinian minority, which makes up 20% of the country's population, has been convulsed by violent crime in



recent years involving criminal gangs and family disputes.

Activists say Israeli authorities have historically ignored deadly crime among Arabs, doing little to deter violence or hold criminals to account.

They say that sense has deepened under the current government. Of the 100 or so people killed this year, police have brought charges in just over 10 cases, according to Abu Rass.

Ben-Gvir has pledged to serve all Israelis. But the community views his past remarks and perceived neglect of the crisis as a sign that the government isn't looking out for them. Earlier this month, five people were killed when a gunman opened fire at a car wash near the biblical city of Nazareth, and the shooter is not known to have been caught.

In April, the bodyguard for the mayor of an Arab city was shot and killed outside the mayor's home.

Women and children have not been spared, among them an 18-year-old killed recently who had reportedly received threats over her sexual orientation.

Two toddler siblings and their mother were allegedly killed by their father in May.

Shootings are so common in some places that residents fear leaving their homes, not only to avoid getting hurt but also to make sure they don't accidentally become witnesses to a crime and fall into the killers' sights.

"We leave the house, we're scared. The kids are at school, I am afraid for them. I am always thinking will my son return home or not?" said Mirvat Saleh, 48, a plant and flower vendor at a market in Lod, a mixed Arab-Jewish city in central Israel rife with violence.

Under Ben-Gvir's leadership, critics say the police is in disarray, with a crisis in confidence within the ranks, including spats between the minister and the police chief, and a series of departures by top officers, including the head

of the unit fighting crime in the Arab population.

Ben-Gvir says he is dealing with manpower shortages that have been complicated by weekly mass protests against a government plan to overhaul the judiciary that need securing.

"The police chief and I are working hard," Ben-Gvir said after the five people were killed near Nazareth. "We are trying to address the root problems."

Ben-Gvir, whose office did not respond to requests for comment, has pushed for the establishment of a new "national guard," which he says will increase community policing. Critics say the guard, which would report directly to Ben-Gvir, would amount to a personal militia for the minister.

Global trends, progress of monsoon to guide equity markets this week: Analysts

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Equity markets this week will be largely guided by trends in global stocks, foreign funds' trading activity and progress of monsoon, analysts said.
Investors will also track the movement of rupee against the US dollar and crude oil prices.
Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty closed at fresh lifetime highs on Friday.
Market analysts attributed the rally in the markets to the fact that the US Federal Reserve did not raise interest rates, while positive global cues and foreign institutional investors (FIIs) turning net buyers of local equities also supported the uptrend.
"The Indian market will be

closely monitoring the progress of the monsoon season. Globally, there is expected to be an increase in volatility in the US market over the coming week. This is due to the upcoming semi-annual testimony of Fed Chairman Powell to Congress," said Praveesh Gour, Senior Technical Analyst, Swastika Investmart Ltd.
According to analysts, a steady recovery in global indices, especially in the US, played the catalyst in the surge in domestic equities last week. Last week, the BSE benchmark jumped 758.95 points or 1.21 per cent.
"The market will respond to domestic and global cues, crude oil prices, trends in global markets and investment by Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) and



Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) in the coming days," Arvinder Singh Nanda, Senior Vice President, Master Capital Services Ltd, said.
The 30-share BSE index zoomed 466.95 points or 0.74 per cent to settle at a record closing high of 63,384.58 on Friday. The index went ahead of its earlier lifetime high of 63,284.19 on December 1 last year.
The NSE Nifty climbed 137.90 points or 0.74 per cent to end at its lifetime peak of 18,826. Its previous record peak was 18,812.50.
"Going ahead, we feel the performance of the US markets will continue to play a key role," said Ajit Mishra, SVP - Technical Research, Religare Broking Ltd.



