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Sri. Narendra Modi
Hon'ble Prime Minister

Thank You
Heroes
of Indian Hockey
for
Making The Nation Proud

Bronze in Paris, Pride at Home



Sri. Mohan Charan Majhi
Hon'ble Chief Minister, Odisha

Odisha is proud to support
the Indian National Hockey Team



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MARKETS EXTEND GAINS

NEW DELHI, THURSDAY AUGUST 22, 2024; PAGES 12 & 4

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RONAK WINS BRONZE IN 110KG 11 SPORTS



Modi to discuss with Zelenskyy ways to end war

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said he was looking forward to sharing perspectives with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on a peaceful resolution of the Ukraine conflict.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi gives his autograph on a portrait presented to him by the Indian community members upon his arrival at a hotel, in Warsaw, Poland, on Wednesday

Modi will be in Kyiv for around seven hours on August 23 in the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Ukraine since the country became independent in 1991.

Indian Prime Minister to Ukraine," he said. "I look forward to the opportunity to build upon earlier conversations with President Zelenskyy on strengthening bilateral cooperation and share perspectives on peaceful resolution of the ongoing Ukraine conflict," he said.

contacts with the two countries and help create the foundation for stronger and more vibrant relations in the years ahead." The Prime Minister will travel to Kyiv from Poland in a 'Rail Force One' train that will take around 10 hours.

Modi's visit to Kyiv comes nearly six weeks after his high-profile trip to Moscow which drew criticism from the US and some of its Western allies. India has been calling for resolution of the conflict through dialogue and diplomacy.



NDA's push for majority mark in Rajya Sabha

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

BJP leader Kiran Choudhary, former Union Minister Upendra Kushwaha, Supreme Court lawyer Manan Kumar Mishra, renowned Kudumi community leader Mamata Mohanta, Union Minister George Kurian, nominees of BJP and NCP, Dhairiyasheel Patil and Nitin Patil, Mission Ranjan Das and Rameshwar Teli and Union Minister of State Ravneet Singh Bittu were among those who filed their nomination papers for election to the 12 vacant seats in the Upper House on Wednesday.

111, four short of half-way mark. The Opposition has 84 members — Congress 26 and allies 58. Several of the 12 seats fell vacant as the sitting members, including Union Ministers Piyush Goyal, Sarbananda Sonowal and Jyotiraditya Scindia, were elected to the Lok Sabha.

Assembly on Tuesday, nearly two months after she left Congress. She represented the Tosham seat in the Haryana Assembly. The by-poll for the lone Rajya Sabha seat in Haryana was necessitated after Congress leader Deepender Singh Hooda was elected to the Lok Sabha from Rohtak.



Firefighters douse a fire which broke out following an explosion in a reactor pharma unit of pharmaceutical company Escientia, in Anakapalle, Andhra Pradesh, on Wednesday

13 killed in Andhra pharma unit fire

PTI ■ ATCHUTAPURAM (ANDHRA PRADESH)

The death toll in the fire accident at a pharmaceutical unit here on Wednesday rose to 13, officials said. Anakapalli District Collector Vijaya Krishnan said the fire broke out at 2:15 pm at Escientia Advanced Sciences Pvt Ltd at Atchutapuram in Anakapalli district.

WB icons join march for justice in Kolkata horror case

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Kolkata continued to remain loyal to its age old insignia — Michhil Nagari or City of Processions — with players and engineers, IT personnel on Wednesday joining the doctors in their ongoing protest movement against the RG Kar Medical College rape and murder case.

Among who joined the march were Chess Grand Master Dibyendu Barua, swimmer Bula Chowdhury, sprinter Jyotirmoye Sikdar and national soccer player Gautam Sarkar. "We have joined not to get justice for the young lady doctor but also for the whole society... enough is enough we cannot breathe anymore in this vitiated system where everything is rotting... tomorrow it can be my family members or anyone else's... you need a foolproof system in place," said Chowdhury. Sarkar too lent his voice saying, "It is not the culprits that have to



be hanged but the system in which they flourish that has to go to the gallows... this rule of the corrupt, by the corrupt and for the corrupt must end because in the mire of this corruption these devils are born... who else than the State can do it... we demand justice for the State... if a doctor is not safe inside her own hospital ... if a journalist is not safe inside her own office... if a policewoman is not safe inside the police station... if a player is not safe inside the camp... or for that matter if a politician is not safe inside the legislature then who is safe in which place?"

