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## **NEW DELHI, MONDAY** SEPTEMBER 4, 2023; PAGES 12 ₹3

# the pioneer

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# DHARMA STORM IN TAMIL NADU Costing millions of rupees to Jord Krishna. the presiding global economics: PM

Hindus across the country were shocked and upset over the call made by Udhayanidhi Stalin, Tamil Nadu's Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs to get rid of 'Sanatan Dharma' from India. What made the statement by Udhayanidhi shocking is the fact that he is the son of MK Stalin, Chief Minister of the State and the president of the DMK. "We usually finish off mosquitoes and germs causing dengue fever, cholera etc. We should eradicate and abolish 'Sanatan Dharma' not defeat it,' he said while addressing a conference titled 'How to eradicate Sanatan Dharma' organ-

Katchi at Chennai on Saturday. His father Stalin is on record stating many times in the past that 'Sanatan Dharma' was more dangerous to India than China and Pakistan.

ised by Viduthalai Chiruthaigal

The BJP top brass and Hindu leaders pounced on the statement by junior Stalin.

While Home Minister Shah accused the DMK and the INDIA grouping of insulting 'Sanatan Dharma' for votebank and appeasement politics, BJP president JP Nadda on Sunday appealed to people to reject the Opposition bloc INDIA, which he alleged was spreading "hatred" and "poison" and attacking India's culture and tradition. Two com-



plaints were filed in the national Capital with the Delhi Police against Udhayanidhi over the issue. BJP leaders in Tamil Nadu, too, warned that they

would take legal action.
"What he has done is call for genocide of the Hindus in the country. This is a signal to the Hindu-baiters to launch genocide against Hindus," said Narayanan Thirupathy, the BJP's State vice-president.

He said that the DMK was more dangerous than dengue, cholera and cancer. "DMK is a cancer that has afflicted Tamil Nadu society and the Hindus would see to it that this terminal illness is eradicated from society," said Thirupathy.

Arjun Sampath, founder and president, Hindu Makkal Katchi, called for the dismissal of Udhayanidhi and Minister for Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowment Board from the Council of Ministers.

"This was a Tamil Nadu Government-sponsored meeting. The Hindus in the State feel threatened and frightened because of this statement. The Centre should intervene and dismiss both the Ministers for participating in a meeting like this," said Sampath in a statement on Sunday.

The DMK deployed its spin-doctors by Sunday as the situation took a serious turn with senior BJP leaders Amit

Shah and JP Nadda taking up the issue and slamming the

DMK and INDIA grouping.

Coming out in defence of Udhayanidhi, DMK spokesman Sharavanan told reporters, "The BJP is blowing the statement out of proportion. At no point of time did Udhayanidhi called for genocide. He equated the Sanatais to dengue and cholera and wanted it to be eradicated like the way we get rid of this disease. How can it be a call for genocide?" Though it is well-known that both Stalin and his son do not see eye to eye with the Hindus, but Durga, Stalin's wife is a devout Hindu. Last month she had offered a crown

costing millions of rupees to Lord Krishna, the presiding deity of Guruvayur, as per astrological advice as an atonement for the frequent statements made by her husband against Hindu gods.

Udhayanidhi himself is no stranger to controversy as he had said in the run-up to the 2021 Assembly elections that Prime Minister Narendra Modi was behind the deaths of former Finance Minister Arun Jaitley and External Affairs

Minister Sushma Swaraj. Karti Chidambaram, Congress MP and the controversial son of senior Congress leader P Chidambaram, blamed the BJP for the "mis-chievous spin" given to Udhayanidhi's speech. The 'Sanatan Dharma' is known for its caste hierarchy and Udhayanidhi was attacking this only," said the iunior said the junior Chidambaram

The DMK leadership is known for its aversion to 'Sanatan Dharma'. Late M Karunanidhi, the patriarch and DMK's chief for almost five decades had described the Hindus as thieves. One of the Hindu activists had dragged him to Madras High Court for "insulting Hindus". Though Karunanidhi had claimed that what he meant was that the Hindus were robbers of the hearts, the court was not amused. As the case reached a crucial stage, Karunanidhi died and the case was closed.

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Aweek before India hosts world leaders at the G20 summit in the national Capital, Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserted that India's economic growth was a "natural by-product" of his nine-year-old Government's political stability, as he expressed optimism that India would be in the top three economies in the near future and a developed nation by 2047. In an exclusive interview to PTI, the Prime Minister stressed that while most advanced economies are facing an economic slowdown, chronic shortages, high inflation, and ageing populations, the Indian economy is acknowledged to be the fastestgrowing large economy with the largest youth population.

"For a long time in world history, India was one of the top economies of the world. Later, due to the impact of colonisation of various kinds, our global footprint was reduced," he said. "But now, India is again on the rise. The speed with which we jumped five spots, from the 10th-largest economy to the fifth-largest in less than a decade has conveyed the fact that India means business," he noted. Adding a fourth 'D' - development — to the 3Ds of democracy, demography and diversity he said the period till 2047 is one of huge opportunity and "Indians

who are living in this era have a great chance to lay a foundation for growth that will be remembered for the next thousand

vears." India's \$3.39 trillion GDP overtook that of the UK in the fiscal year ending March 31, 2022, making it the fifth-largest economy in the world behind the US, China, Japan and Germany. In the three decades before 2014, Modi said, the country saw many Governments that were unstable and therefore, unable to get much done. "But in the last few years, the people have given a decisive mandate (to BJP), which has led to a stable Government, predictable policies and clarity in the overall direction," he said. "This stability is the reason that over the past nine years, several reforms were brought in."

These reforms, related to the economy, education, financial sector, banks, digitalisation, welfare, inclusion and social sector, have laid a strong foundation, and "growth is a natural by-product," he said.

The rapid and sustained progress made by India has evoked interest across the world and many countries have been "watching our growth story very closely." "They are convinced closely." that this progress is not an accident but is happening as a result of a clear, action-oriented roadmap of 'Reform, Perform,

Transform," he said.

"For a long time, India was perceived as a nation of over one billion hungry stomachs. But now, India is being seen as a nation of over one billion aspirational minds, more than two billion skilled hands, and hundreds of millions of young people," he said.

He noted that India is home to more than 100 unicorns, is the third-largest start-up hub and its space sector's achievements are being celebrated the world over. India is also breaking all previous records in almost every global sports event and more universities are entering the top rankings of the world year after year, he said. Stressing on the fact that the country was on its way to becoming the third axis of the global economy he said, "With such momentum, I am positive that we will be in the top three economies in the near future. By 2047, I am sure that our country will be among the developed countries."

Modi said that as a developed nation, the Indian economy will be even more inclusive and innovative, poor people will comprehensively win the battle against poverty, and the nation's health, education and social sector outcomes will be among the best in the world.

"Corruption, casteism and communalism will have no place in our national life," he said.

## Delhi braces up for its first Global Summit Congress and TMC bare

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

 $E^{\text{ven though the residents of}}_{\text{the national Capital are}}$ acutely aware of the great honour that comes with being the city that is hosting the prestigious G-20 Summit from Šeptember 8 to 10, Delhiites are also bracing for restrictions that come with the event.

shops have been closed in some specific markets and in areas like Connaught Place, Khan Market besides

retail liquor stores in the city. A multi-agency security blanket is being put in place to secure the summit

the dignitaries and ensure no infiltration, terror act or sabotage takes place.

A multi-tiered security cover entailing dog squads, Quick Reaction Teams and Special Weapons and Tactics contingents deployed during the event will provide foolproof security and the security arrangements will entail closure of markets and routes as also diversion of roads in the NDMC areas and the summit venue near Pragati Maidan. To mitigate the hardships of the citizens, the Delhi Police has issued detailed advisories regarding the closure of institutions or diversion of routes during the multilateral meet-

ing. Malls and markets outside NDMC limits will remain open. Essential services like milk booths and medical stores will also remain open. Buses will also ply on the Ring Road except the NDMC areas. Delhi Metro operations will continue as usual except for the Supreme Court station. However, three-seater autobarred during the summit in the New Delhi district. The

Delhi Police issued a Helpline Number 6828400604 for ambulance assistance during the event.

The security paraphernalia will include comvenue and one EARTH • ONE FAMILY • ONE FUTURE ponents of the para-

military forces or the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and the commandos of the elite anti-terror contingency force National Security Guard. Delhi Police and central forces personnel will be clad not in the usual khaki uniform but in blue during the summit. "Officers of the rank of Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police and above will wear blue suits, while others will have safari suits in the same colour. They have been provided the cloth, and will get it stitched in prescribed unified designs," said officials on the condition of

anonymity. Ás mány as 1,30,000 security personnel including the



45,000-strong Delhi Police, will be deployed during the summit. The 45,000 personnel include commandos who will act as personal security officers for the dignitaries. Apart from snipers placed atop key buildings in the Lutyens Zone, the Delhi Police will mount drone surveillance to thwart any aerial threats.

In addition, the Indian Air Force (IAF) will also be kept on standby to mitigate any contingencies during the mega event to be attended by nearly 30 heads of states and multi-lateral fora. The IAF has set up a special Operations Direction Ĉentre (ÔDC) to coordinate various aspects of the arrangements with the security agencies in a bid to safeguard Delhi's

The IAF would be keeping

its airborne warning systems, fighter jets including the Rafale on high alert along with stationing the new air defence missile systems at vital locations. Sources said the Army IAF and paramilitary forces, too, will deploy anti-drone systems, while 400 firefighters will remain on standby. North India will remain under vigilant surveillance through the utilisation of Airborne Warning Systems Control (AWACS), often referred to as the "eyes in the sky." Various agencies will work with backroom support from the Intelligence Bureau. Other security measures include taking off the public transport buses and private vehicles in the bungalows zone area and its vicinity where the venue at the Pragati Maidan is located.

The gathering of the heads of state and other dignitaries will be held on September 9 and 10 at the newly-built Bharat Mandapam at Pragati Maidan. Security control rooms have been set up at Pragati Maidan and special arrangements are being made at important hotels like ITC Maurya, where US President Joe Biden and other heads of states will be staying.

# fangs in West Bengal

Mamata Banerjee may be silent at the moment but she is unhappy, if not angry with the Congress, post the Mumbai Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) meet. With the CPI (M) turning down the Bengal Chief Minister's proposal for a consensus on a blanket nation-wide seat-sharing formula in the Mumbai summit and the Congress doing nothing to restrain ČPI (M)'s general secretary Sitaram Yechury, the Trinamool Congress top brass is fuming. Though the party leaders are under strict instruction not to speak out of turn, sources said in the TMC said that the party's second-in-command Abhishek Banerjee has given instructions to prepare for an allout campaign for all the 42 parliamentary seats sans both the

Left and the Congress. This means that there will be no INDIA in Bengal in the parliamentary elections and there will be no CPI (M) and the Congress in the State after that," said a senior TMC leader close to Kalighat. According to a very senior leader and a former Union Minister, Mamata has not liked the extension of the phraseology "as far as possible" (in the alliance's resolution on fighting the elections together) to Bengal her own home turf. Though

to leave only two seats of Bahrampur and Malda South to the Congress in Bengal and back the Left not in Bengal but in Tripura, at present she wants her res to go all-out for all the seats. "After Mumbai, the TMC's one-point agenda should be to decimate the Left and the Congress in Bengal even if that means going soft on the BJP in some place ... because they must be taught a lesson here," said a senior member of the TMC's think tank. Earlier evebrows were raised

in the coastal city when the TMC chairperson on Friday skipped the joint Press conference addressed by the alliance leaders after the Mumbai meet leaving for the airport along with his nephew Abhishek apparently in a huff.

Senior TMC leader Derek O'Brien, too, did not attend the Press conference as their repeated plea for including a statement on seat-sharing from the national level was turned down by the Left and the Congress which reportedly suggested keeping Kerala, Punjab and Bengal out of the scheme of seat-sharing proposal for now. Sources said while the TMC remained "committed to the INDIA alliance" it wanted seat sharing to be decided at a "faster pace".

The Bengal ruling outfit

Mamata was initially half-willing wanted the Mumbai meeting to put a timeline by which the seatsharing talks should be complet-

According to TMC sources, Mamata was so angry with her from the Left and the Congress that she even jerked the hands of Maratha patriarch Sharad Pawar who tried to make some last moment efforts to calm her down by pulling her hands and went away without talking to Yechury who was seen rising up from his seat to speak to her. Mamata is also known to have told her confidants about the conduct of the Congress Working Committee member Adhir

Chowdhury. "No one (from Delhi) restrained some Bengal leaders (of the Congress) who were attacking us from Dhupguri (in North Bengal) at a time when the INDIA meeting was on ... is this is a right message and commitment for the alliance," Mamata

was quoted as saying. This was apparently in reference to Chowdhury who earlier said, "Mamata is holding the feet of the Congress to save herself as her family is embroiled in scams."

Dhupguri Assembly seat which fell vacant following the local BJP MLA's death is going to a bypoll on September 5. The Left has put up a candidate here with the Congress backing.

## One Nation, One Election: Politicians rush to astrologers

**KUMAR CHELLAPPAN** 

The nation is agog with debates and discussions about the 'One Nation, One Poll' theory though the Centre has not made any announcement about the same other than constituting a committee to study the feasibility of such

a step.
While the Opposition parties are unanimous in their aversion to 'One Nation, One Poll', many of them, including rationalists and Communists, are making a beeline for astrologers to know what is in store for them if the Centre goes ahead with a single poll

the phone from New Delhi, Chennai or Kolkata want to know whether the INDIA alliance would succeed in the ensuing poll, whether they would get seat to contest and if so, whether they would win the election," said a leading astrologer from Kerala who has an international clientele from Asia and Europe.
"Those who called me

include politicians and analysts who force the people to focus on scientific temper and not to waste their time on obscurantism, "said the scholar who did not want to be named.

He further stated that these people reminded him of passengers who get into reserved interesting.

"Those who call me over railway compartments through underhand dealings while oppose the people who resort to the same measures. There are politicians in

the Congress and the Communist Party who want to know whether they would gain by joining the BJP.

"Please don't ask the names of these persons because you will be shocked if I tell you who they are," another star astrologer told *The Pioneer*.

The subject of astrology is all set to be discussed in the coming days as the nation is getting into the poll mode.

The fact that astrology is looked down upon with contempt by our intelligentsia is



This brought to mind how the late Dr Krishna Kumar, who headed the Coimbatore Aryavaidya Sala (Ayurvedic Hospital) having been trained as a doctor in the traditional Gurukula style by his uncle, himself an acclaimed physician, treated his patients.

The first thing the doctor would ask his patients were about the date, time year and place of birth. The details played crucial role in the diagnostic style of Dr Kumar who was honoured with the Padma

making waves among the sci-

Though the Sunday editions of all newspapers carry features on astrology, they fail to report how astrology is

entific community. Professor BM Hegde, internationally respected cardiologist who was honoured with Padma Vibhushan, wrote in the editorial of the super peer reviewed magazine 'Journal of the Science of Healing Outcomes' that the science of astrology needs some introspection by scientific astrologers. "We have to assume many

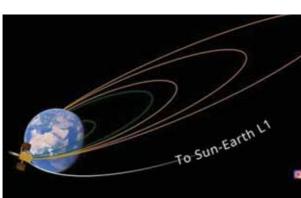
things in astrology which is being criticized by outsiders. Little do they realise that even in the king of sciences, mathematics, numbers are only assumptions. "Rahu and Ketu might not be seen through the Hubble's Telescope but they are assumptions for calculations like the North and South Pole

which are not marked on the ground," writes Professor Hegde. The professor also lambasted western science which keeps inconvenient scientific data from coming into their mainline journals. "Unless one breaks the western scientific monopoly of the so-called scientific knowledge, this world cannot progress," Prof Hegde writes. He says the science of astrology could be sold to the world by refining the accuracy of the predictability. Before signing off,

Professor Hegde says that the idea that the stars or a constellation of them have some influence on human birth and life can never be scientifically

## Earth-bound manoeuvre of CISF cover for National Aditya L1 successful: ISR0

 $\mathbf{I}^{ ext{SRO}}$  on Sunday said it has successfully performed the first earth-bound manoeuvre of the country's maiden solar mission, Aditya L1, from ISTRAC here. The space agency also said the satellite is healthy and operating nominally. The next manoeuvre is scheduled for September 5, 2023, around 03:00 Hrs. IST "Aditya-L1 Mission: The satellite is healthy and operating nominally. The first Earthbound maneuvre (EBN#1) is performed successfully from ĪSTRAC, Bengaluru. The new orbit attained is 245km x 22459 km. The next maneuvre (EBN#2) is scheduled for September 5, 2023, around 03:00 Hrs. IST," ISRO said in an update on 'X', formerly Twitter. Aditya L1 was launched on



Saturday from Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.

The mission aims to study the outer atmosphere of the sun by placing India's first solar observatory at the Sun-Earth L1 point. L1 stands for Lagrange point 1, where the spacecraft would be stationed. The satellite started generating

power after the solar panels vere deployed. According to ISRO, Aditya-L1 will stay approximately 1.5 million km away from Earth, directed towards the Sun, which is about one per cent of the earth-sun distance. It will neither land on the Sun nor approach the Sun any closer.

# Gallery of Modern Art

PNS NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry has sought immediate deployment of an armed contingent of the CISF to secure the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA) that will host special events and an exhibition for the spouses and other family members of the dignitaries visiting the national capital here later this week for the G20 Leaders' Summit.

The NGMA, under the Union Culture Ministry, is the country's premier art institution for modern and contemporary Indian art and is spread over eight acres along the India Gate hexagon in the heart of the national capital.

Its vast collection of art is displayed across multiple gallery floors, an art shop, auditorium, preview theatre and library. The Central National Museum in Delhi Industrial Security Force and the Indian Museum in (CISF) has been directed to immediately deploy an armed contingent on a short-term basis for securing the facility in view of the VVIP movement at the art complex during the G20 Leaders' Summit on September 9-10, a senior Union Home Ministry official said.
The NGMA currently has

private security personnel to secure it and this CISF cover is expected to be regularised after this initial deployment being done in view of the G20 meeting, they said.

The CISF, a Central paramilitary or Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) under the Home Ministry is the designated Force for securing vital installations and has expertise in the art and culture domain

and the Indian Museum in Kolkata for a very long time now, another official said. Officials said a special exhibition — Roots and Routes: Past, Present and Continuous — is being curated at the Jaipur House in NGMA by the Culture Ministry to coincide with the G20 Summit under India's presidency.
A number of artefacts,

sculptures and miniatures are being brought from various museums in the country to be displayed at NGMA for this

Keeping in mind the security of these valuables and the protection of the visiting foreign dignitaries, it was decided that a professional security cover of the CISF should be accorded to the facility, the offi-

### 'Welcome New Pakistan' slogans surface on walls of bus terminus in Kathua

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Welcome New Pakistan slogans surfaced on the walls of bus terminus in the Kathua district of Jammu late Saturday evening forcing the local authorities to whitewash the same while launching a massive crackdown to identify the 'suspected' individuals behind the nefarious game

A large number of local residents assembled at the bus terminus while the local policemen were seen cleaning the walls dotted with 'contentious' slogan. The residents also questioned approach of local police authorities as they could not prevent entry of miscreants into busy area where slogans were painted without facing

any resistance. A large number of vehicles remain parked in the area yet no one was caught red-handed while painting these slogans on the wall.

Raising security concerns over the matter the local residents appealed to police authorities to immediately identify miscreants and check mushrooming of overground workers indulging in such nefarious designs.

Local residents claimed,

"A deliberate attempt is being made to disturb the peace in border district. The menace of drug trafficking is already creating havoc in region and now an attempt is being made to disharmony". Meanwhile, police have registered a case in this regard and launched investigations into

## Ghosi bypoll to see first INDIA bloc-BJP clash in Uttar Pradesh

 $T^{\text{he stage is set for the first}}_{\text{electoral showdown between the BJP and an INDIA bloc contents}$ stituent in Uttar Pradesh, with leaders of both sides going all out to drum up support for their candidates for the September 5 Ghosi assembly bypoll. The Congress and the Left parties have not only extended support to the Samajwadi Party (SP) candidate but are also campaigning for him, in accordance with the spirit of the new opposition togetherness ahead of next year's

Though not a major force in Uttar Pradesh, Arvind Kejriwal's AAP is also drumming up support for the SP nominee. The BJP's Dara Singh Chauhan, the sitting MLA who crossed over to the saffron party from the SP and resigned from the seat, is

seeking re-election. The SP has fielded Sudhakar Singh. Singh has got support from the Congress, the CPI(M) and the CPI(ML) - Liberation. Interestingly, SP chief Akhilesh Yadav, who had given campaigning for the other two prestigious bypolls in the Rampur and the Azamgarh Lok Sabha seats last year a miss, addressed an election meeting in Ghosi. He had said this election would bring a change in the country's politics. Without Yadav at the helm of its campaign and facing an aggressive campaign by the BJP, the SP lost the Lok Sabha bypolls in Rampur and Azamgarh -- once considered its strongholds. The SP chief had won from the Azamgarh seat in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections while party veteran Azam Khan retained Rampur in a tight fin-

## Toll in lightning strikes rises to 12 in Odisha

PTI BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha government on Sunday said the death toll in lightning strikes that occurred across the state a day before rose to 12. The government also announced an ex gratia of Rs 4 lakh for the next of kin of each deceased.

Lightning strikes claimed the lives of four people in Khurda district, two in Bolangir and one each in Angul, Boudh, Gajapati, Jagatsinghpur, Dhenkanal and Puri, the office of the special relief commissioner (SRC) said. Fourteen people were also

njured in the lightning strikes in 11 districts of Odisha on Saturday. Among the injured, eight are in Bolangir district, three in Khurda, and one each in Angul, Cuttack and Ganjam, the SRC office said.

Besides, eight bovines — six in Gajapati and two in

Kandhamal — were also killed in the lightning strikes. All the 11 districts and the twin cities of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack witnessed heavy rain with lightning strikes a day before, an official said. Bhubaneswar and Cuttack recorded 126 mm and 95.8 mm of rainfall respectively during a 90-minute spell on Saturday afternoon. The state recorded 36,597 CC (cloud to cloud) lightning and 25,753 CG (cloud to ground) lightning in the afternoon, Odisha State Management Authority (OSDMA) said on X, formerly Twitter.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) had on Saturday forecast heavy rainfalls with lightning strikes in several parts of the state in the next four days. A cyclonic circulation has activated the monsoon which caused heavy rainfall across the state, it said. The meteorological department has

advised people to take shelter in safe places during thunder-storm activity. A cyclonic circulation also lies over the northeast Bay of Bengal, while another is likely to form over the north of the Bay of Bengal around September 3, said H R Biswas, director of the Regional Meteorological Centre here. Under its influence, a lowpressure area is likely to form during the subsequent 48

Due to the cyclonic circulation and possible low-pressure area, the southwest monsoon, which remained subdued in Odisha, will now cause heavy rainfall during the next three to four days, he said.

The Odisha government has declared lightning as a state-specific disaster. As many as 281 people lost their lives due to lightning in 30 districts in the 2021-22 year, official

## Stalin's son slammed for anti-Sanatan Dharma remarks

This kind of loose talk should be nipped in the bud: Sanathan Sanstha spokesman

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

The call by Udhayanidhi Stalin to eradicate and abolish Sanatana Dharma should be condemned in the strongest of words, said Ramesh Shinde, national spokesman of Sanathan Sanstha, the Ramnadi based spiritual organisation on

"This is not a statement expected from fair minded politicians. What will happen if some Hindu organisations issue a statement tomorrow

asking the followers of Sanatana Dharma not to vote for the DMK? Politics should not be fought on the basis of religion," said Shinde in a video message. He said Udhayanidhi should bear in mind that peo-

ple like Raavan and Kamsa had tried to abolish Sanatana Dharma and what happened to them. "Does Stalin or his son Udhayanidhi has the courage to issue such statements against other religions? This kind of loose talk should be nipped in the bud itself," said the Sanatana Sanstha spokesman. Shinde said the Sanstha

would hold a brain storming session to counter the statements and charges against the Sanatan Dharma who do not have anything to do with the Sanatana life style.

### **LS** polls: **Mayawati** shortlisting candidates

PNS LUCKNOW

After discussing the proba-ble candidates from Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand for the Lok Sabha elections in 2024, Bahujan Samaj Party supremo Mayawati on Sunday discussed the names of candidates for the parliamentary polls with the leaders of Jharkhand. Four-time Chief Minister

of UP, Mayawati has already announced that her party would keep distance both from Bharatiya Janata Party-led National Democratic Alliance and INDIA bloc and would go it alone in the coming parliamentary elections. Apprehending that Lok Sabha elections may be preponed, Mayawati, is holding meetings with leaders of various states to

discuss party candidates.

## Manipur: 10 Kuki families in Imphal shifted to Kangpokpi

▲ has shifted the last of 10 Kuki families comprising 24 members from Imphal's New Lambulane area where they had been living for decades and did not move elsewhere even after the ethnic violence broke out in Manipur four months ago.