Petrol, diesel sales fall as monsoon sets in

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Petrol and diesel sales fell in the first half of June as the arrival of monsoon cut demand in the agri sector and reduced vehicular movement, preliminary industry data showed.
Demand for diesel, the most consumed fuel in the country accounting for about two-fifths of the demand, fell 6.7 per cent to 3.43 million tonne in June 1-15 compared to the year-ago period.
Sales of diesel had soared 6.7 per cent and 9.3 per cent in April and May, respectively as agriculture demand picked up and cars yanked up air-conditioning to beat summer heat.
Month-on-month sales were up 3.4 per cent when compared with 3.31 million tonne of diesel consumed in May 1-15.
Petrol sales dropped 5.7 per cent to 1.3 million tonne during the first half of June 2023 when compared with the same period last year. Sales were down 3.8 per cent month-on-month, the data showed.
Petrol and diesel sales had been on the rise since the second half of March on the back of a pick-up in industrial and agriculture activity. But the arrival of monsoon has cooled temperatures and reduced demand for running diesel gensets to irrigate fields as well as cut down consumption in tractors and trucks in the first half of June.
Consumption of petrol during June 1 to 15 was 44.2 per cent more than COVID-marred June 2021 and 14.6 per cent more than pre-pandemic June 1-15, 2019.
Diesel consumption was up 38 per cent over June 1-15, 2021 and 8.8 per cent higher than in the first half of June 2019.
With the continued opening of the aviation sector, India's overall passenger traffic at airports inched closer to pre-COVID levels.
Reflecting the trend, jet fuel (ATF) demand rose 2.6 per cent to 290,000 tonne during June 1 to 15 when compared to the same period last year. It was 148 per cent higher than in the first half of June 2021 but 6.8 per cent lower than pre-Covid June 1-15, 2019.
Month-on-month sales fell 3.9 per cent when compared with 301,900 tonne in May 1-15, 2023.
The Indian economy has gained pace with a pick-up in government and private capital spending. Manufacturing too has picked up while the services sector has been robust.

Official: EPR for circular economy in discussion to incentivise recycling



PTI ■ KOLKATA
To promote a circular economy and reduce waste, the Indian government is discussing the use of policy instruments like Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) to incentivise recycling, a senior mines ministry official said.
Under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 2030 initiative, the Ministry of Mines and the Ministry of Steel have issued recycling frameworks aimed at developing the recycling sector using advanced technology to achieve resource efficiency and carbon neutrality.
"The government has issued recycling frameworks intended to develop the recycling sector using advanced technology to achieve resource efficiency and carbon neutrality. Further policy instruments like EPR are under discussion stage, which will incentivise recycling in the country," Joint Secretary, Ministry of Mines Upendra C Joshi told PTI.
EPR is a policy approach where producers are made responsible for the treatment or disposal of post-consumer products. Under EPR, producers have a role in minimizing environmental impact, funding collection, and recycling costs, which will incentivise the recycling industry.
Dhawal Shah, senior vice-president of the Material Recycling Association of India (MRAI), has urged the government to review the 18 per cent GST on metal scrap and reduce it to 5 per cent to promote a circular economy and ecosystem.
Shah further highlighted that to achieve a target of 300 million tons of steel production by 2030, the government must implement lucrative policies to promote investment in the recycling sector. Scrap or recycled steel makes up 22 per cent of India's steel production.
Adding further, Shah stated that the government must also remove import duty on non-ferrous scrap in line with the ferrous scrap. The current import duty on non-ferrous scrap is between 2.5-5 per cent, he said.
The Indian recycling industry, estimated at USD 15 billion now, has substantial potential for growth, Shah said.
According to investment banking firm Avendus Capital, just the recycling of plastics, electronic waste, and batteries can potentially create a market size worth USD 20 billion by 2030.
As part of the "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) - Circular Economy Campaign - 2023", the government, in association with AI and JNADDDC, recently concluded its sixth event in Kolkata.
Apart from Joshi, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Steel, Subhash Kumar was also present in the city to visit some manufacturing units to gather first-hand inputs.

