

**CITY 3**  
CM: MATHRUBHUMI YOJANA  
IN URBAN AREAS TOO

**OPINION 6**  
US BATON OF VALUES  
PASSES SEAMLESSLY

**WORLD 10**  
BIDEN FALLS FROM STAGE, SAYS  
HE GOT 'SANDBAGGED'

LUCKNOW, SATURDAY JUNE 3, 2023; PAGES 12 ₹3



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# Over 70 dead as 2 Express trains derail

## Three-way accident also involves goods train in Balasore

PTI ■ BALASORE/HOWRAH

At least 70 people were killed and more than 350 injured in a horrific triple train crash on Friday in Odisha's Balasore district involving the Bengaluru-Howrah Superfast Express, the Shalimar-Chennai Central Coromandel Express and a goods train, officials said.

Though local villagers claimed that the number of dead could be nearer 100.

Officials said several coaches of the 12864 Bengaluru-Howrah train travelling to Howrah derailed at Bahanaga Bazaar, near Balasore and fell on adjacent tracks.

"These derailed coaches collided with 12841 Shalimar-Chennai Central Coromandel Express and its coaches capsize too," a senior official said. A goods train was also involved in the accident as the coaches of the Coromandel Express hit its wagons after getting derailed, the official said.

The accident happened around 7 pm, he said.

Over 350 people have been admitted to different hospitals across the district, officials said, adding that all private and government hospitals have been put on alert in the nearby districts, including state capital Bhubaneswar.

So far, 70 bodies could be brought out from under the

overturned coaches, they said.

A PTI reporter at the spot said several people were trapped under the derailed coaches, and locals were assisting emergency services personnel to rescue them, but darkness was hindering the operation.

The local villagers were the first to reach the site and try and help the passengers, pulling out the wounded and the dead from bogies, some of which were nothing but a "mangled heap of steel," according to eye-witnesses.

A passenger Rupam Banerjee told newsmen, "the local people really went out on a limb to help us... not only helping pull out people but retrieve our luggage and get us water."

Gas cutters are being used to open bogies and bathrooms to rescue people. Some of the scenes at the site "were too gory to describe," said another passenger, who added that most people who were trapped by the accident have been rescued.

Fifty doctors from different hospitals in neighbouring districts have been rushed to the spot to treat the injured at the accident site as 115 ambulances have been brought in to remove the wounded.

All government and private hospitals in Balasore, Bhadrak, Mayurbhanj, Cuttack and Bhubaneswar have been put



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

on alert to receive the injured.

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said he was rushing to the accident site, while Odisha chief minister Naveen Patnaik is expected to be also

at the site by tomorrow morning. "Rushing to the site in Odisha. My prayers for the speedy recovery of the injured and condolences to the bereaved families.

Rescue teams mobilised from Bhubaneswar and Kolkata. NDRF, State govt. teams and Airforce also mobilised. Will take all hands required for the rescue ops," he

tweeted.

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

injuries.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi too expressed his distressed. He also announced an ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh for the next of kin of each deceased and Rs 50,000 for the injured from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund (PMNRF). The prime minister spoke to Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw to take stock of the situation.

"Distressed by the train accident in Odisha. In this hour of grief, my thoughts are with the bereaved families. May the injured recover soon," Modi said in a tweet.

"Spoke to Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw and took stock of the situation. Rescue ops are underway at the site of the mishap and all possible assistance is being given to those affected," the prime minister said.

The Odisha government has issued helpline 06782-262286. The railway helpline is 033-26382217 (Howrah), 8972073925 (Kharagpur), 8249591559 (Balasore) and 044-25330952 (Chennai).

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

West Bengal Chief

Secretary HK Dwivedi added that the state was sending a team led by minister Manas Bhunia and MP Dola Sen to the spot.

Meanwhile, three NDRF teams are working at the triple train crash site in Odisha's Balasore district while six more are being rushed to the spot, officials said on Friday.

The estimated strength of these nine teams is about 240 personnel, they said.

NDRF Director General (DG) Atul Karwal told PTI that his teams are working in coordination with the Odisha state government and railway authorities. "As we understand, our job requires heavy lifting as railway coaches have climbed on one another. Some heavy lift cranes are being brought in by the state government while we are mobilising more cutters and equipment as we speak," Karwal said.

The rescue teams are equipped with stretchers, gas and plasma cutters, lifting pads, first-aid kits and other equipment, besides sniffer dogs, NDRF Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Manoj Kumar Yadav said. While one National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) team, located at its regional response centre in Balasore, was the first to reach the accident site, two more reached shortly after.

## CAPSULE

### GO FIRST TO RESTART OPS WITH 152 DAILY FLIGHTS

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

### 'WILL TAKE INFORMED CALL ON SEDITION LAW'

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

### ANTI-TERROR COURT EXTENDS IMRAN'S BAIL

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

### RUPEE GAINS 1 PAISA TO CLOSE AT 82.39 AGAINST \$

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

# 2024 LS elections will throw surprising outcome: Rahul

PNS ■ WASHINGTON

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

Nonetheless, Rahul expressed confidence in overcoming these challenges. During the interaction, Rahul also addressed a range of

## IUML fully secular, claims Rahul, sparks political row

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

Continued on Page 9

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

Khap sets June 9 deadline for Brij Bhushan's arrest

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Members of the 1983 World Cup-winning cricket team, including Kapil Dev and Sunil Gavaskar, have expressed their support for the protesting wrestlers and urged them not to make hasty decisions, while also hoping that their issues will be heard and resolved. At the same time, a "khap mahapan-chayat" in Kurukshetra set a deadline of June 9 to take action on its demand for the arrest of Brij Bhushan

Singh, the outgoing chief of the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) and BJP MP. Singh has been accused of sexually harassing several women wrestlers

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

The statement comes in response to the protest by wrestlers Vinesh Phogat, Sakshi Malik, and Bajrang Punia, who have been demanding the



arrest of Brij Bhushan for the alleged sexual exploitation of women wrestlers. The wrestlers had threatened to immerse their medals into the holy river Ganga during their protest in Haridwar on May 30 but did not carry out the act.

On May 28, police detained the wrestlers for violating law and order when they marched towards the new Parliament without permission. The police then cleared the protest site.

"We are distressed and disturbed by the unseemly visuals of our champion wrestlers being manhandled. We are also deeply concerned that they are considering discarding their hard-earned medals into the River Ganga," stated the 1983 World Cup-winning team in a release to PTI.

"Those medals represent years of effort, sacrifice, determination, and grit, and are not

## WFI chief denied nod for June 5 rally

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

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

only their own but the nation's pride and joy. We urge them not to make any hasty decisions in this matter and fervently hope that their grievances are heard and resolved quickly. Let the rule of law prevail," the

Continued on Page 9

# BRICS pledges to combat terror, financing networks

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE/ AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/ CAPE TOWN

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

Continued on Page 9

# Day after Shah appeal, people surrender weapons in Manipur

PTI ■ IMPHAL

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

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

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

The Army, the Assam



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



# Allow law to take its due course: Lekhi

PTI ■ AGRA

Union Minister Meenakshi Lekhi on Friday said the wrestlers' matter will be decided by court and that the law is same for everyone be it a man or a woman.

"The law of India is equal to everyone whether it is a daughter, son, husband or a wife. The court will decide what is wrong and what is right," she said when asked to comment on wrestlers' protest against Wrestling Federation of India chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Sharma, who has been accused of committing several acts of sexual exploitation against women under training.

The Minister of State for External Affairs and Culture Meenakshi Lekhi was in Agra to highlight the achievements of the Modi government in the past nine years.

Speaking on the achievements of the BJP government at the Centre, she said the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has brought a

## WRESTLERS' PROTEST



massive change in the last nine years of his rule.

"Things are same. What has changed is the able leadership of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who always thought of welfare of the poor, farmers, the deprived section and women," she said.

"Despite rumours spread by the people in Opposition about the COVID vaccines, the BJP government did a commendable work by providing

vaccines to lakhs of people in record time and supplying two COVID-19 vaccines to the developed nations and other countries," she said.

Lekhi also lauded the Modi government work on the launch of Vande Bharat trains, construction of the house for poor people under PM Awas Yojana, construction of toilets and increasing the number of tap water connection in rural areas.

# 70-year-old woman killed in mishap

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A 70-year-old woman was killed in a road mishap on Friday morning. She was the mother of Prabhuranjan Tripathi, a resident of Devasthan near Shiv Yoga Ashram on Faizabad road under BBD police station.

Prabhuranjan lodged a complaint in this regard. He stated that his mother went out of the house for a walk on Thursday evening and was knocked down by an unidentified speeding vehicle. She was rushed to a nearby government hospital where she succumbed on Friday morning.

Meanwhile, Vivek Pratap Singh, who resided near Mahakal Mandir in Rajendra Nagar under Naka police sta-

tion, sustained head injuries in an attack allegedly by Kripa Shanker and his 10 unidentified accomplices.

Kripa Shanker is a salesman in a fair price shop owned by Pradeep Singh in Naka area. Earlier, there was a heated exchange between Kripa Shanker and Vivek over the later not submitting the photocopies of his Aadhaar and ration cards.

Police said Shanker called his accomplices and they allegedly attacked Vivek, who was rushed to a government hospital where his conditional was said to be critical.

In another incident, Lalit Kumar (52), a slum-dweller of Bakshi-Ka-Talab, was caught carrying 2-kg ganja. He was arrested by a joint team of police and Excise department.

# Wanted criminal killed in police encounter

**Lucknow (PTI):** A notorious criminal carrying a reward of Rs 50,000 on his head was killed in an encounter with police in Ghaziabad district on Friday, officials said.

Two policemen were also injured in the exchange of fire, they said. Monu Choudhury of Ghaziabad's Muradnagar area was killed in an encounter with police. Two police personnel sustained injuries in the operation, Special Director General of Police (Law and Order) Prashant Kumar said.

Choudhury was wanted in connection with two murders that took place in Ghaziabad in the last two months and carried a reward of Rs 50,000 on his head. A total of 12 cases, including those of murder, loot

and extortion, are registered against him, he said.

Recently, the Ghaziabad police had attached properties of his gang members worth Rs 29 crore under the Gangsters Act, Kumar said.

Meanwhile, two people were killed and another sustained injuries in a head-on collision between a motorcycle and a car on the Nanpara-Rupaiddiha Highway in Bahraich, police said on Friday.

Soon after the collision, the vehicle and the motorcycle caught fire leading to a traffic jam, they said. Three friends Shivam (25), Satyam (24) and Pankaj (26) of Bakshipura locality were going to Rupaiddiha on the motorcycle when the accident occurred near Hada

Bashari village, police said.

A police officer said Shivam and Satyam died on the spot while Pankaj was seriously injured and taken to the district hospital. Efforts are on to trace the driver of the car, police said.

In Bulandshahr, two men were killed after being hit by a tanker truck on Friday, police said. The accident happened in Sikandrabad police station area, killing Omveer (35) and Chatar Singh (40) on the spot, they said. The two men, both flower sellers, were waiting near a brick kiln when a speeding truck ran over them, they said.

The bodies have been sent for post-mortem and efforts are on to arrest the truck driver, police said.

# Ex-min acquitted in 13-year-old case

PTI ■ BALLIA

A special MP-MLA court here has acquitted former Uttar Pradesh minister Upendra Tiwari and three others for lack of evidence in a 13-year-old case related to alleged blocking of national highway at Phephana.

According to the prosecution, on August 5, 2010, the then in-charge of Phephana police station T P Singh had

lodged a case against Tiwari, former district president of BJP Devendra Yadav and two others under sections 143 (knowingly joining an unlawful assembly and disturbing public peace), 341 (wrongfully restraining a person) and 186 (voluntarily obstructing a public servant in the discharge of his public functions).

