

OPINION 6
INDIA AND BANGLADESH:
A TALE OF TWO BOOKS

WORLD 8
TRUMP FIRST EX-PREZ
CONVICTED OF FELONY

MONEY 10
INDIA'S GDP EXPANDS 7.8 PER CENT
IN Q4, 8.2 PER CENT IN FY24

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Torrid summer kills 71, mostly in Bihar

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Severe heatwave sweeping Northwest and Central India is increasingly becoming a public health crisis in India with around 71 people succumbing to heat-related illness especially sunstroke since March 1 till date even as Uttarakhand and Jammu region reported forest fires adding complexity to the ongoing situation on Friday. The reports of deaths and illness cases due to heatwaves continue to surface every day. Tragically, on Friday, as several pockets of Northwest and Central India turned into a baking pan with temperatures soaring as high as 45 degrees Celsius, it proved fatal particularly to the polling personnel. The Jammu and Kashmir Disaster Management Authority (JKDMA) which is mobilising resources, including drones, to combat the fires has issued an extreme forest fire risk warning for the coming week as temperatures soar and the dry conditions persist. Fourteen people, including 10 polling personnel lost their lives to heatwave in the last 24 hours in Bihar alone, while four persons succumbed to sunstroke in Jharkhand. In the eastern State 1,326 people were hospitalised due to the health risks posed by the intense heatwave. Uttar Pradesh's authorities also reported the death of 13 poll



Smoke rises from a forest fire in Uttarkashi district

File Photo: PTI

personnel in poll-bound Mirzapur district following fever, high BP. However, Principal of Maa Vindhyavasini Autonomous State Medical College Raj Bahadur Kamal said the exact reason is yet to be ascertained. The deceased include seven Home Guard jawans, three sanitation workers, one clerk posted at the Chief Medical Officer's office, one chakbandi adhikaari (consolidation officer), and one peon in the Home Guard

team, according to PTI reports. Meanwhile, the situation in Uttarakhand too is alarming as it has started battling another series of forest fires after a brief lull, affecting over 1,300 hectares and causing significant environmental damage. Since November 2023, there have been 1,167 forest fire incidents in the State, claiming six lives and injuring five people, as per the officials. On Thursday, at least 24

people died of suspected heatstroke in India's eastern States of Bihar and Odisha, and the heatwave in the region is expected to continue until Saturday, authorities said. Delhi, which recorded a temperature of 45.4 degrees Celsius on Friday afternoon, reported its first heat-related death this week and is also facing an acute water shortage. Experts, however, cautioned that death and heat-related illness data might represent

only a fraction of the actual impact, highlighting the severe health consequences of humid heat in Northwest and Central regions. As the intense heatwave wreaks havoc in Bihar, where temperatures soared to 47.1 degrees Celsius in Buxar, the State Government has shut down schools and educational institutions until June 8 and has initiated ex-gratia payments to the families of the deceased. **Continued on Page 2**

Remal aftermath wreaks havoc in Assam, Manipur

PNS ■ IMPHAL/NEW DELHI

About four lakh people have been affected in the northeastern States of Assam and Manipur, which have been hit by heavy rain and thunderstorms triggered by Cyclone Remal in the last few days. A total of 1,88,143 people have been affected by floods in Manipur following incessant rainfall in the aftermath of Cyclone Remal, a State Minister said on Thursday. It has also damaged at least 24,265 houses in the last few days, he said. The Central Water Commission said six rivers in Assam and Manipur, including Brahmaputra, and Barak, are experiencing severe flooding, putting numerous districts in the region at risk. Altogether 18,103 people have been evacuated and 56 relief camps were set up, Manipur Minister for Water Resources and Relief & Disaster Management Awangbou Newmai said. Around 401 hectares of crop have been affected, too, he said. Relief materials have been distributed to Imphal East, Imphal West, Bisnupur, Noney, Churanchanpur, Senapati and Kakching, the Minister said. **Continued on Page 2**



Residents fill water from a tanker amid water crisis at the Vivekanand Camp in Chanakyapuri area of New Delhi on Friday

PTI

Delhi moves SC for more water from neighbours

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Amid acute shortage of water in the national Capital, the Arvind Kejriwal-led AAP Government approached the Supreme Court on Friday, seeking its intervention to direct neighbouring States, including Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, to immediately release the additional raw water provided by the Himachal Pradesh to Delhi through the Wazirabad Barrage, to enable urgent mitigation and resolution of the ongoing water and sanitation crisis here. The plea, filed by Delhi's Water Minister Atishi, has made the Centre, BJP-governed Haryana and Congress-ruled Himachal Pradesh parties to the petition and said access to water is essential for survival and one of the basic human rights. **Continued on Page 2**

The move comes as Delhi grapples with a severe water crisis, which has affected millions of residents. The BJP lambasted the Kejriwal Government, terming it mismanagement and an artificial water crisis created by the Kejriwal Government while Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal made an appeal to the BJP-led Governments in Haryana and Uttar Pradesh to provide water relief to Delhi amidst the ongoing heatwave. Highlighting the severe water demand caused by the relentless heat, Kejriwal called for a united effort, urging political collaboration over conflict while criticising the Delhi government, Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva said water crisis in Delhi is a result of mismanagement of Kejriwal. **Continued on Page 2**

One last battle today for taking the crown

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Voting across the 57 parliamentary constituencies in seven States and Union Territory of Chandigarh in the seventh and last round of the Lok Sabha elections will be held on Saturday including Varanasi, from where Prime Minister Narendra Modi is seeking a third consecutive term. Saturday's voting will mark the end to the marathon polling process that began on April 19 and has already covered 486 Lok Sabha seats in 28 States and Union Territories. The Assemblies of Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim also went to polls. Counting of votes will be taken up on June 4. The Election Commission also called upon voters to turn out in large numbers and vote with responsibility and pride. According to the poll body, over 10.06 crore eligible voters, including nearly 5.24 crore men, 4.82 crore women and 3,574 third gender electors are eligible to vote in this phase. Polling for the remaining 42 Assembly constituencies of Odisha and bypolls to six Assembly seats in Himachal

STARS IN FRAY

CONSTITUENCY	CANDIDATE	PARTY
Varanasi	Narendra Modi	BJP
	Ajay Rai	Congress
Gorakhpur	Ravi Kishan	BJP
	Kajal Nishad	SP
Hamirpur	Anurag Thakur	BJP
	Satpal Singh Raizada	Congress
Mandi	Kangana Ranaut	BJP
	Vikramaditya Singh	Congress
Pataliputra	Ram Kripal Yadav	BJP
	Misa Bharti	RJD
Patna	Ravi Shankar Prasad	BJP
Sahib Ghazipur	Anshul Avijit	Congress
	Paras Nath Rai	BJP
Jalandhar	Afzal Ansari	SP
	Charanjit Singh Channi	Congress
Bhatinda	Pawan Kumar Tin	AAP
	Parampal Kaur Sidhu	BJP
Godda	Jeet Mohinder Singh Sidhu	Congress
	Harsimrat Kaur Badal	Shiromani Akali Dal
Diamond Harbour	Nishkant Dubey	BJP
	Pradeep Yadav	Congress
	Abhijit Das	BJP
	Abhishek Banerjee	TMC

Pradesh will also take place simultaneously. The 75-day campaigning for the seven-phased Lok Sabha elections — the longest in Indian election history after the 1951-52 polls — ended on a combative note with the ruling BJP-led NDA and Opposition INDIA Bloc engaging in a bitter war of words with each of the seven phases of polling. Besides Prime Minister Narendra Modi (Varanasi, UP), prominent candidates from the BJP are Union Minister Anurag Thakur (Hamirpur, Himachal Pradesh), Ravi Shankar Prasad (Patna Sahib, Bihar) and Kangana Ranaut (Mandi, Himachal Pradesh); while from the Congress is Manish Tewari (Chandigarh), Vikramaditya Singh (Mandi) and Ajay Rai (Varanasi). The campaigning for the last phase which ended Thursday evening saw BJP leaders led by Modi accusing the Congress of being corrupt, anti-Hindu and engaging in loot, appeasement and dynastic politics. The Opposition parties have been claiming that the BJP is anti-farmer, anti-youth and will change and scrap the Constitution if they win the elections. The BJP based their campaign on

'Modi ki Guarantees' and the Prime Minister's personality, the Congress was betting on 'Nayab Patra' that talked about five 'nyays' and 25 guarantees targeting youth, farmers, workers and women. The Congress and its alliance campaign centred around "saving" the Constitution and the country's democracy while claiming that the BJP's '400 paar' target was meant to get the mandate for rewriting the Constitution and end the quota regime. Modi and the BJP countered the Opposition onslaught with the Prime Minister first seeking to link the Congress manifesto with the pre-partition Muslim League, redistribution of wealth. In the second phase of election, Modi sought to target Congress saying it was going to snatch 'mangalsutra' of women, to claim that Congress is going to redistribute wealth to Muslims. For Rahul Gandhi, a copy of the Constitution, which he displayed at rallies, was a constant companion, while Mallikarjun Kharge warned people that if Modi is reelected, then there will be no more elections. Opposition leaders claimed that their campaign had a resonance, especially among Dalits, tribals and OBCs. **Continued on Page 2**



TRANSCENDENTAL MEDITATION



Prime Minister Narendra Modi meditates at the Vivekananda Rock Memorial, in Kanniyakumari, on Friday

PTI

LONG ARM OF THE LAW

Women cops 'greet' Prajwal upon return

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ BENGALURU/NEW DELHI

Suspended JD(S) MP Prajwal Revanna, facing sexual abuse allegations, was arrested on Friday upon his return from Germany, a month after he left the country in the wake of explicit videos of his alleged actions doing the rounds in Karnataka's Hassan. In a clear messaging by the SIT probing the allegations, a team of women police personnel 'welcomed' Prajwal upon his arrival here, as they were deputed to execute a warrant and take him to the CID office for interrogation. After evading summons and staying out of the country for a little over a month, the 33-year-old grandson of JD(S) supremo and former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda landed at Bengaluru past midnight from Germany's Munich, only to be arrested by the Special Investigation Team (SIT) minutes later and whisked away for questioning. **Continued on Page 2**

Denied court relief, Kejriwal is 'proud of going to jail'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With only two days left for his interim bail to end, AAP convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Friday said he will surrender before the police at Tihar Jail on Sunday. The AAP chief said he feels "proud" that he is going to jail to "save the country from dictatorship". "I will surrender the day after tomorrow. I will leave my house at around 3:00 pm to surrender. It is possible that this time they will torture me more, but I will not bow down", Kejriwal said. AAP convener is currently out on interim bail, claiming his body has lately shown symptoms of a serious disease. In an emotional video message to the people of Delhi on Friday, Kejriwal, who is supposed to surrender at Tihar Jail on Sunday, June 2, asserted that the work being done in Delhi by his Government will not stop. **Continued on Page 2**



Air India fliers gasp for air, literally!

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Amid the severe heatwave in Delhi, an Air India flight to San Francisco from the Indira Gandhi International (IGI) airport was delayed for over 24 hours due to multiple reasons after passengers were allegedly made to board the flight and sit without any air conditioning, causing several fliers to faint. This was the second incident in less than a week when an Air India flight suffered an inordinate delay while passengers were made to wait without proper assistance. Taking note of the incident, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) issued a show cause notice to Air India for inordinate delay of at least two international flights and failure to take due care of passengers. The DGCA mentioned about the inordinate delay of two international flights — AI



183 from Delhi to San Francisco on May 30 and AI 179 from Mumbai to San Francisco on May 24. Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia took cognisance of the flight delays and inconvenience caused to passengers, following which the DGCA issued the show cause notice. AI 183, which was to depart from Delhi at 15:30 IST on

appear exhausted. One passenger shared their experience, saying, "People were made to board the plane and sit without AC. Then I was deplaned and not allowed to enter the terminal because immigration was done." While sharing the ordeal on social media platform X, journalist Shweta Punj claimed that the passengers were made to board the AI183 New Delhi- San Francisco Air India flight and sit without air-conditioning. The airline deplaned the passengers after some fliers fainted on the flight at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport. "If there is a privatisation story that has failed it is @airindia @DGCAIndia AI 183 flight has been delayed for over 8 hours, passengers were made to board the plane without air conditioning, and then deplaned after some people fainted in the flight.

This is inhuman @JM_Scindia," she said. However, the airline responded to the passenger, regretting the inconvenience and said it's working to provide necessary assistance to the passengers. "Dear Punj, we truly regret to note the disruptions. Please be rest assured that our team is actively working to address the delay and appreciate your ongoing support and understanding. We are also alerting our team to provide necessary assistance to the passengers," Air India said. Another user, Abhishek Sharma (@39Abhishek) urged the airline for swift action and drew its attention to let his parents and "numerous other parents" stranded at the boarding area to go home. However, the airline official claimed that passengers were offered the options of full refund, complimentary rescheduling and hotel accommodation. **Continued on Page 2**

Many hurt in bombing by TMC goons in WB

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■
BHANGAR/JADAVPUR

A new 'Shahjahan Sheikh' threatened to take control of large swathes of Trinamool Congress dominated parliamentary constituencies hours before the seventh phase of polling even as alleged goons of party strongman and MLA Shaikat Molla spread terror in more than one Assembly segments, including Bhangar area of Jadavpur constituency, that saw massive blood spilling several deaths during last year's panchayat elections.

At least 20 people were injured and many of them had to be hospitalised as TMC goons resorted to night long bombing and attacks on members of Indian Secular Front, sources said. "We have seen armed men moving around the area



threatening voters and polling agents," said a local BJP leader requesting anonymity. "Our polling agents have been

asked not to go to the booths ... same in the case of ISF," he said.

reportedly rushed to the area but was refused entry by the police sources said adding Central forces and police that

were rushed to the area had recovered several exploded country made bombs.

Meanwhile the Election Commission of India in Friday issued orders restricting movement of Molla sources said adding he had been asked not to venture out of Canning Assembly area where he lives. Reports of TMC motorbike brigades roaming all about Basirhat and Barasat constituencies also came in, sources said the goons were asking people not to step out of their houses. Incidents of violence were also from areas like Ganguly Bagan, Ramgarh and other places, sources said. "We have requested the ECI to take steps but if things do not improve then the people will resist and the authorities will have to take responsibility," CPI(M)'s Meenakshi Mukherjee said.

Karnataka and Kerala at war on black magic and animal sacrifice

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

An inter-State "war" has erupted between Kerala and Karnataka over animal sacrifice and sorcery. Karnataka strongman and deputy chief minister D K Shivakumar said on Friday that animal sacrifice and "black magic" were held in temples in northern Kerala with the intention of bringing down the Congress Government led by D Siddarmaiah. "This is being done against me and the Chief Minister. A 'Shatru Bhairavi Yagya' (fire sacrifice) is being carried out near Raja Rajeshwari Temple in Kannur district in Kerala to eliminate enemies. 'Panchabali' (five sacrificial items) is being offered. A nice red goat, 21 buffaloes, three black sheep and five pigs" Shivakumar told the

media. But the supreme Court by an order has banned the practice of animal sacrifice in 1960s itself. This is the first time in post-independent India a State's top political leader charges another State with such an allegation. The Congress leader also said that he was getting up to date information from people taking part in these rituals. Shivakumar also disclosed that the rituals and sacrifices were being performed by political leaders from Karnataka itself. He showed the sacred thread tied on his right hand and said that it has been done to ward off the evil effects of these animal sacrifices and black magic. Interestingly, the temple administration council members of Raja Rajeshwari Temple denied that the temple premises were being used to conduct

animal sacrifice and sorcery. "Such rituals are never held in any of the temples in Kannur district. Raja Rajeswari Temple, where the presiding deity is Lord Shiva is a Maha Kshethram and reports about such rituals are non-sense," said Akkeeraman Kalidasa Bhattathiri, one of the senior priests and president of the Kerala Yoga Kshema Sabha, an organization of professional priests. Bhattathiri said this was an attempt to discredit the Sanatan Dharm. R Bindu, CPI(M) leader and Kerala Minister for higher education, who has no love lost for temples and Hindu deities, told reporters that Shivakumar was bluffing. "There is no iota of truth in Shivakumar's allegations," said Bindu, spouse of CPI(M) polit bureau member Vijayaraghavan.

Mortal remains of 22 pilgrims killed in fatal accident in Jammu to be dispatched today

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
JAMMU

The mortal remains of the 22 pilgrims killed in the fatal accident near Tungi Morh in the Akhnoor subdivision of Jammu on Thursday will be dispatched to their native places on Saturday after completing necessary medico-legal formalities. Several close relatives of the pilgrims also arrived here in Jammu from Aligarh and Hathras to look after their loved ones admitted to the Government Medical College hospital, Jammu. 72 pilgrims injured in the accident were undergoing treatment in the hospital. Meanwhile, the UT administration on Friday suspended six transport department employees for alleged dereliction of duty. The tragic incident occurred on Thursday when the bus carrying 94 devotees towards the Shiv Khori shrine in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district skidded off the Jammu-Poonch highway and



plunged into a 150-foot gorge. The driver lost control of the vehicle while negotiating a blind curve at the Tungi morh in the Chowki Chora area. Transport Department Secretary Niraj Kumar ordered the suspensions and a probe after Principal Secretary of the Home Department Chandraker Bharti chaired a high-level meeting. "Pending enquiry into the conduct and dereliction of duties, officials posted in the Regional Transport Office in

Kathua (Lakhanpur) are placed under suspension with immediate effect and are attached in the office of Transport Commissioner, Jammu," Kumar said in an order. The suspended officials are Ranjeev Bhasin (motor vehicle inspector), Sumit Magotra (junior assistant) and multi-tasking staff (MTS) members Ashwani Kumar, Aman Kumar, Keshav Singh and Rakesh Kumar. An inquiry into the conduct

and performance of the suspended officials will be led by Additional Secretary (Technical) Paramvir Singh, who will submit a report with recommendations within a week, Kumar said. The Jammu district magistrate has already initiated a magisterial inquiry into the incident and the report is expected within seven days. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Thursday announced Rs 2 lakh ex-gratia/relief in favour of the kin of each deceased person and Rs 50,000 for those injured. Expressing shock over the Akhnoor bus accident Modi said, "Anguished by the loss of lives due to a bus mishap in Akhnoor. My thoughts are with those who have lost their loved ones. I pray that the injured recover soon." Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha has also announced an ex-gratia of Rs 5 lakhs in favour of the next of kin of each deceased and Rs 50,000 for those injured in the tragic bus accident in Akhnoor.

Yogi campaigned tirelessly for Modi, Rajnath, others

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

With the slogan 'Abki Baar 400 Paar, 80 Banega Iska Adhaar', Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath significantly contributed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's potential third term in office. The state is set to send a strong contingent of parliamentarians to Delhi, with the chief minister putting in considerable effort to ensure their success. He has campaigned extensively, urging voters to re-elect Prime Minister Modi and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, along with 12 other Central ministers from Uttar Pradesh. He also supported four state ministers in their bid to secure seats in the Lok Sabha, ensuring a smooth path for their transition to Delhi. Apart from this, Chief Minister Yogi also held rallies, roadshows and public meetings for Rajya Sabha MPs, eight MLAs of BJP and allied parties and three legislative council members. The 2024 Lok Sabha elections have eight MLAs from Uttar Pradesh contesting the polls under the National Democratic Alliance banner. Chief Minister



Yogi has held numerous rallies in support of these candidates. Minister in Yogi government and Mainpuri MLA Jaiveer Singh is contesting from Mainpuri Lok Sabha seat, while minister and Khairi MLA Anoop Pradhan Valmiki has been fielded from Hathras Lok Sabha constituency. Other NDA candidates include Phulpur MLA Praveen Patel from Phulpur Lok Sabha seat, Ghaziabad MLA Atul Garg from Ghaziabad, NISHAD Party MLA Vinod Kumar Bind from Bhadoli, Nehtaur MLA Om Kumar from Nagina, Meerapur MLA Chandan Chauhan (RLD) from Bijnor

and Chhanbey MLA Rinki Kol (Apna Dal-S) from Robertsganj. Four ministers of the Yogi government are also contesting the Lok Sabha elections. Of these, Jitin Prasada has been fielded from Pilibhit, Jaiveer Singh from Mainpuri, Anoop Pradhan from Hathras and Dinesh Pratap Singh from Rae Bareilly. Notably, Jaiveer Singh and Anoop Pradhan are members of the UP Legislative Assembly, while Dinesh Pratap Singh and Jitin Prasada are members of the UP Legislative Council. Apart from these two, the Bharatiya Janata Party has field-

ed MLC Saket Mishra as its candidate from the Shrawasti Lok Sabha constituency. On the other hand, Rajya Sabha member Neeraj Shekhar has been fielded as BJP candidate from the Ballia Lok Sabha seat this time. Voting will take place in Ballia in the seventh phase. As the head of UP, Chief Minister Yogi has campaigned tirelessly for these candidates. The BJP has fielded Prime Minister Narendra Modi from Varanasi and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh from Lucknow. Chief Minister Yogi organised several rallies, conferences and public meetings to support these leaders. Other Central ministers in the fray from Uttar Pradesh include Smriti Irani from Amethi, Bhanu Pratap Singh Verma from Jalaun, Professor SP Singh Baghel from Agra, Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary from Maharajganj, Dr Mahendra Nath Pandey from Chandauli, Anupriya Patel from Mirzapur, Sanjeev Balyan from Muzaffarnagar, Ajay Mishra Teni from Lakhimpur Khari, Kausal Kishore from Mohanlalganj and Sadhvi Niranjani Jyoti from Fatehpur

One last battle today for taking the...

From Page 1

Modi notched up a total of 206 public-outreach programmes, including rallies and roadshows, since the EC announced the poll schedule on March 16. The Prime Minister surpassed his nearly-145 public engagements on the stump during the 2019 polls by a big margin. The campaign period this time was 76 days, compared to the 68 days in the polls held five years ago. Congress president Kharge alleged that Modi has mentioned his own name 758 times, spoke about mandir 421 times and mentioned Muslim, Pakistan and minorities 224 times but didn't speak about inflation and unemployment even once in the last fifteen days. On Thursday evening, Modi headed to Kanyakumari where he is meditating till June 1 at the site associated

with Swami Vivekananda. Modi had 206 public outreach programmes, including rallies and roadshows, since the Election Commission announced the Lok Sabha election schedule on March 16. According to EC guidelines, television channels and news outlets will be able to run exit poll data and its results on June 1 after 6.30 pm. Polling is scheduled in all 13 seats of Punjab and four of Himachal Pradesh, 13 constituencies in Uttar Pradesh, nine in West Bengal, eight in Bihar, six in Odisha and three seats in Jharkhand besides Chandigarh. Polling for the remaining 42 Assembly constituencies of Odisha and bypolls to six Assembly seats in Himachal Pradesh will also take place simultaneously.

Remal aftermath wrecks...

From Page 1

Newmai said three persons have died and nine people suffered injuries, while one is missing due to the floods that hit the state on May 29. Chief Minister N Biren Singh, in a social media post said breach of river embankments occurred at 18 spots of which 17 have been sealed. In view of severe flooding caused by breaches in embankments along river banks, the government on Thursday declared a two-day public holiday for all state offices until May 31 and citizens have been urged to stay indoors unless faced with an emergency, according to an official notification.

Women cops 'greet'...