RBL aims to expand NIMs; credit cards, MFIs to outpace overall loan book growth

PTI ■ MUMBAI
RBL Bank is targeting to expand its net interest margin (NIM) to over 5.2 per cent by the end of FY24 by upping the share of higher-yielding assets in its loan book, a top official has said. The private sector lender will continue to maintain the share of unsecured loans like credit cards and microfinance by growing them at over the 20 per cent overall loan book increase targeted for every year till FY26, R Subramaniakumar told PTI.
The bank had reported an expansion in NIMs to over 5 per cent in the March quarter, in line with the industry trend.
"NIM will be 5.2-5.3 per cent by the end of the year (FY24). The mix of products will deliver the higher yield," he said.
Subramaniakumar said the bank is targeting to increase the share of secured retail assets like mortgage loans, loans against property, two and four-wheeler loans, which will yield higher.
He admitted that given its relatively smaller size, it has to offer higher deposit rates to get the required liabilities to fund the asset growth of over 20 per cent.
The higher deposit rates alone will have a 0.30 per cent drag on the NIMs, he said,



secured retail assets yield higher than wholesale book.
By end-FY26, the bank is targeting to have a third of its book from such secured retail assets, Subramaniakumar said, adding that it will continue to grow the unsecured book as well which it considers as "flagship" products.
It can be noted that in late 2021, the Reserve Bank had, in a rare intervention, curtailed the duration of the then MD and CEO, and also placed its representative on the bank board. As per some reports, the regulator was concerned with the unsecured assets concentration at the bank.

Corp Affairs Secy to hold stakeholders' consultations on MCA21 portal issues

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
The Ministry of Corporate Affairs will hold consultations with stakeholders on issues related to MCA21 portal in Chennai and Hyderabad next week. The move comes amid stakeholders facing various issues with respect to the portal, which is the key platform for submitting statutory filings under the companies law. In a series of tweets on Sunday, the ministry said the secretary will hold consultations with stakeholders in Chennai on June 20 and in Hyderabad on June 21.
"Secretary @MCA21India will hold stakeholders' consultations, along with the team of @LTMindtreeOFCL @theicai and @icsi_cs at Chennai on 20th June and at Hyderabad on 21st June on the issues relating to the MCA-21 Version-3 Portal. @nsitharamanoff," it said in a tweet.

Board of Seshasayee Paper gives nod to secure green clearances to ramp up expansion

PTI ■ CHENNAI
The Board of integrated paper manufacturer Seshasayee Paper and Boards Ltd has accorded in-principal approval to secure environmental clearances to take up expansion work of its project under the Mill Development Plan-IV in Erode facility, the company said on Sunday. The proposed plan was to augment production capacity of pulp and paper at its manufacturing unit.
"The enhanced pulping capacity would help the company to replace the costlier purchased pulp and reduce the overall cost of manufacturing per tonne of paper in the unit at Tirunelveli," Seshasayee Paper said in a regulatory filing.
The company has filed the necessary applications with the Ministry of Environment and Forests for Climate Change for Environment Clearances, Seshasayee Paper and Boards Ltd said today.
The Erode-based company said the environmental clearances for project Mill Development Plan IV in the company's manufacturing facility in Erode was to augment paper capacity from 1.65 lakh tonne to 2.31 lakh tonne per annum and pulp capacity from 1.80 lakh tonne to 2.52 lakh tonne per annum.
The project is expected to be completed in 30 months after securing the necessary environmental clearances.
Seshasayee Paper and Boards Ltd chairman N Gopalaratnam while addressing the shareholders at the 63rd annual general meeting, said the company has initiated steps including an increased focus on green energy, setting up newer plants and processes for a reduction in emissions, reduction in chemical consumption, the pursuit of organic and growth opportunities to augment pulp and paper production.

Physics Wallah to acquire 50% stake in Xylem for ₹500 crore in 3 years

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Unicorn edtech firm Physics Wallah will acquire 50 per cent stake in Kerala-based edtech firm Xylem Learning for Rs 500 crore in phases over three years, a top official of the company said on Sunday.
The partnership is aimed at strengthening the presence of Physics Wallah (PW) in the southern market.
"Physics Wallah will acquire 50 per cent in Xylem Learning in a phased manner over a period of three years," PW Founder and CEO Alakh Pandey told PTI.
The partnership involves strategic equity and cash investments in Xylem and scaling up operations.
Pandey said that the partnership with Xylem Learning not only aligns with PW's shared vision of providing quality education to all but also propels us closer to our strategic goal of becoming the leading education platform in South India.
market and plans to now expand to Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and other southern markets.
At present, Xylem Learning provides free classes to over 3 million students through their 30 YouTube channels. Additionally, it has more than 1 lakh paid students across its various online courses and 30,000 students in its offline or hybrid centres located across five prime districts of Kerala.
It also operates 10 tuition centres and a school-integrated program across seven schools. It has also ventured into commerce and Kerala PSC test preparation and will continue expanding into other categories.
Built on the exchange of technology and knowledge, the collaboration will leverage the strengths of both platforms to deliver the learning experience for JEE and NEET aspirants in South India.
Ananthu said that the partnership is driven by the principles of affordability, trust, and the democratization of education.