It was alleged that Tiwari, two-time BJP MLA from

Phephana seat, had illegally blocked the national highway from 7 am to 11 am by gathering a crowd for various demands at Phephana trisection. Special judge Tapasya Tripathi, after hearing the arguments of both the sides, acquitted all the four accused, including Tiwari for lack of evidence. Tiwari was the sports minister in the first term of the Yogi Adityanath government.

# 2 held for involvement in several theft cases

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Police claimed to have arrested two accused for their involvement in several theft cases in different areas of trans-Gomti in the past one year. They were identified as Riaz and Aamir. They were picked from Purwa Mashalchitola in Khadra under Madehganj police station on Thursday night. The police had been searching for them for the past six months.

Their involvement once again came to the fore when they barged into the house of Manisha Singh of Madehganj where preparations were

underway for her daughter's marriage. They disguised themselves as helpers of the cooks and made off with cash and valuables on the intervening night of May 16 and 17.

After a case was registered in this regard, the accused were rounded up on May 20. During interrogation, they confessed to their crime. Stolen goods were also recovered.

Meanwhile, two accused were arrested by a joint team of Chinhat and BBD police stations. They were identified as Sandeep Rawat and Sachin Rawat. Three stolen mobile phones and Rs 3,000 in cash were also recovered.

# PM to be invited for consecration ceremony at Ram Temple

PTI ■ AYODHYA

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be invited to the Ram Temple here for the consecration ceremony of the new idol of Lord Ram, an official of the temple's trust said.

Ram Temple Trust general secretary Champat Rai said that the decision was taken in the recently held meeting of the members.

Rai said that the ground floor of the temple will be ready by October. Two months will be spent in the trial of its operation and by December, it will be thrown open to the devotees. A letter will be sent to the



prime minister and he will be asked to give his permission regarding any favourable date between December and January 26, 2024, he said.

This letter will be signed by the president of Sriram Janambhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust Mahant Nritya Gopal Das, the official said.

After the consecration of the idol of Lord Ram, the temple will be officially inaugurated for worshipping and offering prayers.

In the meeting held in Ayodhya this week, 11 members were present, while founder member K Parasaran joined virtually. However, Rai said that no date has been fixed for the consecration of the idol in the sanctum sanctorum of the temple. Swami Govind Dev Giri, the treasurer of the temple trust, is consulting the astrologers regarding the dates. So far talks have been held with seven astrologers for a suitable date, he said.



## NOTICE

I have changed my name from Anand Kukreja S/o Satish Kumar Kukreja R/o 113/183-A Swaroop Nagar Kanpur for all future purpose.

## NOTICE

I have changed my name from Zarna Shah to Zarna Kukreja W/o Anand Kukreja R/o 113/183-A Swaroop Nagar Kanpur for all future purpose.

## NOTICE

I have changed my name from Zarna to Zarna Kukreja W/o Anand Kukreja R/o 113/183-A Swaroop Nagar Kanpur for all future purpose.

## NOTICE

I have changed my name from Hina Tabassum to Hina Tabassum Ansari.it will known for all future purpose. Hina Tabassum Ansari, 581/402 Faithful Ganj Cantt Kanpur

## NOTICE

I have changed my name from Ajaya Shukla to Ajay Shukla S/o Raj Narayan Shukla R/o 117/O/228-A Sharda Nagar Naveen Nagar, Kanpur for all future purpose.

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## NOTICE

I Vijay Kumar Yadav and Vijai Kumar Yadav is same person S/o Late Ramjash Yadav and Kamlesh Yadav and Kamlesh Kumari Yadav is same name person W/o Vijay Kumar Yadav. R/o Village Ahiran Ka Purwa Post Gaddopur Mahiwa PS Kaint Dist Ayodhya.

# Metro clocks highest-ever ridership

**Lucknow (PNS):** Lucknow Metro achieved the highest ridership in May, breaking all the past records. In the month of May, around 21 lakh passengers travelled by the metro. Earlier, the highest ridership figure (20.50 lakh) was achieved in December, 2022.

Officials said that Lucknow Metro organises different awareness campaigns to attract travellers and ensure pollution-free travel.

"Lucknow Metro organises carnivals for travellers where different products are kept under one roof by many small-scale businessmen. Lucknow Metro celebrates birthdays of passengers besides organising pre-wedding shoots for couples in the station premises," an official said.



## NOTICE

Inform that my daughter Nishika's T.C. and Mark Sheet in class-VI. College of Loreto Convent Intermediate College, Lucknow has been lost anywhere. Sunil Kumar S/o Shri Hansraj R/o-566/129, Jai Prakash Nagar, Alambagh Lucknow.

## NOTICE

## NOTICE

It is to inform all that I am retired from the post of senior marketing inspector of Food and Civil Supply department. In my service records the name of my wife has been mentioned as Ravi Mohini Srivastava, when the fact her correct name is Mohini Srivastava, the name of Ravi Mohini Srivastava and Mohini Srivastava are the name of one and the same lady. Harsh Kumar Srivastava, S/o Late Babu Ram Srivastava, R/o 359/2, Shastri Nagar Kanpur, P.S. Kakadeo

# Skin bank on anvil at med varsity

SHARMILA KRISHNA ■ LUCKNOW

Processes are on to set up a skin bank at the burn unit of King George's Medical University, head of the plastic surgery department Dr Vijay Kumar said.

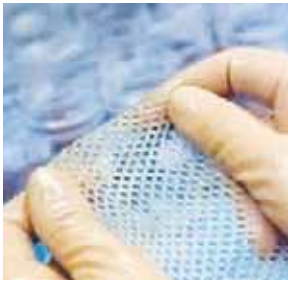
If the department was successful in establishing the skin bank, it would be the first in the state, he said, adding they were getting the equipment for the skin bank after which they would apply for licence with the Director General of Medical Education (DGME).

"The building is ready and fifty per cent of the equipment have been procured. For other things required, the tendering process is on. We need deep freezers and a vehicle. We will apply for the licence to the DGME once we get all the equipment. It will be done

shortly," he said. Skin is procured from the donor, kept in the bank and is utilised for patients of burns, trauma or any other department for which the skin is not available. The skin is harvested from deceased donors.

"There are patients who pledge their organs and they also fill the form for skin donation. When these patients die, their skin is harvested. This exercise will begin when we get the licence for the skin bank," Dr Kumar said. He said there are few cities in the country which have a skin bank, such as Coimbatore, Mumbai, Cuttack and Bengaluru.

"Eighty per cent of the burn cases are usually very critical. It's true that the poor cannot afford skin from these banks. In that case, we apply silver dressings in which healing takes place, albeit very slowly,



he pointed out.

On why it took so long for KGMU to think in terms of setting a skin bank, he said the burn unit itself was started January earlier this year.

"Once we start with the skin bank, we will go for research and development in the area of skin culture. We can take some part of the skin for culture and can grow the tissue. If possible, we can use the skin on the same person," he explained. About the cases of

burns which the department is receiving, he said the trend was changing and they were getting a lot of electrical injuries.

"We are getting liquid burns and there are also cases involving children falling into big vessels," he pointed out.

There are 35 beds in the burn unit and eight of them are in the ICU. The OPD footfall is 200 per OPD.

Dr Kumar said they were also providing hyperbaric therapy to patients for superficial deep burns, and that improvements were visible.

"Besides KGMU, Hyperbaric oxygen therapy is available only at a private private hospital in the city and it is for cosmetic purposes. Hyperbaric therapy is given in a chamber with raised atmospheric pressure. Oxygen goes faster to the tissues, thus helping in quick healing," he said.

# Stress on need to conserve water bodies in city

**Lucknow (PNS):** Lucknow, which had plenty of water bodies till about two decades back, is left with only 25 per cent of those while the rest have vanished.

Giving this information, Prof Naveen Arora from Dr Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University said the condition of water bodies is poor in Lucknow.

"Most of the lakes and ponds are polluted apart from the Gomti river. One can see overgrowth of algae and plants, because of which the lakes die down slowly. This is unfortunate because once upon a time, there were so many lakes and ponds in Lucknow but now because of mismanagement, many of them are either becoming or have become extinct. Immediate measures are required, otherwise the water bodies will slowly die down," he said.

He added that they had mapped the water bodies in a 5-km radius around BBAU. "They were several water bodies around the university and Shaheed Path, but one between SGPGI and the uni-

versity is just ten per cent of what it used to be," he pointed out. He said that the water bodies which are left now in Lucknow should be protected because they control the pollution levels, temperature and biodiversity of the city.

Meanwhile, a one-day workshop on 'Sustainable Practices and Mission Life' was organised by the School for Earth and Environmental Sciences at BBAU on Friday under 'World Environment Day' activities.

Dean, academic affairs (BBAU) Prof Rana Pratap Singh introduced the audience to the major crises of pollution, climate change, and water scarcity. He stressed on the importance of traditional rituals and holistic approaches towards the environment.

Singh addressed the need for resilience, restoration, and renewable resources through the adoption of sustainable technologies. He also said that technological development alone is not the solution; it is essential to develop a mind-set and raise awareness about conservation and sustainability.

# Two liver transplants performed at KGMU

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Two liver transplants performed at KGMU on May 15 and 16 turned out to be successful and both the recipients and donors were discharged from the hospital.

One of the patients was a 51 years old male, a resident of Ghaziabad district. He was suffering from advanced-stage liver cirrhosis with hepatocellular carcinoma. His 21-year-old daughter donated half part of her liver. She was discharged one week after the surgery while the recipient was discharged on May 23.

Another patient was a 33-year-old man, a resident of Siddharthnagar district. He was suffering from hepatitis B with advanced-stage liver cirrhosis. His 32-year-old wife donated half part of her liver. She was discharged one week after the surgery and the patient on June 1.

With a success rate of more than 90%, KGMU is at par with the most advanced centres in the world.

More than two lakh patients suffer from liver cirrhosis in India per year. Most of these cases are caused by

alcohol abuse, diabetes, viral infections or immune disorders. Only about 2,000 liver transplants are done in India per year. Most of the transplants are done in private hospitals with a cost of approximately Rs 30-40 lakh.

"KGMU, being a UP government institute, has brought down the cost to about Rs 10 lakh. For patients with low income, KGMU is utilising government schemes like and UP CM fund to further reduce the cost to Rs 3-5 lakh, a senior doctor said.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

This is to inform the general public that my client, Shubham Housing Development Finance Co. Ltd. intend to grant loan on the property scheduled below by of equitable mortgage by deposit of title deeds out of which one Original Sale Deed dated 30.07.2012 executed by Smt. Sarojini Devi Tripathi W/o Vishwa Nath Tripathi in favour of Smt. Kamla Sharma W/o Late Rakesh Kumar Sharma vide Book No.1, Volume No. 7180 Page No. 359 to 376 at Serial No. 8602 dated 01.08.2012 in the office of Sub-Registrar, Unnao is lost and not traceable. All person having any claim in respect thereof by way of sale, exchange, mortgage, charge, lien or otherwise howsoever are hereby requested to make the same known in writing to the undersigned within a period of 07 days from the date of publication hereof, failing which, the claim of such person/s will be deemed to have been waived and/or abandoned.

**Property Details**  
Part of Arazai No. 158/M, New No. 431, w/90 (Admeasuring Area- 62.61 Sq. Meter) situated at Netuva Pargana- Sikandarpur Sarosi, Mohalla-Rishi Nagar, Shuklaganj, Unnao.

