

**OPINION 6**

**A NEW DAWN IN  
TIBETAN DIPLOMACY**

**WORLD 8**

**NORTH KOREA TEST-LAUNCHES  
TWO BALLISTIC MISSILES**

**MONEY 10**

**SENSEX, NIFTY HIT  
FRESH RECORD**

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# OPPOSITION FINDS VOICE IN PARLIAMENT

## Rahul debuts as LoP

## Government returns fire

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Opposition parties, led by Rahul Gandhi in the Lok Sabha and Mallikarjun Kharge in the Rajya Sabha, fired a salvo at the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is in his third tenure, by "provoking" and then "prompting" the top Cabinet Ministers from the BJP, including Modi, Amit Shah, and Rajnath Singh, to respond and retort to the statements made by Congress leaders in Parliament.

Amid several rounds of interruptions, references to the Rule Books, Parliamentary conventions etc, a brief 'clash' between Speaker Om Birla and Rahul and a few Opposition leaders was also observed apparently catapulting a tough Opposition to resonate in Parliament after a hiatus of one decade.

In his maiden speech as LoP in Lok Sabha, Rahul triggered a row when he said those who call themselves Hindus are engaged in "violence and hate" round the clock. Rahul said leaders of the ruling party are not Hindus as they engage in "violence and hate" round the clock, drawing massive protests from the Treasury Benches. He, however, hit back at



Congress MP Rahul Gandhi in the Lok Sabha during ongoing Parliament Session, in New Delhi, on Monday PTI

saying he was speaking about the BJP and neither the ruling party nor the RSS nor Modi represents the entire Hindu society. "It is not just one religion that talks about courage. In fact, all our religions talk about courage," Rahul said in his debut speech as the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha that was watched by his mother Sonia Gandhi and sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra from the visitors' gallery. Holding up pictures of Lord Shiva, Guru Nanak and Jesus Christ, he referred to Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, Christianity, Buddhism and

Jainism to underline the importance of fearlessness. As Rahul held up a picture of Lord Shiva, Speaker Om Birla reminded him that rules do not allow displaying placards in the House. "Shivji says daro mat, daro mat, shows the abhaya mudra (the right hand held upright with the palm facing outwards), talks about ahimsa, but those who call themselves Hindus indulge in hatred, violence and untruths round the clock," Rahul said, pointing towards the BJP MPs. In his one hour 40 minutes speech Rahul accused the BJP

of launching "systematic attacks" on the Constitution and the fundamental idea of India, noting that millions of people have resisted the ideas proposed by the ruling party. Rahul also claimed that the Armed forces know that Agniveer was Modi's brainchild, prompting Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to accuse the Leader of Opposition of misleading the House. He also hit out at the Centre over the situation in Manipur, alleging that it has pushed the northeastern State into a civil war.

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PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi termed "serious" the remarks made by Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, by calling the entire Hindu society violent and he, along with Home Minister Amit Shah and other Ministers, demanded an apology from the Congress leader. Intervening during Rahul's speech, Modi said, "This issue is very serious. Calling the entire Hindu community violent is a serious issue." Besides Modi, who intervened twice, at least five Cabinet Ministers also interjected during Rahul's speech with Shah demanding his apology for painting the Hindu community as violent. The second intervention by Modi came when Rahul alleged that Ministers do not greet him due to the fear of Modi, the Prime Minister said democracy and the Constitution have taught him to take the Leader of Opposition seriously. Shah said the ruckus created by the Opposition cannot drown the fact that the words — "those who call themselves Hindus indulge in violence" — were used in the House. Shah spoke of the



Prime Minister Narendra Modi speaks in the Lok Sabha during ongoing Parliament Session, in New Delhi, on Monday PTI

irresponsible" speech in the Lok Sabha. They also accused the Congress leader of inflicting "grave insult" on the Hindus by allegedly linking them with violence and spreading untruth. Rishi said the ruling BJP has challenged many of the claims made by Rahul in his speech in the Lok Sabha and has sought action from the Speaker. He will have to substantiate or tender an apology, the Parliamentary Affairs Minister said slamming his allegations on Agniveer scheme and compensation

for the residents of Ayodhya during development projects there. BJP Rajya Sabha member Sudhanshu Trivedi said the Congress has a history of insulting Hindus, as he cited former home ministers P Chidambaram and Sushil Kumar Shinde's alleged terrorism barbs for the religion. Union Health Minister and BJP president JP Nadda also lambasted Rahul, accusing him of combining lies and hatred in his speech. "It was a worst show by Rahul on his first day. Third time fail LoP has a knack for agitated, flawed logic. His speech today has shown that neither has he understood the mandate of 2024 (his third successive loss) nor does he have any humility," Nadda said. Slamming Rahul for his remarks, Union Minister G Kishan Reddy said democracy will remain intact and there will also be peace "so long as Hindus are in majority" in the country. Union Minister Krishan Pal Gurjar flayed Rahul for his remarks and said the Leader of Opposition only made "baseless remarks" in his speech and did not give any "positive suggestion" in the House.

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## World Cup team stranded in Barbados

PTI ■ BRIDGETOWN (BARBADOS)

Indian cricket fans might have to wait a little longer to see their T20 World Cup-winning heroes back in the country as the Rohit Sharma-led side's travel plans have been impacted by a hurricane here. Reports said that hurricane Beryl, originating in the Atlantic, had intensified with maximum sustained winds of 210 kmph. The Category 4 hurricane was about 570km east-southeast of Barbados and there are reports that the airport in Bridgetown will shut in the evening. The Indian team was supposed to take an Emirates flight from New York via Dubai. A source told PTI that the plan now is to fly the team back to India on a charter flight. "The team was supposed to leave from here (Bridgetown) to New York and then reach India via Dubai. But now the plan is to get a charter flight straight from here to Delhi. A meeting with the Prime Minister Narendra Modi is also being considered," a source said. The Indian contingent, including support staff, families, and officials, consists of about 70 members. India had ended their 11-year wait for an ICC trophy on Saturday, overcoming South Africa by seven runs in a thrilling contest to win the T20 World Cup for the second time.

# Home Minister Amit Shah allays fears

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

As the new criminal laws came into force on Monday amid apprehensions, Home Minister Amit Shah allayed fears regarding them asserting that the new laws have ended the era of British laws in India, converting the criminal justice system into 'completely Swadeshi'. The new law prioritises the provisions of justice in contrast to the colonial-era law that focused primarily on penal action, the Home Minister claimed. "Instead of 'dand', it is now 'nyay'; instead of delay, there will be speedy trial and speedy justice. Earlier, only the rights of the police were protected but now, rights of victims and complainants will be protected too," Shah said. The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA) came into effect on Monday. The new laws have replaced the British-era Indian Penal Code, Code of Criminal Procedure and the Indian Evidence Act, respectively. Addressing a Press conference in the Parliament premises, Shah said, "First of all, I would like to congratulate the people of the country that about 77 years after Independence, our criminal justice system is becoming completely 'Swadeshi'. "This will function on Indian

ethos. After 75 years, these laws were contemplated upon and as these laws have gone into effect from today, colonial laws stand scrapped, and laws made in the Indian Parliament are being brought into practice," he said. The Home Minister said justice would be delivered up to the level of the Supreme Court in all cases within three years of the registration of an FIR under the new criminal laws. "The new laws brought in a modern justice system, incorporating provisions such as Zero FIR, online registration of police complaints, summons served through electronic modes such as SMS and mandatory videography of crime scenes for all heinous crimes," he said. He said the new statutes were made more sensitive by adding a chapter on crimes against children and women and the inquiry report in such cases were to be filed within seven days. Shah said, according to the new laws, judgment in criminal cases had to be delivered within 45 days of completion of trial and charges must be framed within 60 days of first hearing. The Home Minister said the laws would be applicable to cases occurring on or after July 1, 2024. Shah said the first case under the new laws was about a motorcycle theft registered in Madhya Pradesh's Gwalior at 10



Union Home Minister Amit Shah speaks in the Lok Sabha during ongoing Parliament session, in New Delhi, on Monday PTI

minutes past midnight. He also said the police dismissed the case filed against a street vendor for selling water and tobacco products from a cart that allegedly obstructed a public way in central Delhi's Kamala Market after an investigation. Setting aside apprehensions regarding the new criminal laws, Shah said that new laws do not give more powers to police and remand period will remain only 15 days.

"In the first-60 day period, police can take custody for 15 days any time," he said, adding that in the next 3/4 years, the entire system would get an uplift. Shah also said the issue of bringing sexual crimes against men will be discussed since a Supreme Court verdict has mentioned this. On terrorism, Shah said it has been defined separately in the BNS "as we have a zero-terror policy".

"There are some instances," he recalled, "where conspiracies are hatched outside the country as was a bomb blast which occurred when he was Gujarat Home Minister. "All conspirators walked free as terror was not defined." Shah also rejected amid protests Opposition's criticism that the new criminal laws were a "cut, copy, paste" job and were rushed through without adequate discussion or debate. He said misinformation was being spread in this regard. "We have been consulting on the new laws for four years. I have attended 118 consultative meetings. And in Parliament, there was a 9.29-hour debate in the Lok Sabha, 6.7-hour in Rajya Sabha on the new laws...34 members in Lok Sabha and 26 in Rajya Sabha participated [in the debate]," Shah said. The Home Minister said organised crime, acts of terrorism and mob lynching had been defined, sedition was replaced with treason and video recording of all search and seizures made mandatory. "A new provision has been added for the cases where physical relations have been established after giving false promise of marriage and statement of rape victims will be recorded by a woman police officer in presence of her guardian," he said.

## NEET toppers tally down

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Testing Agency announced the revised rank list for the medical entrance exam NEET-UG on Monday. The revised list was announced after a retest was conducted for candidates who were earlier awarded grace marks to compensate for loss of time as the exam on May 5 started late at six centres. For the retest conducted at seven centres on June 23 following a Supreme Court order, 48 per cent of the 1,563 candidates did not appear. NTA officials reported that 813 of the 1,563 candidates appeared for the retest while the others opted for the marks without the grace. Centre-wise, Chandigarh — which had just two candidates — registered zero attendance. The under-scanner Jhajjar centre registered 58 per cent attendance, with 287 of the 494 candidates taking the retest. Allegations arose that the grace marks inflated scores, leading to six candidates from a single Haryana centre achieving a perfect 720, along with 61 others. Consequently, the top court ordered the cancellation of the grace marks and provided an option for a retest. "At least 52 per cent — 813 out of 1,563 candidates — appeared for the retest. No candidates appeared in Chandigarh while the numbers were 291 from Chhattisgarh, one from Gujarat, 287 from Haryana, and 234 from Meghalaya," a senior NTA official earlier said. The National Eligibility cum Entrance Test-Undergraduate (NEET-UG) was held on May 5 across 4,750 centres, with approximately 24 lakh candidates appearing for it. Initially expected on June 14, the results were announced on June 4 due to early completion of answer sheet evaluations.