A former Ranji Trophy player said, "It is the voice that has risen from within the society and that has to be addressed or else it will turn into a volcano... society is scared... I am a father of a girl who too is in a profession that I won't name and I want her safe... "I can just imagine what the old parents of the ill-fated doctor who was killed so brutally must be going through... gradually this fire will subside but the pain of losing an 'aulad' (offspring) that is burning the old parents by the hour will never subside... so it is the duty of the society to see the end of it."

Google, Meta in trouble over ads linked to fake lotteries

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala police have issued a notice to Google to remove apps from its Play Store that are selling fake lotteries online in the name of the lottery run by the state. A similar notice was issued to Meta to remove advertisements of such fake lotteries from social media platforms Facebook, Whatsapp and Instagram managed by it, the State Police Media Centre (SPMC) said in a release on Wednesday. Police took the action after cyber patrolling revealed that 60 fake lottery apps, 25 fake Facebook profiles and 20 websites are connected to the scam, the



SPMC release said. It said that stringent legal action will be taken against those who are behind the fraud. Giving details of the scam, the police said that fake advertisements in the name of 'Kerala Megamillion Lottery' and 'Kerala Summer Season Dhamaka' have been circulating on social media

platforms like WhatsApp, Telegram and Instagram for some time stating that lotteries run by the state government can be bought online. People also get messages on their phones stating that the Kerala government has started an online lottery, and on spending ₹40 rupees there is a chance to win up to ₹12 crore, it said. When a person sends ₹40 on the number mentioned in the message, they get a fake lottery ticket image on WhatsApp. Later, when the draw time is over, the fraudsters send artificially fabricated results that show that the ticket held has won a prize of ₹5 lakh, the release said.

Bharat Bandh against SC's quota ruling evokes mixed response

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Amid protest against the Supreme Court's decision to permit the sub-classification of Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs), a daylong nationwide strike called by Dalits and Adivasi communities led to partial disruption in rail and road services in the States of Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha and Rajasthan on Wednesday, evoked a mixed reaction. The response was tepid in other parts of the country. The bandh was by and large peaceful with some sporadic incidents of violence. Several videos of cops lathicharging protesters were doing the rounds on the Internet. One such video from Bihar's Patna has grabbed

eyeballs after a policeman accidentally hit a Sub Divisional Magistrate (SDM) with a baton while managing law and order in Patna. The bizarre incident occurred at the busy Dak Bangla square in Bihar's capital city. Having broken barricades at the JP Golambar intersection, the protesters reached Dak Bangla, where, to control the situation, security forces resorted to a lathi-charge. In a viral video, the policeman is seen hitting Khandekar, who was in civil dress, with a stick. While the SDM is taken away by his colleagues, who tell him about the mistake. The SDM identified as Shrikant Kundlik Khandekar.

Dosa, butter chicken, Indian street food popular in Poland

PTI ■ WARSAW

Dosa, butter chicken and mango lassi, an unlikely combo for some perhaps but topping the list of favourites for Polish diners who say the dishes remind them of their travels to the country. More than 45 Indian restaurants are offering a variety of traditional Indian food across Poland, with the capital Warsaw City having at least a dozen of them, as per the listing of the Embassy of India in Poland here. And not just dining out, Indian food is popular as a takeaway option too across Poland.



India and Indian food are the talk of the town yet again as Warsaw is excited to receive Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who will arrive here for his two-day visit on

Wednesday. This will be the first official visit of an Indian Prime Minister to this country in 45 years. In Warsaw, Chetan Nandani, a Gujarati businessman, recently opened a restaurant called 'Chaiwala', possibly alluding to the moniker that has stuck with Modi since 2014. Nandani, who already ran a restaurant called 'Curry House', opened the 'Chaiwala' owing to the popular demand for Indian food. He claimed to have introduced Indian street food to Warsaw.

Greed for big catch poses risk to fish eaters

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Several fishermen are illegally using commonly available pesticides, particularly synthetic pyrethroids to harvest high-value crustaceans or prawns in the lower stretches of the River Ganga in West Bengal. The practice may cause significant harm to the river's ecosystem in the long run, scientists from ICAR-Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute (CIFRI) have sounded alarms. "Research has shown that pesticide residues are present in fish tissues from the River Ganga, although concentrations are currently below levels deemed hazardous to human health.