These families were taken to the Kuki-dominated Kangpokpi district on the northern side of Imphal Valley early on Saturday, as they had become "vulnerable targets", an official said.

The last of 10 Kuki families were provided "safe passage" to Motbung, in Kangpokpi district, some 25 km from Imphal, he said. But Kuki families alleged that they were forcibly evicted from their residences in the New Lambulane area to Motbung.

S Prim Vaiphei, one of the volunteers guarding the Kuki locality in the heart of Imphal, directions from the Home Department came to New Lambulane, Imphal in the intervening night of September 1 and 2 and forcibly evicted the last remaining residents of the Kuki locality in Imphal from their homes' Around 300 tribal fami-

lies, who were living in the New Lambulane area, had earlier left the place in phases since the ethnic violence began on May 3. "Twenty-four of us were not given time to even pack our belongings and we were herded into vehicles with only the clothes we were wearing," Vaiphei said in a statement. Expressing strong displeasure over the "forcible eviction", Kuki Inpi Manipur, the apex body of the Kuki tribes, in two statements, said, they stood "aghast at the das-

said that a "team of unibering about 24 men) who formed armed personnel have been guarding the housat New Lambulane. The volunteers were later escorted by security personnel". The Kuki body reiterated its demand for a separate administration. "There is now total separation of the Meiteis and Kukis..It is imperative that the central govt should constitutionally recognise this separation at the earliest," it said.

More than 160 people lost their lives and several hundreds were injured since the ethnic clashes broke out in Manipur in early May, after a 'Tribal Solidarity March' was organised in the hill districts to protest against the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status.

Meiteis account for about 53 per cent of Manipur's population and live mostly in the Imphal Valley. Tribals — Nagas and Kukis — constitute tardly attack against the last of the Kuki Zo volunteers (num-reside in the hill districts.

### Chidambaram claims 'ethnic cleansing complete' in Imphal valley, raps Centre, State Govt

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Cenior Congress leader P Ochidambaram on Sunday alleged that "ethnic cleansing is complete" in Manipur's Imphal Valley and said there can be nothing more "shameful" than this development.

The former home minister cited a media report which claimed that the last five Kuki families in Imphal were "forcibly removed" from their homes by the authorities.

'This means that 'ethnic cleansing' is complete in the Imphal Valley that is dominated by the Meitei people," he said in a post on X "A state government presides over 'ethnic cleansing' and the central government claims that the government of the state is being carried on in accordance with Constitution,"

Chidambaram said. There can be nothing more shameful than this development, he said. "It marks a new low in India's descent into lawlessness, Chidambaram said.

More than 160 people lost their lives and several hundreds were injured since the ethnic clashes broke out in Manipur in early May after a Tribal Solidarity March was organised in the hill districts to protest against the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status.

## BJP living in arrogance after winning LS polls twice: Mann

 $P_{\text{Bhagwant Mann on Sunday}}^{\text{unjab} \ \text{Chief Minister}}$ "living in arrogance" after winning the Lok Sabha elections twice and said that people will break their "arrogance".

Mann was addressing a gathering of office bearers and party workers of the Haryana unit of AAP in Bhiwani where Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal was also present. "They (BJP) are living in arrogance. They have become arrogant after winning elections twice. You can see their arrogance. Public breaks arrogance," Mann said.

Lashing out at the BJP, Mann said every day, they come out with a new lie and a new "jumla". "As elections in the country are near, these days Bharatiya Janata Party's 'jumla' making factory is working round-the-clock because they have to sell these in the 2024 polls," alleged Mann. Every promise they made has turned out to be a "jumla", he



said. Referring to Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar's statement in which he said many parties offer freebies to the public, Mann said the AAP is providing free electricity, free medicine and free education, adding that not even a single rupee of debt was raised in Delhi and Punjab for ensuring these facilities. He said the AAP dispen-

sations have plugged revenue leakage and the state coffers are being filled. Referring to Punjab, Mann said a corruption-free government was running in the state.

He said a WhatsApp number has been given to the public for sharing any video or photo of bribe being sought by any government official. More

jailed on corruption charges so far, he said. Mann said a few days ago, 'patwaris' (revenue of one of their colleagues who was caught on bribery charges. The revenue officials then

decided to hold a pen-down strike in protest against the vigilance action, the chief minister said. He further said his government has decided to fill posts of 2,000 'patwaris'. Mann said the AAP made electricity free in Punjab as was done in

"Arvind Kejriwal made power free in Delĥi. In Punjab too we made this promise and now nearly 90 per cent households get zero bills for electricity consumption in Punjab and power is available roundthe-clock. We had guaranteed this and we fulfilled it," Mann said

More than 35,000 government jobs have been given in Punjab in one-and-a-half years. Apart from this, big companies are coming to Punjab, he

#### New Okhla Industrial Development Authority

Administrative Building, Sector - 6, Noida - 201301 (U.P.) Website: www.noidaauthorityonline.in

#### **E-TENDER NOTICE**

E-Tenders are invited from eligible firms/contractors for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened/downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on Noida Authority's official website: www.noidaauthorityonline.in & http://etender.up.nic.in. Please ensure to see these websites for any changes/amendments & corrigendum etc.

A) (Rs. 30.00 Lacs to 1.00 Crore)

S. No.	Job No.	Sale Start Date	Sale End Date	Tender Opening Date and Time
1	05/E-TENDER/SPO/2023-24 Name of Work- Supply of Manhole Covers with Frame, NOIDA, Estimated Cost Rs.95,60,000.00	04.09.2023	11.09.2023 upto 5:00 P.M.	12.09.2023 11.00 AM
2	06/E-TENDER/SPO/2023-24 Name of Work- Procurement of Printing & Stationary Items, NOIDA, Estimated Cost Rs.39,80,478.00	04.09.2023	18.09.2023 upto 5:00 P.M.	19.09.2023 11.00 AM
3	07/E-TENDER/SPO/2023-24 Name of Work- Stitching of Summer Uniform Cloth, NOIDA, Estimated Cost Rs. 60,20,400.00	04.09.2023	18.09.2023 upto 5:00 P.M.	19.09.2023 11.00 AM
Office Store Purchase Office Sector-39, Noida Store Purchase Office Noida				

Store Purchase Officer,

## Centre OKs ₹83K cr for T'gana's 30 railway projects: Culture Min

**PTI** ■ HYDERABAD

The Central Government has decided to take up 30 railway projects including 15 new railway lines in Telangana with a total outlay of Rs 83,543 crore, Union Tourism and Culture Minister G Kishan Reddy said on Sunday.

Speaking to reporters, the Union Minister alleged that due to the "noncooperation" of the ruling BRS government, works on laying over 700 km railway tracks have been stalled.

"We (the Centre) have asked the state government to speed up the land acquisition for railway projects. We seek the state government's support for projects such as Phase II of Multi-Modal Transport



The state government has been non-cooperative," Reddy, who is also Telangana BJP president, alleged.

Despite the "non-cooperation" from the state administration, the Union government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is working for development of Telangana and welfare of the people, he said. Recently, the Railways gave approval for modernisation

and redeveloping 40 railway stations in Telangana and the Prime Minister virtually laid foundation for 21 of them, Reddy said. The Central government

has released Rs 2,300 crore towards redevelopment of 40 stations, he added. The Union Minister said between 2004 and 2014, the UPA government approved only five projects and a total of Rs 10,192 crore was sanctioned for laying only 714 km of new railway lines, whereas the Modi government approved 30 projects that

includes laying of 5,239 km of new railway lines in Telangana. He further said before 2014, only 17 km new railway line was laid every year and now under Modi government Furthermore, directions have it has gone up to 55 km. been given to complete the sur-

### **Govt directive to** expedite digital crop survey in UP

PNS LUCKNOW

The Yogi Adityanath Government has issued directives to speed up the digital crop survey in the state. While in 21 districts the survey work has been completed, instructions have been issued to complete the crop survey in all villages under the supervision of the district magistrate within the specified time frame.

Additionally, officials have been instructed to increase the number of surveyors in order to expedite the survey work. The officials have also been directed to ensure that each surveyor completes surveys of 1,500 plots per month and 2,250 plots within 45 days.

10 revenue villages of 54 districts. It is noteworthy that the digital crop survey in Uttar Pradesh is making progress. For this purpose, a state project management unit (SPMU) has been established, and help desks are being operated in 10 sectors. Surveyors have been provided with internet connectivity and power packs for their work. In the presentation of the

vey within the next 15 days in

Agriculture department before Chief Secretary Durga Shanker Mishra, it was reported that the digital crop survey has been completed in 21 districts and is in progress in 54 districts. Mirzapur leads with digital crop surveys conducted in the highest number of plots, total-

**CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA** 







## Delhi Police holds full dress rehearsals ahead of G20 Summit

The Delhi Police conducted full dress rehearsals smoothly largely owing to advisories issued in advance and light vehicular movement on Sunday. The forces escorted carcades from different parts in carcades from different parts in the national Capital, said officials. Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena and the Prime Minister's Principal Secretary P K Mishra were among the senior Government functionaries who visited key sites related to the upcoming G20 Summit meeting to take stock of preparedness for the mega event.

ness for the mega event.

In order to avoid inconvenience to the public, Saxena and Dr Mishra, along with all senior officers, travelled by minibus. They visited Bharat Mandapam, the convention centre that will host key G20 meetings, the Palam technical area and some of the roundabouts in the area through which the foreign delegates will be travelling, officials said. The Delhi Police, which is

the nodal agency for security arrangements of G20 Summit, has officially clarified that there will be no lockdown, suggesting residents to use Delhi Metro during the summit. The Delhi Traffic Police conducted the rehearsals in three shifts from 8 am to 9 am, between 9.30 am to 10.30 am and 12.30 pm to 4pm.

On Sunday, the restrictions were in effect on 30 points or stretches of roads for



"Dear Delhiites, don't

panic at all! There is no lock-

down. Just keep yourself updated with traffic information

available on @dtpftraffic's Virtual Help Desk," it said on

Saleem Garh Bypas, Bhairon Road, Ring Road, Mathura Road, Shershah Road, C-

Hexagon, roundabouts at Mansingh Road, Gol Methi,

Teen Murti, Yashwant Place,

Brig Hoshiyar Singh Marg,

and Tolstoy Marg. Commuters

too said that they avoided tak-

ing the road in anticipation of

ling on the north-south corri-

dor have been advised to take

the Ring Road, Ashram Chowk, Sarai Kale Khan,

Delhi-Meerut Expressway,

Noida Link Road, Pusta Road,

Yudhistir Setu, ISBT Kashmiri

Gate, Ring Road and Majnu Ka

People who will be travel-

traffic jams.

X (formerly Twitter).

an almost seven hours to facilitate the movement of carcades from different parts of the city towards the New Delhi

The visuals of the rehearsals show that the traffic was affected briefly when the carcades were moving. The police advised people to follow real-time traffic updates on the'G-20 Virtual Help Desk' for route suggestions for commuting from/to the airport, railway stations, or bus termi-

Delhi Police chose a quirky way to assure Delhiites that there is no need to panic over the traffic situation during the G20 Head of States and Governments Summit on September 9 and 10.

With a filmy twist, it shared an image from the South Indian movie Don No.1 and clarified that there will not be a lockdown during the summit in the national capital. This comes after speculations of a possible lockdown in the capital city in view of maintaining

## Red carpet welcome awaits leaders

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

A red-carpet welcome awaits G20 leaders and their spouses, who will be treated to Southeast Asian, Arab and East Asian cuisines, along with fare from various Indian States including flavourful delicacies from Chandni Chowk, and innovative millet dishes, during their stay in New Delhi for the Summit on September 8-10. Spouses of heads of State of various countries coming for the G20 Summit, will be treated to a special lunch at the iconic Jaipur House, on the sidelines During the carcades rehearsals, traffic were restricted at Mahatma Gandhi Marg, IP Flyover, Rajghat Chowk, Shanti Van Chowk, Salam Carb Byrns, Bhairon of the mega event. The menu will also include millet-based

An elaborate spread of millet recipes has been planned for the world leaders and delegates attending the G20 Summit on September 9-10 at the Bharat Mandapam, showcasing the climate-resistant and highly nutritious coarse grains grown across the country.

The cuisine is being given

special attention, with over 120 chefs working at the Taj Hotel alone. A menu of nearly 500 items is being arranged, including several fusion cuisines. The Taj has also added millet-based meals to its menu in honour of the International Year of Millets in 2023. The Taj Hotel is in full gear with preparations. The premier hotel has created a unique cuisine that



uses millet in a variety of dish-

Raw Banana Barnyard mil-Raw Banana Barnyard millet Tikki with puffed Amaranth, Jowar-Mushroom Khichda and the multi-course millet medley with millet Thekua and a Lemon Shrikhand mille-feuille dessert will be served to first ladies and spouses of G20 leaders spouses of G20 leaders.

Some of the dishes to be displayed include millet Brioche Bun with Gelato (Italy), Barnyard millet Nasi Goreng (Indonesia) and Ragi Mysore Masala Dosa (India). The spouses will also visit

the field research centre in IARI campus where millet crops including jowar, ragi, bajra and fox millets are at the

They will interact with women farmers from key millet producing states — Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Bihar and

various countries coming for the G20 Summit, will be treat-ed to a special lunch at the iconic Jaipur House. "They (spouses of heads of states) will be treated to a special lunch at the Jaipur House, and the menu will include millet-based deliwin include infliet-based deli-cacies," sources said. Jaipur House that is home to the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA)," an official source said. The NGMA possesses a rich collection of art-works, including paintings, sculptures, photographs and other forms of art. It comes under the Ministry of Culture.

The British-era edifice, one of the several former royal houses facing the India Gate circle in the heart of Delhi, was built originally as a residence for the Maharaja of Jaipur in

In an interview to a new agency, India Special Secretary Muktesh Pardeshi said, "there would be an introduction to street food, and local and regional cuisines of India. The chefs are working overtime to finalise the menu, keeping all aspects in mind. But certainly,

there will be some exposure".
"Delhi is very well known for its street food, particularly the Chandni Chowk area. So, when you visit our international media centre, I am sure you will also get a taste of the street food of India," he said.

## 207 passenger trains will be cancelled

In view of the G20 Summit in the national Capital, a total of 207 passenger train services will be cancelled and 36 train services will be short terminated or short originated on September 9, 10 and 11, according to a Northern Railways Press release with the list of trains to be affected.

While several trains stand

While several trains stand cancelled during the crucial days when air transport as well as road transport will be affected, some of the trains will be short terminated at the Delhi peripheral and NCR stations like Anand Vihar, Nizamuddin, Ghaziabad, Gurugram, Narela.

As per the Northern Railway, 70 trains have been given additional stoppage standard.

given additional stoppage stations to minimise passenger discomfort, including Jammu Tawi-New Delhi Rajdhani, Tejas Rajdhani Hazrat Nizamuddin, Varanasi-New Delhi Tejas Rajdhani among others. Further, the origin and termination stations of 36 trains have also been changed, and three trains will not stop at Delhi's Kishan Ganj during the summit.

The Northern Railways

also announced that it has cancelled 40 mails and express trains from September 9-10 in view of the September 9-10 in view of the G20 Summit. While sharing the Train Handling Plan, the Northern Railways advised passengers to plan their journey accordingly. "Keeping in view the security and other important arrangement for prestigious G20 Summit 2023 in Delhi Area, Railways have made Train Handling Plan as under. The Passengers are requested to plan their jourrequested to plan their journey on the dates shown accordingly," the Northern Railway said in a post on X formerly Twitter.
While Sirsa Tilak Bridge

Express has been cancelled from September 9-11, Bareilly Junction-New Delhi Intercity Express and New Delhi-Rohtak Junction Intercity Express have been cancelled from September 8-10. Some of the trains cancelled include New Delhi-Virangana Lakshmibai (Jhanshi) Taj Eaksnmidal (Jnanshi) Iaj Express, New Delhi-Lohian Khas Jn. Sarbat Da Bhala Express, Bhiwani-Tilak Bridge Express, Shri Ganganagar-Tilak Bridge Express, and Meerut Cantt-Shri Ganganagar Special from Shri Ganganagar Special from September 9 and 10.

#### **MCD** cleaned more than 11,000 garbage vulnerable points: Mayor

Delhi Mayor Shelly Oberoi Said on Sunday the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has identified and cleaned more than 11,000 garbage vulnerable points and is conducting anti-larval spraying in all wards ahead of the G20 Summit. Oberai claimed that the AAP Government in MCD tip-topped Delhi in just two months. "We used 311 App, deployed 12,000 workers and 95 machines to make Delhi clean and green,"she said.

In a press conference at the AAP headquarters, she said teams have been also set up to clean areas adjacent to posh hotels, tourist attractions and the city airport, adding that Delhi is ready to welcome guests for the summit. "We deployed 12,000

workers on special duty to prepare Delhi for G20 summit; this includes 1500 workers in Central Zone, 1000 workers in



South Zone, 1500 workers in Najafgarh Zone, 250 workers around Pragati Maidan," said Oberai adding over 250 employees are deployed to clean Delhi's Rajghat Marg, Jawaharlal Marg, Zoo Area and Bhairav Marg, Vikas Marg, Tilak Marg.
"The MCD (Municipal

Corporation of Delhi) is working continuously to ensure that the roads, parks, markets and other public places are neat and clean. It is a matter of great pride for Delhi that India is hosting the G20 Summit and we will put our best foot forward. MCD is cleaning 35 prominent roads round the

### Civic body picking up stray dogs, sterilising them illegally: PFA

he Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has started picking up stray dogs, mostly sterilised in "illegal" manner and without any written orders, in the wake of the G20 Summit scheduled on September 8-10. "The People For Animals (PFA) was reached out by air travellers at Terminal 2 who spotted "screaming and yelping" dogs being "dragged by neck" using wires by "what looked like class 4 untrained workers" before being bundled into vehicles, People For Animals

(PFA) claimed on Sunday. Animal rights activists are up in arms over the move by civic bodies across the nation to remove stray dogs from roads falling on the routes of G20 delegates. However, recently, visuals from the city showing dogs being picked up mercilessly and locked in sub-



human enclosures have surfaced online raising concerns on animal welfare and cruelty done to the dogs in the name of 'beautification' of the prominent locations near the event venue.

In a statement PFA said another stray dog feeder also approached the PFA saying that a lactating mother with tiny pups was picked up from Pragati Maidan and "no one knows if all the pups have been taken or some carelessly left behind".

The animal rights group said after the hasty withdrawal of its "ill-thought out order

stray dogs across 47 locations in the city, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has chosen to avoid sharing any plans or orders, and simply gone ahead to pick up dogs

randomly. The statement said on September 1, catching teams swooped down on two locations -- Pragati Maidan where the long suffering dogs had been picked just over a month ago, and the Airport terminal-

"Having got wind of their intentions, the animal welfare community had actually offered its help towards the safe collection and keeping of dogs by involving local feeders in the exercise. Spurning the offer, MCD went ahead to blatantly and illegally pick up mostly sterilised dogs," it said. PFA said the airport area from where dogs have never been previously picked was targeted by three teams.

### Delhi Metro to sell 'Tourist Smart Cards' at 36 stations from Sept 4-13

**NEW DELHI** 

n a bid to enhance the expe **⊥**rience of international delegates and visitors attending the G20 Summit, Delhi Metro will sell'Tourist Smart Cards' through dedicated counters at 36 stations from September -13. These cards, designed to facilitate seamless travel within the city. These are available in two categories -- one-day validity and three-day validity cards -- offering "unlimited rides" in the metro network. These cards will offer unlimited rides on the extensive metro network, allowing tourists to explore Delhi's prominent tourist attractions with ease. The one-day validity Tourist Smart Card is priced at Rs 200, while the three-day validity Tourist Smart Card can be purchased for Rs 500, which includes a refundable security deposit of



These cards will grant unrestricted access to the entire metro network and no penalties or surcharges will be imposed on'Tourist Smart Cards' for issues such as entry/exit mismatches or overstay within the system.

To assist tourists in planning their journeys, the Delhi Metro Rail offers a Delhi Metro Rail app which provides comprehensive information on the metro network. Within the app, a dedicated'Tour Guide section showcases a list of all metro stations and nearby tourist attractions.

The 36 stations where

through dedicated counters include — Kashmere Gate, Chandni Chowk, Chawri Bazar, New Delhi, Rajiv Chowk, Patel Chowk, Central Secretariat, Udyog Bhawan, Lok Kalyan Marg, Supreme Court 'metro stations, Indraprastha, Extension, Sarojini Nagar, Chhatarpur, Qutub Minar, Hauz Khas, Nehru Place, Kalkaji Mandir, Akshardham,

Karol Bagh. Besides unlimited rides, these cards are of great benefit to tourists as they can seamlessly travel in the entire network from the first train to the last service available for the day, the officials said.

Terminal 1 IGI Airport and

There are no penalties or surcharge levied on the use of Tourist Smart Cards on account of instances like entry or exit mismatch, overstay in system, overstepping etc," the Delhi Metro said

### Delhi-bound local EMU derails near Pragati Maidan

**STAFF REPORTER** ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi-bound local EMU Atrain derailed on Sunday near Pragati Maidan, the venue of the G20 Summit, a senior official said.

The fifth coach of the Palwal-New Delhi EMU (electric multiple unit) train derailed at 9.47 am, the official said, adding that no passengers were injured."The train was not crowded. All passengers have been evacuated to safety," he

said.
The train derailed between Nizamuddin and Tilak Bridge on the down main line, the offi-

cial said. A senior police officer said, "No injury has been reported. No public person was present at the spot. Railway staff mem-



The Northern Railway has released a list of more than 300 trains whose services will be impacted due to the G20 Summit, to be held on September 9-10.

According to the Northern Railway, services of 207 trains have been terminated, terminals of 15 changed and routes

The official statement further said 70 trains, including the Jammu Tawi-New Delhi Rajdhani, Tejas Rajdhani Hazrat Nizamuddin and the Varanasi-New Delhi Tejas Rajdhani have been given additional stoppage stations to minimise passenger incon-

### Atishi pulls up officials over non-payment of salaries to civil defence volunteers

**STAFF REPORTER** ■ NEW DELHI

Revenue Minister Atishi Rpulled up officials over non-payment of salaries to civil defence volunteers for the past several months. Taking cognizance of the department's failure to pay the volunteers, Atishi has instructed the Principal Secretary (Revenue) to release the salaries of all civil defence volunteers within a

In the orders given to the Principal Secretary (Revenue), the Revenue Minister has emphasized the need for immediate coordination with the Finance Department to expedite the process of disbursing salaries to civil defence volunteers.< "It has come to my atten-

tion that despite their service in various government departments, civil defence volunteers have not received their salaries for the past several months. This situation is alarming and should be addressed immediately," Atishi said. The minister further stated that during the COVID ipandemic, the role played by civil defence volunteers was extraordinary.

"At that time, they assisted millions of Delhi residents. They supported the government in mobilizing people and

delivering relief services to those in need. Their dedication and commitment are commendable". Additionally, she mentioned that recently, when Delhi faced floods, the role of civil defence volunteers was of utmost importance. These volunteers worked diligently in every relief camp, delivering relief supplies to flood-affected individuals and organizing facilities for them. Despite being on duty during such times, not releasing their salaries is not appropriate.

The Principal Secretary (Revenue) should immediatelv take notice of this and coordinate with the Finance Department to release the salaries of all civil defence volunteers within seven days," Atishi added.

#### Two hurt in brawl at bar in Noida's Gardens Galleria Mall area

**STAFF REPORTER** NEW DELHI

Tn a shocking incident, a fight Lerupted between two groups at the F Bar & Lounge located in Garden Galleria Mall in Sector 38, Noida.

Two persons have been injured. According to police, the brawl took place at F-Bar & Lounge on Saturday night. Two groups can be seen fighting in the videos making rounds on social media.

They threw bottles at each other while others tried to intervene and stop the fight. This is not the first incident of a fight at the Bar, F Bar and Lounge had hit the headlines earlier for such brawl. A customer was also murdered by the bouncers at the F Bar and Lounge last year.



are seen exchanging blows with each other under the influence of alcohol. It can be seen in the video that alcohol bottles are also being thrown by the group at each other after the fight

The two groups are seen fighting inside the bar. The reason for the fight in not known yet. The staff of the bar is seen trying to separate the people fighting with each other

## Opp bloc's main agenda eradication of Hindu dharma: BJP

I launched a scathing attack on DMK leader Udhayanidhi Stalin and the INDIÁ coalition over his comments against 'Sanatan Dharma', alleging that it is clear that "a complete eradication" of Hindu dharma is the "primary agenda" of the Opposition

Describing the DMK leader's remarks as "hate speech" the BJP also urged the Supreme Court to take action against him in accordance

The party's reaction came after Tamil Nadu Youth Welfare Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin alleged that 'Sanatan Dharma' is against equality and social justice, and that it should be eradicated. Udayanidhi, son of Tamil

Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin, also likened 'Sanatan Dharma' to coronavirus,

and said that such things should not be opposed but destroyed.