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# Delhi IGI canopy fall impacts 22,000 fliers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Days after the canopy collapse at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA), the Ministry of Civil Aviation shared data saying the incident impacted more than 22,000 passengers of IndiGo and SpiceJet. Around 21,690 passengers of IndiGo and around 925 passengers of SpiceJet were affected. The Ministry said IndiGo airline provided alternate flights to 12,194 passengers while refunded airfare to 9,431 passengers. SpiceJet

provided alternate arrangements to 250 passengers. Terminal 1 was used for domestic flight operations by IndiGo and SpiceJet. Sources said 72 flights of IndiGo have been shifted from T1 to T2 and T3, and 17 flights to T3, adding that all the flights are operational. The expanded T1, which had its capacity increased to handle 40 million passengers from the earlier 17 million, is yet to become fully operational. According to the sources, it might be a few months before operations resume at T1. Union Minister of Civil

Aviation Ram Mohan Naidu on Monday visited the Airport Operations Control Centre (AOCC) at the Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGI) and held a meeting with senior officials from the Ministry of Civil Aviation, DGCA, BCAS, DIAL, and airline operators where he took stock of the operations. The meeting focused on reviewing current operations and passenger handling following the transition of flights from Terminal 1 to Terminals 2 and 3. According to the Ministry, a comprehensive assessment was conducted, involving



Restoration and relief work underway at the Terminal-1 of the IGI Airport where a canopy collapsed amid heavy rain in New Delhi PTI

detailed discussions on ensuring smooth functioning and deploying additional manpower to manage

increased passenger flow. Minister Naidu advised all stakeholders to maintain rigorous standards to ensure

seamless operations and prioritise passenger safety. All flights from T1 have been shifted to Terminal 2 (T2) and Terminal 3 (T3), and all of them were being operated. As per an update provided by the ministry on Monday, the war rooms to help passengers have been activated and close coordination between DIAL and airlines is being facilitated. "All SpiceJet flights to/from Delhi from 1st July till 7th July, 24 will operate from Terminal 3, Delhi Airport. Necessary information has been communicated to all the passengers on their registered contact details (SMS/Email),"

the airline said in a post on X on Sunday. According to officials, structural engineers from IIT Delhi, engaged by the Civil Aviation Ministry, are expected to complete an independent assessment of the roof collapse at Delhi airport's T1 in a month's time. After a thorough assessment of the findings and taking into consideration other aspects, decision will be taken on restarting operations at the terminal. On June 28, a canopy at the old departure forecourt of T1 partially collapsed amid heavy rains resulting in the death of

a person and injuries to at least six people. Following the incident, the Ministry of Civil Aviation said structural engineers from IIT Delhi have been asked to immediately assess the partial collapse of the canopy. The official said the ministry was engaging structural engineers from IIT Delhi to do an independent assessment of roof collapse incident at T1 and they were expected to complete the assessment in one month. After the findings come in, a decision will be taken about recommencing operations at T1, the official added.

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# New criminal law: Street vendor booked in first FIR

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

As the three criminal laws came into force on Monday, Delhi Police registered its first FIR under provisions of the new criminal code Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) against a street vendor for allegedly obstructing a public way in central Delhi's Kamala Market.

Addressing a press conference, Union Home Minister Amit Shah stated the Delhi's case was not the first FIR registered in the country. He said the first case under the new laws was about a motorcycle theft registered in Madhya Pradesh's Gwalior at 10 minutes past midnight. He also said the Delhi Police "dismissed" the case filed against a street vendor after an investigation. "By using the provisions of review, police have dismissed this case," he told the media.

The BNS, the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam (BSA) replaced the colonial-era Indian Penal Code, Code of Criminal Procedure and the Indian Evidence Act, respectively.



Ranjan Dimri

Delhi Police sources said that they will initiate the process of cancelling the FIR registered against the street vendor and will have to inform the court for formally cancelling the FIR. The FIR was registered under Section 285 of the BNS which states, "Whoever, by doing any act, or by omitting to take order with any property in his possession or under his charge, causes danger, obstruction or injury to any person in any public way or public line of navigation, shall be punished with fine which may extend to Rs 5,000."

Police said 23-year-old Pankaj Kumar, a native of Patna, was found selling water, bidi and

cigarettes from a cart under a foot overbridge near the New Delhi railway station around 12:15 am. While the patrol officer asked Kumar to move his makeshift cart away from the path as it was hindering people's movement, he ignored the officer's instructions following which a case was registered at 1:30 am. The officer also asked four-five passersby to become witnesses but they refused, the FIR stated. The patrol officer used the e-Pramaan app to record the seizures made. The app, handled by the Delhi Police's Crime Branch, will directly feed the content to police records for further investiga-

tion. In north east Delhi, the first FIR was registered at the Seelampur police station, under clause 109 (1), over a gun firing incident that led to the injury of a 30 year old e-rickshaw driver. According to the clause 109 (1), "Whoever does any act with such intention or knowledge, and under such circumstances that, if he by that act caused death, he would be guilty of murder, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to ten years, and shall also be liable to fine; and if hurt is caused to any person by such act, the offender shall be liable either to imprisonment for life, or to such punishment as is hereinbefore mentioned." In east Delhi district, the first case was registered under section 303 (2) of BNS in Shahdara over theft of a mobile phone by an auto driver who forcibly stole it from his passenger and fled away. According to officials, two cases under the BNS were also registered in Delhi's Outer district including one regarding an accident in Nihal Vihar and an encroachment case in Mangol Puri.

The Delhi Police has imparted training to its 30,000 personnel, from the ranks of assistant sub-inspectors and inspectors to assistant commissioners and deputy commissioners, who are responsible for registering FIRs and conducting investigations. The force was among the first in the country to start training personnel on the new criminal laws, the officials said. Meanwhile, Delhi Police chief Sanjay Arora said the force has started registering FIRs under the three new laws. He told reporters during the Delhi Police's Commissionerate Day celebrations at Kingsway Camp that the force was fortunate the new laws came into force on this day. "We are fortunate as today is our Commissionerate Day and, on the same day, these laws are being implemented," Arora said. The Noida Police on Monday registered its first FIR under provisions of the new criminal code BNS for cheating and forgery, and arrested five people in connection with the case. The case was lodged at Surajpur police station under the Central Noida police zone, a police spokesperson said.

# IMD predicts overcast skies, heavy rainfall in coming days

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted overcast skies and heavy rainfall in the coming days. An 'orange' alert has been issued, signaling significant rainfall that could lead to localized flooding and disruptions. "Moderate to heavy rainfall is likely till Wednesday. From Thursday until Saturday, we will again see a reduction in rain intensity," the IMD said. Rainfall is expected to drop the maximum temperature by around 7-8°C during this period. Safdarjung, representative of Delhi's weather, recorded zero rainfall in the last 24 hours till 8:30 am on Monday. Though forecasts of moderate to heavy rain were in place for Sunday, weather experts said the monsoon trough did not move towards Delhi, instead keeping humidity high. As per the IMD, the temperature was 35 degree C but the feel like index was recorded at 46.1 degree C while humidity stood at 62 per cent. The IMD has clarified that the recent heavy rainfall in Delhi,



which caused significant disruptions, was not due to a cloudburst but was close to one. The IMD's Chief, Mrutyunjay Mohapatra, provided insights into the weather patterns that led to the intense rainfall on June 28. This activity was supported by thermodynamic instability in the atmosphere, which is favourable for thunderstorms. The Safdarjung Observatory recorded 228.1 mm of rainfall in the 24 hours ending at 8.30 am on Friday, more than three times the June rainfall average of 74.1 mm and the highest for the month in 88 years - since 1936. A cloudburst typically involves rainfall of over 100 mm in an hour within a localized area. The IMD classifies rainfall as 'light' when it is between 2.5mm and 15.5mm; as 'moderate' when it is between 15.6mm and 64.4mm; as 'heavy' when it is between 64.5mm and 115.5mm and as 'very heavy' when over 115.5mm in a 24-hour window. Regarding other States, the IMD forecast isolated heavy rainfall very likely over Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Haryana-Chandigarh, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, East Rajasthan, West Madhya Pradesh during Monday to Friday.

# Atishi directs officials to tackle overflow of Central Delhi's drain

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi PWD Minister Atishi on Monday directed officials to find solutions for addressing the overflow of a drain, which runs through central Delhi, during heavy rainfall days after the rain on Friday wreaked havoc and created flood like situation in the national capital. The drain overflowed following a record-breaking rainfall of 228 mm on June 28, causing waterlogging in nearby areas. Atishi inspected the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) drain number 12 at ITO along with Mayor Shelly Oberoi, Chief Secretary and other senior officials including, and senior officials from MCD, PWD, Urban Development, and Flood and Irrigation Control Departments. "The water of central Delhi goes to Yamuna from drain No 12



Ranjan Dimri

near ITO. When Delhi received 228 mm of rainfall on June 28, the drain overflowed and caused waterlogging in the surrounding areas," the senior AAP leader said in a post in Hindi on X (formerly Twitter). "Today, I along with Mayor @OberoiShelly and senior officials, inspected this drain and gave instructions for finding short- and long-term solutions to stop the overflow," she

added. During the inspection, Atishi instructed the officials to find short-term solutions to prevent MCD drain number 12 from overflowing in the upcoming rainy season. She directed them to find a permanent solution to prevent the drain from overflowing so that the waterlogging problem does not arise in future and people do not have to face problems.

# AAP Government responsible for flooding in city, says BJP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva on Monday held the Arvind Kejriwal led AAP government responsible for creating flood like situation in the national Capital, calling it 'incompetent'. Hitting at the Delhi government over the water logging situation in the city, he said, "Delhi has 287 identified dangerous waterlogging spots, and on Friday, more than 250 of these locations had non-functional pumps." He added that on the day Delhi received a record-breaking rainfall of 228 mm, over 400 out of the total 696 permanent water drainage pumps installed by the Public Works Department (PWD) in the city were. "According to our information, more than 100 pumps were non-functional because they did not have



diesel," Sachdeva said. Additionally, he said, "465 pumps are installed in Delhi by the Delhi Jal Board, the Flood Department, and the Municipal Corporation of Delhi, and most of these are still not working. Proof of this is that two days after the flooding, Minister Atishi herself visited the pumping station at Minto Road Bridge, and even then, three out of

eight pumps were not operational." "At the Bharti Nagar Pumping Station, the pumps of the Public Works Department of the Delhi government were found to be non-functional on Friday, and the situation has not improved satisfactorily," the Delhi BJP Chief claimed while mentioning that every year during the monsoon, around 1300 additional tem-

porary water drainage pumps are rented and installed, but this year not a single one has been installed. He claimed that the Kejriwal government's argument, that the necessary tender could not be issued due to the election code of conduct, is false. "However, the truth is that the government, engrossed in securing the Chief Minister's bail and fighting elections, did not pay attention to this essential task," he said. "Renting additional water drainage pumps for the monsoon is an annual public interest task, and if the Arvind Kejriwal government, intoxicated by power, had written a letter to the Election Commission seeking special permission, it would have certainly been granted, but they did not consider it necessary," he alleged. The Delhi BJP President said that the excuse of not being able to install additional water

drainage pumps due to the election code of conduct is weak, as the code ended on June 5. "The Public Works Minister Atishi could have tendered on June 6 or 7 and installed additional pumps by June 20," he said. Sachdeva challenged Atishi to disclose how many permanent and temporary water drainage pumps are needed during the monsoon and how many are currently operational. He said, "The drowning of 11 people in the capital city is shameful. The BJP demands that the Delhi government provide one crore rupees in compensation to the bereaved families of these helpless individuals." Sachdeva demanded compensation from the Delhi government and the MCD for the damage caused to traders of wholesale markets in Old Delhi, as well as to ground floor and basement homes and offices throughout the city.

# 1,100 trees felled in Ridge: Probe committee already formed, says official

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A day after a three-member fact-finding committee of Delhi Ministers was constituted over the felling of 1,100 trees in the Ridge area, Principal Secretary of Delhi government's Environment and Forest department AK Singh claimed that the committee consists of only political executives and an independent committee consisting of Officers of the Forest Survey of India and other impartial experts has already been formed. "In this regard, it is informed that vide Order dated May 15, Supreme Court of India has already constituted an independent fact-finding committee consisting of Officers of the Forest Survey of India and other impartial experts. The said committee has also been given the liberty to inspect and collect all required information pertaining to the case being



examined by the Apex Court," Singh said. He added that the committee has furnished preliminary report before the court and said, "Therefore, constituting another committee (in the name of fact finding) when the Apex Court is already in seizure of the matter, is not only

improper but may also invite contempt of the court for interfering in the judicial process of fact finding." Singh said that the Minister In-charge of the Forest and Environment Department Gopal Rai is primarily responsible for disposal of business of that department.

"If a committee is required to be constituted to inquire on the initiative of the Department, the same requires approval of the Council of Ministers," he said. "Further, the constitution of the fact finding committee is a departure from the general practice and procedure of the CiNCT. The undersigned / Principal Secretary (Environment & Forest) is being asked to report to the Minister of Urban Development, whereas there are no orders by the Chief Minister to that effect," he said while adding that Gopal Rai is not even a member of the committee. He also alleged that the committee is nothing but a "Group of Ministers" which has not been constituted by the Council of Ministers to conduct the exercise as desired in the minutes of the meeting on Saturday and meeting notice on Sunday. "The said fact-finding com-

mittee has been constituted under the signatures of Saurabh Bharadwaj without any due authority or sanction from the Council of Ministers," he said. Further, he claimed, "Gopal Rai is the Minister In-charge (Environment & Forest), however he is neither disposing such business of fact finding in terms of Rule 4(2) of the ToBR 1993 nor any approval of the Council has been obtained for the purpose of constitution of the Committee of Ministers in light of provisions of Rule of ToBR 1993 read with clause 13 of Schedule to the Transaction of Business Rules (ToBR) 1993." Hence, the constitution of the fact-finding committee to inquire into the cutting of trees in Southern Ridge by the DDA, without obtaining approval of the Council of Ministers, is a violation of the provisions of the business rules, he added.