"However, long-term exposure to these chemicals can impact reproductive health in fish and pose risks to wildlife and human populations dependent on the river for drinking water and livelihood," the researchers warned, calling for urgent stringent regulatory actions and community awareness. The illegal fishing practice is particularly prevalent in areas extending from Nabadwip to Balagarh in the State, said the study. Also, as per the representation of the local communities in the studied area, the scientists found that illegal intruders appear from neighbouring areas, specifically the villages adjacent to the river. "They target the lucrative



freshwater prawn (Macrobrachium spp.), which commands high prices in the market. Apart from this, a variety of Small Indigenous

Fish species are caught rampantly as the bye catch, including Puntius spp., Gudusia chapra, Salmostoma," said Ajay Saha,

Archisman Ray, Kausik Mondal, Basanta Kumar Das from ICAR-Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute (CIFRI), Barrackpore, and Vikas Kumar from ICAR-CIFRI, Prayagraj. Presently, majority of the fish are harvested using gill nets, cast nets, passive fish traps, or occasionally plant-based fish poisons, the banned pesticides are being rampantly used despite being banned. "Indiscriminate use of synthetic pyrethroids, such as cypermethrin and deltamethrin, disrupts aquatic ecosystems by causing imbalances in fish populations and damaging aquatic flora.



FIRST COLUMN

THE DIVINE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Aligning with this divine justice system is essential for realising true justice and harmony in life



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

Along with the Creation, God has set in place a perfect justice system. This is overseen by the Divine Authority under the superintendence of God. (The Bhagavad-Geeta 9.10) The Divine Authority is required to record all our acts by the mind, words and the body 24x7. Obviously, they have access to them. They are required by God to decide awards and punishments according to the guidelines given by Him. God does not interfere in this, and we keep on getting rewards and punishments as deserved life after life according to the 'Karmaphala Principle', which is: "what we sow we reap." Going into details, there are three parts of this.

There is 'prarabdha' (acts done earlier), 'kriyamana' (acts currently being done) and 'svabhava' (nature). What was done earlier including past lives, which has not been acted upon is carried forward till rewarded or punished. This process goes on eternally. The timing of rewards and punishments are decided by the Divine Authority. God knows what is being done, but does not interfere in it.

God gets into the act only if someone, mostly a devotee having God's consciousness, approaches Him for relief/pardon. If the request is found appropriate, God helps those approaching Him in order to deal with their punishments, i.e. makes them tolerable. (18.58) In this connection, it is necessary to point out that nature of all souls are also results of past karmas (deeds), as determined by the Divine Authority. It is very difficult to change one's nature by self-help. For example, if someone is lusty,



he or she will continue to be so during his entire life, unless God intervenes and helps in improving it. Again, we have to pray for it. These are the basics. Now let us see how it turns out practically. Take up a soul as an example. He has past karmas, which are due for rewards and punishments in this life. They manifest at their appointed times.

A man gets into an argument with his brother for his share in the paternal property. He decides to seek legal help. This is stage one of the justice system. Now it is 'Panchayat' at the village level or a court of justice. Such courts deliver justice based on man-made laws. These authorities deliver justice expeditiously, i.e. not taking too much time. But they must do justice, in which 'dharma' (highest religious principles) is the basis, wherever they have some latitude. Failing which, they create their faulty destiny; they just act as mediums. Whatever happens to a person has been decided long ago. That is how astrologers can predict what will happen to us.

At every stage of the legal process, rewards and punishments, as destined only, keep coming. If the person concerned is fated to get relief, it will happen in a higher court. Vice versa is also true. God has no pre-conceived or prejudiced notion towards anyone, except if someone takes His shelter, as mentioned earlier. Like all of us, nations have also destiny. This is a cumulative total of fate of all its residents. Let me take up India for example.

The 21st century is likely to be dominated by India. If it is true and India will become a developed nation by 2047, then, its judicial system has to be functioning smoothly. It must have been streamlined. There will be no delay in the delivery of judgements, i.e. there will be time-bound at every stage. Justice delayed is justice denied will be a thing of the past. There will be adequate judicial infrastructure with sufficient resources. But for this miracle to happen, some people in authority have to become mediums. For this, they will be rewarded personally according to the karmaphala principle. The divine justice system is foolproof. Are people in authority listening? It will be a shame if an opportunity like this is squandered; whatever is destined will surely happen. The question is: who would become mediums and get credit? This has been left to individuals.