**Shiva Kant Dixit (Advocate)**  
Mob.: 9415403399

**EDEN PROJECTS PVT. LTD.**

Office : 17/24, PICNIC SPOT ROAD, INDIRA NAGAR, LUCKNOW-226016  
www.manasgroup.in

Ref No. 105/2023-24      Date : 01.06.2023

### सार्वजनिक सूचना

मैं प्रमोटर एडेन प्रोजेक्ट्स प्राइवेट लिमिटेड, लखनऊ व्यक्तिगत कारणों से उत्तर प्रदेश रेरा में पंजीकृत परियोजना मानस गार्डन एक्सटेंशन (32 प्लॉट्स) पंजीयन संख्या-UPRERAPRJ13262 का निरस्तीकरण करा रहा हूँ। किसी व्यक्ति/संस्था आदि द्वारा इस परियोजना में यदि बुकिंग कराई गयी हो तो कृपया अपना क्लेम/दावा प्रस्तुत करें। उक्त क्लेम/दावा को विवरण सहित 15 दिनों के अंदर उ0प्र0 रेरा की ईमेल आईडी contactuprera@up-rera-in पर भी भेजा जाए तथा क्लेम/दावा विवरण को सचिव, उ0प्र0 रेरा मुख्यालय नवीन भवन राज्य नियोजन संस्थान, कालाकाकर हाउस, पुराना हैदराबाद, लखनऊ 226007 को प्रेषित किया जाए।

**निदेशक**



# CM: Mathrubhumi Yojana to be implemented in urban areas

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Mathrubhumi Yojana is currently being implemented in rural areas and the government will soon implement it in urban areas as well, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath disclosed on Friday.

Inaugurating the Uttar Pradesh Mathrubhumi Yojana, the chief minister said, “The mother and motherland are greater than heaven. There can be no comparison between them. Therefore, everyone should be given a chance to participate in the Mathrubhumi Yojana. Our government has currently implemented this scheme in rural areas. We will implement the Mathrubhumi Yojana in urban areas also.”

This will serve two purposes: firstly, individuals will be able to reconnect with their roots, and secondly, they will be able to contribute towards their motherland,” he added.

On this occasion, the chief minister distributed awards to

370 outstanding gram panchayats under the Mukhyamantri Panchayat Protsahan Puraskar Yojana. Additionally, under the Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan, 3,145 gram panchayat secretaries were provided with laptops.

The chief minister said, “The Panchayati Raj department should develop a mechanism through which the person contributing money can be given an account of his every penny. Under the UP Mathrubhumi Yojana, 60 per cent of the funds will be invested by individuals willing to contribute towards their motherland, while 40 per cent of the funds will be provided by the state government.”

The chief minister said that because people were God’s greatest creation, they had a strong sense of respect for their motherland. “Each person has a bond with his or her motherland. We must encourage this bond and instill faith in their hearts. Previously, peo-



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath distributing awards to gram panchayats under the Mukhyamantri Panchayat Protsahan Puraskar Yojana in Lucknow on Thursday | Pioneer

ple had in mind that there was misappropriation of funds in the state government’s budget so if we send money, it will also

be misused,” he said. Asserting that 10 municipal corporations were being developed as Smart Cities in

Uttar Pradesh with the inspiration of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Yogi said, “Additionally, our government

is developing seven municipal corporations as ‘Smart Municipal Corporations’ under the State Smart City pro-

gramme.”

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that through various initiatives such as gram sachivalaya, optical fibre, sanitation facilities, LED streetlights, good roads, computer operators, and BC Sakhi, the government was helping gram panchayats become ‘smart’.

“If our villages become smart, they can also progress towards self-reliance,” the chief minister said.

Talking about making gram panchayats smart, the chief minister said: “First, there should be competition between villages, and further, we will organise a cleanliness competition between villages and cities. Now that most of the villages have concrete drains and good roads, pay attention to ensure that there is no garbage in any village’s drains. Post June 15, make sure that the drains do not get clogged with water during the monsoon.”

Yogi Adityanath further asserted that laptop distribution to village secretaries would

make panchayats digital. “It will allow the secretaries to carry out their work through laptops instead of manual methods,” he said.

During the programme, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath also had a conversation with Indian migrants who are associated with the Mathrubhumi Yojana. During this interaction, he spoke to Sanjeev Rajoura, who has been living in California, USA for 21 years and is originally from Bulandshahr.

Sanjeev expressed his desire to be a part of this scheme and to contribute to its implementation. He mentioned his faith in Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and said that other people, including those who live abroad, had a lot of faith in him.

He said, “People living abroad believe that by cooperating with the Yogi government, their money will be invested in the right place, leading to the development of their villages.”

## Yogi govt sops to food processing industry

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In an attempt to boost the food processing sector in the state, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has launched Uttar Pradesh Food Processing Industry Policy-2023 under which subsidies and other facilities are being given for setting up food processing industries.

The Uttar Pradesh government is providing additional facilities to encourage investors, including subsidy, interest subvention and transport subsidy. It has been divided into four parts, first is the grant of projects, second is interest subvention, the third is transport grant and the fourth is major incentives.

Under the policy, the Yogi government is giving a grant of 35 per cent of the project cost (on plant, machinery and technical civil work) or a maximum of Rs 5 crore on the establishment of new food processing units.

“Apart from this, 35 per cent of the project cost or a maximum of Rs 1 crore is being given for expansion, modernisation and upgradation of units,” an official said. On the other hand, for integrated cold chain and value addition infrastructure (primary equipment, plant machinery, and 50 frozen irradiation facilities), 35 per cent of the project cost, or a maximum grant of Rs 10 crore, is being given.

Similarly, 35 per cent of the project cost of a minimum investment of Rs 25 crore (five units) or a maximum of Rs 10 crore by the agro-processing group, a grant of 35 per cent of the project cost or a maximum of Rs 5 crore for the development of a priority processing centre at the farm gate, collection centre, cold storage, dry warehouse, mobile pre-cooling unit, reefer trucks, IQF facility distribution centers, and retail outlets under backward and forward linkage, is being given.

Not only this, a maximum of Rs 5

crore of the project cost is being given for agricultural promotion chain development study, 50 per cent of the project cost or a maximum of Rs 50 lakhs is being given on the construction of decentralised procurement storage and processing unit.

Under major incentives, exemption of 2 per cent fee on the declaration of non-agricultural use, 25 per cent on circle rate on exchange of government land, 50 per cent on change fee on land use conversion, 75 per cent on external development fee, is being given. Percentage discount, reimbursement of stamp duty for land purchase, market fee on raw material purchased for processing in the state, exemption in tax, exemption in market fee and cess on agricultural produce purchased directly from farmers by processing units is being offered. Investors do not have to visit the department, rather they can take advantage of these facilities by applying online at ‘http://niveshmitra.up.nic.in’.

## Govt equipping youth with skills and knowledge

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government has taken the initiative to connect students with eminent technological educational institutions like the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and in this sequence, a group of 100 students and 100 teachers from Uttar Pradesh left for IIT-Mandi in Himachal Pradesh from Lucknow on Friday.

The one-month course (June 5-July 5) on ‘new age of modern technology’ offered by IIT-Mandi will equip these students with the necessary skills and knowledge to pursue new employment opportunities in India and abroad.

UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has emphasised the importance of skill development and has been working towards ‘Sakho Hunar, Sakho Kaam’. The Skill Development Mission’s ‘Prayas’ is aligned with this vision, striving to groom youth in new and demanding courses, ensuring they are well-prepared for the

job market.

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was previously signed between the Uttar Pradesh Skill Development Mission and IIT-Mandi. According to this, all students who have passed their 12th grade this year would be given summer courses with new technologies like advanced computing, artificial intelligence, and robotics. They have organised an online test for the same.

Based on the merit, 100 students from intern/mediate colleges and ITIs were selected. The selection criteria focused on students who have recently completed their 12th grade with a science background.

Alongside the students, 50 teachers of secondary education and 50 ITI teachers were also chosen to be part of these courses.

On Friday, five buses were arranged to transport the group to Mandi. Vocational Education and Skill Development Minister

(Independent Charge) Kapil Dev Aggarwal and Secondary Education Minister (Independent Charge) Gulab Devi flagged off these buses.

According to the officials, the funding of the entire programme will be done by the Uttar Pradesh Skill Development Mission.

The Uttar Pradesh Skill Development Mission is actively exploring opportunities to collaborate with other institutes like IIT-Bombay, IIT-Kanpur, and IIT-BHU to organise such summer courses for UP students. The potential for future MoUs with these institutes demonstrates the mission’s commitment to expanding access to high-quality technical education.

The Skill Development Mission is engaging in discussions with private companies, such as HCL Technology, to provide students in UP with opportunities to develop skills. Similarly, in technology like 5G, there is a possibility of starting a training programme to provide skills to the youth.

## Jump in number of start-ups a major success story of Modi govt: Jitendra

**Sambhal (PTI):** Union minister Jitendra Singh said on Friday that a major success story of the Narendra Modi government has been the rise in the number of start-ups — from just about 350 before 2014 to 92,683 now.

Addressing a youth gathering here, he said that in 2022 alone, 26,542 entities were recognised as start-ups by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).

He said that before 2014 there were just about 350 start-ups, but after Prime Minister Modi gave the clarion call from the ramparts of the Red Fort in his Independence Day address in 2015 and rolled out a special start-up scheme in 2016, there was a quantum jump and India today has the world’s third largest start-up ecosystem in the world, boasting 92,683 start-ups and with more than 115 unicorns (billion-dollar enterprises).

A NASSCOM study says tech start-ups created 23 lakh direct and indirect jobs between 2017 and 2021, according to a statement issued by the Personnel Ministry.

Besides, start-ups have self-reported creation of a million jobs directly and many more indirectly since the launch of the Startup India initiative in 2016 when the total jobs created stood a meagre 10, it said.

Singh said India’s youth today is gradually coming out of the government job mindset and is ready to take the plunge and create new opportunities in niche sectors, in turn creating scores of job opportunities.

Interacting with youth beneficiaries of various central government schemes in Sambhal in Uttar Pradesh, he said that the focus of the government in the last nine years has not been just to create employment but also to build entrepreneurship.

Singh said Prime Minister Modi wants our youth to become new entrepreneurs, new producers and create a complete network of start-ups by these new entrepreneurs across the whole country.

He said Indian start-ups raised USD 44 billion in 2021, with over USD 33 billion going towards deals worth more than USD 5 million.

Many Indian start-ups are

domiciled outside India despite having the majority of their market, personnel and founders in India, the statement said.

These “externalised” or “flipped” start-ups constitute a large number of India’s unicorns, it added. Singh said Modi also opened the doors of the space sector to private participation, as a result today Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is working with nearly 150 private start-ups.

Similarly, before 2014, India’s bio-economy was valued at USD 10 billion. “Now it’s over USD 80 billion. Biotech start-ups have grown 100 times in eight years from 52 odd start-ups in 2014 to 5,300 plus in 2022,” the statement quoted the minister as having said.

Singh said that in the last nine years, the Modi government has launched and implemented several welfare schemes to empower every Indian.

“The success of the Modi government’s prioritisation of creating new formal jobs for the youth can be seen in the massive rise in new Employee Provident Fund Organisation accounts,” he added.

## PM Modi, Yogi ‘saints’: Sadhvi Niranjan Jyoti

**Ballia (PTI):** Union Minister Sadhvi Niranjan Jyoti has dubbed Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath as “saints” and credited the PM for “changing” the country’s atmosphere.

Speaking at a religious event held here on Thursday, Jyoti, the Union Minister of State for Rural Development, said Modi has done in parliament what other prime ministers “did not want to do”.

“PM Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath are saints (saints). The person whose life is dedicated to someone else is a saint,” said Jyoti, who is also the Union Minister of State for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.

She lauded the prime minister for paving the way for the construction of Ram Temple in Ayodhya and abrogating Article 370 which gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir.

The prime minister has “changed the atmosphere of the country”, Jyoti said, without elaborating.

## Maya lashes out at Rahul for his minority comment

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Bahujan Samaj Party supreme leader Maya Awati has lashed out at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for his minority comments that he made during his ‘Mohabbat Ki Dukaan’ event in the United States that has stirred a political row.

Taking to Twitter, Maya Awati slammed the Gandhi scion for his remark highlighting the pathetic conditions of Dalit and Muslim communities and held Congress responsible for inflicting atrocities on them during the United Progressive Alliance regime. She also blamed Bharatiya Janata Party and Samajwadi Party for it.

Maya Awati said, “The statement given by the former president of Congress during his America tour about the pathetic condition of crores of Dalits and Muslim society in India and their life and property, insecurity of religion etc. is such a bitter truth for which Congress, BJP and other parties at the Centre need to be blamed.”