BJP national spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi said that the remarks have exposed the real character of the opposition alliance. This is not a statement

given in isolation. It has a complete consequential sequence," Trivedi told a press conference here at party head-



The DMK leader's

remarks within 48 hours after

meeting in Mumbai has exposed the real character of the 'dukandaar of mohabbat ki dukaan (owner of the shop of love)," Trivedi said in an apparent reference to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and INDIA opposition bloc "It is clear that a complete

eradication of Hindu Dharma, Sanatan Dharma, is their primary agenda," he alleged. Home Minister Amit

Shah also accused opposition

Navy top brass to

Udhayanidhi Stalin of insulting 'Sanatan Dharma' for votebank and appeasement poli-Dubbing the INDIA bloc

as "ghamandiya gathbandhan" Shah, who was addressing a rally in poll-bound Rajasthan, said the alliance can go to any extent for votebank politics but "the more they talk against 'Sanatan Dharma, the less they will be

Annamalai too slammed the DMK minister for his "mali-

cious ideology". "Tamil Nadu is a land of spiritualism. The best you can do is to hold a mic in an event like this & rant out your frustration!" he posted

BJP Tamil Nadu vice president Narayanan Thirupathy dubbed the DMK a "cancer" and said such remarks from the ruling Dravidian party were nothing

mate the DMK, he said.

After his remarks led to a furore in social media with BJP's IT department in-charge Amit Malviya stating the DMK leader has called for "genocide" of 80 per cent population who follow Sanatan Dharma, Udhayanidhi rubbished that accusation.

Udhayanidhi said on X: "I never called for the genocide of people who are following Sanatan Dharma.

#### **PASSENGER TRAINS HANDLING PLAN IN VIEW OF G20 SUMMIT 2023**

Keeping in view the security & other important arrangements for prestigious 'G20 Summit 2023' in Delhi Area, Railways have made 'Passenger Trains Handling Plan' as under. The passengers are requested to plan their journey accordingly.

#### **CANCELLATION OF PASSENGER TRAINS ON 08.09.202**

Train No. & Train Name			
04139 Kurukshetra Jn - Ambala Cantt. Jn Spec			

04445 Palwal - Shakurbasti EMU MEX Special 04911 Palwal - Ghaziabad Express Specia 04999 Delhi Jn. - Shamli Express Special

#### **CANCELLATION OF PASSENGER TRAINS ON 09.09.202**

Train No. & Train Name 04041/42 Delhi Sarai Rohilla-Farrukh Nagar - Delhi Sarai Rohilla Spl. 04089/90 New Delhi - Hisar - New Delhi Express Special

04128 Delhi .ln. - Ghaziabad Specia 04176 Panipat Jn - Ambala Cantt. Jn Special

04285 Delhi Jn. - Rewari Express Special

04339 Buland Shahr - Tilak Bridge Express Special 04340 Tilak Bridge - Buland Shahr MEMU Express Special

04405 Hazrat Nizamuddin - Kurukshetra Jn MEMU Express Special

04406 Kurukshetra Jn - Hazrat Nizamuddin MEMU MEXP Special 04407 Palwal - Ghaziabad 12CAREMU

04408 Shakurbasti - Palwal Express Special

04409 Ghaziabad - Shakurbasti EMU MEXP Special

04410 Shakurbasti - Palwal EMU MEXP Special 04413 Ghaziabad - Delhi Jn. 12CAR Express Special

04416 Shakurbasti - New Delhi Express Special

04421 Palwal - Shakurbasti Express Special 04422 Delhi Jn. - Ghaziabad 12CAR Express Special

04435 Rewari - Meerut City MEX Special

04437 Palwal - Shakurbasti 12CAR EMU MEX Special

04438 New Delhi - Palwal MEX Special

04443 Ghaziabad - New Delhi EMU MEX Special

04444 New Delhi - Ghaziabad MEX Special 04447 Ghaziabad - Delhi Jn. MEMU MEX Special

04451 Delhi Jn. - Panipat MEX Specia

04452 Kurukshetra Jn. - Delhi Jn. MEMU MEX Special

04453/54 New Delhi - Jind - New Delhi MEMU MEX Special 04455 New Delhi - Ghaziabad MEX Special

04471/72 Ghaziabad - Panipat - Ghaziabad MEMU MEX Special

04485/86 Ghaziabad - Delhi Jn. - Ghaziabad 12CAR Express Special

04581/86 Delhi Jn. - Panipat - Delhi Jn. Express Special

04599/04600 Delhi Jn. - Saharanpur - Delhi Jn. MEX Special 04907 Dankaur - Shakurbasti Express Special

04912 Ghaziabad - Palwal 12CAR EMU

04913 Palwal - Ghaziabad 12CAR MEX Specia

04915 Ballabhgarh - Shakurbasti EXP Special

04916 New Delhi - Palwal Express Special 04919 Kosi Kalan - New Delhi Express Special

04920/21 New Delhi - Palwal - New Delhi Express Special

04934 Shakurbasti - Dankaur Express Special 04938 Delhi Jn. - Ghaziabad Special

04939/40 Ghaziabad - Delhi Jn. - Ghaziabad Express Special 04942 Delhi Jn. - Ghaziabad Express Specia

04944 Sahibabad - Delhi Jn. Express Special

04947 Ghaziabad - New Delhi Special 04949 Ghaziabad - New Delhi Special

04951 Ghaziabad - New Delhi Express Special

04952 New Delhi - Ghaziabad Special 04954 New Delhi - Ghaziabad Special

04955 Ghaziabad - Delhi Jn. Special 04956/57 Delhi Jn. - Ghaziabad - Delhi Jn. Express Special

04959 Ghaziabad - New Delhi Special 04960 Shakurbasti - Ballabhgarh - Palwal Express Specia

04965/66 Palwal - New Delhi - Palwal Express Ladies Special

04968 Ghzaibad - Palwal Express Special

04987/88 Delhi Jn. - Jind - Delhi Jn. Express Special 04989 Delhi Jn. - Rewari Passenger

04990 Rewari - Delhi Jn. Express Specia 05000 Shamli - Delhi Jn. Express Special

04139 Kurukshetra Jn - Ambala Cantt, Jn Special

04445 Palwal - Shakurbasti EMU MEX Special

04911 Palwal - Ghaziabad Express Specia

04999 Delhi - Shamli Express Special

#### **CANCELLATION OF PASSENGER TRAINS ON 10.09.20** Train No. & Train Name

01617/18 Delhi Jn. - Shamli - Delhi Jn. Sewa Service 01620 Shamli - Delhi Jn. Express Special 04019/20 Delhi Jn. - Shamli - Delhi Jn. Specia

04023/24 Delhi Jn. - Qasimpur Kheri - Delhi Jn. Special

04089/90 New Delhi - Hisar - New Delhi Express Special

04127 Delhi Jn. - Panipat Express Special

04128 Delhi Jn. - Ghaziabad Special

04140 Ambala Cantt. Jn - Kurukshetra Jn Special 04176 Panipat Jn. - Ambala Cantt. Jn Special

04178 Kurukshetra Jn - Delhi Jn. Express Special 04283 Delhi Jn. - Rewari Express Special

04285/86 Delhi Jn. - Rewari - Delhi Jn. Express Special 04339 Buland Shahr - Tilak Bridge Express Special

04340 Tilak Bridge - Buland Shahr MEMU Express Specia 04403/04 Delhi Jn. - Saharanpur - Delhi Jn. MEMU MEXP Special 04405/06 H. Nizamuddin - Kurukshetra Jn - H. Nizamuddin MEMU

04407 Palwal - Ghaziabad 12CAR EMU 04408 Shakurbasti - Palwal Express Specia

04409 Ghaziabad - Shakurbasti EMU MEXP Special

04410 Shakurbasti - Palwal EMU MEXP Special 04413 Ghaziabad - Delhi Jn. 12CAR Express Special

04416 Shakurbasti - New Delhi Express Special 04421 Palwal - Shakurbasti Express Special

04422 Delhi Jn. - Ghaziabad 12CAR Express Special 04425 Delhi Jn. - Narwana Jn Express Special 04429 Delhi Jn. - Shamli - Saharanpur Special

04430 Saharanpur - Shamli - Delhi Jn. Special 04432 Jakhal - Delhi Jn. MEX Special

04435 Rewari - Meerut City MEX Specia

04437 Palwal - Shakurbasti 12CAR EMU MEX Special 04438 New Delhi - Palwal MEX Special

04443 Ghaziabad - New Delhi EMU MEX Special 04444 New Delhi Jn. - Ghaziabad MEX Special

04447 Ghaziabad - Delhi MEMU MEX Special

04451 Delhi Jn. - Panipat MEX Special 04452 Kurukshetra Jn - Delhi Jn. MEMU MEX Special

04453/54 New Delhi - Jind - New Delhi MEMU MEX Special

04455 New Delhi - Ghaziabad MEX Specia

04471/72 Ghaziabad - Panipat - Ghaziabad MEMU MEX Special 04485/86 Ghaziabad - Delhi Jn. - Ghaziabad 12CAR Express Special

04499/04500 Delhi Jn. - Rewari - Delhi Jn. Express Special 04521 Delhi Jn. - Shamli - Saharanpur Express Special

04581/86 Delhi Jn. - Panipat - Delhi Jn. Express Special

04599/04600 Delhi Jn. - Saharanpur - Delhi Jn. MEX Special 04907 Dankaur - Shakurbasti Express Special

04912 Ghaziabad - Palwal 12CAR EMU 04913 Palwal - Ghaziabad 12CAR MEX Special

04915 Ballabhgarh - Shakurbasti Express Special

04916 New Delhi - Palwal Express Special

04919 Kosi Kalan - New Delhi Express Special 04920/21 New Delhi - Palwal - New Delhi Express Special

04934 Shakurbasti - Dankaur Express Special

04938 Delhi Jn. - Ghaziabad Special 04939/40 Ghaziabad - Delhi Jn. - Ghaziabad Express Specia 04942 Delhi Jn. - Ghaziabad Express Specia

04944 Sahibabad - Delhi Jn. Express Special 04947 Ghaziabad - New Delhi Specia

04949 Ghaziabad - New Delhi Special 04951 Ghaziabad - New Delhi Express Special

04952 New Delhi - Ghaziabad Special 04954 New Delhi - Ghaziabad Specia 04955 Ghaziabad - Delhi Jn. Special

04956/57 Delhi Jn. - Ghaziabad - Delhi Jn. Express Special 04959 Ghaziabad - New Delhi Special

04960 Shakurbasti - Ballabhgarh - Palwal Express Special 04968 Ghaziabad - Palwal Express Specia

04987/88 Delhi Jn. - Jind - Delhi Jn. Express Special 04989 Delhi Jn. - Rewari Passenger 04990 Rewari - Delhi Jn. Express Special

#### 05000 Shamli - Delhi Jn. Express Special **CANCELLATION OF PASSENGER TRAINS ON 11.09.2023**

irain No. & Train Name

04439 Palwal - Ghaziabad

04283 Delhi Jn. - Rewari Express Special 04286 Rewari - Delhi Jn. Express Special

DIVERSION OF PASSENGER TRAINS ON 09 & 10.09.2023 Train No. & Train Name **Diverted Route** 04419 Mathura Jn - Ghaziabad Via H. Nizamuddin 12CAR EMU MEX Special Sahibabad 04945 H. Nizamuddin - Ghaziabad Via H. Nizamuddin -Express Special Sahibabad 04420 Ghaziabad - Mathura Jn. Via Sahibabad -12CAR EMU MEX Special

### SHORT TERMINATION/SHORT ORIGINATION OF PASSENGER TRAINS ON 09 & 10.09.2023

Via H. Nizamuddin

1	Train No. & Train Name	Train to short terminate at originate from
4	04449 New Delhi - Kurukshetra MEMU	from Adarsh Nagar Delh
4	04092 Delhi Jn Khurja Jn MEX Spl.	from Ghaziabad
┨	04288 Delhi Jn Aligarh Jn Special	from Ghaziabad
+	04414 New Delhi-Aligarh 12CAR MEX	from Ghaziabad
┨	04908 New Delhi-Aligarh Express Spl.	from Ghaziabad
┨	04930 Delhi Jn Aligarh Express Spl.	from Ghaziabad
┨	04932 Delhi JnDankaur Express Spl.	from Ghaziabad
┨	04914 Delhi Jn Palwal Special	from H. Nizamuddin
1	04439 Palwal - Ghaziabad MEX Spl.	from Okhla
	04446 Shakurbasti - Mathura Jn. MEX	from Palwal
	04450 Panipat - New Delhi MEMU MEX	at Adarsh Nagar Delhi
┨	04091 Khurja Jn - Shakurbasti MEX Spl.	at Ghaziabad
┨	04287 Aligarh Jn - Delhi Jn. Special	at Ghaziabad
1	04415 Aligarh-New Delhi 12CAR EMU MEX	at Ghaziabad
1	04931 Aligarh Jn Delhi Jn. Express Spl.	at Ghaziabad
┨	04967 Mathura Jn New Delhi EMU Exp.	at Okhla
4	04929 Aligarh In - Delhi In Eypress Spl	at Sahihahad

#### SHORT TERMINATION/SHORT ORIGINATION OF PASSENGER TRAINS ON 10.09.2023

Train to short terminate at a Train No. & Train Name originate from 04431 Delhi Jn. - Jind - Jakhal MEX Spl. from Shakurbasti 04424 Jind - Delhi Jn. Express Special at Shakurbasti

Any inconvenience caused to the passengers is deeply regretted

Please join us on F X Azadika Azadika Azadika

**SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE** 

scenario at 3-day conclave PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW s China is flexing Aits muscle in the

review maritime security

strategically important Indo-Pacific region and the Indian Ocean, the Navy top brass will review the operational readiness of the force to meet any challenge during the three-day commanders'

conference beginning Monday. The meet is held twice a year and the upcoming event will be held in hybrid mode, navy officials said here on Sunday. The Conference is the apex-level biannual event facilitating interaction between the Naval Commanders for deliberation and formulation of

important policy decisions. During the three-day conclave, the senior leadership of the Indian Navy will review major operational, materiel, logistics, training, and administrative activities undertaken during the previous six months. The Conference will also deliberate upon the course to be steered in the ensuing months,

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will address the Commanders during the conference and interact with them. The Conference also provides an opportunity for institution-alised interaction of Naval Commanders with senior



ahead several inter-ministerial initiatives towards the development of a safe and secure maritime environment essential for the holistic economic growth of the country.

The conference and the embedded interactions with the National Security Advisor (NSA), Chiefs of the Indian Army and the Indian Air Force would also be utilised to analyse the operational environment, deliberate on the issue of Tri-Service synergy and assess the readiness of the Maritime forces.

The last six months have

seen an intense operational tempo as the Indian Navy's operations spanned from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Indian Naval ships were first responders for the evacuation of Indian nationals from Sudan as part of 'Operation Cauvery and humanitarian mission in Myanmar in the aftermath of Cyclone Mocha as part of 'Operation Karuna'.

### Congress to hold yatras at district level on first anniversary of BJY

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI** 

ongress is all set to hold yatras at the district level commemorate the Kanyakumari-to-Kashmir Bharat Jodo Yatra, which was launched on September 7 last The party is planning to

mark in a big way the beginning of the cross-country march that saw former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi, along with several party leaders, traverse over 4,000 kilometres and interact with a cross-section of society. The sources said yatras will be held at the district level

sary of the beginning of the Bharat Jodo Yatra on September 7 last year. Rahul Gandhi launched the yatra on September 7, 2022, in Kanyakumari. It ended on January 30 this year

as Gandhi capped his ambi-

tious 145-day journey in

to mark the one-vear anniver-

Srinagar. "I have not done this yatra) for myself or for the Congress but for the people of the country. Our aim is to stand against the ideology that wants to destroy the foundation of this country," Rahul Gandhi had said at the Shere-Kashmir Cricket Stadium in Srinagar at a rally marking the grand finale of the cross-



country march.

During the course of the yatra, Rahul addressed 12 public meetings, over 100 corner meetings and 13 press conferences. He had over 275 planned walking interactions and more than 100 sitting interactions.

Asserting that the Congress made huge gains from the yatra, Congress chief spokesman Jairam Ramesh said the party succeeded in conveying the messages of the march — the threats to the republic from economic inequalities, social polarisation and political dictatorship.

With over 4,000 kilometres under his belt, Rahul Gandhi had managed to catch the attention of his supporters as well as detractors and the march saw participation from a cross-section of society, including film and TV celebrities such as Kamal Haasan, Pooja Bhatt, Riya Sen, Sushant Singh, Swara Bhasker, Rashami Desai, Akanksha Puri and Amol Palekar.

### Dengue Alliance sets goal to deliver treatment within 5 years

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

With dengue causing mosquitoes alarmingly countries, The Dengue Alliance, a coalition of reputed healthcare and research institutions from the endemic nations has set a goal to develop a new treatment using repurposed drugs and combinations within the next five years to curb the vector-

The alliance, co-created, co-owned, and co-funded by dengue-endemic nations, aims to accelerate research and development to deliver dengue therapeutics through an inclusive partnership, as per the comment published in The Lancet Global Health journal by The Dengue

Alliance. Conceived by the Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative (DNDi), the Alliance comprises a string of institutions from dengue-endemic countries including the Faculty of Medicine at Siriraj Hospital, Mahidol University in Thailand; the Ministry of Health in Malaysia; the Translational Health Science and Technology Institute in



India; the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation in Brazil; and the Federal University of Minas Gerais in Brazil among a few Experts warn that climate change, rapid urbanization,

and widespread internation-

al travel threaten to spread

mosquito-borne viral infec-

the world's population already at risk of becoming infected. The WHO has already flagged the concern. "About half of the world's population is at risk of dengue, and dengue affects approximately 129 countries," Dr Raman Velayudhan, WHO's Head of the Global Programme on control of Neglected Tropical

Diseases said recently. 'We estimate that about 100 to 400 million cases are reported every year. This is basically an estimate and the American region alone has

reported about 2.8 million cases and 101,280 deaths," he rings alarm bells. Dengue mosquitoes cnarting n

tories in Europe and North

Americas is estimated to

infect approximately 390 mil-

lion individuals annually, with 96 million infections being symptomatic. So far, the only strategy adopted to reduce the burden of dengue is vector control. Although techniques such as using Wolbachia bacteria to reduce dengue transmission by Aedes mosquitoes look promising, it is evident that

tion in the world, with half of ly to be adequate to reduce the dengue burden. The currently available dengue vaccines (CYD-TDV and TAK-003) have been shown to reduce hospitalisations, especially in dengueseropositive individuals, but lack efficacy against some

vector control alone is unlike-

dengue virus serotypes. Also, CYD-TDV showed a higher incidence of severe dengue in dengue-naive vaccine recipients, and both vaccines show some degree of waning immunity with time, especially in seronegative individuals.

#### **Kharge convenes** meeting of **INDIA** bloc MPs



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

**NEW DELHI** 

A head of the five-day Special Session of Parliament this month, Congress president and Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge has convened a meeting of MPs of the INDIA alliance partners on

Tuesday. Sources said Opposition parties will decide their strategy for the upcoming special session to be held from September 18 to 22. The meeting has been convened by Kharge at his Rajaji Marg residence

While the agenda for the five-day special session of Parliament is not clear yet, the opposition India alliance is working in cohesion with each other and is planning to take on the BJP unitedly on various fronts as well as the 2024 Lok Sabha elections as well the special session scheduled September 18-22, 2023.

### **NSG** institutes counter IED innovator and breakthrough innovation award

RAKESH K SINGH NEW DELHI

**■** contingency force National Security Guard (NSG) has instituted a "NSG Counter-IED Innovator/Breakthrough Innovation Award" and invited nominations from the paramilitary forces in order to effectively counter the IED menace through innovative

the start-ups for developing

The elite counter-terrorist

and advanced new technology. The award is aimed at fuelling research and development in the counter-IED domain and to bring the secucountry as a whole, according rity forces, industries and acadto a document of the NSG ciremia together to get involved in culated to other paramilitary

igate the challenges and requirements of the Forces. The idea behind the insti-

tution of the award by NSG is not only to find a solution to fulfill its own requirement of technologically advanced counter-IED equipment, but also to give more thrust to research and development in the domain and to bring together expertise of the Forces, academia and the industry to make use of the "Make in India" initiatives for the benefit of the agencies and the

forces seeking nominations for

involving the Start-Ups to focus more on conceiving and developing technologically advanced counter-IED equipment to fulachieve self-sufficiency.

civilians are lost every year in explosions of buried and hidden IEDs planted by the antinational elements. from rogue drones carrying

out IED attacks. Loss of pre-

#### home grown solutions to mitthere is a proven technology The move is also aimed at for detection, inactivation and safe disposal of all kinds of

fill the requirements of the security forces in order to Several lives of Security Forces personnel as well as

A new threat has emerged IEDs which can penetrate into high security zones and carry

work together to put their experiences and expertise to work out a better solution for the IED challenges posed by the anti-national elements. . It is appreciated that the subject award will surely act as a stimulator to encourage the Start-Ups, scientists, academicians and other enthusiasts to come up with innovative counter-IED technology to mitigate the IED menace in the country," reads the NSG cious lives could be saved if

IEDs. "Thus, it is imperative

for Security Forces, industries

and academia to come and

## 'Nehru molded diverse India Preparations on to enhance into unified modern nation'

¬he vision of religion of first The vision of reason.

Prime Minister Pt Iawaharlal Nehru was complementary to inclusive nationalism in India. "It gives concrete expression to that common India concept of national consciousness of Gandhi, Nehru, Patel, Maulana Azad etc, which molded diverse India into a unified modern nation as the world's largest democracy. These were the opinions of former professor of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) and ex-member of Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) Prof Purushottam Agrawal while speaking on the topic of 'Nehru's vision of religion' on the occasion of Pandit Kamlapati Tripathi's 118th anniversary at Aurangabad House here on Sunday. Prof Agrawal was honoured with 'Pt Kamlapati Tripathi National Honour'

Prof Agrawal said that Nehru was a believer and founder of the citizens' natural right to religious freedom of faith, belief and worship. "In this way Pt Nehru was neither anti-religion nor indifferent to religion as he also used to recite Manas path while sitting with Pt Ram Naresh Tripathi. Nehru believed that India is not only a country of wide diversity of religion, language, culture and folk customs but it is also a country of deep spiritual traditions of diversity among

which carries Rs 1 lakh prize

money.



Ex-JNU Prof Purushottam Agrawal being honoured at Pt Kamlapathi's birth anniversary function in Varanasi on Sunday.

different religions," he said, adding that underlying consciousness of the spiritual essence and morality of various religions unites all the communities and makes the true nation an embodiment. "Bapu taught us the path of his practice. Undoubtedly, Congress has been the representative institution of inclusive nationalism with these basic elements of building modern India. That's why every Congressman must compulsorily read Nehru's 'Bharat Ek Khoj' or 'Hindustan Ki Kahani,' Prof Agrawal said.

Remembering Kamlapati Tripathi, he said that Pandit ji was a hero, writer and journalist in the leading

India. "Pandit ji was a symbol of deep Sanatani religiosity, non-objectionable secularism and conceptual coordinator of socialism with democracy," he

Speaking as the special guest, state Congress presi-dent Ajay Rai said that Pt Kamlapati is our inspiration in terms of principle, struggle and example of politics of equality and coordination in the society. He said that by walking on the path of mass politics shown by Pt Kamlapati, the Congress will restore its legacy of pride.

Welcoming the guests, president of Kamlapati Tripathi Foundation Rajeshpati Tripathi said that by following the prinline of learned politicians in cipled Congress culture which

Pt Kamlapati Tripathi lived, the Congress can be successful The function was presided over by senior party leader Vijay Śhankar Pandey. The function was also addressed by former MP Dr Rajesh Mishra, Satish Choubey and Onkar

Singh.

In the beginning, Prof
Satish Kumar Rai highlighted
the personality of Pt Kamlapati. The function was attended by Dineshpati Tripathi, Anjali Tripathi, Ambarishpati Tripathi, Sunayana Pateria, Laliteshpati Tripathi, Anil Srivastava, Rajeshwar Patel, Raghvendra Choubey, Ajit Singh, Dr Arif, Shailendra Singh and Nripendra Narayan Singh. The vote of thanks was proposed by Baijnath Singh.

# capacity of ITI Naini

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Dreparations are on to enhance the capacity of ITI Naini in view of the orders being received from government and non-government sec-

tor for making solar panels.

A new plant for making solar panels of 525 watt will be set up in ITI. This is being done after the instructions of the after the instructions of the Indian Telecom Ministry. An amount of Rs 110 crore will be spent on setting up a new 525 watt solar panels plant by the next year. At present, the ITI has manufactured solar panels since 2017.

After setting up the new plant, Naini's unit will be able to increase its share in the solar panel manufacturing sector in the country.