# NIA consent for Rashid Engineer to take oath as LS member on July 25

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) gave consent for jailed Kashmiri leader Sheikh Abdul Rashid, known as Engineer Rashid, to take oath as a Lok Sabha member on July 25, ahead of the Delhi court's order on Tuesday. Additional sessions judge Chander Jit Singh will pass an order on the plea on Tuesday. Rashid could not take oath as a member of the 18th Lok Sabha on June 24 despite his name being called as he has been lodged in jail since 2019 after being charged by the NIA in a terror-funding case. The NIA's counsel said Rashid's oath taking should be subject to some conditions like not speaking to the media. He also said Rashid, who is in Tihar Jail, must complete the process within a day. Everything within a day. Rashid, an Independent MP



from Baramulla who has been arrested in a 2017 Jammu and Kashmir terror funding case, had moved the court seeking interim bail, or custody parole in the alternative, to take oath and perform his parliamentary functions. On June 22, a special court here had adjourned the matter and asked the NIA to file its response. The agency has been consulting with Parliament and jail authorities on the matter. While Rashid's counsel had cited AAP leader Sanjay Singh

being granted custody parole to take oath as a Rajya Sabha MP, the court noted that Rashid's charges were different. This session of Parliament is scheduled to end on July 3. Procedures allow MPs to take oath in the speaker's chamber even when Parliament is not in session. Rashid has been in custody since August 2019 under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act for his alleged involvement in the terror funding case. His name surfaced during the probe of Kashmiri businessman Zahoor Watali, who was arrested for allegedly financing terrorist groups and separatists in the Kashmir Valley. The NIA had earlier filed a chargesheet against several individuals, including Kashmiri separatist leader Yasin Malik, Lashkar-e-Taiba founder Hafiz Saeed, and Hizbul Mujahideen chief Syed Salahuddin in connection with the case.

# Rajiv Dhankher appointed DMRC's new director of projects and planning

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) has appointed Rajiv Dhankher, an Indian Railways Service of Engineers (IRSE) officer, as its new director of projects and planning, officials said on Monday. Dhankher, an IRSE officer of the 1992 batch, has three decades of experience in projects, planning and execution at numerous key positions, they said. He earned his bachelor's degree from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Kharagpur and master's degree from IIT Delhi. Dhankher also holds a post-graduate diploma in management from Gurugram and an LLB from Delhi University, the officials said.



Before taking up this role in the DMRC, he was the DRM in the Ajmer division of Indian Railways. During his tenure, the Udaipur-Himmat Nagar railway section was commissioned. He has also worked as a chief project

manager in the NCRTC for the Sahibabad-Ghaziabad-Duhai priority section, they said. Dhankher was also involved in the commissioning of the Jammu-Udhampur Rail Link Project, the officials added.

# Implementation of three new criminal laws revolutionary step of Govt: GGSIPU VC

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With three new criminal laws implemented from Monday, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University Vice Chancellor of the University Mahesh Verma here called it a revolutionary step of the government. He also said these three laws have evolved the judicial system from colonial era to match the requirements of adhunik Bharat. He added that these will help in building a meaningful, empathetic and just society. The Vice Chancellor made these assertions in a panel discussion organized by Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University's School of Law and Legal Studies on the three new laws. He also said there is a need to make the people aware about these laws and also train those who will implement them. He enumerated the various activities being



planned by the University to play a key role in this area. The Vice Chancellor added that in these new laws, the word 'Nyay' has been used in place of 'Dand' and community work has also been included as a punishment for minor crimes. He concluded by saying that this

is an unprecedented change in the Indian judicial system, which will benefit every section of the society. Former District & Sessions Judge H.S. Sharma said the most important thing about the changes made in these laws is that maximum attention has been given to those

who seek justice. Full provision has been made to ensure that their plea is heard carefully at every level. Special Secretary of National Security Council Secretariat Praveen Sinha said the changes made in these laws are quite progressive and are focused on the interests of the citizens. Their benefits will be reflected in the near future. He said many old provisions have been removed and new provisions have been added in view of the requirements of our contemporary society. He also said among these changes, special care has been taken to ensure that the dignity of women and the rights of children are upheld. Former Judge of Delhi High Court, Justice Talwant Singh said a lot of emphasis has been laid on digital evidence in the new laws. This will increase digital intervention in the judicial process and the demand for forensic science professionals

will increase. He also said by setting a time limit for the judicial process, legal benefits will reach a greater number of people. Former judge of Delhi High Court, Justice M.L. Mehta said it is inappropriate to oppose these new laws without reading and understanding them properly. The changes brought in these laws have been made keeping in mind the interests of the people. He said that the new changes will speed up the judicial process and increase access of justice to the common man. Dean of University School of Law and Legal Studies Professor Queeny Pradhan said about 800 students and staff participated in this discussion. Nodal officer of the program Dr. Upma Gautam said many such programs will be organized by the University in the future to increase awareness about the new laws.



New criminal laws well designed to render justice: Pondy CM

PTI ■ PUDUCHERRY
Puducherry Chief Minister N Rangasamy said that the three new criminal laws which came into force across the country on Monday are well-designed to curb crimes, particularly heinous crimes.

particularly heinous crimes". Thinking the Central government for implementation of the new laws, the chief minister said that they are aimed at imposing deterrent and stringent punishment on the culprits and also ensuring justice to the victims of crimes.



subordinate staff would be posted to man these courts," he said. The chief minister also released a handbook on the new laws and wanted its Tamil translation for the benefit of all.

new laws were absolutely necessary and they were made by Indians for Indians, unlike the previous laws which were designed by the British during colonial rule. Law Minister K Lakshminarayanan said that the government was mulling appointment of a Director of Prosecution.

3 killed, 1 injured as speeding SUV rams into car in Ahmedabad

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD
Three persons were killed and one was critically injured when a speeding Sports Utility Vehicle (SUV) rams into another car in Gujarat's Ahmedabad city on Monday morning, police said.



was chasing the SUV. Deputy Commissioner of Police, Traffic (West), Neeta Desai said the SUV driver was in their "custody" and a probe was ordered to find out if he was speeding because of their involvement in any illegal activity.

The deceased have been identified as SUV occupant Om Prakash (37), the other car's driver Ait Kathi (32) and its occupant Manish Bhatt (52), both residents of Viramgam town in Ahmedabad, she said.

Manipur CM denies report on resignation, asks media not to spread rumours

PTI ■ IMPHAL
Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh on Monday described a report on his resignation as unfounded and asked the media not to spread rumours.



the Union Home Ministry on the Manipur situation. "If we leave, who will lead the people? More chaos will be created. We have to guide the people," said Singh who heads a BJP government in the northeastern state.

the deaths of over 200 people since May 3, 2023, and rendered thousands of people homeless. Earlier, addressing a gathering, Singh said, "The new laws allow registration of zero FIRs anywhere and also gives scope for registration in local language or dialect."

Leadership change: Will abide by Congress high command's decision, says Siddaramaiah

PTI ■ BENGALURU
Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday said he would abide by the decision of the Congress high command on the issue of leadership change, amid a political tussle within the ruling Congress.



from Lingayat, SC, ST, and minority communities. The move is seen in some quarters as an attempt to clip the political wings of Shivakumar, who is also the State party chief.

Shivakumar, a member of the Vokkaliga community, is currently the only Deputy Chief Minister in the Siddaramaiah government.

There was stiff competition between Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar for the Chief Minister's post after the declaration of Assembly election results in May last year, and the Congress had managed to convince the latter and made him the Deputy Chief Minister.

MP Cabinet nod for bills on seizing vehicles used in cow transportation

PTI ■ BHOPAL
The Madhya Pradesh cabinet on Monday approved a bill providing for seizing vehicles involved in transportation of cows for slaughter, and also gave its nod to another proposed legislation under which state ministers will henceforth have to pay their own income tax.

Assam flood: Over 43 per cent of forest camps in Kaziranga submerged

PTI ■ GOLGHAT/JORHAT (ASSAM)
With worsening flood condition in Assam, rising water levels have impacted more than 43 per cent of the 233 forest camps at Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve, an official report said on Monday.



is being conducted regularly. Additional staff from neighbouring divisions have been deployed to intensify patrolling. Joint patrolling in the fringe areas of the park is being carried out by Forest and Police Departments," the report said.

PUBLIC NOTICE
IAK Chadha, S/o Mr. Shyamal Chadha and his wife Madhubala Chadha, resident of G-503, Dasnac The Jewel of Noida, Plot No. 14, Sector 75, Noida, U.P. (201301) Due to the misbehavior and immoral conduct of our son Saurabh Chadha and daughter-in-law Sonia Chadha, we evict both of them from our movable and immovable property and breaks the relationship.

PUBLIC NOTICE
I, have lost my property documents on Ashok Nagar, Shahdara in favour of Neelam Mehta W/o Subhash Mehta R/o 5017 Roshanara Road Gali Chaman Gaur Sabzi Mandi Malka Ganj Delhi-110007, in respect of Property No. D-449/3A, Gali No. 1, Ashok Nagar, Shahdara, Delhi-110093. FIR has been lodged vide LR-No. 1844831/2024 Dated: 25/06/2024. If anyone finds my contact- 98108 82799. If anyone misuses the property document then legal action will be taken against them.

INDIA RESURGENCE ARC PRIVATE LIMITED
POSSESSION NOTICE (APPENDIX IV) RULED 8(3)
Whereas the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of M/s India Resurgence ARC Private Limited (ARCC), an Asset Reconstruction Company (registered with Reserve Bank of India) having its Registered Office at 3rd Floor, Unit No. 304, Piramal Tower, Peninsula Corporate Park, Lower Panel, Mumbai-400013 under the provision of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (SARFAESI Act, 2002) (hereinafter referred to as "ARCC") and in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice dated 10.06.2020 calling upon, 1. ABHINAV SALES, THE PROPRIETORSHIP FIRM THROUGH ITS PROPRIETOR ABHINAV SINGHVI A-65, 20/20, KASTURBA NAGAR NIRMAL NAGAR JAIPOUR RAJASTHAN-302015. ALSO AT - P NO 6 HILL VIEW FARM HOUSE YOJANA GRAM PAHARIYA RANWAL TEHSIL PHAGI JAIPOUR RAJASTHAN. 3. NIRMALA SINGHVI, W/O ASHOK KUMAR JAIN 39 A GAUTAM MARG SHIV SHAKTI NAGAR NIRMAL NAGAR JAIPOUR RAJASTHAN-302019. ALSO AT - P NO 6 HILL VIEW FARM HOUSE YOJANA GRAM PAHARIYA RANWAL TEHSIL PHAGI JAIPOUR RAJASTHAN. 4. TIRUPATI MULTITRADE PRIVATE LTD, 153 KASTURBA NAGAR NIRMAL NAGAR JAIPOUR RAJASTHAN-302019. ALSO AT - P NO 6 HILL VIEW FARM HOUSE YOJANA GRAM PAHARIYA RANWAL TEHSIL PHAGI JAIPOUR RAJASTHAN. 5. ASHOK KUMAR JAIN S/O BILAM CHAND JAIN, 6. ANUJ SINGHVI, DIRECTOR OF TIRUPATI MULTITRADE PRIVATE LTD S/O ASHOK KUMAR JAIN, Both at - 39 A GAUTAM MARG SHIV SHAKTI NAGAR NIRMAL NAGAR JAIPOUR RAJASTHAN-302019. ALSO AT - P NO 6 HILL VIEW FARM HOUSE YOJANA GRAM PAHARIYA RANWAL TEHSIL PHAGI JAIPOUR RAJASTHAN.