(The writer is a spiritual teacher; views are personal)

Streamlining Punjab's administrative web



A S MITTAL

To unlock the State's true potential, there is an urgent need for structural reforms that prioritise smooth operations, accountability and stakeholder engagement

It's time for the complex web of multiple organisations of the Punjab government to take cues from the Indian Army's well-structured organisational hierarchy, which prioritises efficient command, control, and operational efficiency to maintain readiness. From a Havaldar leading a section, the smallest unit comprising ten soldiers, to the Chief of the Army Staff, the Army meticulously ensures cohesive functioning, distinct roles, and responsibilities, enabling the 14.55 lakh personnel to effectively fulfil defence and security roles. In contrast, the Punjab government's organisational structure (4.15 lakh personnel, including contractual and outsourced) requires an overhaul. In total, 50 parent departments and 163 affiliated organisations, each with its administrative head, aim for seamless result-oriented operations, which are below expectations. In the current government, the Chief Minister, who also oversees the industry sector, plays a pivotal role. However, the current structure, with around 20 administrative secretaries heading 17 departments, corporations, boards, and regulatory authorities, is not conducive to growth. By fostering a culture of collaboration, we can overcome these hurdles and drive efficiency and accountability towards a single goal of industrial growth, which has the potential to exceed the current stagnation of around 3% over the past 20 years in Punjab. Unfortunately, the complexity of multiple departments cannot achieve the single target of developing a fresh entrepreneurial class in the state. Rather, numerous channels breed corruption at various levels, and coercion can easily be gauged as the Punjab government scrapped 1498 mandatory compliances for industries three years ago. Therefore, it is high time to further ease the parent department as a single unique point, focusing on the singular target of developing a fresh entrepreneurial class in the state. It's impractical for any chief secretary to closely monitor 50 parent departments and their 163 affiliated organisations, which around 75 administrative secretaries head.

Assigning an Apex officer, preferably at an additional chief secretary (ACS) level, is crucial to overseeing and synchronising each key sector. This officer will provide guidance, ensure alignment of goals and strategies, and streamline human resources operations effectively. Industries and other key sectors, such as Education, Health, urban development, Rural Development, and Agriculture, also need help navigating the complex web of 15 parent departments and their 69 affiliated organisations, which hampers good governance in Punjab. However, these challenges also present an opportunity for policymakers to reassess and reform, driving efficient and accountable human resources and paving the way for a vibrant Punjab. Industries: In Punjab industries are overseen by over 20 administrative secretaries who manage 17 departments and affiliated organizations. This large organizational structure, instead of collectively achieving the goal of growth, is currently engaged in assessing around 2000 compliances, posing a significant challenge for entrepreneurs. The need for an efficient and accountable administrative setup is urgent to create a conducive and thriving business environment. Initially, the Department of Punjab Industries and Commerce and its



IT'S IMPRACTICAL FOR ANY CHIEF SECRETARY TO CLOSELY MONITOR 50 PARENT DEPARTMENTS AND THEIR 163 AFFILIATED ORGANISATIONS, WHICH AROUND 75 ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARIES HEAD

seven affiliated organisations oversaw the industrial sector.

However, three additional departments were later established - the Department of Investment Promotion, the Department of Employment Generation and Training, and the Department of Technical Education and Industrial Training - along with their ten organisations to fulfil the same objective. To fetch new investment, "Invest Punjab" was established under the Punjab Bureau of Investment Promotion (PBIP) as a single access point to streamline processes. It is claimed that this entity has been empowered to provide over 34 regulatory approvals, clearances, and compliances related to more than 30 organisations. This streamlined approach is crucial for existing industries, as they face challenges in directly dealing with 17 departments- the Punjab Industries & Commerce Department, Pollution Control Board, Chief Electrical Inspector, Labour Commissioner, Department of Factories, Department of Industries, Employment Generation and Training, Skill Development Mission, Punjab Bureau of Investment Promotion and Punjab State Industrial Development Corporation etc.

This complex web of multiple departments is directionless and unfocused; enormous human resources can be utilised in a single merged service provider entity. In 2012, the idea of merging The Punjab State Industrial Development Corporation (PSIDC) and Punjab Financial Corporation (PFC) into the Punjab Small Industries and Export Corporation (PSIEC) was also

proposed but has yet to materialise. Punjab, with 99.7 per cent of MSMEs, is a promising hub for growth. However, the most significant roadblock for these enterprises is dealing with multiple departments and keeping track of their compliance. Despite the implementation of ten policies since the first industrial policy was formulated in 1978, the need for actionable governance reforms is still pressing. It is necessary to explore various measures to significantly improve services and make Punjab an attractive destination. Policymakers must urgently re-imagine the state. Agriculture: In Punjab, agriculture is overseen by five distinct departments: the Department of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Dairy Development and Fisheries, Department of Horticulture, and Department of Soil & Water Conservation.