From Page 1

The NDA Lok Sabha candidate from Hassan, facing allegations of sexually abusing several women, was arrested after completing the due process, and further legal procedures will follow, Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara said. Prajwal's advocate said the former was extending full cooperation to the SIT probe and cautioned against any media trial in the case. During the procedure of executing the arrest warrant, he was flanked by the women police personnel who were led by two IPS officers, Suman D Pennekar and Seema Latkar. He was then taken in a jeep in which only women police were present. They took him to the CID office. The MP was later taken for medical examination under tight

security. The SIT is also contemplating a potency test on Prajwal. A potency test is done to ascertain if a rape accused is capable of committing sexual assault on victims. Meanwhile, Prajwal's advocate, Arun G, too met him. "I went to speak to him. He has told the media that he has come forward to cooperate with the investigation. So he has requested that there be no media trial. Let there be no negative campaign unnecessarily," Arun said. Deve Gowda had recently issued a 'stern warning' to Prajwal, asking him to return to the country and face probe into the sexual abuse allegations, while asserting there will be no interference from him or other family members into the enquiry.

Denied court relief...

From Page 1

"We are all fighting dictatorship together. If something happens to me to save the country, if I even lose my life, do not be sad," said Kejriwal who was arrested in Delhi excise policy case. He assured the Delhiites that all facilities available to them, including 24-hour free electricity, treatment, bus ride for women will continue. "We are all fighting dictatorship together. If something happens to me to save the country, if I even lose my life, then do not be sad," Kejriwal said. He said the Supreme Court had given me 21 days to campaign for the elections. "Tomorrow 21 days are getting over and I have to surrender the day after tomorrow. I will go back to Tihar Jail the day after tomorrow. I don't know how many days these people will keep me in jail this time. But my spirits are high. I am proud that I am going to jail to save the country from dictatorship. They tried to break me in many ways, tried to bow me down, tried to silence me. But they did not succeed," he said.

The AAP supremo said when he was in jail they tortured me in many ways. "They stopped my medicines. I have been a serious diabetic for 20 years. For the last 10 years I have been getting insulin injections daily. I get injections in my stomach four times every day. In jail, they stopped my insulin injections for many days and my sugar reached 300, 325 (mg/dL). If the sugar remains so high for so many days, then the kidney and liver get damaged. I don't know what these people wanted, why did they do this," he said. Mentioning about the unexplained weight loss during his incarceration, the AAP convener said during his 50 days stay in jail he lost 6 kilogram of weight. "When I went to jail, my weight was 70 kilogram. Today it is 64 kilogram. Even after being released from jail, my weight is not increasing. Doctors are saying this can also be a sign of some major disease in the body. Many tests need to be done, ketone level in my urine has also increased a lot," he said. Assuring the people of Delhi that all the facilities available to them will continue even in his absence,

Kejriwal said, "You take care of yourself, I worry a lot about you in jail. If you are happy, then your Kejriwal will also be happy. I will not be among you, of course, but you don't worry, all your work will continue. Wherever I am, inside or outside the jail, I will not let the work of Delhi stop. Your free electricity, Mohalla clinics, hospitals, free medicines, treatment, free bus travel for women, 24 hours electricity and all other works will continue. And after returning, I will also start giving Rs 1,000 every month to every mother and sister," he said. Making an impassioned appeal to the Delhiites who stood by him in difficult times to look after his aged and ailing parents, the AAP national convener said, "I have always fulfilled my duty as a son of your family. Today I want to ask something from you for my family. My parents are very old, my mother is very ill and I worry a lot about them in jail. Take care of my parents after I am gone, pray for them, pray to God. Prayers have great power. If you pray for my mother daily, she will definitely remain healthy," he said.

Torrid summer kills 71...

From Page 1

Till mid-May, the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) had reported 32 confirmed and 28 suspected heatstroke deaths, emphasising the severe health risks posed by the extreme temperatures. On May 22, two individuals succumbed to suspected heatstroke in Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan's Kota, adding to the staggering 16,344 suspected heat stroke cases reported since March 1, with 486 cases documented on that single day. In the absence of correct data, the number of deaths and cases of illness due to the extreme heat events are

not known. For instance, the Union Ministry of Earth Sciences has reported 6,751 heatwave deaths between 2009 and 2022. In contrast, the NDMA recorded 11,090 deaths in the same period. India has been experiencing a blisteringly hot summer, and a part of Delhi recorded the country's highest ever temperature at 52.9 degrees Celsius this week, though that may be revised with the weather department checking the sensors of the weather station that registered the reading. While temperatures in Northwestern and Central India are expected to fall in the coming days, the prevailing heatwave over

East India is likely to continue for two days, said the India Meteorological Department (IMD). The deaths of 10 people were also reported in the Government hospital in Odisha's Rourkela region on the same day, authorities said, prompting the State Government to suggest residents against outdoor activities between 11 am and 3 pm when temperatures peak. In Rajasthan, the Government on Thursday announced that five people had died from heatstroke and added that reports about a higher toll being circulated in the media were "beyond facts".

Delhi moves SC for more water from...

From Page 1

BJP candidate from New Delhi Lok Sabha seat, Bansuri Swaraj, also said the AAP Government has created an artificial water crisis. Delhi Water Minister Atishi has also requested the Centre to ensure a provision for the release of spare water from either Uttar Pradesh or Haryana to address the national Capital's unprecedented water crisis. In a letter to Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Atishi said there has been a drastic dip in the water level at the Wazirabad barrage during the last few days as Haryana is not

releasing the required quantity in the Yamuna. The water crisis in Delhi comes at a time when maximum temperature in the national Capital is inching close to the 50 degrees Celsius mark. The minimum temperature is nearly 30 degrees Celsius, 2.8 degrees above normal. "Access to water is one of the basic human rights of an individual. Not only is water essential for sustenance, but access to water also forms an essential component of the guarantee of dignity and a quality of life guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution. The current water crisis, which may only get worse given peak summers and ongoing water shortage, violates the right to a dignified and quality life of the people of the NCT of Delhi, who are unable to

access even adequate clean drinking water," the Delhi Government said in its petition before the Supreme Court. Atishi in her plea, contending that the filing of "this petition has been necessitated by an acute heatwave and an issuance of a red alert in the NCT, with temperatures soaring to a record-breaking high of 52.9 degrees Celsius." The plea reads that the Petitioner (Delhi) Government has already devised a solution to meet the increased demand for water in the national capital - the State of Himachal Pradesh, Respondent No. 2, has agreed to share its surplus water with Delhi, as per a pre-existing MOU signed in 2019. It further stated that since Himachal Pradesh does share a physical boundary with Delhi, this water needs to be

released to the national Capital through the Wazirabad barrage, which is located in the State of Haryana, Respondent No.1. Therefore, Respondent No.1's facilitation and cooperation, which is not being provided as on date, is imperative. According to DJB data, there has been a constant decline in water supply over the past week, with the supply levels logged at 984mgd on May 23, 983.2mgd on May 24, 980.73mgd on May 25, 969.32mgd on May 26 and 966.16mgd on May 27, all below the 1,000mgd supply mark. The Wazirabad Barrage in north Delhi forms the primary holding area where raw water is lifted for the Wazirabad and Chandrawal treatment plants, but dwindling water levels have impacted areas that feed these plants.

Air...

From Page 1

"Repeated incidences of passengers being put to discomfort by M/s Air India in violation of various DGCA CAR (Civil Aviation Requirements) provisions have come to notice," the DGCA said in a statement on Friday. "It has come to the notice of DGCA that flight AI-179 dated 24.05.2024 and flight AI-183 dated 30.05.2024 were inordinately delayed and passengers were put to discomfort due to insufficient cooling in the cabin. Further, repeated incidents of passengers being put to discomfort by M/s Air India in violation of various DGCA CAR provisions have come to notice," the DGCA notice read.

Temperature hovers around 50 degrees in Capital

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The national Capital witnessed temperatures soaring to 50 degrees Celsius for the sixth continuous day on Friday as Mungeshpur area, which has recorded 53 degrees Celsius on Thursday, recorded a roasting temperature of 49.6 degrees Celsius.

In the areas in the northwest border of Delhi like Mungeshpur, Narela and Najafgarh, temperature hovered around 50 degrees Celsius for about a week. In Narela, the maximum temperature recorded was 49.4 degrees Celsius, while in Najafgarh it was 49.2 degrees Celsius.

Albeit, bringing respite to the heat-stricken public of Delhi, reeling under temperature soaring more than 45 degrees Celsius consistently and prevailing heatwave conditions for the past few days, light rain and thunderstorm have been forecast on Friday for the city. While, the maximum temperature recorded at the



Safdurjung station, considered as a parameter for the whole of Delhi, is 45.8 degrees Celsius, 6 degrees above the normal, the minimum temperature settled at 27 degrees Celsius according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD). Humidity was recorded at 23 per cent at 6:30 pm. The IMD predicted a partly cloudy sky with heat wave to severe heat wave conditions with the possibility of a dust storm. There is a possibility of thunderstorms with very light rain drizzle accompanied with gusty winds with speeds of 25

to 35 kmph. Amid the roasting temperature in the national capital, Delhiites have been grappling with issues of water shortage and power cuts due to unprecedented summer heat with temperatures hovering around the 50 degrees Celsius mark in parts of the city. Residents have been facing such water crises across various parts of the national capital, including Chanakyapuri's Sanjay Camp area and East Delhi's Geeta Colony. Videos on social media show desperate citizens rushing at the sight of tankers to fetch

water for their survival. Another one showed people lining up outside the Delhi Jal Board (DJB)'s water emergency counter to book tankers. People living in the New Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC) area, Patel Nagar, North and South Delhi, including areas like Mehrauli and Chattarpur, are also facing similar issues. Upon the issue of water shortage, both the ruling AAP led Delhi government and BJP are face to face with the former approaching the Supreme Court over the alleged non release of Delhi's water share by Haryana. The BJP, in turn, are blaming Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal for creating this crisis by doing corruption. Meanwhile, the Delhi University on Thursday said 25 water coolers will be installed at various spots on the premises to address the ongoing water crisis on the campus. The decision was taken in a meeting of Delhi University Students' Union (DUSU) representatives

and DU officials, according to a statement. A student delegation led by DUSU Secretary Aparajita met Vice Chancellor Yogesh Singh to present a memorandum detailing various campus-related demands. The memorandum highlighted the urgent need for clean and cold drinking water, particularly in the Faculty of Arts, Central Library, and North Campus hostels. Recognising the severity of the ongoing heat wave in the national capital, Singh instructed the installation of 25 water coolers across the campus. He also assured the student delegation that the university would take immediate and further necessary steps to improve campus facilities. Additionally, in a statement, the JNUSU announced that the Jawaharlal Nehru University can also set up water collection centres and check dams within the campus in view of students' long standing demand to address the issue of water scarcity at the university.

LG Saxena criticises AAP Government over water crisis

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena on Friday launched a scathing attack against the AAP led Delhi Government over the water crisis, while calling the attitude of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and his Government 'irresponsible'. In a letter, he said, "For the last few days, Delhi Government's extremely irresponsible attitude regarding water has been seen in Delhi. Today, women, children, old and young people are seen running behind tankers for a bucket of water, risking their lives. Probably no one would have imagined that such heart-rending scenes would be seen in the country's capital. But, the government is blaming other states for its failures. The promise of 24-hour water supply in Delhi by the Chief Minister has proved to be a hoax till now." While claiming that Haryana



and Uttar Pradesh are continuously supplying their allotted quota of water to Delhi, he claimed, "Despite this, the biggest reason for the terrible shortage of water in Delhi today is that 54 per cent of the water being produced has no accounting. 40 per cent of the water is wasted during supply due to old and dilapidated pipelines. Despite thousands of crores of rupees being spent by the Delhi government in the last ten years, neither the old pipelines could be repaired or replaced, nor enough new pipelines laid. The worst part is that this

water is stolen and sold to the poor people by the tanker mafia. Highlighting the disparity between the rich and the poor, he said, "It is unfortunate that while on one hand, 550 litres of water is being supplied per person on an average in the rich areas of Delhi, only 15 litres of water is supplied per person on an average in the villages and slums." He further stated, "I have been told that even today, except Wazirabad, all the water treatment plants in Delhi are producing more water than their capacity. The Wazirabad treatment plant is not able to work to its full capacity because the reservoir of the barrage, where the water coming from Haryana is stored, is almost completely filled with silt. Due to this, the capacity of this reservoir, which used to be 250 million gallons, has reduced to only 16 million gallons."

Atishi urges Centre to ensure release of water from UP, Haryana to overcome crisis

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Senior AAP leader and Delhi Water Minister Atishi has urged the BJP led Central Government to ensure a provision for the release of spare water from either Uttar Pradesh or Haryana to address the national capital's "unprecedented water crisis".

In a letter to Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat on Thursday, she claimed, "There has been a drastic dip in the water level at the Wazirabad barrage during the last few days as Haryana is not releasing the required quantity in the Yamuna." She added that this has resulted in a massive water crisis in the national capital while highlighting that the temperature in Delhi has touched almost 50 degrees Celsius. "This has further intensified the demand for water, putting additional burden on an already-strained demand-supply chain of



potable drinking water in Delhi," she said. Atishi visited the Wazirabad barrage on Thursday and found that the water level at the pond was 670.3 feet against a normal of 674.50 feet. Mentioning that this reduction has a serious impact on the water production capacity of water treatment plants in Delhi, she said, "I am writing this letter to bring to your kind notice the unprecedented water crisis situation that the national capital of Delhi is facing. As you are aware, Delhi is heavily dependent on water from the Yamuna river to meet its

day-to-day demand." She stated that if adequate water is not released by Haryana, Delhi's water treatment plants will not be able to optimally function. "And if the water treatment plants do not function optimally, then Delhi will not be able to meet its demand-supply gap. This will have a serious and direct implication on the people living in the national capital. I have already written to Hon'ble Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini ji to appraise him of the issue. However, we are yet to receive a response from his office," she said. Highlighting that people from all parts of the country migrate to the national capital in search of a better future, she said, "It is our collective responsibility as a nation to ensure that the people of Delhi get the water they need." Further, she stated, "I am writing to request you to ensure that some provision of water is made for NCT of

Delhi, be it from Haryana or Uttar Pradesh or any other state that may be able to spare water, so that the people of Delhi don't suffer." "The Delhi government and its citizens will be forever grateful to you if you could kindly intervene and help us solve this crisis. It is imperative that the state of Haryana must immediately release Delhi's rightful share of water into the Yamuna river to bring the waters to the normal level of 674.5 feet," she added. Atishi also said the Delhi government is making all possible efforts to encourage people to use water wisely. "A multi-departmental approach is being undertaken to ensure that there is no water wastage. We have formed on-ground teams to take immediate action against those who are found to waste water. However, these standalone steps will not be sufficient to curtail water scarcity in the national capital," Atishi added.

BJP leaders hold protest march over water crisis

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi BJP leaders and workers held a protest march on Friday from Shahidi Park in the central part of the city towards the secretariat over the water crisis in the national capital, demanding resignation from the Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Delhi Water Minister Atishi. Led by Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva, the protesters carried placards and raised slogans against Kejriwal. Due to imposition of Section 144, Sachdeva and about 100 workers were taken to IP Estate Police Station from where they were released after some time after giving warning. Sachdeva said that Delhi's water crisis is not natural and has arisen due to the corruption and inaction of Kejriwal. "If the people of Delhi are yearning for every drop of water today, then the only person responsible for it is Arvind Kejriwal. After 2014, CLC was constructed by the Haryana government whose main objective was to stop the wastage of water and water should reach the



people through a canal and at that time 1049 cusecs of water was given to Delhi by the Haryana government from the Munak canal. Then it was diverted by the Delhi government towards different channels of Bawana, Haiderpur, Dwarka and from here the game of corruption started. From 1 May to 29 May, the Haryana government has given 1049 cusecs of water to Delhi every day." He also attacked Atishi and stated, "She is talking about going to court but this is not the first time that the Delhi government will go to court

regarding water shortage. The Kejriwal government has already gone to court in 2021 where the court reprimanded it and said that the Delhi government is getting enough water but the Kejriwal government has failed to stop the wastage of water. 53 per cent of Delhi's water is stolen or wasted during supply. If all that water is stopped from being wasted, only then will the people of Delhi get enough water." While accusing the AAP MLAs, he alleged that they sell water through tankers and fill their pockets by stealing water. BJP candidate Bansuri Swaraj

for New Delhi said that in this scorching heat, Delhi is crying for water. "The Delhi Jal Board which was in profit of Rs. 600 crore in 2,013 is in loss of Rs. 73,000 crore today. Kejriwal should answer this because this is such a useless government which is involved in corruption apart from propaganda and wants to encourage tanker mafia by creating water shortage. This dictatorship will not work and every BJP worker will keep fighting until Kejriwal answers it. If an all party meeting had been called in March and a water distribution action plan had been worked upon, then perhaps Delhi would not have been yearning for every drop of water." BJP candidate Praveen Khandelwal for Chandni Chowk said, "The water crisis in Delhi is only proof of Kejriwal's failure and corruption. Kejriwal, who showed concern for water from inside the jail, used to write letters to mislead people, but after coming out of jail, instead of solving the water crisis, he went out for election campaign."

BJP alleges mismanagement, wastage of water in city

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The residents of Delhi continue to face an acute water crisis this summer, with scenes of long queues and people struggling to secure even a basic supply in several areas.

Delhi BJP leader Virendra Sachdeva accused the AAP Government of corruption, alleging mismanagement and wastage of water. Sachdeva claimed, "Haryana is providing water, but by the time it reaches Delhi, 53 per cent gets wasted due to mismanagement."

The BJP leader said the government knows Delhi faces such issues during the summer season and asked why it did not come up with a summer action plan to address the issue. As temperatures soar to nearly 50 degrees Celsius, the demand for water has risen significantly, leaving many desperate and frustrated. The residents in several areas of Delhi are lining up with their



plastic containers, anxiously waiting for the water tankers. Vibha Devi, a resident of Geeta Colony, shared her plight: "I stand in line from 4 am, but due to the crowd, I can't reach the water tanker...It's hard to get water." Asked whether she manages to get water, she said, "Sometimes we get water, sometimes we don't. When we don't, we have to buy it from

outside and use it sparingly." Speaking about the insufficient supply of water tankers, another local Gajendra Pratap Singh said, "Tanker comes in our area, but it's only half full since they need to deliver the other half somewhere else, and for this half, we stand in line from early morning." The frustration is evident among the residents, who jostle for their share as soon as the

tanker arrives. Expressing concern about the problems faced by them, another local Neelam said, "We don't even have water to drink. Every day, people are fighting for water as there are thousands waiting in line for three to four hours, but the demand is not being met." "Many of them do not get water even after standing in queues with pipes and buckets," she added. Another local Sabnam echoed similar sentiments and said "there are thousands of people waiting for half a tanker of water." "We've been standing in line since 3 am, but there's no water for anyone," she added. Many people are also taking to social media to complain about the water problem in their areas. Nitesh Singh, a banker living in South Delhi, tagged the government in his post on X, highlighting the severity of the crisis. He wrote, "Dear Sir, I am from Jawahar Park, Khanpur, South

Delhi. We are facing a water supply crisis, not even getting a tanker for survival. This is very painful. We regularly call the concerned personnel of DJB, but they are not listening. This is forcing my society and many families to leave Delhi." Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal made an appeal to the Centre and the BJP to urge the governments of Uttar Pradesh and Haryana to help Delhi meet its water demand. "The entire country is experiencing unprecedented heat, leading to a water and electricity crisis. However, water demand has surged while supply from neighbouring states has decreased. We must solve this together. BJP protests won't help. I urge everyone to set aside politics and work together to provide relief. If BJP can secure some water from Haryana and UP for Delhi, it would be greatly appreciated. Let's unite to provide relief during this heatwave," he wrote on X.

Death toll in neonatal hospital fire incident rises to seven

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The death toll in a fire in an east Delhi neonatal hospital rose to seven on Friday after a 50-day-old infant who was rescued from the incident site succumbed during treatment. A senior police officer said, "A 50-day-old girl child was under treatment. She succumbed on Friday morning. Further investigation has been initiated." A family member of the victim also confirmed that the child has died. "Doctors told us about her death on Friday morning," said a family member. Another senior police officer said the child did not have any burn injury when she was rescued from the hospital. The fire tragedy at the Baby Care New Born Hospital in east Delhi's Vivek Vihar on May 26 claimed the lives of six newborns and left five babies injured. The blaze broke out



at the hospital at around 11:30 pm and soon spread to two adjacent buildings. Sixteen fire tenders were pressed into service to douse the flames and a massive rescue operation was carried out to bring out seven children alive from the hospital. Six newborns had already died. Police had said one child had died before the fire

broke out. According to the fire department, the neonatal hospital had no fire NOC (no-objection certificate) and not even proper fire-combat arrangements. Besides, the oxygen cylinders kept at the hospital had exploded due to the fire. The fire started from a short circuit in a generator, police had said.

Taking various measures to limit bird strikes in airfield, says DIAL

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi airport operator DIAL on Friday said its wildlife hazard management team is taking various mitigating measures to limit bird strikes in the airfield while also carrying out programmes in areas near the airport for spreading awareness about the dangers of such wildlife strikes.

The Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL), a consortium led by the GMR Group, conducted an awareness campaign this week in the Rangpuri Pahari area near the airport to educate the local community about the dangers of wildlife strikes, particularly bird strikes. Rangpuri Pahari, located on the approach path of runway 29L/11R, was organised to



address the increasing incidents of bird strikes observed in this area, especially during the monsoon season, according to a release. The airport operator also said that its dedicated Wildlife Hazard Management (WHM) team is actively engaged in various mitigation measures to limit bird strikes within the airfield. "Regular surveys are conducted

up to a 10 kilometres radius around the airfield to identify and eliminate bird attractants in coordination with civic agencies," it added. Earlier this month, an Emirates flight from Dubai struck a flock of flamingos, resulting in the death of around 40 birds in Mumbai. The aircraft landed safely at the Mumbai airport but had suffered damages.

MCD intensifies efforts to control vector borne diseases

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) intensified its efforts across the national Capital to prevent and control vector borne diseases, while deploying a large number of Domestic Breeding Checkers (DBC) to keep the situation in check. MCD is taking several measures to control the diseases. One such measure includes deployment of a large number of Domestic Breeding Checkers (DBC) to check for larvae and mosquito breeding. These workers have conducted more than 1.35 crore inspection in different houses in the first five months of 2024. More than 25,000 houses, buildings and land premises were found breeding with mosquitoes which were detected and treated on spot.



Further, about 2 lakh houses and buildings have been sprayed and fogged as anti-adult measures. All surface water collections including drains are regularly sprayed with insecticides on a weekly interval by manual &

motorised sprayers. Additionally, intersectoral meetings with different stakeholders of the city are being held to work together in a strategic manner against the spread of vector borne diseases. Awareness campaigns

have also been organised with the Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs), civic societies and citizens to make people aware about prevention and control of vector-borne diseases. Anti-larval insecticides are being sprayed at potential mosquito breeding sites by the corporation. Dengue is an outbreak prone seasonal febrile viral disease, transmitted through bites of female adult Aedes mosquitoes. Aedes mosquitoes are small blackish mosquitoes with white stripes on the abdomen and legs. Aedes mosquitoes breed in stagnant clean water in and around houses. Aedes mosquitoes are container breeder viz., cement tanks, overhead tanks, underground tanks, tyres, desert coolers, pitchers, discarded containers, junk materials, potholes, rooftop, window

parapet, ornamental fountain, lucky bamboo pot, money plant bottle etc, in which water stagnates for more than a week. Dengue causing mosquitoes rest in indoor houses, mainly in corners under furniture, beds, shelves, almirah and dark clothing hanging inside and these mosquitoes bite during day time usually in morning and afternoon hours. The civic body appealed to people to cover all water holding containers and tanks with tight lids, emptying, cleaning by scrubbing and drying water coolers at least once a week before refilling. They also urged the people of Delhi to dispose and destroy all unused containers, junk materials, tyres and coconut shells so that mosquito breeding can be checked.