Sources informed that going by the potential in the market, the company is all set to enhance its capacity and will be manufacturing solar panels that can harness solar energy of 525 W and further to 600 watt and 700 watt too.

"Solar panels and harnessing solar energy are the need of the hour and going by the

already manufacturing 325 watt solar panels will start manufacturing panels, each one of which can harness solar power up to 525W and more", said an official of ITI.

In terms of yearly production, the unit manufactures solar panels, which can harness 30 Mega Watt (MW) of solar energy comes to around 65,000 panels per year. With the enhanced capacity, the unit will start manufacturing around seven lakh panels per year. Along with increasing the production of solar panels,

the land of the Indian Telephone Industries (ITI) complex at Naini will be given on lease and rent and the ITI management has started its preparations too. The management has put out an advertisement for Expression of Interest (EOI) for leasing and renting out the unit located at Naini. Some private sector agencies have also shown interest in taking land in the ITI campus. The agencies have visited the premises. The team of experts had also visited the unit to see the possibilities. About 100

## Chahal appointed as Prayagraj DM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Navneet Singh Chahal has now been appointed as the new District Magistrate (DM) of Prayagraj. This was confirmed after the letter was issued late on Saturday night. After the transfer of the outgoing DM Sanjay Kumar Khatri, Navneet Singh Chahal was made the DM here. He is an IAS officer of 2011 batch. Prior to this he was the DM of Agra. After serving there for almost a year, he has been entrusted with the responsibility of a big district like Prayagraj. Chahal is a resident of Panipat. Before Agra, he has also been DM in Mathura. It is expected that the new DM can take charge on

The outgoing DM Sanjay Kumar Khatri was made the DM of Prayagraj on June 5,

The schools of Basic Education department will

be conducting quarterly assess-

ment of its students. For this,

tests will be conducted from

September 11 to 16. It will be

based on target/learning out-

comes achieved through Saral

App. The level of knowledge in

language and mathematics of

students from classes I to V and

that of mathematics and sci-



2021. His tenure here was for two years and three months. The assembly elections 2022, the elections of Municipal Corporation and Nagar Panchayat were successfully completed here during his tenure. Sanjay Kumar Khatri has been made ACEO Noida.

NOTIFICATION ISSUED: The Allahabad University administration has allowed the recently recruited

Quarterly assessment of

students to be conducted

research scholars under them. AU Registrar, Prof N K Shukla has issued a notification in this

Earlier, assistant professors in probation period were not allowed to enrol aspirants wishing to pursue PhD. This is being done by AU in accordance with UGC's 2022 regulations, which are applicable to all central universities.

So far, more than 300 teachers have been appointed in AU. These newly appointed assistant professors will conduct PhD of the candidates selected through Common Research Entrance Test (CRET) 2023 to be held this year. The AU administration has sought information about seats for CRET 2023 from the departments and colleges. Under CRET 2022, admission is being done against 709 seats of PhD

in AU and constituent colleges. Against the total number of PhD seats in 43 subjects, there are 316 PhD seats in universities main campus and 393 in colleges. "Each assistant professor can enrol two research scholars under them for PhD as per rules", said AU's PRO, Prof laya Kapoor.

Meanwhile, teacher recruitment is going on at dif-ferent constituent colleges of AU. At Allahabad Degree College, a constituent college of AU, teacher recruitment is being done after a gap of 18 years. Recruitment has started for 132 posts in 24 subjects at this college.

Till now the interview for Physics department has been completed. Likewise, 17 new teachers have been appointed in two subjects in CMP Degree

## Atal school's first session to commence from Sept 11

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

¬aking a meaningful initia-T tive, the state government has made arrangements for modern quality education for the children of construction workers and those who became destitute during the corona period. The classes for the first session will commence from September 11 in the Atal Residential School, built under the ambitious scheme of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. In this boarding school, con-structed under the Chief Minister Child Service Scheme, enrolled in Class 6 and they will get studies in English and Hindi mediums based on Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) pattern. This Atal Residential School in Karsada here has taken shape at a cost of Rs 66.54 crore.

The Principal of the school Amarnath Rai said that admission of 80 children has been done as per rules. Out of them, 40 are boys and 40 are girls. "The academic session will start in the school from September 11. All the teachers here will be experienced. There are separate hostels for the boys and girls and the curricu-



lum in the school will be based on CBSE board," he said, adding that there are smart classes equipped with CCTV cameras, solar panels, RO clean drinking water, sports activities, uniforms, study (books, note books) food etc and all the facilities will be given to the students free and the team of experienced teachers will take care of the personality building of the students along with

teaching and learning.

Kedar Prajapati, father of Shriyanshi, a student of Ghazipur, said that the biggest challenge in his life was to give good education to his children.

"Yogi ji has taken up this responsibility," he said. Umesh Kumar Bharti, father of Varanasi student Anurag, said that we have become relaxed about the future of the children. "Now our child will not do labour work but will do a good job," he said.

Commissioner Vandana said that there is a good opportunity among construction workers of the Varanasi division to give better education to their chil-

The children of Varanasi, Chandauli, Ghazipur and Jaunpur are admitted on the basis of entrance tests. Atal Awasiya Vidyalaya Yojana has better facilities for separate living for boys, girls, teachers and other personnel. In the Atal Residential School set up by the Yogi government, children will receive free residential education till class 12th. Atal Residential School will strengthen the future of the country.

At the same time, this scheme will also provide employment to many people. Overall, the Atal Residential School has been constructed in an area of 12.25 acres at a cost of Rs 66.54 crore.

classes VI to VIII will be tested. The printing of question papers and OMR sheets for evaluation is being done by the state project office through GeM portal. The selected printers will supply question papers and OMR sheets in the districts and later the same will be taken to schools. For students of classes I to

III one question paper will be provided for every five children. Question papers will be given to every student from class IV to VIII. The responsibility of conducting the examination with integrity will be of the basic education officer (BEO), block education officer and district coordinator (Training)

According to BSA, Prayagraj, Praveen Kumar Tiwari, the teachers will ask questions from the question paper to evaluate students of classes I to III in the form of an interview. On receiving the answer, they fill the OMR sheet pen. If there is no answer, the circles will be kept blank. After this the OMR sheet will be scanned through the Saral app. The duration of the exam will be one hour 30 minutes. The teachers will have to complete the scanning process within an hour. Likewise, for the evaluation of students of class IV to VIII, the OMR sheet will be filled by the students themselves. They have to explain it properly so that they do not make mistakes. Every student will also have to fill a nine-digit

RECRUITMENT EXAM: As many as 441 candidates will compete for each of the 1,876 sub-inspector posts in Delhi Police and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) such as the BSF, CISF, CRPF, ITBP and SSB in the Sub-Inspector (SI) recruitment examination-2023 being conducted by the Staff Selection Commission

The information pertains to a Right to Information (RTI). The SSC had sought online applications from candidates aged 20 to 25 till August 15 for the post of sub-inspector (S-I) recruitment examination-2023. The first phase of the computer-based examination is proposed to be held in October. According to the SSC, 8,27,602 candidates have applied for the posts. However, the Commission didn't specify how many applications have been received from UP and Bihar (the central region). For

recruitments to 4,300 posts in 2022, 1,75,329 candidates had applied from the central region.

The examination will consist of Paper-I (general intelligence and reasoning, general knowledge and general awareness, quantitative aptitude and English comprehension) and Physical Standard Test (PST)/ Physical Endurance Test (PET); Paper-II (English language and comprehension) and Detailed Medical Examination

There are 1,37,213 applicants in the unreserved category, 3,04,761 in Other Backward Classes (OBC), and 63,163 in the Economically Weaker Section (EWS) category.

Meanwhile, SSC (Central Region) has commenced the Multi-Tasking Staff (MTS) recruitment exam-2023 at 96 centres in 20 cities of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, from Friday. Rahul Sachan, regional officer, SSC (central region), said that the exam will be conducted from September 1 to 14.

## **'Kashi Vaishvik Gaurav** Samman' Samaroh held

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

Dedicating to the 200th birth anniversary of Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati, the Ministry of Culture on Sunday organised 'Kashi Vaishvik Gaurav Samman' Samaroh at Hotel Taj Ganges here under the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. The family members of as many as 11 great revolutionaries of the freedom struggle were honoured in the event. Besides, the actress of the film 'Champaran Matan' Falak Khan was also honoured.

Those who were honoured included Kiranjit, nephew of Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh, Ashfaq, great grandson of Ashfaq Ullah Khan, Satyasheel, grandson of Rajguru, Jitendra Pratap Singh, grandson of Shaheed Thakur Roshan Singh, Shailesh, great grandson of Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Jagdish, great grandson of Durga Bhabhi, Yogesh Rao Arun Rao from the sixth generation of Queen of Jhansi



from the fourth generation of Martyr Mangal Pandey, Anuj Thapar, great grandson of Sukhdev, Rajbahadur, nephew of Ram Prasad Bismil and Malkeet Singh, grandson of Udham Singh. Besides, the actress of the film 'Champaran Matan, which reached the semifinal of the Oscar Award,

Falak Khan was also honoured. Those who were honoured, remembered their great ancesrifices to liberate the country from the slavery of the British Rule and described them as the great heroes of the freedom

The chief guest was the Mayor Ashok Kumar Tiwari who said that the organisation of such events gives inspiration to nationalism. Presiding over the event, the organiser Akal Jaiswal of Algol Films said that the objective behind organising those who laid down their lives for the cause of the nation and also to apprise the new generation of their bravery. Neeraj Parikh welcomed

the guests in the beginning and Namit Parikh offered the vote of thanks at last. Simran Ahuja conducted the proceedings. Among those who graced the occasion were the president of Arya Samaj Sabha Suresh Chandra Arya and Ajay Sehgal.

#### Former MLA passes away PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ He was hospitalised where he fession. He was elected an

Asif Jafri (56), former MLA of Chail Assembly and leader of Samajwadi Party, died on Sunday morning. He was suffering from heart disease for a long time. He had gone to Chennai for a heart transplant.

died before the operation. On hearing the news of his demise a large number of people reached his residence to express their condolences.

Asif Jafri (56), a resident of Mahagaon in Chail tehsil, was a chartered accountant by pro-

MLA from Chail on Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) ticket in 2012. In 2017 too Asif Jafri contested the election on BSP ticket, but, he lost the election in BJP wave. Soon after he left the BSP along with many leaders of the district and joined the SP.

As soon as information about the death of the former MLA spread, there was a wave of mourning among SP workers. The mortal remains of Asif Jafri will be brought from Chennai by plane and will be kept at his residence in Kareli, Prayagraj, to pay last respects.

## New Mirzapur DM takes charge

**CORRESPONDENT** ■ MIRZAPUR

New District Magistrate (DM) of the district Priyanka Niranjan took the charge of office on Saturday evening. After coming to the district she visited Vindhyavasini temple and paid obeisance to the goddess amidst the chanting of the Vedic shlokas. She met MLA (City) Ratnakar Mishra at his residence as a courtesy call. An IAS officer of 2011 batch she had worked as the CDO in the

district about three years ago. During a brief interaction with the media she said it was the grace of the goddess that she got the opportunity to serve the district for the second time and she will do her best

for the betterment of the peoany problem. The meeting was ple. She said proper implementation of government schemes was her top priority and the target will be to facilitate the ARRESTED: The Jigna

deprived class. PEACE COMMITTEE MEETING: In view of the upcoming festivals a meeting of peace committee was held at Katra Kotwali police station on Saturday. Addressing it Circle Officer (CO/City) Parmanand Kushwaha sought suggestions from the people and assured that they will be considered sincerely. SHO Katra Kotwali Venkatesh Tiwari apprised the CO about the arrangements and assured that there is no problem in the area so far. The CO appealed to the gathering

to inform the police in case of

attended by Sonavar Khan and

police arrested an accused of theft on Saturday. On November 27 last year secretary Cooperative Committee, Jigna, Ram Bihari Singh, had lodged a case at the police station Jigna about the theft at the centre. The police succeeded in arresting three accused and recovering most of the stolen materials. Another accused whose name had come to light was remaining at large. New SO Ravi Kant Mishra directed the investigating officer to nab the accused and he was arrested on Saturday and sent to jail. The accused was identified as Lavlesh Yadav of Khaira village

under Jigna police station.

CAUGHT: Two human traffickers were caught by the RPF along with 10 minor boys on Saturday. The RPF during routine checking of the train no. 12487 Seemanchal Express found 10 minor boys suspicious in the D compartment of general bogie. After interrogation the boys told about the persons who were taking them to Firozabad to work in a bangle factory. The RPF took two persons identified Saddam Husain of Kayani village and Khursheed Anwar of Bhamara Pashchim Tola, both under Kasba police station, Purnia district, Bihar, into custody. The RPF handed over the traffickers along with boys to GRP for completing the legal formalities.

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

## Shining bright

Solar mission Aditya-L1 is a stellar triumph for space research programme and ISRO

ven before celebrations for Chandrayaan-3's successful soft landing on lunar south pole could get over, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is back in business: this time, the mission is to the Sun to study it more closely. In the vast expanse of our solar system, there is no celestial body more awe-inspiring than the Sun. It has fascinated humanity for aeons. Every culture has paid rich tributes to it and, in India, we have had a great fascination with the Sun, the giver of life and energy. Now ISRO has embarked on an Odyssey that promises to unlock the Sun's secrets and elevate India's standing in space research to new heights. The Sun Mission Aditya-L1's successful liftoff from Sriharikota is a testament to our scientists' vision and dedication. Though the four-month mission is still in infancy and we can only hope it will accomplish all its tasks, one thing is for sure --- India has now set a firm foot in space exploration. The Aditya-L1 mission, named after the Sun god, seeks to study the star and its

composition as never before. While India has made significant strides in space research over the years, this mission marks a pivotal moment in the nation's scientific journey. It underscores ISRO's commitment to advancing our understanding of the cosmos and its unwavering dedication to pushing the boundaries of space exploration. The Sun's behaviour, its magnetic fields, solar flares and the impact of solar radiation on Earth's climate are all areas that require further understanding. Aditya-L1 is poised to address all these mysteries, and more.

One of the mission's primary objectives is to study the outermost layer of the Sun's atmosphere, known

as the Corona. This is an area of intense scientific interest because it plays a pivotal role in phenomena like solar winds, which can affect Earth's space weather. By studying the Corona, Aditya-L1 aims to enhance our ability to predict and mitigate the impact of solar activity on our technological infrastructure, such as satellites and power grids. The mission will also provide valuable insights into the Sun's magnetic field dynamics, helping us comprehend the underlying mechanisms behind solar cycles and their influence on climate patterns on Earth. This research has the potential to contribute significantly to our understanding of climate change and its link to solar variability. The success of Aditya-L1 is not only a scientific achievement but also a matter of national pride. ISRO scientists, known for their tireless dedication and resourcefulness even on shoestring budgets, have once again stamped their expertise on the global stage. The successful execution of this mission will undoubtedly enhance India's reputation in the field of space research, showcasing the nation's capabilities in developing and executing space missions. Furthermore, Aditya-L1 is poised to foster international collaboration. Space exploration is a global endeavour, and India's participation in studying the Sun will undoubtedly lead to collaborative efforts with other space agencies. Good going, ISRO!



An artist gives finishing touches to an idol of Lord Ganesha ahead of Ganesh Chaturthi festival, in Amritsar

## Games people play in Pakistan



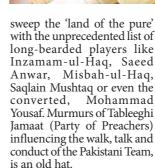
**BHOPINDER SINGH** 

Pakistan's cricket players, society and the state have walked too deep into the proverbial 'marsh' of religiosity and its unrestrained outcomes

he cricketing term Gentleman's Game is not just a tad bit sexist, but even inappropriate considering the sheer number of scams attached to the same. Only some like the disgraced Kiwi player, Lou Vincent, triggered a counterintuitive hope with unfiltered confessions like. "My name is Lou Vincent and I am a cheat. I have abused my position as a professional sportsman on several occasions by choosing to accept money through fixing". He had been banned and admitted guilt stating, "I abused the game I love. I had to put things right. Speaking out. Exposing the truth. Laying bare the things I have done wrong is the only way I can find to begin to put things right." It was unusual and redemptive honesty, as others caught would typically resort to deflective denials, contexualisation, or mealy-mouthed inanities. While it is a systemic curse that afflicts all cricketing nations, Pakistan leads the roll of infamy, by miles.

Some of the most naturally talented Pakistani Cricketers have fallen at the altar of amorality, substance abuse and greed like Mohammad Amir, Salman Butt or the surreally gifted, Mohammad Asif. Many explanations have been made to explain the Pakistani players' indiscretions like endemic corruption within the country, team management, and even in the Pakistani Cricket Board (which can deny opportunities to the deserving), lack of adequate earning opportunities like endorsements, sudden exposure to hedonistic lifestyle or even the players maximizing their opportunities (even illegally) given their humble socio-economic backgrounds and short shelf-life, as players. All is true, but the same conditions apply to other subcontinental teams like Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka, and they certainly do not have the same scale of muck. But there seems to be yet

another phenomenon that is peculiar to the tainted Pakistani layers i.e., the rediscovery and taking to puritanical religiousity.
The last couple of decades have seen the Pakistani dressing room mirror the revisionist winds that regress into the dark alleys of



Ahmed Shehzad typified the tainted Pakistani player template when he was caught and banned for doping (the ban got extended after he was found guilty of breaching the rules of suspension). However, Ahmed Shehzad is even more infamous for attempting to proselytize Sri Lankan player, Tillakaratne Dilshan (who had converted from Islam to Buddhism of his own volition) by getting caught on camera provoking, "If you are a non-Muslim and you turn Muslim, no matter whatever you do in your life, (you will go) straight to heaven". Saeed Anwar was probably amongst the first to take to ultra-religiousity and the once flamboyant team of the likes of Imran Khan, Zaheer Abbas, Waseem Raja, Wasim Akram etc., suddenly started looking rather pious and conservative.

But religiosity, if not tempered with pragmatism and evolutionary necessities, can



THE CARETAKER **GOVERNMENT IN** PAKISTAN IS STUCK AT THE CROSSROADS OF REINING IN **RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM** WITHIN AND MANAGING THE CONSEQUENTIAL GLOBAL **PERCEPTIONS** 

politics and societal tensions, which can then become a slippery slope of guaranteed backsliding. 'Born-again' believers can then be amongst the most hardline in terms of thinking and action. The short-lived cricket career of Pakistani cricketer Khalid Latif, who too was convicted in the shame of 2017 Pakistan Super-League (PSL) spot-fixing scandal - where Khalid was found guilty of convincing other players to partake fixing and using certain bat grips to convey messages to bookies that spot-booking terms were agreed, is a classic case of rebounding with religion, as a means of redeeming themselves, in the public and their own eyes.

In 2018, well after Khalif Latif had been shunted out of cricketing possibilities, he hit the headlines for offering a 'hit' on the controversial and provocative, Dutch anti-immigrant politician, Geert Wilders, for attempting to hold a cartooning competition for caricaturing the Holy Prophet. While the event was thankfully cancelled for being unnecessarily provocative, the Dutch politician has since remained defiant, even as Khalid had offered \$23,000 for killing Geert Wilders and others. Now, Khalid has been called into question in the Dutch courts for promoting violence,

and the verdict is eerily due on September 11th! Expectedly, many in Pakistan had lionized the almost-forgotten Khalid Latif after his death threats, and equally many had slammed Khalid's call for bloodlust - now the case is back in the news, even as Pakistan has got caught even further in the spiralling vortex of intolerance and religiousinspired violence, since 2018.

As far as the far-right pol-

itics of politician Geert Wilders are concerned, he has been convicted of hate speech and insulting certain communities in the past and is therefore expected to muddy the waters even further, to enhance his racist and populist appeal with the latest case, with more grandstanding. The caretaker Government in Pakistan is stuck at the crossroads of reining in religious extremism within and managing the consequential global perceptions, as well as the plausible optics and accusations of seemingly defending someone guilty of insulting the Holy Prophet. It is a common conundrum with the Pakistan cricket players, Pakistan has walked too deep into the proverbial 'marsh' of religiosity.

(1 ne writer, a military veter an, is a former Lt Governor of Åndaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry. The views expressed are personal)

#### THE EDITOR

## Transform workspace with innovative designs

Design choices reflect a company's values, enhance employee satisfaction, and boost creativitiy writes Sammeer Pakvasa

≺he modern corporate landscape is rapidly evolving, and so are the paradigms of office spaces. A workspace isn't just a place to work; it is an extension of a company's culture, values, accomplishments, and brand identity. As organisations recognise the pivotal role a conducive environment plays in employee satisfaction, productivity, and creativity, innovative design solutions have taken centre

**Bringing Nature Indoors** Imagine stepping into an office adorned with verdant walls, exuding a sense of tranquillity and freshness. Green walls, or vertical gardens, not only enhance aesthetics but also contribute to improved air quality and reduced stress levels. The lush foliage can transform a mundane space into an inviting oasis, boosting both physical and mental well-being. **Collaborative Spaces: Fostering Teamwork** 

Collaboration lies at the heart of innovation. Introducing collaborative spaces can encourage spontaneous interactions and brainstorming sessions. These



spaces, equipped with comfortable seating, writable walls, and interactive technology, facilitate idea exchange and teamwork, driving creativity to new heights. **Breaking Down Barriers** 

Say goodbye to rigid cubicles and hello to open desking. This design trend promotes flexibility and encourages communication among employees. Removing physical barriers allows for a more inclusive and transparent work environment, where colleagues can easily share

ideas and insights. **Tech-Savvy Workspaces** 

The Internet of Things (IoT) has revolutionised how we interact with our surroundings. In a corporate setting, IoT integration can optimise office operations, from smart lighting and temperature control to personalised workstations based on employee preferences. This

decreasing energy consump-

**Lockers: Personalised Storage Solutions** 

Modern workplaces are embracing minimalism, encouraging employees to declutter their desks. Providing lockers or storage units can help individuals keep their personal belongings organised while maintaining a clutter-free work-

**Acoustics: Designing for** Soundscapes

Noise pollution can hinder concentration and productivity. Strategic acoustic design, with sound-absorbing materials and spatial layouts, creates an environment where individuals can focus without disturbances, ultimately enhancing work quality. **Open Ceilings:** 

Open ceilings characterised by exposed pipes, ducts, and beams, have become an architectural trend symbolising transparency and creativity. This design choice not only adds an industrial aesthetic but also maximises vertical space, making the area feel more expansive

and open improves comfort while Privacy in Shared Spaces

Amidst the open layout, it is important to provide spaces for private conversations. Phone booths equipped with soundproofing ensure that confidential discussions can take place without disturbing the overall work-

**Creative Lighting Ideas:** Lighting is more than just functionality; it sets the mood and ambience of a space. Innovative lighting designs, such as dynamic LED installations or adjustable colour temperatures, can invigorate the workspace, promoting focus during tasks and relaxation during breaks. **Fun Zones:** 

A well-rounded work-life balance includes moments of recreation. Incorporating fun zones with games such as air hockey, table tennis board games, and relaxation pods provides employees with opportunities to unwind and recharge, boosting overall morale and creativity.

Innovative design solutions have the power to metamorphose corporate workspaces that nurture productivity, creativity, and well-being.

(The writer is the MD and CEO of Eleganz Interiors)

#### **ONE NATION, ONE ELECTION**

Sir — On the face of it, the 'One Nation, One Election' brainchild of the national poll panel, recommending the simultaneous conduct of elections to the Parliamentary and State Assemblies, is steadily gaining ground across all political spectrums. This can be attributed to a host of advantages it offers. By conducting elections simultaneously, a significant amount of time and the staggering financial burden of hundreds of crores of rupees, along with the immense manpower required, and the subsequent expenditure of taxpayers' hardearned money on various poll-related expenses, can be avoided in one go, serving the greater good. Ironically, political leaders who oppose the proposed simultaneous conduct of elections might be dri-

ven by personal interests. Interestingly, the poll panel has also highlighted the hurdles standing in the way of conducting simultaneous elections, which include a large number of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) devices, involving a total cost of Rs. 9,284.15 crore for procurement. Furthermore, the replacement of these machines will be required every 15 years, incurring additional expenses. Additionally, warehousing costs are expected to increase naturally.

Azhar A Khan | Rampur

#### **GET THE PRIORITIES RIGHT**

Sir — It is indeed necessary to employ rockets for weather predictions, the search for oil, natural gas, minerals, and strengthening communication networks. However, what is the use of moon missions for the welfare of the people? The top fifteen countries in the Human Development Index do not allocate funds for moon missions simply because they prioritise the allocation of their limited resources for the benefit of their citizens. India has fallen to the 107th position out of 121 countries in the Global Hunger Index. Chandravaan-3 cannot serve as a solution for millions of hungry children in India.