Eighteen additional organisations support these departments. Despite the involvement of multiple organisations, the state's agricultural growth has consistently declined, resting at around three per cent from 1990 to 2000 and further declining to less than two per cent from 2010 onwards. Education: The government greatly emphasises education and considers it a top priority.

There is a critical need to revamp the administrative structure, as there are currently two separate departments, with six organisations and a school education board. The Department of Higher Education and Languages manages organisations in education and languages, while the Department of School Education oversees the six organisations. Despite these efforts,

it is essential to address that Punjab's secondary school dropout rate was 17.2% in 2022, exceeding the national average of 12.6%. The Way Forward: The reforms have the potential to significantly improve the functioning of key sectors in Punjab, creating a more accessible, transparent, efficient, responsive and accountable system to achieve a single goal collectively. Therefore two steps may be taken: First, Empowering Apex Officials: To achieve seamless collaboration among departments, empower at least five to six apex officers who will oversee the overall administration of their respective departments and have to report to the chief secretary. Each apex officer should have the support of five to six officers as direct reports.

This approach aims to improve responsiveness, ensure transparency in decision-making processes, and hold apex officials accountable for their actions. Second, Stakeholder Engagement: The active participation of stakeholders is not just important, it's integral to the success of the proposed reforms. Encouraging stakeholder participation through feedback mechanisms and regular interactions to understand their needs and concerns is a key part of inclusive growth.

(The Author is Vice-Chairman of Sonalika ITL Group, Vice-Chairman (Cabinet minister rank) of the Punjab Economic Policy and Planning Board, Chairman of ASSOCHAM Northern Region Development Council and President of Tractor and Mechanization Association (TMA). Views expressed are personal)

A bold leap towards 'Viksit Bharat' with historic push for education and skilling

This budget allocation of Rs 1.48 lakh crore for education and skilling along with digital learning will help build a robust, future-ready workforce

Union Minister for Education Dharmendra Pradhan hailed the 2024-25 budget as a pivotal milestone on India's path to becoming a developed nation by 2047. Prioritising education, skilling, employment generation, research and innovation like never before, #Budget for Viksit Bharat paves the way for strengthening Bharat's credentials. "Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan posted on X. He noted that these are comprehensive and concrete measures taken up by Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman that will be a win-win for all stakeholders—students, academia, and industry. The budget allocation for Education, employment, and skilling has been increased by



REETU SRIVASTAVA

30% to Rs 1.48 lakh crore. India has the largest educational system with 265 million students in schools, 43 million in higher education and more than 10 million learners enrolled in skilling institutions. The Budget Allocation for 2024-25 of Rs 73,498 crores is the highest ever for the Department of School Education & Literacy. Autonomous bodies such as the Kendriya Vidyalaya

Sangathan and Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti have also received their highest-ever allocations. The Flagship Schemes like Samagra Shiksha, POSHAN and PM-SHRI have got Rs 3,250 crores. The budget includes strengthening the skilling and apprenticeship ecosystem, skill development and internship opportunities for one crore youth by India's top companies, and providing employment-linked incentives to first-time employees across the sector. The government has introduced a revamped 'Model Skill Loans Scheme' from 1.5 lakhs to 7.5 lakhs to 25000 students annually and education loans up to 10 lakhs for pursuing education in higher domestic educational institutions to one lakh students every year with an annu-

al interest subvention of 3%. The step will certainly promote enrolment in domestic institutions as well as reduce the financial burden on the students. In addition to this, the finance minister also outlined several initiatives for the Skill Development sector. These include the upgrading of 1,000 Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) in line with the skill requirements of the industry. The internship opportunities for one crore youth in 5 years by the government is a welcoming step, this will provide youths with an engagement and enhance employability and practical skills.

In the scheme 'National Apprenticeship Training Scheme (NATS)', an allocation of Rs 600 crore has been made. There has been an over-



all increase of Rs. 3525.15 crore (7.99%) in the budget allocation of the Department of Higher Education in this budget.