PUBLIC NOTICE
My client Mrs. Ramweli W/o Late Mr. Sudhir the owner of a residential built up house, area measuring 300 sq. yds. i.e. 250.83 sq. mtrs. covered area 250.83 sq.mtrs. out of khasra no. 214/1, situated at village Hazratpur Wajidpur Noida, Fargana and Tensli Dadr, District Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P. through registered gift deed dated 28.03.2024 executed by Sh. Pramod S/o Late Sh. Sudhir in favour of Smt. Ramweli W/o Late Sh. Sudhir vide reg. no. 2844 at SR-Noida U.P. the above-mentioned property is going to be mortgaged with Fed Bank Financial Services Limited if any person/bank/financial institution having any claim / right, lien, any objection whatsoever in regard to the above property, should notified to the undersigned/Adv. Vishal Mehan, E-713, Karkardooma Court, Delhi-110092 along with documentary evidence under address through registered within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice failing which any claim, lien or objection shall be deemed to have been waived. VISHAL MEHAN, ADVOCATE E-713, Karkardooma Court, Delhi-110092. Mobile No. 9811215181

PUBLIC NOTICE
My client (1) Sh. Akash Sharma (2) Sh. Harjeet Sharma S/o Sh. Rati Ram Sharma the owner of plot of out of khasra no. 179, situated in the village Chaura Raghunthpur Tehsil Dadr Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar through registered gift deed dated 02.05.2024 executed by Sh. Rati Ram Sharma S/o Sh. Ganga Ram Sharma in favour of (1) Sh. Akash Sharma (2) Sh. Harjeet Sharma S/o Sh. Rati Ram Sharma vide reg. no. 2800 at SR-II, Noida U.P. the above-mentioned property is going to be mortgaged with Fed Bank Financial Services Limited if any person/bank/financial institution having any claim / right, lien, any objection whatsoever in regard to the above property, should notified to the undersigned/Adv. Vishal Mehan, E-713, Karkardooma Court, Delhi-110092 along with documentary evidence under address through registered within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice failing which any claim, lien or objection shall be deemed to have been waived. VISHAL MEHAN, ADVOCATE E-713, Karkardooma Court, Delhi-110092. Mobile No. 9811215181

PUBLIC NOTICE
To be known to all, CHANDER KANTA ADLAKHA W/O SH. VIJAY KUMAR ADLAKHA R/O 5-331, FIRST FLOOR, GREATER KAILASH PART-1, NEW DELHI-110048, owner of SFS FLAT NO.217, GROUND FLOOR, CAT-II, NILGIRI APARTMENTS, ALAKNANDA, NEW DELHI-110019. The original documents, i.e. ALLOCATION LETTER, DEMAND-CUM-ALLOTMENT LETTER, POSSESSION LETTER, NOC FOR WATER AND ELECTRICITY CONNECTION, SITE POSSESSION SLIP & OTHER DOCUMENTS of the above said flat has been lost. An LR No. 1860775/2024 dated 01/07/2024 to this effect has been lodged in P.S. Crime Branch, Delhi. Any person(s) claiming any right, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents, may write/contact with above named person at above Address/Phone No. 9868300795 with in 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objection with respect to this property, can write/contact with Deputy Director (Housing) or Director (Housing), Delhi Development Authority, Vikas Sadan, New Delhi-110023.

PUBLIC NOTICE
To be known to all that We Arun Kumar Arora and Mansi Arora R/o 2-1522, DLF Phase-II, Gurgaon, Haryana-122002 owner of Commercial Plot No.11, Block C, LSC, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi-57 has applied for conversion of aforesaid Plot from leasehold to freehold vide application no. LD38710C/LCON/27/032024 dt:28.03.24 LDO, Noida. The original documents, i.e. Allotment U.P. Possession Letter, Lease Deed & D Form of above property have been lost. A FIR dt.01.07.24 bearing LR no 1859584/2024 against this effect has been lodged at crime branch Delhi. Any person claiming any right, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents may write contact with above named person at above address/ Ph. No. 9810248300 within 15 days from date of publication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objections with respect to this property can personally inform or write to Dy. Director (CL), DDA, Vikas Sadan, New Delhi-23

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS
CHANGE OF NAME
I, Jitender S/o Harsh Bahadur Singh R/o F-23 Hari Nagar Part 2 Near Hari Nagar Extn Badarpur New Delhi 110044 have changed my name Jitender to Jitendra Bahadur Singh for all future purposes. Vishal Diwan (Advocate) For Diwan and Company LLP H. No.2 (LGF), NRI Complex New Delhi-19 Mobile No. 9818399999 PD/566/C

PUBLIC NOTICE
General public is hereby informed that We (1) MR. ARUN GOSWAMI son of Late Sri Joga Binode Goswami, resident of G-1347, Ground Floor, Chittaranjan Park, New Delhi-110019, (2) MR. KAMAL GOSWAMI son of Late Shri J. B. Goswami, resident of D57149 D, Maulvi Bagh, Soniya Road, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh-221010 and (3) MRS. SHARMILA GOSWAMI wife of Shri K. P. Arora, resident of G-1347, Chittaranjan Park, New Delhi-110019 are filing a application in L&DO for substitution/mutation of the property no. G-1347, Chittaranjan Park, New Delhi-110019 in the name of (1) MR. ARUN GOSWAMI, (2) MR. KAMAL GOSWAMI and (3) MRS. SHARMILA GOSWAMI on the grounds of Death Certificate of Mrs. Kavyan Goswami, bearing No. MCDOLR0035890 dated 15.05.2008 duly recorded in the records of Municipal Corporation of Delhi and Surviving Member. Certificate bearing No. 986600016731, dated 03.02.2022, issued by Office of District Magistrate, Kaikali. If there are any objections/claims from the general public on this application, the same shall be communicated to L&DO with supporting documents through registered post or by visiting L&DO at Narain Branch, New Delhi or through an email at ld@nic.in, within 30 days of publication of this notice. Name: MR. ARUN GOSWAMI Address: G-1347, Ground Floor, Chittaranjan Park, New Delhi-110019. Phone: +91 8868685858

INDIAN BANK
H-1A/18, Sector 63, Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar, UP-201301 | E-mail: n615@indianbank.co.in Phone no. 0120-2427115
Notice under The Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 - As regards taking possession of movables hypothecated and not hypothecated to the Bank - (ABANDONMENT of items not hypothecated to the Bank). Borrower : 1. M/s Capital Trading Co. A/35, 2nd Floor, J.P. Garden, Mohan Nagar, Ghaziabad-201005 (U.P.) 2. Proprietor : Mrs. Chitra Mittal W/o Sri Avinash Kumar Mittal R/o A/35, 2nd Floor, J.P. Garden, Mohan Nagar, Ghaziabad-201005 (U.P.) 3. Guarantor : Shri Avinash Kumar Mittal S/o Shri Vinod Kumar Mittal R/o A/35, 2nd Floor, J.P. Garden, Mohan Nagar, Ghaziabad-201005 (U.P.) 4. Mortgagee : 1. Mrs. Chitra Mittal W/o Sri Avinash Kumar Mittal R/o A/35, 2nd Floor, J.P. Garden, Mohan Nagar, Ghaziabad-201005 (U.P.) Sub: Secured Overdraft account no. 6444960881 in the name of M/s Capital Trading Co. with Indian Bank, Noida Sec-63 Branch-Reg. First of you, has availed Secured Overdraft facility from Indian Bank, Noida Sec-63 branch. The repayment of the said loan/OCC is secured by mortgage of certain property. 1st of you failed to pay the outstanding to the bank and therefore was called upon to pay the amount due vide notice dated 18.09.2017 issued under Sec. 13(2) of the Act. It was made clear that if payment is not made within 60 days, Bank will be constrained to exercise its rights by taking possession of the securities. As M/s Capital Trading Co failed to make payment, Bank took possession of the property more fully described in the schedule hereunder on 13.06.2024. While taking possession, Bank has taken inventory of movables/goods/items, which were found inside the schedule-mentioned property, not hypothecated to the Bank. A copy of the same is available with the AO. You are hereby called upon to make arrangements to remove the said items not hypothecated/charged to the Bank within 15 days time. It is hereby made clear that Bank shall not be responsible for any loss/pilferage of such items. It is also made clear that Bank shall not take any insurance coverage for these items, as they are not charged/hypothecated to the Bank. You are at liberty to take possession of those movables at your cost and expenses at a time to be fixed in advance with the Authorized Officer. If you do not remove those movables immediately and / or within 15 days, Bank will be constrained to abandon the items without any further reference to you in this regard. Bank will not be responsible for any insurance and / or deterioration in value of the securities. The items are kept in a separate place only in adherence to principles of natural justice, though there is no legal obligation cast on the Bank. Take final notice to take delivery of goods within 15 days of this notice, failing which Bank will be constrained to abandon all the items, for which you and you alone will be held responsible. SCHEDULE The specific details of the assets which has been taken possession of and which has been left out on parity to be given hereunder: All the Part and Parcel of Residential Property ad measuring 104.26 Sq Mtr (Super area), at Plot No. A/35, 2nd Floor with roof rights, J.P. Garden, Mohan Nagar, Ghaziabad (U.P.), Plot boundaries as follows - East: Plot No. A-66 North: Plot No. A-36 West: Road 12m Wide South: Road 8m wide Sd/- (Authorized Officer) Indian Bank



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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Cosmetic makeover

The new criminal laws have retained old laws with minor changes while others could impact civil liberties harshly

India has finally shed its colonial legacy in jurisprudence, embracing a new era with indigenous criminal laws. The big question being asked is whether it has truly moved beyond nomenclature or if it's merely a name change. The archaic Indian Penal Code (IPC), the Indian Evidence Act, and the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) have been replaced by the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam, and Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, respectively. This historic change, taking effect from July 1, 2024, has stirred considerable debate among legal experts, practitioners, and the broader public. While some provisions break from the past, others are just old wine in new bottles, adding a layer of confusion in the legal system. The IPC, established in 1860, and the Evidence Act, enacted in 1872, have long been the cornerstones of India's criminal justice system. Both were products of the British colonial administration and have been criticized for their outdated and colonial-era perspectives. The CrPC of 1973 also formed a significant part of the legal framework governing criminal procedures in India.



The new legal laws Replacing the IPC, the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita aims to update and Indianise the criminal code. There are some provisions that are definitely new while others are mere replicas of the old ones. One notable change is the adoption of the definition of terrorism from the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA). This new definition encompasses a broad spectrum of activities intended to threaten the unity, integrity, and security of India. However, critics argue that this broader definition could lead to misuse and the criminalisation of legitimate dissent. Another stark

departure is Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam which replaces the Indian Evidence Act and seeks to modernise the rules of evidence in line with contemporary technological advancements. A significant change is the new stance on electronic evidence. Last but not the least, the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, replacing the CrPC, introduces several changes aimed at streamlining criminal procedures. The new law redefines the use of handcuffs and expands the scope of police custody beyond the initial 15 days, a change that has sparked considerable concern regarding potential misuse and the risk of increased custodial violence. So far, the legal fraternity has been rather jittery about the new laws. Prominent legal luminaries, State Bar Councils, and Bar Associations have expressed apprehensions about the potential implications of these changes. Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud has commented that the new laws could create a positive impact only if there are concurrent investments in infrastructure development and capacity building for forensic experts and investigating officers. The expanded powers of the police and the handling of electronic evidence are areas of particular concern, highlighting the need for careful implementation and oversight to ensure that the new laws do not lead to increased misuse of power or injustice.

### PICTALK



Pilgrims wait in a queue to get themselves registered for the annual Amarnath Yatra, in Jammu

PTI

## Unveiling the deception: Decoding food labels for healthier choices

It's vital to scrutinise food labels beyond their claims. Decoding the fine print ensures that what we eat aligns with our health goals

Decoding Food Labels As a dietician, I strive to provide the best possible tailored meal plans to my clients, so why would I not stop and flip food packages to scrutinize labels to ensure what goes on my plate and my family's? Albeit, every time I do that I stop to think about the actual intent of documenting the ingredients on the package and I feel deceived. The idea behind all this 'extra work' was to keep the consumer informed and help them make intelligent choices for themselves. But then

I see a granola bar labelled "whole grain" and "healthy snack," only to find sugar listed as the first ingredient! Has the food industry turned food labels into a game of hide-and-seek with our health? Food manufacturers have become masters of a deceptive language game. Over time, they've developed tactics to maximize sales and keep their customers hooked, often at the expense of health. Buzzwords like "natural" and "low-fat" create an illusion of health, while hidden sugars and cleverly disguised serving sizes make it difficult to deci-



pher the truth. These tactics paint a picture of a healthy snack, obscuring the reality which can be quite different. So, does this mean we're doomed to fall victim to marketing tactics? Absolutely not! With a little knowledge, we can become empowered to decode food labels, making informed choices about what purchases we make.