Tata Steel plans ₹16,000 cr consolidated capex in FY24

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Industry giant Tata Steel is planning a consolidated capital expenditure (capex) of Rs 16,000 crore for its domestic and global operations during the current financial year, according to its top management.
Of the planned amount, Tata Steel has earmarked Rs 10,000 crore towards stand-alone operations and Rs 2,000 crore for its subsidiaries in India, the company's CEO & MD T V Narendran and Executive Director & CFO Koushik Chatterjee said.
"The projected capital expenditure (capex) for FY2023-24 is set at Rs 16,000 crore on a consolidated basis which is intended to be financed through internal accruals over the full year," the executives said in the company's annual report for 2022-23.
Of this, Rs 10,000 crore has been earmarked towards Tata Steel Standalone operations of which the Kalinganagar project will account for approximately 70 per cent, they said.
The company is in process of expanding capacity of its plant at Kalinganagar, in Odisha to 8 MT from 3 MT.
"Our other Indian sub-

sidaries, currently in an expansion phase with value accretive projects, especially in downstream operations which are important to service customer needs and improve our value-added product mix, will have a capex of about Rs 2,000 crore," the company officials said.
In Europe, Tata Steel Nederland will incur capex of Rs 1,100 crore on the relining of its blast furnace, which is underway. The remainder of the capex is largely allocated towards and will be spent on sustenance, environmental initiatives, and improvement projects, the leaders said.

Axtria plans to expand its India operations, hire over 1,000 techies

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
IT company Axtria Inc, which focuses on the life sciences industry, has plans to hire over 1,000 people in data science, software development, and data engineering in the next eight months, the company said on Sunday. The company is hiring for its offices in Gurugram, Bengaluru, Noida and new centres coming up in Pune and Hyderabad, Axtria said in a statement.
"Axtria will significantly expand its headcount with over 1,000 data scientists, software developers, and data engineers across its office locations in the country in the next 8-10 months," it said. The expansion plans closely follow the increasing demand for data-driven analytics solutions and the adoption of AI technologies among life sciences businesses across the globe.
"Axtria is also preparing for aggressive campus hires in the next two years. For 2023, the team is already in conversation with the placement cells of leading IITs and other premier engineering and management colleges," the statement said.
Axtria at present has around 3,000 employees in India.
"We are transforming healthcare via an AI-driven approach with the most advanced, personalized content and message delivery for globally leading healthcare companies. We are investing ahead of time in people, technology, and processes..." Axtria, Head of Global Delivery, Manish Mittal said.



73% respondents on Trai's consultation paper seek satcom spectrum allocation without auction, says ISpA

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
About three-fourth respondents including Starlink, Amazon, OneWeb have advocated for allocation of satellite communication spectrum through an administrative process and not through auction, according to space sector industry body ISpA.
On Trai's consultation paper, telecom operators Reliance Jio and Vodafone have opposed allocation of spectrum for satellite communication through an administrative process citing the Supreme Court order, which declared that the right to use such spectrum can only be transferred through a transparent auction.
However, Bharti Airtel has backed the demand of satellite companies to allocate spectrum through administrative processes. Bharti Group holds a majority stake in OneWeb.
The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has released a consultation paper on the Assignment of Spectrum for Space-Based Communication.
According to Indian Space Association team research, about 73 per cent or 47 of 64 respondents have advocated for allocation of spectrum through an administrative process.
"The overwhelming majority, which includes all space players, strongly supports the administrative allocation of the satellite spectrum. This reinforces ISpA's viewpoint. Our suggestions are in line with global best practices, which have enabled the successful adoption of space-based communication technology," ISpA Director General AK Bhatt told PTI.
Amazon said that it has plans to launch Project Kuiper, a non-geostationary satellite orbit (NGSO) constellation consisting of over 3,000 satellites in low Earth orbit (LEO) that will provide high capacity, high-speed, low latency broadband services to residential customers, schools, and businesses, including those in remote communities in India.