Deemed Universities, IITs, NITs, IISERs, and IISc have got hefty allocations, considerably high in comparison to the previous budget. In higher education, areas like Digital e-learning, Research and Innovation, teacher training, the Centre of

Excellence in Artificial Intelligence and some specific institutions have received higher allocations. Under Digital e-learning, the government is looking forward to tapping the potential of virtual learning and aligning it with the Academic Bank of Credits with the view of increasing portability and flexible study options.

In the scheme 'National Mission in Education through ICT', an allocation of ₹480 crore has been made in 2024-25 and this is ₹80 crore more than the allocation in 2023-24. The increased budget for Research and Innovation is to focus on academic and research collaborations in science, engineering and technical education. To improve the quality of education being

imparted at the school level it requires a revamped pedagogical structure, so, the Teacher Training segment has got its due share. The scheme 'Establishment of 3 Centres of Excellence (CoEs) in Artificial Intelligence (AI) has got an allocation of ₹255 crore in the budget. The Major Schemes For Pradhan Mantri Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (PM-USHA) erstwhile known as Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA), the budget has been kept at ₹1814.94 crore. An allocation of ₹1800 crore has been allocated for Institutions of Eminence. In the scheme 'Multi disciplinary Education and Research Improvement in Technical Education EAP (MERITE)', an allocation of ₹200 crore has been made and this is a 100% increase over the

last year's budget. The NEP 2020 says that the aim of the policy must be for India to have an education system by 2040 with equitable access to the highest-quality education for all learners regardless of social or economic background. Recognising the crucial role of education the government has designed an ambitious package for education for it to be growth-oriented, inclusive and progressive. However, the most important aspect is its implementation. The features of the budget meant for education will play a crucial role in guiding India towards becoming a 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047 as stated by the Education Minister. (The writer is an educationist and a freelance writer; views expressed are personal)

Another case filed against Hasina, her aides in B'desh

PTI ■ DHAKA

A case was filed on Wednesday against Bangladesh's deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina and 86 others on charge of attacking a procession in Sylhet city which left several people shot and injured during the recent mass protests on August 4, taking the number of cases against her after her ouster to 33.



Mahmud, former law minister Anisur Rahman, and former advisor to the prime minister Salman F Rahman were among people named in the case. With this case, Hasina is now facing 33 cases against her, including 27 for murder, four for crimes against humanity and genocide, and one for abduction, the paper said. Hasina fled to India on August 5 after resigning from her post amidst unprecedented anti-government student-led protests.

ment has said it will try those involved in the killings during the recent mass movement of the students against the Hasina-led government in the International Crimes Tribunal. Over 230 people were killed in Bangladesh in the incidents of violence that erupted across the country following the fall of the Hasina government, taking the death toll to more than 600 since the massive protest by students against a controversial quota system in government jobs first started in mid-July.

Another case was filed against Hasina and 49 others over the death of Md Omar Faruque, a student of Kabi Nazrul Government College, at Laxmibazar of Sutrapur on July 19. Hasina and 24 others were sued for the death of 18-year-old garment worker Sohel Rana in the city's Adabor area on August 5.

Moscow faces massive Ukrainian drone attack but destroys all

AP ■ MOSCOW

Moscow came under one of the largest attacks yet by Ukrainian drones since the start of fighting in 2022, Russian authorities reported Wednesday, saying they destroyed all of those headed toward the capital.



ed a "mass" attack on his region but that 23 drones were destroyed. While Ukraine has been bogged down in a land conflict in eastern Europe in which the Russians have been driving forward slowly at a heavy cost to both sides, Kyiv has also been attacking Russia with drones. Ukraine has targeted oil refineries and airfields in an attempt to weaken Russia's fighting potential, and also has targeted the capital several times.

ern industrial region of Donbas. The Institute for the Study of War, a think tank based in Washington, said in its daily report late Tuesday that the Ukrainians had made additional advances in their incursion, now in its third week. The Russian state news agency Tass reported that 31 people had died since Ukraine's attack on Russia began Aug. 6, citing an unnamed source in the medical service — figures which are impossible to verify. It said 143 people had suffered injuries, of whom 79 were hospitalized, including four children.