Lok Sabha Secretariat prepares to welcome members of 18th LS

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha Secretariat is ready to welcome Members of the eighteen Lok Sabha. Several measures have been taken to welcome the members and ensure their seamless registration. Secretary — General, Lok Sabha, Utpal Kumar Singh, conducted an inspection of the preparations today and is monitoring the arrangements on day to day basis. With a view to reducing the paper work and making the registration formalities of Members seamless, the regis-

tration process of the newly elected Members shall be done through an online integrated software application. Members would not be required to sign multiple physical forms with various branches. This would save a substantial amount of time of Members. The integrated software application not only captures bio profile data of MP but also includes solution for issuance of Parliament Identity Card based on Facial and Biometric Capturing and solution for issuance of CGHS card to Members & Spouses. With a view to minimize

complications arising out of the multi-desks approach of the past, all formalities relating to the registration, nominations, transit accommodation and a host of other matters are proposed to be got completed with minimum movement of Members. The Secretariat has made arrangements from 2 p.m. on 04.06.2024 and the process will remain operational from 8 am to 8 pm on 5th to 14th June, 2024 including on Saturdays and Sundays. Earlier, the registration of newly elected Members used to take place in the old Parliament House building

(now Samvidhan Sadan). This time, the Secretariat has made such arrangements in the Parliament House Annexe. As many as 20 digital registration counters with as many computers, 10 each in Banquet Hall and Private Dining Room (PDR), have been set up in the Parliament House Annexe. These counters have been set up for end-to-end registration process. Each counter has been equipped with desktop with double sided screen, printer cum scanner, biometric, and a tab for getting signature. There are separate counters for clicking photographs and

for facial recognition. Additionally, arrangements have also been made for simultaneous opening of SBI bank account, issuing of permanent Identity Card, Central Government Health Scheme Card to the newly elected Members on the spot. While welcoming the Members, the Secretariat will provide each Member with a set of publications relating to the Constitution of India, Rules, Directions and some other useful publications in hard copies. Besides, a few other publications will be provided to Members in soft version.

A waiting area has been provided for family members and guests of the MPs at the Banquet Hall in the Extension to Parliament House Annexe. In case of more number of guests arriving, the spillover will be seated in a nearby Committee Rooms. A total 70 Officers/Officials have been trained to man the registration Counter in shifts. The Liaison Officers (Los) have also been imparted training to make data entry through the Tabs while the MPs are waiting in the designated waiting area (Banquet Hall in EPHA building). The intent is to minimize the

registration time for Hon'ble MPs while they are in Parliament Complex for the purpose of registration. Videos on Foundation stone laying ceremony of Parliament Building, Inauguration of Parliament Building, Multimedia Devices, have been kept ready for playing in Banquet Hall, Committee Room 1 & 2 EPHA for the Members. A team has been assigned the task to keep close tab on Election Commission website on the day of declaration of results and to enter the contact details of successful candidates in near real time.

The team using a software application would be able to check whether the successful candidate is a new MP or re-elected MP. The same information would be shared with Liaison Officers (Los) through software application to make further data entry of their tour programs. The dashboard would be available for the stakeholders to get updated information in near real time. An endeavor has been made to deploy L/Os from the same region/language to facilitate members and ensure faster communication.

INDIA Bloc going to get clear mandate on June 4, claims Congress

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Friday said it is due to its positive campaign, the nay guarantees and giving priority to protecting the Constitution that the INDIA Bloc is going to get a "clear and decisive" mandate on June 4. Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh, party's media and publicity department head Pawan Khera and AICC social media department head Supriya Shrinete released a compilation of 272 questions the party asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the last 72 days titled '72 Days, 272 Questions, 0 Jawab' ? Bhaag Modi Bhaag. Addressing a press conference along with Khera and Shrinete, Ramesh said the Congress' campaign was positive and result of the Rahul Gandhi-led Bharat Jodo Nyaya Yatra. He

recalled that on January 23 this year in Guwahati, Rahul Gandhi for the first time announced the five nays - Yuva Nyay, Nari Nyay, Kisaan Nyay, Shramik Nyay and Hissedari Nyay. In Ranchi on February 5, Gandhi talked about 'hissedari nyay' and the party's guarantees under it, Ramesh said. On February 23 in Ambikapur, Gandhi and Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge announced the guarantees under 'kisaan nyay'. He pointed out on March 7 in Banswara, Kharge and Gandhi released the 'yuva nyay' guarantees. On March 13 in Dhule, Gandhi announced 'nari nyay', while Kharge announced the 'shramik nyay' guarantees in Bengaluru, he said. Ramesh also recalled that Rahul Gandhi carried the copy of the Constitution to public meetings and stressed the Congress'

guarantee to protect social justice, get a caste census done and remove the 50 per cent cap on reservation. "We believe that due to our campaign, 'paach nyay pachhees guarantee' and the priority we gave on protection of the Constitution as stressed by Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi, we are going to get a clear and decisive mandate on June 4," Ramesh said. During the news conference, Ramesh also said the Congress made several complaints of the model code violations by the BJP including 14 against the PM, to the Election Commission of India. "We respect the EC but sadly impartiality was not seen during the course of the campaign," he said. Khera said the Congress campaign derailed Modi's "propaganda" and he did not tell the country what his government achieved.

RSS chief Bhagwat pays tributes to Ahilyabai Holkar on birth anniversary

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat on Friday remembered queen Ahilyabai Holkar on her 300th birth anniversary and said she was an ideal ruler who provided good governance and worked for the welfare of every section of society. In a video statement, Bhagwat said she lived a simple life despite being a queen and cared for the weak and backward. "This year marks the tercentenary of Punyashlok Devi Ahilyabai Holkar," he said and added that the 'Punyashlok' title is given to rulers who free their subjects from all kinds of deprivations and sorrows. "She was widowed. Despite being a single woman, she did not only manage her big kingdom but also made it bigger and provided good governance," the



chief of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). She was, in fact, one of the ideal rulers of her time, he said and added that she was a symbol of women's capabilities. Bhagwat said Holkar built industries so that her subjects could get employment. "She built them (industries) so well that Maheshwar's textile industry is still running today. It provides employment to many people," he added. The RSS chief said Holkar cared for the weak and backward sec-

tions and had also eased the tax system. "She cared for farmers. Her kingdom was a good kingdom in every way," he said. "Today we talk about the empowerment of women. Devi Ahilyabai has set before us an ideal example worth emulating. Despite being a queen she lived a simple life," he said. Bhagwat said the work she did was special in many ways. She ran the state efficiently and had friendly relations with all the rulers of that time, he said. She was known for her strategies that prevented attacks on her kingdom. At its Akhil Bharatiya Pratinidhi Sabha held in Nagpur in March, the RSS had announced it would organise programmes to mark the 300th birth anniversary of Holkar. "Throughout this year, efforts will be made everywhere to remember her. This is a matter of great joy. I wish all the best to such an effort," Bhagwat said.

Associate of fugitive gangster detained in US

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

An alleged associate of fugitive gangster Himanshu Bhu is understood to have been detained by agencies in the United States, officials said on Friday. The agencies are trying to ascertain the identity of the detained man before any move for his return to India is initiated, they added. It is suspected that Sahil Kumar, who allegedly runs an extortion racket with Bhu from abroad and is wanted by the Haryana Police in a number of cases, has been detained by the US authorities, the officials said. Once the identity of the detained man is established, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), as Interpol India, will coordinate with the US authorities to seek his return, which would be possible after an order from the courts of that country, they



said. Kumar is facing an Interpol Red Notice that requests the law-enforcement agencies of all the 196-member countries to detain a fugitive if spotted in their jurisdiction. The information is then passed on to the member country that had sought the issuance of the notice. This process is followed by a move to get the accused extradited or deported after the legal formalities. Kumar allegedly used passports with a fake identity and address to flee India. Cases related to extortion and threats are registered in Haryana against Kumar and Bhu, the officials said.

JASCH GAUGING TECHNOLOGIES LIMITED

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CIN NO. : L33111DL2021PLC381513

Extract of Audited Standalone Ind AS Financial Results for the Quarter and Year Ended on 31st March 2024
(Under Regulation 47 (1)(B) of SEBI Listing Regulations)

Sl No	Particulars	Standalone			
		Quarter Ended		Year Ended	
		31.03.24	31.12.23	31.03.23	31.03.24
		Audited	Unaudited	Audited	Audited
1.	Total Income from Operations.	1797.58	1355.55	-	3153.13
2.	Profit before Interest, Depreciation & Taxes (EBITDA)	695.28	540.11	-	1235.40
3.	Net Profit for the Period (before Tax and Exceptional Items)	669.24	515.26	-	1184.51
4.	Net Profit for the Period before Tax (after Exceptional Items)	669.24	515.26	-	1184.51
5.	Net Profit for the period after Tax (after Exceptional Items)	494.23	385.56	-	879.80
6.	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [(Comprising Profit) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	494.23	385.56	-	879.80
7.	Equity Share Capital	453.20	453.20	5.00	453.20
8.	Reserves	7290.27	6899.62	(0.49)	7290.27
9.	Earnings Per Share (of ₹10/- each) - Basic & Diluted (₹)	10.91	8.51	-	19.41

Notes:

- The above is an extract of the detailed format of quarterly and yearly financial results filed with BSE under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations & Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the aforesaid results is available on the website of the BSE i.e. www.bseindia.com and also on the website of the Company i.e. www.jasch.net.in.
- The financial results of the Company have been prepared in accordance with Indian Accounting Standards (Ind AS)
- Figures for the previous periods have been regrouped, wherever necessary, to conform to the current period's classification.
- The figures of last quarter are the balancing figures between audited figures in respect of the full financial year and the published year to date figures up to the third quarter of the current financial year.

Place: Sonipat, Date: 30th May 2024

JAI KISHAN GARG
CHAIRMAN & MANAGING DIRECTOR

ASHNOOR TEXTILE MILLS LIMITED

Registered Office : Behrampur Road, Khandas Village, Gurugram, Haryana- 122001, India, Tel: +91 (0124) - 4809756
CIN: L17226HR1984PLC033384 | E-mail: atml_delhi@yahoo.com | Website: www.ashnoortext.com

Statement of Standalone Audited Financial Results for the Quarter and Year Ended March 31, 2024

(Rs. in lakhs)

Sl. No.	Particulars	For the quarter ended March 31, 2024	For the quarter ended March 31, 2023	For the quarter ended March 31, 2023	For the Year ended March 31, 2024	For the Year ended March 31, 2023
		(Audited)	(Unaudited)	(Audited)	(Audited)	(Audited)
		1	Total Income from Operations (Net)	3,853.13	3,267.06	3,586.47
2	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	231.45	198.55	418.00	970.65	781.18
3	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	248.98	182.37	432.05	972.00	797.23
4	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	245.38	104.06	311.88	743.56	612.43
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [(Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	245.38	104.06	311.88	743.56	612.43
6	Paid Up Equity Share Capital	1,274.58	1,274.58	1,273.95	1,274.58	1,273.95
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the Audited Balance Sheet of the previous year	5,131.57	-	4,388.01	5,131.57	4,388.01
8	Securities Premium Account	240.00	240.00	240.00	240.00	240.00
9	Net Worth	6,406.15	-	5,861.96	6,406.15	5,861.96
10	Paid up Capital / Outstanding Debt	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.18
11	Outstanding Redeemable Preference Shares	-	-	-	-	-
12	Debt Equity Ratio	1.18	1.33	1.25	1.18	1.25
13	Earnings Per Share (of Rs. 10/- each) (before and after extraordinary items)					
1	1. Basic:	1.93	0.82	2.45	5.83	4.80
2	2. Diluted:	1.93	0.82	2.45	5.83	4.80
14	Capital Redemption Reserve	-	-	-	-	-
15	Debenture Redemption Reserve	-	-	-	-	-
16	Debt Service Coverage Ratio	1.18	1.06	2.20	1.36	1.82
17	Interest Service coverage Ratio	3.15	2.07	4.69	2.83	2.77

Notes: The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly and Yearly Financial Results filed with the Bombay Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly and Yearly Financial Results as on March 31, 2024 are available on the websites of the Bombay Stock Exchange i.e. www.bseindia.in and on web site of the Company i.e. www.ashnoortext.com

By Order of the Board of Directors For Ashnoor Textile Mills Limited
Sd/-
Suneel Gupta
Managing Director
DIN - 00052084

Place: Gurugram, Haryana Date: 30-05-2024

PUBLIC NOTICE

Be it known to all concerned that the original Demand Letter, Possession Letter, NOC for Electric Connection, and Site Possession etc. regarding Built Up Industrial Shed property No. B-122, Okhla Industrial Area Phase I, New Delhi, with other correspondence with DDA, kept in Green Colour File has been misplaced/lost and is not traceable and a report in this regard has also been filed online complaint with the Police Station Crime Branch, LR No.1778793/2024 dated 31.05.2024. Any person, Bank, Company, Financial Institution, Firm, Society, Government, Semi-Government Organization etc. etc. knowing the whereabouts or having in their possession the above mentioned documents may inform Mr. Bhagwant Singh on my email ID jasmehsingh@gmail.com and phone No. 9990228844 and Dr. Director (CE) A Block, Ind. Floor, Vikas Sadan, DDA, New Delhi, within 15 days of publication of this notice.

Kamal Kant Gupta (Advocate)
Unit No. FF-2, First floor, Mahalaxmi Metro Tower Sec-4, Vajshahi, Gzb., U.P., Moh. 9810063351

MY MONEY SECURITIES LIMITED

CIN : L67120DL1992PLC047890
Regd Office : 10-A, Underhill Lane, Civil Lines, Delhi-54
Ph : 011-23937870, 23930655. Email Id : mymoneyviews@outlook.com
Extract of the Standalone Audited Financial Results for the Quarter and year ended 31st March, 2024 (Rs. in Lakhs)

Sl. No.	Particulars	Quarter Ended 31.03.2024	Quarter Ended 31.12.2023	Quarter Ended 31.03.2023	Year Ended 31.03.2024	Year Ended 31.03.2023
		Audited	Unaudited	Audited	Audited	Audited
		1	Total Income from operations (net)	178.49	73.46	38.06
2	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period (Before Tax and after exceptional items)	117.94	40.49	16.11	221.25	12.07
3	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after tax (after exceptional items)	126.99	31.98	30.38	208.19	26.34
4	Total comprehensive income for the period (comprising profit/(loss) for the period after tax and other comprehensive income after tax	126.99	31.98	30.38	208.19	26.34
5	Equity Share Capital	1680.03	1680.03	1630.03	1680.03	1630.03
6	Earning per share (of Rs. 10/- each) (EPS for the Quarter ended are not annualised)	0.755*	0.191*	0.186*	1.239	0.162
		0.755*	0.191*	0.184*	1.239	0.157

Notes:

- The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly/Annual Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly/Annual Financial Results are available on the Stock Exchange websites. (www.bseindia.com) and company website www.mymoneyviews.com
- For and on behalf of the Board of Directors

Sanjeev Seth
Sd/-
Whole Time Director & C.F.O.
DIN : 00350518

Place: Delhi, Dated : 30.05.2024

JASCH INDUSTRIES LIMITED

Regd. Off. : 502, NDM-II, NSP, Pitampura, Delhi - 110034
CIN NO. L24302DL1985PLC383771
Website : www.jaschindustries.com, Email : accounts@jasch.biz

Extract of Reviewed Ind AS Financial Results for the Quarter and Year Ended on 31st March 2024.
(Standalone Financial Results under Regulation 47 (1)(B) of Listing Regulations)

Sl No	Particulars	Standalone			
		Quarter Ended		Year Ended	
		31.03.24	31.12.23	31.03.23	31.03.24
		Audited	Unaudited	Audited	Audited
1.	Total Income from Operations.	4003.77	4682.75	5539.23	17231.31
2.	Profit before Interest, Depreciation & Taxes (EBITDA)	194.27	556.40	1006.56	1582.53
3.	Net Profit for the Period (before Tax and Exceptional Items)	95.33	459.07	897.00	1202.78
4.	Net Profit for the Period before Tax (after Exceptional Items)	95.33	459.07	897.00	1202.78
5.	Net Profit for the period after Tax (after Exceptional Items)	77.07	341.32	657.09	894.86
6.	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [(Comprising Profit) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	77.07	341.32	657.09	1619.10
7.	Equity Share Capital	679.80	679.80	1133.00	679.80
8.	Reserves	4958.47	4891.11	9855.64	4958.47
9.	Earnings Per Share (of ₹10/- each) of Continued Operations Basic & Diluted: (Rupees)	1.13	5.02	5.80	13.16

Notes:

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JAI KISHAN GARG
CHAIRMAN
Sonipat, 30th May 2024

TMC tries to defend its citadel in last phase of LS polls

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■
KOLKATA

An uncanny lull prevailed in the air as Bengal prepared to go for the seventh and final phase of elections to nine parliamentary constituencies considered a stronghold of the Trinamool Congress which presently holds all the seats up for grabs. Elections will be held to Basirhat, Barasat, Dum Dum, Mathurapur, Jaynagar, Diamond Harbour and Jadavpur in North and South 24 Parganas in that order and Kolkata North and South constituencies.

"No one is talking... there is a strange silence... Allah knows what will happen," says Moinuddin from Falta Diamond Harbour while Rabi Santra from Jadavpur says "some netas are talking communal but the questions is whether the people are taking it." Albeit, silence is often most piercing to the politicians' ears, more so to those in power, say pundits. True perhaps 2024 is different from 2019 or 2021. While much of the sharp communal polarisation that had been the hallmark of 2019 and 2021 (Assembly) elections has been blunted to a reasonable extent — save in some pockets — with corruption and women-



TMC supporters during a roadshow of party candidate from South Kolkata constituency Mala Roy for the last phase of Lok Sabha elections in Kolkata PTI

emotive Sandeshkhali issues taking the center stage what tends to keep all sides particularly the TMC and Opposition BJP on the tenterhooks is the re-emergence of the Left as a reasonable force with a frightful capability of springing some surprises — or in the least slicing away big chunks of votes — in at least three or four seats, local experts say.

A total of 1.63 crore voters — 83.19 lakh men, 80.20 lakh women, and 538 belonging to the third gender are likely to exercise their franchise in

17,470 polling stations to be manned by 960 companies of central forces and a large posse of state police. Some of more famous names out of the 124 contestants contesting in the seventh phase are TMC's Diamond Harbour nominee and sitting MP Abhishek Banerjee who besides being the party's general secretary and a future Chief Ministerial candidate is also the nephew of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

The two-time TMC MP who is pitted in a tri-cornered contest against CPI (M)'s

students' leader and son of the soil Pratik R Rahaman and BJP's Abhijit Das hopes to win the seat by 3 lakh margin on account of his creating Diamond Harbour a "model constituency" a narrative often rejected by the Left that calls it "a model laboratory of violence and cold horror."

Besides him TMC leader in

Lok Sabha is Sudip Bandopadhyay is contesting from Kolkata North seat against BJP nominee Tapas Roy a former minister who quit the party to join the saffron outfit just before the polls started and Congress veteran and sitting Rajya Sabha member Pradip Bhattacharya.

A third such seat is Dum Dum where the TMC veteran and three-time MP Saugato Roy is contesting in a fierce battle against CPI(M) stalwart Sujan Chakrabarty and BJP's Silbhada Dutta, once a Mukul Roy protégé. Kolkata South that sent Mamata Banerjee to Parliament for six times before she became the Chief Minister too presents a keen contest between sitting TMC NP Mala Roy and BJP's Debashri Chowdhury a former Union Minister and Raiganj MP — who according to her own party men has been given a punishment posting a la Dilip

Ghosh. Though both of them are confident of winning CPI(M) is putting its money on its dark horse Saira Shah Halim a niece of actor Naseeruddin Shah and daughter of a former Army Lt General besides being the daughter in law of longest serving Bengal Assembly speaker HA Halim. Though a traditional TMC stronghold which has the history of sending Shyama Prasad Mukherjee to Parliament too, Kolkata South has a good presence of minority voters that might be a source of encouragement for Marxists.

All eyes could also be set on the Basirhat seat which has a good 45 percent minority votes. But more importantly Basirhat catches attention on account of Sandeshkhali being one of the seven Assembly segments. Considered a microcosm of the broader electoral battle this time round drawing national attention

due to allegations of atrocities on women and land grabs by local TMC leaders Basirhat could present a tricky picture this time round. The BJP which led the Sandeshkhali battle and iced the cake by nominating Rekha Patra, a local victim-turned-protector the TMC has fielded a former MP Hazi Nurul Islam once black-listed by his own party for fanning communal violence. The Left on the other hand has fielded Nirapada Sardar a former three-time MLA from Sandeshkhali. Basirhat also gains importance because the BJP considers it to be a prestige seat with Prime Minister Narendra Modi personally speaking to Patra over phone inspiring her for the upcoming fight. Basirhat is also important for State Opposition Leader Suwendu Adhikari because Patra is his hand-picked candidate and her victory or defeat could make or break much of Adhikari's importance in State

politics. While from the adjoining Barasat seat TMC's sitting MP Kakoli Ghoshdastidar is locked in a tri-cornered contest against BJP and Forward Bloc, down South from Jadavpur an elite constituency CPI(M)'s young Turk Srijan Bhattacharya is contesting against TMC's Sayani Ghosh and BJP's Dr Anirban Ganguli. A traditional Left stronghold Ghosh who replaced sitting TMC MP Mimi Chakrabarty is getting strong challenge from her opponents. The Jadavpur seat is historically significant for the TMC, as it was from here that a young Mamata Banerjee first made her mark by defeating CPI (M) veteran Somnath Chatterjee in 1984. It is also important because former Chief Minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee lost his last electoral battle from Jadavpur Assembly seat in 2011 before bidding politics a good bye.

CORRIGENDUM

Please refer to our earlier advertisement of Public Notice published on 16th May, 2024 Subhash Sharma V/S Arcity Builders Pvt Ltd. Ex app. No 961/23 Para No.-2 in final order instead 8-8-23, 8-6-2023 was published. Please consider is as 8-8-23.