The former chief minister of Uttar Pradesh claimed that despite any political parties being in power, the minorities



have to face injustice, atrocities and exploitation at every level, but it was only under the BSP rule that justice was provided to them and the law was established.

“Whether it is the government of Congress or BJP or SP in other states including UP, injustice-atrocities and exploitation are common at every level on the poor and deprived of the majority bahujan samaj, whereas in UP only the BSP government has followed the law by law. Justice was done to everyone by estab-

lishing the raj,” she said.

Maya Awati further stated that history is full of dark chapters of incessant, countless communal riots and casteist incidents for which allegations and counter-allegations are made just for the sake of political and electoral interests. “And despite their benevolent constitution, the people of these classes are constantly exploited, victimised and still remain helpless,” she said.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, who is on a 10-day visit to the United States, on

Thursday interacted with the Indian diaspora at the ‘Mohabbat Ki Dukaan’ event in San Francisco in the United States. Raking up the minority issue, Rahul said that “what is happening to Muslims in India today happened to Dalits in the 1980s” and it has “to be fought with affection”.

He further alleged that the impact of some actions of the Centre was being felt by minorities and people from the Dalit and tribal communities. He said, “It is being felt by Muslims most directly because it is done most directly to them. But in fact, it is done to all communities. The way you (Muslims) are feeling attacked, I can guarantee Sikhs, Christians, Dalits, and tribals are feeling the same. You can’t cut hatred with hatred, but only with love and affection.”

“Also, this is a periodical thing. What is happening to Muslims in India today happened to Dalits in the 1980s. If you went to UP in the 1980s, this was happening with Dalits... We have to challenge it, fight it and do it with love and affection and not with hatred and we will do that,” Rahul added.

## Akhilesh to participate in oppn’s Patna meet

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Continuing his efforts for forging a grand alliance of opposition parties to take on the Bharatiya Janata Party in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav will participate in the conclave of opposition parties to be held in Patna on June 12.

The meeting has been convened by Janata Dal (United) leader and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar after consultation with leaders of various parties and several chief ministers of opposition-ruled states.

Senior leaders of opposition parties are expected to attend the meeting. SP spokesman Rajendra Chaudhary confirmed that party chief Akhilesh Yadav will attend the meeting in Patna on June 12.

The Congress has also announced that it will participate in the June 12 meeting in Patna.

However, the party is yet to decide on who will attend the meeting.

Kumar had met several opposition leaders last month as part of efforts to forge a united front against the BJP in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. He had met Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi last month and prior to that, he had a meeting with Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal.

Significantly, Nitish Kumar, Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren, Nationalist Congress Party supreme Sharad Pawar, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin and National Conference president Farooq Abdullah attended the swearing-in ceremony of Siddaramaiah as the Karnataka chief minister in a show of opposition unity.

The opposition has plans to put forward one common candidate to defeat the BJP to

upstage it from power at the Centre, but some have expressed reservations over such a proposal as some parties have aspirations to contest the maximum number of parliamentary seats.

The Congress also is not inclined to restrict itself to around 200 seats and wants to contest more seats, claiming that it is a national player unlike many regional outfits and has a presence across the country.

It has also contended that it is the only party that can directly take on the BJP due to its national footprint. The victory of the Congress in Karnataka assembly elections has also strengthened its claims.

The Janata Dal (United), Rashtriya Janata Dal and the Congress are in a coalition government in Bihar and the three parties have been in talks to bring other opposition parties together on a common platform in their fight against the BJP.

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

Summons for Filing &  
Appearance by Publication  
O.A. No. 194/2023  
Date 08/05/2023

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

ICICI Bank Ltd. ...Applicant  
Vs  
MOHD KADEEM & OTHERS  
...Defendants

To,  
Defendants :-  
1. MOHD KADEEM S/O JALEEL  
Gram Bahrauli, Bahrauli,  
Barabanki, U.P.- 225302  
Also at : Flat No. 403, 4th Floor,  
Building Khasra No. 223, Khurram  
Nagar, Lucknow, U.P.- 226022  
3. M/s M.K. TRADERS  
through its proprietor Mohd.  
Kadeem  
R/o 5/599, Sector-5, Gomti  
Nagar, Gomti Nagar Vistar,  
Lucknow, U.P.- 226010

In the above noted application, you  
are required to file in Paper Book  
form in two sets along with  
documents and affidavits (if any),  
personally or through your duly  
authorized agent or legal  
practitioner in this Tribunal, after  
serving copy of the same on the  
applicant or his counsel/duly  
authorized agent after publication  
of the summons, and thereafter to  
appear before the Tribunal on  
21/11/2023 at 10.30 A.M. failing  
which the application shall be  
heard and decide in your absence.

Registrar  
Debts Recovery Tribunal,  
Lucknow

FORM NO. 5  
THE DEBTS RECOVERY  
TRIBUNAL  
(9/2-A, Panna Lal Road,  
Allahabad- 211002, U.P.) (Area  
of Jurisdiction, Part of Uttar  
Pradesh)

Summons for Filing Reply &  
Appearance by Publication  
No..... Date 23.05.2023

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

Original Application  
No. 205 of 2021  
ICICI BANK LIMITED  
...Applicant(s)  
Versus  
Farah Khan & others  
...Defendant(s)

1. Farah Khan wife of Arsh Ali D/o  
Mussaraf Jama Khan, resident of  
Dundawa Buzurg Dundawa,  
Kannauj-209726  
Also at Aysha House, Tirwa Road,  
Sarai Meera (Anshik), Kannauj-  
209725.  
Also at Plot No. GH- 04, Flat No.  
903, 9th Floor, Imperial Crest,  
Sector-6C, Vrindavan Yojna,  
Raebareilly Road, Lucknow-226014.  
2. Arsh Ali son of Muqaddar Ali,  
resident of Aysha House, Tirwa  
Road, Sarai Meera (Anshik),  
Kannauj-209725.  
Also at Plot No. GH- 04, Flat No.  
903, 9th Floor, Imperial Crest,  
Sector- 6C, Vrindavan Yojna,  
Raebareilly Road, Lucknow-226014  
3. Shanaz Fatima wife of  
Muqaddar Ali, resident of Aysha  
House, Tirwa Road, Sarai Meera  
(Anshik), Kannauj-209725.  
Also at Plot No. GH- 04, Flat No.  
903, 9th Floor, Imperial Crest,  
Sector-6C, Vrindavan Yojna,  
Raebareilly Road, Lucknow-226014  
4. Gandharv Infrastructure &  
Project Ltd., Gh-04, Sector- 6C,  
Vrindavan Yojna, U. P. Avas Avam  
Vikas Parishad, Raebareilly Road,  
Lucknow. U. P. through its  
Authorized Signatory/ Director Mr.  
Santosh Kumar Bagla.  
...Defendants

In the above noted application, you  
required to file reply in Paper Book  
form in four sets along with  
documents and affidavit (if any),  
personally or through your duly  
authorized agent or legal  
practitioner in the Tribunal, after  
serving copy of the same on the  
applicant or his counsel / duly  
authorized agent after publication  
of the summons, and thereafter to  
appear before the Tribunal on  
03.07.2023 at 10:30 A.M. failing  
which the application shall be  
heard and decided in your  
absence.

Registrar  
Debts Recovery Tribunal



# 2 solvers caught in AU LLB entrance exam

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Two solvers were caught in the LLB Honours entrance examination conducted by the Allahabad University here on Friday. Both of them were giving examination in place of the bona fide candidates. The STF received information that in place of original candidate Prashant Kumar Yadav, solver Mohd Aved, son of Mohd Javed, a resident of Salon under Salon police station of Rae Bareli was taking the exam. When the STF checked in the examination hall, both were found appearing in the examination instead of the bona fide candidates.

ASP STF Navendu Kumar Singh said when the arrested Mohammad Aved was interrogated he said he was appearing in the Allahabad University's LLB Honours Entrance Exam-2023 in place of his friend Prashant who had promised him ₹25,000. This money was to be received after the examination.

Solver Anil Kumar Yadav of Ghazipur was caught giving the examination in place of original candidate Ashutosh Patel of Prayagraj from the examination centre in Naiini. During interrogation Anil told the police that when he was graduating from Allahabad University in 2014-15, he met LLB student Dhara Singh Patel of Soraon, Prayagraj. A month back he was asked by Dhara Singh Patel to appear in the Allahabad University LLB (Hons) Entrance Exam-2023 in place of the original candidate. It was decided that Rs 25,000 will be given to him by Dhara Singh Patel. This money was to be received after the completion of the examination.

**INSPECTED:** In order to address the problem of regular traffic jams in the old city area, Industrial Development Minister Nand Gopal Gupta 'Nandi' along with chief town planner, UP government, Anoop Srivastava re-evaluated the proposed multilevel parking at Moti Park, Bahadurganj.

The proposed parking lot opposite Laxman Market was suggested by outgoing mayor Abhilasha Gupta Nandi to the state government. However, the proposal was cancelled twice citing technical deficiencies. However, chief town planner re-evaluated the site thoroughly and found the rationale for the construction of the proposed parking system to be correct considering the geographical location of the old city, the ever-increasing pressure of vehicles and problem of traffic jam. In view of the daily jams as well as considering the influx of visitors during the Maha Kumbh Mela 2025, the suggestion of parking arrangement at Moti Park was justified. He also inspected Chowk, Zero Road, Muthiganj and Bahadurganj areas to check the possibilities of parking lots.

The minister along with chief town planner also visited and inspected the ancient Manokamanapurti temple circuit, Shiv Temple circuit,

Ram Bhavan Square to Chandralok Square, Mansarovar Square, Sulaki Square.

**CAMPAIGN:** Ahead of monsoon, authorities of Prayagraj Municipal Corporation (PMC) have taken up an extensive exercise of cleaning 546 small and 116 big drains in eight zones spanning across 100 wards of Sangam city. The civic body aims to complete the work by June 10. Nagar swasthya adhikari (PMC) Dr Abhishek Singh told mediapersons that a squad of 700 workers has been engaged in the campaign which is taken up ward and zone wise. "Over 70% of cleaning of drainage channels has been completed," he said adding that "Before taking up the drive, the department had carried out a detailed survey of pockets that witness water logging during monsoon season." He said the objective of the exercise was to address the recurrent problem of water logging caused

by clogged drains in the low-lying residential and market areas.

Corporation authorities have prepared a list of drainage channels that often witness water logging in every monsoon season and take up the cleaning work accordingly. Further, a supervision team will also start the repairing work, after removing sludge from the drains. Areas like Georgetown, Tagoretown, Allahapur, Rajapur Kachar, Civil Lines and old city pockets are the worst hit areas. The PMC authorities have also warned residents not to throw garbage into drains or face action. The PMC authorities claimed to have issued over 700 challans to defaulters in the past five months in the city on the charges of throwing garbage into drains and nullah. City residents also seemed happy with the drive as they said the unclogging of drains will improve the water-logging problems.

# Seminar on rainwater harvesting

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Senior scientist of Chandra Shekhar Azad University of Agriculture and Technology (CSAUA&T), Dr Nimisha Awasthi while addressing a seminar on 'Rainwater harvesting' at Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Dilip Nagar on Friday said in hydroponic systems, plant roots are unable to escape undesirable growing situations, such as high salt concentrations or unfavourable pH. She said this was why the quality of the water used was so imperative to the growth and health of the crops engendering the need for use of pure water.

She said when using pure water the drainage from the growing system can be reused, creating a closed system that saved water and fertiliser. She said it was more sustainable and in turn helped the environment. She said if the quality of water used was not pure it would lead to accumulation of salts.

Dr Awasthi said plants needed water for two main reasons growth and transpiration. She said depending on the age of the plants the size of the growing system and the growing medium used, it will contain just enough water for one



The CSAUA&T conducted a seminar on 'rainwater harvesting' for farmers at Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Dilip Nagar on Friday.

day. She said thus there was a need for rainwater harvesting and suggested low-cost technique that required minimum specific expertise or knowledge and offered many benefits.