Patanjali Foods earmarks capex of up to ₹1,500 cr in next 5 yrs: CEO Sanjeev

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Patanjali Foods Ltd plans to invest up to Rs 1,500 crore in the next five years on capital expenditure, mostly for scaling up its palm oil business, according to company CEO Sanjeev Asthana. The company (formerly Ruchi Soya Industries) has set a target of clocking a turnover between Rs 45,000-50,000 crore in the next five years as it expands its product offerings and distribution reach.
"Our estimation is over five years, we'll invest about Rs 1,200 crore to Rs 1,500 crore of capital expenditure...Most of the expenditure will happen in year four and five, which is where we are pushing for and the rest in the initial years. We have enough capacity and capex already laid out," Asthana told PTI.
He was responding to a query on the company's investment plans in order to meet its growth targets. When asked where the investments will be



made, he said, "A large part of it will be on oil palm."
On the palm oil plantation, Asthana said, "We have got about 64,000 hectares which are already yielding fruits. That's a big business for us already. We have committed to do five lakh hectares of further

palm plantation under the National Mission on Edible Oil - Oil Palm in five states in northeast -- Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Tripura, Nagaland."
In south India, he said, "We are already large in Andhra Pradesh, now we're going big ticket in Telangana and in Karnataka, and then the rest are the other states like Orissa, Chhattisgarh and Gujarat, among others. So it's a very big campaign that we're running and we continue to build up

and grow that."
Asked about the turnover target, he said, "As of now it is more than Rs 31,000 crore and in the next five years our expectation is it shall go between Rs 45,000 crore and Rs 50,000 crore."
The company expects its new range of premium offerings in nutraceuticals, health biscuits, Nutrela millet-based cereals, and dry fruits to play a significant part in meeting the five-year target.
"Our target is that from the

current value offering that we have, about 5 per cent to 10 per cent will come from the premium products," Asthana said.
The scope of the company's Nutrela brand is also being widened to keep pace with the growth plans.
"Nutrela is a premium offering that we have with the different verticals under it. We are building it up as an umbrella consumer business orientation, that has got both value and a premium offering," he added.

Satwik, Chirag clinch historic doubles title

PTI ■ JAKARTA

India's dynamic duo of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty scripted history by winning the men's doubles title at the Indonesia Open here on Sunday, becoming the first pair from the country to claim a Super 1000 event.

The Indians outwitted the Malaysian world champion duo of Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik 21-17, 21-18 in an intense contest that lasted 43 minutes.

"We had prepared very well for this event. We knew the crowd will be supporting us. They have supported us all week. This has been amazing week for us. We played amazing badminton today. We didn't have good head-to-head record against them, so wanted to play one point at a time and it fetched the result for us," said Satwiksairaj after the match.

Satwiksairaj and Chirag gained initiative midway through the first game and they never really gave a sniff to their fancied opponents since then.

In the second game as well, the Indian pair did not allow their opponents to break free and a four-point streak kept them ahead of the curve.

The Indians seemed to be in for a facile victory when the Malaysians nullified four match points to come within sniffing distance of their opponents.

However, Satwiksairaj and



Chirag, the world No. 6 pair, who won a gold medal at the Birmingham Commonwealth Games and bronze at the world championships last year, could not be denied when the score read 20-18 in their favour, and this time they converted the match point to script a magnificent win.

The magnitude of the result can be gauged from the fact that this was the first time Satwiksairaj and Chirag are beating Aaron and Soh in 11 attempts.

In fact, the triumph of Satwiksairaj and Chirag in the Indonesia Open is quite unparalleled as they are the first doubles Indian doubles pair to land the title while Saina Nehwal (2010, 2012) and Kidambi Srikanth (2017) had earlier bagged the singles crown in Jakarta.

The Indian pair is the first doubles team from the country to clinch a Super 1000 title while they also stand as the first ones to win the set of \$100, \$300, \$500, \$750 and \$1000 events from the country.