PUBLIC NOTICE

"It is to inform to the public at large that Mr. Subhash Oberoi has acquired Entire Second Floor without roof rights area 50 sq. yds. Built up property bearing No. 69/1, Kharsa No. 9/10, situated in Village Matiala, Delhi, colony known as Sainik Block-B, on Najafgarh Road, Uttar Nagar New Delhi vide GPA dt. 25.12.2023 along with ATS & Will executed by Mr. Rahul Oberoi, Now Mr. Subhash Oberoi is the undisputed owner of above said property. OR Any person firm / institution / company having any claim or right in respect of the said Property by way of inheritance, share, sale, agreement, lease, license, gift, possession, legal heirs, partners or encumbrance whatsoever or otherwise is hereby required to intimate in writing to the undersigned within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice of his/her share or claim, if any, with all supporting documents at below mentioned address. After expiration of notice period, the claims, if any of such person shall be treated null and void and also treated as waived and not binding on our client. Ajay Kumar Giri (Advocate), H.No 26/161, Basement, Vikram Vihar, Lajpat Nagar 4, New Delhi-110024

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"It is to inform to the public at large that Mr. Mohammad Nadeem and Mr. Mohammad Azeem has acquired Built up Upper Ground Floor Left Side area 60 sq. yds., without roof right, built on property bearing Municipal No. 225/160/1A, Kharsa No. 289, situated in Village of Khampur Raya, Delhi, abadi known as Guru Nanak Nagar, Shadi Khampur, New Delhi vide Sale Deed dt. 24.07.2022 executed by Mrs. Mona Tanwar, Now Mr. Mohammad Nadeem and Mr. Mohammad Azeem are the undisputed owners of above said property. OR Any person firm / institution / company having any claim or right in respect of the said Property by way of inheritance, share, sale, agreement, lease, license, gift, possession, legal heirs, partners or encumbrance whatsoever or otherwise is hereby required to intimate in writing to the undersigned within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice of his/her share or claim, if any, with all supporting documents at below mentioned address. After expiration of notice period, the claims, if any of such person shall be treated null and void and also treated as waived and not binding on our client. Ajay Kumar Giri (Advocate), H.No 26/161, Basement, Vikram Vihar, Lajpat Nagar 4, New Delhi-110024

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given to public at large that my client Mrs. Asha who is the owner of Plot measuring 150 Sq Yards Out of Khewala/Khata No. 3351/4037, Mu No. 138, Kila No. 7/1 (1-17), 6 (3-13), Waka Mauja Palwal Tehsil and District vide Sale Deed dated 06.12.2023 and intend to get the financial assistance from Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited will provide the financial assistance. Also the Sale Deed dated 1994 as doc no. 4062 is missing/lost. If any person(s)/Institution has/ have any objection(s) or claim(s) with respect to the right, title or interest in the said property may please contact us within 07 days from the date of this notice on the address mentioned herein below, failing which my client(s) shall not be held responsible in any manner whatsoever. Khatian & Khatian, A-38 Kailash Colony, New Delhi-110048, Ph. No: 011-49774545



CHANGE OF NAME

I, hitherto known as YUG alias YUG SINGH S/O VIKAS SINGH R/O J AND K block-161, No-C, Road Near Narul bakery Shakarpur, Laxmi Nagar, Delhi-110092, have change my name and shall hereafter be known as YUG Singh.

PD(486)C

I, Anwar S/o Mr. Sultan Khan R/o Plot No. -A-31, Shalimar Garden Main, Sahibabad, Ghaziabad, U.P.- 201005, Hereby declare that Ranveer Khan and Anwar one and the same person. Henceforth I shall be known as Anwar for all future purposes.

PD(487)C

I, RAJESH KUMAR YADAV S/O SURESH YADAV R/O VILLAGE KEHUNIA PAKRI BABU, DEORIA, UTTAR PRADESH-274702 have changed the name of my minor Daughter TANYA YADAV aged 13 years and she shall hereafter be known as RADHIKA YADAV

PD(488)C

UNITED TEXTILES LIMITED

Regd. Off: 7th K.M. Stone, Barwala Road, Hisar
CIN: L1715HR1993PLC032092

STATEMENT OF AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH, 2024

Particulars	Quarter Ended		Year Ended	
	31.03.2024	31.12.2023	31.03.2024	31.03.2023
	Audited	Unaudited	Audited	Audited
I Revenue from operations	283.58	443.92	350.64	1332.51
II Other Income	2.18	0.50	(5.41)	4.01
III Total Revenue (I+II)	285.76	444.42	345.23	1336.52
IV Expenses				
(a) Cost of materials consumed	240.20	227.62	254.52	913.36
(b) Purchases of stock-in-trade	4.16	1.19	22.10	7.35
(c) Changes in inventories of finished goods work-in-progress and stock-in-trade	(65.77)	86.98	(17.54)	(74.52)
(d) Employee benefits expense	18.32	15.24	16.22	62.31
(e) Finance costs	11.39	11.73	(5.76)	64.10
(f) Depreciation and amortization expenses	35.83	35.13	24.80	125.92
(g) Other expenses	42.07	64.99	49.71	234.60
Total expenses (IV)	288.20	442.88	344.05	1334.12
V Profit/(Loss) before exceptional items and tax (III-IV)	(2.44)	1.54	1.18	2.40
VI Exceptional items				
VII Profit/(Loss) after exceptional items but before tax (V+VI)	(2.44)	1.54	1.18	2.40
VIII Tax expense:				
(i) Current tax	(0.73)	-	(3.39)	-
(ii) Deferred tax	0.30	1.33	3.72	1.88
Total tax expense	(0.43)	1.33	0.33	1.88
IX Profit/(Loss) for the period from continuing operations (VII-VIII)	(2.01)	0.21	0.85	3.03
X Other comprehensive income (OCI):				
A. Items that will not be reclassified to profit or loss				
(i) Re-measurement gain (losses) on defined benefit plans	1.35	-	2.00	1.35
Income tax effect on above	(0.34)	-	(0.50)	(0.50)
(ii) Equity instrument through Other Comprehensive Income (Gain on Fair Valuation of Long Term Investment)	-	-	-	-
Income tax effect on above	-	-	-	-
Total Other Comprehensive Income (X)	1.01	-	1.50	1.01
XI Total Comprehensive Income (Comprising Profit/(Loss) and Other comprehensive income for the period) (IX+X)	(1.00)	0.21	2.35	4.53
XII Paid-up equity share capital (Rs. 10 Per share)	300.00	300.00	300.00	300.00
XIII Reserve/Other Equity	-	-	747.41	745.88
XIV Earnings per equity share:				
(i) Basic	(0.04)	(0.02)	0.03	0.02
(ii) Diluted	(0.04)	(0.02)	0.03	0.02

P. WAY MAINTENANCE AND OTHER ANCILLARY TRACK WORK

E-Tender Notice No. 58/W-2/APDJ; Dated: 29-05-2024. E-tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following work: Tender No: 16-AP-II-2024. Name of Work: P. way maintenance and other ancillary track work under the jurisdiction of SSE/P.WAY/COOCHBEHAR. Tender Value: ₹2,28,09,548.41. Earnest Money: ₹2,64,100.00. E-tender will be closed at 13:00 hrs. on 25-06-2024 and opened at 15:00 hrs. on 25-06-2024. The complete information with the tender documents of above e-tender will be available in the website <http://www.irops.gov.in>.

DRM (Works), Alipurduar Jn. NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY "Serving Customers with a smile"

PUBLIC NOTICE

To be known to all that We, Bhagwati Devi W/o Sh. Krishan Lal Kanojia & Vinod Kumar Kanojia S/o Sh. Krishan Lal Kanojia both R/o C-3, C-4 Janta Flat, Katwaria Sarai Ph-I, New Delhi-110016, allottee/purchaser of Shop No. 2, Ground Floor, DDA Shopping Center No.2, Munirka, New Delhi - 110067, vide File No. F-7(133)/75/HBA, have applied for conversion of the aforesaid shop from lease hold to free hold in DDA. The original documents i.e. DDA Allocation Letter, Demand Letter, Possession Letter, Site Possession Letter, All Bank Challans, NOC for Water & Electricity, of the above said Shop, Aadhar Card, Voter I-Card, PAN Card have been lost. An FIR has been lodged to this effect. 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.9999270673 within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objections with respect to this property can personally inform or write to Dr. Director/Director (Commercial Estate) A-Block, 2nd Floor, Vikas Sadan INA, New Delhi.

PD(488)C

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NOTICE is hereby given to public at large that my client Mrs. Asha who is the owner of Plot measuring 150 Sq Yards Out of Khewala/Khata No. 3351/4037, Mu No. 138, Kila No. 7/1 (1-17), 6 (3-13), Waka Mauja Palwal Tehsil and District vide Sale Deed dated 06.12.2023 and intend to get the financial assistance from Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited will provide the financial assistance. Also the Sale Deed dated 1994 as doc no. 4062 is missing/lost. If any person(s)/Institution has/ have any objection(s) or claim(s) with respect to the right, title or interest in the said property may please contact us within 07 days from the date of this notice on the address mentioned herein below, failing which my client(s) shall not be held responsible in any manner whatsoever. Khatian & Khatian, A-38 Kailash Colony, New Delhi-110048, Ph. No: 011-49774545

DAMAGED SLEEPER RENEWAL

E-tender Notice No. 59/W-2/APDJ dated: 29-05-2024. E-tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works: Tender No. 14-AP-III-2024. Name of the work: Alipurduar Jn- New Mal Jn. - Damaged sleeper renewal under the jurisdiction of SSE/P.WAY/Banarhat, Dalgouni-Binnaguri-TBR of loop line at Dalgouni line no. 3 & 4 and at Binnaguri line no. 3 & 4 under the jurisdiction of ADEN/ WEST/Alipurduar Jn. & New Mal Jn. - Alipurduar Jn. -TSR(P) of LC gate sleeper under jurisdiction of ADEN/ WEST/Alipurduar Jn. Tender value: ₹1,85,45,339.73/. Earnest Money: ₹2,42,700.00. E-tender will be closed at 13:00 hrs. on 21-06-2024 and opened at 15:00 hrs. on 21-06-2024. The complete information with tender documents of above e-tender will be available in the website <http://www.irops.gov.in>.

DRM (Works), Alipurduar Jn. NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY "Serving Customers With A Smile"

CORRIGENDUM

Branch office: ICICI Bank Limited Plot No-23, 3rd Floor, Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi-110005
Notices under SARFAESI Act for Loan Account No. LBDEL00002414855, Name of the Borrower/ Co-borrower PRAVIN KUMAR MALHOTRA/ PRIYANKA MALHOTRA Demand Notice under section 13(2) dated April 28, 2022, Symbolic possession notice dated September 06, 2022 and Physical Possession Notice October 06, 2023, published in News Paper The Pioneer (Eng.) & Pioneer (Hindi) on June 22, 2022, September 09, 2022 & October 11, 2023 respectively. We wish to mention that inadvertently and unintentionally a typographical error has occurred in the said notices and Property Address was mentioned as FLAT NO 2828, SECOND FLOOR, BLOCK-C-1, COUNTRY HOME SCHEME, SUSHANT LOK PHASE-I, GURGAON, HARYANA, GURGAON instead of PLOT NO 2828, SECOND FLOOR, BLOCK-C-1, COUNTRY HOME SCHEME, SUSHANT LOK PHASE-I, GURGAON, HARYANA, GURGAON. We therefore, request you to please read the property address as PLOT NO 2828, SECOND FLOOR, BLOCK-C-1, COUNTRY HOME SCHEME, SUSHANT LOK PHASE-I, HARYANA, GURGAON only. All other details mentioned in the aforesaid Notices will remain the same. We sincerely regret the inconvenience caused to you in this regard.
Date : June 01, 2024
Place : Delhi
Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

Branch Office: ICICI Bank Limited Plot No-23, 3rd Floor, Shal Tower New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi-110005

Whereas The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13(2) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Sumeet Kumar Dwivedi/ Annupta Dwivedi/ LBDEL00001857297	Flat No-D-1/52/6, 2nd Floor, Situated At Village Brahmur Bhopura, DLF Dilshad Plaza, Dilshad Extension-II, Pargana Loni Tehsil And District Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh- 201010/ May 29, 2024	January 12, 2024 Rs. 11,86,364/-	Delhi/ NCR
2.	Ramesh Kumar/ Saroj Sharma/ LBGHZ00001396680	Flat No.-UG-1, Plot No. A-86 Mig DLF, Dilshad Extn.-2, Block-A, Brahmur Alias Bhopura Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh- 201005/ May 29, 2024	January 17, 2024 Rs. 6,29,333/-	Delhi/ NCR
3.	Bal Krishan Dua/ LBDEL00001431340	Flat No. T-4, Second Floor, L.I.G., Plot No. C-1/2, (with Roof Rights), Residential Colony D.L.F., Ankur Vihar, Pargana Loni, Tehsil & Distt. Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh/ May 29, 2024	January 23, 2024 Rs. 5,28,402/-	Delhi/ NCR

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/ guarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgage properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.
Date: June 01, 2024
Place: Delhi/ NCR
Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

RLF LIMITED.

Reg.Office:14 Kms. Gurgaon, Pataudi Flood, Village Jhund Sarai veeran, Distt. Gurgaon, Haryana-122001
Corporate Office:D-41, South Extension-II, New Delhi-110049.
CIN No. L74999HR1979PLC032747, Phone :011-26258237,Email :limitedrfl@gmail.com

EXTRACT OF STANDALONE AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND YEAR ENDED ON 31ST MARCH,2024

Sr. No.	Particulars	Quarter ended		Year ended	
		31/03/2024	31/03/2023	31/03/2024	31/03/2023
		Audited	Audited	Audited	Audited
1.	Total Income from Operations	19.32	25.27	236.53	96.62
2.	Net Profit for the period (before tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(17.28)	(16.83)	6.47	(17.28)
3.	Net Profit before tax for the period (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(261.16)	(260.71)	4.46	(278.04)
4.	Net Profit for the period after tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(261.16)	(260.71)	4.46	(278.04)
5.	Total Comprehensive Income for the period (comprising profit for the period (after tax) and other Comprehensive Income (after Tax)	(261.16)	(260.71)	4.46	(278.04)
6.	Equity Shares Capital (Face value Rs.10/- Per equity share)	980.08	980.08	980.08	980.08
7.	Reserve (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the Audited balance sheet of previous accounting year	-	-	-	-
8.	Earning Per Share of Rs. 10/- each (for continuing and discontinued Operations) Basic and diluted	(2.66)	(2.66)	0.05	(2.84)

Notes:
1. The above extract is an extract of the detailed format of Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under the Regulation 33 of SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the financial results is available on the stock exchanges website: www.bseindia.com. The same is also available on the company's Website: www.rfltd.com
2. The above results have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of Directors of the company at their Meeting held on 30TH May, 2024.
3. Figures for the previous Quarter/year have been regrouped/rearranged wherever necessary to correspond with the Current year's figures.

Place: New Delhi
Date: 30-05-2024
For RLF LTD
SD/
Aditya Khanna, Managing Director
DIN : 1860038

UNITED LEASING & INDUSTRIES LIMITED

Regd. Office: Plot No.66, Sector-34, EHTP, Gurugram, Haryana-122001.
CIN: L17100HR1983PLC033460, Website: www.uliltd.com,
Email id: investorrelations@uliltd.com, Phone: 011-49075251

Extract of Audited Financial Results for the Quarter & Year Ended 31st March, 2024

Sl.No.	Particulars	Quarter Ended			Year Ended	
		31.03.2024	31.12.2023	31.03.2024	31.03.2024	



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PAPER WITH PASSION

High and dry

The Delhi Govt is out to fine people wasting water. But is it doing enough at its own end?

Summers in Delhi are particularly harsh due to the combination of extremely high temperatures, hovering around 50 degrees Celsius, and frequent heatwaves that exacerbate the already intense heat. Compounding these problems is the deficiency in civic services, which leaves the residents high and dry. The city's urban heat island effect, where concrete retains and radiates heat, makes the environment significantly hotter. The rural areas in the hinterland, particularly those towards the west, bear the brunt of hot westerlies coming in from the Rajasthan desert. During this season, water shortage becomes a critical issue as demand peaks while supply dwindles, making it difficult for the residents to stay hydrated. Additionally, the high demand for electricity to run air conditioners, coolers and fans often overwhelms the power grid, resulting in frequent power cuts, thus increasing health risks. Summer also brings poor air quality due to dust storms and increased vehicular emissions which, when combined with the



heat, can lead to respiratory problems and other health issues. There are several reasons for Delhi's woes. Though nothing much can be done about the fire raining from the skies, the management of resources such as electricity and water can be done in a better manner. Every year, the Delhi Government blames Haryana for not releasing its share of water, but no one wants to find a long-term solution. Besides, many parts of Delhi, especially East Delhi, lack sufficient green spaces, which are essential for providing shade and cooling the environment. It is a sad commentary on Delhi Government that more than 22 per cent water bodies of Delhi have been stolen.

Earlier records suggest that Delhi had over 1,000 water bodies which served as buffers and provided water and coolness. To address this issue, the Delhi Government has announced a fine of Rs 2,000 on those found guilty of wasting water. So, in a way, the city Government is putting the onus for water scarcity only on its people. Home to over 20 million people, Delhi is experiencing unprecedented water shortages. The rising temperatures have led to increased water consumption, putting immense pressure on the already strained water supply system. Residents are facing erratic water supplies, with many neighbourhoods receiving water only a few hours each day. The fine targets a range of activities considered wasteful, including washing cars with hosepipes, watering gardens excessively and leaving taps open. While the intention is commendable, several factors question its practicality and effectiveness. How will the Government find the culprits and who will define water wastage? Besides, the Government is being harsh on people who are already braving the heat despite electricity and water scarcity. Instead, the Government could have issued a warning for wasting water and arranged for water tankers in areas badly hit by water scarcity. For now, only the weather gods can save the Capital.

PICTALK



Children of a school offer prayers during a 'havan' for relief from the heatwave, in Jammu

India and Bangladesh: A tale of two books



HIRANMAY KARLEKAR

Two recently published books provide in-depth examinations of pivotal South Asian political landscapes

I have just finished a book pertaining to election-related data in India and another to Bangladesh and its ties with this country. Chambers Book on Indian Election: Facts (Hachette, India) authored by Kingshuk Chatterjee and Surbek Biswas, an academic and a senior journalist respectively, goes beyond statistics. Figures are integrated into a narrative that encompasses the country's political and electoral journey since the time of the British Raj and the elections held during it. Post-Independence, it dwells on the functioning of institutions like the Parliament, State legislatures and the judiciary, placing figures in context of an unfolding account of electoral battles, their results and the underlying political currents running throughout the country. It is a heaven-sent for not only scribes but political party functionaries, activists, poll-forecasters, to name a few, who scramble for data with the advent of elections, and, of course, scholars and researchers, hunting for information at all times for doctoral theses or other projects. Interspersed with the narrative are interesting pieces of not generally remembered information, such as Gian Singh Rarewala being the first non-Congress chief minister of any state in India. He became chief minister of Patiala and East Punjab States Union (PEPSU) at the head of a United Front Government on April 22, 1952. It is a book worth keeping on the shelf.

Transformation, Emergence of Bangladesh and Evolution of India-Bangladesh Ties (Knowledge World and Indian Council of World Affairs), is by a distinguished former officer of the Indian Foreign Service, Pinak Ranjan Chakravarty. It traverses a long time-span from the pre-historic period to the present. While providing an illuminating account of the historical circumstances shaping Bangladesh's emergence and cultural, religious, social and political ethos, the narrative contains several avoidable errors. For example, Chakravarty says that Siraj-U-Doula (the last independent nawab of Bengal) was tortured and brutally killed in prison by



Mir Madan, Mir Jafar's son. Siraj was killed on July 2, 1757, under orders from Mir Miran, Mir Jafar's son. Mir Madan fought loyally for Siraj in the battle of Palashi and died in combat. Again, Chakravarty writes, "The Hindu College in Calcutta came up in 1817 CE and the Serampore College in 1819 CE. The Serampore missionaries also introduced Bengali periodicals and newspapers like 'Deek Darshan' and 'Samachar Darpan', which were vehicles for campaigning against 'Sati'. The Bengali 'Bhadralok' class was created with such activities." The emergence of the Bhadralok was a much more complex phenomenon. In Elite Conflict in a Plural Society: Twentieth Century Bengal, J.H. Broomfield has described the Bhadralok as "A socially privileged and consciously superior group, economically dependent on landed rents and professional and clerical employment." The factors contributing most to their rise were the Permanent Settlement (1793), which created a class of zamindars and rentiers, the spread of English education, the expansion of British administration which created opportunities for Indians in the bureaucracy and the establishment of a judicial system, networks of medical administration and engi-



ITS STUMBLES NOTWITHSTANDING, THE BOOK PROVIDES MUCH USEFUL INFORMATION AND INSIGHTS INTO THE EMERGENCE OF BANGLADESH AND THE EVOLUTION OF INDIA-BANGLADESH RELATIONS WITH THEIR STORMY AND SUNNY INTERLUDES

neering services, which led to the rise of the professions. All this deserves mention because Muslim Bhadralok, emerging in the wake of their Hindu predecessors, played an important role in Bangladesh's liberation struggle and its post-independence politics. While the two leading political parties, Awami League (AL) and Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), are led by Sheikh Hasina and Begum Khaleda Zia, both Bhadramahilas (women Bhadralok), the leaders of the organisational layers below them are mainly Muslim Bhadralok. Its stumbles notwithstanding, the book provides much useful information and insights into the emergence of Bangladesh and the evolution of India-Bangladesh relations with their stormy and sunny interludes. It also provides an exhaustive account of Bangladesh's increasingly contentious internal politics. The book's narrative ends before elections to the country's National Parliament on January 7, 2024, which were boycotted by the BNP and which the AL won securing 224 out of the 300 seats in contest. Sheikh Hasina, however, has to grapple with the adverse economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Ukraine War and the increasing spread

of fundamentalist Islam in Bangladesh. The first has led to discontent against her Government. The second, which threatens the secularism embedded in Bangladesh's constitution, led to the rise of terrorist outfits resorting to violent acts, the most outrageous of which was the attack on the Holy Artisan Bakery, a restaurant in a posh Dhaka neighbourhood, in which 20 persons, including an Indian, were killed, on July 1, 2016. Sheikh Hasina has squelched the terrorist outfits but has to deal with kid gloves organisations like Hefajat-e-Islam preaching fundamentalist Islam. Her ascent to power for the second time as prime minister in 2009, initiated a continuing friendly chapter in India-Bangladesh relations. Nevertheless, pressures on both countries are many and neither can take things for granted. Chakravarty's narrative is enriched by his ringside view of events both as India's Deputy High Commissioner (1999-2002) and High Commissioner (2007-09) to Bangladesh. His book needs to be read, over and over again, by all those interested in India-Bangladesh ties which, in turn, have an important bearing on South Asian geo-politics. (The author is Consulting Editor, The Pioneer. The views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

TRAGIC BUS ACCIDENT IN JAMMU

Madam — Apropos the news story "21 killed, 47 injured as bus falls into gorge in Jammu," published on May 30, this is my response. Reading about the tragic bus accident in Jammu, where 21 lives were lost and 47 people were injured, is truly heartbreaking. The accident occurred when a bus carrying pilgrims skidded off the road and plunged into a gorge, highlighting once again the perils of road travel in treacherous terrains. The grief expressed by Jammu and Kashmir's Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha resonates with the deep sorrow felt by all. The details are chilling: a failed negotiation of a blind curve, an oncoming speeding car and a catastrophic fall of 150 feet into the gorge. The prompt response by the rescue teams and the efforts to provide immediate medical assistance to the injured are commendable, yet the loss remains profound. This incident underscores the urgent need for enhanced road safety measures and stricter regulations to prevent such heartbreaking occurrences in the future. My thoughts and prayers go out to the affected families.

Arjun Desai | Chandigarh

RBI DIVIDEND BOOSTS GDP

Madam — Apropos the news story "Record RBI dividend at 0.6 per cent of GDP may not be sustained Fitch," published on May 28, this is my response. The above alluring cum enticing and burning news from the stable of RBI that the same has declared record-high super-normal dividend growth by the central bank is simply a win-win situation for both duo viz. Apex Bank of India and the Government of India. Furthermore, the same news by the US (United States) credit rating agency cum giant Fitch Ratings Inc. will give a nitro boost to the economic growth GDP (gross domestic product) of our country. Furthermore, the above-mentioned spectacular news is a source of pride for the RBI, a bourse country Government and its citizens.