She said rainwater is collected on the roof and transported with drains to a storage reservoir, where it provided water at the point of consumption or can be used for recharging a well. She said this reduced soil erosion, stormwater runoff, flooding and pollution of surface water with fer-

tilisers, pesticides, metals and other sediments. She emphasised on the need for rainwater harvesting and said two prominent methods were surface runoff harvesting where rainwater flowed away as surface runoff and can be stored for future use. She said surface water can be stored by diverting the flow of small creeks and streams into reservoirs on the surface or underground. It can provide water for farming, for cattle and also for general domestic use.

# ‘Human survival rests on water & trees’

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Director of National Sugar Institute (NSI) Prof Narendra Mohan while inaugurating the poster making competition as part of the Environment Week at the institute on Friday said "save trees and save water" are the two major missions of the people currently residing on this planet. He said human survival rested on water and trees but despite knowing the fact people were highly apathetic to both the issues. He said NSI apart from working in the area of its expertise feels it a bounden duty to promote both the issues from the grass-roots level. He said the competition was divided into three groups. He said for the graduates the topic was "Protecting environment through efficient plastic and e-waste management". He said it is encouraging to witness a huge gathering of children in different age groups.

Around 100 students from institute itself, other colleges and schools participated in the



National Sugar Institute conducted a poster making competition for students on Friday

competition. He said the NSI will conduct more programmes like distribution of cloth bags in market, tree plantation and seminars on various issues related to environmental pollution and its control during the week. He said it was very important that the current gen-

eration had a role to play in mitigating various environmental issues. He said they should be aware of the challenges and prepare themselves making this earth a better place to live in. Programme convener Anoop Kanaujia said the NSI opted for poster mak-

ing competition with a purpose that it will give a fair chance to students of all age groups to express their feelings about environmental issues. Neelam Chaturvedi and Vanistha Shukla, research fellows coordinated in managing the competition successfully.

**DIRECTIVE:** The regional transport authority has issued directives for all old vehicles plying on the city roads to immediately apply for HSRP for an old vehicle both four and two-wheelers in Uttar Pradesh. Traffic Senior Inspector Chaunk Singh said several hundreds of vehicles without the high security registration plate had been fined in the past two days. He said special pickets had been posted within the city as well as in the outskirts. He said for four-wheeler registration data can be easily available to enforcement agencies which will be helpful in traffic management. He said the HSRPs are tamper proof and come with non-removable snap-on locks due to which it was difficult to replace. He said the HSRP can help trace a vehicle in case it gets stolen. He said online booking can be easily done and one had to furnish all the details of the vehicle.

Singh said one had to enter the registered phone number name of the vehicle owner and other details.

# Valedictory function held at BFTS



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The valedictory function of 211 Army Pilot Course (Helicopters) and 211 Indian Coast Guard Stage II Pilot Course (Helicopters) was held at Basic Flying Training School (BFTS) Air Force Station Bamrauli on Thursday. Air Commodore GJ Reddy VSM, Chief Flying Training Officer (CFTO) HQ Training command, Indian Air Force (IAF) was the reviewing officer for the valedictory function. He was received by Wing Commander Abhimanyu Singh, Commanding Officer of BFTS, AF. The RO presented certificates to the graduating officers and trophies to those who excelled during the course of training.

211 Army Pilot Course (Helicopters) Lt Shubham stood first in ground subjects, Capt Ashutosh was awarded the trophy for first in flying and Capt Prasad won the trophy for best in overall merit.

211 Indian Coast Guard Stage II Pilot Course Asst Comdt Nishchay stood first in ground subjects, Dy Comdt Sumeet was awarded the first in flying and Asst Comdt Nishchay won the trophy for best in overall order of merit.

While addressing the gathering, air officer congratulated the officers and asked them to keep themselves updated with the requirements and nature of future warfare. He praised the BFTS for its rich traditions of

transforming young officers into skilled aviators and instilling professionalism and excellence in the young aviators abiding by the institutions' motto "Setting standards". The BFTS is a premier flying training establishment of the Indian Air Force located at Prayagraj. It was established on October 9, 1987, to impart ab-initio training to pilots on HPT-32 aircraft.

On July 5, 1999, the school changed its role from training flight cadets of the IAF to training the officers of the Indian Army, Navy and Coast Guard. The school was re-equipped with Chetak helicopters on December 26, 2005, for imparting ab initio flying training to Army officers on helicopters.

# Loans given to street vendors

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The SVANidhi Mahotsav was organised under the joint auspices of Nagar Nigam and District Urban Development Agency (DUDA) at Gandhi Addhyan Peeth Auditorium in Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapeeth (MGKV) here on Thursday in which around 500 street vendors were present. The state government is providing self-reliance to street vendors through self-employment and this festival was organised to celebrate the third anniversary of Pradhan Mantri SVANidhi Yojana.

In this festival, loan disbursement, SVANidhi Mitra



Samman, health camp and various competitions were organised for the street vendors. According to many participat-

ing vendors, ever since the Yogi government has created vendor zones for street vendors, the police and other govern-

ment departments do not harass them and life, which was derailed during the corona period, is back on track. In the festival Uttar Pradesh Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ravindra Jaiswal and MLA (Varanasi Cantt) Saurabh Srivastava gave different loans to street vendors. Along with this, SVANidhi Mitras were honored. Ravindra Jaiswal suggested to the DUDA and Nagar Nigam officials to open a registration office for SVANidhi Yojana in the DUDA office, so that along with employment from this scheme, the beneficiaries in the DUDA can get the facility of registration. DUDA's Project Officer Nidhi Bajpai said that so far a total of 36,363

beneficiaries have been given first loans, 13,060 second loans and 563 third loans. She said that 30,143 vendors are doing digital transactions. On the third anniversary, the benefits of the SVANidhi Yojana were explained through a street play. On this occasion, health camp, rangoli, slogan, mehendi etc competitions were organised and the participants were rewarded. Under the Building and Other Construction Welfare (BOCW) scheme, the labour department has registered the family members of the vendors. At the festival ₹10,000 first loans were distributed to three beneficiaries, ₹20,000 second loans to five and ₹50,000 third loans to five.

# Mega camp organised

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Anupriya Patel has said that it was the visionary approach of PM Narendra Modi that the government came forward to help those who were energetic but lacked fund. These views were expressed by her as the chief guest in a mega camp organised under SVANidhi scheme by DUDA at City Club on Thursday. She said the scheme was launched to empower the weaker section. DM Divya Mittal said it is the need of the hour that the beneficiaries availed the facilities under the scheme and upgrade their status. During the day-long programe the DM interaction with several beneficiaries. Divisional Commissioner Muthukumarasamy B asked the officials to publicise the scheme on a wide scale. Conducting the programme Project Officer DUDA Pratibha Srivastawa claimed it is the merit of the scheme that many area earning their livelihood successfully. She appealed to beneficiaries to fulfil the norms and avail the loan of ₹50,000 for their bright future. ADM (F&R) and incharge of the scheme Shiv Pratap Shukla proposed the vote of thanks.

**REUNITE:** Forty-six couples reunited under

Vindhychal range in the month of May. As per DIG's office under Mission Shakti and women self reliance family counselling centres were working to settle disputes between couples at family counselling centre in the districts. In the same spirit matters were brought to the centres and 46 couples living separately due to some misunderstanding were persuaded to live together. DIG RP Singh has directed the officials concerned to settle maximum disputes at the family counselling centres and minimise the disputes in the larger interest of the society.

**ATTACHED:** Under the provisions of Gangsters Act the administration attached property under Ahraura police station on Thursday. Sultana Parveen of Burhadey under Ahraura police station was involved in illegal trade of drug and more than half a dozen cases had been registered against her under NDPS Act in different police stations. In a case as investigating officer SHO Rajgarh had reported that the accused had accumulated assets through illegal activities and on the recommendation of the SP, the district magistrate ordered to attach four houses worth more than ₹1 crore. In compliance of DM's order the authorities attached the properties.

# V-C inaugurates summer internship programme

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Vice-Chancellor of Chhatrapati Shahu Ji Maharaj University (CSJMU) Prof Vinay Pathak while inaugurating the summer internship programme mooted that legal services need to be linked to technology. He said the varsity was willing to provide all possible help to the Legal Service Authority for technical support. He said the university had a huge number of student who pursued law from the university and this move will certainly be beneficial for them. He appealed to the students to provide legal help to weaker sections of the society.

Addressing the programme Additional District and Sessions Judge, Shubhi Gupta, said technology is no doubt having a significant impact on several industries and how professionals work. She said legal profession was no exception as the advancement in technology had helped improve lawyers' efficiency and enabled them to take on more task than previously possible. Gupta said virtual hearings, digital case management, online research bases, digital con-

tracts and computer stimulations amongst others were some of the technological solutions transforming the legal industry and increasing productivity. She said with perpetual acceptance of technology into our daily lives and gradual phasing out of the conventional mode of conducting business and social activities, it had been made essential for the beaming of searchlights of the legal aspect of the technological adaptations. She said as legal technology essentially meant the She suggested that as legal practice was a passion driven venture the legal practitioner required a special form of professional artistry to effectively deliver his or her client's goals and expectations. She said the role of technology was to aid in the delivery of these goals and expectations and not to replace the legal practitioner. She also strongly suggested that today was the time of Artificial Intelligence which was the simulation of human intelligence processes by machines, especially computer systems. Ms Gupta said Artificial Intelligence can equip lawyers with efficient tools to help

them become better at advising clients as well as help clients access real-time information about the progress of their transaction. She said technology can help in legal research by providing easy access to information and materials. She said it will be highly beneficial in will writing. She said remote hearings had proven to be practicable during pandemic and hearings done online tend to be faster and will also reduce the cost of litigation. Others present were Judge Pratham Kant, and Pro VC, Mr SK Awasthi.

**S V A N I D H I MAHOTSAV:** BJP MLC Salil Vishnoi while inaugurating the SVANidhi Mahotsav at KNN auditorium as the chief guest said Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath was concerned about the present plight of street vendors and thus every effort was being made to ensure that there was substantial uplift in their economic condition. He advised the organisers to ensure such Mahotsav were organised in open space so more and more vendors can be accommodated. He said it was a matter of concern that majority of street vendors were igno-

rant of the welfare schemes run by state government. He said special efforts had been made to display the products in the stalls set up in the Mahotsav. He later handed over letters of sanction of loans for first, second and third vendors. He said a special help desk had also been set up by the organisers so that vendors can avail themselves of the details of all the welfare schemes run for their welfare. He said the vendors need to avail themselves of the facility of health check-up in the Mahotsav. He said the special health desk will compile all the records of the vendors and they they will be getting the benefit of free check-up and also free medicines. Project Manager, DUDA, Tej Kumar said it was being run in three phases and in the first phase it will be run for first three months and efforts will be made to promote the existence and the aims and objectives of the city livelihood centre. He said after three months steps will be taken to provide the services to various educational institutions, government offices, semi-government offices, private firms and business units, already registered.