Earlier, the 2022 world championships bronze medalists had become the first ever Indian pair to reach the final of any Super 1000 tournament after a sensational comeback to get the better of the Korean combination of Kang Min Hyuk and Seo Seung Jae 17-21, 21-19 21-18 in a thrilling semi-final.

The Indians, who were also Asian champions, defeated the current world champions in less than an hour.

Chirag was outstanding at the net with his speedy interceptions and defence, and was one of the main reasons behind the Indian pair pulling off the match.

The BWF (Badminton World Federation) World Tour is divided into six levels, namely World Tour Finals, four Super 1000, six Super 750, seven Super 500, and 11 Super 300. One more category of tournament, the BWF Tour Super 100 level, also offers ranking points.

Each of these tournaments offers different ranking points and prize money. The Super 1000 level provides the highest number of ranking points and offers the most significant prize pool among all the tiers.

This triumph at the Indonesia Open adds to the Indian duo's already impressive collection of titles, which includes a gold medal at the Commonwealth Games, a gold medal at the Thomas Cup, a bronze medal at the World Championships, and wins at the Super 300 (Syed Modi), Super 500 (Thailand and India Open), and Super 750 (French Open) tournaments.

In the women's singles final, China's Chen Yu Fei defeated Spain's Carolina Marin 21-18, 21-19 to bag the title.

India defeat Lebanon, win Intercontinental Cup

PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR

Captain Sunil Chhetri, as is his wont, rose to the occasion with his 87th international goal as India won the Intercontinental Cup with a 2-0 victory over Lebanon in the final here on Sunday.

Lallianzuala Chhangte struck the evening's other goal to cap an impressive display.

This is India's second title triumph in the tournament, following their win in the inaugural edition in 2018. Korea won in 2019.

In the last leg of his career, the 38-year-old Chhetri found the back of the net in the 46th minute of the title clash, breaking the deadlock right after play resumed after a goalless first half.

Buoyed by the lead and backed by a near-capacity



crowd at the Kalinga Stadium, India consolidated their position when Lallianzuala Chhangte, the provider of the first goal, found the target in the 66th minute, leaving the fans delighted and their 99-ranked opponents stunned.

In hot and humid conditions, both the teams had their fair share of chances in the first half but could not make use of them, just like the goalless stalemate they played out in an inconsequential match two days ago.

And while India had more possession of the ball - nearly 58 percent -- the Lebanese had seven shots at goal as compared to three by the home team which again seemed to be lacking in ideas in the opponent's final third.

However, all that changed after the half-time break.

First a charging Chhangte surged into the box and cut it back for Chhetri, who calmly tapped the ball in past the Lebanese goalkeeper Ali Sabeh from close for the opener. The goal was a result of an excellent build-up as Nikhil Poojary managed to slip in the ball through little space to Chhangte who then laid it for his inspirational skipper.

Their tails up after the opener, the Indians looked to press home the advantage and they were rewarded with a second goal through Chhangte.

Having received a ball from Chhetri, substitute Naorem Mahesh Singh attempted to put it past the Lebanese custodian, who saved it but could not keep the ball with him. Off the rebound, Chhangte converted to double India's lead.

Wolves captain Neves set for Saudi move

AFP ■ LONDON

Wolves captain Ruben Neves is reportedly close to becoming the next major player to arrive in Saudi Arabia with Al Hilal set to spend £47 million (\$60 million) on the Portuguese international.

Sky Sports and the BBC reported on Sunday that Neves, who only had one year left on his contract, will leave for Wolves' club record fee.

Thanks to its oil riches, Saudi Arabia, the conservative Gulf monarchy frequently targeted over its human rights record, has swiftly achieved a prominent role in world sports, dishing out billion of dollars in the process.

Karim Benzema joined his former Real Madrid teammate Cristiano Ronaldo in moving to the Saudi Pro League earlier this



month in what is expected to be just the start of a series of move for stars based in Europe.

France's World Cup-winning midfielder N'Golo Kante will reportedly turn down a contract renewal at Chelsea to join Benzema at Al-Ittihad.

But in contrast to recent moves for players in the twilight of their careers, Neves, 26, still

has his prime years ahead of him.

Barcelona had held a long-term interest in the former Porto midfielder.