### **Ramon Magsaysay Awards**

he Ramon Magsaysay Award is Asia's premier prize and highest honor, presented annually to individuals or organizations in Asia who demonstrate the same selfless service and transformative influence that characterized the life of the late and beloved Filipino leader. This year, on the 65th anniversary of the Award, four recipients have been announced. They are:

 Ravi Kannan (India), a surgical oncologist and the director of Cachar Cancer Hospital and Research Centre in Assam. He has been providing pro-poor and people-centered healthcare and cancer care to millions of patients in the region

• Miriam Coronel-Ferrer (Philippines), a peace-building pioneer and the first woman to chair a peace panel that signed a comprehensive peace agreement with a rebel group. She has been advocating for the inclusion of women and other marginalized sectors in the peace process.

 Eugenio Lemos (Timor-Leste), a food sovereignty visionary and the founder of HASATIL, a network of grassroots organizations that promote sustainable agriculture, environmental protection, and community empowerment in his

Korvi Rakshand (Bangladesh), an education-for-all champion and the founder of JAAGO Foundation, a youth-led organization that provides free online education to underprivileged children in remote areas through volunteer teachers.

These awardees have demonstrated great spirit and transformative leadership in their respective fields, inspiring many others to follow their example. They will receive their awards in a virtual ceremony on September 30, 2023.

Sabita Kumari | Hazaribagh

India now ranks 132nd in the Human Development Index. India needs to focus its full attention on education, healthcare, food security, and employment opportunities. Utilizing public funds for moon missions, amidst poor conditions in these sectors, seems akin to wearing an expensive coat over a pair of tattered trousers. Some may argue that moon missions enhance India's prestige among our neighbors. However, we must not forget that while India has fallen to the 107th position in the Global Hunger Index, What would be more fruitful: ensuring the health and education of our children or the vanity of moon missions?

Sujit De | Kolkata

**NCERT DEEMED-TO-BE UNIVERSITY** Sir — Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan announced that the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has been granted the

status of a deemed-to-be university on its 63rd foundation day. By bestowing this status, the prime educational institution of the nation will now have immense opportunities for global collaborations.

NCERT will now have the privilege of becoming a high-class research university and will be able to offer opportunities for global collaborations and contributions to the global educational landscape.

NCERT has established itself as a prominent organization in educational research and has actively shaped school education, teacher training, and adult literacy since its foundation in 1961. NCERT will now have the ability to initiate new

courses or programs in any field on its existing campus and approved off-campus

M Pradyu | Kannur

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### **FIRST COLUMN UNDERSTAND THE HUMAN MIND**

The mind oscillates between the past and the future and is seldom in the present moment



The date, is 8th January, a Sunday. The weather was salubrious and after a sumptuous meal, I switched on the Yoga Nidra meditation of Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, slipping into a much-needed afternoon

Little did I realize, I was neither in a state of stupor or reverie, nor carousing after the sumptuous meal, but in a state of deep rest. Shortly thereafter I headed for a radio show on All India Radio, Rainbow FM, Hyderabad for an interview on my book, The Matter of the Mind. The interview drew warm applause and encomiums. A friend texted on WhatsApp, "Lage raho, Munna Bhai." As I was surfing through congratulatory messages, my mind meandered to a character in the film Lage Raho Munna Bhai.

The character was Khurana, who upon the advice of a soothsayer wore several rings on his fingers; and the simple Khurana surname became Kkhurana to overcome obstacles in life and ward off the malefic influence of planets. He did not possess an alert or robust mind. So long as desires linger in the mind, it cannot be at complete rest or experience peace. Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita says, "You cannot get into yoga unless you drop the desires or hankerings in you.'

An unwavering and undaunted mind can overcome negative emotions and feelings by applying the principles of the 7Cs of the mind. These are coaching the mind, characterizing it, communicating with consciousness, commitment, and consistency in the mind, calming the mind, besides enhancing contagious positive energy and aura.



There is a saying in the Bible that if we focus on plenty galore, it magnifies, however, if the mind devotes time towards negativity, nature by sleight of hand takes away whatever was provided and we are in a state of privation. This is nothing but the secret of the Law of Gratefulness. The human mind constantly oscillates between the past and the future and is seldom in the present moment. This is the intrinsic character or chitta of the mind. Invariably, the mind gravitates towards self-reproach and moves towards past events in life. It gets encompassed with fretfulness and becomes anxious when it relocates itself to the future.

Now there are different ways to remain in the present, to elevate our consciousness. Individuals can go for long walks and be in communion with nature, footslog on the treadmill or sweat it out by exercising, reading inspirational literature and keeping the company of people blessed with positive thoughts to increase their prana levels. Chinese military strategist Sun Tzu wrote, "In peace prepare for war, in war prepare for peace. The art of war is of vital importance to the state."

We temporise, exercising only if we put on weight rather than to remain physically fit, students dally to study. The list is endless and in the ultimate analysis, we add liabilities to the balance sheet of life.

Change is inevitable, everything is transitory, and ideologies or thought processes keep altering. However, it is paramount within the ocean churn of change that the mind nurtures a few aspects of life to be consistent. In this age of unabashed aspirations and hankering, these are positive qualities like being grateful to nature or saying a word of thanks, essentially remaining good human beings. If we train ourselves to moor the craft of the mind, to look at the sunshine and radiance with zealousness by religiously practising the first 6Cs, it will automatically be sleeved with contagious positivity, generating an aura of propitious and unalloyed energy, which assumes magnetic properties.

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

## 'Indigenous' fertilisers must be explored



UTTAM GUPTA

The government must pursue indigenous sources of fertiliser raw materials to minimise India's vulnerabilities on imports

he enactment of two laws viz. The Mines and Minerals (Development Regulation) Amendment Act, 2023 and the Offshore Areas Mineral (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2023 in the just concluded monsoon session of the parliament bodes well for the Indian fertilizer sector. While the first law paves the way for the auction of critical mineral potash (besides lithium and graphite) blocks for exploration and processing in India, the second provides a fixed 50year production lease for offshore min-

Potash or 'K' is amongst the three major plant nutrients (the other two being Nitrogen or 'N' and Phosphate or 'P') needed for increasing production of foodgrains and other agricultural products. Its requirements are met 'entirely' from imports (these are sourced mostly from Belarus, Canada, Russia, Israel, and Jordan) as India doesn't have its resources. This is primarily because our policymakers in the past never bothered to prop up indigenous explo-

Besides, the ecosystem under which the fertilizer industry in India operates hasn't been conducive to driving companies to come up with innovative ideas that help in surmounting the deficiency of resources or optimally utilizing them. This, in turn, has to do with the obsession of successive political regimes to make fertilizers available at a low price, come what may.

For close to five decades, they have

promised to deliver all types of fertilizers at low maximum retail price (MRP) unrelated to the cost of production and distribution which is higher. Now, if a manufacturer or importer is told by the government to supply at a low MRP without at the same time promising that he would be compensated for the excess of cost over it, he won't. So, the latter commits to compensate the former for

the excess by way of subsidy.
This has led to a ballooning fertilizer subsidy bill which hit a whopping Rs 255,000 crore during 2022-23 against a few hundred crore in the late 1970s when the subsidy scheme was introduced. Apart from increasing production and consumption of fertilizers, a paramount reason was escalating cost – most of it going to pay for heavy import bills (during 2021-22, the total value of fertilizer imports by India, inclusive of inputs used in domestic production, was US\$24.3 billion or close to a mammoth Rs 200,000 crore).

During the initial stages, this approach could be justified as India needed to increase fertilizer use - in pursuit of its overarching goal of food security - on the one hand and supplying it mostly from domestic production on the other. Now, when fertilizer use has increased substantially (in fact, there is excess use of Urea, a dominant source of 'N' supply) and the domestic industry has also built up its production capabilities, it can't be justified any more. Yet, the government continues giving wrong

Farmers know that they will continue to get fertilizers at a low price, so they don't bother to improve the efficiency of use. The manufacturers and importers know that excess of the cost of supply-



**AFOREMENTIONE** THE POTENTIAL OF ATTRACTING INVESTMENT INCLUDING BY **GLOBAL FERTILIZER** MAJORS IN THE MINING AND PROCESSING OF POTASH **RESERVES PARTICULARLY** IN RAJASTHAN

(The writer is a policy

analyst; views are

Government is there to pick up the tab. Above all, there is no incentive (in fact, no compulsion) to even look for the possibility of finding raw material resources D LAWS HAVE

within the territorial bounds of India. When the Centre is more than willing to pay 'any price' for their imports however high (all coming from taxpayers' kitty) thereby immunizing both the suppliers and the farmers from its consequences, why would anyone make efforts to look for them within India? Another flaw in the policy

by farmers would be reimbursed

as a subsidy, so they don't mind

incurring higher costs. And, global suppliers know that even if they

charge high prices, they won't face

demand resistance as the Union

approach deserves mention.

Before 1991 when a major economic crisis engulfed India, all fertilizer types (apart from urea, there are 22 grades of fertilisers being the source of 'P' and 'K', di-ammonium phosphate or DAP and muriate of potash or MOP are the most widely used) were meted out similar treatment in as much as all suppliers got subsidy on 'firm specific basis. In 1991, when we sought the help of the IMF/World Bank, the latter insisted on the elimination of fertilizer subsidies within three years - as one of the reform conditions.

The then PV Narasimha Raoled government settled for the removal of subsidy on 'P' and 'K' (call them non-urea fertilizers) even while retaining control and subsidy on urea. Those deci-

sions were made effective from August 25, 1992.

But, within a little over one month i.e. from October 1, 1992, subsidy was restored on the former. Under its new incarnation, all suppliers of non-urea fertilizers were given a 'uniform' subsidy even as subsidy on Urea continued to be 'firm-specific'.

Today, all fertilizer types receive subsidies. But, thanks to the control tab on urea it remains the darling of all political bosses whereas non-urea fertilizers are at the receiving end most of the time; courtesy of the de-control tab they got post-1992. Unlike the former, where increasing subsidies help keep MRP immune to ment including by global fertilizcost hikes, the government genthe latter. This leads to an ularly in Rajasthan (the state also increase in prices of non-urea stuff as costs escalate.

Together with a step-motherly treatment non-urea fertilizers receive in other areas (for instance, they get reimburse-ment of freight cost only for movement from the factory/port to the rail-head, on urea, the entire freight cost for movement up to the retail point is given), this has led to an imbalance in fertiliser use. Thus, there is excessive use of 'N' vis-à-vis 'P' and 'K' even as the present NPK use ratio at 6.7:2.4:1 (against the desired 4:2:1) is tilted in favour of 'N'. This, in turn, has led to a decline in crop yield, deterioration in soil health and adverse impact on the environment. Why can't demand resistance for 'P' & 'K' fertilizers propel their suppliers to rethink

there is government intervention. For instance, even if a supplier brings MOP at a lower cost, the government can reduce subsidy; hence no incentive. That apart, since 2021-22, Modi has substantially hiked subsidies on non-urea fertilizers also to offset the steep increase in their cost triggered by the Ukraine war, as is the case with urea. During 2022-23, of the total subsidy bill Rs 255,000 crore, it spent Rs 86,000 crore on these fertilizers. This has only strengthened complacency amongst all stakeholders.

The aforementioned laws have the potential of attracting invester majors in the mining and processing of potash reserves partic offers good prospects for rock phosphate – the raw material for 'P' nutrient where also India's import dependence is a high of 80-90 per cent) besides exploring these from under the sea.

The government must pursue indigenous sources of supplying fertilizer raw materials to minimize India's vulnerabilities to total reliance on imports (with Russia and Belarus alone contributing 50 per cent of our potash imports, the Ukraine war has made us even more vulnerable). It should also overhaul the eco-system for fertilizers by dismantling the extant controls, giving suppliers pricing freedom and subsidies directly to farmers. It can use the money saved by stopping misuse – inherent in existing systems - to give incentives to firms engaged in mining.

## Politics has no place in the houses of gods

The politicians should refrain from provoking the believers and poking fun at their beliefs

t is unfortunate and saddening to note that a par-Lticular religion in Kerala has come under attack from all political parties that swear by secularism, tolerance and pluralism. Onam, portrayed as the "national festival" of Kerala is an occasion when Mahabali is portrayed as a buffoon and comedian. Though this mythological character is described as the former ruler of the State, his image as a monarch evokes laughter and fun from the people. Add to this the flippant dialogues delivered by him in TV pro-

grams and plays! Days before Onam, Speaker of Kerala Legislative Assembly A N Shamseer, who had declared his aversion for anything associated with Sanatana Dharma, made fun

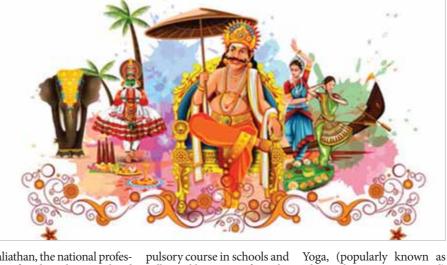


KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

(The writer is a special correspondent with the Pioneer.

The views expressed

of Lord Ganapathi which hurt the devotees of the God with an elephant's head. Shamseer was propagating the virtues of scientific temper and he chose Lord Ganapathi as the mascot of reactionary forces. Addressing school students, the CPI-M leader with his open proclivity for Islamists, asked them not to worship such false icons because plastic surgery was unknown in the era of Ganapathi and Lord Shiva. It cannot be that Shamseer is unaware of Charaka and Susrutha, the founding fathers of Ayurveda and who wrote Charaka Samhitha and Susrutha Samhitha, the compendiums of Ayurveda which are widely referred to by medical scientists and physicians across the world. It was Dr M S



Valiathan, the national professor of India who translated Charaka Samhitha to English.

colleges alike. But justifying the scientific temper should not be done by ridiculing the age-old Scientific temper has to be appreciated and made a com-

Thoppukaranam in Tamil) has been found to boost brain power as well as strengthen Indian traditions. Super Brain memory by scientists and

physical therapists like Annie Pilates. Moreover, Lord Ganesha does not belong to the Hindus alone. It was the Sarvajanik Ganesh Festivals in Maharashtra organized by LokManya Tilak that integrated the people to fight for free-dom from the colonial mas-The Sanatan Dharma pon-

tificates that all religions are equal while the Semitic religions shun that teaching. While obscurantist and reactionary rituals should be banned by law, the same should be made applicable to miracle crusades and wonder healings which are practised across India with impunity. Religions and Gods should be left to the personal business of devotees. While Hindus are ridiculed for their beliefs and

ial office of Charlie Hebdo, a political satirical magazine in France that published cartoons of Prophet Mohammed. On 7 January 2015, two gunmen gatecrashed into the mag-azine's office and massacred 12 editorial staff as retaliation. The likes of Shamseer should understand that the Hindus do not hurt the religious sentiments of anybody and their response to the insults meted out to the God who removes all obstacles should not be seen as a weakness. The latest development coming from Kochi is a cause for worry. There is substance to the demand by Hindus that the temples be left at the hands of devotees and believers. Politics has no place in the Houses of Gods.

Gods, one should not forget

what happened in the editor-

## Pope gives 'noble' Chinese people shout-out in bid to warm ties

 $P_{\text{greeting to China's "noble"}}^{\text{ope Francis sent a special}}$ people on Sunday, giving them a special shout-out at the end of a Mass celebrated in neighbouring Mongolia during the firstever papal visit that was largely overshadowed by Beijing and its crackdown on religious minorities.

Francis brought up to the altar the retired and current bishops of Hong Kong, Cardinal John Hon Tong and Cardinal-elect Stephen Chow, clasped their hands and told the crowd that included many mainland Chinese pilgrims that he wished them all well.

"I want to take advantage of their presence to send a warm greeting to the noble Chinese people," Francis said. "To all the (Chinese) people I wish the best and to always go forward, always progress.

"I ask Chinese Catholics to be good Christians and good citizens," he added, to cheers from the crowd in the Steppe Arena, in the capital, Ulaanbaatar.It was the first and

licly mentioned China during his four-day visit, despite the large shadow that Beijing has cast over the trip and Mongolia.

ne pioneer

China's ruling Communist Party has been waging a yearslong, sweeping crackdown on religion, tightening controls, especially on Christianity and Islam that are viewed as foreign imports and potential challengers to Communist author-

The crackdown targeting Uyghurs in the northwestern Xinjiang region has been especially fierce, with claims that more than 1 million ethnic minority members were forcibly sent to prison-like reeducation centres where many have said they were tortured, sexually assaulted, and forced to abandon their language and

The UN last year accused China of serious human rights violations that may amount to "crimes against humanity". China has denied targeting Uyghurs and others for their religion and culture, denouncing the accusations as lies by the West and saying its crackdown



Pope Francis on a wheelchair leaves at the end of a meeting with religious leaders at the Hun Theatre some 15 kilometers south of the Mongolian capital Ulaanbaatar, Sunday.

was aimed at quashing separatism, terrorism and religious

The pope did send a telegram of greeting to President Xi Jinping as his aircraft flew early Friday through Chinese airspace, offering him "divine blessings of unity and peace". The Beijing foreign ministry acknowledged the gesture and said it showed "friendliness and goodwill"

But while small groups of Chinese pilgrims attended Francis' main Mass here, no mainland Chinese bishop was believed to have been given per-

mission to travel for the papal visit to Mongolia. Their absence underscored the tenuousness of a 2018 Vatican-China accord over Catholic bishop nominations, which Beijing has violated by making appointments unilaterally. Earlier Sunday, China's crackdown on faith groups was indirectly apparent as Francis highlighted, by contrast, Mongolia's long tradition flicts continuing to afflict so many of the world's peoples," he said. of religious tolerance: He presided over an interfaith event with Mongolian shamans, Buddhist monks, Muslim, Jewish, Shinto leaders and a Russian Orthodox priest. Sitting among them on a

theatre stage, Francis listened intently as the faith leaders described their beliefs, their relationship with heaven and the peace and harmony their faiths bring the world. Several said the traditional Mongolian ger, or round-shaped yurt, was a potent symbol of harmony with the divine - a warm place of family unity, open to the heavens, where strangers are welcome."The fact that we are meeting together in one place already sends a message: It shows that the religious traditions, for all their distinctiveness and diversity, have impressive potential for the benefit of ociety as a whole," Francis said.

"If the leaders of nations were to choose the path of encounter and dialogue with others, it would be a decisive contribution to ending the con-

Francis is in Mongolia to minister to one of the world's smallest and newest Catholic communities and highlight Mongolia's tradition of tolerance in a region where the Holy See's relations with neighbouring China and Russia are often strained. Beijing's crackdown on religious minorities has been a constant backdrop to the trip, even though the Vatican hopes to focus attention instead on Mongolia and its 1,450 Catholics.

Hong Kong Cardinal-elect Chow, who made a historic visit to Beijing earlier this year, accompanied 40 pilgrims to Mongolia. He declined to discuss the absence of his mainland Chinese counterparts, focusing instead on the importance of Francis' visit to Mongolia for the Asian church."

I think the Asian church is also a growing church. Not as fast as Africa - Africa is growing fast - but the Asian church also has a very important role to play now in the universal church," he told reporters.

demanded that Catholicism and all other religions adhere strictly to party directives and undergo "Sinicization." In the vast Xinjiang region, that has led to the demolition of an unknown number of mosques, but in most cases, it has meant the removal of domes, minarets and exterior crosses from churches."We really hope that gradually our government and leaders will accept him and invite him to visit our country," said Yan Zhiyong, a Chinese Catholic businessman in Mongolia who attended an event on Saturday with Francis at the city's cathedral. "That would be the most joyful thing for us." Most Mongolians follow the dominant Gelugpa school of Tibetan Buddhism and revere its leader, the Dalai

As a result, many Mongolians are concerned with the Communist Party's opposition to the exiled Tibetan leader and its heavy-handed control over monastic life and what appears to be a concerted effort to gradually eliminate Tibetan

## **Russia attacks Ukrainian port** before Putin, Erdogan talks

Two people were hospitalised following a 3½-hour Russian drone barrage against port infrastructure in Ukraine's Odesa region on Sunday, officials said.

The attack comes a day before Russian President Vladimir Putin is due to meet with his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan to discuss the resumption of food shipments from Ukraine under a Black Sea grain agreement that Moscow broke off from in

Russian forces fired 25 Iranian-made Shahed drones along the Danube River in the early hours of Sunday, 22 of which were shot down by air defenses, the Ukrainian air

force said on Telegram. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's chief of staff, Andriy Yermak, described the assault as part of a Russian drive "to provoke a food crisis and hunger in the world."

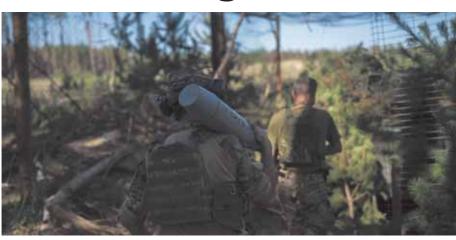
Moscow hasn't commented on the attack.

Elsewhere in Ukraine, two people were killed and two others were wounded during Russian shelling Sunday on Donetsk area.

Artillery fire hit eight settlements across the region, Ukraine's National Police wrote on Telegram.

Ukrainian prosecutors also announced Sunday that they had opened a war crimes investigation into the death of a police officer killed by Russian shelling on the town of Seredyna-Buda on Saturday afternoon.

Two other police officers and one civilian were wounded during the attack, which hit Ukraine's north-eastern Sumy



A Ukrainian soldier carries a shell towards a howitzer on the front line in the outskirts of Lyman, Ukraine, Tuesday, Aug. 15, 2023. Moscow army is staging a ferocious push in northeast Ukraine designed to distract Ukrainian forces from thei counteroffensive and minimize the number of troops Kyiv is able to send to more important battles in the south.

### What's at stake in Erdogan & Putin meeting?

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan will meet with Vladimir Putin on Monday, hoping to persuade the Russian leader to rejoin the Black Sea grain deal that Moscow broke off from in July.

The meeting in Sochi on Russia's southern coast comes about when and where the two leaders might meet.

Erdogan previously said that Putin would travel to Turkey in August.

The Kremlin refused to renew the grain agreement six weeks ago. The deal — bro-kered by the United Nations and Turkey in July 2022 — had allowed nearly 33 million metric tons (36 million tons) of grain and other commodities to leave three Ukrainian ports safely despite Russia's war.

However, Russia pulled out after claiming that a parallel deal promising to remove member Turkey, however, has

**Istanbul** (AP): Turkish obstacles to Russian exports of food and fertilizer hadn't been honored.

Moscow complained that restrictions on shipping and insurance hampered its agricultural trade, even though it has shipped record amounts of wheat since last year.

Since Putin withdrew from repeatedly pledged to renew arrangements that helped avoid a food crisis in parts of Africa, the Middle East and Asia. Ukraine and Russia are major suppliers of wheat, barley, sunflower oil and other goods that developing nations rely on.

The Turkish president has maintained close ties to Putin during the 18-month war in Ukraine. Turkey hasn't joined Western sanctions against Russia following its invasion, emerging as a main trading partner and logistical hub for Russia's overseas trade.NATO

also supported Ukraine, sending arms, meeting Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and backing Kyiv's bid to join NATO.Erdogan angered Moscow in July when he allowed five Ukrainian com-

manders to return home. The soldiers had been captured by Russia and handed over to remain there for the duration

Putin and Erdogan — both authoritarian leaders who have been in power for more than two decades — are said to have a close rapport, fostered in the wake of a failed coup against Erdogan in 2016 when Putin was the first major leader to offer his support.Traditional rivals Turkey and Russia grew closer over the following years as trade levels rose and they embarked on joint projects such as the Turkstream gas pipeline and Turkey's first nuclear power plant.

## Biden assures Florida victims support

President Joe Biden on Saturday saw from the sky Hurricane Idalia's impact across a swath of Florida before he set out on a walking tour of a city recovering from the storm. Notably absent was Governor Ron DeSantis, a Republican presidential candidate who declined to join Biden after he suggested that the Democrat's presence could hinder disaster response efforts. Biden, when asked about his rival's

absence, said he was not disappointed by the turn of events, but welcomed the presence of Rick Scott, one of the state's two Republican US senators.

He pledged the federal government's total support for Floridians. "I'm here today to deliver a clear message to the people of Florida and throughout the Southeast," Biden said after the walking tour. He spoke outdoors near a church that had parts of its sheet metal roof peeled back by Idalia's powerful winds and a home half crushed by a fallen tree. "As I've told your governor, if there's anything your state needs, I'm ready to mobilize that support," he continued. "Anything they need related to these storms. Your nation has your back and we'll be with you until the job is done."

Earlier, the mayor of Live Oak, which is about 80 miles east of Tallahassee, the state capital, thanked Biden and first lady Jill Biden for coming and "showing us that we're important to you."

"Everybody thinks Florida is rich, but this is not one of the richest counties in the state and there are people who are suffering," said Frank Davis, adding he knew of no loss of life or serious injury.
At Suwannee Pineview Elementary

School, where the Bidens were briefed on praise for early disaster declarations by the White House and the quick flow of federal aid. "What the federal government is doing ... is a big deal," Scott said.