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

**Sd/-**  
**Coordinator**

NA/12/16818/2023/24664 Dated CHD :- 6/2/2023

**कार्यालय, नगर पालिक निगम, भिलाई (छ.प्र.)**  
**निविदा सूचना**  
 क्रमांक/लोक.वि./जोन-4/2023/324/126 भिलाई, दिनांक 31/5/23  
 एकीकृत पंजीयन प्रणाली अंतर्गत सावग श्रेणी में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से निम्नलिखित निर्माण कार्य हेतु निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है:-

क्र.सं.	सिस्टम क्र.	कार्य का नाम	निविदा लागत (₹/दि. रु.)	निविदा अंतिम तिथि
1.	135805	जोन क्र 04 के अंतर्गत जोन 01, जोन 02, एवं जोन 03 में पूर्व स्वीकृत सीवरों का ट्रीटमेंट प्लांट निर्माण के स्थान पर सीवर लाईन पुनः निर्माण कार्य।	970.915	19.06.2023

निविदा स्वीड पोस्ट/रजिस्टर्ड डाक से स्वीकार किये जायेंगे। उपरोक्त निर्माण कार्य की निविदा की सामान्य शर्तें, बरोबर राशि, विस्तृत निविदा विज्ञापित, निविदा दस्तावेज व अन्य जानकारी संचालनालय की वेबसाईट [eproc.cgstate.gov.in](http://eproc.cgstate.gov.in) में भी देखी जा सकती है।  
 (घर से निकलने वाले गीले एवं सुखा कचरे को अलग कर सफाई मित्र (रिश्वात) को देंगे।)

हस्ता/-  
 जोन आयुक्त



# Make drive to check power theft more effective: UPPCL chairman

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Chairman of Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Limited (UPPCL) M Devraj reviewed the power distribution system and revenue collection of the district at a meeting with the engineers at Purvanchal Vidyut Vitran Nigam Limited (PVVNL) office at Bhikharipur here on Friday. Expressing concern over the low realisation of power dues, he directed the department officers to make the campaign to check power theft more effective.

He said that as per the intention of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Energy Minister AK Sharma, the electricity system of Varanasi should be made ideal and world class. “It is a big centre of tourism. The tourists and devotees not only across the country but also from all over the world come to visit Kashi Vishwanath temple. That’s why there should be an electrical system according to fame and importance,” he said, adding that all kinds of cooperation and help will be provided from the corporation level for whatever work has to be done to improve the system. “No negligence will be tolerated in these works,” he said. “Every area of the city should get electricity as per the schedule of 24-hour electricity supply. For this, keep vigilance continuously from junior engineer to chief engineer levels. Check overloading on transformers completely by running a campaign and where there is overload, the capacity



UPPCL Chairman M Devraj reviewing power distribution system in Varanasi on Friday.

of transformers should be increased,” he said, adding that to prevent the transformers from getting burnt or damaged, utmost care should be taken in their maintenance. “Trolley transformers are available as an option in ample numbers. Sufficient teams and necessary materials should be there to rectify the local faults in minimum time. There is no dearth of materials for this in the entire state,” he said, directing the Power department officers to ensure making the city tripping free by proper monitoring. He also said that all necessary work should be done immediately so that tripping does not happen again and the officers should take special precautions in these summer days. The UPPCL chairman instructed all the officers to discharge their responsibilities

with full honesty, hard work and transparency with mutual coordination and take the corporation forward and work together. “Contact consumers and request them to make bill payments. Electricity connections disconnected due to pending revenue recovery should be re-examined. If these connections are found to be reconnected, then the responsibility of the linemen and the JEs of the areas should be fixed. Give the right bills every month at the right time and if the consumers complain about the discrepancy in the bills, get it rectified in time. JEs and linemen should have good behaviour towards the customers,” he said, emphasising on reducing line losses. He also instructed the officials to conduct surprise raids to stop electricity thefts. “Strict action should be taken

against those who steal electricity without harassing the consumers during the raids,” he said, adding that revenue collection, reducing line loss, searching for never paid consumers and recovering the amount of the outstanding bills from them, extracting the bills based on correct reading and delivering it to 100 per cent consumers. Devraj said that as Varanasi is the Prime Minister’s parliamentary constituency as well as a religious centre, there should be uninterrupted power supply. He emphasised that if there is a power shutdown in any area, it should be informed to the local people first. He said that all officers, linemen, JEs etc must receive their phones and there should be no fault anywhere in Varanasi, wherever there is a fault, it should be rectified immediately.

# Rakesh Kr takes charge as registrar of SSU

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer Rakesh Kumar took charge as the 59th Registrar of Sampurnanand Sanskrit University (SSU) here on Friday. Speaking on the occasion he said that Sanskrit is the culture and due to Sanskrit this country will become a world leader. “Whatever work is done to establish the university at the global level, the same will be done apart from conducting timely classes, exams etc as well as maintaining discipline in the campus,” he said after taking charge.

A native of Pratapgarh district and an IAS officer of 2012 batch, Rakesh Kumar is a post graduate in Philosophy from Allahabad University (AU) and he has good com-



IAS officer Rakesh Kumar taking charge as new SSU Registrar in Varanasi on Friday.

mand over Sanskrit, Hindi and English languages.

After taking charge, he inspected all the offices and main buildings of the campus including Panini Bhawan and

Vagdevi temple. He said that it will be our priority to implement all the works as per the instructions given by the chief secretary during his inspection in SSU recently.

# 10-year-old boy meets tragic end

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

A minor boy died while three others sustained injuries when a mound collapsed in Pakrol village near Baraut police out post under the Handia police station. They had gone to the earth hump for collecting soil when the mound collapsed. Suraj (10) had gone to collect soil with many others, including women and children, to the above mound and were engaged in digging the hump when it collapsed on them. Efforts were made to pull out all those who had been trapped under the collapsed portion of the mound. An alarm was also raised to collect the villagers whose joint effort could pull out Puja Bind (12), daughter of Devraj, Anita Bind, (17), daughter of Nand Lal Bind, and Jaya Devi (25), wife of Manoj Kumar Bind, could be pulled out alive, but 10-year-old Suraj breathed his last under the soil. Devraj, father of Suraj, is a labourer and he was about to clean his house with mud and cow dung. His son and daughter along with other family members had gone to fetch soil for the purpose when the incident took place. The police rushed the injured to a hospital for treatment while the body of Suraj was sent to the mortuary for the post-mortem examination. A similar incident occurred in Kakarabad village of Kokhraj in the neighbouring Kaushambi district where one woman was buried alive while four others were rescued when Gauraiya Bir Baba Teela collapsed there.

**FOUR ARRESTED:** Four members of an inter-district robbers gang were nabbed by police on Thursday. The police also seized one countrymade pistol of 0.315 bore along with one live cartridge, Rs 14,900 cash, two knives, five crude bombs, 12 mobiles and five bikes from their possession. The police said the arrest was made near Kandipur pulia road on Prayagraj-Varanasi highway when the gang was planning to strike. The police said the arrested criminals as Ankit Duriya (24), Shivam Kumar Bharatiya (23), Basant Lal alias Rajjan (23) and Akash Kumar Razak ( 20), residents of Phulpur and Tharwai —have confessed to have executed about half a dozen loots in Soroan, Phulpur and Tharwai areas in trans-Ganga pocket of the district.

# India scaling new heights of development: Baghel

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare SP Singh Baghel pinpointed the nine pillars of success for the central government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his nine years of regime. Addressing a press conference at Circuit House here on Thursday, he said that the country has seen unprecedented development in every field and it is continuously setting new records and showing the way to the world under the leadership of the PM. He added that during this period, our government has not only connected the deprived and exploited people with the mainstream, but has also empowered them.

“The 21st century is our century as today the whole world is full of a belief about India,” he said, pinpointing the nine main pillars of this success story which are service, good governance, poor welfare, innovation, strong will, zero tolerance on corruption and terrorism, policy initiatives, bold decisions and working on concept of ‘Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas’.

“Today India is scaling new heights of development and this unprecedented journey has been possible due to the visionary leadership and strong will of the PM,” he said



Union Minister of State for Health and Family WelfareSP Singh Baghel addressing a press conference in Varanasi on Thursday.

adding that all the goals of Amrit Kal (period) are being achieved as a strong foundation built over nine years with a holistic approach.

Baghel said that the biggest invention of the century is vaccine. “During the corona period, 220 crore countrymen were given free vaccines. In the last nine years, more than 3.5 crore families were provided pucca houses and 11.72 crore toilets were built, pure drinking water was provided to 12 crore households, free gas connections to 9.6 crore families and during corona pandemic period 80 crore people were given free ration,” he said, adding that under Ayushman Bharat, free treatment facility up to five lakh

was made available and for cheap medicines and more than 9,300 Jan Aushadhi Kendras were opened.

He said apart from Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana and 10 per cent EWS quota on economic basis, 74 new airports were built in just nine years whereas the same number of airports was constructed between 1947 and 2014. “In record time, more than 53,868 km of national highway roads were constructed in nine years, while just 91,287 km between 1947 and 2014. Before 2014, there was not a single inland waterway whereas in the last nine years, 111 waterways were built,” he said.

He said till 2014 there was not even a single world

class train whereas several world class Vande Bharat trains have been started and the process is going on to add more such semi-speed trains during this Amrit Kal year. “Till 2014, Metro was run in five cities while now the same facility is available in 15 cities. Till 2014, there were just seven AIIMS and 641 medical colleges in the country but in last nine years, 15 new AIIMS and 700 medical colleges were built,” he said, adding that in the PM’s parliamentary constituency (Varanasi) unprecedented development has taken place as projects worth Rs 17,832 crore have been completed while projects worth Rs 12,475 crore are under construction.

# CM to attend closing function of KIUG today

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will be the chief guest of the concluding function of Khelo India University Games (KIUG) at the Ramesh Srinivasan Sports Activity Centre of IIT (BHU) here on Saturday at 7 pm. The function will also be attended by Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports Anurag Thakur. The different events of KIUG are being organised in four cities of UP, including Varanasi, where two disciplines (wrestling and yogasana) are being held. Earlier UP Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ravindra Jaiswal and Zila

Panchayat Chairperson Poonam Maurya reached the KIUG venue to give away medals to the winners.

During the day UP Yogasana’s brand ambassador Nisha Sharma grabbed everyone’s attention with her performance at the KIUG. She surprised everyone by showcasing her yoga skills as a guest player. Nisha is the only yogasan athlete in the world who does yoga in a unique way by tying a black bandage over her eyes and keeping a burning lamp on her forehead. She is known as the ‘First girl of blind fold deep yoga’. Nisha has registered her name in the Golden Book

of World Records in 2019 with her astonishing performance. A resident of Noida, Nisha Sharma has also won a bronze medal for India in the International Yogasan Championship. Nisha, who has been doing Yogasana since the age of four, is India’s first and only female Yogasana athlete who holds the Golden Book of World Record for the maximum duration of one hour and 50 minutes in Padmasana. Nisha Sharma also has two younger brothers who are national level Yogasana athletes who have also received many medals and awards in Yogasana like Nisha.

While talking to the media, Nisha, a first year BA student of Chaudhary Charan Singh University (CCSU), Meerut, said she came into the field of yoga with the inspiration of Divyang Tejashwi Sharma. She said that yoga keeps both body and mind healthy and every person must do yoga for 10 minutes daily. “Television and mobile phones are increasing the stress in our lives. In such a situation, nothing is better than yoga to get rid of this stress,” she said, adding that she has a dream of winning an Olympic gold medal as it is expected that yoga can be a part of the Olympic Games in the year 2032.

# Modi gave global recognition to Yoga: Dr Arya

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

General Secretary of National Yogasan Sports Federation (NYSF) Dr Jaideep Arya said that Yogasan is the original method which has been a part of India’s culture and civilisation since ancient times but at the global level, this culture of the country has been given a new identity by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

“The result of the PM’s efforts and initiatives is that today Yoga is being celebrated all over the world. People doing Yoga can be seen not only in Europe but also in Latin American and African countries,” he said while speaking to the media amidst the busy moments of Yogasana competitions going on at the indoor hall of Ramesh Srinivasan Student Activity Centre of IIT (BHU) during the Khelo India University Games (KIUG) here on Friday.



NYSF General Secretary Dr Jaideep Arya at KIUG in Varanasi on Friday.

Dr Arya, who is also the Chairman of Haryana Yoga Commission, said that the exercise to give world class recognition to Yogasan in the world of sports has started and India has a leading role in this. “The golden age of Yogasana is about to come in India. Yogasan sports are getting a

lot of encouragement at the government level. As a result of the government’s efforts, Yogasana has become the sport with the maximum number of players in the KIUG,” he said, adding that the NYSF is preparing a new crop of young athletes in 30 states of the country. He said that the NYSF

is working at the national level and it is recognised by the Government of India.