A huge offer would ease Wolves' financial pressures.

They have been under pressure to sell to avoid breaching Premier League spending rules after splashing out £150 million on transfers over the past 12 months.

Neves has made 253 appearances for Wolves, scoring 30 goals, since arriving in 2017.

He helped them win promotion from the Championship a year later and then to two consecutive seventh-placed finishes in the Premier League.

Wolves also reached the Europa League quarter-finals in 2020, but have struggled to replicate that success and finished 13th last season.

Babita has tried to weaken our protest: Sakshi

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Olympic medallist Sakshi Malik on Sunday accused BJP leader and former Commonwealth Games gold medallist grappler Babita Phogat of trying to use the wrestlers for selfish motive and weaken their protest.

Sakshi and her husband Satyawart Kadian had also posted a video on Saturday alleging that it was Babita and another BJP leader Teerath Rana who had initially taken permission for the grapplers to protest at Jantar Mantar but later started advising them that the platform should not be used by parties for political purposes.

Rana, however, said that neither he or Babita tried to initially investigate the protest and then weaken it, saying the wrestlers are the pride of the nation and the respect of the sportspersons is uppermost on the mind of the BJP.

"Look, wrestlers are the pride of the nation and the respect of sportspersons is uppermost on the mind of the BJP, and I also respect them a lot. I have always supported sportspersons," said Rana in a video.

The country's top wrestlers including Sakshi, Vinesh Phogat and Bajrang Punia have accused outgoing Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief and BJP MP Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh of sexual harassment and demanded his arrest.

Satyawart and Sakshi also



furnished a letter, which allegedly showed Babita and Rana had taken permission from the Jantar Mantar police station for the wrestlers to stage a sit-in.

Sakshi, in a tweet on Sunday, wrote, "In the video (posted on Saturday), we had taunted Teerath Rana and Babita Phogat that how they were trying to use wrestlers for their selfishness and how when the wrestlers were in trouble, they went and sat on the lap of the government. "We are definitely in trouble, but our sense of humour

should not become so weak that we cannot even laugh at the jokes of the powerful," she added.

Rana, however, denied allegations that he had used the wrestlers for selfish motives.

"The wrestlers came and met me (before staging the protest) and they told us that they were being exploited. We said we are with our sisters and daughters. I am with the athletes in the fight for justice. I was there with them before and am now as well," added Rana.



Italy seal Nations League bronze against Netherlands

AFP ■ ENSCHEDE (NETHERLANDS)

Italy sealed a third-place finish in the Nations League finals on Sunday, with a 3-2 win over disappointed hosts the Netherlands.

Ronald Koeman's Dutch side started the week determined to win their first trophy since 1988's European Championship but they fell short on home territory in both matches, losing the semi-final against Croatia on Wednesday.

Federico Dimarco and Davide Frattesi struck first half goals for Euro 2020 winners Italy in Enschede as the Netherlands started slowly.

Steven Bergwijn pulled one back with 20 minutes remaining but Juventus forward Federico Chiesa quickly restored Italy's advantage to ensure they would take bronze, despite Georginio Wijnaldum pulling another goal back.

Koeman has now lost three of his four games since being reappointed Netherlands coach in January.

Inter Milan defender Dimarco sent a searing strike into the top corner after

Giacomo Raspadori teed him up neatly in the sixth minute.

Neither player started in the semi-final defeat by Spain on Thursday, as Italy coach Roberto Mancini made several changes and returned to his favoured 4-3-3 formation.

It paid off, with Italy netting the second through Frattesi, one of only four who also faced La Roja from the outset.

The Sassuolo midfielder, 23, has been Italy's best player in the final four, another example of the promising crop of players coming through for the Azzurri.

Bergwijn injected some excitement into the game with a well-taken goal to give the Netherlands a chance, but soon Chiesa stroked a low finish past Justin Bijlow at the other end.

Wout Weghorst netted for the Oranje after a deflected free-kick fell into his path but the goal was ruled out for off-side.

Netherlands showed plenty of spirit in the final stages and Wijnaldum fired home from Joey Veerman's threaded pass, but it was too little, too late.