Delhi's water crisis worsens



Apropos the news story "Mad scramble for water in several areas as Delhi grapples with a severe shortage," published on May 30, this is my response. The water crisis in Delhi has reached alarming levels, with residents in areas like Chanakyaपुरi struggling to secure necessities. Despite Government measures to curb water use, such as banning potable water

for car washing, the situation remains dire. The sight of people scrambling with empty buckets and climbing atop water tankers underscores the desperation. Deepak Srivastava and Janki, long-term residents, express frustration over the lack of consistent water supply, blaming political parties for neglecting basic needs in favour of electoral gains. The severe heatwave exacerbates the issue, with temperatures nearing 50 degrees Celsius. The Delhi Government's emergency actions, including inspections at car service centres, offer some hope, but the fundamental problem persists. Videos of the crisis shared on social media highlight the stark reality: in 2024, in India's capital, access to water will remain a daily battle for many. This calls for urgent, sustainable solutions from both local and national authorities.

Vihaan Verma | Jaipur

Additionally, the above awesome cum uber-cool news has become a burning topic among both the masses and classes. Moreover, from now on, after enjoying the windfall dividend of the central bank, the Government of India will keep a close tab on RBI stock. Additionally, after giving oh-so-uber cum oh-so-uber supernormal dividend growth, the RBI will again work day and night to deliver more and more windfall dividends to the Government of India. Additionally, the above news has received a red-carpet welcome from both print media and electronic media.

Harminder | Lucknow

PRAGGNANANDHAA'S TRIUMPH

Madam — Apropos the news story "Norway chess: Pragganandhaa claims maiden classical win over Carlsen, takes sole lead," published on May 30, this is my response. Reading about Indian Grandmaster R Pragganandhaa's remarkable victory over world number one Magnus Carlsen in the Classical format is truly thrilling.

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Economic growth raises sustainability concerns

As Indians embrace a culture of 'wants' over 'needs,' there's a growing urgency to address the unsustainable patterns of consumption



KAJLEEN KAUR

Over time, India has shown remarkable progress in GDP growth rates. It currently ranks fifth surpassing the United Kingdom in 2022 and with its promising performance, is expected to overtake Japan by 2025.



Amidst the celebration of becoming the fourth largest economy, a worrisome aspect is the rising consumption level of the huge population and its alarming impact on sustainability. Consumption is the driving force behind prospering economic growth. It has a multiplier effect as investors respond to positive consumption by increasing production and hiring more workers, who in turn, spend more, further boosting economic activity. Consumerism is dominating the world and India is no exception indeed. The estimates of average Monthly per capita consumer expenditure (MPCE) according to the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey, 2022-23 reveal a 33.5 per cent increase by urban households since 2011-12, reaching ₹3,510, while rural India's MPCE increased by 40.42

per cent to ₹2,008. India's consumption story reminds us of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, a psychological theory proposed by Abraham Maslow (1943), wherein there is a transition from psychological needs comprising necessities to security to esteem and self-actualisation needs. A noteworthy phenomenon of this shift from 'needs to wants' is the unlimited nature of the latter and the subsequent and alarming wastage of resources. High consumption can have alarming repercussions on sustainability and long-term economic and social welfare. Foremost, it leads to resource depletion, which may be non-renewable and therefore irreversible, causing scarcity, higher costs and potential financial instability. Environmental degradation is another externality of excessive consumption which includes pollution, deforesta-

tion, biodiversity loss and waste production. According to the Central Pollution Control Board, 2020-21 Annual Report, the total quantity of Solid waste generated in the country is 160038.9 tonnes per day (TPD), out of which 79956.3 TPD (50 per cent) of waste is treated and 29427.2 (18.4 per cent) TPD is landfilled. 50655.4 TPD which is 31.7 per cent of the total waste generated remains ironically unaccounted for. Besides, high consumption also leads to increasing use of fossil fuels and products with large carbon footprints, significantly contributing to climate change. Given large income disparities in India, even the benefits of high consumption are not evenly distributed. While some people and regions may experience significant economic growth, others may be left behind, exacerbating further economic inequality. While at one end consumption is essential for economic growth, at the same time it is threatening long-term sustainability. To ensure that high consumption contributes to sustainable eco-

nomical growth, we need to encourage consumption patterns that are environmentally friendly and socially responsible. This can be achieved through rampant education, incentives and regulations. We need to radically work towards investing in renewable resources to reduce the environmental impact of high consumption. The Government needs to implement policies and regulations that encourage sustainable practices and mitigate the negative impacts of high consumption. This includes environmental regulations, carbon pricing and incentives for green technologies. We also need to develop diverse economic activities that do not solely rely on high consumption levels.

By sensibly managing consumption and prioritizing sustainability, it is possible to achieve economic growth that benefits society while preserving the environment for future generations. (The author is assistant professor at Sri Guru Gobind Singh College of Commerce, University of Delhi; views are personal)



FIRST COLUMN

WITNESSING THE DIVINE PRESENCE

There are multiple instances where the Supreme manifests itself



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

I was watching 'pran pratistha' of Lord Rama's Deity in the new temple constructed at the birthplace of the Lord. As the ceremony progressed, I began to notice subtle changes in the Lord's expression; He was coming alive. I was amazed, but I couldn't fail to notice the change as it happened. My experience was corroborated by the sculptor, who made this idol. He admitted that what he had sculpted was a lot different, meaning that the expression he had given was quite sober. By the way, pran pratistha is a transformative act of bringing the idol to life. This manifestation is nothing amazing. God appears even in person. The following five true life stories will exemplify this. The first one chosen is when Lord Krishna appeared as Draupadi was being attempted to be disrobed in the royal court of Dhrtarashtra. Draupadi in desperation prayed for help by chanting — "Krishna, Krishna, Krishna". The Lord appeared and provided endless sarees to save Draupadi from humiliation. The second incident chosen is when Surdasa falls into a ditch, him being blind. He attempted to get out but failed. He called for help, but no one came. The place was deserted. His worshipable Lord knew that His true devotee needed help. He came and saw Surdasa sitting down and singing bhajan completely oblivious of the sorry situation he was in. Lord asked him, "Why are you not trying to get out?" Surdasa replied, "I did and failed. I realised that only you could help me." The Lord gave Surdasa His hand and helped him to come out. There is a famous bhajan when Surdasa implores the Lord not to leave him.



The third incident happened a few years back. A close relative of mine was sitting in a temple near her home deeply engrossed in thought. A babaji appeared in front of her. He spoke to her, "You are greatly troubled by the behaviour of your in-laws. Don't worry. You will suffer a certain disease, he named it, due to the stress caused by it. But it will be cured; will not make you suffer much. Before this relative could react, this person had gone away. That disease did trouble her but came under control soon. This relative is a sincere devotee of God. The fourth example is related to a friend of mine. He is a staunch devotee of God. Over the last five decades, he has made enormous spiritual progress. He is in his late nineties and still going strong. His wife passed away recently after a brief illness. He tried to prevent it by chanting a mantra. He also hoped that she would get an excellent birth next time. As he was overdoing it, God arranged for an aged lady to come to his house. She informed him that his wife would pass away on the fifteenth day. He was shocked. By the time he gathered his wits, she was gone. Was she God Himself or a person chosen by God? The last example is of an American. He had become very rich, but he was neither peaceful nor happy. Intrigued, he had to find the reason. Was material wealth not the solution to all our problems and he had plenty of it? He started visiting various churches but got no satisfactory answer. Disappointed, he decided to come to India - the spiritual capital of the world. Same result here also with bogus gurus trying to manipulate him. Highly frustrated, he was sitting down on a bench on the bank of the Ganges in Haridwar. He was in deep thought when someone tapped him on his shoulder. He opened his eyes and saw a saintly person standing in front of him. He said, "Don't be so sad. Take shelter of God. And the best way is to follow God's instructions as detailed in the bona fide scriptures. Buy a copy of the Bhagavad-Geeta." When he opened his eyes, the saintly person was not to be seen. Can we have similar experiences with God? Yes, we can. God is always quite forthcoming. We just have to qualify for it. How do you do that? It is simpler than what you can imagine. Do spiritual practices, which suit your nature. For example, I do 'darshan' and 'naman', chanting, thanking and praying regularly. Once a certain amount of spiritual credits has been accumulated, God gets active in our lives. (The writer is a spiritual guide; views are personal)

Recycle nutrients to mitigate fertiliser crisis

Many elements crucial for life on Earth are depleting rapidly due to disrupted biogeochemical cycles caused by human activities



NANDULA RAGHURAM

If you think carbon is bad enough, other essential elements that sustain life on Earth are also crossing the planetary boundaries of sustainability, as their natural 'biogeochemical' cycles are broken by human activities. For about ten thousand years before the 'green' revolution, farmers grew crops without fertilisers by combining legume-based crop rotations and livestock farming. Legume crops and some soil microbes fixed atmospheric nitrogen, while livestock manure and urine enriched the soil with nutrients such as compounds of nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P), potassium (K), sulfur (S), carbon (C) and even micronutrients. But modern cropping in India shifted away from legume-based crop rotations and relies heavily on NPK fertilisers rather than manures, costing the Indian govt over Rs. 2 lakh crores per year in subsidy. As livestock farming moved away from crops and intensified as peri-urban dairies, manure and urine mostly find their way to our ground and surface water bodies. The release of untreated dairy or domestic and other wastes has reduced the Sahibi River in New Delhi to a wastewater drain (Nazafgarh drain), which along with the Shahdara drain heavily pollutes the river Yamuna, apart from releasing noxious gases into the air.

The nutrient cycles have thus become cascades causing nutrient pollution, but the good news is that some pollutants are nutrients in the wrong place and can be brought back. Unfortunately, less than 30 per cent of the fertiliser nutrients supplied as fertilisers are harvested as crop yield and the remaining add to the growing pollution. In water bodies, the accumulation of these nutrients supports unwanted algal growth causing eutrophication and death of fish and other useful aquatic and marine species. This destroys the ecosystem and the livelihoods of people who depend on fishing, tourism and other ecosystem services. In our coastal areas, algal eutrophication progressively causes green tides, brown and eventually red tides and even the accumulation of poisonous species. The reversal of these trends can rebuild water economies and support the livelihoods of millions. Nitrogenous compounds from fertilisers, manures, urine and sewage also cause air pollution as ammonia or nitrous oxide. Ammonia contributes heavily to particulate matter pollution (PM2.5 and PM5) by combining with NOx gases (nitrogen dioxide and nitric oxide) emitted from fuel or residue burning for power, transport industry, or waste disposal. Over a million deaths per year are attributed to PM2.5 alone in India, while some attribute up to 7 per cent of all deaths to PM2.5, as India has the largest number of the world's most polluted cities in terms of PM2.5. These figures call for drastic measures to control air pollution in general and PM2.5 in particular, but it needs not only curbing pollution from fuel burning but also restoring the nutrient cycles in agriculture and waste management.

While a fraction of livestock manure is recycled for cropping in India, urine recycling is nearly nonexistent. If we recycled all the 15 kg per animal per day of manure produced by 200 million cattle, its 5 per cent NPK nutrients amount to 1,50,000 metric tons. This is much more than our average daily fertiliser consumption, which is about 1,37,000 metric tons. Add to this about 3 per cent of nutrients lost from 15-20 litres of cattle urine per animal per day totalling



1,20,000 metric tons. Technologies and best practices are available from Europe and elsewhere to maximise nutrient retention and recycling from manure and urine. We already know that at least half of the currently recommended fertiliser doses can be replaced with farmyard manure without any loss of crop yield. It not only saves a lakh crores but also reduces the environmental footprint of fertilisers, manures and agriculture itself. Similarly, over 55,000 metric tonnes of nutrients equivalent to 40 per cent of our fertiliser consumption are lost daily from over 150 billion litres of wastewater produced per day in India. This is because of our abysmally low wastewater treatment capacity of about 27 per cent. Most sewage treatment plants (STPs) exist only in the cities and only a few of them work. Fortunately, some metropolitan cities like Delhi and Hyderabad are rapidly expanding their STP capacity to become 100 per cent wastewater treatment capable in a year or two and some other big cities in India are following suit. However, they vary in their efficiency of nutrient removal, which must be addressed immediately to ensure that the purpose of treatment is fully realised and that the treatment plants become resource plants by selling the recovered nutrients.



WE ALREADY KNOW THAT AT LEAST HALF OF THE CURRENTLY RECOMMENDED FERTILISER DOSES CAN BE REPLACED WITH FARMYARD MANURE WITHOUT ANY LOSS OF CROP YIELD

There is a growing emphasis worldwide on preventing the wastage of nutrients and recycling them. The most notable among them is Target 7 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework adopted under the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity at its 15th Conference of Parties in 2022: It seeks to "Reduce pollution risks and the negative impact of pollution from all sources by 2030, to levels that are not harmful to biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services considering cumulative effects, including (a) by reducing excess nutrients lost to the environment by at least half, including through more efficient nutrient cycling and use". In Europe, where extensive recycling

of livestock manure and urine is already in practice, the new buzzword is the so-called RENURE (recovery of nitrogen from manure) policy of the European Commission (2024). As such proposals are debated to ensure that they contribute to overall sustainability objectives in the European context, it is important to note the policy attention that the recovery and recycling of nutrients has garnered. In the meantime, a Swedish fertiliser company, Ragn-Sells, has patented a process to recover nutrients from wastewater and convert them into industry-grade fertilisers and spun off a company easyming.se to launch it in Europe within a year. If India can set up such units attached to our STPs, they can hugely reduce the economic and environmental costs of earlier fertiliser technologies, generate green jobs.

Delhi alone produces about 3330 Million Litres per Day (MLD) of wastewater, far over the installed and operational treatment capacities of the city's 38 STPs (CPCB, 2021). The Delhi Government has set its target to achieve 100 per cent wastewater treatment by 2025 and increase the reuse of treated wastewater from 12.5 per cent to 60 per cent with the proposed utilisation of 197 MGD, 112 MGD and 10 MGD treated sewage for drinking purposes, irrigation and rejuvenation of water bodies respectively (CPCB, 2021). We conducted some studies on the wastewater nutrients and their recovery/recycling potential in several STPs of the national capital, aided by the University's memorandum of understanding with the Delhi Jal Board.

They were funded by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) under the Global Wastewater Initiative and the Global Partnership on Nutrient Management. Our studies found that the current level of removal of phosphatic nutrients in various STPs of Delhi varies between 35-74 per cent and 14-93 per cent for nitrogenous nutrients. Except for the Akshardham STP, which oper-

ated at the higher end of the range, most of the other STPs we studied were closer to the lower end of the range, indicating the huge scope to improve nutrient recovery. A similar study will be undertaken in Hyderabad soon, in association with agricultural scientists who will also test the crop performance and estimate the amount of commercial fertiliser that can be saved by recycling nutrients recovered from wastewater.

Such efforts will hugely improve the quality of treated water for various uses and also relieve the water crisis looming over India's metropolitan cities. In Delhi, the nutrient-depleted water is also critical to expediting the rejuvenation of the water bodies of Delhi, as the quality of treated water currently used is not good enough to revive the heavily eutrophicated water bodies. As for the recycling of nutrients removed from wastewater, currently, there are huge piles of nutrient-rich sludge in the backyard of every working STP. They need to be developed and marketed as alternatives to fertiliser by building necessary market linkages and supply chains as needed.

This is already happening to some extent in Hyderabad but needs to be scaled up further to clear the inventory. An important task is to find ways to pre-process the sludge to minimise the heavy metals, plastics and other undesirables we found coexisting with nutrients in the sludge in Delhi. Overall, on a national scale, if we recover and recycle the 84 per cent of nutrients lost in wastewater for agriculture, up to forty per cent of our national fertiliser consumption can be saved. In economic terms, these savings are equivalent to the entire R&D budget of the Government of India.

(The writer is a Professor and Head of, the Centre for Sustainable Nitrogen and Nutrient Management School of Biotechnology, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, New Delhi; views are personal)

Haryana is driving towards progress and prosperity

Haryana is emerging as a beacon of economic prosperity and social development, embodying the vision of 'Viksit Haryana for Viksit Bharat'

Haryana embodies courage and strength. Modi, who has savoured Haryana's spirit, has led with vigour for ten years. Seeing Rafale jets soar in Ambala skies today is a proud moment for all of us, Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently said at the major rallies in Ambala and Sonapat, highlighting the opposition's deceitful intentions and reaffirming the BJP's dedication to Haryana's development. In his second mega rally in Sonapat, Modi shed light on the Congress party's past misdeeds and their desperate attempts to regain power. In another incident earlier this month, Haryana stood on the cusp of an emotional milestone. In a display of unprecedented support and



KIRIT P SOLANKI

enthusiasm, former Chief Minister of Haryana, Manohar Lal Khattar, led a mega rally at Ganaur, Sonapat, endorsing Lok Sabha candidate Mohan Lal Badoli. The event, attended by over 15,000 fervent supporters, marked a significant moment in Haryana's political landscape. Manohar, renowned for his progressive policies and transformative governance, was warmly received by the crowd,

underscoring the deep-rooted admiration and trust he commands among the populace. His rally served as a testament to the enduring popularity of Manohar's leadership and the impactful strides taken by the 'double engine Government' in the State. The Modi-Manohar effect has been instrumental in spearheading numerous initiatives aimed at propelling Haryana towards economic prosperity and social development. Under their stewardship, Haryana has emerged as a magnet for investments and a hub of opportunities, embodying the vision of 'Viksit Haryana for Viksit Bharat'. The rally, infused with patriotic fervour and untiring support, emphasised the staunch resolve of

Haryana's electorate to chart a path towards progress and prosperity. As the political landscape evolves, Manohar's rally stands as a testament to the enduring legacy of visionary leadership and the collective determination to realise a brighter future for Haryana and the nation at large. From bolstering transparency in Government job recruitments to empowering the youth through the Haryana Kaushal Rozgar Nigam, the State has witnessed a paradigm shift under the astute leadership of Manohar Lal Khattar. The establishment of all-women police stations, initiatives like Beti Bachao Beti Padhao and a surge in infrastructure projects underscore the Government's untiring commitment to holistic

development. Haryana's rise as an investment destination is nothing short of spectacular, with exports soaring and MSMEs mushrooming across the State. In the textile and apparel sector, Haryana's prowess shines through, with a significant contribution to India's exports. With over 35 per cent of carpets and 20 per cent of garments manufactured in the State, Haryana is cementing its position as a textile powerhouse. The strategic alignment with national initiatives like the PM Gati Shakti Yojana and the establishment of industrial parks exemplify Haryana's proactive approach towards economic prosperity. The State's healthcare infrastructure has received a significant boost, with the establishment

of medical universities and skill development centres catering to the evolving needs of the populace. The number of medical colleges has surged from 6 in 2014 to 15 and the number of MBBS seats has increased from 700 to 2185. Moreover, the number of PG seats in medical colleges has grown from 289 to 1006. The State has further enhanced nutritional outcomes for children, adolescents, pregnant women and lactating mothers through the POSHAN Abhiyan. In agriculture, schemes like PM-KISAN and PM Fasal Bima Yojana have provided a safety net for farmers, ensuring their livelihood security. Today, PM-KISAN has benefited over 20 lakh farmers in

the State with assistance of over Rs. 5,000 crore. Haryana plays a pivotal role in India's journey towards becoming a global nutrition hub. There are ambitious plans that include promoting the State's coarse grains like jowar and millet on the international stage, the implementation of the world's largest warehouse project and the creation of specialised clusters over the next 5 years. Also, there are plans for a revolutionary drone initiative in farming, empowering mothers and sisters with drone pilot training to harness the latest technology in agriculture. Cultural preservation and promotion have been integral to Haryana's development narrative, with initiatives like the PM Vishwakarma Yojana

fostering artisanal traditions and 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' fostering cultural exchange. The State's rich heritage is being showcased through initiatives like the Anubhav Kendra Jyotisar and the development of archaeological sites like Rakhi Garhi. The 'double engine Government' has proven instrumental in leveraging resources for comprehensive growth, be it in agriculture, infrastructure, or education. Prime Minister Modi emphasised, The dawn of a new era, led by visionary leadership and fueled by the aspirations of its people, promises a brighter tomorrow for the State and the nation at large. (The writer is a Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha; views are personal)

Trump first ex-prez convicted of felony

HUSH MONEY TRIAL



AP ■ WASHINGTON

Donald Trump has been found guilty of all 34 charges of falsifying business records by a grand jury in New York, an unprecedented and historic verdict that makes him the first former president in American history to be convicted of a felony, as he makes a bid to return to the White House in November. In a landmark verdict, a panel of 12 Manhattan jurors on Thursday said they unanimously agreed that Trump, 77, falsified business records to conceal a USD 130,000 hush money payment to adult film star Stormy Daniels to influence the 2016 presidential election. It will ultimately be up to voters on November 5 to decide the significance of the guilty verdict delivered by 12 ordinary New Yorkers, which, on a legal basis, does not prevent him from being elected president again. Over a six-week trial, the court heard from 22 witnesses, including Daniels, whose alleged sexual encounter with the former president was at the centre of the case. As the verdicts were read, Trump remained silent and still. But the former president spoke to reporters outside the courtroom, calling the trial a "rigged, disgraceful trial" and saying that the "real verdict" will be rendered on Election Day. Prosecutors had argued that, by approving a scheme to disguise the money as legal expenses,

Trump broke election law. Trump's sentencing is scheduled for July 11, four days before the Republican National Convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where he will be formally nominated as the party's presidential candidate against incumbent Joe Biden, an 81-year-old Democrat, in the elections. For now, Trump has been released without having to pay bail. "This was a disgrace. This was a rigged trial by a conflicted judge who was corrupt. It's a rigged trial, a disgrace. They wouldn't give us a venue change. We were at 5 per cent or 6 per cent in this district, in this area. This was a rigged, disgraceful trial," said Trump shortly after the verdict was read. "The real verdict is going to be November 5th by the people. And they know what happened here, and everybody knows what happened here. You have a Soros-backed DA, and the whole thing, we didn't do a thing wrong. I'm a very innocent man, and it's okay, I'm fighting for our country. I'm fighting for our Constitution. Our whole country is being rigged right now," Trump said. Trump alleged that this was done by the Biden administration to wound or hurt a political opponent. No former president or presumptive party nominee in the US has ever faced a felony conviction. During the trial, the prosecution

set out to prove that Trump had falsified records when he repaid his former lawyer Michael Cohen for a hush-money payment to Daniels. They said he had recorded the reimbursements as legal expenses to circumvent campaign finance laws. Todd Blanche, Trump's lead lawyer, told Justice Juan Merchan that the court should not allow the verdict, arguing that Cohen committed perjury on the stand. The Trump team's motion to acquit, however, was denied by Justice Merchan. The Biden Harris campaign welcomed the jury's verdict. "In New York today, we saw that no one is above the law," said Biden-Harris 2024 Communications Director Michael Tyler. "Donald Trump has always mistakenly believed he would never face consequences for breaking the law for his gain. But today's verdict does not change the fact that the American people face a simple reality. There is still only one way to keep Donald Trump out of the Oval Office: at the ballot box. Convicted felon or not, Trump will be the Republican nominee for president," he said. University of California, Los Angeles law professor Richard L. Hasen - one of the country's leading experts on election law - has consistently said that nothing in the US Constitution bars a convicted criminal from running for the nation's highest office.