Helping Floridians and their communities get back on their feet was the emphasis at the briefing on response and recovery efforts, with DeSantis' conspicuous absence seemingly not a concern for residents and officials

Deanne Criswell, the head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, told reporters as the president flew from Washington that her team and the governor's team had "worked collectively" to determine that Biden would visit Live Oak. She said her teams "have heard no concerns over any impact to the communities that



after Biden said he would be meeting with DeSantis, the governor's office issued a statement saying there were no plans for that. "In these rural communities, and so soon after impact, the security preparations alone that would go into setting up such a meeting would shut down ongoing recovery efforts," DeSantis spokesman Jeremy Redfern said in a statement. DeSantis' office said his public sched-

ule Saturday included stops in Keaton Beach, about 60 miles southwest of Live Oak, and Horseshoe Beach, about 75 miles away, with the last event beginning at 1:45 p.m.Criswell said aboard the flight that power is being restored and the roads are all open in the area where Biden was going. "Access is not being hindered," she said, adding that her team had been in "close coordination" with the governor's

ing along Florida's sparsely populated Big Bend region as a Category 3 storm, causing widespread flooding and damage before moving north to drench Georgia and the Carolinas. As Biden left Washington on Saturday morning, reporters asked what happened with the meeting. "I don't know. He's not going to be there," the president said of DeSantis. The political disconnect between both sides is a break from the recent past, since Biden and DeSantis met when the president toured Florida after Hurricane Ian hit the state last year, and following the Surfside condo collapse in Miami Beach in summer 2021. But DeSantis is now running to unseat Biden, and he only left the Republican presidential primary trail with Idalia barrelling

Putting aside political rivalries following natural disasters can be tricky, mean-

Another 2024 presidential candidate, former Republican New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, has long been widely criticized in GOP circles for embracing then-President Barack Obama during a tour of damage 2012's Hurricane Sandy did to his state. Christie was even asked about the incident last month, during the first Republican

presidential debate. Both Biden and DeSantis at first suggested that helping storm victims would outweigh partisan differences. But the governor began suggesting that a presidential trip would complicate response logistics as

'There's a time and a place to have political season," the governor said before Idalia made landfall. "But then there's a time and a place to say that this is something that's life threatening, this is something that could potentially cost somebody their life,

it could cost them their livelihood." By Friday, the governor was telling reporters of Biden, "one thing I did mention to him on the phone" was "it would be very disruptive to have the whole security apparatus that goes" with the president "because there are only so many ways to

get into" many of the hardest hit areas. "What we want to do is make sure that the power restoration continues and the relief efforts continue and we don't have any interruption in that," DeSantis said.

The post-Idalia political consequences are high for both men.

As Biden seeks reelection, the White House has asked for an additional USD 4 billion to address natural disasters as part a supp Congress. That would bring the total to USD 16 billion and highlight that intensifying extreme weather is imposing ever

higher costs on US taxpayers. DeSantis has built his White House bid around dismantling what he calls Democrats' "woke" policies. The governor also frequently draws applause at GOP rallies by declaring that it's time to send "Joe Biden back to his basement," a reference to the Democrat's Delaware home, where he spent much of his time during the early lockdowns of the coronavirus pandemic. But four months before the first ballots are to be cast in Iowa's caucuses, DeSantis still lags far behind former President Donald Trump, the Republican primary's dominant early front-runner.

### Queen Elizabeth II memorial plans to be unveiled in 2026

PTI ■ LONDON

The plans for a permanent Elizabeth II will be unveiled by an independent body chaired by her former Private Secretary in 2026, the year that would have marked the monarch's 100th birthday, the UK government announced in London on

Queen Elizabeth II died aged 96 at Balmoral Castle in Scotland on September 8 last year before being laid to rest at St George's Chapel in Windsor Castle in a State Funeral on September 19. As the one-year anniver-

sary of her passing approaches this month, the Cabinet Office unveiled plans for a "fitting tribute" to be finalised by a new Queen Elizabeth Memorial Committee to be chaired by Lord Robin Janvrin.

The committee will be responsible for considering and recommending proposals for a memorial to Queen Elizabeth II, jointly supported by the UK government and the Royal Household.

It will develop proposals



for both a permanent memorial and a national legacy programme that will allow everyone in the UK to commemorate Queen Elizabeth's life of service, the Cabinet Office

"It is an honour to be asked to chair the Queen Memorial Elizabeth Committee. It will be a unique challenge to try to capture for future generations Ĥer Late Majesty's extraordinary contribution to our national life throughout her very long reign, said Lord Janvrin.

The UK government said it will support the proposals and will consider funding options proposals

develop."Queen Elizabeth II was our longest reigning Monarch and greatest public servant. Lord Janvrin will now begin the important work of designing a fitting tribute to her legacy of service to our nation and the Commonwealth," said Oliver Dowden, Cabinet Office minister and Deputy Prime

The Queen Elizabeth Memorial Committee will consider the late Queen's public service throughout her 70-year reign as the longest-serving British monarch and the causes she supported. It will also engage with the public to ensure ideas and sug-

gestions from across the UK are captured, the Cabinet Office The plans will be unveiled

to coincide with what would have been Her Late Majesty's hundredth birthday year in 2026," it added. A range of senior figures

and experts will be appointed to develop ideas and bring recommendations to the late monarch's son and heir, King Charles III, and the Prime

### Aus woman suspended over sending racist email to Indian

Melbourne (PTI): A real estate agent in Australia has been suspended for sending a former Îndian tenant a racist email in which she criticised the cleanliness habits of Indians and hoped that their influx would not turn the country into "the filth that is India", according to a media report. The email was sent to Sandeep Kumar in May 2021 after he disputed a cleaning bill deduction from his security deposit, news.com.au, an Australian website, reported.In the email, Mavin Real Estate director Bronwyn Pollitt compared Australian living standards and quality of life to what she described as the "overcrowded, overpopulated, dirty squaller" of many countries, including India.In the mail, she hoped Indian migrants would not turn Australia into "the filth that is India". The email was submitted to the State Administrative

Tribunal in Western Australia

which deemed Pollitt unfit to

hold a real estate and business

agents licence for eight months

from September 1.

### Taiwan suspends work, transport as Typhoon Haikui slams into island

**AP** ■ BEIJING

Taiwan suspended flights, vices along with classes and outdoor events and urged workers to stay home on Sunday as Typhoon Haikui churned across the southern part of the island.

The typhoon made landfall in Taitung county on the Pacific-facing east coast around 3 pm (0700 GMT) Sunday, bringing sustained winds of 155 kph (96 mph) and gusts of

190 kph (120 mph). The winds and driving rains forced in unsecured doors, uprooted trees — at least one of which crushed a parked minivan — and caused flooding in some low-lying areas. There had been no mass evacuations, although dozens sheltered in school gymnasiums and public meeting halls. There appeared to be little serious damage, and some shops remained open, partly to dispose of locally grown fruits and vegetables that would otherwise go to waste. Haikui's arrival came as Typhoon Saola continued to weaken while

swirling along the Chinese

coast, where 900,000 people and 80,000 fishing vessels had been moved to safety. Most of Hong Kong and

parts of the coastal mainland had suspended business, transport and classes. Damage appeared to be minimal, however, and restrictions had largely been lifted by Sunday. Ön Saturday night, the Hong Kong Observatory had canceled all warnings.

Among events cancelled in Taiwan were a hot air balloon festival in the central Taichung region, several outdoor concerts, art events and a baseball game. National parks and treacherous roads in the island's mountainous center were also closed.Haikui was expected to continue toward China after crossing over Taiwan, and authorities in the Chinese city of Shantou in Guangdong province were advising residents to take precautions. Because of the previous Typhoon Saola, workers in a number of Chinese cities stayed at home and students saw the start of their school year postponed from Friday to Monday. Trading on Hong

Kong's stock market was sus-

pended Friday and hundreds of people were stranded at the air-port after about 460 flights were canceled in the key regional

business and travel hub.

The cross-border bridge connecting Hong Kong, the gambling hub of Macao and manufacturing center of Zhuhai was closed at one point, with Macao leader Ho Iat Seng ordering a halt to casino operations. In recent months, China has experienced some of its heaviest rains and deadliest flooding in years. Dozens of people have been killed, including in outlying mountainous parts of the capital, Beijing.

Despite the twin storms, China's military continued to conduct operations meant to intimidate Taiwan, a self-ruled democracy that Beijing seeks to bring under Chinese sovereignty by force if necessary.

Defense Ministry said it was monitoring the movements of Chinese military aircraft and navy ships near the island. However, it said there were no indications any had crossed the median line in the Taiwan Strait or entered Taiwan's air defense identification zone as they frequently do.

#### Louisiana school shooting kills student, hurts woman

out during a high school football game on a warm late-summer evening in Louisiana, killing a 16-year old student and wounding a woman in the arm, authorities said Saturday. Police have made no arrests

and investigators still don't

know why the violence erupt-

Louisiana (US): Gunfire broke

ed at halftime Friday in an area next to the stands, Sgt. Landon Groger with the West Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office said. A medical helicopter landed on the field at Port Allen High School and the two victims were rushed to the hospital, where the teen was pronounced dead, Groger said. The woman's injuries were not considered life-threatening. The game was suspended as stunned spectators headed for the parking lot, which was filled with emergency vehicles."We don't know what led up to the event and we don't yet know if it was a targeted shooting or random," Groger said by phone Saturday, adding, "We want to take our time and cover this from all angles."

## **Hearing of post-arrest bail pleas** by Imran Khan, Qureshi deferred

A special Pakistani court has postponed the hearing of post-arrest bail applications of former prime minister Imran Khan and his close aide Shah Mahmood Qureshi in a case related to the alleged disclosure of state secrets till the Islamabad High Court decides a plea challenging the court's jurisdiction.

The purported cipher (secret diplomatic cable) contained an account of a meeting between US State Department officials, including Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs Donald Lu, and Pakistani envoy Asad Majeed Khan last year.

Of late, Khan has come under increased scrutiny following the publication of a purported copy of the secret cable by the US media outlet The Intercept, with many in the previous government led by Shehbaz Sharif pointing fingers at the PTI chief for being the source of the leak.

Qureshi, 67-year-old former foreign minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party's Vice Chairman was arrested on August 19 under the Official Secrets Act for violating the secrecy of the official cable sent by the Pakistani embassy in the US to the for-eign office when he was the foreign minister

A special court here has postponed the hearing of postarrest bail applications submitted by Pakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan and his close aide Shah Mahmood Qureshi in the diplomatic cipher case till the IHC decides a plea challenging the court's jurisdiction, the Express Tribune reported.

Meanwhile, the Lahore High Court (LHC) will address petitions on Monday filed by 70-year-old Pakistan Tehreeke-Insaf's (PTI) Khan against the rejection of his pre-arrest bail applications in seven different cases.

Khan, who served as the country's prime minister until April last year, currently faces around 180 cases. These cases primarily stem from incidents that occurred following the sacking of the Lahore corps commander's house on May 9. In these petitions, present-



Khan has also named the Attock jail superintendent as a respondent. He argues that his applications were dismissed due to his non-appearance in court after being convicted in the Toshakhana case on August 5. The cricketerturned-politician seeks a fair consideration of his bail appli-



ing, Judge Abual Hasnat Muhammad Zulqarnain of the Islamabad ATC-1, who was recently appointed as a judge of a special court handling cases under the Official Secrets Act, 1923, was informed by the prosecution that Khan had challenged both the special court's jurisdiction and his jail

lawyers to await the IHC's decision and consider bail matters thereafter. It further recommended withdrawing the bail applications and re-filing them after the IHC's ruling. A hearing on both defendants' bail requests is scheduled for Monday

Additionally, an ATC in Lahore has directed authorities to include Khan's sisters, Aleema Khan and Uzma Khan, in an investigation into four different cases filed against them following incidents on May 9.

Aleema and Uzma ppeared in the ATC of Judge Abher Gul after their interim bail expired. They had been requesting inclusion in the investigation for three months, and the judge ordered the investigating officers to do so promptly, expressing a desire to conclude the case and receive the investigation report.

## Kakar terms May 9 violence 'attempted coup', 'civil war'

Pakistan's caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar has termed the May 9 violence by supporters of for-mer premier Imran Khan "an attempted coup and civil war" that targetted Army chief Gen Asim Munir and his team, a media report said on Sunday.

Kakar, however, denied that revenge was a motive behind taking legal action against the perpetrators of the violence. Dozens of military installations and government buildings, including the army headquarters in Rawalpindi, were attacked during the May 9 violence following the arrest of 70-year-old Khan by paramilitary Rangers.

The vandalism and arson on May 9 were witnessed by the whole world and international newspapers reported the tragedy. This kind of manipulation is not acceptable in any form of government," Kakar said in an interview with Geo news channel.

The May 9 violence was "an attempted coup and civil war, the target of which was the serving army chief and his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chairman, is also facing numerous



team in the military," he said. Kakar said the government does not want to create an impression that revenge is being taken against the accused of May 9 violence.

However, he added, if legal action is not taken against those who violated the country's laws and resorted to violence, then "we will be seen as a party to the matter".

The interim premier maintained no political party had the right to throw stones at others, abuse them, and burn buildings. Hundreds of Khan's supporters have been arrested for their alleged involvement in the May 9 violence. Khan, the

cases related to attacks on military installations.

Currently, he is facing over 150 cases related to terrorism, murder and blasphemy. He is currently lodged in Attock jail. His party claims that its members were not involved in the attacks, but the government and military say they have "irrefutable evidence" of their

Speaking about the new role that he has been chosen to perform, Kakar said: "I had no idea that I would ever sit on the prime minister's chair." Commenting on the relations between India and Pakistan and the role of trade between the two sides, Kakar said the final decision on bilateral trade has to be taken by Indian politicians. Ties between India and Pakistan nose-dived after a terror attack on the Pathankot Air Force base in 2016 by terror groups based in the neighbouring country.

The relations deteriorated further after India announced the withdrawal of the special powers of Jammu and Kashmir and the bifurcation of the state into two union territories in

#### 'Imran willing to talk to all but only on elections'

Islamabad (PTI): Pakistan's jailed prime minister Imran Khan is willing to talk to any political party or institution only on matters related to holding elections in the country, his lawyers have said. Khan, the Chairman of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, has been demanding early elections since he was ousted from power after he lost a no-confidence motion in the National Assembly in April last year.

Subsequently, the 70-yearold cricketer-turned-politician launched an aggressive cam-paign under the slogan of 'Haqeeqi Azadi', calling for elections and blaming the incumbent government led by Shehbaz Sharif and the army leadership for his ouster.

Taking to X on Saturday after meeting Khan in Punjab's Attock jail, his lawyer, Barrister Gohar Khan said that the PTI chief "is willing to talk to all BUT about election".

"Finally met Khan sab at Attock Jail with other colleagues. Alhamdulillah, he is in great spirit but concern about ongoing uncertainty, inflation, and terrorism," he said.

Another of Khan's lawyers Nadeem Haider Panjutha said the former premier has a clear message that unless there is political stability, there will be no economic stability in Pakistan. The PTI chief said "we are ready to talk to everyone, but only on election," Panjutha tweeted in Urdu.

Another of Khan's lawyers, Intazar Hussain Panjutha, said the former prime minister "will talk to any political party or institution on the matter of holding elections".

The National Assembly was dissolved on August 9 which makes it mandatory for the Election Commission of Pakistan to hold polls within 90 days after the dissolution. However, the ECP is set to delay the election in order to carry out delimitation in the light of the new census, which is also a constitutional requirement. Khan has been kept in jail since August 5 after his conviction in the Toshakhana corruption case. His sentence was suspended by the Islamabad High Court on August 29, but he continues to remain in prison in the cipher case in which he is accused of leaking sensitive national security matters.

## Mobile internet services suspended in Gilgit-Baltistan amid sectarian tensions

Pakistan's interim Information Minister Murtaza Solangi said on Sunday that the situation in Gilgit-Baltistan was "completely peaceful", amid reports of sectarian tensions in the region that forced authorities to indefinitely suspend mobile

intery suspend mobile inter-er-net services.

"The situation in Gilgit-Baltistan is completely peaceful and the news and speculations." circulating in media regarding the deployment of Pakistan Army are completely baseless," Solangi said in a post on platform X, citing a statement released by the region's home department.

He said all roads, trade centres, business activities and educational institutions are open as usual in the region, which has a history of rivalry between the Sunni and Shia Muslims. The minister said that services of the Pakistan Army and the civil armed forces had been requisitioned "only to maintain law and order" on the eve of the chehlum or Arbaeen (that marks the anniversary of the 40th day of mourning following the seventh-century killing of the Prophet's grandson Imam Hussain in the battle of Karbala in Iraq).

He added that special measures have been taken for the security of the procession routes and Imambargahs as per the past practice and section 144 has been imposed across the region to maintain law and order, protect lives and avoid any untoward incident.

"Peaceful protests do occur at times in reaction to some religious and sectarian concerns but the law-and-order situation is calm," he said, dismissing the reports of unrest as "baseless".

The situation in the region turned tense on Friday when protests were held in the Gilgit city and surrounding areas on the call of a Shia group, hours after a prominent Sunni cleric allegedly made derogatory remarks during a protest in Gilgit. The protesters were demanding action against the cleric. The authorities have been dealing with a tense situation for over a week, due to the alleged derogatory statements by both sides, the Dawn news-

Meanwhile, mobile internet services have been suspended across the region until further orders. An official said an FIR had been registered against the Sunni cleric at the City Police Station Gilgit for his comments, while another FIR against a prominent Shia cleric had already been registered in Skardu, the newspaper reported. The authorities in the area have suspended two police personnel and a schoolteacher on allegations of sharing sectarian posts on social media. Over 12 persons have been detained for posting controversial posts.

Meanwhile, the United Kingdom joined Canada and the US on Saturday in advising its citizens to avoid visiting the northern areas. The US embassy statement said that American citizens should exercise heightened caution in Gilgit-Baltistan due to recent protests in Skardu and Diamer and the potential for additional demonstrations, road closures, and associated disruptions to local mobile and internet networks in the region.



Children take part in an act to mark the 2000th day since the murder of Councilwoman Marielle Franco and her driver,

**Indian-origin ministers in S'pore sue** 

## **Security situation deteriorates** Woman stoned to death in Pak as terrorist attacks rise | in Pakistan's Punjab

PTI ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's security situation has further deteriorated as the country fights a relentless rise in terrorist attacks by militant groups, active in the volatile northwestern and southwestern regions, according to a media report citing data from a prominent think tank. The number of attacks in August was the highest tally for monthly strikes in almost nine years, Dawn newspaper reported, quoting data from the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS). The think tank stated that there were 99 attacks across the country, the highest in a month since November 2014.

The numbers released by the Islamabad-based think tank were lower than the 147 attacks claimed by the outlawed Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), most of which couldn't be verified through independent sources, PICSS said, adding it only recorded verified terrorism attacks.

The attacks resulted in the deaths of 112 civilians and security forces personnel while were injured. The data showed a month-on-month increase of 83 per cent, compared to 54 attacks reported in July. There were four suicide attacks in August, three in tribal districts and one in mainland Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Overall, the country witnessed 22 suicide attacks in the first eight months of 2023, in which 227 people were killed and 497 injured. Balochistan and erstwhile Fata were the regions most affected by violence in August. The former witnessed a 65 per cent increase in attacks, from 17 in July to 28 in August, while there were 37 attacks in the latter, up by 106 per cent from 18 in July.

However, both regions recorded a decrease in fatalities, by 19 per cent and 29 per cent, respectively.

The attacks also increased in mainland KP, up by 83 per cent from 15 in July to 29 in August. The deaths and injuries according to the report.

also increased by 188 per cent and 73 per cent, respectively.

The province was mainly targeted by the outlawed TTP and its splinter groups, who claimed responsibility for several attacks. Sindh witnessed a slight increase in militant attacks, from three in July to five in August. The deaths also increased from one to four.

Punjab remained relatively peaceful, with no militant attack reported in August. The only attack reported in July was a low-intensity blast near a police station in Lahore, which caused one injury. The data also revealed that security forces remained the primary target of violence, accounting for 50 per cent of the total deaths and 63 per cent of the total injured.

There was a 51 per cent rise in military fatalities in August compared to July 2023. The security forces also responded to the militancy threat and killed at least 24 alleged militants and arrested 69 in operations across the country,

# province for 'adultery'

Lahore (PTI): A woman was stoned to death in Pakistan's Punjab province for allegedly committing adultery, police said on Sunday. The incident took place in Rajanpur district of Punjab, some 500 km from Lahore, on Friday. According to police, the husband of the woman, who is in her 20s, accused her of adultery. On Friday, the man along with his two brothers tied the woman against a tree and stoned her to death. Before stoning her, they also brutally tortured her.

The brothers fled after committing the crime and are believed to be hiding at the border region between Punjab and Balochistan, police said.

The woman belonged to the Alkani tribe of Rajanpur. A number of women are killed in Pakistan every year in the name of honour. According to human rights activists, around 1,000 women are killed in the Pakistan. The victims are widely perceived to have brought shame and dishonour to their families either by marrying against their will or having an affair. Most often the family members are behind such killings. A few days ago, a young lady doctor was shot dead in the name of honour in Punjab's Mianwali district.

According to police, the 25-year-old doctor wanted to marry her colleague but her father disapproved of it.

"Over a week ago, the doctor's father came to her clinic in Mianwali city and argued with her over the matter. During the argument, he pulled out a gun and opened fire on her leaving her critically injured. She was rushed to a nearby hospital where she succumbed to her wounds," police said.

#### PM's kin over bungalow rental issue Balakrishnan of "acting cor-**PTI** SINGAPORE market value" for the bungaruptly and for personal gain by $S_{\text{cabinet ministers have sued}}^{\text{ingapore's two Indian-origin}}$ having Singapore Land Authority (SLA) give us pref-

Lee Hsien Yang, the younger brother of Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, for defamation over allegations relating to their rental of two state-owned bungalows. The case conference will take place on Tuesday (September 5) at 9 am, according to a hearing list on the Singapore Courts' website, Channel News Asia reported on Saturday.

and Home Affairs Minister K Shanmugam and Foreign Affairs Minister Vivian Balakrishnan - had sent lawyers' letters to Lee Hsien Yang in July, saying they would sue unless he apologises, withdraws his allegations and pays damages relating to the colonial-era bungalows in Ridout Road.

The two ministers - Law

In a Facebook post on July 27, Shanmugam said Lee Hsien Yang had accused him and

erential treatment by illegally felling trees without approval, and also having SLA pay for renovations to 26 and 31 Ridout Road".

These allegations are false, Shanmugam added. Lee Hsien Yang and his wife left the country after declining to attend a police interview in July 2022 that relates to lying in judicial proceedings about the will of his late father and founding Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew.

Shanmugam says he rented Ridout Road property to prepare for sale of family home, not profiting from rental.

The issue surrounding the rental of the two Ridout Road state properties surfaced in early May when opposition politician and Reform Party chief Kenneth Jeyaretnam questioned if the ministers were "paying less than the fair

lows. The Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau (CPIB) was tasked to investigate whether there was any misconduct related to the transactions and found no wrongdoing. The CPIB report, released

on June 28, said the two ministers did not benefit from getting any privileged information. They were not given preferential treatment and their rental rates were comparable to that of neighbouring properties, the report stated

The issue was debated in parliament on July 3. Lee Hsien Yang has made at least eight Facebook posts on Ridout Road before and after CPIB's report and the parliament debate, according to the channel report. A Facebook post on July 23 resulted in a correction direction under the Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Act (POFMA), with the Law Ministry saying that it contained untrue

### Entrance to Burning Man fest in Nevada closed due to flooding

Nevada (AP): The entrance to the Burning Man counterculture festival in the Nevada desert was closed on Saturday and thousands of attendees were urged to stay at the site as flooding from storms swept through the area.

The entrance will be closed for the remainder of the event, which began on August 27 and was scheduled to end on Monday, according to the US Bureau of Land Management, which oversees the Black Rock Desert where the festival is being held. More than one-half inch of rain is believed to have fallen on Friday at the festival site, located about 110 miles



(177 kilometers) north of Reno, the National Weather Service in Reno said. At least another quarter of an inch of rain is

expected Sunday. Organisers urged festival-

goers to conserve their food, water and fuel. Officials haven't yet said when the entrance was expected to be opened again. Messages left Saturday

afternoon by The Associated Press for both the Bureau of Land Management and the Pershing County Sheriff's Office, the agencies that closed the entrance, weren't immediately returned. Photos published by the Reno Gazette Journal showed festivalgoers with garbage bags wrapped around their legs as they walked through mud. The newspaper reported that organisers had started rationing ice

## Netanyahu seeks deportation of Eritrean migrants involved in violence

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Sunday he wants Eritrean migrants involved in a violent clash in Tel Aviv to be deported immediately and has ordered a plan to remove all of the country's African migrants. The remarks came a day

after bloody protests by rival groups of Eritreans in south Tel Aviv left dozens of people injured. Eritreans, supporters and opponents of Eritrea's government, faced off with construction lumber, pieces of metal and rocks, smashing shop windows and police cars. Israeli police in riot gear

shot tear gas, stun grenades and

live rounds while officers on

horseback tried to control the

protesters. The violence on

the issue of migrants, which has long divided Israel. Its resurgence comes as

Israel is torn over Netanyahu's judicial overhaul plan, and supporters cite the migrant issue as a reason why the courts should be reined in, saying they have stood in the way of pushing the migrants out.