Here are a few key areas to focus on during your next grocery run and fill your shopping cart with what is right for you: As I said earlier, don't allow the food companies to trick you into buying their products just because they claim to be "natural," "low-fat" or "multi-grain." Low fat doesn't alone mean that literally. The term also implies added sugars and the use of unhealthy fillers. For the longest brown

rice has wooed Indian buyers, but this does not mean that brown rice syrup is any good and a healthy replacement for sugar! High fructose corn syrup, agave nectar, palm, etc are scattered through the list of ingredients keeping even the most discerning customer, from grasping the true sugar content. When you see "sugar-free" on the label, know that other forms like sugar alcohol or artificial sweeteners might be in play. The latest in line is, "natural sweeteners" or "fruit extract" which again is sugar; no less, no more.

The biggest gamble lurks in the Serving Sizes. As a standardized directive laid down by the FDA, it is ideally meant to help consumers compare the same products from different brands, empowering them to make the best choice for themselves. But, most manufacturers shrink the serving size per package, compared to what an average consumer would typically eat. Consider finishing a whole bag of munchies in one go while the manufacturer suggests two servings per container. All ingredients are specified per serving and

you ended up twice what you thought was good for you! Ensure you keep a tab of serving size and calculate your portion and calorie/sugar intake accordingly. "Rich in protein," "Fiber-rich" etc are another set of crowd pullers that mostly tend to divert customer's attention from other not-so-healthy ingredients. Bearing these points in mind, your next trip to the supermarket will be a game-changer for your household. Don't get carried away by big claims made on the face of the package, TURN IT AROUND & be sure to read the numbers. Whether it is calories, saturated and trans fats, sodium or added sugars, learn the limits and decide for yourself what suits you best. Employ help from label-reading apps that can demystify tricky labels and provide additional information about ingredients. See-through those marketing gimmicks and bring to the table what is healthier and more wholesome for you and your family.

(The author is a dietician and Clinical Nutritionist Ambassador of FIT INDIA Movement of GOI; views are personal)



KOMAL PATEL

A seven-member American delegation led by Michael McCaul, and Nancy Pelosi, both leading lights of the US House of Representatives, recently met the Dalai Lama at Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh; this is a particularly significant event. They delivered a clear message that the USA no longer accepts Tibet as a part of China; and the US Congress will be soon passing an Act to be made into a law, called the "Resolve Tibet-China Act". The delegation told the Tibetan spiritual leader that "things have changed now". This American message has unmistakably resisted in Chinese ears. This US delegation first called on His Holiness at Dharamshala, indicating they were calling on the Tibetan government-in-exile, calling on Prime Minister Narendra Modi only thereafter. The Government of India has not hesitated to welcome the delegation. Xi Jinping may have forgotten that Mao Zedong's regime had first claimed 'suzerainty' over Tibet.

Before long, it asserted that Tibet was a Chinese province, before attempting to erase Tibet's culture, heritage and language. These events have their roots in what happened towards the end of World War II. By allowing Stalin's Red Army to enter Berlin first and occupy it, the US made the Russians believe that they were the prime victors of WWII. In 1949, the Soviet Communist regime, by hook or crook, acquired the atom bomb. This made them believe even more they were now a superpower. Eco-militarily though, the Soviet Union was no 'super' but only a Eurasian power, as it had historically been. Similarly, the US overestimated the Communist Chinese as well. Compared to Chiang Kai Shek and his Kuomintang (KMT) on the mainland, the Maoists were much more committed. That, however, was no reason to dump the KMT as well as Formosa, now Taiwan from the UN as an official member. In fact, India should have been the correct replacement, but the Nehru gov-



ernment was insistent on giving the right of way to Red China, believe it or not. The USA, or at least its State Department continued to believe for years that the Soviets and the Chinese were a single communist bloc. The extent of the animosity between the two was fully realized only after the Sino-Soviet clash along the Ussuri River in 1969.

It was only thereafter that President Nixon decided to call on Chinese Premier Mao Zedong in 1972, which brought a great deal of prestige to Dr. Henry Kissinger. The ultimate beneficiary of this resumption of relations was China, when Deng Xiaoping introduced economic reforms, emphasizing manufacturing and exports. The surplus of trillions of dollars accumulated by China came largely through exports to America. The course of these events explains why the State Department of the USA until now ignored the treatment of the hapless Tibetans by successive Chinese regimes over the last seven decades, beginning in 1959. The question is: is this because of repeated provocations over Taiwan, or could there be some larger reason unknown to us? The intentions should become clearer with the unfolding of time. India's stand has also been important.

“ XI JINPING MAY HAVE FORGOTTEN THAT MAO ZEDONG'S REGIME HAD FIRST CLAIMED 'SUZERAINTY' OVER TIBET. BEFORE LONG, IT ASSERTED THAT TIBET WAS A CHINESE PROVINCE, BEFORE ATTEMPTING TO ERASE TIBET'S CULTURE, HERITAGE AND LANGUAGE

Unfortunately, the Leftists and communists in the country had clamoured for the (then) newly formed Red Chinese regime, which had requested its recognition within a few days of its winning the civil war. Deputy Prime Minister Sardar Patel, on the other hand, was of the clear view that there was no hurry to recognize the new Chinese regime. In November 1949, Patel invited the American charge d'affaires Donovan to verify if there was an urgency in the recognition of Red China.

Knowing the Sardar through his long correspondence with Jawaharlal Nehru on the subject of China, uppermost in his mind must have been the concern that the Sino-Indian border should be mutually recognized. But Jawaharlal Nehru was in a hurry and without consulting the Sardar, informed the Chinese of India's decision to recognize their regime in the December of that year itself. While expressing its delight at Nehru's message, China also laid down a few preconditions. India would pass on to the new regime all properties and assets of China. Secondly, India would not recognize any members of the KMT. Thirdly, India should support the expulsion of Nationalist China from the UNO, as well as its replacement by the

communist regime. China's perfidious intentions can be gauged from the fact that its communist regime announced the 'liberation' of Tibet as the People's Liberation Army's (PLA) task just one day before the founding of the People's Republic of China. The Tibetans had expelled the Chinese Amban, although he had been a Kuomintang government appointee.

The Chinese blamed India for it, abusing Nehru as "a lackey of British imperialism" and complicit in the British humiliation of China, which Mao sought to reverse. The People's Daily of China in an editorial denounced the concept of suzerainty as feudal and oppressive—the very thing China demanded over Tibet. It even called on the UNO to examine India's relationship with Bhutan. The reality, which the Nehru government chose to ignore despite even Ambassador K.M. Pannikar's warnings was that China was eyeing Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan too. But India's first prime minister, a votary of international peace and brotherhood was oblivious to this. The sufferers were from Tibet and India.

(The writer is a well-known columnist, an author and a former member of the Rajya Sabha. The views expressed are personal)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### REFORMING JUSTICE

Madam — India is poised to undergo a transformative shift in its criminal justice system with the implementation of three groundbreaking laws starting July 1st, 2024. However, the primary concern lies in the readiness of our institutions to handle these changes, necessitating a nationwide audit. There has been no thorough assessment of the preparedness across various criminal justice institutions in different states. Additionally, the transition from old laws to new ones is likely to create significant confusion. It would be prudent to postpone the implementation of these laws until a comprehensive and independent audit of institutional readiness is conducted. Alternatively, a phased implementation to test the waters would be a more sensible approach.

Noopur Baruah | Tezpur

### A DEMOCRACY IN DISARRAY

Madam — The signs were clear for all to see. We eagerly awaited the end of the elections and patiently anticipated the results. Yet, once Parliament convened, it quickly became apparent that walk-outs and paralysis were the order of the day. The drama of democracy played out in full view, with heightened agitation across the country. On the anniversary of the Emergency, Parliament was divided, and the opposition was relentless in disrupting proceedings at every turn, reflecting the turbulence within our so-called democratic framework. Opposition leaders harshly criticized President Droupadi Murmu's address, dismissing it as a government-scripted speech riddled with falsehoods. They accused the government of imposing an undeclared emergency and challenged its claims of economic growth and investment.

Leaders highlighted issues facing farmers, unemployed youth, and recent national events. The true nature of our parliamentarians has been laid bare,

### India's T20 World Cup victory



India celebrated a momentous victory over South Africa in the T20 World Cup 2024 final, marking a glorious return to World Cup triumph after a 13-year hiatus since their last ICC trophy win in 2011. Under the astute leadership of Rohit Sharma, the team showcased exceptional prowess

and resilience, dominating the tournament with consecutive victories. This win was particularly poignant as it marked a grand farewell for two Indian cricket stalwarts, Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, along with head coach Rahul Dravid, who had not previously won a World Cup trophy. Both Rohit and Virat announced their retirement from T20 internationals, making this victory an emotional and proud moment for all Indians. Rohit's tactical brilliance and Virat's consistent performances have been instrumental in India's crickering success over the years. Their departure signifies the end of an era. The Indian cricket team displayed outstanding skill and determination, ensuring that they lifted the ICC trophy and gave their beloved captain and star player a memorable send-off. This victory will be cherished as one of the most emotional and proud moments in Indian cricket history. Bishal Kumar Saha, Murshidabad

Bishal Kumar Saha | Murshidabad

with their election appearing to serve only as a means to create chaos, disrupt parliamentary decorum, and hinder smooth functioning. The disarray within Parliament serves as a stark reminder of the urgent need for a recommitment to democratic principles and decorum. The behavior of our elected representatives, which seems aimed more at creating chaos than fostering progress, threatens the very foundation of our democratic institutions. It is imperative that we, as citizens, demand accountability and a return to a more respectful and effective form of governance.

Jayanty Subramaniam | Mumbai

### FAREWELL TO A LEGEND

Madam — India's head coach, Rahul Dravid, is not one to seek the spotlight. Yet, it inevitably finds him, whether during his illustrious playing career or his post-retirement role as a coach for both junior and senior Indian cricket teams. As his era of strategic brilliance and mentorship draws to a close, we bid

farewell to a coach whose wisdom has guided Team India to new heights. Dravid's tenure has been marked by unforgettable victories and moments of crickering genius, from nurturing young talent to instilling a culture of discipline and resilience.

His legacy will continue to inspire future generations of cricketers, embodying the values that define our beloved sport. A World Cup win would be the perfect capstone to Rahul Dravid's remarkable journey. As we celebrate Rahul Dravid's contributions to Indian cricket, we also honor a figure whose integrity, dedication, and humility have left an indelible mark on the game. His departure marks the end of an era, but his legacy will continue to inspire and shape the future of Indian cricket for years to come. What a distinguished man and an outstanding cricketer!

Jayanthi S Maniam | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



## FIRST COLUMN

## THE EVOLVING PATH TO SUCCESS WITH UPSKILLING

Success is more than just good intentions. It's a journey paved with education and skill



RACHNA LAKHPATRI

The saying "Where there's a will, there's a way" offers a reassuring belief that sheer determination can overcome any obstacle. However, navigating the complexities of real-world success involves more than just good intentions. It requires a foundation built on education, experience, and often, a blend of both. The path to achievement is multifaceted, demanding a strategic combination of willpower, continuous learning, and specialization. Enter the upskilling advocate. These individuals champion the importance of lifelong learning, asserting that the pursuit of new knowledge can unlock doors that even traditional qualifications cannot. The argument holds weight, especially in an era where technology evolves at breakneck speed. The ability to adapt to these changes is crucial. However, the journey of upskilling can sometimes feel like an endless treadmill—each completed course leads to another, creating a perpetual cycle of learning without a clear endpoint. On the other hand, we have the specialist.

Specialists possess targeted expertise, backed by rigorous education in a specific field. Their qualifications often serve as a shortcut past initial professional hurdles, providing a clear and direct path to success. Yet, this path can be fraught with its own challenges. As industries transform and new technologies emerge, specialization that once seemed advantageous may become obsolete. The clear road that once led to career success can abruptly end, leaving the specialist in need of new directions. So, who holds the advantage in this dynamic landscape? The truth, as with many aspects of life, is that the ideal path is a balanced



one. The most successful individuals often embody a blend of both approaches. They possess a solid foundation in a core discipline but are equally committed to continuous learning and adaptation. For instance, someone with a degree in marketing might pursue courses in digital analytics to stay relevant in an increasingly data-driven world. This duality—rooted in depth of knowledge but flexible in acquiring new skills—is what makes them particularly valuable. Employers who recognize the importance of this balance are making the smartest investments. They seek out candidates who not only have the expertise to excel in their current roles but also the agility to navigate the shifting landscape of the professional world.