According to Dr Arya, Sports Authority of India (SAI) is running many programmes to connect women with sports. “SAI’s efforts are now paying off. Increasingly women and youth are joining sports. This year, Yogasana’s Women’s League 10 Ka Dum was organised from March 8 to 12. A total of 2,500 women from 10 states participated in it. This is such a league in which women can keep themselves healthy and happy with the help of Yoga asanas by staying at home,” he said, adding that Yogasan sports are being organised in about 40 countries of the world including India.

“This is a record in itself. In the coming days, Indian Yogasana athletes will be seen waving the flag of their talent in the Asian Championship and World Yogasan Tournament,” he said.

# Social media influencer summit organised

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

In a series of programmes being held on the completion of nine years of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s government, a social media influencer summit was organised at Gulab Bagh Office (Sigra) of Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) here on Friday in which more than 100 social media influencers from Varanasi Lok Sabha constituency participated. The chief guest and Rajya Sabha MP Kailash Soni, through a powerpoint presentation, informed everyone about the work done by the Modi government at the Centre.

He said that the Modi government dedicated itself to service and gave good governance apart from working for welfare of the poor during the last nine years. He called upon all social media influencers to



BJP’s Rajya Sabha MP Kailash Soni addressing social media influencers in Varanasi on Friday.

use social media to inform people about these welfare schemes. Speaking on the occasion, regional BJP president (Kashi Region) Dilip Singh Patel emphasised that the role of volunteers in social media is

going to be very important in the coming 2024 elections. “The opposition, which is constantly demoralised by its defeat, will do the work of spreading fake news and we have to give a befitting reply to

them through social media,” he said.

MLA (Varanasi Cantt) Saurabh Srivastava said that in the present era, social media is such a powerful medium through which we can convey our message to the masses in a short time. Earlier, city BJP chief Vidyasagar Rai welcomed the guests. The function was also addressed by the district BJP president and MLC Hanstraj Vishwakarma. The programme was conducted by Arvind Pandey, regional coordinator of the party’s IT cell while Vijay Gupta welcomed the guests. State co-ordinator (social media) of BJP Shashi Kumar proposed the vote of thanks. Kushagra Srivastava, Amit Pathak, Himanshu Jaiswal, Shailendra Mishra ‘Sonu’, Ritik Mishra, Pranjal and many others were also present.

# Felicitation ceremony held



The felicitation function being held at DAV PG College in Varanasi on Friday.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

A felicitation ceremony was organised by the Cultural Committee under the aegis of IQAC at DAV PG College here on Friday. The participants, who presented cultural programmes during the Youth Festival Udaan-23 and inspection of National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) held last month were honoured by former principal Prof Satya Dev Singh, manager Ajit Kumar Singh Yadav and executive principal Prof Satya Gopal by giving them letters of appreciation at the Late PN Singh Yadav Memorial Auditorium of the college.

On the occasion the participants who staged a play ‘Chauri Chaura Ek Aparajeya Samar’ organised last year were also felicitated. Those who were honoured were Varsha Shukla, Vaishnavi Singh,

Kritika, Arshika Jaiswal, Shruti Chaurasia, Sonali Chaurasia, Saif Ali Khan, Uday Bhaskar, Nitish Kumar, Himanshu, Ajit Gond, Ankur, Kunal, Sagar Sharma, Roshni Shreyasi, Simran Raj and many others.

Addressing the function, Prof Satya Dev Singh said students are the capital of an educational institution. “If they are upgraded properly, then the organisation automatically gets upgraded,” he said, adding that the team work played the most important role in helping the DAV PG College to get A+ grading again by NAAC. “The way the teachers, staff and students have created an academic atmosphere in the college with their hard work, the credit for this success goes to all of them,” he said, appealing to the students not to give up in life and remain positive towards him as well as others.

Then the Cultural

Committee members and non-teaching staff were also honoured for their special contribution in NAAC evaluation. On behalf of the Cultural Committee, former principal and manager Ajit Kumar Singh Yadav were also felicitated. The function was conducted by Dr Rakesh Kumar Dwivedi while the participants were welcomed by Prof Anoop Kumar Mishra. The vote of thanks was proposed by Prof Richarani Yadav. Prominent among others present were Prof Vikramaditya Rai, Dr PK Sen, Dr Sameer Kumar Pathak, Dr Parul Jain, Prof Mishri Lal, Prof Madhu Sisodia, Prof Poonam Singh, Prof Prashant Kashyap, Prof Satish Kumar Singh, Dr Vijay Nath Dubey, Dr Rahul, Dr Meenu Lakra, Dr Sangeta Jain, Dr Pratibha Mishra and Indrajit Mishra.







FIRST COLUMN

KARNATAKA GOVT TO  
CREATE A MILLION JOBS

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



LAKSHMI VENKATARAMAN **VENKATESAN**

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

India's stake in Awami  
League's Victory



HIRANMAY **KARLEKAR**

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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


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

Flawed ICMR paper on vaping continues to cause harm

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

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

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



KIRAN **MELKOTE**

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

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

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

This paper was roundly criticized at the time by renowned global experts as well as by senior doctors at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi.

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

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

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

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

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

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

A prominent concern also raised by the ICMR paper was about vaping being a "gateway" into tobacco use and ending up in a "nicotine addiction" even after cessation of smoking or as some folks have put it: exchanging one addiction for another. We need to consider two things here. First, nicotine is not carcinogenic and is not associated with the detrimental effects of tobacco. There are no studies that have established any detrimental effects of long-term nicotine replacements.

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

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



# Bring norms against misuse of sedition law, says panel

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

# India stresses need for UNSC reform

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

PNS/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/UNITED NATIONS

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

# Govt pushing for developed India by 2047: Def Min

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

# ED raids VIPS Group of Cos in Pune for FEMA violations

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/KOCHI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

# Send baby back: India tells Berlin

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

# India will rule automobile sector in five years: Gadkari

PTI ■ VAPI (GUJ)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

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

# IN SHORT

## INS TRISHUL VISITS PORT ANJOUAN ISLAND

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

## AMARNATH YATRA TRACK TO BE RESTORED SOON

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

## VIRTUAL SCO SUMMIT DUE TO MANY FACTORS: MEA

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



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

PTI



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

37K people in 272 relief camps, says Manipur Govt

PTI ■ IMPHAL

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

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

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

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

"More companies are being

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

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

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

There is no curfew in Tamenglong, Noney, Senapati, Ukhrul and Kamjong, it added.

"Movement of essential items along the NH-37 has been ensured," the statement said, noting that around 450 trucks were on the move with essential items. An uneasy calm prevailed in Manipur a day after Home Minister Amit Shah left the state, concluding his four-day visit and announcing a slew of measures to bring back normalcy.

# Another district-level BJP leader killed in West Bengal

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

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KOLKATA

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

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

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



# Security forces eliminate Pak ultra in Dassal forest

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

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

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



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

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

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

# HC defers hearing in Chhota Rajan's suit against Netflix

Jailed don seeks to restrain release of series 'Scoop'

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

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

personal life, till June 7.

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

## FROM PAGE 1

### 2024 LS ELECTIONS WILL THROW SURPRISING OUTCOME: RAHUL

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

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

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

He expressed concerns about the growing pressure on this structure.

Regarding US-India relations, Rahul emphasised their significance and described the relationship between the two countries as "very, very important."

While highlighting the importance of a strong defense partnership, he also advocated for considering cooperation in other areas.

Rahul's statements reflect his optimistic outlook on the unity of the Opposition and their potential to bring about surprising results in the 2024 elections. He also addressed various challenges faced by India, such as the capture of institutions, weakening press freedom, and the need to protect minority rights.

### IUML FULLY SECULAR, CLAIMS RAHUL, SPARKS POLITICAL ROW

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

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

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

In a retaliatory move, the Congress argued that Rahul was referring to a different party and criticised the BJP for their affinity towards the Muslim League and their praise for Jinnah.

Congress General Secretary Jaiiram Ramesh tweeted, "Syama Prasad Mookerjee was in league with the Muslim League in the Government in Bengal when Gandhi launched the Quit India movement. Mookerjee was singularly responsible for the partition of Bengal."

Ramesh also highlighted a tweet by Congress leader Amitabh Dubey, who criticised BJP IT department head Amit Malviya for mistakenly conflating the Kerala-based IUML with Jinnah's Muslim League, which embraced Savarkar's two-nation theory.

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

Pawan Khera, the head of Congress' media

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

"He said the NDA Government led by Atal Bihari Vajpayee had sent IUML leader E Ahamed to Geneva to represent India. 'IUML established the largest Sanskrit University in Kerala. The BJP also made an alliance with IUML for Nagpur Municipal Corporation. The omniscient Vishwaguru of WhatsApp nursery, please enrich your knowledge,' Khera claimed in a Hindi tweet.

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

BJP National spokesperson and MP Sudhanshu Trivedi alleged a connection between the regional party and Jinnah's organisation, which played a significant role in the Muslim partition movement. "For the Congress, parties such as AIMIM, Muslim League, and Indian Secular Front, a West Bengal party formed by a Muslim cleric, are considered secular, while the PFI, a banned radical Islamic organisation, is seen as a cultural body," he stated.

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

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

### 1983 WORLD CUP WINNERS BACK WRESTLERS, URGE CANNY DECISIONS

statestment further read.

Kapil Dev, the legendary captain of the 1983 team, said, "I am not going to say anything individually; the entire 1983 team stands by the statement we have issued." The statement was also supported by other members of the 1983 batch, including Roger Binny (current BCCI President), Sunil Gavaskar, Mohinder Amarnath, K Srikanth, Syed Kirmani, Yashpal Sharma, Madan Lal, Balwinder Singh Sandhu, Sandeep Patil, and Kirti Azad. The 1983 World Cup final was held at Lord's on June 25, 1983. Former cricketers Anil Kumble, Robin Uthappa, and Irfan Pathan have also shown solidarity with the protesting wrestlers, while active cricketers are yet to comment on the controversy.

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

Rakesh Tikait, the leader of Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU), told reporters after the

mahapanchayat that the WFI chief should be immediately arrested.

If the government fails to act on this demand by June 9, the agitation will escalate through the organization of panchayats across the country, and the wrestlers will return to Jantar Mantar in Delhi to continue their protest.

Representatives from various khaps (clan councils) and farmers' organizations gathered at the Jat Dharamshala, coming from different regions including Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh.

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

### BRICS PLEDGES TO COMBAT TERROR, FINANCING NETWORKS

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

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

The ministers also called for expeditious finalisation and adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism within the United Nations (UN) framework and for launching multilateral negotiations on an international convention for the suppression of acts of chemical and biological terrorism, at the Conference of Disarmament.

They welcomed the activities of the BRICS Counter-Terrorism Working Group and resolved to further deepen counter-terrorism cooperation. They also reiterated their commitment to strengthening multilateralism and upholding international law, including the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

They expressed concern about the use of unilateral coercive measures, which are incompatible with the principles of the Charter of the UN and produce negative effects notably in the developing world.

The ministers recognised the impact on the world economy from unilateral approaches in breach of international law and they also noted that the situation is complicated further by unilateral economic coercive measures, such as sanctions, boycotts, embargoes and blockades, in an apparent reference to the US-led western nations have imposed crippling sanctions on Russia for invading Ukraine.

They also reiterated the call for reforms of the principal organs of the United Nations. China and Russia reiterated the importance they attach to the status and role of Brazil, India and South Africa in international affairs and supported their aspiration to play a greater role in the UN, the statement added.

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

PNS ■ BENGALURU

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

During a media conference, Siddaramaiah, who chaired the Cabinet meeting, informed reporters that detailed discussions were held regarding the guarantees and their implementation. However, he did not disclose the cost of the five guarantees at the moment, stating that he would share the information later.