Republicans rally behind Trump to his defence after felony verdict

Washington (PTI): Republicans rallied behind former US president Donald Trump who on Thursday was convicted of a felony as a grand jury in New York found him guilty on 34 counts of falsifying business records. This made him the first former president to be convicted of a felony. The jury found that the 77-year-old presumptive Republican presidential candidate, falsified the records in a scheme to influence his 2016 presidential election through hush money payments to a porn actor who had said she had sex with Trump. Cutting across internal party divisions, the Republicans rallied around Trump as the jurors unanimously reached a verdict in the hush money criminal case. "This will backfire," said Indian-American Vivek Ramaswamy, who over the past few months has emerged as a close aide and confidant of Trump. "The prosecutor is a politician who promised to nail Trump. The judge's daughter is a Democrat operative who literally *raised dollars from the trial* while her father presided over it. The jury instructions said they didn't have to agree on the crime to convict," he said. "Dems could have saved a lot of time by announcing the verdict first, and then having the trial," said former Indian-American Governor Bobby Jindal from Louisiana. "Pretty neat trick that the same Dem DA who makes violent felonies disappear conjured up these felonies," he said. House Speaker Mike Johnson described it as a shameful day in American history.

"Democrats cheered as they convicted the leader of the opposing party on ridiculous charges, predicated on the testimony of a disgraced, convicted felon," he said. "This was a purely political exercise, not a legal one. The weaponisation of our justice system has been a hallmark of the Biden administration, and the decision today is further evidence that Democrats will stop at nothing to silence dissent and crush their political opponents," Johnson said. House Majority Leader Steve Scalise said extremist Democrats have undermined democracy by weaponising the courts to operate like a banana republic that targets their political opponents. "Today's verdict is a defeat for Americans who believe in the critical legal tenet that justice is blind. It was clear from the start that Biden teamed up with heavily biased DA Alvin Bragg to go after his political opponent regardless of wrongdoing - while hardened criminals are set free in New York to commit more violent crimes against innocent citizens," he said. He alleged that this is nothing more than an attempt to interfere with the 2024 election. "The radical Democrats behind this abuse of our justice system will not prevail. The voters will settle this on November 5th," he said. Florida Governor Ron DeSantis said the verdict represents the culmination of a legal process that has been bent to the political will of the actors involved: a leftist prosecutor, a partisan judge and a jury reflective of one of the most liberal enclaves in America - all in an effort to 'get' Donald Trump.

16 killed, 35 wounded in joint US-British airstrikes

AP ■ DUBAI

Joint British-US airstrikes targeting Yemen's Houthi rebels killed at least 16 people and wounded 35 others, the rebels said Friday, the highest publicly acknowledged death toll by the rebels from the multiple rounds of strikes carried out over their attacks on shipping. Three US officials, speaking on condition of anonymity to describe a then-ongoing attack, described the strikes Thursday as hitting a wide range of underground facilities, missile launchers, command and control sites, a Houthi vessel and other facilities. They called it a response to a recent surge in attacks by the Iran-backed militia group on ships in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden over the Israel-Hamas war. The US F/A-18 fighter jets involved in the strikes launched from the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower aircraft carrier in the Red Sea, officials said. Other US warships in the region also participated. But the Houthis focused Friday morning on just one of the strikes, which they said struck a building housing Hodeida Radio and civilian homes in the port city on the Red Sea. Their Al Masirah satellite news chan-

nel aired images of one bloodied man being carried down stairs and others in the hospital, receiving aid. The Houthis described all those killed and hurt in Hodeida as civilians, something The Associated Press could not immediately confirm. The rebel force that's held Yemen's capital, Sanaa, since 2014 includes fighters who often are not in uniform. Other strikes hit outside of Sanaa near its airport and communication equipment in Taiz, the broadcaster said. Little other information was released on those sites - likely signaling that Houthi military sites had been struck. "We confirm this brutal aggression against Yemen as punishment for its position in support of Gaza, in support of Israel to continue its crimes of genocide against the wounded, besieged and steadfast Gaza Strip," Houthi spokesman Mohammed Abdulsalam wrote on the social media platform X. In the United Kingdom, the country's Defense Ministry said Royal Air Force Typhoon FGR4s conducted strikes on both Hodeida and further south in Ghulayfiqah. It described its targets as "buildings identified as housing drone ground control facilities

and providing storage for very long range drones, as well as surface-to-air weapons." "The strikes were taken in self-defense in the face of an ongoing threat that the Houthis pose," British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said. "There's an ongoing threat that the Houthis pose." The Houthis have stepped up attacks on shipping in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, demanding that Israel end the war in Gaza, which has killed more than 36,000 Palestinians there. The war began after Hamas-led militants attacked Israel on October 7, killing about 1,200 people and taking around 250 hostages. The Houthis have launched more than 50 attacks on shipping, killed three sailors, seized one vessel and sunk another since November, according to the US Maritime Administration. This week, they attacked a ship carrying grain to Iran, the rebels' main benefactor. On Wednesday, another US MQ-9 Reaper drone apparently crashed in Yemen, with the Houthis claiming they fired a surface-to-air missile at it. The US Air Force didn't report any aircraft missing, leading to suspicion that the drone may have been piloted by the CIA.

Cop dies in ambush shooting that killed two others in US

Minneapolis (AP): A Minneapolis police officer who was killed Thursday had responded to a shooting call and was providing medical attention to a man when he was ambushed in a shooting that killed two other people including the suspected gunman, authorities said. Minneapolis Officer Jamal Mitchell was trying to help an injured man when the man shot him, Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension Superintendent Drew Evans said. The Minneapolis Police Department said the public was not in danger but encouraged people to stay away from the scene at a Minneapolis apartment complex in the south Minneapolis neighborhood of Whittier. The Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association said a second officer was injured

while they were responding to the call. Police were holding a late evening news conference to address the shooting. News footage showed a large police presence at both the apartment complex and the hospital. Melvin Carter, the mayor of neighboring St. Paul, said the city was sending police and other first responders to Minneapolis to provide support, including having officers help with security at the NBA playoff game between the Minnesota Timberwolves and the Dallas Mavericks. Agents from the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives had responded to "an active shooting situation," said Ashlee Sherrill, a spokeswoman for the local field division. ATF agents were "there to help expedite the firearms investigation piece of it," she said.

S Africa heading for 'coalition country' As partial election results have ANC falling under 50%

AP ■ JOHANNESBURG

South Africa was heading closer to the reality of a national coalition government for the first time Friday as partial election results put the ruling African National Congress well short of a majority. With more than half of votes counted across the country's nine provinces, the ANC had received just under 42% of the national vote, according to the early results as counting continued. That represented a huge drop from the 57.5% it received in the last national election in 2019, although the final results from Wednesday's election have not yet been declared. The commission that runs the election said those would be announced by Sunday, although they could come sooner. The count from more than 12,000 of the 23,000 polling

stations raised the strong possibility that the ANC would need a coalition partner to form a government and reelect President Cyril Ramaphosa for a second and final term. The frenzied negotiations were likely set to start behind closed doors. The ANC was still leading the count and had the most votes by some way, as expected, with the main opposition Democratic Alliance on around 24%. The ANC is widely expected to still be the biggest party and to have the most seats in Parliament. The ANC has had a clear majority for all 30 years of South Africa's democracy since the party swept to power in a 1994 election which officially ended the apartheid system of white minority rule, leading Nelson Mandela to become the country's first Black president. It has been the dominant political force and its slipping below

50% would be a momentous change for Africa's most advanced economy. The ANC's support has steadily declined from a high of nearly 70% of the vote 20 years ago as South Africa grapples with deep socioeconomic problems, including widespread poverty and now one of the worst unemployment rates in the world at 32%. Poverty and unemployment disproportionately affect South Africa's Black majority that make up 80% of the population and were the core of the ANC's support over the years. While the inequalities of apartheid were always going to be hard to solve, the ANC has also been blamed by many for failures in basic government services, numerous government corruption scandals and most recently an electricity crisis that led to rolling blackouts across the country of 62 million. This election is shap-

ing up to be the tipping point when more South Africans choose another party. A projection from a government agency and SABC, based on vote returns, was estimating on Friday that the ANC would end up with just over 40%, a drop of around 17 percentage points, which would be a stunning result in the context of South Africa. The ANC has said little on its possible coalition partners despite the issue dominating South Africa's political analysis for months ahead of the election. The various parties - South Africa has at least four that could be considered major parties - may now "be faced with a reality that they have to work together" to deal with the country's major challenges, said Joleen Steyn-Kotze, a senior research specialist on democracy at South Africa's Human Sciences Research Council.

Top US, Chinese defense officials seek to restore communications as tensions rise in Indo-Pacific

AP ■ SINGAPORE

US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin met with his Chinese counterpart for more than an hour Friday, as the two countries seek to repair lines of communications between their militaries that could be critical as tensions continue to rise between the two in the Indo-Pacific region. The meeting behind closed doors with Chinese Defense Minister Dong Jun was the first in person for the top defense officials since contacts between the American and Chinese militaries broke down in 2022 after then-US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi visited Taiwan, infuriating Beijing. It took place on the sidelines of the Shangri-La defense forum, Asia's premier security conference, which features defense officials, government leaders and diplomats from around the world. The week-

end talks are being held as wars rage in Gaza and Ukraine, and at a time of increasing tensions and competition for influence between the United States and China in the Indo-Pacific region. Beijing in recent years has been rapidly expanding its navy and is becoming more assertive in pressing its claim to virtually the entire South China Sea, which has led to an increasing number of direct conflicts with other countries in the region, most notably the Philippines and Vietnam. The US, meanwhile, has been ramping up military exercises in the region with its allies to underscore its "free and open Indo-Pacific" concept, meant to emphasize freedom of navigation through the contested waters, including the Taiwan Strait. China also claims the democratic self-governing island of Taiwan and has said it will not rule out using force to take it.

Austin, who is due to address the conference on Saturday, reiterated the American position to Dong during their talks, according to Pentagon spokesperson Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder. "The secretary made clear that the United States will continue to fly, sail, and operate - safely and responsibly - wherever international law allows," Ryder said. "He underscored the importance of respect for high seas freedom of navigation guaranteed under international law, especially in the South China Sea." Since territorial hostilities with China surged last year in the South China Sea, Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s administration has taken steps to forge new security alliances with a number of Asian and Western countries and allowed a US military presence in more Philippine bases under a 2014 defense pact.

In his talks with Austin, Dong accused the US of inflaming regional security by deploying medium-range missiles in the Philippines for the first time recently, and said the Philippines was being provocative toward China by pressing its own South China Sea claims, Chinese Defense Ministry spokesperson Wu Qian told reporters after the meeting. Marcos opens this year's conference, hosted by the International Institute for Strategic Studies, with a keynote address Friday. This week, Marcos already expressed concerns over a new law issued by China giving its coast guard license to seize foreign ships "that illegally enter China's territorial waters" and to detain foreign crews for up to 60 days. The same law also made new reference to 2021 legislation that says China's coast guard can fire upon foreign ships if necessary.

Indian-American seventh-grader wins Spelling Bee title

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Bruhat Soma, a 12-year-old Indian-American seventh-grade student from Florida, has won the Scripps National Spelling Bee after he spelt 29 words correctly in the tiebreaker, maintaining the dominance of the children from the small ethnic community in the prestigious competition. Bruhat emerged victorious in the Scripps National Spelling Bee on Thursday, earning more than USD 50,000 in cash and other prizes. This year's contest came down to a tiebreaker in which Bruhat spelt 29 words correctly in 90 seconds, beating Faizan Zaki, who managed to correctly spell 20 words in the lightning round. His championship word was "abseil", which is defined as "descent in mountaineering by means of a rope looped over a projection above." Organisers calling for a spell-off to determine a winner following 14 rounds over three days at the national champi-

onships. Bruhat went first in the tiebreaker, and after he got through 30 words, it appeared he would be impossible to beat. Faizan's pace was more uneven at the outset. He attempted 25 words but flubbed four of them. "Bruhat Soma rules the word! The Champion of the 2024 Scripps National Spelling Bee! The boy with the unbelievable memory doesn't miss a word all week and takes home the Scripps Cup!" the organisers said. "Bruhat Soma correctly spelt 29 out of 30 words attempted to earn the coveted champion title and beat the standing spell-off record set by Harini Logan in 2022. Logan spelt 22 out of 26 words correctly during the competition's first-ever spell-off," the organisers said. "As the competition progressed, it was clear that Faizan and Bruhat - our final two spellers - showed up tonight ready to take down the dictionary," said Corrie Loeffler, executive director of the Bee.



"Together, they were a powerful match. Bee officials activated the spell-off in the competition's closing minutes, giving these stellar spellers an opportunity to show even more of what they can do," Loeffler said. The two final spellers each had

90 seconds to spell as many words as they could from a predetermined list of words while the other speller was sequestered. He spelt every word thrown his way correctly over the 90-second duration: brouette, adelantado, hyporcheme, bisellium, mycterix, endecha, sericin, myctalopia, ascham, wenzel, cebell, heautophany, kwazoku, panetiere, sagaie, nachschlage, exorhason, giclee, ashwagandha, pusza, asarotum, scintillante, myrabalanus, sciniph, voussour, caizinha, ramoneur, aposiopsis and abseil. The 31th word was posology, but time is called before he can finish spelling it. He only spelt porphyrio incorrectly. While competing, his forehead was marked with a vermilion tika, a Hindu symbol of power and purity. His parents said that Bruhat memorised about 80 per cent of the sacred Hindu texts, the Bhagavad Gita. "My heart was pumping so fast when I realised I won," Bruhat said. "I had a good feeling I would win because I did pret-

ty good, but yeah, you never know. I still couldn't absorb the moment yet." Adam Symson, president and CEO of The E W Scripps Company, presented Bruhat with the championship trophy. "At just 12 years old, Bruhat impressed with his display of knowledge and composure," Symson said. Bruhat's father Srinivas Soma is originally from Nalgonda in Telangana. This was Bruhat's third time participating in the Scripps National Spelling Bee. He tied for 74th in 2023 and tied for 163rd in 2022. Zaki of Allen, Texas, received USD 25,000. Shrey Parikh of Rancho Cucamonga, California, tied for third place in the competition and received USD 12,500. Coached by 16-year-old former speller Sam Evans, Bruhat previously competed in 2022 (tied for 163rd place) and 2023 (tied for 74th place).

'Kim Jong Un supervised drills simulating preemptive attacks on South Korea'

Seoul (AP): North Korean leader Kim Jong Un supervised drills involving the firing of nuclear-capable multiple rocket launchers to show the country's ability to carry out a preemptive attack on rival South Korea, state media reported Friday. North Korea has simulated nuclear strikes on South Korea numerous times, but the latest drills came after animosities on the Korean Peninsula rose over North Korea's recent failed spy satellite launch. The North's official Korean Central News Agency reported that the rocket firing drills were meant to demonstrate North Korea's resolve not to hesitate in launching a preemptive strike on South Korea if threatened. It cited Kim as saying that the drills "will serve as an occasion in clearly showing what consequences our rivals will face if they provoke

us." Photos showed Kim watching from a distance as at least 18 projectiles were launched. KCNA suggested the drills came as response to a South Korean aerial exercise performed hours before North Korea's failed attempt to place its second spy satellite into orbit on Monday night. The launch attempt drew strong condemnation from South Korea, the U.S. and others because the U.N. bans any satellite launches by North Korea, viewing them as covers for testing missile technologies. North Korea reacted angrily, arguing that it has the sovereign right to launch satellites. Also this week, North Korea flew hundreds of huge balloons into South Korea carrying manure and other trash, and allegedly jammed GPS navigation signals in the South. There were no reports of any substantial damage.

Biden eases ban on Ukraine using US arms for strikes in Russia

AP ■ WASHINGTON

President Joe Biden has given Ukraine the go-ahead to use American weaponry to strike inside Russia for the limited purpose of defending Kharkiv, according to three US officials familiar with the matter.

The officials, who requested anonymity to discuss the sensitive matter, underscored that the US policy calling on Ukraine not to use American-provided ATACMS or long-range missiles and other munitions to strike offensively inside Russia has not changed.

Biden's directive allows for US-supplied weapons to be used for "counterfire purposes in the Kharkiv region so Ukraine can hit back against Russian forces that are attacking them or preparing to attack them", one official said.

The move comes as Ukrainian officials have stepped up calls on the US administration to allow their forces to defend themselves against attacks originating from Russian territory. Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, is just 20 kilometers (12 miles) from the Russian border.

Biden's decision was first reported by Politico. Ukrainian officials, most

notably Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, have been increasingly vocal in arguing that the restriction was putting Ukrainian forces in an untenable situation as Russia intensified attacks around the northeast Kharkiv region.

The advances came with Russia exploiting a lengthy delay in replenishment of US military aid and as Western Europe's inadequate military production has slowed crucial deliveries to the battlefield for Ukraine. During Secretary of State Antony Blinken's visit to Kyiv two weeks ago, Zelenskyy made his case for using American weapons to strike back at positions in Russia that were launching attacks into north and northeast Ukraine. Blinken was convinced and brought that message back to Washington, but it was ultimately Biden's decision to make, according to three US officials who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss internal administration deliberations.

Since the start of the Russian invasion in February 2022, Biden has been steadfast in his opposition to Ukraine's offensive use of American-made weaponry, concerned that the action could be seen as

provocative and lead to Moscow widening the war. Blinken said in Moldova on Wednesday that US policy on how Ukraine deploys American weapons is constantly evolving, hinting that Washington may alter its unwritten prohibition on Ukraine's use of them for attacks on Russian territory. On Thursday, Blinken joined NATO foreign ministers for a meeting in Prague, where during a tour of a Czech military base he saw armored vehicles that are being sent to Kyiv. Although US officials insist there is no formal arms ban, they have long made clear that they believe the use of American weapons to attack targets inside Russia could provoke an escalatory response from Moscow, something that Russian President Vladimir Putin has promised. That position, Blinken noted, was a "hallmark" of the Biden administration's stance on Ukraine to "adapt and adjust" as needed.

"As the conditions have changed, as the battlefield has changed, as what Russia does has changed in terms of how it's pursuing its aggression, escalation, we've adapted and adjusted, too, and I'm confident we'll continue to do that,"

Blinken said at a news conference in Moldova. "We're always listening, we're always learning, and we're always making determinations about what's necessary to make sure that Ukraine can effectively continue to defend itself, and we'll continue to do that," he said.

Calls for a change in policy have been mounting. Earlier this week, French President Emmanuel Macron and NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg said that Western countries should not object if Ukraine needs to strike inside Russia to defend itself. Stoltenberg reaffirmed that position on Thursday. "I believe that time has come to (re)consider some of these restrictions to enable the Ukrainians to really defend themselves," he said. "We need to remember what it is. This is a war of aggression launched by choice by Moscow against Ukraine."

The right to self-defence, he said, "includes also striking legitimate military targets outside Ukraine". Czech Foreign Minister Jan Lipavsky said at a NATO-related event on Thursday in Prague that Ukraine needs resources to counter Russia's relentless assault.

Berlin lets Ukraine use German weapons against targets in Russia

Kyiv (AP): The German government said Friday that Ukraine can use German-supplied weapons against Russian attacks from positions just over their joint border, in a significant policy change that came a day after US President Joe Biden gave Kyiv a green light to strike back with American weapons at Russian military assets targeting the country's second-largest city.

A German government statement noted that, in recent weeks, Russia has prepared, coordinated and carried out attacks on Ukraine's northeastern Kharkiv region in particular from areas just over the border in Russia.

"Together we are convinced that Ukraine has the right under international law to defend itself against these attacks," the statement said. "For this, it can also use the weapons delivered for that purpose in accordance with its international legal commitments, including the ones delivered by us," it added, without elaborating on what Berlin called confidential agreements

with Kyiv.

A Russian onslaught this month in the northeastern Kharkiv region, including a Russian aerial bomb attack on a large construction supplies store that killed 18 people on May 25, has forced the evacuation of thousands of people and has stretched Ukraine's depleted forces in what is proving to be a critical period in the war, which is now in its third year. That appears to have prompted the change in policy among Western leaders.

The Kremlin's bigger and better-equipped army is exploiting Ukrainian shortages in troops and ammunition after a lengthy delay in US military aid. Western Europe's inadequate military production has also slowed crucial deliveries of military aid to Ukraine. Biden's decision allows for US-supplied weapons to be used for "counterfire purposes in the Kharkiv region so Ukraine can hit back against Russian forces that are attacking them or preparing to attack them," one Washington official told The Associated Press.

But the officials, who requested anonymity to discuss the sensitive matter, stressed that the US policy calling on Ukraine not to use American-provided ATACMS or long-range missiles and other munitions to strike offensively inside Russia has not changed.

The German announcement came hours after Russian ballistic missiles slammed into an apartment block in Kharkiv and killed at least four people in a nighttime attack.

Russia launched five S-300/S-400 ballistic missiles at Kharkiv overnight, Ukraine's air force said. One of them struck a residential building close to midnight and was followed by another missile 25 minutes later that hit first responders, according to regional Governor Oleh Syniehubov. At least 25 people were injured, he said. Ukrainian officials have previously accused Russia of targeting rescue workers by hitting residential buildings with two consecutive missiles — the first one to draw emergency crews to the scene and the second one to wound or kill them.

Orban pushes back on NATO proposals to further assist Ukraine

Budapest (AP): Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban on Friday pushed back against some NATO proposals that would allow Ukraine to use Western weapons to strike targets within Russia, saying that such plans have Europe "inching closer to destruction."

The nationalist leader has long opposed Western countries supplying Ukraine with military aid, and threatened to derail European Union financial support to Kyiv and the passing of sanctions against Moscow.

He has also maintained close ties with Russian President Vladimir Putin despite his full-scale invasion of Ukraine, while ramping up energy deals with Moscow at a time when most EU countries have sought to limit the use of Russian fossil fuel.

During a Friday interview on state radio, Orban said that French President Emmanuel Macron's stance that he wouldn't rule out sending troops to Ukraine, as well as a NATO proposal that would allow Kyiv to strike military bases inside Russia with sophisticated long-range weapons provided by Western partners, risked escalating the war in Ukraine into a global conflict.

"War is a monster that is constantly hungry, it must be fed, and it must be fed with money. And I see that the Americans and the Democratic government of the United States, and the leaders of the European Union, are ready to feed it," he said.

Orban is campaigning for the European Parliament election, which will be held in Hungary on June 9. He has cast the election as an existential struggle between war and peace, and focused his campaign on fears that Western support for Ukraine could cause an escalation of Russia's war.

He has portrayed his party as unique in calling for an immediate end to the fighting in Ukraine. But critics say his proposals amount to capitulation to Moscow, which would allow Russia to retain territories it has occupied in Ukraine and embed it further.

Russian missiles kill 4 in Kharkiv

Kyiv (AP): Russian ballistic missiles slammed into an apartment block in Kharkiv and killed at least four people in a night-time attack, Ukrainian officials said Friday, a day after US President Joe Biden gave Kyiv a green light to strike back with American weapons at Russian military assets targeting the country's second-largest city.

Russia launched five S-300/S-400 ballistic missiles at Kharkiv overnight, Ukraine's air force said. One of them struck a residential building close to midnight and was followed by another missile 25 minutes later that hit first responders, according to regional Gov. Oleh Syniehubov. At least 25 people were injured, he said.

Ukrainian officials have previously accused Russia of targeting rescue workers by hitting residential buildings with two consecutive missiles — the first one to draw emergency crews to the scene and the second one to wound or kill them. The tactic is called a "double tap" in military jargon. Russia used the same method in Syria's civil war.

A Russian onslaught this month in the northeastern Kharkiv region, including a Russian aerial bomb attack on a large construction supplies store that killed 18 people on May 25, has forced the evacuation of thousands of people and has stretched Ukraine's depleted forces in what is proving to be a critical period in the war, which is now in its third year.