These employers understand that a blend of foundational knowledge and a willingness to upskill can create a workforce capable of responding to change with confidence and competence. The key takeaway? While willpower is essential, it must be channeled effectively. Start by building a strong educational foundation in a chosen field, then continually seek opportunities for growth and learning. This approach fosters a mindset of perpetual improvement, positioning individuals to thrive amid the uncertainties of the modern workplace. Yet, the journey doesn't end with acquiring new skills. The future of work demands the ability to unlearn outdated practices and embrace new paradigms. The most successful professionals will be those who approach each challenge with a growth mindset, eager to expand their knowledge and reshape their skills. They understand that change is the only constant and that adaptability is the ultimate competitive advantage. Rather than seeing your career as a ladder to climb, envision it as traversing a vast, ever-shifting landscape. The willingness to learn and grow continuously is key to unlocking a fulfilling and successful career in an ever-evolving world. So, abandon the notion of being a finished product and embrace the journey of lifelong learning. It's a marathon, not a sprint. With the right mindset, you'll be well-equipped not just to survive but to thrive in the ever-changing world of work. Are you ready for the adventure?

(The writer is an author and has penned three books; views are personal)

## Focus shifts to prudent public wealth management



UTTAM GUPTA

The new Govt is overhauling India's disinvestment policy. It is supporting non-profit enterprises, and maintaining a strong presence of State-run firms in strategic sectors

The new National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is reviewing the existing disinvestment policy to shift its focus from selling central public sector undertakings (CPSUs) to prudent public wealth management (PWM), supporting not-for-profit enterprises, and ensuring strong presence of state-run firms in strategic sectors'. A CPSU is an undertaking in which the Union government has majority share holding meaning it holds more than 50 percent of its shares. Disinvestment is fancy nomenclature for sale of these shares to private investors. When, disinvestment results in reduction of the government's shareholding in the CPSU to below 50 percent and concomitant transfer of ownership and management control to private entity, this is termed as 'strategic' disinvestment or privatization.

The extant policy on disinvestment was announced by the Union Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman in her Budget speech for FY 2021-22.

Under it, CPSUs were classified into two broad categories i.e. strategic and non-strategic. The strategic group covers atomic energy, space and defense; transport and telecommunications; power, petroleum, coal and other minerals; and banking, insurance and financial services. The non-strategic category includes all other sectors viz. industrial and consumer goods, hotel and tourist services, trading, and marketing and so on. The government's intent was to sell all undertakings in the strategic sector with the caveat that at least one (and a maximum of four) will be retained in the public sector.

As for undertakings in non-strategic sectors, it wanted to reduce its shareholding to below 50 percent in 'all' of them. Put simply, they would all be privatized. All loss-making undertakings in this category would be closed.

Also tagged to this policy was government's intent to use the proceeds from disinvestment for meeting its fiscal deficit (excess of total revenue over total expenditure) or FD target. This part was a continuation from the past when the Modi - government started selling its shares in CPSUs in 2015-16 with particular focus on 'strategic' disinvestment. In the backdrop of devastation caused by Covid-19 pandemic and debilitating effect on its finances during 2020-21 (in that year, FD had scaled to 9.2 percent of GDP), in the budget for 2021-22, Sitharaman had put even greater reliance on proceeds of disinvestment by setting an ambitious target of Rs 175,000 crore. During that year, the government had planned big ticket disinvestments such as Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), IDBI Bank, NMDC Steel and Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) and so on.

But, the process has remained stuck in the slow lane even as the targets of proceeds from sales were missed year-after-year. Only during two years viz. 2017-18 and 2018-19, it achieved the target. That was primarily because, in those years, it had conducted two big-ticket sales of its shares from one CPSU to another.

During 2017-18, the government sold



51.11 percent of its shareholding in Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) to the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) yielding Rs 37,000 crore. In the following year, it undertook the sale of its 52.63 percent stake in the Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) to the Power Finance Corporation (PFC) yielding Rs 13,000 crore. But, those sales can't be termed as strategic as the purchaser being another CPSU namely ONGC/PFC, the Government continues to have effective ownership over the divested entity viz. HPCL/REC.

The results during 2021-22 and 2022-23 were particularly disconcerting. During 2021-22, against a target of Rs 175,000 crore, the actual proceeds from disinvestment were a meager Rs 15,440 crore. During 2022-23, against a target of Rs 65,000 crore, the actual was nearly half at Rs 31,059 crore. For 2023-24, the FM had lowered the target to Rs 51,000 crore which during the course of the year was further revised downwards to Rs 30,000 crore. Even against this, the actual proceeds were a meager Rs 14,564 crore.

What does the interim Budget for 2024-25 say?

In a briefing following the presentation of the Budget by Sitharaman on February 1, 2024, Finance Secretary TV Somanathan had stated that the "government no longer views disinvestment from the perspective of balancing the budget". Can it be taken to mean that it has shed its age-old stance of using proceeds from share sale for reducing FD. The answer is 'No' as it has set a target of Rs 50,000 crore for 2024-25 under the head "miscellaneous capital receipts" which

includes disinvestment proceeds besides receipts from asset monetization.

The very idea of garnering resources from the sale of government shares in CPSUs is inherently flawed. This is because unlike tax revenue, which can be projected with a degree of certainty based on the existing tax rate and a reasonable assessment of the growth in nominal GDP, the same cannot be said about proceeds from disinvestment. In this case, a lot depends on the market scenario and, in particular, the perception of investors about the company in which share-sale is contemplated.

In cases where the strategic sale is mooted, the Government faces a bigger challenge as apart from a favorable market, it needs bidders with deep pockets. The lengthy and cumbersome process of approval and bureaucratic red tape further undermines the chances of its kicking the ball rolling just around the time when the strategic investors are ready to put in their bets.

The Niti Aayog identifies companies for disinvestment which are then considered by the Core Group of Secretaries on Divestment (CGD), a long-drawn process by itself, which takes it to the Alternative Mechanism (AM) - a group of ministers, including finance, road transport & highways, administrative reforms, etc., for approval. After AM's approval, the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) moves a proposal for in-principal approval of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA).

In view of above, the government shouldn't put any number to

receipts from share sale while preparing the budget as the end of the year, slippage is inevitable. Even so, the government's tax revenue is buoyant (for three years in a row since 2021-22, these have exceeded the target) and it is getting higher dividends from CPSUs as also higher dividends from the Reserve Bank of India (for its FY 2023-24, the RBI has made a huge dividend transfer of Rs 210,000 crore to the Centre for latter's use during 2024-25) and public sector banks (PSBs). These positive trends should be good enough for managing fiscal deficits; hence, no need to depend on 'miscellaneous capital receipts'.

What happens to strategic sale? From the emphasis on public wealth management (PWM), strong presence of state-run firms in strategic sectors, one gets sense that the government has completely abandoned the path of privatizing CPSUs in these sectors. As it is, under the 2021-22 policy, it had intended to retain at least one (and a maximum of four) undertakings in the strategic sector. Now, it seems it won't privatize even one. The government's decision to drop its plan for sale of BPCL which was on its agenda since 2019-20 is an indication of things to come.

Changing horses midstream won't be in the best interest of the country. Fundamentally, the State shouldn't be in the business of running enterprises. There always remains a risk of political interference and bureaucratic red tape which can seriously hamper the working of CPSUs. The government should continue the process of share sale and focus on de-bureaucratizing it.

(The writer is a policy analyst; views are personal)



IN CASES WHERE THE STRATEGIC SALE IS MOOTED, THE GOVT FACES A BIGGER CHALLENGE AS APART FROM A FAVOURABLE MARKET, IT NEEDS BIDDERS WITH DEEP POCKETS

## Surviving the scorch: Strategies for managing heat waves in India

The summer of 2024 has seen record-breaking temperatures. It is imperative for policymakers to understand the underlying causes and implement effective measures

The country is in the midst of intense heat waves causing severe hardship in the entire North, Central and Western India for more than a month. India may have recorded the hottest-ever temperature in 2024. On 29th May 2024 Delhi recorded 52.3 Degrees Celsius temperature at a weather station in Mungeshpur a suburb of Delhi though later on it was proved that it was slightly on the higher side. Even cooler places like Dehradun have noticed the highest temperature of the last 53 years this year. More than 30 crore people in India are prone to high risk due to lack of means to escape heat waves. The people are feeling severe shortages of power and water and many grids are collapsing due to overload lead-



V K BAHUGUNA

ing to prolonged outages. Several people have died due to heat waves across the country. According to official sources, 150 people have died due to heat waves and around 30,000 people suffered heat stroke from March to mid-June 2024. The people from Delhi and other adjoining areas are rushing to hill stations of Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and other hills to escape the heat torture

and in the process causing heavy traffic jams and throwing in disarray the civic amenities in several towns and cities. The River width of Ganga in Varanasi has reduced by 35 % and similar reports are forthcoming of the narrowing of other streams and rivers.

The experts have been warning the government and the society at large about the changing weather trends of the country. The policy makers, professionals and administrators is to assess the causes of such an unprecedented rise in temperature and how to mop up resources to deal with it. If the mandarins in power in the centre and state do not change the way to deal with it efficiently and effectively many disasters will be ruining the stabil-

ity and cohesiveness in the society.

One thing all must learn is the fact that high temperatures are the results of the combined effects of global warming, increasing urbanisation/concretization leading to changing weather patterns. As far as Delhi and nearby areas are concerned the dry and warm westerly winds from Rajasthan and Haryana are the causes of the heat wave. Now these winds continue during the night and do not allow the night temperature to fall and this is further accentuated when these westerly winds lead to cloud formation in the sky which prevents cooling the temperature. To find the solution our planners and civic administrators in cities must meet the challenges of the

'urban heat island effect'. In nature trees and other vegetation in the landscape along with green roofs help in reducing the urban heat island effects by releasing moisture through transpiration, and by shading reflecting the sun radiation back into the atmosphere. Therefore, the massive dense urbanisation, buildings, roads and pavements absorb and retain the heat and hence the urban heat island effect with disastrous consequences. On the other hand, the effects of heat waves in rural areas are different; there is less or minimal heat island effect but the heat effects mostly relate to health issues like severe dehydration, heat stroke, heat exhaustion and gastro-intestinal diseases exacerbated by the long power cuts and water

shortage. India is not the only country affected by heat waves. Europe is also suffering from heat waves since April 2024. The temperature is above 30 degrees Celsius in south Europe, particularly in Spain. This year in Europe the highest temperature was noticed in Zeneca and Bosnia at 33.3 degree Celsius on 14th April 2024. The European country's architecture is such that they cannot cope up well with continuous heat waves. The objective of this article is to stress that in India the Central and State governments should jointly devise a policy to effectively deal with summer weather. The first thing to be done is to declare the temperature beyond a certain limit as a nat-

ural disaster/climate emergency and put in place standard operating procedures to deal with it for the different cities and rural areas. In rural areas, the government must ensure a supply of potable water and electricity as well as a mobile dispensary to provide quick health care services. In each village lakes and ponds should be created compulsorily so that people including farmers and cattle get water. It needs short-term planning risk assessment and early warning systems based on the India Meteorological Department forecast. One of the fundamental requirements is the need to remould the district administration by creating an integrated and holistic approach so that climate-resilient develop-

ment is ensured and preparations are made in advance to deal with any emergent situation. However, real change in the entire civic administration is essential in urban areas. The town and country planning needs complete overhauling as also revisit the power-centric civic bodies. The drainages are in shamble and must be protected so that the next emergency in rainy weather does not derail the life and property. Will the Urban Development Ministry set up a task national force to recommend action?