Unrest impact: Hospitality sector hit in Dhaka, rooms empty at hotels

PTI ■ DHAKA

The recent anti-government protests that rocked Bangladesh for over a month have hit the hospitality sector hard in the capital Dhaka with the majority of rooms at several luxury and economy hotels here going empty in the aftermath of the unrest.

unrest in the country, the number of guests occupying rooms have dramatically shrunk," a senior manager in the sales department of a luxury hotel told PTI on the condition of anonymity. This five-star hotel operating under the current brand name for a year-and-a-half is located in a towering building near Gulshan enclave — an affluent area which also houses several diplomatic missions of foreign countries in Bangladesh.

multiple hotels still talk in a hushed tone about the police action that took place in the third week of July and later days to halt the protests. However, the police crackdown only infuriated the masses which eventually led to the fall of the Hasina-led government.

Imran demands open court trial of ex-ISI chief

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Jailed former prime minister Imran Khan on Wednesday demanded an open court trial of former Pakistan spymaster Lt Gen (ret.) Faiz Hameed if his links with the May 9 violence were established as then "it would not be an internal military affair."



year, Khan said that if Hameed is "indeed the mastermind behind the May 9 conspiracy, then the trial should be held openly," adding that the incident was a local issue rather than a matter of national security.

Pak police charge man with cyber terrorism

Lahore (AP):

Pakistani police have arrested a man and charged him with cyber terrorism for his alleged role in spreading misinformation that led to widespread rioting in the UK earlier this month, a senior police investigator said Wednesday.

that his parents are from Rwanda and said to have Christian beliefs. Channel3 Now, an account on the X social media platform that purports to be a news channel, was one of the first outlets to report the false name, Ali Al-Shakati. A Facebook account for the channel said it is managed by people in Pakistan and the US.

Indonesia searches for ways to balance domestic industries with surging Chinese imports

AP ■ JAKARTA

A flood of Chinese products into Indonesia has hit local manufacturers hard, prompting the government to look for ways to placate domestic producers while avoiding angering the country's biggest trading partner.

to ensure micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises and industry. But China is Indonesia's largest trading partner, with two-way trade exceeding \$127 billion in 2023. Imposing higher tariffs could prompt Chinese manufacturers to invest in more factories in Indonesia, but could also backfire, leading Beijing to retaliate.

rics and silks — imports of Chinese products have left thousands of workers idle and without regular incomes, said Neng Wati, a manager at manufacturing company Asnur Konveksi.

The uptick in imports of Chinese products is partly seen as the result of trade friction between the U.S. and China, which has led to increased American tariffs on Chinese goods. But it also reflects rising trade within Asia as the region implements various free trade pacts, as well as weakening demand in Western markets for Chinese exports.

School employee kills at least 3 in Bosnian town

Sarajevo (AP):

A school employee shot and killed three people Wednesday in a town in northwestern Bosnia, police said. The shooter was severely injured after trying to kill himself.

China opens investigation into EU exports as trade tensions flare

AP ■ BEIJING

European milk and cheese producers have become the latest target in a simmering trade war with China. The Chinese Commerce Ministry said Wednesday that it would launch an investigation into subsidies given by the European Union and EU

member countries for dairy products that could lead to tariffs on their export to China. The announcement came one day after the EU released a draft decision to finalize tariffs on electric vehicles made in China, in a follow-up to provisional tariffs announced last month. The tariffs have said.

Sirisena settles compensation for Easter Sunday bombings victims

Colombo (PTI): Sri Lanka's former president Maithripala Sirisena has settled in full the SLR 100 million compensation for the victims of the 2019 Easter Sunday bombings that killed 270 people, including 11 Indians, during his tenure.

country's one of the worst terror strikes despite having credible information of an imminent attack. His lawyers said the full payment of rupees 100 million was completed on August 16. Nine suicide bombers belonging to local Islamist extremist group National Thawheed Jamaat (NTJ) linked to ISIS carried out a series of devastating blasts that tore through



three Catholic churches and as many luxury hotels on April 21, 2019, killing nearly 270 people, including 11 Indians, and injuring over 500. Sirisena was also the minister of defence at that time. The attack stirred a political storm as the then President Sirisena and Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe were blamed for their inability to prevent the attacks despite

prior intelligence being made available. In mid-July, Sirisena reported to the court that he had already paid SLR 58 million and pleaded for six more months to pay the balance of 42 million.

PARADIP PORT AUTHORITY e-TENDER CALL NOTICE No. EM/MSD-IT/TECH-03/2024/1199 Date: 16.08.2024 e-TCN No. EM/MS-23/2024

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