'We want harsh measures against the rioters, including the immediate deportation of those who took part," Netanyahu said in a special ministerial meeting called to deal with the aftermath of the violence. He requested that the ministers present him with plans "for the removal of all the other illegal infiltrators," and noted in his remarks that the Supreme Court struck down some measures meant to coerce



the migrants to leave. About 25,000 African migrants live in Israel, mainly from Sudan and Eritrea, who say they fled conflict or repression. Israel recognizes very few as asylum seekers, seeing them overwhelmingly as economic migrants, and says it has no legal obligation to keep them.

The country has tried a variety of tactics to force them

a remote prison, holding part of their wages until after they agree to leave the country or offering cash payments to those who agree to move to another country, somewhere in Africa. Critics accuse the govern-

ment of trying to coerce the migrants into leaving. Under international law, Israel cannot forcibly send migrants back to a country where their life or liberty may be at risk. Netanyahu said Sunday he didn't think deporting supporters of the Eritrean government would be a problem.

Migrants' supporters say Israel, a country founded upon the ashes of the Holocaust and built up by Jewish refugees, should welcome those seeking asylum. Opponents claim migrants have brought crime to

Eritrean government supporters marked the 30th anniversary of the current ruler's rise to power, an event held near the Eritrean embassy in south Tel Aviv. Eritrea has one of the world's worst human rights

Aviv neighbourhoods where

The clashes came as

they have settled.

records and migrants in Israel and elsewhere say they fear death if they were to return. Critics see Netanyahu's judicial overhaul plan as a power grab meant to weaken the courts and limit judicial oversight on government decisions and legislation. Supporters say it is meant to restore power to elected legislators and rein in what they say is an interventionist and liberal-leaning jus-

## **'G20 Presidency boosting India's** trade ties with member nations'

The G20 Presidency with India is helping New Delhi to strengthen trade ties with member nations and provides an opportunity to attract investments from those countries in sectors like infrastructure, experts say.

They said that the G20 (Group of 20) holds a strategic role in securing future global economic growth and prosperity, as its members represent about 85 per cent of the global GDP (Gross Domestic Product), 75 per cent of global trade and two-thirds of the world's population.

Presiding over this multilateral forum is an opportunity for India as it can showcase its strength and achievements for attracting investment and deepen its trade relation with these large economies, the experts added.

Fast-tracking negotiations for free trade agreement, ease of doing business, development of modern infrastructure, skilled manpower, large population with growing income are some of the positives which help India to enhance trade realisations with these member

The G20 has 43 members and not 20 countries. These include countries (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Türkiye, UK and US) and the European Union (27member group). Three EU countries - France, Germany, Italy — are counted among the

Trade experts suggested the government to fast-track ongoing negotiations for free trade agreement (FTA) with countries like the UK and EU as it would help India in better market access to these coun-



market, Shroff said. Gaurav

Dani, Founding Partner, INDUSLAW, said that India

has the largest growing middle-

income population offering a

last consumer base for both

goods and services and due to

this global firms will continue

Rumki Majumdar, Economist,

Deloitte India, said that many

multinational firms are looking

for alternate destinations for

investment and diversifying

supply chains, and the G20

Presidency will help India

attract many such companies.

infrastructure, ease of doing business, skilled labour force

and growing market with large

middle class consumer base are

some of the key indicators that

make India one of the most

attractive places to invest and

import quality goods, Hi-Tech

Group Chairman Deep

and Chairman of Technocraft

Industries Sharad Kumar Saraf

said India's trade with G20

countries will grow at an accel-

erated rate because of the com-

fort and confidence created in

the members due to the mul-

tiple events organised by India

in different cities. "This helped

in showcasing the country as a

whole. The G20 Presidency

has thrown up many opportu-

nities in diverse sectors for

India. It is now for India to grab

Mumbai-based exporter

Kapuria said.

Massive improvement in

Sharing similar views,

to invest in India.

tries as well as facilitate investment. However, they also asked not to use trade platforms to achieve climate aspirations as that could harm progress in both trade and climate discussions.

The largest trade block of G20, the EU, will set in motion the carbon border adjustment mechanism from October 1 this year, making exports expensive from countries like

"In the first eight months of 2023, the EU introduced five regulations on climate change and trade. The G20 nations should not ignore this elephant in the room and discuss before individual countries rush to the WTO (World Trade Organisation (WTO). This may soon unravel world trade." think tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) Co-Founder Ajay Srivastava said. Shardul S Shroff, Executive

Chairman, Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas & Co, said that India should find a common ground with G20 countries to emerge as a global norm setter for the digital economy and use that global stature to boost IT and IT-enabled services

India should position itself as the global norm-setter for various aspects of the digital economy, such as data protection, international contracting, digital assets, and international taxation, as it would help expand India's footprint in consider converting G20 in an economic block, a shade lower than free trade, maybe, reduced custom duties among the group members," Saraf said.

Among the G20 members, India holds ninth position in terms of total trade (USD 1,662 billion) in goods and services in 2022. The EU (17,151 billion), China (USD 7,183 billion) and USA (6,933 billion) hold top three spots. Share of G20 nations in India's merchandise export in 2022 stood at 64 per cent and import at 52.4 per cent.

India's leading export destinations among G20 nations are USA (USD 91 billion), EU (USD 87 billion), China (USD 17.5 billion), UK (USD 14.4 billion), Turkey (USD 10.7 billion) and Saudi Arabia (USD 10

The country's suppliers include China (ÚSD 118.5 billion), EU (USD 59.1 billion), Saudi Arabia (USD 43.3 billion), USA (USD 38.4 billion) Russia (USD 34 billion) Australia (USD 19.2 billion) Korea (USD 18.9 billion), and Japan (USD 13.9 billion) during the last year.

Sector wise, India's top exports to these member countries in 2022 included electronics and machinery (USD 41.3 billion), petroleum prod ucts (USD 30 billion), cut and polished diamonds and gold jewellery (USD 25.9 billion) organic chemicals (USD 20.5 billion), medicines (USD 16.4 billion), automobiles parts (USD 11.8 billion).

The main import items included electronics (USD 46.6 billion), machinery (USD 42.5 billion), petroleum products (USD 40.6 billion), organic chemicals, APIs (USD 18.9 billion), rough diamonds and gold (USD 17.6 billion), plastics raw materials (USD 13.0 billion), and iron and steel

## Tata Steel in advanced talks to get funds for UK plant: Reports

PTI LONDON

Tata Steel is in auvance talks with the UK govern-¬ata Steel is in advanced ment to agree around GBP 500 million in state-backed funding to secure the future of its Port Talbot plant in South Wales, according to UK media reports this weekend.

The Indian steel major has been in long-drawn discussions related to the critical green transition of the UK's largest steelworks, involving thousands of jobs in the country's steel industry.

According to a 'Sky News' report on Saturday, both sides are now close to agreeing a deal that would commit millions to the future of the Port Talbot "Tata Steel is continuing to

discuss with the UK government a framework for continuity and decarbonisation of steel making in the UK amidst very challenging underlying business conditions given that several of its heavy end assets are approaching end of life," a Tata Steel spokesperson told



PTI, when asked about the development.

"Given the financially constrained position of our UK business, any significant change is only possible with government investment and support, as also seen in other steel making countries in Europe where governments are actively supporting companies in de-carbonisation initiatives," the spokesperson said.

According to UK media reports, the draft plans close to being finalised include the UK government committing around GBP 500 million of funding and the Tata Group

capital expenditure to help pay for a switch away from polluting coal-fired blast furnaces. The Indian steel major would reportedly commit to building electric arc furnaces, which offer greener, less labour-intensive ways of producing steel

than traditional blast furnaces.

Opposition Labour's Stephen Kinnock, the local MP for Aberavon which covers Port Talbot, stressed that unions "must be fully involved and workforce must support

"Steel is a strategic industry that underpins our entire

economy. It provides tens of thousands of highly skilled jobs, it's vital for our national security, and it's key to achieving net zero. Failure to invest in our steel industry would be the very definition of a false econ-

omy," he tweeted. The unions, meanwhile, have expressed concerns over reports that a few thousand job losses are expected as part of the negotiations at the Tataowned Port Talbot steelworks, which employs around 4,000

"We continue to support a solution that will maintain blast furnace production and safeguard the future for all the UK plants. We are ready to use all means at our disposal to protect jobs and our vital strategic industry," said the Community steelworkers

The UK Government has not commented on the latest reports, but any support package is expected to be dependent on pledges of investment into the future from the Indian steel giant.

### Bank credit outstanding to real estate reaches ₹28L cr in July: RBI

PTI MUMBAI

 $B^{\rm ank} \ {\rm credit} \ {\rm to} \ {\rm housing} \ {\rm as} \ {\rm commercial} \ {\rm real}$ estate witnessed nearly 38 per cent annual growth in July, taking the loan outstanding to the realty sector to a record Rs 28 lakh crore, as per the latest RBI

It is evident from the Reserve Bank's loan outstanding data as well as property consultants data on housing sales and new launches across major cities that activities in the real estate sector are moving at a fast pace. The credit outstanding in

housing (including priority sector housing) rose 37.4 per cent annually in July crossing Rs 24.28 lakh crore, showed the RBI's data on 'Sectoral Deployment of Bank Credit -July 2023'.

The credit outstanding to the commercial real estate increased by 38.1 per cent to Rs 4.07 lakh crore. Commenting on the RBI data, Anarock Chairman Anuj Puri said the impressive loan growth in the real estate sector is a function of a large-scale demand revival



were contemplating strategies around complete work from the office, work from home, or a hybrid model. However, as the situation gained normalcy, employees returned to offices and the demand for good quality commercial offices is high this year," he said.

Another set of RBI data showed that All India HPI growth (y-o-y) inched up to 5.1 per cent in the first quarter of 2023-24 from 4.6 per cent in the previous quarter and 3.4 per cent a year ago.

In 2022, Puri said housing sales across top 7 cities were 54 per cent higher than the previous year. In January-June mercial office segment was reached 63 per cent of the pre- and people are investing in the reeling under the pandemic's vious year, indicating the sus-

tained demand. The demand remained undeterred despite a steady rise in home loan interest rates, he added. Samantak Das, Executive Director and Head of Research, JLL India, said the RBI's latest sectoral credit data showed a remarkably high growth in bank lending to the real estate sector in July 2023. "This is the impact of the

merger of a non-banking financial company with a bank. On excluding the impact of the merger, lending to commercial real estate in July 2023 increased by ~12 per cent y-oy and housing loans increased by ~13 per cent y-o-y during the same time frame," he Das said this double digit

growth is considered quite robust given the challenging economic scenario globally.

"The double-digit growth can be attributed to the rising demand for housing which is reflected in the robust sales volume recorded till June 2023," he

Aman Sarin, Director & CEO, Anant Raj Ltd, said the growth in credit indicates that

#### Solar installations see 3.2 per cent growth at 872 MW in Jan-June, says Mercom



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

R ooftop solar installations in the country grew by 3.2 per cent to 872 megawatt (MW) during January-June period of 2023, Mercom India said. In H1 or first half of 2022, 845 MW of rooftop solar capacities were installed in India, the research firm said.

India's cumulative rooftop solar capacity reached 9.6 gigawatts (GW) at the end June 2023, the 'Mercom India Rooftop Solar Market Report' said. In the second quarter, 387 megawatts (MW) of rooftop solar capacity was added, which is 20 per cent higher compared to January-March 2023, and marginally down by 0.5 per cent over April-June 2022.

"Rooftop solar did not with falling component prices

## Sebi to curb finfluencers to help investors get accurate, unbiased info

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $T^{\text{he rise of financial influ-encers or finfluencers, who}}$ charge as nigh as Rs a post on social media, introduced a new way for people to access and interpret financial information, and now they will soon come under the regulatory purview as Sebi proposed measures to curb their mushrooming numbers.

The proposed move by Sebi not only ensures that investors receive accurate and unbiased information but also helps in preserving authenticity and reducing fraud, Anand Rathi Wealth Deputy CEO Feroz Azeez told PTI.

Under the proposal, finfluencers need to be registered with Sebi and adhere to specific guidelines. Also, it has been proposed to ban unregistered finfluencers from partnering with mutual funds and stockbrokers for promotional activ-

While many finfluencers provide valuable insights, there has been a growing concern over the potential risks associated with unregulated finfluencers who might offer biased or misleading advice. They usually work on a commissionbased model. "Finfluencers charge as little as Rs 10,000 to



as much as Rs 7.5 lakh for an individual post, excluding tax. Influencer marketing agencies quote as much as Rs 20 lakh for a campaign, plus taxes, to entice their followers," Azeez

In addition, many of them make money from referral fees or profit sharing for promoting the product, channel, platform, or services or get compensation directly from social media and other platforms.

To address the risk associated with finfluencers, Sebi floated a consultation paper late last month proposing to restrict the association of registered intermediaries or regulated entities with unregistered influ-

In an era where financial advice is increasingly disseminated through social media, the line between credible advice and misleading information can become

### India's imports of Russian oil plunged to 7-month low in Aug

India's import of cheap Russian oil plunged to lowest in seven months in August demand, industry data showed.

The world's third largest oil consumer reduced imports from Russia for a third consecutive month in August. It took 1.46 million barrels a day from Russia in August, down from 1.91 million barrels purchased in the previous month, according to data from energy cargo tracker Vortexa.

Indian refiners also cut imports from Iraq, another top supplier, to 866,000 barrels per day from 891,000 bpd. Some of those volumes were replaced by a short surge in imports from Saudi Arabia, which jumped to 820,000 bpd from 484,000 bpd in July, the data showed.

From a market share of less than 1 per cent in India's import basket before the start of the Russia-Ukraine conflict in February last year, Russia's share in India's imports hit a peak of about 2 million bpd in May, as refiners vied for heav-

ily discounted shipments. Following Moscow's invasion of Ukraine in February last year, Russian oil was sanctioned and shunned by European buyers and some in



Asia, such as Japan. This led to Russian Urals crude being trad ed at a discount to Brent crude (the global benchmark). The discount on Russian Urals grade has however narrowed from levels of around USD 30 a barrel in the middle of last year to less than USD 10 per barrel.

Indian refiners, who convert crude oil extracted from below ground into finished products such as petrol and diesel, are now the biggest buyers of Russian oil as Chinese imports have maxed out due to a massive electrification of vehicles and demand issues in a shaky economy.

Indian refiners ramped up purchases from less than 2 per cent of their entire buys in pre-Ukraine war times to 33 per cent to capture discounted oil. India's oil imports from UAE also dropped to 273,000 bpd in August from 290,000 bpd in previous month.

#### Indoor saffron cultivation technology introduced in Jammu & Kashmir 's Kishtwar

Jammu: An indoor saffron cultivation technology was introduced in Kishtwar region of Jammu and Kashmir to promote agricultural innovation and enhance the livelihoods of the saffron farming community, an official said.

Deputy Commissioner, Kishtwar Devansh Yadav unveiled modern indoor saffron cultivation technology, which holds the potential to revolutionise saffron cultivation practices in the region, the official said.

Under the skill development programme, the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Kishtwar has realised project with an estimated cost of ₹1.35 lakh, under SANKALP scheme.

## Punjab & Sind Bank looks to raise ₹250 cr via QIP in Q3

State-owned Punjab & Sind Bank plans to raise Rs 250 crore through share sale to institutional investors in the third quarter of the current fis-"The bank has got

approvals for capital raising of Rs 250 crore via Qualified Institutional Placement (QIP) in the next quarter," Punjab & Sind Bank managing director Swarup Kumar Saha told PTI.

It will help achieve the twin objective of capital raising and dilution of the government's holding in the bank, he said.Government of India holds a 98.25 per cent stake in the bank which was listed on the stock exchanges in 2010.He said that the government's nod

Walmart pays \$3.5 billion to raise stake in Flipkart



is also in place for the capital raising. The bank had written to the Centre seeking its approval for capital raising in May this year. As part of a strategy to increase touch points and brand visibility, Saha said the bank is aiming for 2,000 branches and as many ATMs in the country in the

next three years. The addition of branches would help mobilise low-cost deposits and also increase penetration of loan products, he said.
"We are trying to build

operational efficiency more so that I can reduce my cost and increase my fee income. We are moving to very granular areas like increasing ATM network, improving digital banking experience," Saha said.

He said the ATM network can itself be a profit centre because an outside customer pays about Rs 17 per transaction for the use of an ATM.

The bank is in the process of upgrading its core banking solution (CBS) which would help the digital journey much better and also bring in efficiency, he said.

## Go First can not use **'G8' designator code**

New Delhi/ Mumbai: Bankrupt Go First is now not eligible for the two-letter designator code 'G8', with global airlines' grouping IATA blocking the code as the airline has not been flying for the past few months. The International Air Transport Association

(IATA), which provides two-letter designator and numeric codes to airlines, has blocked the 'G8' for Go First for a 12-month period, according to an official. IATA assigns the airline designator code to

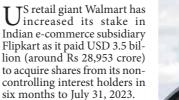
companies to use for reservations, schedules, timetables, telecommunications, ticketing, cargo documentation, legal, tariffs and/or other commercial/traffic purposes, according to IATA website. "One of the requirements for a company to be eligible for an IATA two-letter designator is that the airline needs to be operating. As Go First



statement. He said the two-letter designator and numeric codes will remain blocked for 12 months, during which Go First can ask for the reinstatement of the designator if the require

two-letter designator," Albert Tjoeng, Head of

Corporate Communications at IATA, said in a



Additionally, during the six months ended July 31, 2023, the company received USD 700 million related to new rounds of equity funding for the company's majority-owned PhonePe subsidiary, said the Bentonville-based retailer in a US Securities & Exchange Commission (US SEC) filing. "During the six months

pany paid USD 3.5 billion to acquire shares from certain Flipkart noncontrolling interest holders and settle the liability to former noncontrolling ended July 31, 2023, the cominterest holders of PhonePe,



said Walmart filing. After this, Walmart's total holding in the Indian e-commerce player Flipkart would increase to 80.5 per cent, some reports said. Walmart has bought a stake from hedge fund Tiger Global and Accel Partners.

Besides, the US retail major also acquired the residual stake of Binny Bansal, Flipkart cofounder. PhonePe is a digital payments company, in which Walmart has a majority stake following the takeover of parent outfit Flipkart, which had shifted its headquarters from Singapore to India.

US-based Bentonville in 2018 completed the acquisition of a 77 per cent stake in Flipkart and became the majority owner of the Indian e-commerce company.

Walmart plans for the public listing of Flipkart. Last month, in an investor call, Walmart said Flipkart's GMV

was strong and eCommerce grew 26 per cent in the June quarter. Flipkart's Myntra is the country's largest ecommerce marketplace for fashion and lifestyle products, offering top brands to customers across India. Myntra now provides access to more than 6,000 brands on its marketplace. "Both our businesses in

India, Flipkart and PhonePe, had strong quarters as well. A lot of that is driven from just really being close to customer in those markets and combination of value and convenience that we're now able to offer," Walmart International President & Chief Executive Officer Judith McKenna had

## ALCARAZ PRODUCES HIGHLIGHTS, SMILES DURING A US OPEN VICTORY OVER EVANS

ven if Carlos Alcaraz was by no means perfect during a victory in the U.S.
Open's third round on Saturday
- he dropped a set, after all - the defending champion produced enough bits of brilliance to keep himself smiling and prompt his opponent, Dan Evans, to chuck his racket a couple of times.

Less than 12 hours after the man he's expected to meet next weekend for the title, Novak Djokovic, needed to fashion a comeback from a two-set deficit to win, Alcaraz progressed to the fourth round at Flushing Meadows for the third consecutive year by beating the 26th-seeded Evans 6-2, 6-3, 4-6, 6-3.

Alcaraz, the No. 1 seed, showed off a variety of his considerable collection of skills, generating the sorts of highlights that both he and his fans have come to expect.

"We play to make the people happy, as well, to entertain them and try to make the match fun," said Alcaraz, who won his second Grand Slam title by edging Djokovic in the Wimbledon final in July.



"It's great to have those kind of points, as well, and to feel the energy that they enjoy."

The 20-year-old from Spain is trying to become the first man to win two titles in a row in New York since Roger Federer took five straight from

Roger," Alcaraz said.

"That's my main goal right now and I'm looking for "I would love to be part of tournament history with

Next for Alcaraz is a matchup against Matteo Arnaldi, a 22-year-old from

Italy who is ranked 61st. Arnaldi, who had won a grand total of one Grand Slam match before this tournament, reached the fourth round by eliminating No. 16 seed

3, 6-4, 6-3.

In another early result In another early result Saturday, Jack Draper, a 21-year-old left-hander from Britain ranked 123rd, made the round of 16 at a major for the first time with a 6-4, 6-2, 3-6, 6-3 win over American wild-card entry Michael Mmoh.

No. 2 seed Aryna Sabalenka - who has a chance to overtake Joa Swiatek at No

to overtake Iga Swiatek at No. 1 in the rankings depending on their results the rest of the way at the U.S. Open - continued her smooth march through the bracket by defeating Clara Burel of France 6-1, 6-1.

Sabalenka, the Australian Open champion in January, has dropped a total of just 12 games through three matches

Sabalenka now takes on No. 13 Daria Kasatkina, a 2022 French Open semifinalist, who returns to the fourth round in New York for the first time in six years after getting past Greet Minnen of Belgium 6-3,

No. 17 Madison Keys, the 2017 runner-up at Flushing Meadows, came back to defeat No. 14 Liudmila Samsonova 5-7, 6-2, 6-2, and will play No.



### **Pegula outlasts** Svitolina at US Open, will next face fellow **American Keys**

AP NEW YORK

Tessica Pegula and Madison Keys kept noticing their names near each other in tournament draws this sum-

"We were like, I think the world just wants us to play,"

Pegula said. At the U.S. Open, they

finally will. Pegula beat Elina Svitolina 6-4, 4-6, 6-2 on Saturday, setting up a fourth-

round matchup against the No. 17-seeded Keys.

Pegula, the No. 3 seed, is still trying to advance beyond the quarterfinals of a Grand Slam tournament. First, she'll have to get by the 2017 runner-up in Flushing Meadows who also needed three sets to move on.

Keys came back to eliminate No. 14 Liudmila Samsonova 5-7, 6-2, 6-2.

Ons Jabeur, the No. 5 seed who lost in the finals last year, also reached the fourth round by outlasting No. 31 Marie Bouzkova 5-7, 7-6 (5), 6-3 in a match that took 2 hours, 56 minutes. Jabeur will face No. 23 Zheng Qinwen of China, who edged Lucia Bronzetti 6-3, 4-6, 6-4.

Pegula and Keys could have met early in both Montreal and Cincinnati, but Keys had to withdraw with a hip injury in Canada - where Pegula won the title - and lost her opening match in Ohio.

domestic franchise T20 teams

include Lancashire Thunder, Supernovas, Manchester Originals and Trent Rockets

(The Hundred) and Mumbai

Indians (Women's Premier

League). The WBBL overseas

draft also included Indian play-

ers such as Harleen Deol, Hurley

Gala, Richa Ghosh, Mannat

Kashyap, Amanjot Kaur, Veda

Krishnamurthy, Shikha Pandey.

So they've still played only once, a victory for Pegula last year in San Diego, though do hit together some-

'Every time I practice with her, she just has the ability to just hit aces and rip forehands and backhands, play a really big power game," Pegula said. "It will be interesting to

see how smart I can play and what I can do to combat

Other winners on the women's side Saturday included No. 2 Aryna Sabalenka, who routed Clara Burel 6-1, 6-1, and No. 13 Daria Kasatkina, who topped Greet Minnen 6-3, 6-4 and will face the Australian Open champion Monday.

Pegula then found herself in a tough test with Svitolina, the No. 26 seed from Ukraine who reached the U.S. Open semifinals in 2019. It was tied 2-2 in the third set before the 29-yearold from Florida broke serve to start a run of four straight games to win the match.

That put her in the fourth round of the U.S. Open for the second time. Pegula had her best result at the tournament in 2022, falling to eventual champion Iga Swiatek in the quarterfinals. She's gone that far in each Grand Slam tournament but is still seeking to reach the final four.

"She's been showing great results," Svitolina said.



## Bellingham's fifth goal in four games seals Real Madrid comeback

Jude Bellingham appears to be blessed since joining Real

The England midfielder had already won over Madrid's faithful with four goals in three away wins to start the season after joining the club this sumyear-old Bellingham was gifted a fumbled save by Getafe's goalkeeper right in front of the goal, allowing him to tap home a stoppage-time winner and save the hosts from a stumble in their home debut at a newly renovated Santiago Bernabeu Stadium.

The 2-1 comeback kept Madrid at the top of the Spanish league with a perfect record.