Portugal triumph in Euro 2024 qualifying



AP ■ PARIS

Bruno Fernandes scored twice as Portugal won in Euro 2024 qualifying on Saturday after Scotland produced a stunning late comeback to beat Erling Haaland's Norway in Oslo.

Portugal defeated Bosnia and Herzegovina 3-0 in Lisbon to make it three wins out of three in Group J, with Manchester City star Bernardo Silva opening the scoring a minute before half-time.

Fernandes headed in the second from a Ruben Neves cross in the 77th minute and scored his second, and Portugal's third, in added time.

Cristiano Ronaldo wore the captain's armband and

played all 90 minutes as the 38-year-old men's international appearance record-holder won his 199th cap.

However, the forward now playing for Al-Nassr in Saudi Arabia did not manage to add to his record 122 international goals - he found the net with a header midway through the first half only to be denied by an offside flag.

Portugal, who visit Iceland on Tuesday, are top of Group J with nine points out of a possible nine having scored 13 goals and conceded none.

They are two points clear of Slovakia, who beat Iceland 2-1 in Reykjavik with Tomas Suslov unwittingly scoring the winner 20 minutes from time after an Alfred Finnbogason penalty for the hosts canceled out Juraj

Kucka's opener. Luxembourg beat Liechtenstein 2-0 in the same six-team group, from which the top two sides qualify for the finals in Germany.

Scotland have three wins out of three in Group A following a famous victory over Spain in March by coming from behind late on to beat Norway 2-1 on Saturday.

It looked as if Norway would get their first win of the campaign after Erling Haaland was fouled in the box on the hour mark by Ryan Porteous and converted the resulting penalty.

It was Haaland's 22 goal in 24 games for Norway, and he was taken off six minutes from time by coach Stale Solbakken with the job seemingly done.

But then Scotland equalized in the 87th minute when Leo Ostigard failed to deal with a John McGinn pass, allowing Lyndon Dykes to stab home.

And Scotland were not finished as they snatched the winner with a minute left, McGinn and Dykes combining to set up Norwich City's Kenny McLean to slot in, leaving Norway with just one point from three outings.

Scotland, who went 23 years without appearing at any major tournament before going to Euro 2020, are now in a fantastic position on top of Group A, five points clear of Georgia and six ahead of Nations League finalists Spain.

They have played a game more than both of those sides, however, and welcome Georgia to Glasgow on Tuesday.



नव उत्कर्ष के 9 वर्ष

प्रधानमंत्री श्री नरेन्द्र मोदी के सक्षम नेतृत्व में सशक्त, अतुल्य और आत्मनिर्भर भारत के निर्माण की प्रक्रिया जारी है, "सबका साथ-सबका विकास" का संकल्प लेकर मध्यप्रदेश आगे बढ़ रहा है। राष्ट्र के नवनिर्माण में मध्यप्रदेश को जिम्मेदार भूमिका देने के लिए प्रधानमंत्री जी का आभार। उनकी प्रेरणा से सभी योजनाओं को मध्यप्रदेश पूरी क्षमता के साथ लागू कर, जनहित और विकास के कामों में आगे बढ़ रहा है।

नरेन्द्र मोदी, प्रधानमंत्री

धन्यवाद प्रधानमंत्री जी

समृद्ध कृषि-खुशहाल किसान

कौशल विकास से बढ़ा रोजगार, युवाओं के सपने हुए साकार

सुशासन से सुनिश्चित हुआ जन-जन का हित

बेहतर आपदा प्रबंधन, सुरक्षित हुआ जनजीवन

सबल होती महिलायें बनीं प्रगति की सूत्रधार

सस्ती और सुलभ स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं तक सबकी पहुंच

विश्व पटल पर पहचान, बढ़ता आत्मगौरव और सम्मान

सांस्कृतिक संरक्षण का प्रण, विरासत को आगे बढ़ा रहे हम

सुदृढ़ अधोसंरचना पर बल-मजबूत बुनियाद, बेहतर कल

निर्धनों की सेवा और सहायता, हर जरूरतमंद को पूरी मदद



शिवराज सिंह चौहान, मुख्यमंत्री, मध्यप्रदेश

हर वर्ग खुशहाल, चौतरफा विकास

साथ है मोदी - शिवराज सरकार