Apart from Kharkiv, Moscow's troops are pressing in the Donetsk region further south and are assembling a force for an expected attack in the Sumy region further north, according to Ukrainian officials. The Kremlin's bigger and better-equipped army is exploiting Ukrainian shortages in troops and ammunition after a lengthy delay in U.S. military aid. Western Europe's inadequate military production has slowed crucial deliveries of military aid to Ukraine.

Biden's decision allows for U.S.-supplied weapons to be used for "counterfire purposes in the Kharkiv region so Ukraine can hit back against Russian forces that are attacking them or preparing to

attack them," one Washington official told The Associated Press.

But the officials, who requested anonymity to discuss the sensitive matter, stressed that the U.S. policy calling on Ukraine not to use American-provided ATACMS or long-range missiles and other munitions to strike offensively inside Russia has not changed. That restriction has frustrated Ukrainian officials as the military is unable to order hits on Russian troops massing across the border — Kharkiv city is only 20 kilometers (12 miles) from Russia — or Russian bases used to launch missile attacks. The question of whether to allow Ukraine to hit targets on Russian soil with Western-supplied weaponry has been a delicate issue since Moscow launched its full-scale invasion on Feb. 24, 2022. Western leaders have hesitated to take the step because it runs the risk of provoking Russian President Vladimir Putin, who has repeatedly warned that the West's direct involvement could put the world on a path to nuclear conflict.



From left, Icelandic Prime Minister Bjarni Benediktsson, Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson, Finnish President Alexander Stubb and Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre, re pose for a family photo on the occasion of a Nordic summit, in Stockholm, AP/PTI



Firefighters put out a fire an apartment building damaged in the Russian missile attack in Kharkiv, Ukraine, Friday. AP/PTI

Paks Defence Minister asks Imran to keep mum

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif on Friday asked Imran Khan to keep his "mouth shut" if he wants to ease the political tension in the country, days after a controversy arose over a social media post by the former prime minister. A post attributed to Khan, the incarcerated founder of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, on May 26 on X said: "Every Pakistani should study the Hamood ur Rahman Commission Report and get to know who was the true traitor, General Yahya Khan or Sheikh Mujibur Rahman."

The post also had a video attached that showed black and white clippings from the 1970s.

The Hamood ur Rahman Commission Report was a report by the official commission of inquiry into the reasons for Pakistan's defeat in the 1971 war that led to the cre-

ation of Bangladesh out of what was then East Pakistan. Khan's May 26 post garnered a lot of traction over the days with hundreds of RTs (retweets) and thousands of 'Likes' and was shared by multiple handles of the party and its followers. On Friday, Defence Minister Asif commented: "I think the founder of PTI wants to increase tension."

Asif also asked Khan to keep his "mouth shut" if he wanted political tension in the country to lessen. Asif told Geo News that the former prime minister, who remains incarcerated at the Adiala jail since August 2023, is trying again to create a situation like that on May 9. Last year, after Khan was arrested, hundreds and thousands of his followers and party workers vandalised a dozen military installations, including the Jinnah House (Lahore Corps Commander House), Mianwali Airbase and the ISI building in Faisalabad.

The Army headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi too was attacked by the mob for the first time on May 9. The minister said attempts are being made to retract the tweet related to the former Bangladesh president Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. "Barrister Gauhar (Khan) clarified that the social media team did not seek permission before tweeting," said the minister, adding that this was the first time that the party had to retract a post on their social media account. The tweets were, however, neither retracted nor deleted. Asif said he has a different stand on the history of the Bangladeshi politicians and the tragedy of East Pakistan and added, "By exaggerating the tragedy of East Pakistan today, you want to increase the tension." Geo News said that the minister further alleged that whether it was in politics or sports, the former premier had stung everyone who had done good to him and, com-

menting on Khan's relationship dynamics with the former military men when he was in power, claimed: "General (Qamar Javed) Bajwa's father, General Faiz (Hamid) was his uncle, now (he is) dumping all the debris at them." Two days ago, PTI's Barrister Gohar Khan said that Khan's post had nothing to do with him as the former prime minister did not see the text of the posts that were uploaded to his account, Geo News said. Gohar also defended the tweet and said it was taken out of context as he said: "The context and comparison that we drew with 1971 was in a political context and not otherwise — nothing about the army."

Meanwhile, a Federal Investigation Agency's (FIA) cybercrime team on Thursday decided to initiate action against Khan over his controversial tweet on social media and reached Adiala jail where Khan has been incarcerated since last year.

Pak PM to visit China next week to plan bilateral growth, launch CPEC phase

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD/ BEIJING

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will embark on a five-day visit to China on Tuesday during which he will hold talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping and "jointly draw a blueprint" to strengthen bilateral ties further, as the all-weather allies seek to upgrade cooperation under the multi-billion dollar China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project, as the two sides look forward to launching the project's second phase. The CPEC was launched a decade ago, and several energy and infrastructure projects had already been completed. During his visit to China, Prime Minister Sharif will hold talks with President Xi and "jointly draw a blueprint" for the growth of China-Pakistan relations, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said in Beijing.

This will be Sharif's first visit to China after he took over as prime minister for the second term after his Pakistan National League-Nawaz (PML-N) party-led coalition government came to power in March. During his visit, Sharif will also hold in-depth exchanges with Premier Li Qiang and other officials on China-Pakistan relations and issues of mutual interest, Mao

told a media briefing. "China and Pakistan are all-weather strategic cooperative partners and iron-clad friends. Our friendship stood the test of time and remains rock solid, steady as Mount Tai," she said. Mt Taishan, also known as Mt Tai, is a famous mountain in China's Shandong province. In addition to Beijing, Sharif, 72, will visit Guangdong and Shaanxi provinces. Mao said the two countries had close high-level exchanges in recent years and steadily advanced practical cooperation conducted fruitful and "high-quality cooperation" of CPEC. The two sides also have maintained sound communication and coordination in international and regional affairs, she said.

India firmly opposes the CPEC, which will link Xinjiang in China and the Gwadar port in Pakistan, because it passes through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. The CPEC, which connects Gwadar Port in Pakistan's Balochistan with China's Xinjiang province, is the flagship project of China's ambitious multi-billion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The BRI is seen as an attempt by China to further its influence abroad with infrastructure projects funded by Chinese investments across the world. "China stands ready to work with Pakistan through this visit to make greater progress in our all-weather strategic cooperative partnership and take new steps to build an even closer China-Pakistan community with a shared future in the new era," Mao said.

Ex-Iranian parl speaker Ali Larijani registers as presidential candidate

AP ■ DUBAI

A former speaker of Iran's parliament registered on Friday as a possible candidate in the Islamic Republic's June 28 presidential election to replace the late Ebrahim Raisi, who was killed in a helicopter crash earlier this month with seven others.

Ali Larijani is the first high-profile candidate to register for the contest. He and other serious contenders against Raisi had been barred from running in the 2021 election.

Larijani, 66, is viewed as a conservative within Iran's narrow political scene. However, he has increasingly allied himself with former President Hassan Rouhani, whose administration

reached a 2015 nuclear deal with a group of world powers. Larijani had positioned himself as a pragmatic candidate in the 2021 vote in which hard-liner Raisi, a protégé of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, was elected. Larijani had posted online and made comments in recent days all but confirming he would be a candidate. The Larijani family has long been powerful in Iran's Shiite theocracy. "Solving the issue of sanctions for an economic opening will be among the priorities of diplomacy" for Iran, Larijani told journalists.

All candidates must be approved by Iran's 12-member Guardian Council, a panel of clerics and jurists ultimately



overseen by Khamenei. That panel has never accepted a woman or anyone calling for radical change within the country's governance. Who will run — and potential-

ly be accepted — remains in question. The country's acting president, Mohammad Mokhber, a previously behind-the-scenes bureaucrat, could be a front runner because he has

The new president will take office while the country is enriching uranium at nearly weapons-grade levels and is hampering international inspections. Iran has armed

Russia in its war on Ukraine and launched a drone and missile attack on Israel during the war in Gaza. It also has continued arming proxy groups in the Middle East such as Yemen's Houthi rebels and Lebanon's Hezbollah militia. Meanwhile, Iran's economy has faced years of hardship over its collapsing rial currency. Widespread protests have swept the country, most recently over the death of Mahsa Amini, who died in police custody in September 2022 after being detained for allegedly violating Iran's mandatory headscarf law. A UN panel said the Iranian government is responsible for the "physical violence" that led to Amini's death. (A

Over ₹10 lakh crore bad loans recovered in 10 years, says FM

Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday said the Modi government has turned around the banking sector through various reforms and improved governance which has led to banks recovering more than Rs 10 lakh crore from bad loans between 2014 and 2023.



December 2023, assets amounting to Rs 15,183 crore have been restituted to the Public Sector Banks (PSBs). "Recently, India's banking sector achieved a significant milestone by recording its highest-ever net profit, crossing Rs 3 lakh crore. The banking sector turned around due to PM Shri @narendramodi's strong and decisive leadership. Our government atoned for the UPAs' sins in the banking sector through comprehensive and long-term reforms," Sitharaman said in a post on X.

India's GDP expands 7.8 per cent in Q4, 8.2 per cent in FY24

India's economy growth slowed to a four-quarter low of 7.8 per cent in the January-March period, but pushed the annual growth rate for FY24 to 8.2 per cent, mainly on account of good showing by manufacturing, official data showed on Friday. The growth propelled the Indian economy to USD 3.5 trillion and set the stage for achieving the USD 5-trillion target in the next few years.

PUBLIC NOTICE

ICICI Bank Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005

The following borrower/s have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from the Bank and the loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). A notice was issued to them under Section 13 (2) of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act-2002 on their last known addresses, however it was not served and hence they are hereby notified by way of this public notice.

Table with columns: Sr. No., Name of the Borrower/Co-Borrower/ Guarantor, Property Address of Secured Asset/ Asset to be Enforced, Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice, NPA Date. Contains 27 entries of defaulted borrowers.

INDIAN OVERSEAS BANK

Rohini Branch (1506), 101-110, 1st floor RG complex, Sector 08, New Delhi 110085

ANNEXURE - I Demand notice to Borrowers / Mortgagees/Guarantors Under Sub-section (2) of section 13 of the SARFAESI Act, 2002

Table with columns: SI No, Nature of facility, Limit, Rates of interest (including overdue interest & rests), Total dues* as on 29.05.2024 (in Rs.). Lists borrowers ROHIT KUMAR and SAANVI.

*With further interest at contractual rates/rests will become payable from the date mentioned above till date of payment.

The above named borrowers of our bank have availed the following credit facilities from our Rohini Branch: The details of credit facilities with outstanding dues are as under:

Table with columns: SI No, Nature of facility, Limit, Rates of interest (including overdue interest & rests), Total dues* as on 29.05.2024 (in Rs.). Lists various facilities for ROHIT KUMAR and SAANVI.

The Bank reserves its right to proceed under SARFAESI Act against the eligible securities and as regards the agricultural land security Nos. 6 above through other available legal course of action.

Consequent upon defaults committed by the above named borrowers in payment of the principal debt / interest as per agreed terms, your loan account has been classified as Non-Performing Asset on 29.05.2024 as per Reserve Bank of India guidelines and directives.

Since you the above named borrowers referred under SI Nos 1 & 2 have failed to meet the liabilities in respect of the credit facilities duly secured by various securities mentioned above and upon classification of your account as a Non-Performing Asset, we hereby recall our advances to SI Nos 1 & 2 of you and give you notice under sub-section (2) of section 13 of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, and call upon you to pay in full and discharge your liabilities to the bank aggregating to Rs. 30,51,169.40/- (Rupees Thirty Lakhs Fifty one Thousand one Hundred and Sixty Nine and Forty Paise Only) as detailed in para 1 above, with further interest @ RLLR (9.35%)+0.45%-9.80% compounded with monthly rests as agreed, from the date mentioned above, within 60 days from the date of receipt of this notice.

The above named mortgagor / guarantor Nos 02 have given undertaking for repayment / guarantees for the credit facilities taken by the borrowers and have also given the properties herein mentioned to secure the above said credit facilities. Since the borrowers have committed defaults in repayment, the mortgagors/guarantors have become liable to pay to us in terms of the guarantee, the amounts due to the Bank as per the loan / credit facilities aggregating to Rs. 30,51,169.40/- (Rupees Thirty Lakhs Fifty one Thousand one Hundred and Sixty Nine and Forty Paise Only) together with further interest @ RLLR (9.35%)+ 0.45%-9.80% compounded with Monthly rests as agreed and we hereby invoke the guarantee against the mortgagors/guarantors who have given non-agri securities enforceable under the SARFAESI Act namely Ms. SAANVI of you and call upon you to pay the said amount within sixty days from the date of receipt of this notice. Please be advised that the guarantors liability is co-extensive with the liability of borrowers.

We further give notice to the borrowers namely Mr. ROHIT KUMAR and Ms. SAANVI and mortgagors/guarantors who have given non-agri securities enforceable under the SARFAESI Act namely Ms. SAANVI that failing payment of the above amount in full with interest and charges etc. till the date of payment, we shall be exercising all or any of the rights vested on us, under sub-section (4) of section 13 of the said Act.

5. Please note that in law the borrowers and guarantors are jointly and severally liable to repay the dues with further interest and charges etc.

6. Please note that interest will continue to accrue at the rates and rests as agreed for each credit facility until full repayment.

7. Your attention is also invited to sub-section (13) of section 13 of the said Act in terms of which you are restrained from transferring/ alienating/shifting any of the secured assets referred to above by way of sale, lease or otherwise, without obtaining our prior written consent. Please also note that non-compliance / contravention of the provisions contained in the said Act or Rules made thereunder, is an offense which is punishable with imprisonment and/or fine as provided under section 29 of the Act.

8. The guarantors referred under SI Nos Nil, and have given personal guarantee to secure the loans of the said borrowers and as such we advise you to prevail upon the borrowers to repay the dues as per our demand since we have the right to separately recall the advance from you, initiate action against you simultaneously in accordance with law, for recovery of our dues based on your personal guarantee.

9. We also put all of you on notice that if the account is not regularized/ repaid within the stipulated time and in case of the Bank classifying you as a willful defaulter as per RBI Guidelines, the Bank reserves its rights to publish your photograph in newspaper(s) with your name, address, details of default, dues etc., in accordance with RBI Guidelines besides initiating all resources available to the Bank for recovery.

10. We also advise you that this demand notice is without prejudice to and shall not be construed as waiver of any other rights or remedies which we have for recovery of the above said dues as well as our right to make further demands in respect of sums due and payable by you.

11. Further, attention is invited to provisions of Sub-section (8) of the Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Yours faithfully, Authorized Officer

sanctioning these loans," she said. Sitharaman said the Modi government implemented a comprehensive 4Rs strategy of Recognising NPAs transparently, Resolution and Recovery, Recapitalising PSBs, and Reforms after coming to power in 2014. "Our reforms addressed credit discipline, recognition and resolution of stress, responsible lending and improved governance. We replaced political interference in banks with professional integrity and independence," she said.

POWERGRID acquires Khavda IV-E2 Power Transmission Limited

PNS NEW DELHI

Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID) — a Maharatna CPSU under Ministry of Power has recently acquired a Project Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) viz Khavda IV-E2 Power Transmission Limited on May 31 for the "Transmission System Project for Evacuation of Power from Potential Renewable Energy Zone in Khavda Area of Gujarat under Phase-IV (7GW Part E2)" after competing with various private sector players and emerging as successful bidder in Tariff Based Competitive Bidding (TBCB) process.

Raj comics brings super commando Dhruva, Doga to life

PNS NEW DELHI

Raj Comics, the venerated publishing house that has long been synonymous with Indian comic book superheroes, announces the launch of the live-action short film series, "The Alliance: Project Metamorphosis Chapter 1" released today.

This ambitious project reintroduces beloved characters such as Super Commando Dhruva and Doga, reigniting the enchantment of Indian comics for a new generation.

The inaugural installment of the film will be available on the 'Raj Comics By Sanjay Gupta' YouTube channel, bringing the excitement directly to fans' screens.

In the 1990s, Raj Comics captured the imaginations of millions with its diverse roster of superheroes, featuring the indomitable Nagraj, and others.

SANEH INDUSTRIAL INVESTMENTS LIMITED

Regd. Office : Delton House, 4801, Bharat Ram Road, 24 Daryaganj, New Delhi -110002 (India) Phone No. 91-11-23273907, CIN: L74899DL1980PL060079

STATEMENT OF AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2024 (Rs. In Lakhs)

Table with columns: Sr No, Particulars, Quarter Ended 31.03.2024 (Audited), Quarter Ended 31.03.2023 (Audited), Year Ended 31.03.2024 (Audited), Year Ended 31.03.2023 (Audited), Consolidated Quarter Ended 31.03.2024 (Audited), Consolidated Year Ended 31.03.2023 (Audited). Lists financial results for Total Income, Net Profit, etc.

Notes: 1) The above is an extract of the detailed format of Audited Quarterly / Yearly Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly / Yearly Financial Results are available on the website of the company and also on the Stock Exchanges website www.cse-india.com

By the order of the Board For Saneh Industrial Investments Limited Sd/- Vivek Gupta (Director) DIN 00035916

RAMPUR FERTILIZERS LIMITED

Regd. Office: Judges Bareilly Road, Rampur 244 901 (U.P.), CIN: L15136UP1988PLC010084 Email id- info@rampurfert.com, Web: www.rampurfert.com,

EXTRACT OF AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH, 2024. (Rs. In Lacs)

Table with columns: S. No., Particulars, Quarter Ended 31.03.2024, Quarter Ended 31.03.2023, Year Ended 31.03.2024, Year Ended 31.03.2023, Consolidated Quarter Ended 31.03.2024, Consolidated Year Ended 31.03.2023. Lists financial results for Total Income, Net Profit, etc.

NOTES: The above is an extract of the detailed format of Financial Results filed with Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (LODR) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Financial Results is available on the Company's website at www.rampurfert.com and the same has been also sent to stock exchanges to upload on their websites i.e. www.cse-india.com and www.mse.in respectively.

By order of the Board Sd/- Anshuman Khaikhan (Managing Director)



NISHANT DEV BOOKS PARIS OLYMPICS TICKET

PTI ■ BANGKOK
Nishant Dev (71kg) became the first Indian male pugilist to secure a Paris Games quota when he reached the semifinals of the Boxing Olympic qualifiers here on Friday. The world championships bronze medalist, who had narrowly missed on an Olympic berth in the previous qualifiers, earned the quota after defeating Vasile Cebotari of Moldova 5-0 in the quarterfinal which was a battle of the southpaws. It is India's fourth quota place with women boxers Nikhat Zareen (50kg), Preet Pawar (54kg) and Lovlina Borgohain (75kg) having already secured their passage to Paris. The 71kg weight class had five quotas on offer.

Dev, who has been dominant all tournament, was off to a flyer, landing sharp, accurate punches. The Indian was more composed and used his punches judiciously. In the second round, Cebotari landed a couple of blows and Dev looked a bit out of breath but the Indian continued to hit accurate shots. In the last three minutes, both boxers looked spent but Dev continued to land punches at will. Cebotari earned a point deduction for his punch to Dev when the Indian was down on the canvas. Earlier, India's quest for booking a quota in the women's 60kg ended with Ankushita Boro 2-3 defeat against Agnes Alexiusson of Sweden in the quarterfinals. The 23-year-old Boro fought hard but her Swedish opponent, a former European

Games bronze medalist, dug into her reservoir of experience to pip the Indian. Boro, a former youth world champion, was slow off the blocks, but managed to adapt toward the end of the first round, using straight jabs effectively. It was enough to convince one judge. Down 1-4, Boro made a blistering start, using the combination of left jab and right cross. The Indian was electric and the 28-year Alexiusson was unable to keep up. The two entered the third round on equal footing and Boro was able to make early gains but Alexiusson ended the bout stronger taking the split decision win. Later in the day, Arundhati Choudhary (66kg) and Amit Panghal (51kg) will be in

Ministry approves Neeraj Chopra's two months training stint in Europe with coach, physio

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
The Sports Ministry on Thursday approved reigning Olympic and world champion Neeraj Chopra's plan to train in Europe for 60 days along with coach Klaus Bartonietz and physio Ishaan Marwaha as preparation for the upcoming Paris Games. The ministry's Mission Olympic Cell (MOC) also agreed to Asian Games gold medalist Vinesh Phogat's proposal to include strength and conditioning coach Wayne Patrick Lombard for the international training camp in Hungary from June 10 to 21. Chopra, who created history by becoming the first Indian to win a track and field medal at the Olympics in Tokyo three years ago, will be training at different venues in Europe May 29 to July 28. The financial assistance under TOPS (Target Olympic Podium Scheme) will be covering the airfare, accommodation, meals,

medical insurance, local transport expenses apart from out-of-pocket allowance as per Sports Authority of India (SAI) norms. Vinesh, who will be competing in 50kg division in Paris, had requested for assistance towards Lombard's airfare, visa fees, board and lodging and local transport in Hungary. She will also be competing in the United World Wrestling 2nd Ranking Series - Polyák Imre & Varga János Memorial from June 6 to 9 in Budapest. The MOC also cleared the TOPS wrestler's proposal for support to compete in Grand Prix of Spain from July 5 to 7 in Madrid. Her support team will include physiotherapist Ashwini Jeevan Patil, sparring partner Arvind and coach Woller Akos. **LONG JUMPER, SHUTTLEBATH'S PROPOSAL APPROVED:** Long jumper Shaili Singh's proposal to extend her training camp in Europe to June 23 was also approved by the MOC. Shaili



will be training in Lisbon, Paris, Athens and Geneva along with coach Bobby George. The MOC also cleared the request from shotgun shooters Rajeshwari Kumari and Maheshwari Chauhan to take their personal coaches to the training camp in Italy in June. Rajeshwari's personal coach David Kostecky will accompany the trap shooter to Italy from June 1 to 14. She will be competing in the ISSF World Cup, Lonato during the same period. Maheshwari's personal coach Riccardo Fillipelli will be

therapy and Red Light therapy. Hyperbaric oxygen therapy involves exposing the body to 100 percent oxygen at a pressure that is greater than normal. Among other things, it hastens wound healing. Red light therapy is a therapeutic technique that uses low level wavelengths of red light to help treat various skin conditions. Mainsam Meiraba and Anupama Upadhyay's proposal for support to compete in international tournaments has secured the approval. Recurve archer Atanu Das's request for monetary support towards two-month training at Army Sports Institute, Pune, from June 1 to August 5 along with coach Mim Gurung was also cleared. The request of sailor Vishnu Sarvanan to engage physio Sarath Lal for 40 days during his training camp in Marseille and Para powerlifter Ashok's request to secure a wheelchair also got a green signal from the MOC.

AP ■ MADRID

Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti may not have such a tough decision to make after all when it comes to picking a goalkeeper for the Champions League final. Much of the pre-game talk has centered around whether Ancelotti will go with Andriy Lunin - who has played for most of the season and led the team to the final - or Thibaut Courtois, the veteran who has recently returned from a long-term knee injury. Now Lunin is reportedly sick with the flu and said in a post on social media late Thursday that he won't "be able to prepare" for the final against Borussia Dortmund. "I am very sad to say that I won't be able to prepare for the most important game of the season and the most important game of my life with my team," Lunin wrote on Instagram. "Many thanks for the messages of support and encouragement!" Coach Ancelotti said on Monday that Lunin was running a fever and was unable to practice with his teammates. Lunin stayed in the Spanish capital while Madrid's team flew to London on

With Lunin ill, Courtois could be set to start Champions League final for Real Madrid



Friday. The club said that he would join the team on Saturday, hours before the game at Wembley Stadium. Neither the player nor the club have publicly ruled out the possibility of him

playing, but his illness could provide an opportunity for Courtois to end his season on a remarkable high after being sidelined for most of the campaign.