(The author is the former Director-General of the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education and Chancellor of FRI University; views are personal)







# Sensex, Nifty hit fresh record

**PTI ■ MUMBAI**  
Benchmark Sensex rose by 443 points to close at a new record high while Nifty settled above the 24,100 mark on Monday on buying in banking and IT shares in line with gains in Asian and European markets. The 30-share BSE Sensex settled higher by 443.46 points or 0.56 per cent at an all-time high of 79,476.19. During the day, the barometer soared 528.27 points or 0.66 per cent to 79,561. The broader Nifty rose by 131.35 points or 0.55 per cent to close at a fresh lifetime high of 24,141.95. Intra-day, the index hit a high of 24,164, just 10 points short of its lifetime high of 24,174 hit on Friday. Among Sensex shares, Tech Mahindra, UltraTech Cement, Bajaj Finance, Hindustan Unilever, Tata Consultancy Services, JSW Steel, Infosys, HDFC Bank,



Tata Motors and ICICI Bank were the biggest gainers. In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo and Shanghai settled higher. European markets were trading with gains. US markets ended lower on

Friday. "The domestic market sustained its upward momentum, with a reduction in US PCE inflation raising hopes for a rate cut by the US Fed in September. This optimism contributed to the strong performance of IT stocks," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services. Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.51 per cent to USD 85.43 a barrel. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 23.09 crore on Friday, according to exchange data. The BSE benchmark declined 210.45 points or 0.27 per cent to settle at 79,032.73 on Friday. During the day, it jumped 428.4 points or 0.54 per cent to hit a fresh record trading peak of 79,671.58. The Nifty went lower by 33.90 points or 0.14 per cent to 24,010.60. During the day, it climbed 129.5 points or 0.53 per cent to hit a new lifetime high of 24,174.

# GST reduced tax rates on household goods, brought happiness, relief to every home: FinMin

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
Goods and Services Tax (GST), which completed 7 years of implementation on Monday, has brought happiness and relief to every home through reduced taxes on household appliances and mobile phones, the finance ministry said on Monday. GST, which subsumed about 17 local tax and cesses, was rolled out on July 1, 2017. The theme of the 7th GST Day is Sashakt Vyapar Samagra Vikas (empowered trade overall growth). "With reduced tax rates on household goods after GST implementation, 7 years of GST has brought happiness and relief to every home through lower GST on household appliances and mobile phones," the ministry said in a post on X. The GST taxpayer base has increased to 1.46 crore in April 2024 from 1.05 crore as



of April 2018. "We have witnessed a quantum jump in taxpayers base along with improved compliance," Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) Chairman Sanjay Kumar Agarwal said. Giving comparative charts of pre- and post-GST tax rates of household goods, the ministry said GST has enhanced the ease of living with every household saving on expenditure on food items and items of mass

consumption after GST implementation. The rate of food items like unpacked wheat, rice, curd, and lassi, which were taxed at 2.5-4 per cent before GST implementation, is at nil after the GST rollout. Household goods like cosmetics, wrist watches, sanitary plastic ware, doors and windows, furniture and mattresses are taxed at a lower rate of 18 per cent in the GST regime, lower than 28 per cent in the erstwhile excise and VAT regime. The ministry said mobile phones, TVs up to 32 inches, refrigerators, washing machines electrical appliances (other than air conditioners), geysers and fans which attracted 31.3 per cent taxes in the pre-GST era, are now in the 18 per cent tax slab in GST regime. It further said the compliance burden was reduced for small taxpayers, and the GST Council has recommended to waive off annual return filing requirement for taxpayers with aggregate annual turnover of up to Rs 2 crore in fiscal 2023-24. The quarterly return filing (QRMP) scheme has reduced the number of returns filed in a year from 24 to 8, for more than 44 lakh small taxpayers, IFF (Invoice furnishing Facility) ensured seamless passage of ITC (Input Tax Credit), the ministry added.

# TVS Mobility arm acquires Italy-based automotive components supplier



**PTI ■ MUMBAI**  
TVS Mobility group on Monday said its subsidiary SI Air Springs has acquired Italy-based automotive components supplier Roberto Nuti Group, which will help it broaden the product range and strengthen its position in the global market. The pact between the two partners includes the 100 per cent purchase of Roberto Nuti Group by TVS Mobility indirectly, through its wholly-owned Indian subsidiary, SI Air Springs Private Limited and investments appropriate to the full re-launch of the company, TVS Mobility group said in a statement. It also said that both companies will continue to operate normally during the integration period. TVS Mobility has a well-established presence in Europe with some of the other businesses that are part of the group such as TVS Supply Chain Solutions and TVS Srichakra Ltd. Following this collaboration, the Bologna (Italy)-based group will now operate on a more international scale, benefiting from the market and product leadership of TVS Mobility, it said. "This acquisition marks a

significant step in our global expansion strategy, allowing us to combine our distinctive skills in air spring business with the Nuti Group's suspension systems expertise," said P Srinivasavaradhan, Director of SI Air Springs. SI Air Springs, which operates from Madurai in Tamil Nadu provides air spring solutions to major commercial vehicles, Bus OEMs (Original Equipment Manufacturers), trailer manufacturers Tier 1 suspension System suppliers and Indian Railways. On the other hand, Roberto Nuti Group produces and distributes shock absorbers and air springs for the aftermarket mainly for industrial and commercial vehicles. "We are excited about the international growth potential this agreement brings us and we are confident that partnering with SI Air Springs will allow us to take advantage of their capabilities. "Both companies will continue to operate normally during the integration period, and we are committed to ensuring a smooth transition for all our stakeholders," said Luca Randighieri, General Manager at the Nuti Group.

# FirstCry's parent firm Brainbees Solutions gets Sebi's go ahead to float IPO

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
Brainbees Solutions Ltd, the parent firm of online e-commerce platform FirstCry, has received Sebi's approval to raise funds through an initial public offering (IPO), an update with the markets regulator showed on Monday. According to the fresh draft red herring prospectus (DRHP), Pune-based Brainbees Solutions' proposed IPO is a combination of a fresh issue of equity shares, aggregating up to Rs 1,816 crore and an offer for sale (OFS) of up to 5.44 crore equity shares by existing shareholders. Under the OFS, SVF Frog, a Cayman Islands-registered entity of Softbank, will sell 2.03 crore equity shares of



January and May 2024 -- obtained the regulator's observations during June 25-28, according to the update. In Sebi's parlance, obtaining its observations means its approval to float the public issue. According to the fresh draft red herring prospectus (DRHP), Pune-based Brainbees Solutions' proposed IPO is a combination of a fresh issue of equity shares, aggregating up to Rs 1,816 crore and an offer for sale (OFS) of up to 5.44 crore equity shares by existing shareholders. Under the OFS, SVF Frog, a Cayman Islands-registered entity of Softbank, will sell 2.03 crore equity shares of

25.55 per cent stake in Brainbees Solutions, and M&M owns a 10.98 per cent stake in the multi-brand retailing platform. Currently, Softbank holds a

M&M, other entities selling shares in the OFS are PI Opportunities Fund, TPG, NewQuest Asia Investments, Apricot Investments, Valiant Mauritius, TIMF Holdings, Think India Opportunities Fund and Schroders Capital. Brainbees Solutions re-filed preliminary papers with Sebi in May after the company was directed by the regulator to re-file the draft papers, citing insufficient disclosure of key performance indicators (KPIs), market sources had said. The company's key performance indicators include its number of orders, average order value and annual transacting customers. Unicommerce's issue is entirely an offer for sale (OFS) aggregating up to 2.98 crore equity shares by the selling shareholders. Under the OFS, SB Investment Holdings (UK) Ltd, an affiliate of Japan's SoftBank, will offload 1.61 crore shares, promoter AceVector Limited (formerly known as Snapdeal Limited) will sell up to 1.14 crore shares, and B2 Capital Partners will be selling up to 22 lakh shares. Since the IPO is completely an OFS, the entire proceeds will go to the selling shareholders. Shares of these four companies will be listed on the BSE and NSE.

# Rupee falls 11 paise to 83.45 against US dollar

**PTI ■ MUMBAI**  
The rupee depreciated 11 paise to settle at 83.45 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, tracking rising crude oil prices in international markets. However, a firm trend in domestic equity markets, positive manufacturing PMI data and a weak US dollar against major currencies overseas capped the sharp fall, forex traders said. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.39 and moved between the high of 83.38 and the low of 83.47 against the greenback during the session. The unit finally settled at 83.45 (provisional) against the dollar, registering a loss of 11 paise from its previous closing level. On Friday, the rupee settled 11 paise higher at 83.34 against the US dollar. Anuj Choudhary, Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas, said the rupee depreciated on a surge in US treasury yields and rising crude oil prices. Oil prices were hovering at nearly two-month high levels while the US bond yields above 4 per cent pressurised Asian

currencies. However, positive domestic markets and a rise in manufacturing PMI supported the rupee. Choudhary further said the rupee is likely to trade with a slight positive bias on gains in domestic markets and expectations of fresh foreign inflows. "Traders may take cues from ISM manufacturing PMI and construction spending data from the US. USD-INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of Rs 83.10 to Rs 83.70," he added. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading at 105.24, lower by 0.28 per cent. Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, advanced 0.41 per cent to USD 85.35 per

# ATF price hiked 1.2%, commercial LPG cut by ₹30

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
Jet fuel or ATF price on Monday was hiked by 1.2 per cent while that of commercial LPG used by hotels and restaurants cut by Rs 30 per 19-kg cylinder in line with international oil price trends. Aviation turbine fuel (ATF) price was hiked by Rs 1,179.37 per kilolitre, or 1.2 per cent, to Rs 96,148.38 per kl in the national capital, according to a price notification of state-owned fuel retailers. The increase followed a steep 6.5 per cent (Rs 6,673.87 per kl) reduction effected on June 1. The ATF rate in Mumbai was increased to Rs 89,908.30 per kl from Rs 88,834.27. Prices differ from state to state depending on the incidence of local taxes. Alongside, oil firms cut the price of commercial LPG by Rs 30 to Rs 1,646 per 19-kg cylinder. This is the fourth straight monthly reduction in rates. The price was last cut by Rs 69 per cylinder on June 1. Prior to that, rates were on

May 1 reduced by Rs 19 per cylinder, and by Rs 30.5 on April 1. Rate of cooking gas used in domestic households, however, remained unchanged at Rs 803 per 14.2-kg cylinder. State-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL), and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) revise prices of ATF and cooking gas on 1st of every month based on the average price of benchmark international fuel and foreign exchange rate. Prices of petrol and diesel continue to remain frozen. Rates had been cut by Rs 2 per litre in mid-March. Petrol costs Rs 94.72 a litre in Delhi while diesel is priced at Rs 87.62. Gold prices traded flat at Rs 72,350 per 10 grams while silver gained Rs 200 per kg in the local market on Monday, according to HDFC Securities. Silver prices rose by Rs 200 to Rs 90,300 per kg from the previous close of Rs 90,100 per kg. "In Delhi markets, spot gold prices (24 carats) are trading flat at Rs 72,350 per 10 grams, unchanged from the previous close," Saumil Gandhi, Research Analyst at HDFC Securities, said. In the overseas markets, spot gold at Comex was trading at USD 2,327 per ounce, slightly up USD 1 from the previous close. Gold struggled to find direction on Monday and moved in a narrow range above the USD 2,320 level during the European trading session, Gandhi said. "...Traders appear cautious about making aggressive directional bets given uncertainties about the US Federal Reserve's interest rate-cutting plan, resulting in sluggish range-bound price activity," he added.