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

Before the Assembly polls, the Congress had pledged to implement the following guarantees upon coming to power: Providing 200 units of free power to all households (Gruha Jyoti), offering Rs 2,000 monthly assistance to the woman head of every family (Gruha Lakshmi), distributing 10 kg of free rice to each member of below poverty line (BPL) households (Anna Bhagya), granting Rs 3,000 per month to unemployed graduate youth and Rs 1,500 to unemployed



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

PTI

diploma holders (both aged 18-25) (YuvaNidhi), and facilitating free travel for women in public transport buses (Shakti).

Siddaramaiah announced that the "Gruha Jyothi" scheme, which aims to provide up to 200 units of free electricity per month to every household, will be implemented from July 1. However, customers will need to pay the arrears. The Government will consider the one-year average of power consumption and provide free electricity up to 10 per cent more than the average usage to prevent misuse.

Regarding the "Gruha Lakshmi" scheme that grants Rs 2,000 per month to women heads of households, Siddaramaiah stated that it would be implemented from August 15. Applications can be submitted online from June 15 to July 15, and applicants must provide their

Aadhaar and bank account details, which will be processed before the scheme's launch in August.

The scheme will benefit both BPL and above poverty line (APL) cardholders, as well as the beneficiaries of social security schemes.

Under the "Anna Bhagya" scheme, 10 kg of food grains will be distributed to each member of BPL households and Antyodaya card holders from July 1.

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

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

# Guv 'dismisses' Bengal Govt's claim of not being consulted on VC appointments

PTI ■ KOLKATA

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

been appointed by the Governor, who is the chancellor of all the State-aided or run varsities. Sources in Raj Bhavan claimed that 10 interim VCs, barring one in Dakshin Dinajpur district, joined duty and signed the guidelines issued by the Chancellor.

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

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

"We came to know from the news media that the honourable chancellor has appointed Vice-Chancellors of 10 State-aided universities. These appointments were made without consulting the department. This was done in contravention of the rules laid down for the appointment of VCs and this is illegal. In these unprecedented circumstances we, on behalf of the department, are taking legal opinions on what steps could be initiated in future," Basu tweeted. "On behalf of the higher education department, we are respectfully requesting the vice-chancellors who have been appointed illegally to reject this appointment," the minister tweeted.



# Debt ceiling deal gets Senate nod

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

But making any changes at

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

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



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

## Iran releases 1 Danish, two Austrian citizens

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

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

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

## Albanese stresses need for diplomacy, guardrails in dealing with China

AP ■ SINGAPORE

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

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



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

audience as Albanese spoke.

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

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

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

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

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

## Jens Stoltenberg heading to Turkiye in fresh push on Swedish membership

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

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

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

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

## Biden falls from stage, says he got 'sandbagged'

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Prachanda may visit China next month

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

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

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

## Elahi re-arrested

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

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

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

## Court gives bail to ex-PM Imran Khan

PTI ■ LAHORE

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

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

## Usman Buzdar to quit politics

PTI ■ LAHORE

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

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



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

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

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

Violence erupted across Pakistan on May 9 when crick-

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

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

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

## Centrist parties alarmed over support for German far-right

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## 'Stop sending weapons to the battlefield' China's Ukraine envoy urges govts

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

Li Hui said Russian and Ukrainian officials were open to peace negotiations, but he gave no indication they were any closer to happening. Chinese leader Xi Jinping's government says it is neutral and wants to serve as a mediator but has supported Moscow politically. Foreign analysts saw little chance of progress from Li's visits to the countries because neither side is ready to stop fighting, but sending an envoy gave Beijing a opportunity to expand its global diplomatic role.

"China believes that if we really want to put an end to war, to save lives and realize peace, it is important for us to stop sending weapons to the battlefield, or else

the tensions will only spiral up," Li told reporters. China is the only major government that has good relations with both Russia and Ukraine and has leverage as one of the biggest export markets for both. Xi's decision to send an envoy was welcomed by the Ukrainian government but prompted questions about China's motives after Beijing declared it had a "no limits" friendship with the Kremlin ahead of the February 2022 invasion. Beijing released a proposed peace plan in February, but Ukraine's allies insisted President Vladimir Putin must first withdraw Russian forces. "China's goal is promoting peace talks and a cessation of hostilities," said Li, a former ambassador to Moscow.

European governments promised Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy missiles, tanks and drones when he visited Britain, France and Germany in mid-May. Ukraine has received Patriot anti-missile systems from the United States, Germany and the Netherlands. The United

States, Spain, Germany and France have pledged a total of 300 tanks.

US President Joe Biden earlier warned Xi of unspecified consequences if Beijing provided arms or military supplies to support Russia's invasion. China is buying more Russian oil and gas, which helps to shore up the Kremlin's export revenue after the United States, Europe and Japan cut off most purchases, but it appears to be avoiding anything that might trigger Western sanctions. Li repeated Beijing's call for respect for the "territorial integrity of all countries" but gave no indication China was pressing Moscow to give back captured territory.

Putin's forces occupy the Crimean Peninsula and parts of eastern Ukraine with mainly Russian-speaking populations. "China advocates for a balanced and just way to address security concerns," Li said. Li, who also visited Poland, France, Germany and the European Union headquarters, said

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## Shah crowned Spelling Bee champ

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

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

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

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

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



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

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

Shah instantly identified

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

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

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

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



# 3rd SEED JESSICA PEGULA STUNNED

AP ■ PARIS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

## Fritz shushes booing crowd

AP ■ PARIS

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

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

Rinderknech attempted a lob that landed long on the

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

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



## Parul targets Asian Games medal

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Europa League final referee harassed by Roma fans at airport

AP ■ ROME

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Lakshya enters Thailand semis

PTI ■ BANGKOK

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Szymon to remain referee for CL final after apology: UEFA

AP ■ GENEVA

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

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

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

## Casemiro's winning mentality key for Man Utd in final



AP ■ LONDON

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

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

Could he adapt quickly enough to the English game?

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

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

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

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

"He's such a brilliant football player."

If there's one player Ten Hag would want to have available for

the FA Cup final against Manchester City on Saturday, it's Casemiro.

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

Casemiro started 24 of United's 38 league games this season, and was a substitute in four others. According to statistics compiled by the Who Scored website, United conceded an average of less than a goal a game when Casemiro was in the team and 1.5 goals when he wasn't. He made 3.2 tackles per game in the Premier League, the third highest behind Fulham's Joao Palhinha and Leeds' Tyler Adams.

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

So, yes, Casemiro really was worth it.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



## Raducanu parts ways with coach

AP ■ LONDON

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

Raducanu announced the split via a Twitter post on Thursday.

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

"I wish Seb all the best moving forwards."

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

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

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

## GND University narrow gap with Panjab University

**Lucknow (PNS):** Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar narrowed the gap with leaders Panjab University, Chandigarh, picking up four golds on the penultimate day of the 3rd Khelo Indian University Games 2022. GNDU athletes won two golds in fencing and one each in boxing and judo to end the day with 22 golds. They are now four behind PUC's gold tally and with eight more golds in fencing, judo, yogasana and weightlifting still to be won on the final day.

The coveted men's football title was picked up by Kolkata's Adamas University at the Guru Gobind Singh Sports College ground. After a goalless regulation time led to a penalty shoot-out. Adamas eventually prevailed 9-8 in sudden death over a gallant Punjabi University, Patiala. The women's crown went to Guru Jambheshwar University, who put three past Chaudhary Banshi



Lal University at the Ekana SPortz City. The day also saw the Badminton finals at the BBD Badminton Academy, where Mahharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak defeated Savitribai Phule Pune University 3-2. MDU initially

went 2-0 up but SPPU staged a spirited comeback with a doubles win to tie the final at 2-2. In women's category, the crown went to University of Delhi, who were comfortable 2-0 winners in the best of three finals.

## LOCAL EVENTS

### SPORTS COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

The admission process in the sports colleges of Uttar Pradesh has started. The preliminary exam for Guru Gobind Singh Sports College (Lucknow), Veer Bahadur Singh Sports College (Gorakhpur) and Major Dhyanchand Sports College (Saifai) will be held on June 15 while the main entrance exam will be held from July 14-19.

### DISTRICT AQUATIC CHAMPIONSHIP

Lucknow Amateur Aquatic Association is organising the 33rd Lucknow District Aquatic Championship at Sports Authority of India centre from June 3. Interested may reach the venue with their age-proof certificates at 7:00 AM or call Punit Agarwal on 9335111782.

### CYCLE RALLY

On the occasion of World Cycling Day, PedalYatri Cycling Association is organising the cycle rally on Saturday. The rally will start from 1090 Chauraha and will culminate at KD Singh 'Babu' Stadium, covering 25 km.

### BOXING TRIALS

To select the Lucknow region team for the State-level Junior Boy's Boxing Championship, to be held at

Gorakhpur, regional sports office is organising a selection trials at Chowk Stadium from June 6. Interested may reach the venue along with their age-proof certificates.

### AWADH BLUE WIN



Awadh Red defeated Awadh Blue by a run in a friendly match at Ubaid Kamal ground on Friday. Batting first, Awadh Red scored 155 runs in 28.5 overs. In reply, Awadh Blue could manage 154 runs.

## Kerala Blasters' appeal against fine rejected

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

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

In both cases, the Appeal Committee upheld the earlier decisions of the Disciplinary Committee and were asked to "pay the respective fines within two weeks". Their ISL playoff on March 3 sparked controversy as Kerala Blasters walked off the field claiming that Sunil Chhetri's winning strike from an extra time freekick was not "legitimate". They claimed that referee Crystal John did not blow the whistle before Chhetri took the kick and the players were not ready. By virtue of their extra-time lead Bengaluru FC were declared 1-0 winners and advanced into the ISL semifinals.

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

# Shields fighting for gender equality for women boxers

AP ■ DETROIT

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

The undisputed middleweight champion became

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

Still, she laments the gender inequities in boxing.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

cards in big-time arenas as they do now.

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

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

Shields (13-0, 2 knockouts)

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



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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Gill has recorded centuries across formats in the last six

months and was the standout batter in the IPL.

"It is all about the mindset and Gill has adapted to different formats now. In IPL he did say about technical changes he made in his batting to improve strike rate. So, if a player can change his mindset as per format he is going to do well in any format. "That is what he has done across formats. I hope he will replicate that form in England," said the 48-year-old who played six Tests and 17 ODIs between 1998-99.

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

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

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

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



## Australia unsure about India's bowling line-up

PTI ■ LONDON

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

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

"We have been debating that," Vettori said.

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

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

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

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

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

"We expect The Oval to behave how it always behaves.

"It is a good wicket, but it can offer a lot to the spinners as the game goes on."

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

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

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

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

## It's a grand final for us: Lyon

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

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

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

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

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

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

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



about this match," he added.

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

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

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

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

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

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

## ECB CEO supports India getting 38% earnings share

PTI ■ DUBAI

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

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

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

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

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

However, Gould defended ICC's new allocation model.

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

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



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

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

"India play as many international fixtures as any other team in the world. And they do that because they know when they tour as responsible partners in this when I see the amount they travel around the world, taking India everywhere. I do think it is a balance.

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

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

## Tongue's debut makes family friend richer

PTI ■ LONDON

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Medal-less second day for India in Bishkek

PTI ■ BISHKEK

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

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

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

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

prepared," national coach Har Gobind Singh told PTI.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

The final will be played on June 21.

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

**Head Coach:** Nooshin Al Khadeer  
**SCHEDULE:** June 13 - India 'A' vs Hong Kong; June 15 - India 'A' vs Thailand 'A'; June 17 - India 'A' vs Pakistan 'A'



## Afghanistan beat SL in 1st ODI

AP ■ HAMBANTOTA

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Banarse reaches surfing final

PTI ■ MANGALORE

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

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

In the Men's Open category, Sanjaikumar S, Srikanth D, Raghu Paneriselvam, Sathish Sarvanan, Manikandan M, Kishore Kumar, Santhosh M and Surya P advanced to the semifinals, scheduled to be



held on Saturday.

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

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

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

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