Bellingham said the celebration by Madrid's supporters, which included singing The Beatles classic "Hey Jude," made him tremble with emotion.

"That is the loudest moment I have been in at a stadium and happily it was after my goal, Bellingham said.

"I can't believe it to be honest. When they were singing Hey Jude,' I just wanted to turn and listen - my legs were shaking.

"I know that I was brought in for these kinds of moments, and I've just got to keep doing it and making sure the fans go home happy." Madrid lost veteran top scorer Karim Benzema to the emerging Saudi Arabian league this offseason and was able to bring in Joselu Mato only when Kylian Mbappé stayed put at Paris Saint-Germain.

Joselu, whose Espanyol was relegated last season, and Bellingham provided the goals to fight back against a Getafe that went ahead in the 11th when Borja Mayoral poached a bad pass by new Madrid left back Fran García.

Joselu made his first start in place of the injured Vinícius . Júnior. While Vinícius is a world-class winger with superb dribbling skills, Joselus is a pure striker of the classic mold: A big body who likes to score with his head and prowl the area for a rebound.

That loose ball fell to the Spain striker in the 47th. Getafe held firm until the final minutes when Bellingham took advantage of a spilled save by David

Soria to snatch the three points. Bellingham's five goals in four games, including a double in a 3-1 comeback at Almeria

two weeks ago, lead the league scoring list. That is compared to his eight goals in 31 Bundesliga appearances last season.

Madrid hit the woodwork three times, and Soria kept Getafe in the game with several saves until his error in the final moments cost his team a point.

"We are not surprised by the surprised that he is scoring so many goals," Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti said. "Everyone is surprised, even him."

#### HAIL THE CHAMPIONS

Madrid and Getafe lined up to provide an honor guard for four of Spain's Women's World Cup winners before the game.

Olga Carmona, the scorer in Spain's 1-0 victory over England in the Aug. 20 final, key midfielder Teresa Abelleira, captain Ivana Andrés, and goalkeeper Misa Rodríguez, paraded the Women's World Cup trophy to the center of the field. All four play for Real Madrid.

The victory has been overshadowed by the kiss forced by the president of the Spanish Football Federation on a Spain player during the celebrations.

#### GREENWOOD AT GETAFE

Getafe is being scrutinized for having acquired forward Mason Greenwood on loan from Manchester United after the English player left his old club following a criminal investigation into a possible attempted rape that was closed by pros-

The deal was announced just before the summer market closed on Friday. The 21-yearold England forward has not played for United since January 2022. Getafe coach José Bordalás said in the post-game news conference, "It is a very delicate situation that is not to be made light of. ... Everyone knows what happened and the measures that were taken. We can only talk about soccer. He is motivated to be here and we will help him recover his best level."

#### OTHER RESULTS

Japan forward Take Kubo scored twice to help Real Sociedad beat Granada 5-3 and get its first win of the campaign.

Willian José fired in a free kick for Real Betis to beat Rayo Vallecano 1-0, while Alaves edged Valencia 1-0 thanks to an own goal by defender Cenk

## Monaco routs Lens to move 2 points clear atop French league

Monaco did not even need goals from its forwards to beat Lens 3-0 at home and move to the top of the French

Wissam Ben Yedder failed to add to his league-leading four goals and Takumi Minamino stayed on three, and it hardly mattered on Saturday.

Coach Adi Hütter's freescoring side has 10 points from four games and was two points clear of second-placed Marseille, which drew at Nantes 1-1 on

Women' team captain Harmanpreet Kaur was

the only Indian player to get

picked in the Women's Big

Bash League overseas draft,

being retained by Melbourne

including Yastika Bhatia,

Jemimah Rodrigues and Deepti

Sharma, among other figured in

A total of 18 Indian players,

Renegades here on Sunday.

ond last season to qualify for the Champions League, has picked up only one point and club-record signing Elye Wahi was kept quiet up front by Monaco's defense.

Two of Monaco's defenders scored, too, as it reached a healthy 13 goals from four matches.

Wilfried Songo headed in from Caio Henrique's corner in the 24th minute and, after midfielder Aleksandr Golovin turned in a pass from Minamino in the 36th, it was Guillermo Maripan's turn to

the inaugural WBBL overseas

draft but just one --

egory, Harmanpreet was

retained by the Renegades along

with Hayley Matthews of the

remarkablay for the Renegades

during the 2021-22 season,

scoring 406 runs in 12 innings

at an average of 58.00 and a

West Indies.

Placed in the platinum cat-

Harmanpreeat performed

Harmanpreet -- got picked.



Harmanpreet only Indian player to

get picked in WBBL overseas draft

strike rate of 130.96, including

three half-centuries and a top

the ball, taking 15 wickets at an

economy of 7.45, with best fig-

She was also effective with

Harmanpreet had made her WBBL debut with Sydney

Speaking on Harmanpreet's

retention, Renegades head

coach Simon Helmot stated,

score of 81 not out.

ures of 3 for 22.

Thunder in 2016-17.

Henrique corner in the 59th.

In the other match, Brest kept the visiting Rennes attack quiet as the Brittany derby finished 0-0. It was the third straight draw for Rennes, which recruited former Manchester United and Chelsea midfielder Nemanja Matic during the transfer win-

Defending champion Paris Saint-Germain is at struggling Lyon on Sunday without new signing Randal Kolo Muani, who is nursing a

them (Harmanpreet and

Hayley) and I'm looking for-

ward to them working with us

again this year. "It was a tough

decision -- do we go

Harmanpreet at pick three, or do

we go Hayley? Fortunately, it

worked out for us that

Harmanpreet was still available

in the second round, so we

could still get her as a Platinum

# T-3 in Irish Open

Aday after D Gukesh ended his idol Viswanathan

Gukesh, who is here for the Asian Games camp and an invitational tournament, added on Saturday that he has overcome the disappointment of losing to Norway's Magnus Carlsen in the World Cup

PTI in an exclusive interaction here that, "It's (loss) already quite sometime back, it's fine there are things ahead and I'm

focussing on that." For someone, who is without a sponsor and manages his finances through prize money and crowd-funding, Gukesh says the WestBridge Anand Chess Academy has played a huge

role in his success ever since he came on board in 2021. "(Viswanathan) Anand sir congratulated me; undoubtedly he has played a huge role in my career. He has been my

"I feel good, it's a good achievement and I'm happy about it," he said about becoming India No 1,

(WestBridge Anand Chess Academy) played a huge role in shaping me up for this," added Gukesh, who was the youngest chess player to cross an Elo 2750 surpassing

## With Mirabai not in race, Worlds set to be underwhelming affair for India

PTI IYADH

Egames squad, N Ajith and Achinta Sheuli will have a point to prove while Mirabai Chanu will merely mark her presence by attending the weigh-in at the World Championships, which is a compulsory Paris Olympic

Chanu (49kg) has removed herself from medal contention at the marquee event starting here on Monday as the former champion will not be lifting the barbell in order to save her best for the Asian Games, starting later this month.

She will only complete the necessary formalities to remain eligible for the Paris Games. With Chanu not lifting, the

Worlds are set to be an underwhelming affair for her country. No Indian lifter will be in medal contention as none of them have entered a starting weight worthy of Group A classification.

The lifters who register the highest entry weight are placed in group A, followed by

Ajith and Sheuli were

Sports Ministry's selection criteria. The two, who compete in the 73kg category, will want to put their best foot forward here. Ajith, the reigning national champion, has logged in an entry weight of 305kg and has been assigned Group C. The Commonwealth Championships gold medallist

unceremoniously dumped

from the Asiad squad last

month as they didn't meet the

recovered and will be aiming to close in on the 320kg mark. "I have been lifting 318kg in training, I want to reach 320kg," Ajith told PTI.

Meanwhile, Sheuli has

struggled with injuries since

had some niggles but has

being crowned the CWG champion last year. His previous Worlds campaign ended in heartbreak as he pulled his hamstring during the warmups last year. The Kolkata lifter is still

struggling with a backache and perhaps that's why has registered an entry weight of just 280kg, which is a far cry from his personal best of 313kg, for a place in Group D. Shubham Todkar (61kg) is

the third male lifter from India. The Maharashtra lifter hasn't been at his best in the two international tournaments he has competed in and will be keen to give a better account of

#### Gukesh aims to keep improving after becoming India No 1 without sponsorship support PTI ■ KOLKATA

Aday after D Gukesh ended his idol Viswanathan Anand's 37-year reign as India's No. 1 chess player, the 17-year-old looked committed and keen as ever to keep 'improving" his game.

Gukesh, who is here for the Asian Games camp and an invitational tournament, added on Saturday that he has overcome the disappointment of losing to Norway's Magnus Carlsen in the World Cup quarterfinals recently.

Sounding practical and looking forward to the upcoming events, Gukesh told PTI in an exclusive interaction here that, "It's (loss) already quite sometime back, it's fine there are things ahead and I'm focussing on that."For someone, who is without a sponsor and manages his finances through prize money and crowd-funding, Gukesh says the WestBridge Anand Chess Academy has played a huge role in his success ever since he

came on board in 2021. '(Viswanathan) Anand sir congratulated me; undoubtedly he has played a huge role in my career. He has been my biggest hero and idol. I hope he is happy with my achieve-

"I feel good, it's a good

achievement and I'm happy about it," he said about becoming India No 1, leapfrogging Anand (Elo 2754) by four points in the latest FIDE rating list that came out on Friday. "My trainers and WACA

(WestBridge Anand Chess Academy) played a huge role in shaping me up for this," added Gukesh, who was the youngest chess player to cross an Elo 2750 surpassing Norway's Carlsen. The teenager from Anand's

home city Chennai now sits at No. 8 in world rankings with the duo being the only two Indians inside the world's top-10. R Praggnanandhaa, with 2727 points, is No.3 in India and ranked No.19 in the world. The recently-held World

Cup in Baku saw an unprecedented four Indians making the quarterfinals out of which Praggnanandhaa grabbed the Candidates spot en route to becoming the youngest runner-up in the history of the tournament at 18 years.

### **Diksha fights** back on back nine but slips to

PTI KOLKATA

Anand's 37-year reign as India's No. 1 chess player, the 17-year-old looked committed and keen as ever to keep "improving" his game.

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"My trainers and WACA

Norway's Carlsen.

## KL RAHUL IN, SAMSON OUT OF INDIA'S WORLD CUP SQUAD

aving received a clearance certificate on his fitness from the NCA, KL Rahul is set to be included in India's 15-member provisional World Cup squad, which will be announced by Tuesday.

Rahul has been recuperating at the National Cricket Academy in Bengaluru post a thigh surgery, and he will have one final round of fitness drills before flying out to Sri Lanka to join the Indian team for the ongoing Asia Cup.

It is understood that the NCA trainers and the team management have been left with little doubt after Rahul batted extensively at nets and in the match simulation process.

India is expected to announce their World Cupbound 15 within the September 5 cut off date. But the selectors decided to go ahead with the announcement after Rahul received the fitness clearance.

He can be expected to keep wickets too in the World Cup. Chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar had reached Pallekele on Saturday, and it is understood that he held discussions with captain Rohit Dravid post India's match against Pakistan, which was

Ishan Kishan will be the second wicketkeeper in the side and his composed 81 against Pakistan on Saturday

will miss out on an India berth.

Indies (July-August), making just 78 runs from three matchaveraging 26.

agement felt that the Mumbaikar can add further

In batting apart from skiper Rohit, players like Virat Kohli, Shubman Gill and Shreyas Iyer were automatic picks. Hence, Tilak Varma will have to sit out for the moment.

Mohammed Siraj and Mohammed Shami will handle the pace department along with all-rounders Hardik

abandoned due to rain.

was the clincher. It means that Sanju Samson

Samson is in Sri Lanka with the Indian team as a travelling reserve.Suryakumar Yadav too has found a place in the squad despite his less than satisfactory outings in the ODIs.

However, the team man-

meat to the middle-order.

Bumrah, Jasprit

Suryakumar could not get going in the ODIs against West



Pandya and Shardul Thakur. So, Prasidh Krishna, who is

part of the India squad for the Asia Cup, will not be featured in the World Cup squad.

The spin unit will be led by left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav, who has been in fine fettle this year. Kuldeep is India's highest wicket-taker in ODIs in

2023, taking 22 wickets in 11 matches. Kuldeep and Ravindra Jadeja will be India's two first-choice spinners.

This will be the second World Cup for Kuldeep as he had played 7 matches for India in the 2019 World Cup, picking up 6 wickets in England.
The selectors and the management thought deeply about the third spinner and zeroed in on left-arm spinner Axar Patel, whom they thought will also give a bit more depth in batting needed.

In that context, veterans R Ashwin and Yuzvendra Chahal, who had plucked 12 wickets from 8 matches in the 2019

World Cup, will miss the cut. India's provisional squad for World Cup 2023: Rohit

Sharma (Captain), Hardik (vice-captain), Pandya Shubman Gill, Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, KL Rahul, Ravindra Jadeja, Shardul Thakur, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj, Kuldeep

Axar Patel, Ishan Kishan, Suryakumar Yadav. Had Rohit or Virat scored would you have debated KL's inclusion? asks Gambhir. Mumbai, Sep 3 (PTI) Ishan Kishan has "done everything" to earn a place ahead of KL Rahul for the World Cup and the Karnataka batter would not even have been considered if he was competing with Rohit Sharma or Virat Kohli, says Gautam Gambhir.

Kishan scored a crucial 82 to arrest India's slide in their Asia Cup opener against Pakistan on Saturday, a game which was washed out but witnessed the wicketkeeperbatter recording his fourth consecutive ODI fifty.

At No 5, Kishan's knock against Pakistan not only rescued India but made him a firm favourite for the wicketkeeper-batter position ahead of Rahul, who is missing the starting stages of the continental tournament due to an injury.

Gambhir said India should prefer "form over name" for the World Cup with the host country's squad expected to be announced by Tuesday.

"Tell me something, what is

pionship - name or form? If Rohit (Sharma) or Virat (Kohli) had scored something similar (four consecutive fifties), would you still say that KL Rahul would replace them?" Gambhir told Disney-Hotstar.

"The point is, when you're gearing up to win the World Cup, you don't see the name, you judge by their form. You

choose the player who can perform and win you the World Cup," Gambhir said. The 2007 and 2011 World

Cup winner Gambhir said Kishan has done enough to earn a spot in the Indian side. "I feel Ishan Kishan has done everything he needs to do to be a frontrunner," he said.

"Just because he is Ishan Kishan and hasn't played a lot of international cricket, you're saying that KL Rahul should play before him," he said.

"But if Virat Kohli or Rohit Sharma were in place of Ishan Kishan, would KL Rahul be able to replace them? The answer is 'no'," Gambhir added.

Gambhir emphasised on having Kishan ahead of Rahul at No 5, saying their selections could have been debated if the former's runs against Pakistan

## **Eyeing Super Four** berth, India face greenhorns Nepal

**PTI** PALLEKELE

Coming off a washout, India would hope they only have greenhorns Nepal to tackle and not rain as the heavyweights eye a berth in the Super Four of the Asia Cup here on Monday.

From Group A, Pakistan have already qualified to the Super Four with 3 points, and India have one point from the washed-out game against their arch-rivals on Saturday.

Even in the event of another rain-marred match on the morrow, India can advance to the Super Four with two points, but Rohit Sharma's men will certainly not want it that way.

India receivéd some encouraging signals from their match against Pakistan and they would want to build on them ahead of the busiand much sterner assays in

Pakistan pacers Shaheen Shah Afridi and Haris Rauf had reduced India to 66 for 4 by the 15th over. At that point, India's worries might have been accentuated by the fact that they have a jelly mid-

Ishan Kishan was playing the first match of his career at No. 5 in ODIs and Hardik Pandya never really fitted the bill of a firefighter.

However, both Kishan and Pandya overcame their personal predicaments to amass 138 runs for the fifth wicket, cornerstone of India's eventual 266.

Kishan was particularly impressive, as his forte is being a dashing top-order batsman.

So, there was that hint of doubt whether Kishan would be able to make the necessary adjustments to his batting and approach to suit the No. 5

He excelled on both the counts. As a top-order batter



Kishan was susceptible to pacers who could move the ball around.

Instead of trusting his defence, Kishan's method to get out of the cage was being

Rauf, Afridi and Naseem Shah tested his fortitude but for once Kishan showed that he can offer a scratch.

Nepal do not have the quality of Pakistan, but Kishan would like to have a go at them and add some more runs under his belt to boost his new profile.

Similarly, the management will also welcome the composure Pandya showed while playing second fiddle to Kishan, and the seamless shifting of gears the allrounder did after the lefthander's dismissal.

The adaptability and the no-egotistical methods of Pandya would have pleased the think-tank no end.

Even though the stuttering effort of their top four -Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, Shubman Gill and Shrevas Iyer - against Pakistan pacers could be treated as an aberration, the management would want them to get into ODI mode at the earli-

Rohit and Kohli were rested for the ODIs against the West Indies, while Shreyas Iyer is making his return after an injury lay-off.

Nepal might just give the trio the perfect of earn some valuable game time and runs.

However, the team top brass might be a tad disappointed because the bowlers never got a chance to test their skills against a quality opponent in Pakistan.

They would have been eager to see how Jasprit Bumrah responded to the task of bowling 10 overs and fielding the length of 50 overs.

Hence, his performance will be keenly monitored against Nepal.

Nepal, who lost to Pakistan by 238 runs in the tournament opener, would be eager to mask their lack of cricketing pedigree with their enthusiasm.

Their biggest hope to make some impact in the match will be leg-spinner Sandeep Lamichhane and captain Rohit Paudel.

But in the real world, they will be more than happy to limit the damage to the minimum against a cricketing powerhouse

#### Bangladesh post 334/5 against Afghanistan in Asia Cup PTI LAHORE Bangladesh skipper Shakib Al Hasan won the toss and elected to bat in their Group B match

Najmul Hossain Shanto and Mehidy Hasan Miraz struck centuries to take Bangladesh to 334 for five in their Asia Cup Group B match against Afghanistan here on Sunday. Mehidy, promoted to open

the innings, retired hurt at 112 from 119 balls, while Shanto made 104 off 105 balls before he Mehidy and Shanto added

194 runs off 190 balls for the third wicket before the former suffered an injury to his hand and had to leave the field.

Afghanistan bowlers struggled to make inroads on a flat pitch, with Mujeeb Ur Rahman and Gulbadin Naib taking one



of the Asia Cup against Afghanistan here on Sunday.

Bangladesh made three changes to their playing XI which lost to Sri Lanka in the opening match. They brought in Sĥamim Hossain, Áfif Hossain and Hasan Mahmud in place of Tanzid Hasan, Mahedi Hasan and Mustafizur Rahman.

Shakib said the decision to bat first was taken keeping in mind the wicket and the weath-

"It looks a good wicket and keeping the weather in mind, it is very hot. We have three changes." On the loss to Sri Lanka in the opening game, he said, "We didn't execute (our

plans) with the bat and that was our downfall, but today is a new day and a good wicket, hopefully we (will) put up a good score on the board.

Afghanistan: Rahmanullah Gurbaz (wk), Ibrahim Zadran, Rahmat Shah, Hashmatullah Shahidi (capt), Najibullah Zadran, Mohammad Nabi, Gulbadin Naib, Karim Janat, Rashid Khan, Fazalhaq Farooqi, Mujeeb Ur Rahman.

Bangladesh: Mohammad Naim, Najmul Hossain Shanto, Shakib Al Hasan (capt), Towhid Hridoy, Shamim Hossain, Mushfiqur Rahim (wk), Afif Hossain, Mehidy Hasan Miraz, Taskin Ahmed, Shoriful Islam,

### Had Rohit or Virat scored would you have debated KL's inclusion? asks Gambhir

PTI MUMBAI

■thing" to earn a place ahead of KL Rahul for the World Cup and the Karnataka batter would not even have been considered if he was competing with Rohit Sharma or Virat Kohli, says Gautam Gambhir.

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ODI fifty.
At No 5, Kishan's knock against Pakistan not only rescued India but made him a firm favourite for the wicketkeeperbatter position ahead of Rahul, who is missing the starting stages of the continental tournament due to an injury.

Gambhir said India should prefer "form over name" for the World Cup with the host country's squad expected to be announced by Tuesday.

"Tell me something, what is more important to win a championship - name or form? If Rohit (Sharma) or Virat (Kohli) had scored something similar

(four consecutive fifties), would you still say that KL Rahul told Disney-Hotstar. "The point is, when you're

gearing up to win the World Cup, you don't see the name, you judge by their form. You choose the player who can perform and win you the World Cup," Gambhir said. The 2007 and 2011 World

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"But if Virat Kohli or Rohit

Sharma were in place of Ishan Kishan, would KL Rahul be able to replace them? The answer is 'no'," Gambhir added.

Gambhir emphasised on having Kishan ahead of Rahul at No 5, saying their selections could have been debated if the former's runs against Pakistan had come at the top of

### **Najam Sethi slams Asia Cup** scheduling after Pallekele washout

PTI PALLEKELE

Pormer Pakistan Cricket Najam Sethi has slammed the Asia Cup scheduling after the Indo-Pak match washout at Pallekele, saying his suggestion to play in the UAE was turned down and "poor excuses" were made to accommodate Sri Lanka.

Sethi, who took over on an interim basis after Ramiz Raja was sacked as PCB chairman last year, expressed his frustration after the much-anticipated game between India and Pakistan was abandoned due to rain on Saturday.

Taking a dig at the Asian Cricket Council (ACC), Sethi wrote on X, "How disappointing! Rain mars the greatest contest in cricket. But this was forecast. As PCB Chair, I urged the ACC to play in UAE but poor excuses were made to accommodate Sri Lanka.

"Too hot in Dubai, they said. But it was as hot when the Asia Cup was played there last time in Sep 2022 or when IPL was played there in April 2014 and Sep 2020. Politics over sport. Unforgivable!"

Sri Lanka was added as co-



hosts alongside original tournament hosts Pakistan under a hybrid model after India refused to play their Asia Cup matches across their western border owing to geopolitical tension between the two countries. Under the hybrid model, four games are scheduled in Pakistan, and the rest in Sri

Last year's Asia Cup was held in the UAE around the same window, but was played

Gujarat Lions. He also

in the T20 format, with matches scheduled in the evening.

The Indian Premier League, too, was played in the UAE in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the match on Saturday, only one innings was possible and India were bowled out for 266 in 48.5 overs. There were a couple of stoppages in the Indian innings too, and the toss was also delayed.

## Former Zimbabwe captain Heath Streak passes away

PTI HARARE

Former Zimbabwe captain Heath Streak died on Sunday at the age of 49, his family confirmed on social media.

Streak, who played 65 Tests and 189 ODIs for Zimbabwe from 1993-2005, was battling liver cancer for a long time. "In the early hours of this

morning, Sunday the 3rd of

September 2023, the greatest

love of my life and the father of

my beautiful children, was car-

ried to be with the Angels from to deny it hours later after a his home where he wished to spend his last days surrounded by his family and closest loved ones," wrote Streak's wife Nadine on Facebook.

"He was covered in love and peace and did not walk off the Park alone. Our souls are joined for eternity Streaky. Till I hold you again," Nadiné added.

A few days ago, former

Zimbabwe fast bowler Henry

Olonga announced the demise

of Streak on social media, only

message from his captain, but by then condolence messages by several former cricketers had surfaced. "RIP Streaky," Olonga wrote on X, formerly Twitter, on

In Test cricket, Streak

claimed 216 wickets and scored

one century - against West Indies - and 11 half-centuries for

Zimbabwe. In 189 ODIs, he

bagged 239 wickets and made

2,943 runs with 13 fifties. He is

the highest wicket-taker for

Zimbabwe by a long margin in both Tests and ODIs. In 68 ODIs as captain, he led Zimbabwe to win in 18 and lost 47 while three finished without any result. In 21 Tests, Streak captained Zimbabwe to

> and drew six. When Zimbabwe was under dictator Robert Mugabe's rule, Streak was criticised for not taking a firm political stand like Olonga and former skipper Andy Flower, and in April 2004

wins in four while they lost 11



he left the captaincy role as the team went under a challenging phase. He went on to coach several teams including Zimbabwe after his playing days were over and became bowling coach of the national side, followed by a similar role with Bangladesh.

Streak was also associated with Indian domestic cricket team Uttar Pradesh and he also worked with Indian Premier League teams Kolkata Knight Riders and

became Zimbabwe's head coach in October 2016 after replacing Dav Whatmore, tasked to help his national team qualify for the 2019 World Cup in England, which they failed to do. Streak and his coaching staff, including former South Africa cricketer and batting coach Lance Klusener, voluntarily gave up one year's salaries for helping the Zimbabwe cricketers to

face the challenge of pay cuts

for the players.

In April 2021, Streak was handed an eight-year ban by the International Cricket Council after he was charged with and admitted to breaching five codes of the ICC anti-corruption code, which included payment in bitcoins from a potential corruptor.

Streak accepted "full responsibility" of breaching the ICC code but said he was not involved in fixing any matches.

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