# Digi Yatra policy should spell out all rules on passenger info deletion, suggests study

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
The policy for Digi Yatra — a digital platform to verify air travellers using biometric data — needs to spell out all the rules related to deletion of passenger information from the database once the travel is complete, according to a study instituted by NITI Aayog. There have been privacy concerns in various quarters about Digi Yatra user data. Based on Facial Recognition Technology (FRT), Digi Yatra provides for contactless and seamless movement of passengers at various checkpoints at airports. As per the policy for Digi Yatra, facial biometrics are deleted from the local airport's database 24 hours after the departure of the



passenger's flight. "However, the rules related to deletion of other information collected from the passengers, as well as any facial biometrics that are stored in other registries, must be clearly set out in the policy," the study said. Digi Yatra envisages an identity management ecosystem for Indian airports, which can enhance the capabilities of Indian civil aviation infrastructure, digitise manual processes at airports, improve security standards and lower the cost of operations of airports. "While the Digi Yatra Policy states that it is completely voluntary in nature, if the use of Digi Yatra is made mandatory in any way then the same must comply with the principles laid down in

K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India (case) relating to the constitutional right to privacy. The study recommended that there must be frequent cybersecurity audits and vulnerability testing of the Digi Yatra platform to ensure that reliability, usability, information security in the

ecosystem is a subject of continuous engagement and is adaptive to the rapidly evolving threats that exist in this sphere. In addition to cybersecurity audits, it is imperative to establish a mechanism for performing algorithmic audits by independent and accredited auditors, prior to system deployment at periodic intervals, it added. According to the study, the Digi Yatra SOP must specify timelines and purposes for retention of different types of data within the Digi Yatra Central Ecosystem, beyond which personal data is deleted. "Internal SOPs for handling personal and sensitive personal data must be identified," it said. The study also noted that there must be a provision for

the ongoing monitoring of the performance of the entire system. It also suggested that the use of facial recognition data and other relevant subject data for providing value-added services should only be activated through an opt-in rather than an opt-out method of consent with an ability to revoke consent at any time. Digi Yatra proposes use of FRT to authenticate a passenger's travel credentials, which allows other checkpoints at an airport to be operated in an automated form with minimal human involvement. The use of FRT prima facie has the potential to streamline operations at airports and provide tangible benefits to the civil aviation ecosystem. Amid persisting concerns over user data privacy, the Digi Yatra Foundation, in April, said the Digi Yatra Central Ecosystem (DYCE) never stores any of the ID credentials data, which has Personally Identifiable Information (PII) anywhere in any central repository. The foundation is the nodal agency for the app. In India, as part of its efforts to improve travel experience, the Ministry of Civil Aviation has initiated the Digi Yatra programme using the FRT, and facial verification technology (FVT) to be used at different process points. FRT refers to an AI system that allows identification or verification of a person based on certain images or video data interfacing with the underlying algorithm.



# NEERAJ CHOPRA OPTS OUT OF PARIS DIAMOND LEAGUE: REPORT

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

Olympic and world champion javelin throw star Neeraj Chopra has opted out of this Sunday's Paris Diamond League, citing the adductor niggle that has been troubling him for the past couple of months, according to a report. Speaking to 'ESPN', Chopra said he is focussing on training and strengthening his blocking leg. "I need to strengthen my blocking leg when I throw because that's when my groin gets pulled. We're working on that to see how we can reduce the impact on the groin and control the pressure on it," he said, explaining the issue for which he will consult "different doctors"

after the Paris Games. "I could have competed in more events for sure and that was the plan. But I have realised that my health is paramount, that comes first. Even if I feel the slightest discomfort or like I am pushing myself too much in training, I've learnt to pause for a bit," he added. The block phase is a crucial maneuver as it is the point at which the pace generated by the run-up is transferred to the hip and then to the throwing arm before the javelin is sent flying. Chopra, who topped the field in last month's Paavo Nurmi Games in Turku, Finland, with a throw of 85.97m, said he has become wiser over the years and no longer puts

himself at risk to fulfill commitments like he used to do before his Olympic gold. "Back then, if I had an entry in a competition, I would definitely go and compete no matter what happened. But now with more experience, I am better placed to make correct decisions," he said. "I was happy with my performance in Turku, but I felt there was more work to do. I was slow on the runway compared to my normal speed. "I want that speed back and for that, I need proper confidence that I am fully fit and that my groin is fit. I want to feel confident when I run on the runway," he pointed out.

# All three white ticked off; one red to go, tick it: Dravid to Kohli

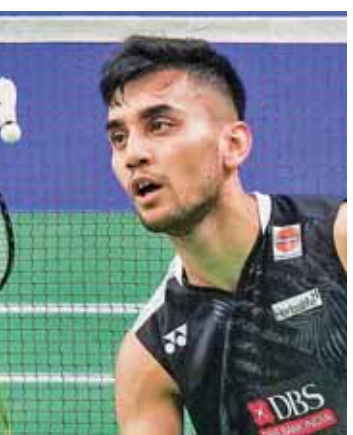


**PTI ■ BRIDGETOWN**

Staying true to his no-nonsense taskmaster image, outgoing India head coach Rahul Dravid had an assignment for star batter Virat Kohli even on his last day at work and within hours of India winning the T20 World Cup. "All three white ticked off, one red to go. Tick it," Dravid told Kohli in a video of the Indian dressing room celebrations shared by the ICC on its Instagram page. By three white he meant the limited-overs global trophies -- the T20 World Cup, the ODI World Cup and the Champions Trophy -- all of which Kohli has collected as a player. What's left now is winning the World Test Championship Final. India have lost the WTC Final twice (against New Zealand in 2021 and Australia in 2023). The 35-year-old Kohli, who retired from T20 Internationals after the World Cup triumph here on Saturday, merely smiled at Dravid as he repeated himself to assert his point, albeit with a warm smile on his face. "Go tick it." The 51-year-old Dravid, who was appointed India coach in 2021, ended his tenure with this event. India defeated South Africa by seven runs in the humdinger to claim their second overall T20 world crown, having won the title in

its inaugural edition in South Africa back in 2007 under Mahendra Singh Dhoni. In the ODI format, India won the 1983 and 2011 World Cups before snaring the 2013 Champions Trophy. The congratulatory video also featured Suryakumar Yadav, whose blinder of a catch to dismiss David Miller proved crucial in the final here. The Mumbaier said it would take him at least two days to fully grasp the enormity of the achievement. "No feelings right now, I don't know what to say," he said. Pacer Arshdeep Singh flouted a couple of polaroid shots of his, one taken on the morning of the final and the other with the winner's medal around his neck and the trophy in his hands in the afternoon. "This is what belief can do," he said. The Indian team is currently stranded here as Barbados has been shut down due to hurricane Beryl, originating in the Atlantic. The category 4 hurricane has intensified with maximum sustained winds of 210 kmph. The Indian team was supposed to take an Emirates flight from New York via Dubai. A source told PTI that the plan now is to take the team back to India on a charter flight. The Indian contingent, including support staff, families, and officials, consists of about 70 members.

# Canada Open: Fourth seed Lakshya Sen hopes to regain form as defending champion



**PTI ■ CALGARY (CANADA)**

With fond memories of his past, defending champion Lakshya Sen will look to end his title drought when he begins his campaign at the Canada Open badminton tournament here on Tuesday. The world No 14 Sen is the only Indian competing in the BWF World Tour Super 500 meet who will compete in the Paris Olympics. The reigning Commonwealth Games gold medallist's form has slipped since his Canada Open triumph around this time last year as he is yet to win a title since then. Sen will look to find his rhythm back as he gears up for the Paris Olympics, which begins in less than a month's time. With a No 4 seeding, Sen finds himself in the bottom half of the draw which also features the Japanese duo of Kodai Naraoka (WR 6) and Koki Watanabe (WR 20). The former world championship bronze medallist Sen will start off against a qualifier and may head into a potential quarterfinal clash with Hong Kong's WR 23 NG Ka Long Angus. There are three other Indians in the men's singles main draw. Priyanshu Rajawat will face eighth seed Rasmus Gemke of Denmark. Rajawat recently had a notable last-eight finish in the US Open Super 300 event, wherein he lost to Lei Lax Xi. Kiran George will take on Yushi Tanaka of Japan, while Ayush Shetty is the fourth Indian in the draw, starting his campaign against the sixth seed Watanabe (6). On a high after her semifinal finish in the US Open last week, Malvika Bansod will face Julie Dawall Jakobsen of Denmark in her opening women's singles fixture. Malvika is also in the bottom half of the draw which has WR 14 Nozomi Okuhara as the second seed. But her immediate next challenge may be against WR 21 Line Hojmark Kjaersfeldt of Denmark. The Danish player has got a fourth seed and could be Malvika's last-16 challenger. If she is able to overcome the pre-quarters hurdle, Malvika may face fifth seed Sung Shuo Yun, who is WR 24.

# Six Indians in ICC Team of Tournament

**PTI ■ DUBAI**

The International Cricket Council has picked six Indians in its 'Team of the Tournament' for the just-concluded T20 World Cup but there was no place for star batter Virat Kohli, who played a match-winning knock in the final against South Africa. In his new role as an opener, Kohli had an underwhelming World Cup before rising to the occasion in the big final where he was adjudged man-of-the-match for his 59-ball 76. India pipped South Africa by seven runs in a sensational comeback in the death overs to win their second T20 World Cup title after 17 years. The ICC XI featured Indian skipper Rohit Sharma, Suryakumar Yadav, Hardik Pandya, Axar Patel and two pacers in Jasprit Bumrah and Arshdeep Singh. Rohit led from the front with 257 runs at a splendid strike-rate of



156.7 to his name. He was the second most leading run-getter after Afghanistan's Rahmanullah Gurbaz. The Player of the Tournament and India's trump card in their title win, Bumrah returned with 15 wickets. But more than his wickets, his impact in restricting the scoring rate of teams made Bumrah India's most important player right through the tournament. His economy rate of 4.17 was the best ever by any bowler in a single edition of the men's T20 World Cup. Following their historic semifinal finish, Afghanistan found three players in the ICC team, including left-arm quick Fazalhaq Farooqi,

who topped the wicket-takers chart jointly with Arshdeep (17 wickets each). Wicketkeeper-batter Rahmanullah Gurbaz, who topped the runs scorers' list with 281 runs as an opener for Afghanistan, also found a place alongside skipper Rashid Khan. The crafty leg-spinner brilliantly led Afghanistan in their historic run and returned with 14 wickets with a tidy economy of 6.17. Marcus Stoinis of Australia and Nicholas Pooran of the tournament co-hosts West Indies completed the XI. Runners-up South Africa did not find a player in the XI and pacer

Anrich Nortje was named the 12th man. Nortje began the tournament with a brilliant 4/7 against Sri Lanka and took at least one wicket in all but one match. In the final, he was the pick of South Africa's bowlers with figures of 2/26 from his four overs. **ICC TEAM OF THE TOURNAMENT:** Rohit Sharma, Suryakumar Yadav, Hardik Pandya, Axar Patel, Jasprit Bumrah, Arshdeep Singh (all Indians); Rahmanullah Gurbaz, Rashid Khan, Fazalhaq Farooqi (Afghanistan); Marcus Stoinis (Australia) and Nicholas Pooran (West Indies); 12th man: Anrich Nortje.

## Nainital : Monsoon pitter-patter sounds like lullaby for weary souls

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**Afzal Hussain Fauji**  
Nainital

Nainital, the lake town known for its peerless beauty world-wide, assumes a kind of ethereality when it starts raining. As the monsoon breezes gently blow, the old, tall trees-covering the hills with eye-soothing greenery- cheerfully swing. Nainital beckons tourists all the year round, but its charm peaks when the summer heat singes the plains. However, its beauty in monsoon, according to many, soothes the weary souls, rejuvenating them with verve and vigour with the romantic pitter-patter of the bounteous monsoon.

We love rain because it is supposed to wash away the old, making life look new again. Rain not just washes away the dust and dirt; it washes away fear and anxieties that gnaw at us from within and once these are washed away we are filled with new energies and if we are a little spiritually inclined we feel as though we are living in the infinity and eternity, away from the space and time our life is limited by. This is what Nainital becomes during the monsoon, a perfect setting to suddenly feel revived physically, intellectually and even spiritually. With raindrops sounding as lullaby, strolling amidst light drizzling along the lakes and the fog-wrapped hills may transport one to an idyllic plane where everything appears beautiful, pure and pristine. Another beauty that is lurking in this lake town is the colonial vestiges still visible. Once the summer capital of the United Provinces, it still boasts of its cluster of beautiful and sprawling bungalows and villas where the summer-scorched and nostalgic

Britishers would come and spend days in quaintness. The Naini Lake, the crescent-shaped, natural, freshwater body appears as the prima donna of this hill station. Indulging in a boat ride on this placid, sapphire-hued lake surrounded by vibrant greenery significantly adds to its attraction. And in the monsoon months, the charm of the lake and the delight of boatrips are said to reach their acme. No wonder, tourists who love to spend alone time away from noise and clamour with themselves or with their near ones through this iconic hill station in the monsoon time when the sunshine exhilarates, rain refreshes and wind resuscitates. In the three monsoon months, the tourist footfall drops significantly, but this deepens the serenity of the place.

Importantly, hotels based in Nainital give huge discounts to the tourists in the monsoon months. Besides, they enjoy numerous facilities during their stay in monsoon which are not available for the summer-time tourists because of the rush and push.



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