Courtois ruptured a left-knee ligament in August, just two days before the start of the season. The 32-year-old Belgian then damaged the meniscus in his right knee in March, when he was close to making a comeback. He was sidelined until the beginning of this month, when he started in a 3-0 win over Cadiz, a victory that secured Madrid's 36th Spanish league title. Courtois has proven experience in finals. He won the 2022 Champions League with Madrid, the FA Cup with Chelsea, the Europa League with Atletico Madrid, and two Copa del Rey titles (one for Madrid, one for Atletico), among other titles. Lunin was back starting when Madrid beat Bayern Munich in the Champions League semifinals. He previously saved two penalties in the decisive shootout win over Manchester City in the quarterfinals.

PTI ■ STAVANGER (NORWAY)

Indian Grandmaster R Vaishali continued her dream run to defeat veteran GM Pia Cramling of Sweden, while her brother R Praggnanandhaa went down fighting against Hikaru Nakamura of USA in the fourth round of the Norway chess tournament here. Vaishali stretched her lead to 2.5 points following her second win under classical time control. The Indian now has 8.5 points in her kitty and is followed by women's world champion Wenjun Ju of China and Anna Muzychuk of Ukraine. Muzychuk defeated Koneru Humpy for her first win in the tournament while Wenjun got through her compatriot Tingjie Lei in the Armageddon. With six rounds still remaining in the six-player double round-robin tournament, Lei stands fourth on five points, two points clear of Humpy and Cramling. In the men's section, world number one Magnus Carlsen grinded down arch-rival Fabiano Caruana of United States on a day that witnessed all decisive games under classical time control.

Vaishali outwits Cramling, Praggnanandhaa loses to Nakamura

In the other game of the day, Firouzja Alireza of France put it across reigning world champion Ding Liren of China. The USD 1,61,000 prize money tournament has many more critical games to come but at the end of fourth round Nakamura has nosed ahead on seven points, enjoying a half point lead over Alireza. Carlsen is third with six points to his credit while Praggnanandhaa slipped to fourth position on 5.5 points. Caruana is a close fifth at this stage with five points while Liren is a distant last on just 2.5 points thus far. Vaishali won thanks to her perseverance out of a drawn rook and pawns endgame. Playing the black side of a Grünfeld defense, the Chennai-based GM had little trouble equalising and the players arrived at a heavy piece endgame in almost no time. Cramling had to solve her pawn structure problem a bit and this is where Vaishali



thought she had a chance. The game was still within the boundaries of a draw when Cramling blundered and found herself staring at a lost rook and pawns endgame. The game lasted 54 moves. Humpy lost to Muzychuk in what was a similar story. The rook and pawns endgame should have been a draw but a blunder by Humpy towards the

optimistic in the resulting middle game and sacrificed a knight. The compensation, however, was not enough and Nakamura converted his extra material into a full point after 86 moves. Carlsen defeated Caruana out of a Queen and pawns endgame. Outplaying his opponent from a balanced position has long been a hallmark of Carlsen and this day was no different as he won thanks to a blunder by Caruana in the final part of the game. **RESULTS ROUND 4:** Men: Hikaru Nakamura (USA, 7) beat R Praggnanandhaa (Ind, 5.5) 3-0; Fabiano Caruana (USA, 5) lost to Magnus Carlsen (Nor, 6) 0-3; Firouzja Alireza (Fra, 6.5) beat Ding Liren (Chn, 2.5) 3-0. Women: Pia Cramling (Swe, 3) lost to R Vaishali (Ind, 8.5); Tingjie Lei (Chn, 5) lost to Wenjun Ju (Chn, 6); Anna Muzychuk (Ukr, 6) beat Koneru Humpy (Ind, 3).

India parts ways with IBA, joins World Boxing

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Boxing Federation of India (BFI) on Friday parted ways with the suspended IBA and joined the breakaway World Boxing in a bid to counter the threat to the sport's Olympic future. The move comes months after the International Olympic Committee reiterated its threat to leave boxing out of the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics if national federations continued to align themselves with the International Boxing Association (IBA). "It is absolutely vital to the sustainability of boxing that it retains its Olympics status, so we are delighted to join World Boxing," BFI president Ajay Singh said in a press release. Singh said he looks forward to working closely with the WB Executive Board to "shape the future development of the sport and deliver a brighter future for boxers across the world." World Boxing, whose president is former IBA presidential candidate Boris van der Vorst, was launched in April 2023 and



aims to ensure that boxing remains at the heart of the Olympic movement. The membership application was approved by the BFI's General Assembly and will be ratified by World Boxing's Executive Board. "India is a very important country in international boxing and we look forward to welcoming the BFI into the growing World Boxing family. This is a very exciting development which will significantly increase our presence in Asia and I look forward to working closely with the BFI in delivering our common goals," Van der Vorst said. On May 7, WB held its first for-

mal meeting with the IOC which signalled the start of a formal collaboration between the two organisations aimed at establishing a pathway for boxing to remain in the Olympic Games. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) had de-recognised the IBA in 2019 over long-standing financial, sports integrity, and governance issues. Boxing at the 2024 Paris Olympics is set to be overseen by the IOC. It will be the second successive time, after the Tokyo Olympics, that the IBA will have no involvement in bouts at the mega-event.

Peyton leads unseeded players pulling off upsets on a long day at French Open

AP ■ PARIS

Good thing the French tennis federation installed artificial lights on every court at Roland Garros in 2021, because they sure did come in handy Thursday, allowing match after match to stretch deep into the night, including one particular result that stood out: unseeded American Peyton Stearns' elimination of No. 10 Daria Kasatkina. All of the waiting around all day to get on court did not disrupt Stearns one bit, and the 22-year-old from Cincinnati, who won an NCAA singles title at the University of Texas, used 17 forehand winners through the cold, damp and slow conditions to defeat Kasatkina 7-5, 6-2 in a match that didn't start until after 9 p.m. And didn't finish until after 10:30 p.m. "You just kind of don't know what to expect," the 62nd-ranked Stearns said about waiting to get on court as showers created a start-stop-start scheduling fiasco all around the

grounds. "You have to accept that." How did she prepare to finally get started? "I had a single espresso before I went out there," she said with a smile. "So it was like morning for me." Kasatkina had a harder time with the situation. "Mentally, it's tough to face the day when it's a long wait," said Kasatkina, a 2022 semifinalist at the French Open. "You have to be calm, but at the same time, you have to be ready to jump on the court. And you don't know when." The last of the long day's 55 matches didn't wrap up until just about 1 a.m., when 17-year-old Russian Mirra Andreieva finally got through a 6-3, 3-6, 7-5 win against No. 19 seed Victoria Azarenka, a two-time Australian Open champion who is 34. Andreieva next faces Stearns, with the winner reaching the fourth round in Paris for the first time. Other seeded women sent home included No. 9 Jelena Ostapenko,

the 2017 champion in Paris, who lost to Denmark's Clara Tauson 7-6 (4), 4-6, 6-3; No. 11 Danielle Collins, defeated by Serbian qualifier Olga Danilovic 6-7 (3), 7-5, 6-4; No. 18 Marta Kostyuk, who was beaten 7-5, 6-4 by Donna Vekic; and No. 23 Anna Kalinskaya, eliminated 1-6, 7-5, 6-3 by oft-injured 2019 U.S. Open champion Bianca Andreescu. Men's seeds who bowed out included No. 25 Frances Tiafoe and No. 31 Mariano Navone. A frosty handshake came when Tiafoe and Denis Shapovalov - who are friends - met at the net after Shapovalov's 6-7 (4), 6-4, 6-2, 6-4 win. That's because Tiafoe sent a tennis ball off the side of Shapovalov's head with one on-the-run shot. "I wasn't happy with it. But it's tennis, so you can do what you want," said Shapovalov, who joined Felix Auger-Aliassime to give Canada two men in the third round at Roland Garros for the first time in the Open era, which began in 1968. "Look, I'm sure we'll be fine in



a couple days. Obviously, (in the) heat of the moment, it's not fun. But we'll get through it." Auger-Aliassime and Shapovalov

are among the players who originally were supposed to complete their second-rounders Wednesday. Because they didn't get

done until Thursday, on account of the weather, they need to get back on court Friday for the third round, losing the usual day off at a Grand Slam. There were victories for several top men Thursday: No. 1 Novak Djokovic, who seeks his fourth French Open championship and 25th from all Grand Slam tournaments, No. 4 Alexander Zverev, No. 8 Hubert Hurkacz and two-time runner-up Casper Ruud. No. 5 Daniil Medvedev and No. 15 Ben Shelton both advanced when their opponents stopped because of injury. Women moving on included No. 2 Aryna Sabalenka, No. 4 Elena Rybakina, No. 14 Madison Keys and No. 15 Elina Svitolina. This is the fourth tournament for Stearns since she began working with Tom Hill, who used to coach two-time Grand Slam semifinalist Maria Sakkari. Last week, Stearns claimed her first career WTA title, in an event on clay at Rabat, Morocco, celebrating by posing for

photos while doing a handstand. That skills is from her days in gymnastics, a sport her mother, Denise, used to do. Mom - who Stearns said good-naturedly offered some critiques of her form in the pictures - came to Paris with plans to watch just daughter's first-round match, then fly home to Ohio. But a win that day prompted a new flight booking. Now after the win against Kasatkina, Stearns said her mother is sticking around for the third round, too. "I was like, Look, just stay. Please," Stearns said with a laugh. "We've got to keep this going." Nothing too onerous about getting to stay in France while watching your kid win tennis matches, right? Ah, but Stearns said she put Denise to work. "She's running me through my warmups and cool downs. And before my matches, we have a ritual where she'll fill up my three water bottles and add electrolytes. Keeping her busy," Stearns said. "She jokes, You're not paying me.

ROHIT SHARMA HOPES FOR QUICK ACCLIMATISATION OF NY PITCH AHEAD OF T20 WC

PTI ■ NEW YORK

Marvelling at the newly-constructed Nassau County International Cricket Stadium here, India skipper Rohit Sharma underlined the need for his team to get acclimatised to the pitch and conditions quickly ahead of their T20 World Cup opener against Ireland on June 5.

However, Rohit and company will get a chance to check the nature of the pitch and overall conditions when they face Bangladesh in a warm-up match here on Saturday. It's also India's lone training game ahead of the ICC marquee event.

The warm-up match is important from India's perspective because their matches will start at 10.30 AM local time and the players need to get used to day-time matches after playing under lights in the IPL for the last two months.

"We're looking to understand the conditions more importantly (before the tournament proper) as we haven't been here before," Rohit told ICC.

The Mumbaier emphasised the need for his side to get into a "rhythm" before the real action starts, and he wanted to use this side game as a



springboard. "We will try and make the most of the conditions, get used to what it's going to be like on June 5 when we play our first game," he added. The challenge for the Indians will be to adapt to the drop-in turf here, something they don't come across very often in international cricket. "It's just about getting into that

rhythm of getting the feel of the ground, pitch and stuff like that," he said. Rohit was part of the first batch of India cricketers to arrive here on May 26, along with Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj, Suryakumar Yadav, Rishabh Pant, Shivam Dube, Ravindra Jadeja, Kuldeep Yadav and Axar Patel. Moving beyond the match

routines, Rohit also found time to take in the beauty of the venue. "It looks beautiful. It's quite an open ground. When we come here and play our first game, I just can't wait to feel the atmosphere in the stadium," he said. "It's a decent capacity as well. Hopefully it's gonna be a good one." Rohit hoped that fans will

through the venue for their matches. "People in New York will be very interested in coming and watching the World Cup, as it is happening for the first time here. "I'm pretty sure all the fans across various teams are quite excited and looking forward to this tournament. And also as players (we) can't wait to get

started," he noted.

WORRY FOR BANGLADESH: Skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto too appreciated the excellent construction here, but he would not have forgotten Bangladesh's shocking series defeat against the USA a few days back.

The United States, largely constituted by expat players, scored a stunning 2-1 win over Bangladesh in a three-match T20I series at home last week, signalling that they are no mere pushovers.

Hence, Shanto might be hoping for a quick turnaround against formidable India, even though it's a warm-up match at this scenic stadium. "To be very honest I wasn't expecting anything like this but we all followed on social media how the wicket looks like, how the ground would be, and we are very excited as to what is going to happen here," said Shanto.

The 25-year-old top-order batter then gushed over the venue.

"It's unbelievable. I think it's crazy. I mean we all saw on the internet there was nothing (three months ago). Now, it looks like a proper stadium and feels great," he said.

The Eastern grandstand (in particular), I didn't expect it to be like this," he added.



India eye redemption as big ticket cricket touches base in America

PTI ■ NEW YORK

There will be the usual favourites, the mavericks, the chokers and also the unpredictable minnows — the script is familiar for a World Cup but the scale would be unprecedented when the T20 showpiece, featuring a record 20 teams, spearheads cricket's audacious charge into the American market starting here on Saturday.

While India would be eager to shed the baggage of near-misses, Australia would like to add another chapter to their tale of domination. For the likes of Pakistan and West Indies, the primary target would be to keep in check their tendency to implode at the most inopportune time.

Defending champions England and South Africa too will be a force to reckon with, especially the latter. Given the presence of match-winners like Heinrich Klaasen, David Miller, Quinton de Kock and Kagiso Rabada, the Proteas seem primed to get rid of the chokers' tag.

It will be a ground-breaking event not just because of the sheer size of the draw but also for the fact that it officially marks cricket's big-ticket entry into the USA, which will host 16 of the 55 matches to be played across 29 days.

The remaining 39 games will be held in the West Indies, including the Super 8 stage, the semifinals and the final on June 29.

Besides the obvious favourites on paper, the likes of Afghanistan can also never be counted out to upset the apple cart at the most unexpected time.

There are plots within plots that will unfold in the course of next one month. And perhaps one of the most intriguing would be the one involving India, a team that looks so

destined for an ICC trophy but has somehow managed to fall short after the 2013 Champions Trophy triumph. Rohit Sharma's reputation as captain will definitely be on the line this time. Considering the unparalleled resources and depth that the sport's powerhouse has, most experts find it difficult to pinpoint India's trophy drought at the world stage over the past decade.

Rohit's predecessor Virat Kohli ended his tenure as the most successful Test captain but a global trophy eluded him.

Now Rohit is carrying that baggage of not winning a world title with India finishing runner-up in two ICC events over the past 12 months, including the juggernaut-ending loss to Australia in the ODI World Cup final at home. Their outdated approach in the previous two T20 World Cups cost them dearly but they are unlikely to repeat those mistakes in the Americas.

The recently-concluded IPL showed how the batters are pushing boundaries and India's high-profile line-up needs to follow that risky path.

India may not have the same batting firepower as compared to some of the rival teams but as pitches in the Caribbean are expected to be spin-friendly, they surely have all bases covered.

Rohit and Co. Are scheduled to play three games at the makeshift facility here including the blockbuster clash against Pakistan on June 9. Drop-in pitches will be used at the brand new facility with all teams entering unfamiliar territory.

India, however, will have the advantage of playing a warm-up game against Bangladesh at the same venue on June 1 before they take on Ireland in their opening league game on June 5.

Pooran, Powell make fifties as WI hammer nine-man Australia by 35 runs

PTI ■ PORT OF SPAIN (TRINIDAD)

Fifties by Nicholas Pooran and Rowman Powell helped West Indies outpunch a nine-man Australia by 35 runs in their warm-up match ahead of the T20 World Cup here.

As it happened in their first training match against Namibia, the Aussies fielded only nine players against the Windies. Selector George Bailey and head coach Andrew McDonald filled the remaining two spots while fielding.

Batting first, West Indies rode on fifties by Pooran (75, 25b, 5x4, 8x6), skipper Powell (52, 25b, 4x4, 4x6) and an unbeaten 47 off 18 balls by Sherfane Rutherford (4x4, 4x6) to raise 257 for 4 in 20 overs.

In reply, Josh Inglis (55, 30b, 3x4, 4x6) led Australia's reply and there were a

39 (22b, 4x4, 2x6) by Ellis and numerous 20s as Australia finished at 222 for seven. Earlier, Australia had Tim David, Josh Hazlewood, Adam Zampa, Nathan Ellis and Ashton Agar as bowlers, and all went for plenty.

All-rounder Mitchell Marsh, recuperating from an injury, refrained from bowling, though he later batted. West Indies innings was built around fine partnerships between Pooran and Johnson Charles (40), who milked 90 runs for the second wicket and a 63 for the unbroken fifth wicket between Rutherford and Shimron Hetmyer (18).

The absence of skipper Pat Cummins, Glenn Maxwell, Mitchell Starc, Marcus Stoinis, Cameron Green and Travis Head was felt as they are yet to join the squad. They are spending a few extra days at



home after a taxing campaign in the recently concluded IPL. **NAMIBIA BEAT PNG:** Namibia

defeated Papua New Guinea by three runs under the DLS method. Batting first, PNG were restricted to

109 for seven in 20 overs, and Namibia were 93 for six in 16.5 overs when the skies opened up in Tarouba. But they were three runs ahead in the DLS calculations at that stage.

At Dallas, the match between the Netherlands and Canada was abandoned without a ball being bowled.

BRIEF SCORES

West Indies: 257/4 in 20 overs (Nicholas Pooran 75, Rowman Powell 52; Sherfane Rutherford 47 not out; Adam Zampa 2/62) beat Australia: 222/7 in 20 overs (Josh Inglis 55, Nathan Ellis 39; Gudakesh Motie 2/31) by 35 runs.

Papua New Guinea: 109/7 in 20 overs (See Bau 29; David Wiese 2/8, Ruben Trumblemann 2/15) lost to Namibia: 93/6 in 16.5 overs (Jan Frylinck 36, JP Kotze 30; Alei Nao 2/9, Assad Vala 2/14) by 3 runs (DLS)



Lamichhane to miss T20 World Cup after US denies visa to Nepalese leg spinner

AP ■ KATHMANDU

Nepal's ace leg-spinner Sandeep Lamichhane was ruled out of the Twenty20 World Cup on Friday after his US visa application was rejected for a second time.

The Nepalese government and its cricket authorities took up Lamichhane's case after his visa was first rejected last week.

The Cricket Association of Nepal said in a statement that "despite taking necessary initiatives ... The US Embassy has expressed its inability to give travel permission (visa) to national player Lamichhane to play the World Cup."

The Nepalese cricket association suspended Lamichhane after he was arrested in 2022 over an accusation of the rape of an 18-year-old woman. He was found guilty in January this year but was acquitted on appeal because of "lack of evidence" and the cricket association allowed him to resume playing cricket.

Nepal, placed in Group D, opens its T20 World Cup campaign against the Netherlands on June 7 in Dallas before taking on Sri Lanka at Lauderhill, Florida on June 11.

Warm up game opportunity to check Indian players' rhythm

PTI ■ NEW YORK

Yashasvi Jaiswal will aim to add his bit to the combination conundrum with a handy contribution while Arshdeep Singh and Mohammed Siraj need to put their best foot forward during India's only T20 World Cup warm-up game against Bangladesh ahead of their tournament opener on June 5.

With all 15 cricketers being regular playing XI members of their respective IPL franchises, the team is certainly not short on game time but an assortment of 15 high-calibre players and finding that perfect combination will be key to ending India's 13-year global trophy drought.

In the warm-up game, it is expected that save for Virat Kohli, who is expected to touch down some time before the practice game, all other 14 players will be given a go as it doesn't

have an official status. It will be an opportunity to check everyone's rhythm after most of the core team members enjoyed a two-week break.

There will be two areas where skipper Rohit Sharma and outgoing head coach Rahul Dravid need to take a judicious call.

Even if Jaiswal is in good nick, how to fit him in the side will be an issue as it would mean keeping a power-hitter like Shivam Dube out of the playing XI.

It is a foregone conclusion that Jaiswal might have to sit out as it would not only allow Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma to open but could also open the door for Dube at the back end of the tournament.

"Shivam Dube is a six-hitting machine. He can be the 'x-factor' in the T20 World Cup. But if Shivam has to be in the XI, then you can't play Yashasvi. Rohit has to take that



call and I prefer both pace-bowling all-rounders in the XI. If Shivam plays, he can take on the opposition wrist spinners in the latter half," Suresh Raina, one of India's premier T20 batters of his time, said on Friday when asked about a possible combination.

The second teething problem for India would be to find Jasprit Bumrah's opening pace-bowling partner. Both Arshdeep Singh and Mohammed Siraj have shown hot and cold in the IPL and their form has left a lot to be desired.

RP Singh, one of the heroes of India's inaugural edition victory, feels that Hardik Pandya's four overs will be very important. Besides, he feels that Arshdeep should be the second frontline pacer on the newly-laid drop-in track.

Talking about the length to be bowled on the tracks in the US during an early morning start, he felt

variations will be important, which make Arshdeep a better bet compared to Siraj.

"As per my understanding, there should be a bit of slowness in the wicket. So, the ideal length will be somewhere around just short of good length. There will not be a lot of swing for the bowlers but the bowlers with variations, not only yorkers but also slower ones, leg and off cutters..." RP replied to a PTI query during a promotional event in Delhi.

"These deliveries will be utilised a bit more by Arshdeep, so the success rate will be automatically higher for him and that's what I understand the wickets in the US," he explained.

Against Bangladesh on a slowish track, it would also be a challenge for the middle-order as to how they deal with Shakib Al Hasan and Mahedi Hasan apart from questions asked by cutter master Mustafizur Rahman.

PTI ■ BARBADOS

Australia skipper Mitchell Marsh will not bowl in their T20 World Cup opener against Oman on June 6 and will play only as a batter as he continues his recovery from a hamstring injury sustained during the IPL, said head coach Andrew McDonald on Friday.

Marsh played both the World Cup warm-up games against Namibia and co-hosts West Indies in Trinidad, scoring 18 and 4 respectively. But the pace-bowling all-rounder did not field for the full bowling innings in either games, with Matthew Wade taking over captaincy duties in his absence. "For Mitch, (the warm-up games) was about ticking off where his body was at," McDonald told cricket.Com.Au.

Mitchell Marsh will not bowl in T20 WC opener against Oman: Coach McDonald

"He fielded more overs tonight (in the warm-up against West Indies), he was able to move more freely, so he's building a little bit of confidence there. It looks as though he's all set for the first game," he added.

Marsh played just four matches for Delhi Capitals in the recently concluded IPL following a right hamstring niggle and he flew back to Australia in the last week of April to continue his recuperation.

"The second part is just when the bowling comes back online... It won't be the first game," said McDonald.



During the second warm-up game against the West Indies, nine-man Australia lost by 35 runs, with the absence of skipper Pat Cummins, Glenn Maxwell, Mitchell Starc, Marcus Stoinis, Cameron Green and Travis Head, who are yet to join the squad, being felt by the Kangaroos. The Australian players who took part in the IPL flew back home to be with their families and were exempted from the warm-up fixtures.

"It was by design, in terms of when we were getting people back after the IPL; we were well aware we weren't going to get

the squad together until the first of next month," said McDonald. "We've got some things in place where we'll bring the group together, we'll work through our plans leading into Oman and there's a bit of space between that game and (playing) England." Australia will play arch-rivals and defending T20 World Cup champions England here on June 9. "We feel as though we have plenty of time to bring that group together. It's a familiar group, they've played a lot together. If they hadn't played a lot together then the prep might have looked different," the coach added. "We feel comfortable though as they know how to play with each other. It will just be finalising the XIs for the games, and the balances that we want. We've got plenty of options.